Gather: The Essentials

Minimum requirements for full participation in the meeting include:

- A reasonably high-speed internet connection,
- A computer running either Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox browsers (for best results),
- A webcam and microphone (optional, but necessary if you wish to be seen and heard by others and take advantage of the interactive opportunities provided).

Depending upon your monitor size and settings, you may wish to experiment with different screen magnifications in your browser (click on the three vertical dots in the upper right corner of the Google Chrome browser or the three vertical lines in the upper right corner of the Mozilla Firefox browser). On many systems and screens, a magnification significantly below 100% gives the best view. Also try viewing your browser in a smaller window rather than full-screen. There are myriad computer/monitor configurations...you will need to experiment to find what works best for your system.

For the guidance below, please refer to the screenshot of a typical Gather screen at the end of this document.

Arriving

- To join the meeting go to https://gather.town/i/0vd6JFdV and arrive in AMMP's Gather space. You will need to sign in with the email you used to register for the meeting. You can choose to sign in through Google or have a magic link sent to your email which you will click on for verification.

- You may appear as an avatar named "Anonymous". You must change "Anonymous" to your preferred given name and full last name (Example: William Jefferson Smith, Jr., could enter "Bill Smith").
- At the bottom of your screen is a box with your avatar, your name, and a few other control icons. To change your name (especially from Anonymous!), click on your avatar in this box. In the pop-up dialog box you can change your name and, if you like, choose your preferred avatar image. Click "Save".
- To change other user preferences, click on your name at the bottom of your screen and on the **gear icon** on the left side of the screen.

Navigation Tools

- Use **Up, Down, Left, and Right arrow keys** on the keyboard to walk around the space. For keyboards without dedicated arrow keys, use the keyboard letters W (up), A (left), S (down), and D (right).
- Pressing the **G key** allows you to "ghost" and walk through other people (handy when you are trapped in a crowd.) The **E key** will teleport you instantly to an open space if you really get surrounded and wish to make a quick escape!
- Pressing the **Z key** causes your avatar to dance and show appreciation.

Communicating

There are three primary ways to connect to people to have voice communication:

- **Proximity connections.** As you walk around the venue, you can hear and talk with anyone near you (proximity communication). You will not hear anyone outside of your proximity, nor can they hear you. As you or others move away, their audio and video feed will fade until you can no longer interact with them, just like in real life!
    - **Private spaces** allow for private meetings/conversations with others within that private space. If someone is outside of the private space, even right next to you, they will not hear you, nor you them. Private spaces are usually denoted by a different color or pattern on the floor. When you are in a private space, the rest of the room becomes slightly shaded. A note pops up at the bottom of your screen whenever you enter a private space.
- **Spotlight.** A spot with a megaphone symbol. Spotlights allow the person standing on them to be heard by EVERYONE in the room (similar with a public address system). In general, spotlight spaces may be used for important announcements by moderators, by presenters, or by audience members addressing questions/comments/announcements to be heard by everyone in the room.
- **Chat via Text.** By clicking on the **chat icon** on the bottom left side of your screen (the cartoon talk balloons), you can send text messages to everyone in the venue, just to those in close proximity to you, or to specific individuals. Check the chats frequently for important Announcements.

Interactions with Objects

- Various objects can trigger certain actions and can contain:
    - An embedded website
    - An embedded image
    - An embedded video
    - An external call (to a Zoom meeting, for example)
    - A note object (a sign, brief instructions, descriptions, etc.)
- When you are within range of an object linked to an action, a small note will pop up at the bottom of the screen saying, "Press x to interact" or something similar. When you see this note, **press x** on your keyboard to initiate the interaction.
- When you are through with the interaction, press x again to return to your previous position.
- Although interactions can be associated with any object, pay special attention to TVs, screens, and note objects. Just press x when near them to view their contents.

Posters

- Posters will be available for viewing throughout the meeting, but be sure to attend the poster reception when presenters will be with their posters to answer your questions.
- During the poster session, step onto the "carpet" in front of the poster and press x to view the poster. Poster carpets are private spaces so you can talk with and hear anyone in the space without interference from adjacent posters or passersby.
- You can scroll up and down the poster by using your mouse wheel or move the poster in any direction by pressing and holding the left mouse button and "grabbing" the poster.
- When viewing a poster, there are two or three small icons on the right side of the poster. These magnify and demagnify the poster and provide a "pointer" that will cast a red circle onto a portion of the poster for emphasis during discussions.

Off-site Rooms

- Workshops, tours, field trips and the oral presentation session will use "off-site" Zoom Meeting or Zoom Webinar rooms.
- During the live workshop presentations, you will not be admitted to any workshops that you did not sign up for. After the meeting, until April 25, all registrants will have full access to all meeting content, including recordings of all workshops.
- When you go to one of the Gather rooms for these events, you will see a message at the bottom of your screen that you need to **press x** to be transported to the appropriate Zoom room. When you wish to leave the Zoom room and return to Gather, simply close the Zoom window and Zoom browser tab. In your Gather browser tab, click "Re-enter" to return to Gather.

Other Useful Tips

Finding People

- Click on the Attendees icon at the bottom left corner of the screen. Click on the person you wish to find. A dialog box presents two options of locating the person you wish to find:
    - **Locate on map** – results in a path that will lead you to that person.
    - **Follow** – results in your avatar immediately going to where that person is located. This is also handy if someone you are with wants to show you something somewhere in the space...you'll go with them automatically! Don't forget to "unfollow" them, though...stalking is not acceptable!
    - A third option, available to moderators only, is to "**spotlight**" someone from the attendee list or who is showing the "raised-hand" emoji. Spotlighting by the moderator allows that person to ask a question and can be heard by all people in the room.

Eliminating Extraneous Audio

- If there is another participant that you do not wish to hear or see you can mute them and turn off their video. To do so, hover your cursor over their video box and click on the microphone and/or video camera icons to mute and/or turn off their video feed (to you only). This does not turn off their microphone or camera...it just prevents you from hearing or seeing them. This is especially useful when multiple people are viewing videos at the same time and you hear the audio stream from their video coming through their speaker and open mic. However, if you want to talk to someone you have previously muted you can turn on their audio and video by clicking again on the icons in their video box.
- Although Gather has filters to eliminate echo and other extraneous audio, it is a good practice (though not required) to mute your own audio when you are not speaking and wear headphones so that audio coming from your computer speakers does not get rebroadcast and cause feedback.

Emoticons/Emojis

- Various emoticons (emojis) can be found at the bottom of the screen by hovering over the smiley face. When you click on an emoji it appears over your avatar. Most emojis are temporary and will disappear within a few seconds.
- The **raised hand emoji** is a special signal to the moderator that you have a question. The raised hand will remain up until you toggle it off. When the moderator acknowledges you and "spotlights" you (see above), you can ask your question and be heard by everyone in the room, including the moderator/presenter.
- Emojis are numbered. You can also use your keyboard numbers to select an emoji directly.

Miscellaneous Tips

- If you cannot walk through a door, it is closed at that time. Try again later!
- If you are experiencing performance issues (choppy video, clipped audio), try turning off your video. It's nice to share our faces with friends, but the most important thing is being able to communicate with them!
- These and other possible performance enhancements can be found by clicking the gear icon (user settings) on the left side of the screen.