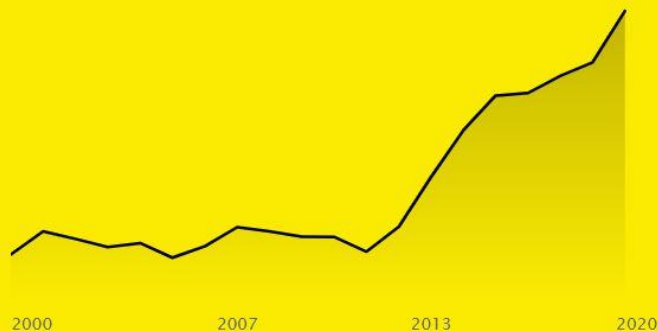# 155% increase in displaced people worldwide since 2012

*Refugees In 2020*

## 80 MILLION
**Forcibly displaced people worldwide**

While a full picture is yet to be established, UNHCR estimates that global forced displacement has surpassed 80 million at mid-2020.

2000    2007    2013    2020

## 39%
### hosted in five countries

| Country | Refugees |
|---------|----------|
| Turkey | 3.6 million |
| Colombia | 1.8 million |
| Pakistan | 1.4 million |
| Uganda | 1.4 million |
| Germany | 1.1 million |

(UNHCR, 2020)

# Connecting Über den Tellerrand Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic:
# A Technology Based Approach

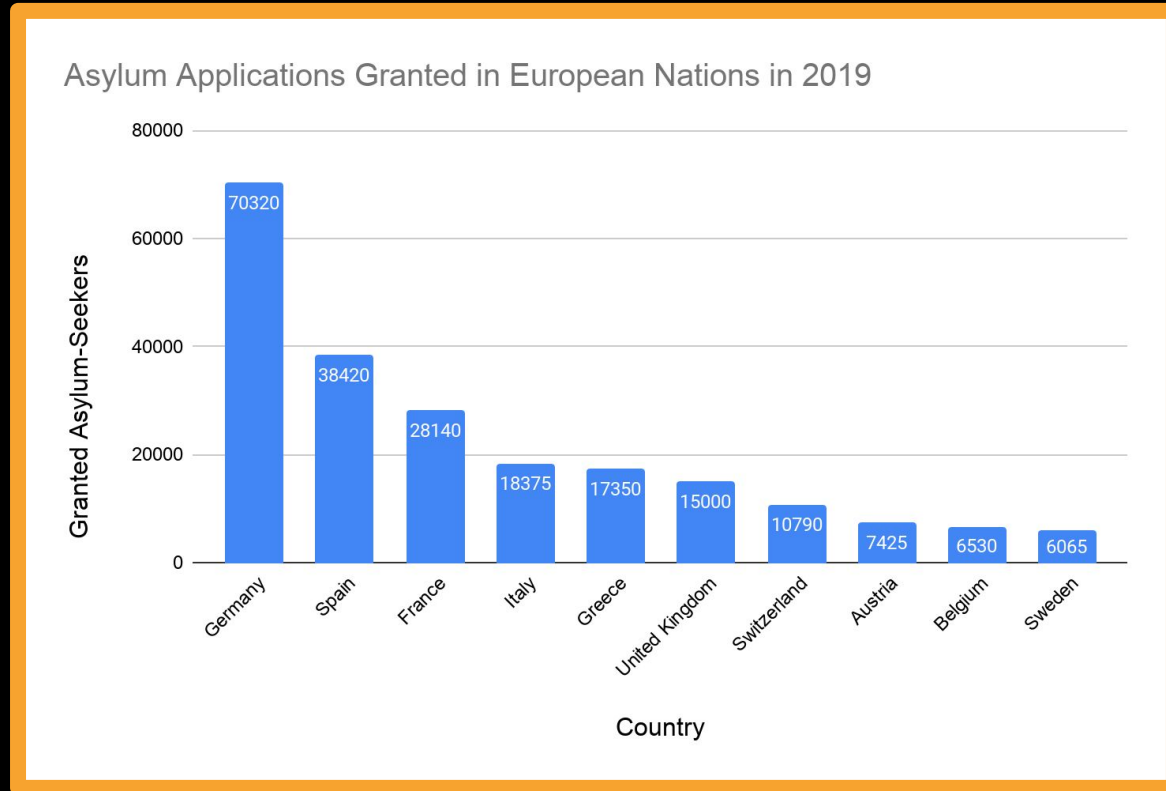**Joe Calcasola, Tony Eid, Kaitlin Mason, and Kwesi Sakyi**

# In 2019, Germany was the most hospitable EU nation for asylum applicants



Asylum Applications Granted in European Nations in 2019

# 100 German NGOs emerged between 2013-2016 to help with the refugee crisis



**Support For Refugees Highest In Western Europe**

"Would you oppose/support taking in refugees fleeing violence and war?" (%)
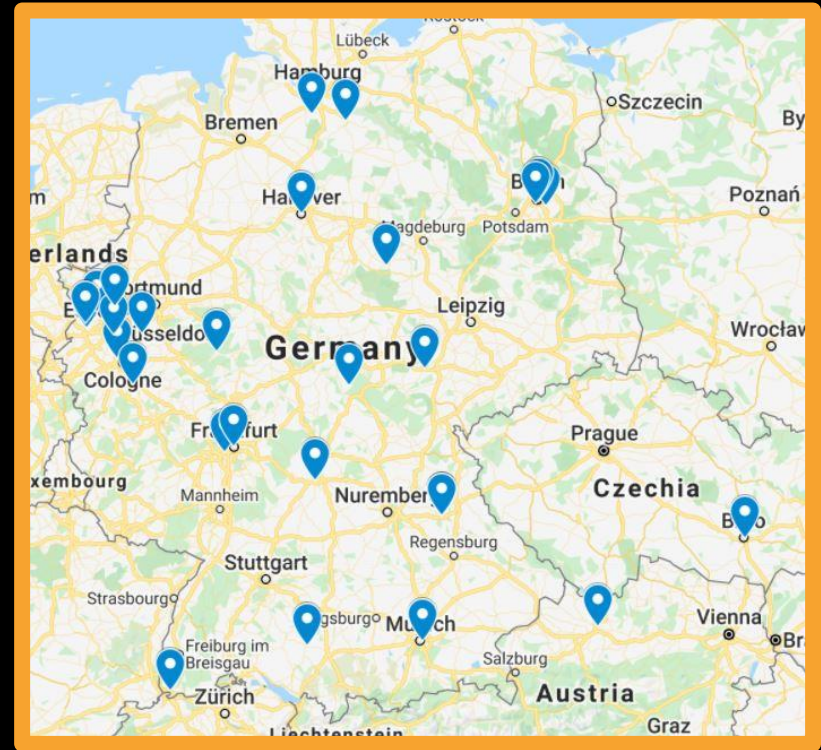
Oppose ■   Support ■

| Country | Oppose | Support |
|---|---|---|
| Spain | 13% | 86% |
| Germany | 16% | 82% |
| Sweden | 16% | 81% |
| France | 20% | 79% |
| United Kingdom | 22% | 74% |
| Australia | 23% | 72% |
| Japan | 27% | 66% |
| United States | 29% | 66% |
| Italy | 32% | 56% |
| Russia | 47% | 41% |
| South Africa | 50% | 48% |
| Hungary | 54% | 32% |
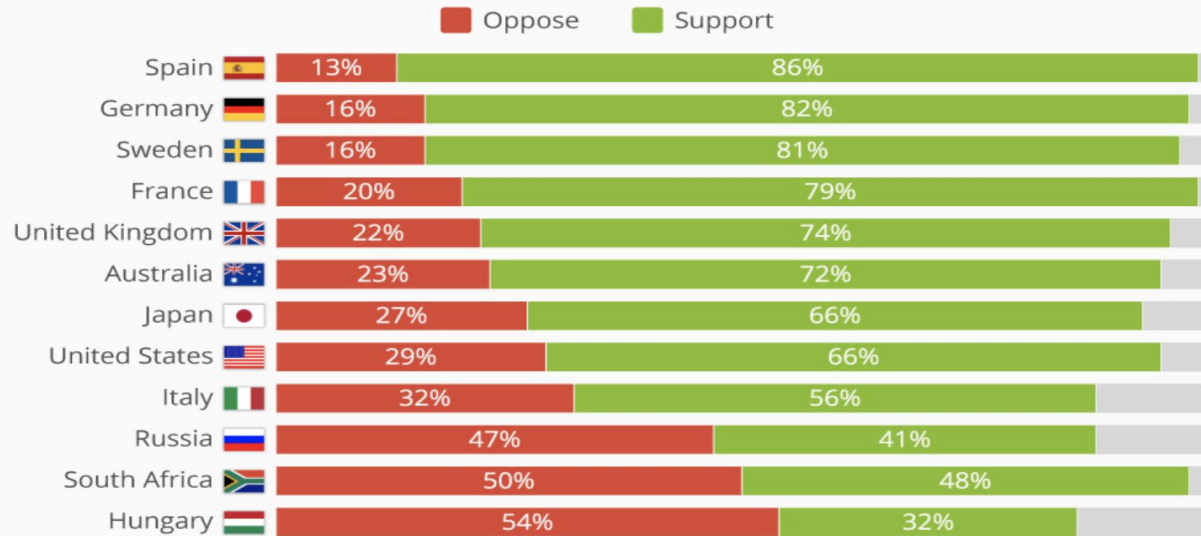
@StatistaCharts   Source: Pew Research Center

statista

# Since 2013, Über den Tellerrand has grown to 40 satellites



Staff
*Internal Communications*

Satellites
*Sustainable Growth*

Über den Tellerrand Network

Volunteers and Participants
*Nurturing Community*

# Mission Statement

This project sought to enhance Über den Tellerrand's *internal communication* and *engagement techniques* during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Objectives

## Identify

Identify **best practices** in network communication within organizations similar to Über den Tellerrand

## Evaluate

Evaluate the **current status** of the organization and how it has adapted to the pandemic
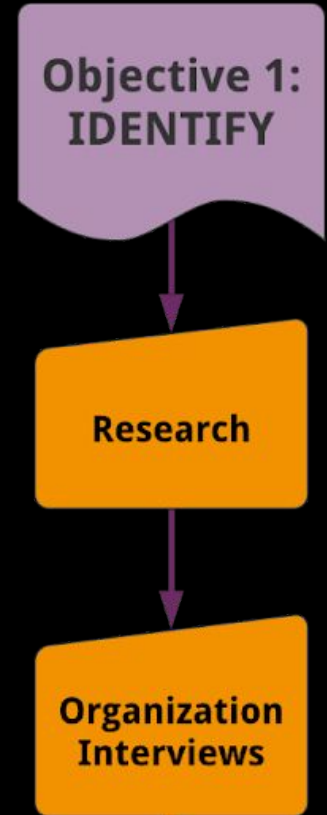
## Design

Design a strategy for **communication**, **networking**, and **community engagement** for Über den Tellerrand

# Identifying Best Practices in Communication

- Researched **13 organizations** centered around the different components of Über den Tellerrand events such as **language** and **refugee resources**

- Interviewed **3 organizations** to identify their best practices in communication during the pandemic in terms of:

  1. Online Platforms
  2. Written Guidelines

- Analyzed responses through inductive coding to develop **key themes**

**GOETHE INSTITUT**

**ACE**

Angels-Net Foundation Inc.

**Objective 1: IDENTIFY**

**Research**

**Organization Interviews**

# Takeaways from Interviews

- Organizations are finding new ways to promote **interpersonal connection** online

- **Adaptability** creates an atmosphere for implementation of new ideas

- **Exciting others** and explaining the **need for change** eases the transition to **new strategies**

- Developing a **clear purpose** behind each communication platform provides **clarity**

# Platforms researched

**Über den Tellerrand's Current Platforms:**

- Slack
- WhatsApp
- Zoom
- Trello/Miro

**Other Organization's Platforms:**

- Remo ⟶ Kumospace

# Objectives

| Identify | Evaluate | Design |
|----------|----------|--------|

Identify **best practices** in network communication within organizations similar to Über den Tellerrand

Evaluate the **current status** of the organization and how it has adapted to the pandemic

Design a strategy for **communication**, **networking**, and **community engagement** for Über den Tellerrand

# Evaluating Über den Tellerrand's Current Status

🏵 Used survey data to understand the current status of the organization

🏵 Used focus groups to better understand **communication and engagement challenges** across the satellite network

🏵 Questions were geared to help us understand the challenges as a result of the pandemic

**Objective 2: EVALUATE**

Über den Tellerrand Questionnaire

Staff Focus Group

Satellite Focus Group

# Analyzing Satellite Data 2019-2020

## COVID-19 complicated communication and networking

- Volunteering and participation **decrease**
- Some smaller satellites **stopped** having events
- Larger satellites **reduced** the number of events hosted

# Satellites found success with events in 2020

## Analyzing Satellite Data 2019-2020

### Number of Events

**Hamburg**

Events Hosted 2019: **32**

Events Hosted 2020: **57**

**Frankfurt**

Events Hosted 2019: **42**

Events Hosted 2020: **52**

### In Person Events

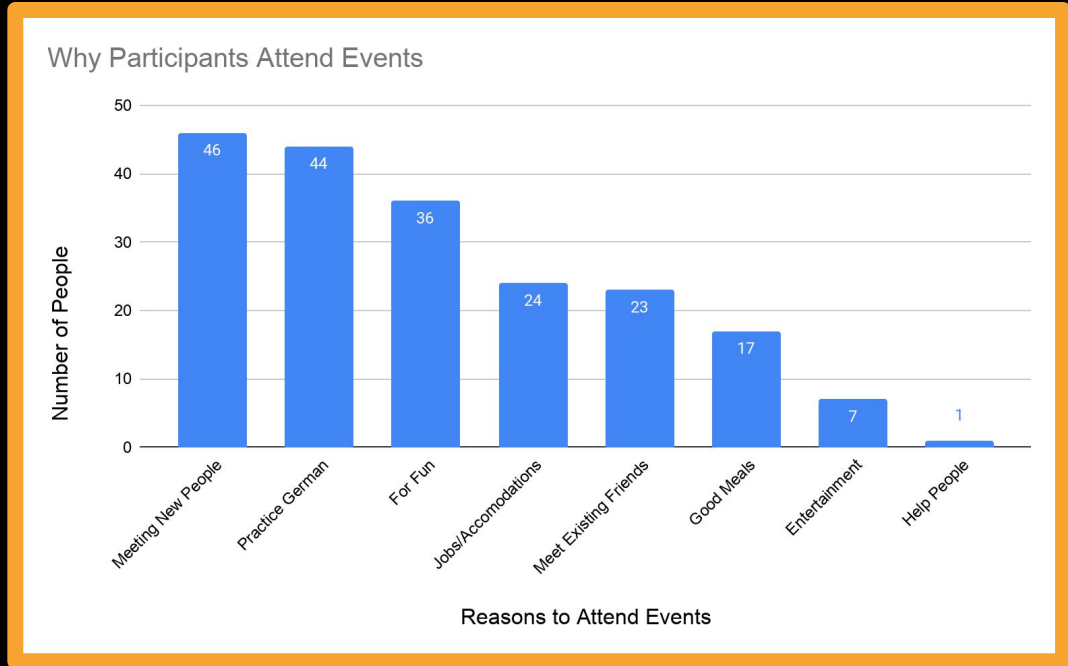**Munich**

Participants 2019: **30**

Participants 2020: **80**

**Linz**

Participants 2019: **27**

Participants 2020: **45**

# Analyzing Participant Data

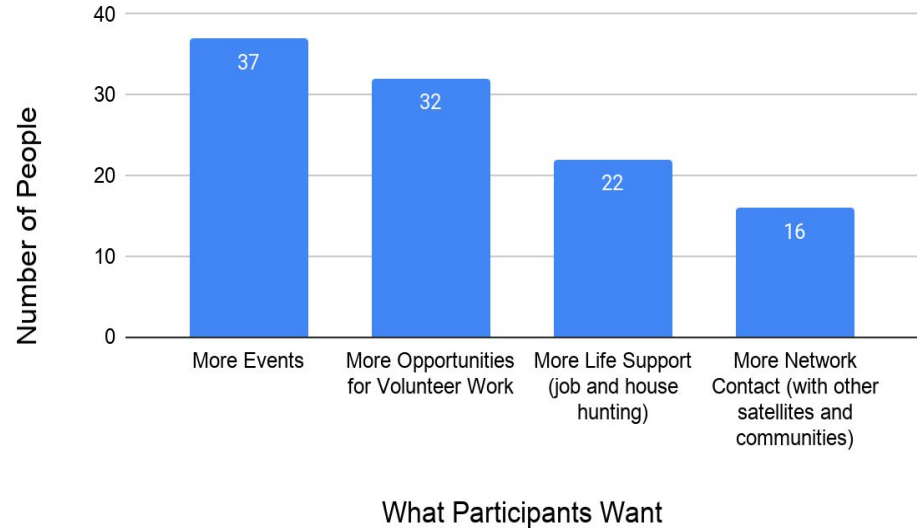**Participants reflect the interpersonal nature of Über den Tellerrand**



Why Participants Attend Events

# Analyzing Participant Data

**Participants want more interpersonal-styled events**



What Participants Want from Über den Tellerrand

Most popular events: Discussion Night, Walk Buddy Program, Cooking, Language Cafe

# Analyzing Participant Data

**Potential for growth in social media practices**
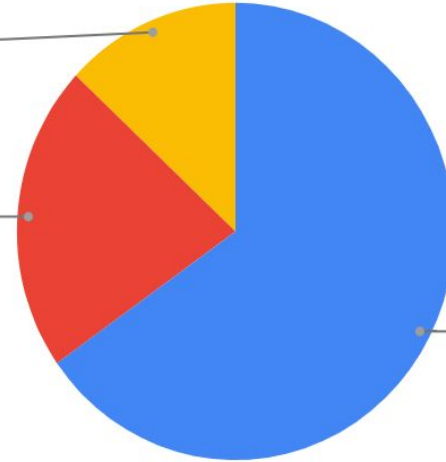


How Participants Heard About Über den Tellerrand

Newspaper 13.0%
Social Media 21.7%
Friend Referral 65.2%

# Takeaways from focus groups

- There has been a **decrease in one-on-one** and **spontaneous** communication

- A sense of **being overwhelmed** developed due to the use of numerous online platforms

- There have been **motivational challenges**

- **Language challenges** are present

- Some satellites developed **strong communication** and **networking techniques**

# Objectives

**Identify** ➤ **Evaluate** ➤ **Design**

Identify **best practices** in network communication within organizations similar to Über den Tellerrand

Evaluate the **current status** of the organization and how it has adapted to the pandemic

Design a strategy for **communication**, **networking**, and **community engagement** for Über den Tellerrand

# Designing Communication Guidelines

- ACE & Goethe-Institut interviews indicated **communication guidelines** were a favorable approach

- Constructed communication guideline document **for staff**

- Assessed **feasibility** of the communication guidelines

- **Refined** the communication guidelines

**Objective 3: DESIGN**

Assess Results

Construct Communication Framework

Framework Assessment and Refinement
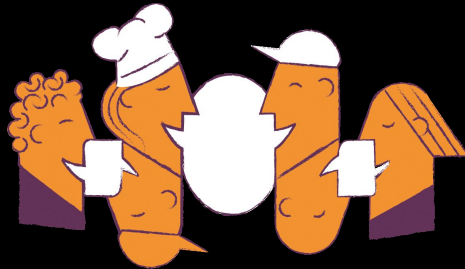
# Communication Guidelines Document

## ÜBERDENTELLERRAND

### Communication
### Practices & Suggestions
### Über den Tellerrand

A comprehensive guide to communication, networking, and community outreach across satellites.

## ÜBERDENTELLERRAND

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

This document is structured by topic to offer **guidance** and **suggestions** regarding communication methods and platforms used by Über den Tellerrand

2

# 3 Key Ingredients of Communication

**Fostering One-on-One Connections**

Communication strategies are used to foster **spontaneous** and **one-on-one communication.**

**Motivating Others to Collaborate**

Communication strategies create **opportunities**, **relationships**, and **environments** that make individuals want to collaborate across all satellites.

**Creating Spaces for Feedback**

Spaces are created for individuals to express **anonymous feedback** to refine our communication strategies and allow people from all walks of life to be heard.

FOSTERING ONE-ON-ONE CONNECTIONS

MOTIVATING OTHERS TO COLLABORATE

CREATING SPACES FOR FEEDBACK

# Snippets from the Communication Guidelines

## ÜBERDENTELLERRAND

### FEATURES OF ONLINE PLATFORMS

**Slack**

**Finding Information**

- ❏ **Pinning** important messages that staff refer back to such as announcements, meetings, etc. is used to easily find information.
  - ❏ Staff can also **save** messages they may need to locate in the future.
- ❏ **Starring** channels that you regularly use to bring them to the top of the channels section on the sidebar.
- ❏ Use the "**Remind me about this**" feature for individual messages you want to go back to in the future. This feature is found on the upper right-hand side of a message under "More actions." There are 6 options including 20 minutes, 1 hour, 3 hours, tomorrow, next week, and custom where you can set a different amount of time.
- ❏ Enable the "**All unreads**" sidebar setting by going to "Preferences" and then "Sidebar." You will be able to see all unread messages here from all channels. This setting minimizes time spent searching for messages.

## ÜBERDENTELLERRAND

### COMMUNICATION WITH VOLUNTEERS/SAFIRS

#### VOLUNTEERS

Über den Tellerrand's volunteers create spaces to get to know people with and without refugee experience. Our volunteers support us by organizing and creating new event activities. They play a key role in promoting an interpersonal atmosphere and enabling encounters on an equal footing.

Communication with the volunteers takes place via **WhatsApp**, **Email**, **Zoom**, and **Kumospace**.

#### MESSAGES

WhatsApp is used on a day-to-day basis and email is used on an as-needed basis.

# Objectives overview

**Objective 1: IDENTIFY**
- Research
- Organization Interviews

**Objective 2: EVALUATE**
- Über den Tellerrand Questionnaires
- Staff Focus Group
- Satellite Focus Group

**Objective 3: DESIGN**
- Assess Results
- Construct Communication Framework
- Framework Assessment and Refinement
  - Recommendations
  - Deliverables
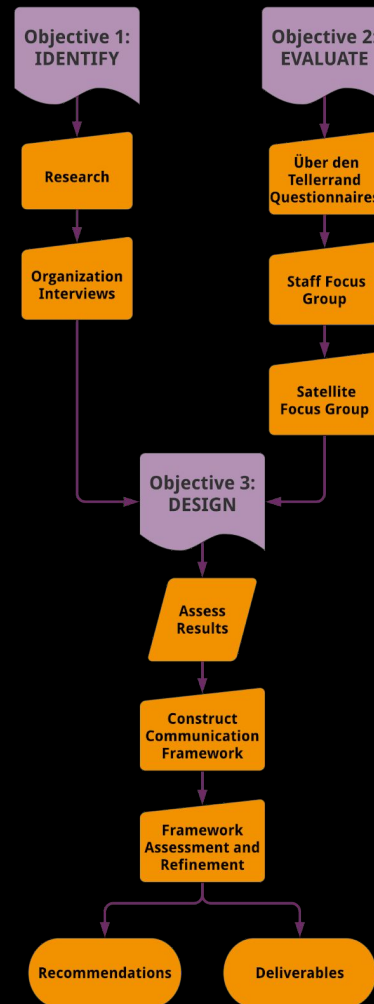
# Recommendations

## Enhancing Communication Between Staff

- Adopt Kumospace to foster **spontaneous, one-on-one connections**

- Create a space for virtual coffee breaks in **Kumospace** ☕

- Implement the **communication guidelines**

- Use emojis to overcome **language barriers** 😊

# Connecting Satellites More Frequently

## Recommendations

- Adopt **Miro** as a **visual planning tool** across all satellites

- **Advertise reasons** to attend the monthly meeting

- Encourage staff members and volunteers to reach out and **check-in** on someone

- Encourage more frequent **co-hosted events** between satellites

- Encourage **frequent check-ins** with the Berlin team

- Create spaces for more regular **feedback**

# Recommendations

## Enhancing Event Participation

- Explore more opportunities for **in-person events** (depending on COVID-19 restrictions)
- Consider **new events** such as
  - Discussion Night
  - Walk Buddy Program
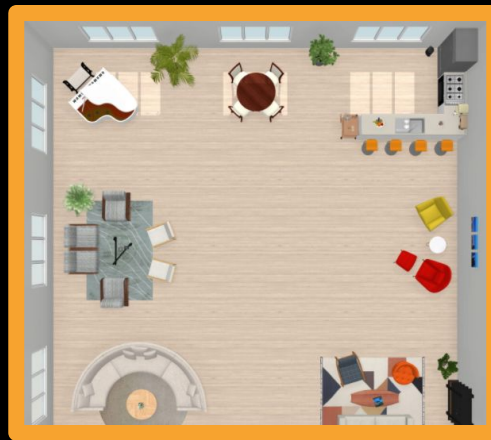- Reassess social media practices

# Kumospace

- Ensures connecting **online feels as natural as in-person**
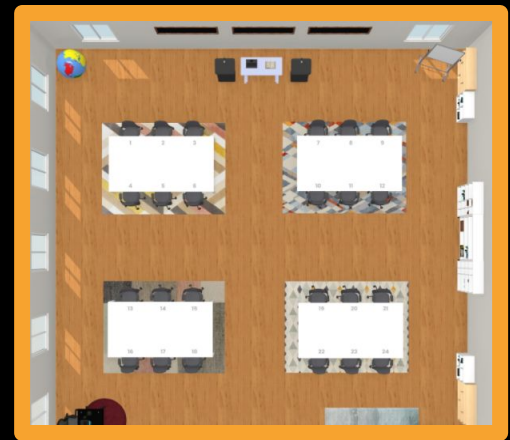
- Offers a variety of room to fit the mood or interaction

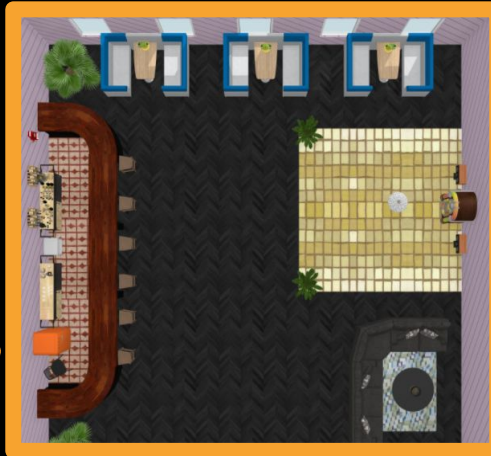- Move around virtual room to **interact and network**

- Establish better **spontaneous** and **one-on-one communication**
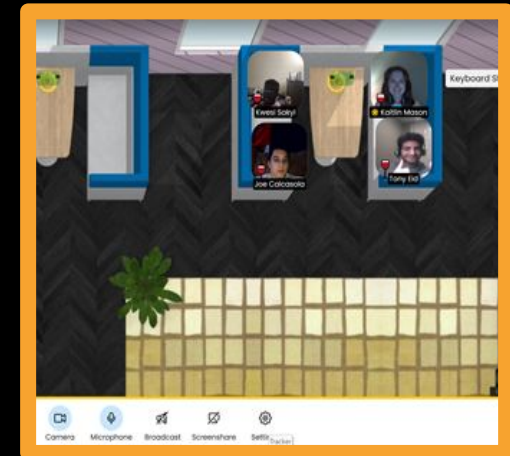


Living Room



Classroom



Diner



Testing Phase

30

# Visual Representation of Spontaneous and One-on-One Communication in Kumospace



**Interpersonal** spatial
conversations
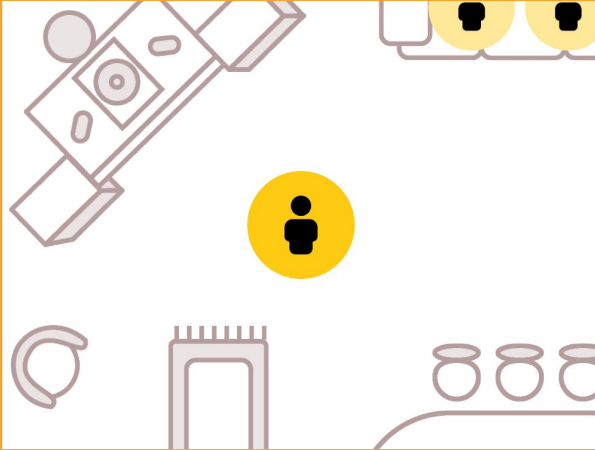
**Freely** move
around the space

Set the **best environment**
for your meeting

# Our Team
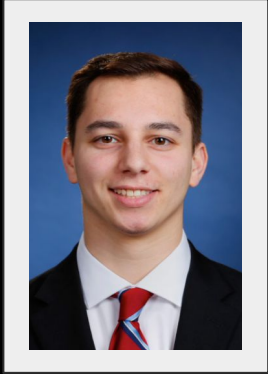
**Joe Calcasola**
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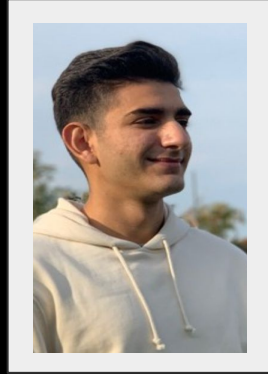
**Tony Eid**
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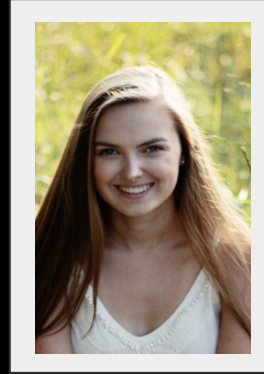
**Kaitlin Mason**
**Physics**
**WPI Class of 2022**
kmason@wpi.edu
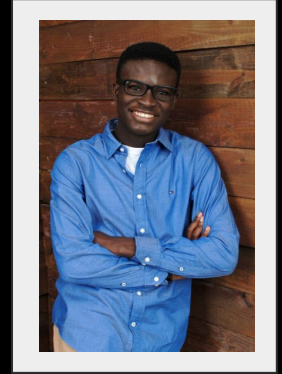
**Kwesi Sakyi**
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Dr. Fabio Carrera
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## Sponsored By

Über den Tellerrand

# Questions?

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