

International students study Russian as part of the International Polytechnic Winter School

The online format was a challenge for the coordinators, teachers, and participants of the Russian Language and Culture program at the [International Polytechnic Winter School](#) 2021. For many years, the educational module included such important components as communication with native speakers in real-life situations, visits to historical sites and places of interest, which provided a deep immersion in the language environment. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the coordinators had to exclude some elements of the program. Nevertheless, 10 international students from China, Italy, Germany and France joined the online classes in order to master the basics of the Russian language and get acquainted with the peculiarities of Russian culture during two intense weeks.



All classes are interactive in small groups and are built on constant communication with teachers and other students. It is this approach, according to the organizers, that is necessary to obtain key skills and successful assimilation of the material. The cultural program also takes place in a modified format. For example, participants took a virtual tour of the Polytechnic University campus, joined online events devoted to Russian traditions and features of modern life in

Russia, and walked around the Hermitage in real time. International students are greatly supported by tutors, who help them improve their conversational skills in Russian in an informal atmosphere.

"Holding an online winter school on Russian language and culture is no easy task. How can you feel the flavor of Russian winter not at the skating rink in a winter park, escaping the cold with herbal tea and ruddy pancakes? After all, it is largely because of immersion in a cultural environment that foreign students go to St. Petersburg to study Russian. Polytechnic teachers have put all their skills, their soul into the preparation of the program. And the start has already shown that it will be successful," said Victor KRASNOSHCHÉKOV, Director of the Higher School of International Educational Programs.

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