

Romina Carrasco

Telephone: 0413 976 433

Email: rcarrasco@student.unimelb.edu.au

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/romina-carrasco-zuffi/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/romina-carrasco-zuffi/)

Career Highlights

- 7 years of experience teaching and coordinating an Interactivity and New Media Bachelor degree in the number 1 University in Ecuador.
- 8 peer-reviewed publications, the majority of which appear in ACM conferences of Human-Computer Interaction.
- Experience collaborating in the design and development of a Social V.R. Application targeted for older adults. The project featured in more than 10 media publications.
- Experience conducting participatory design workshops, focus groups, interviews with groups of older adults over 18 months.
- Redesigned the academic curriculum of the Bachelor of New Media from a service-oriented focus to research and a creative program.

Education

2015 Melbourne University, Melbourne-Australia, PhD Candidate (2015 – present)

Thesis: Older Adults Designing Avatars for Self-expression

Supervisors: Prof. Frank Vetere, Dr Jenny Waycott, and Dr Steven Baker

- Investigating the design of virtual avatars (full body representations of the user) among older adults over 65 years old. This research seeks to understand the avatar's designs made by older adults in relation to the ageing body; and how the use of these self-representations impact older adults' experience when socialising online.
- Participated as part of a multidisciplinary team of researchers in the project Ageing and Avatars of the University of Melbourne. This project is fund by an ARC Discovery Grant and investigates how avatars and virtual reality can be used to support social participation among older adults.
- Co-designed and developed a Social Virtual Reality application targeted for older adults. This investigation resulted in several publications that I have co-authored (2 accepted and 2 forthcoming) and has been featured by more than ten online media as illustrated by the article Ageing In A Virtual World, which has received 1,868 views.

2006 Universidad Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona – Spain, Master Degree on Digital Arts,

Award: Best Final Project, GPA: 9.9/10 (ranked 1 out of 32 students)

- As part of my master in Digital Arts, I designed and developed an interactive, educational game ("Equilibroscopio") to teach environmental equilibrium among children 9-11 years old. The project was chosen as the best graduation project of the 2006 Master of Digital Arts.

1999 Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Quito - Ecuador, Bachelor in Arts Visual Communication,

Magma Cum Laudem, GPA 3.75/4

- As the final project of my bachelor, I was part of the team of animators of the first animated (3d) short film done in Ecuador, the project received international awards: 1st place Student Category in "IMAGINA" (Mexico) and 1st place (script) at "Rosario" (Argentina) festivals.

Work Experience

2019 The University of Melbourne, Research Assistant, Project: Av@tar: Enabling Disability to become Ability, in collaboration with House with No Steps and The Tipping Foundation, Melbourne – Australia (2018-2019).

- Ongoing participation in workshops presenting and discussing findings of research on avatars, older adults and social virtual reality in sense-making sessions with disability specialists.

- 2018 The University of Melbourne, Undergraduate Teacher Assistant (marking),** Evaluating the User Experience (INFO90004), Mar-Jun 2018, Melbourne – Australia.
- 2017 The University of Melbourne, Research Assistant,** Project: Active-VR for Engaging Older Adults with Dementia in Residential Aged Care, in collaboration with BlueCross Australia, Oct-Dec 2017, Melbourne – Australia.
- Explored virtual reality technologies with older adults residents and staff of an aged care facility. I was in charge of assisting the sessions in virtual reality and conducting semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. This project resulted in two publications (accepted and forthcoming).
- 2015 Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Interactivity and Multimedia Coordinator (2008-2015), Environmental Communication Coordinator (2010-2014),** Quito–Ecuador.
- As a coordinator (similar to being a Chair) of both B.A. programs, I was responsible for: curricular planning, course scheduling, accreditation reports for local institutions, the hiring of faculty, requests of hardware, software, and infrastructure.
 - Supervised eleven graduation projects for undergraduate students, taught core courses of the program, and was the mentor of students enrolled in both programs.
 - Redesigned the curriculum of the B.A. of Interactivity and Multimedia from a service-oriented focus to research and a creative program.
 - Designed and participated in interdisciplinary community-related projects, research projects, and creative works that received coverage from the local media.

Awards, Scholarships and Grants

- 2018 Best poster award at the Computer Information Systems - Doctoral Colloquium, University of Melbourne:** Older Adults Designing Portrait and Cartoon Avatars for Self-expression.
- 2017 ACM Travel Scholarship 2017,** Selected to participate CHI 2017 Doctoral Consortium
- 2016 PhD Top-Up Scholarship, Microsoft Research Centre for Social Natural Use Interfaces (2016-2018).**
- 2016 Finalist Google Anita Borg Memorial Scholar, Asia-Pacific.**
- 2015 Melbourne International Engagement Awards and Melbourne International Fee Remission Scholarship,** The University of Melbourne, (2016-2019)
- 2014 Best Project Award at COCOA Awards: Universidad San Francisco de Quito: Earth Hour (2014) – Galapagos.**
- Directed a group of 40 students of Interactive Design, Digital Animation, and Environmental Communication to design interactive games, animations and lobby activities to eliminate the use of plastic bags.
 - This project was done in collaboration with the WWF Ecuador and as a result of this project, the Ecuadorian government published an official resolution to restrict the use of plastic bags from the Galapagos Islands.
- 2012 Best Pedagogical Strategy on teaching digital arts, IBEC (International Business E Corporation) Awards 2012**
- 2012 Government Grant in collaboration with the Interactive Science Museum of Quito (MIC):** Applying User-Centred
- Lead the research, design, and development of 12 interactive educational digital games on physics for children 9-12 years old of the city of Quito.
 - Implemented a user-centred design during the development of the games involving a total of 142 children.
 - Presented the project at several local symposiums about education, games and new media.
- 2010 Government Grant in collaboration with Environmental Office of the City:** Development of an Environmental Interactive Educational Website of the City of Quito, , Quito – Ecuador, 2010-2014
- Directed a team of designers, programmers and teachers in the creation of Quitoambiente.com, an interactive educational website that motivates students to contribute to the conservation of Ecuador’s capital city (Quito).

Other Experiences

- 2019 Associate Committee of Late Break Work at CHI (Conference of Human-Computer Interaction).
- 2019 Guest Lecturer INFO30004 Usability Engineering, The University of Melbourne (2018, 2019)
- 2018 Committee Member of the Australian Conference on Human-Computer-Interaction (OzCHI), Committee Member for the Student Design Challenge of the conference, (2016, 2018).
- 2017 Coordinator of the Seminars of the Interaction Design Lab, Melbourne University (2016-2017)
- 2017 Academic advisor of a Master student in Information Systems at Melbourne University.
- 2017 Editorial Committee “post[s] 2017” Journal of the School of Communication and Contemporary Arts of USFQ, Quito-Ecuador.
- 2015 Reviewer OzCHI 2015-2019, CHI 2018-2019, CSCW 2018, CHI PLAY 2018.
- 2015 Student Volunteer, OzCHI 2015.
- 2014 Founder and General Chair “Vértice”: New Media Conference, Quito – Ecuador, (2012-2014).

Presentations

- 2014 Partnership for Academic Leadership (PALS) on Sustainability Summit, I participated representing my university (the only Latin-American university at the summit), New York – USA
- 2014 Campus Party 2012-2014, I have been invited several times to talk about my experience in interactivity and game design in the major event of interactive media of the city.
- 2013 LASA (Association of Latin-American Studies) Congress, Ecuador 2013, presentation of the paper Learning physics with interactive games at the Interactive Science Museum of Quito, Quito – Ecuador.
- 2012 Education in the XXI century, Latin American International Summit organised by Telefonica, Quito – Ecuador.

Publications

Long Papers

- 2019 Baker, S. Waycott, J. Carrasco, R. Thuong, H. & Vetere, F., **Exploring the Design of Social V.R. Experiences with Older Adults**. *Accepted in Proceedings of the 2019 Conference on Designing Interactive Systems - DIS '19*. (forthcoming). ACM.
- 2018 Carrasco, R., Waycott, J. Baker, S. & Vetere, F., **Designing the Lost Self : Older Adults Self-representations in Online Games**. *Accepted in Proceedings of the 2018 Conference on Designing Interactive Systems - DIS '18*. (pp. 441-452). ACM. [DOI:[10.1145/3196709.3196773](https://doi.org/10.1145/3196709.3196773)] (acceptance rate ~23%)
- 2017 Carrasco, R., Baker, S., Waycott, J. & Vetere, F., **Negotiating Stereotypes of Older Adults through Avatars**. In *Proceedings of the 29th Australian Conference on Computer-Human Interaction (OzCHI 2017)*, 28 Nov – 1 Dec, Brisbane, Australia. [DOI: [10.1145/3152771.3152795](https://doi.org/10.1145/3152771.3152795)]
- 2014 Condo I., Carrasco R. “RunaTech: Suit technology for blind user” *Electronic Journal Publication of Free Knowledge (CLIC) Mérida – Venezuela*, ISSN: 2244-7423 (July 2014), p. 39-52.
- 2013 Carrasco R. “Applying User-Centered Design for Interactive Educational Games Museum”, 1st edition of POST [s], *Academic Journal of the College of Communication and Contemporary Arts*, Quito- Ecuador (August 2015) p. 58-86, ISSN: [1390-9797](https://doi.org/10.1145/1390-9797)

Short Papers

- 2018 Cavenett, W., Baker, S., Waycott, J., Carrasco, R., Robertson, E., Vetere, F., & Hampson, R., **Deploying new technology in residential aged care: staff members' perspectives**. In *Proceedings of the 30th Australian Conference on Computer-Human Interaction* (pp. 200-204). ACM. [DOI: [10.1145/3292147.3292214](https://doi.org/10.1145/3292147.3292214)]
- 2017 Puri, A., Baker, S., Hoang, T. & Carrasco, R., **To be (Me) or Not to be? Photorealistic Avatars and Older Adults**. In *Proceedings of the 29th Australian Conference on Computer-Human Interaction (OzCHI 2017)*, 28 Nov – 1 Dec, Brisbane, Australia. [DOI: [10.1145/3152771.3156166](https://doi.org/10.1145/3152771.3156166)]

Extended Abstracts

- 2018 Carrasco, R., Older Adults Designing Avatars for Socializing.** *Accepted in Proceedings of the 2018 Conference on Designing Interactive Systems - DIS '18.* ACM. (pp. 379-382). [DOI: [10.1145/3197391.3205387](https://doi.org/10.1145/3197391.3205387)]
- 2017 Carrasco, R. (2017) Designing Virtual Avatars to Empower Social Participation among Older Adults.** In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems.* Denver, USA. [DOI: [10.1145/3027063.3027133](https://doi.org/10.1145/3027063.3027133)]
- 2016 Carrasco, R. Designing Avatars to Promote Social Engagement for Older Adults.** In *Proceedings of The University of the 2016 Melbourne Computer Information Systems Doctoral Colloquium (p.57).* Melbourne, Australia. [[CIS DC Proceedings 2016](#)]

Referees

Dr Jenny Waycott,

Senior Lecturer and ARC Future Fellow
School of Computing and Information Systems
The University of Melbourne,
PhD Supervisor,
Telephone: +61 3 8344 8964,
Email Address: jwaycott@unimelb.edu.au

Prof. Hugo Burgos

Dean of the Graduate School
Universidad San Francisco de Quito,
Former employer,
Telephone: +593 2297 1700, ext. 1787
Email Address: hburgos@usfq.edu.ec

Prof. Frank Vetere

Director of the Interaction Design Lab
School of Computing and Information Systems
The University of Melbourne, PhD Supervisor,
Telephone: +61 3 83441496,
Email Address: f.vetere@unimelb.edu.au