

UltraFest IX

Ultrasound Imaging for Speech and Language

Virtual Conference

October 21-24, 2020

Getting Connected to the Conference

At a virtual conference, connectivity is critical. Your internet connection (and hence your ability to participate fully in UltraFest IX) is influenced by a number of factors (see [this article on TechGuide.com](#) for explanations and examples). Some factors are outside of your control, such as the internet speeds provided by your local area network (LAN) or internet service provider (ISP). Other factors are within your control and are relatively easy to optimize on short notice:

- **Network connection:** The speed of your network connection is influenced by your router, your mode of connecting (e.g. Ethernet cable vs. WiFi), and the quality of your connection. For best performance, **use a high quality Ethernet cable** to connect to a high quality router or LAN. If WiFi is your only option, set up your computer close to your WiFi router. A useful discussion of these factors is available at [this blog from digitaltrends.com](#).
- **Bandwidth usage:** The speed of your network connection is influenced by the number of devices using the network, as well as the speed of those devices. It is also affected by the number of programs running on your computer; especially the number of programs that are using the network. For best performance, minimize the number of devices connected to your network, and close software programs that you don't need during the conference.
- **Internet Browser:** Based on a combination of non-rigorous testing and recommendations from the platform vendors, an up-to-date version of **the Chrome browser is strongly recommended**. In the practice run-throughs that we have had so far, most of the problems that have been experienced were directly related to the use of a browser other than Chrome.
- **Software settings:** During a presentation, you can choose software settings (e.g. in Zoom) that minimize the amount of data being transferred across the network and to/from your computer. For best performance, consider turning your camera feed off, selecting to view only participants with cameras turned on, selecting to view only the speaker, and not using a virtual background.

Audio quality is another critical factor in a virtual performance. In order to avoid distracting electronic reverberations, **please consider using a headset with headphones and a microphone rather than computer speakers and microphone**. A headset places the microphone close to your mouth so that your voice is transmitted rather than background noise; and headphones make it easier for you to hear a presentation, especially if there is background noise around you. Finally, using headphones ensures that the sound from the conference does not get picked up by your microphone and create a positive feedback loop.

Navigating the Conference

The [main UltraFest IX website](#) is your entry point into the conference. (It is possible to bypass the main website, but for simplicity we will assume that you aren't going to do that.) The main website contains direct links to the [UltraFest IX Whova website](#) and the [UltraFest IX Gather website](#).

Within the UltraFest IX Whova website...

There is a navigation bar with links to “Home”, “Agenda”, “Attendees”, etc. **The most important link is to “Agenda”**. When viewing the Agenda, you can navigate from day to day and view when individual presentations and other events are happening. Clicking on an event title (or pressing the “View Session” button) will open up that event for further viewing. For example, if you click on the “Welcome and Introductions” event on Wednesday, October 21, at 10:00am (-4 UTC), you will see a Zoom meeting embedded in the UltraFest IX Whova website. If you check it out early, the meeting window will say “Warning – This session will start on October 21, 10:00am EDT ...” If the Zoom meeting has already been started by the host, then you will be able to join it. For more information about interacting with the host/moderator and the speaker or audience, see the section on “**Using Whova**” below.

If after viewing the session, you want to go back to the Agenda, you can simply click on the “Agenda” link once more. The Zoom window will then appear as a pop-out window that you can close by clicking on the “x” in the top-right corner of the Zoom window.

If you “View Session” for a poster, you will find a link that will take you directly to the UltraFest IX Gather website where the poster presentations will take place.

If you click on the “Home” link, you will find a link directly back to the main UltraFest IX website.

Within the UltraFest IX Gather website...

When you enter the UltraFest IX Gather website for the first time, you will be prompted to sign in with your email address. You should use the same email address you used to register for UltraFest IX. Gather will send you an email with a confirmation link that you will need to click on. **The link needs to load in a Chrome browser**. The browser window will then tell you that you have successfully registered, and that you can close the tab. Do close the tab, and then re-enter Gather from the main UltraFest IX website. Once you are in the Gather space, you can move around and interact with people and objects (e.g. posters).

In several areas of the Gather space, there are podiums with interactive links back to the main UltraFest IX website. Interacting with these podiums (by pressing the “x” key on your keyboard) will open up a copy of the main UltraFest IX website within the Gather website. In this way you can easily check the schedule on the main UltraFest IX website without leaving the Gather space.

Using Gather

Once you are in the UltraFest IX Gather website, you will automatically and randomly be assigned an avatar. There is a small menu of icons at the bottom of the screen, including:

- A picture of your avatar. Click this to change your avatar's appearance.
- A three-panel map icon. Click this to open a map of the entire space and see where you are in it.
- A picture of concentric circles. Click this to change your "interaction distance". Lots of concentric circles mean that you don't have to be particularly close to another person's avatar to communicate with them – great for a small group discussion! A single dot means that you have to be right next to another person's avatar to communicate with them – great for a semi-private conversation!
- A picture of a computer monitor. Click this to share your screen with anyone within your "interaction range".
- A hand. Click this to "raise your hand". If you do this during a poser presentation, the presenter will see that you have a question or a comment and can let you have the floor.
- A green circle with a check mark. Click this to let others know your current level of engagement/absence.
- A gear. Click this to change your display name. You should always set your display name to your real name, so that other attendees can easily identify you.

To "walk around" the Gather space with your avatar, use the arrow keys on your keyboard. You cannot normally walk through other people's avatars. If you want or need to get through someone else's avatar, press the "g" key (for "ghost") and hold it down while you use the arrow keys to move. Note that pressing "g" only allows you to walk through other avatars – it does not allow you to walk through walls or other obstacles placed in the space.

Your video is displayed in the bottom right corner of the screen. You can click on the icon of the microphone or video camera to mute yourself and turn your camera off.

When you walk up to another person's avatar, their video and audio will automatically fade in (if they are turned on) so that you can see and hear them! Move away from another person's avatar to fade out their video and audio feed.

When you walk up to a poster, it will appear at the bottom of your screen (above the icon menu). You can scroll through the poster there, or you can press the "x" key to open up a larger version of the poster. In general, pressing the "x" key when you are near an interactive object will open the object up in a window within your screen. To exit an interaction, press the "x" in the top right corner of the window.

Using *Whova*

Once you are in the UltraFest IX Whova website, you can take advantage of Whova's built-in "Community" and "Message" tools. You can also view who the attendees and presenters are. You can update your own profile by clicking on the drop down menu at the top right corner of the website, and choose "My Profile". Updating your profile will help with networking and getting to know new people.

When you view sessions in the "Agenda" you can see what other people have said in the Session Q&A and Chat (on the right side of the embedded Zoom video). The messages in the Q&A and Chat are viewable throughout the conference, so this is potentially a good place to continue discussions associated with particular presentations.



Using *Zoom* embedded within *Whova*

It may be that all of us are acquainted with Zoom already. For UltraFest IX there is no need to start a Zoom meeting yourself, even if you are presenting. The conference organizers will take care of starting the Zoom meetings, letting people in from the Waiting Room, and managing mute, video, and share screen controls. All you will need to do is join the appropriate session and wait for the host to let you in; you can turn off your video if you need to (e.g. for internet bandwidth), but we recommend that you keep your video turned on as much as possible. If you have a question or comment at the end of a presentation, you can "raise your hand" and then speak when the host unmutes you. The Chat feature in Zoom will be disabled, but the Session Q&A and Chat features in Whova will be available beside the embedded Zoom window.

Oral Presentations

Oral presentations will be made *live* using Zoom embedded in the UltraFest IX Whova website. They will *not* be recorded. Each oral presentation will last 30 minutes. **The 30 minutes includes the presentation as well as any Q&A and discussion with the attendees.** During the presentation, attendees will be muted, but will be encouraged to leave their cameras turned on (unless technical difficulties suggest turning off the cameras). During the Q&A and discussion time, the host will act as a moderator, and will unmute and re-mute attendees as needed.

Attendees will use the Whova event app to join the session in which they are presenting. The Zoom meeting is already set up and integrated into the Whova event app. Attendees will simply need to join the session. When the presentation is over (including the Q&A and discussion), the attendees will not need to do anything – they may leave the Zoom meeting or stick around for the next presentation.



Poster Presentations

Poster presentations will be made *live* using *Gather*. They will *not* be recorded. A copy of the poster will be “tacked up” and available to conference attendees even outside of the designated presentation time.

Each poster session will last 2 hours. Attendees will be able to see “where” the other attendees are (including poster presenters) and thus be able to make a decision about when to view a particular poster. If the presenter is temporarily away when the attendee visits, the attendee can still interact with the poster, and/or can send the presenter a message asking for the presenter’s attention.

During the poster presentation, attendees will not automatically be muted, and will be encouraged to leave their cameras turned on (unless technical difficulties suggest turning off the cameras). The attendees will be able to mute and unmute themselves. **It is suggested that attendees mute themselves at all times unless they are speaking** (e.g. asking a question).

Master Classes

While oral presentations and poster presentations constitute the heart and soul of a research conference, UltraFest IX's Master Classes offer a forum for more interactive and hands-on training in specific research practices. Because of this different focus, **presenters will have up to one hour for their Master Classes.**

Master Classes will be made *live* using Zoom embedded in the UltraFest IX Whova website. They will *not* be recorded. During the Master Classes, attendees will *not* be automatically muted, and will be encouraged to leave their cameras turned on (unless technical difficulties suggest turning off the cameras). The attendees will be able to mute and unmute themselves. **It is suggested that attendees mute themselves at all times unless they are speaking** (e.g. asking a question). The Master Class presenter will act as the moderator for their own Master Class.

Attendees will use the Whova event app to join the Master Class. The Zoom meeting is already set up and integrated into the Whova event app. Attendees will simply need to join the session. When the Master Class is over, the attendees will not need to do anything – they may leave the Zoom meeting or stick around for the next presentation.



Social Gatherings

Three official social gatherings are planned: a Meet and Greet on the first day immediately after the keynote presentation; a Morning Social on the third day immediately after the morning session (which now has only one presentation in it); and an Evening Social on the third day immediately after the afternoon session. See [the main UltraFest IX website](#) for the complete schedule. All social gatherings will take place in the Gather space.

During both the Morning Social and the Evening Social, participants may take advantage of several videos demonstrating how to make a variety of mixed drinks. The list of drinks and the ingredients/supplies needed are [available here](#). Participants may also find some additional entertainment spread around the Gather space. Additional activities are being planned for the Evening Social – stay tuned!