

BioEM Town Visitors Guide

BioEM Town is built in “Gather Town”, an interactive virtual network platform. It can be accessed using the link here: <https://gather.town/app/8jo4aOLY2h41mDC8/BioEM%20Town%20Hall>
Please do not freely distribute this link. BioEM Town is only for registered users.

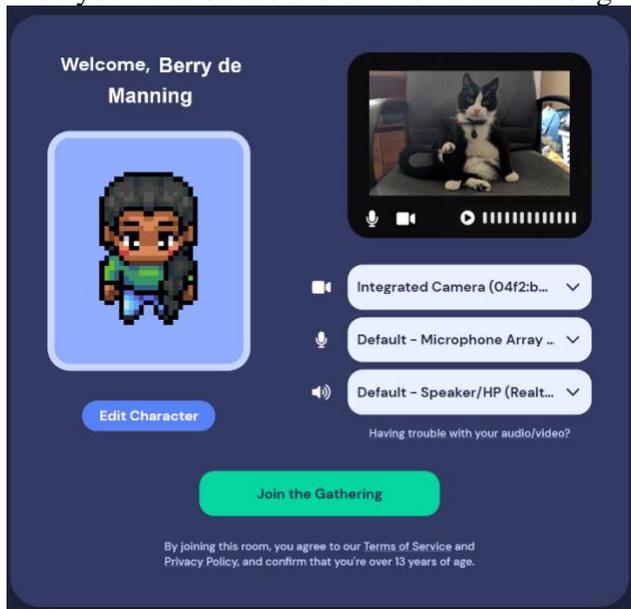
BioEM Town consists of a “BioEM Town Hall”, a “BioEM Town Square”, an “Auditorium” and three chat rooms:” Epon, “Spurs” and “Lowicryl”.

To visit BioEM Town, you need:

A desktop/laptop with a mic and webcam. iPad or cell phone are not supported.
A web browser (Chrome or Firefox recommended).
Headphones are strongly recommended to help prevent feedback.

How it works:

When you click on the BioEM Town link through your browser, you will first see a menu below:

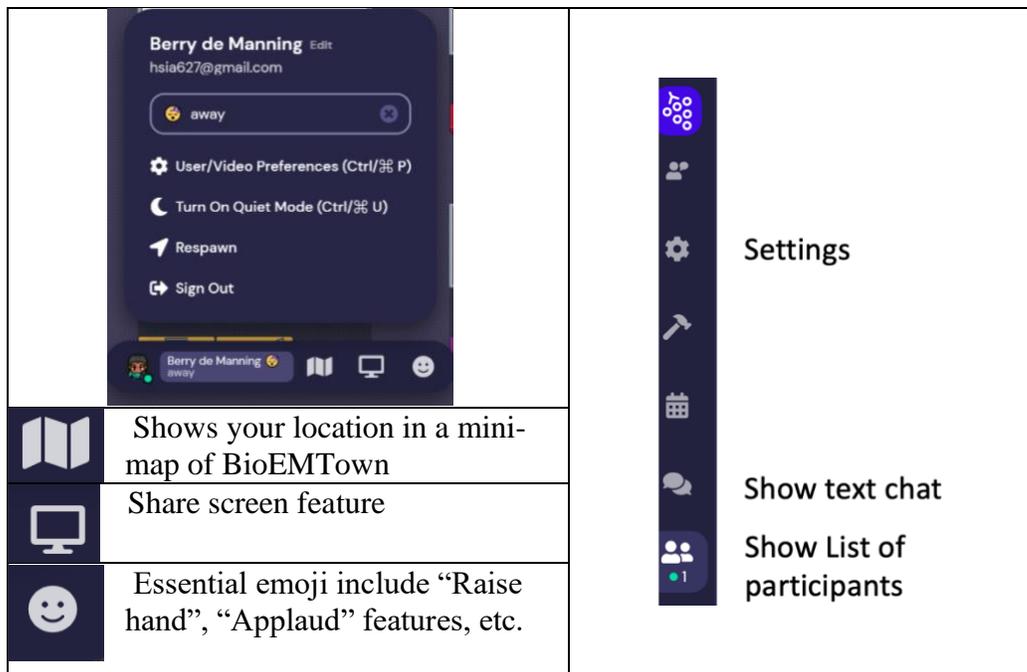


1. Edit Character by choose your name and avatar to represent yourself
We recommend attendees to use real name while attending BioEM Talk and interacting with our community members.
2. Choose webcam, audio, and video devices

Press “Join the Gathering”, to enter BioEM Town Hall

Control and navigation panels on your screen

- Once entering BioEM Town, you will see a status menu showing your avatar at the bottom of the screen and a vertical menu panel on the left side
- Click on the text window next to your avatar in the bottom of the screen will open the control panel. You can add emoji or text to show your mood or status.
- Click on the settings icon in the vertical menu panel to change your audio, video device or other navigation options.



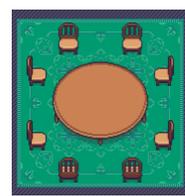
Stroll in BioEM Town,

- Move your avatar around using the “arrow keys” on your keyboard.
- Visit the “Welcome desk” to get the meeting program or other assistance.
- Meet some friends and chat in the “private space”

Private space is where people can carry on private video chat without interruption by passerby. Most of the private space in BioEM Town are outlined by area rugs (see examples below)

We specifically named a few private space such as “the Lounge”, “the round table”, “the Courtyard” and “the snack bar” so you can use them as rendezvous point with your friends.

Try to see if you can find these places in BioEM Town.



- Similar to walking in the street or hallway, as you get close to other avatars, your video will pop up and you will be able to say “Hi” or chat. These chats can be either one-on-one or small groups depending on how many people are around you.
- when your avatar moves closer to an interactable object, there will be a notification that shows up ‘**Press x to interact with -object-**’. This can range from informational flyers, videos, signup sheet, integrated Zoom meetings, and more!

Socialize in BioEM Town

- Find your friends by scrolling through  participants list on the left panel.
- “**Locate**” to find others.
- Once you find your friends, you can send individual chat messages, or “**Follow**” him/her in BioEM Town.

Status Messages

- You can set status messages for others to see in the Participants pane! To edit or set a status message, click on your name in the control panel at the center of the bottom of your screen. Text Statuses are displayed under each user's name in the Participants Tab.
- To add an emoji in status window, click and select emoji in the text window.



Not-So-Obvious Features: Here are some things you might find useful but aren't immediately obvious.

- There is a messaging feature that allows you to message people in four ways:
 - individually by clicking on their name in the participant panel,
 - locally to the people you are video chatting with,
 - room chat (must be requested) with all the people in the current room you are in,
 - globally to all the people in your map.
- There is a “locate” feature to find others by clicking their name in the participant panel.
- Interaction distance is also sometimes altered by designated private spaces. This allows conversations to only include people inside that space. We have set up
- Want to full screen someone else's video? Just click on their video.
- Talking to a group of people? Click the down arrows centered below the videos to shift into grid view.

Leaving BioEMTown:

Sign Out by clicking the 'sign out' button in the control panel, then close the Gather.Town tab or window

Technical difficulties:

- If you are lost, click on the “Respawn” button in the control panel will take you back to the BioEM Town Hall where the welcome desk is located.
- Refreshing the page will fix most things!
- If that doesn't work, try muting and unmuting your mic and camera in Gather.
- Check the security and privacy setting of your computer and browser, allow “Gather” to access camera and mic
- Additional troubleshooting at <https://gather.town/video-issues>
- For accessing BioEM Town using VPN
Because of the nature of the server infrastructure of virtual private network (VPN), Gather is unable to properly function on some kinds of VPNs, campus networks, or corporate networks. If you're in such a situation, you can try:
 - disabling your VPN
 - visiting your VPN provider's support website and trying different connection options
 - changing your connection to a different server or network if your VPN will allow you to do so
 - asking your network administrator to unblock Gather.To unblock gather.town on a personal or corporate firewall, please add these domains and ports as exceptions (or ask your administrator to do so):
Domains: *.gather.town
Ports: 80 and 443