GatherTown instructions for NIRSEF Judges 2025

Link to Gather.Town <https://app.gather.town/app/LpvnlVGFYtedTuEP/NIRSEF2021>

\*There will not be a password required at the fair. If you click the link and are prompted for the password earlier than Saturday, it means we are working on the platform. We remove the password when it is free to look around.

LOGGING ON:

1. Click on link above. **This is the same link as for Saturday**
2. First, you can personalize your avatar. There aren’t many choices, so if you wish to personalize, it will take only a minute or two.
3. Type in the Name that you want to be seen by those in Gathertown, (ex. Tom, Dr. Smith, etc.). This is the name that the exhibitors, other judges and NIRSEF coordinators will see and address you by.
4. Follow on-screen instructions to enable your microphone and video.
5. Click button “Join Gathering.”
6. You will be taken to the Tutorial. There you will see your “avatar” person as well as a short tutorial on how to use Gather. **Use the arrow keys to move**, and you will be taken to the next page on the tutorial. If you already familiar with GatherTown, clicks skip the tutorial to be taken directly to the NIRSEF site. At the end of the Tutorial you will enter the site.
7. IMPORTANT: AT THE TOP OF THE SCREEN IN THE **“LOBBY”** IS AN **“INFORMATION DESK**.” It will be staffed with NIRSEF members during the entire Fair, so if you have a question, you can always come to the desk for answers.

**Notes about Gather.Town**

* Use your arrow keys (or WASD, if your computer does not have arrow keys) to move around. As you approach other avatars, you will see their video screen appear and as you get closer, you will be able to see and speak with that person. Conversely, as you walk away from an avatar, their video screen will go away and you will not be able to see or hear that person, unless you walk closer to them again. It works just as if you were physically in a large room; the closer you are to a person, the better you can communicate with them.
* Your Avatar: Each Avatar has a “dashboard” that is at the bottom of your screen. See the information below for greater details.
* NIRSEF will have a lobby and then 3 separate room for elementary, junior and senior divisions. Elementary projects will be number 1-90, Junior projects 200-290, and Senior projects will be 400-490. Note that this is a different numbering than has been used at NIRSEF in the past for those of you who have judged previously.
* All projects will have an easel/white sign to connect you with images of that student’s board. When you approach a project the easel/white sign should glow yellow. When it is glowing yellow, push x **on your keyboard** (you will also be prompted on your screen to push x if you’d like to see the information). When push x you will be connected to that student’s page with images of their science fair board, quad chart, and safety forms. It may open within gather town or on a separate web page. When you are finished reviewing the material, you can click the close x on the upper right corner. When judging, it may be helpful to have this material open while speaking with the student.
* During NIRSEF there will be a student or team of students in each booth. When you enter the colored circle a video and audio connection will be made. To make the window larger you can click on it. If another judge comes by while you are interacting with a student, another window will open. If you enter a booth and another judge is already interacting with the student you may wait and listen or leave the booth and come back at another time (similar to an in person fair) NOTE: if you do not want to interrupt another judge, you can look in the booth to see if there is another avatar in that booth already. If there is, that judge is already conversing with a student.

REMINDER: At NIRSEF there will be an information table that will be staffed by NIRSEF volunteers all day to answer your questions.

* Announcements will be made regarding the end of the judging as well as any other pertinent information. You will be able to hear those announcements even if you are in a private space.
* We would recommend only discussing student evaluations in the ZOOM meeting rather than Gather.town. The only private areas are student booths, and discussions in “public” areas could be overheard by students and other judges that are in the area.
* Once you have finished in Gather.town, you need to only log out of the Gather.town site.

**Bottom Screen Dashboard:**

Once you are in Gather.town, you will have a personal Dashboard at the bottom of the screen. The ones you will use are circled in Yellow. This dashboard will be at the bottom each “room.”

It will look like this:



 

Judging Notes:

* Judging will occur from 9am-12pm for Junior and Senior Projects and 1-3pm for Elementary projects.
* About 10 minutes prior to the beginning of the judging window, please go to your assigned Zoom room to meet the judges you will be working with. This information along with the projects you will be reviewing will be sent out before the science fair.
* After checking in with your fellow judges and creating a plan, you will head to gather.town to judge your projects before returning to your zoom room.
* All judging caucusing should occur in your assigned Zoom room. This information will be sent out the week of the science fair.
* Google forms will be used to complete your final results after caucusing.