Virtual Chair's online venue:
Basic tips for Navigation & Troubleshooting

Prepare for your experience

You will need to use **Chrome** or **Firefox** to connect from a computer (not a personal device). Please ensure that you are not logged in to a VPN.

Before arriving in the online venue, you will be able to learn the basics of navigating the site by watching [Virtual Chair's Instructional Welcome Video](#). This is how you will discover the most important tips for navigating the site.

Log in to the venue using credentials received by email to the address you used to register for the conference. ***These are typically sent just a few days before the event begins***

When logging in, you MUST grant permission for the website to access your camera, microphone and sound. If you do not see this prompt or have trouble adjusting your computer's AV tools to function correctly, see the **Troubleshooting Guide** at the end of this document.

- Once connected, click on the avatar on the very left of your menu bar (located in the bottom-center of your screen) to select a character to represent you.
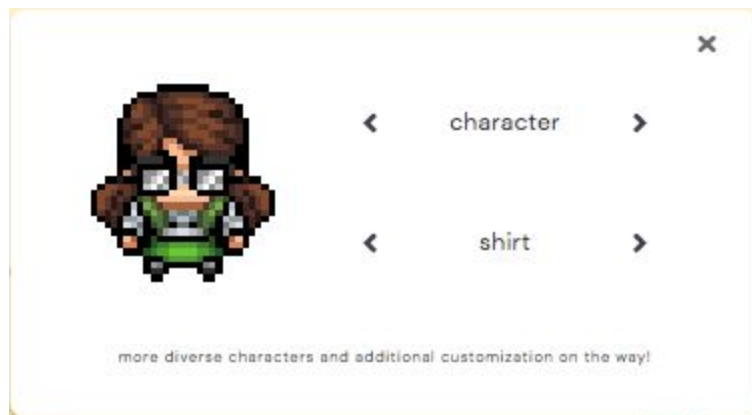
View the event venue in different ways

Your avatar will be labelled with your name and positioned in the center of your screen - you are now standing in the lobby.

- Visit different parts of the venue by pressing the arrow keys on your keyboard or letter keys WASD.

- Press and hold "G" on your keyboard to enable ghost mode - this is an easy way to get out of a crowded area as it allows you to walk through obstacles.

- Click "View" then "Zoom" in your internet browser's menu to see more at once. This can also be done using the keyboard shortcuts CTRL+ or CTRL- (CMD+ or CMD- on Mac).

- Directories will let you know where specific rooms or posters are located. Type "X" on your keyboard any time you see the message below:

Presenting or leading a demo

- To make an announcement to everyone in the same room, stand on the rug behind a podium. If you share your screen while at a microphone/podium, this will be visible to all other attendees in the same room.
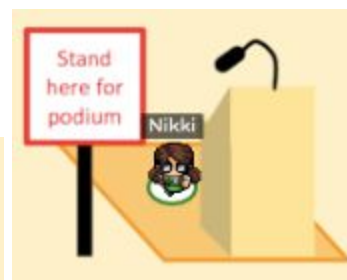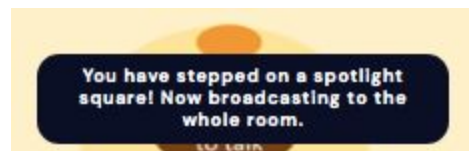
- It is also possible to share your screen with others who are standing on the same conversation carpet as you. This would override their view of a poster, so it's important to let them know when you are about to share your screen so this is not a surprise. *We HIGHLY recommend that demo presenters test their own personal screenshare settings prior to their presentation time, as these vary widely depending on the computer and software being used.*

- Practice ahead of time in a private conversation to be sure you're comfortable turning screenshare on and off.

- Computer audio is NOT sharable in gather.town; screenshare will only project an image and sounds entering via your computer's microphone.

Interacting with others

There are a few ways to interact with others in the event venue:

- As in real life, you can speak "face-to-face" with other participants who are in close proximity - no shouting across the room!

- By stepping onto a "conversation carpet" together or by placing your avatar on chairs around the same table, you and other attendees will be entering an isolated conversation area; you will not hear others unless they join you on the carpet or occupy a chair at your table. Don't fall off your chair-you'll no longer see or hear the other participants at the table!
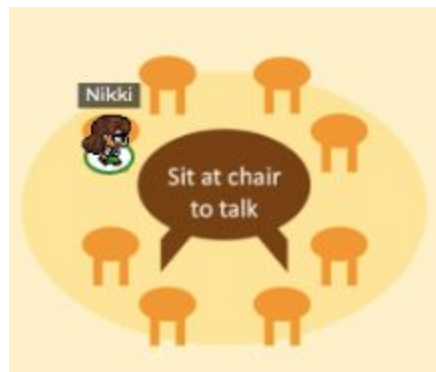
- The exception to this rule is that you will still hear anyone speaking at a microphone in the same room as you. As in real life, anything said by someone at a microphones will interrupt and override all other conversations in the room.

- Ignore another participant's microphone by clicking on it (this does not change what other participants hear and only applies to your own sound).

- Enlarge videos by clicking on them (including videos of people you're talking to).

- Curate a "friends" list by first clicking the person icon in the left hand toolbar, and then clicking the name of another participant and sending a private chat message; they will appear in your chat list thereafter. If you part ways, message them privately by selecting the name of the person you would like to chat in the Participants list of your left-side toolbar. You can also select "Everybody" to send a chat to attendees in every room of the venue, or "Nearby" to send a chat to those people in your current videochat.
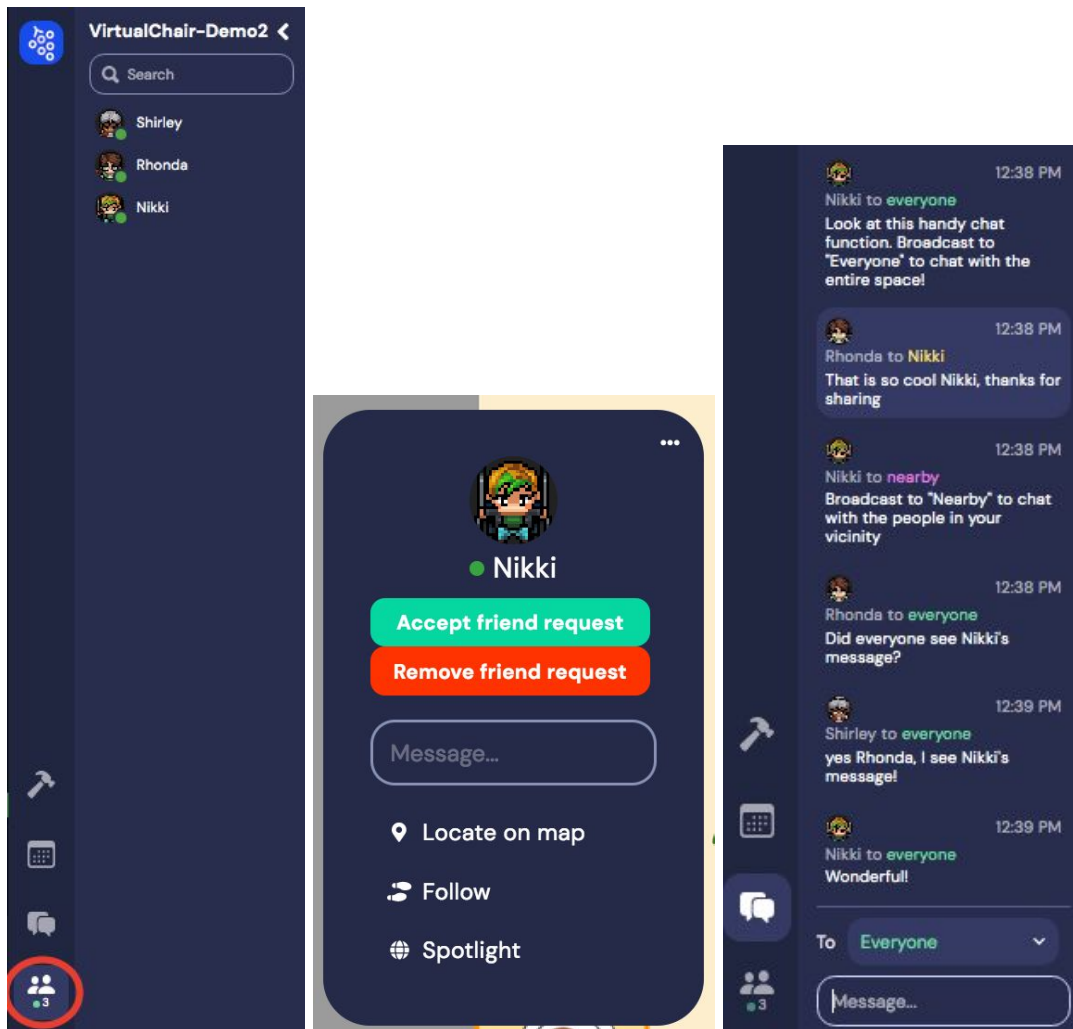
- Check out people's name badges. Click on their name in the video chat or in the participants list and a badge will pop up with their affiliation.

- Don't stand in doorways; it blocks others. And if you get stuck in traffic, hold down "G" on your keyboard to turn into a ghost and walk through the avatars who block your way.

- Bring your virtual dance shoes and try dancing by holding down "Z" on your keyboard. No one has two left feet in Gather!

Asking for Help

During the event, members of Virtual Chair's staff will also be available to assist participants who have any questions about navigating the site. Please feel free to contact them in one of the following ways:

- **Email** the Virtual Chair staff to alert them if you have have trouble navigating the event space on gather.town; they are available at aaai-helpdesk@virtualchair.net

  In order for Virtual Chair's Helpdesk team to best assist you, it is recommended that you confirm which browser you are using, and provide either a screenshot or a description of the specific webpage where you encountered an issue. Specific information on troubleshooting audiovisual connection issues is available by clicking here.

- **Walk** to a virtual Helpdesk to discuss your question directly. Helpdesks will be located in the lobby.

- **Chat** one-on-one with a Helpdesk staff member by scrolling through the participant list and clicking on their name, then "message". You can also search for the Helpdesk staff member using the search bar, found above the list of participant
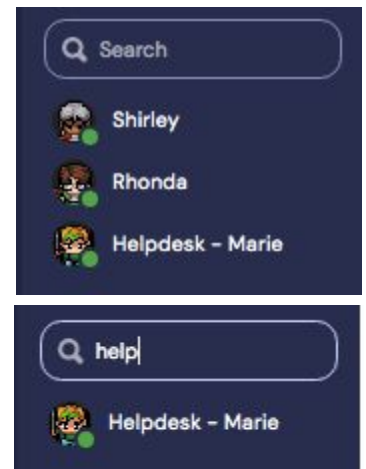
On behalf of the entire team at Virtual Chair, we look forward to speaking with you for AAAI-21!

To keep in contact with us after the event, feel free to write to info@virtualchair.net.

Troubleshooting Guide

We want your experience to be as good as technology will allow! If your equipment isn't functioning correctly, you can view information on common AV issues here. Any ongoing or unresolved issues should be signaled to support@gather.town for direct assistance.

**Here are a few common settings that may need to be adjusted:**

When you first log in to the venue, you are prompted to authorize gather.town to access your camera and microphone. If you skip or do NOT authorize this, or your AV is not functioning properly, check the following settings on your computer:

- Clicking on your Name on the bottom menu bar will allow you to view which audiovisual tools you are currently using (note that you will not be able to modify your name here, which for security reasons is that used on your event registration).
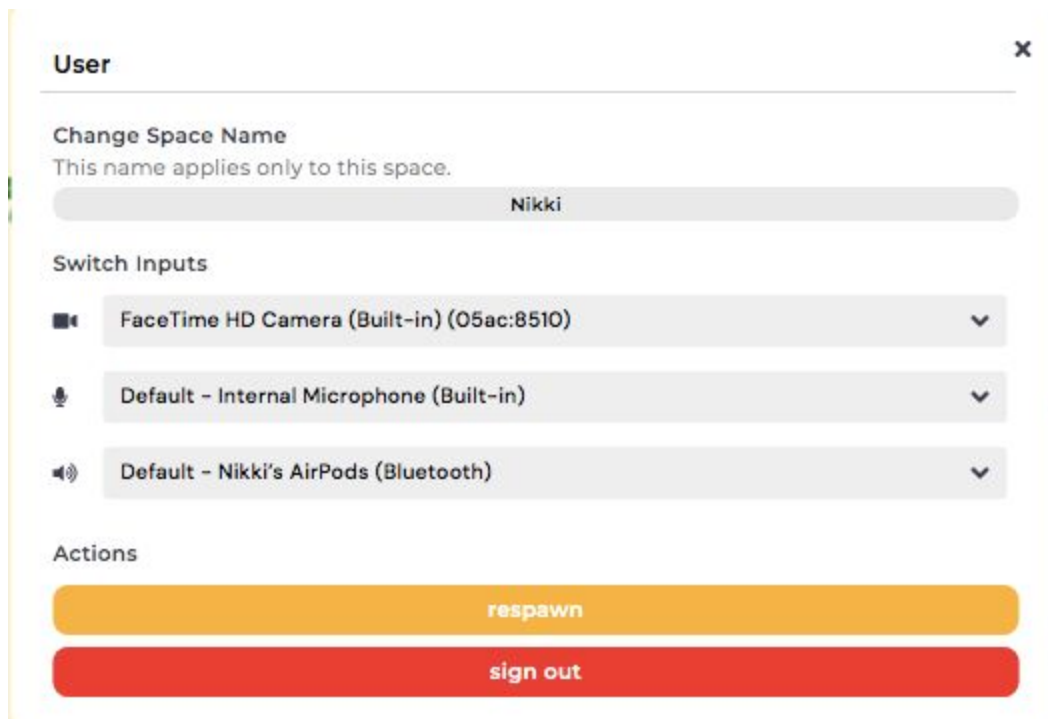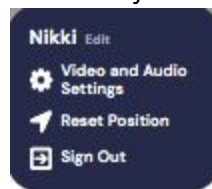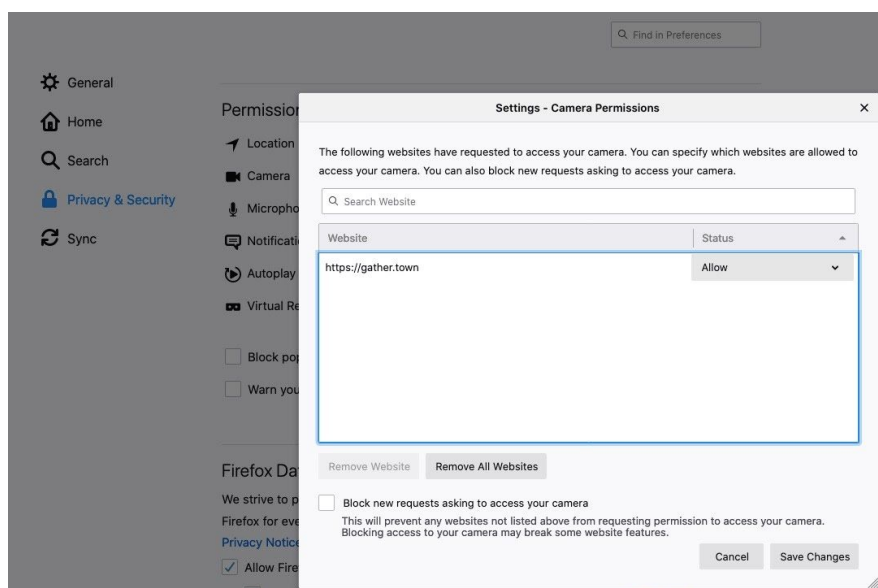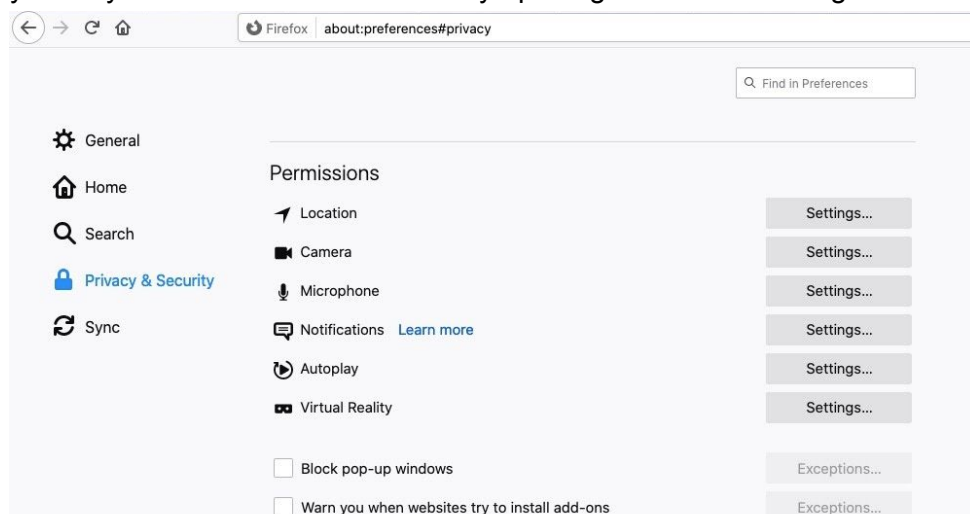

- If your video or microphone is still not functioning, you can open your browser's settings and ensure that you have given permission to the site gather.town to access these tools.
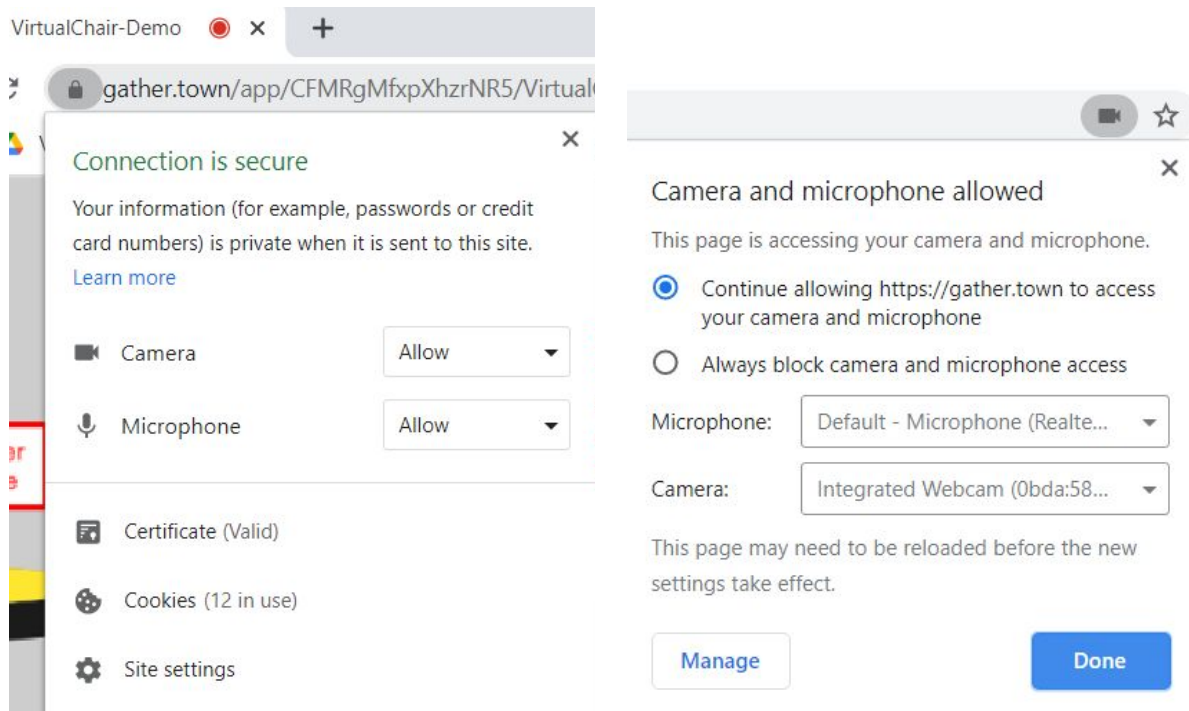
  In Firefox, you'll see these permissions by clicking directly in your address bar here:
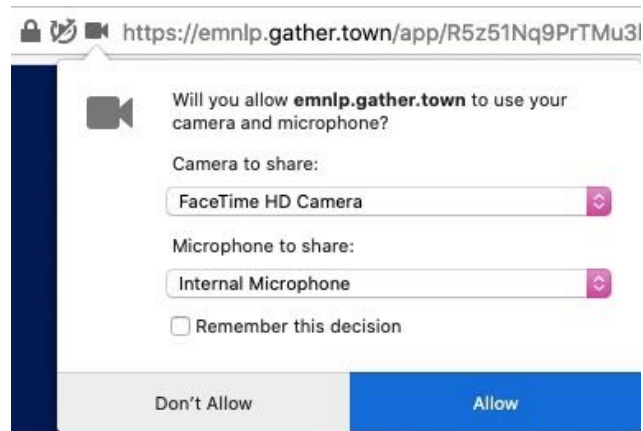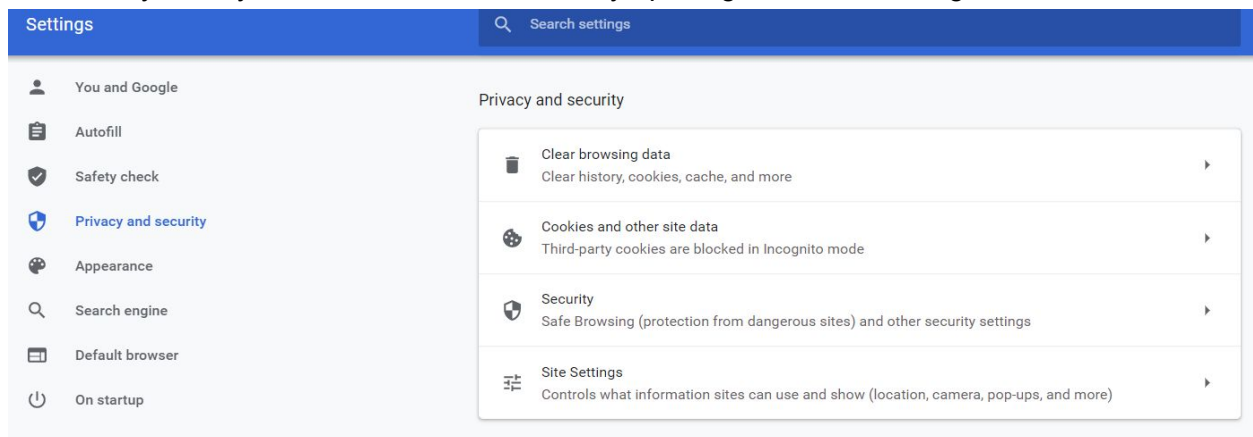
Or you may need to authorize access by opening the Firefox settings menu here:

In Chrome, you'll see these permissions on the left and right sides of your address bar:

Or you may need to authorize access by opening Chrome's settings menu here:

- If you're having bandwidth issues, try turning off your or others videos by clicking on the video camera icon superimposed on the video (it won't impact the views of others). Similarly, if someone's background noise is disturbing you, you can mute them (again without impacting whether others can hear them).

For ongoing difficulties or any issues not mentioned, please contact support@gather.town or aaai-helpdesk@virtualchair.net for further guidance.