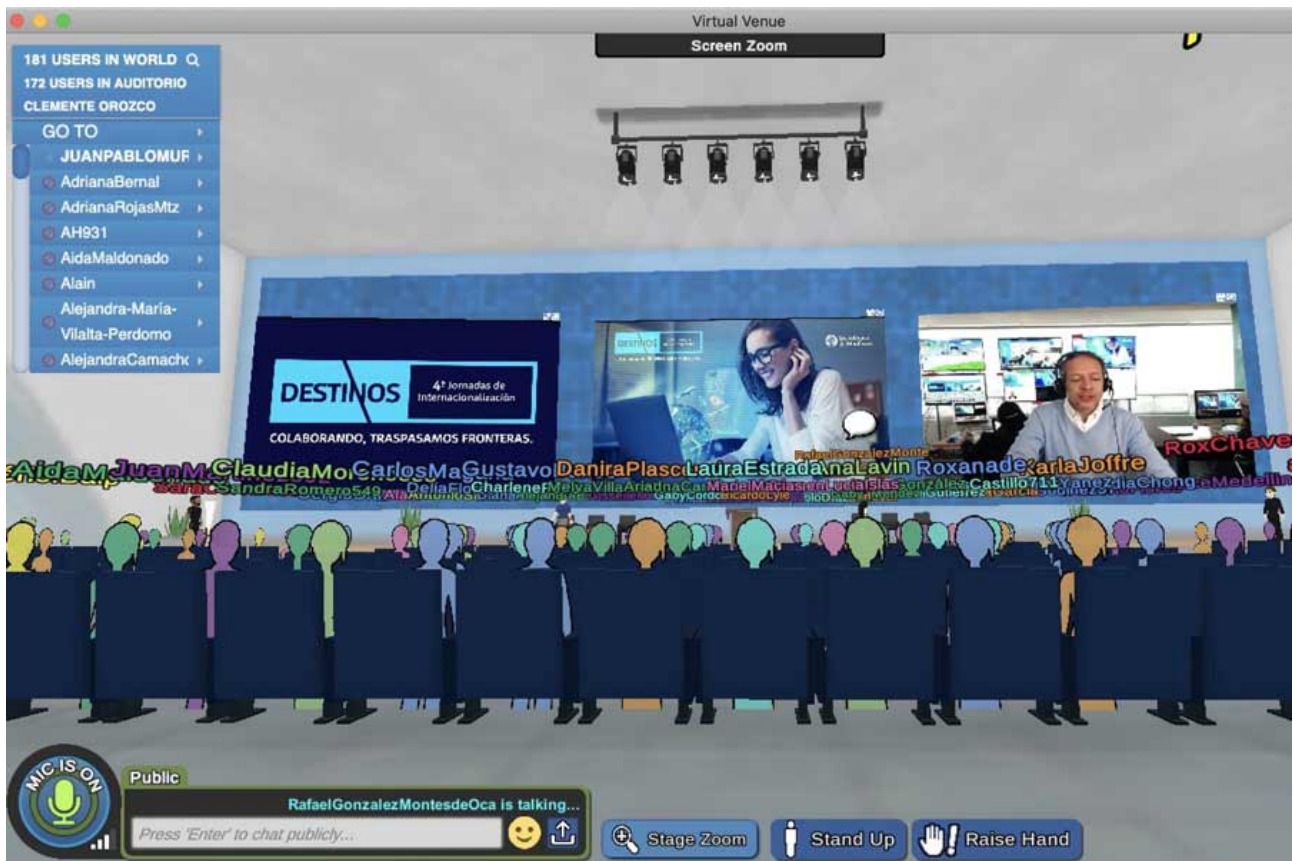


Tec employees and managers experienced a new way of training and working as a team in a **virtual reality** environment similar to those used in video games.

This happened at the **Internationalization Conference**, where members of staff from the Tec **Vice Rector's Office for Internationalization** used avatars to participate in exercises and conferences.

**Patricia Montaña**, Director of the Tec's [Internationalization Office](#), said that the meeting had been moved to a **virtual environment** due to the lockdown as a result of the pandemic.

*"We wanted to do something different and, with a little **creativity**, we were able to communicate and go beyond just having a chat or a video conference on Zoom,"* the director told **CONECTA**.



The **Internationalization Conference** is held annually to reinforce **internal communication** and **bonding** between those in charge of the internationalization of the Tec.

The fourth event, called “**Crossing Borders through Collaboration**”, took place on October 1 and 2 for 3 hours each day. It was attended by about 200 collaborators.

Also taking part were executives such as **Juan Pablo Murra**, Rector of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies at the Tec, and **Hernán García**, Vice President of Talent and Experience at the Tec.

The event -the first of its kind at the Tec- brought together collaborators from the Vice Rector’s Office who work in Mexico with those in countries such as the **United Kingdom, Denmark, Switzerland, the United States, Canada, Australia, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, and Peru.**

## Training and interacting in a virtual world

The **high school, undergraduate and graduate** collaborators met on a virtual island, with a conference center, beach, sports facilities, boat rides, and even a lighthouse that they could climb using their avatars.

*“You enter the platform as an interactive **avatar** and take part in the conferences. You can raise your hand, take the microphone, and ask a question”,* explained Montaña.

In addition to training and focusing on issues such as teamwork in the **new normal**, she said that the collaborators participated in virtual activities such as a bingo, soccer, and even a concert.

*“The intention is to **grow as professionals**, that’s why we’ve been talking about service and analyzing success stories; but it’s also been an opportunity to free ourselves from the pressure we’re feeling as a result of the pandemic.*

*“Being in a **Zoom** conference for five hours is definitely something you can do, but it becomes very monotonous. It lacks the **playful element** of relaxing, connecting with people, and having a reason to smile,”* she shared.

The director said that these types of meetings seek to generate a **better working environment** which helps collaborators to have a **positive attitude** when dealing with students and parents.



## Technology for internationalization

Montaño highlighted the use of **technology** in programs such as **Global Classroom** and **Global Week**, in which Tec students interact from home with students and teachers from other parts of the world.

*“**Technology and methodology** are very important things: technology in the sense that we are making use of something that has been used by our students for many years.*

*“And methodology because we couldn’t do this if we didn’t have the support of the **Digital Education** department and its critical mass of academics and staff who know how to work online,” she explained.*

The **Global Classroom** program includes 60 groups and 53 participating universities. **Global Week** also worked with around 10 groups as part of the Global Vision Tec Week.

They are also seeking to implement the **Global Challenge**, a project allowing students to work remotely on solving global challenges which will start up in future semesters.

*“These formats are here to stay with or without a pandemic. We’re going to continue working on this **internationalization from home** format.*

*“We know that even if situations improve and **mobility** returns, there will always be a Tec population that can take advantage of them,” she concluded.*

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