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**Subject:** PGP Harvard: News & Updates  
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News from 2015 and third-party activities you can join!

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## Harvard Personal Genome Project: August 2015 News and Updates

Dear PGP Harvard participant,

Since January of this year we've had over five hundred new participants enroll in PGP Harvard, and we now have over 4400 participants. We also have a lot of exciting new updates to share with you.

### **MindEx Conference and PG-Palooza labs**

We are pleased to announce that on September 12 and 13, at the famous Harvard Sanders Theatre, the [Harvard Personal Genome Project](#) and the [Mind First Foundation](#) will hold their first jointly organized U.S. conference and labs event. The conference, **MindEx 2015**, will feature many exciting speakers, including PGP founder Dr. George Church and keynote speaker Dr. Martine Rothblatt of United Therapeutics. The labs event, **PG-Palooza**, will feature hands-on science from organizations such as American Gut.

All PGP Participants are welcome to register for MindEx and PG-Palooza, paying only what they want. You're welcome to attend for as little as 1¢ (plus a minimum Eventbrite fee of 99¢), or donate as much as you'd like to help support our programs.

To register as a PGP participant for MindEx and PG-Palooza, please [click here to visit the MindEx and PG-Palooza page](#) (you'll need to log in to your account), and click on the "Participate" button at the bottom of the page. Or go to the appropriate [EventBrite page](#), click "Enter promotional code," and enter the promotional code `pgp@HU_enrolled_1`.

For additional details about the conference, labs, speakers, venues, hotels, directions and maps, visit the conference pages on the [Mind First Foundation website](#).

**The Annual GET Conference**

In years past, the PGP was featured at the Genomes Environments Traits (GET) Conference. This year, the GET Conference is going international, and will take place in Vienna, Austria (Sept 17-19, <http://www.getconference.org/>). This exciting event will feature Genom Austria and other members of the growing Global Network of Personal Genome Projects. For more information on GET Global, please visit the [conference site](#).

### **New phenotypes survey**

We have a new basic phenotypes survey that will help researchers interested in the interaction between genes and phenotypes such as blood type or eye color. It's less than ten questions, so please take this short and quick survey!

[Go to activity: New phenotypes survey](#)

### **New Interactive Phenotype Visualization (+ Database)**

If you're Interested in exploring the phenotypes people have opted to disclose publicly via the trait surveys, staff member Abram Connelly recently compiled all the phenotypes into a database, which you can play with at <http://curoverse.link/22d61dd43786c65cd175b04ad6954af0+3119/html/index.html> and about which there will be a blog post within the next month.



*Above: A picture of the fifty most common allergies reported by enrolled participants in the trait and disease surveys.*

### **The PGP is now open to 18 to 20 year olds!**

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Personal Genome Project. The PGP has enrolled thousands of people, and, until now, the age of consent for all enrolled participants has been 21. We have had many inquiries—and occasional begging and pleading—about lowering the age of consent. Over many years we have considered the pros and cons of lowering the age of enrollment, and we have decided that the time is right to lower the minimum age of enrollment to 18.

Bear in mind that nothing else about the process has changed. Our enrollment process remains thorough, and only those who provide full consent and pass the standard enrollment exam will be admitted as participants. Nevertheless, this is an exciting new chapter in the PGP experiment. We hope that we will increase not only participant numbers, but that they will help spread the word and educate their colleagues, friends, and relatives about the PGP.

### **What cool research has the PGP enabled?**

We're compiling a list of PGP research activities, if you know of anyone using PGP data do let us know, and expect an update soon on how PGP data has helped scientific research!

## Where's my genome?

We realize many of you have been waiting anxiously for genomes. We plan to release about 150 genomes this fall. Our research partner has been doing some improved quality control on PGP genomes which created some unforeseen delays, but please be assured we have been working very hard to return genomes to participants. We think we're very close, so stay tuned.

## Critical Analysis of Genomic Interpretation

Some participants among those who will be receiving these upcoming genomes will be able to donate their genome towards a challenge in this year's [Critical Analysis of Genomic Interpretation](#) (CAGI). CAGI invites researchers to test and share their methods for predicting phenotypes from genomes. It's a great match for the PGP's uniquely public genome and phenotype data, as openly available data are invaluable for understanding the methods for analyzing it.

## Ongoing third-party activities

- **Go Viral.** Sign up online and get a kit mailed to you. When you get sick later, send in a sample to test what virus you had.
  - [\[Go to activity: Go Viral\]](#)
- **Circles in Human Evolution: the Areola.** Sign up online and get a kit mailed to you, both men and women invited. By the way: if you forgot your kit, you can request a new one!
  - [\[Go to activity: Circles in Human Evolution\]](#)
- **Skin Biopsies for the Generation of Stem Cells by the New York Stem Cell Foundation.** NYC sample collections for a stem cell biobank.
  - [\[Go to activity: Skin Biopsies for the Generation of Stem Cells\]](#)

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