



MyHeritage and Whitehead Institute at MIT Announce Collaboration to Harness the Power of Genealogy for Genetic Research

Crowdsourced family history data opens new horizons for scientific research

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. & TEL AVIV, Israel – October 23, 2013 - [MyHeritage](#), the popular online family history network, is pleased to announce collaboration with Whitehead Institute at MIT to advance the understanding of human traits using big data. The project will analyze the extent to which genealogical data can explain different aspects of human life such as personal well-being and patterns of immigration.

The research is conducted by Dr. Yaniv Erlich, principal investigator and fellow at [Whitehead Institute](#). At the heart of the research are family trees with more than 43 million anonymized public profiles from MyHeritage's Geni.com World Family Tree - a massive genealogy dataset created by collective research of casual and expert family historians.

"Family trees are basic yet powerful assets in human genetics," said Dr. Yaniv Erlich. "Until now, the use of large scale genealogy data in genetic research has not been fully tapped. We are extremely excited about this collaboration and hope that this research will contribute to the broad scientific community and to the public good."

As a proof of concept, the research team analyzed the immigration patterns of individuals in these family trees, displaying them graphically in a [time lapse video](#). The video exemplifies how historical events correlate well with the mosaic of personal stories found in the data, such as the arrival of the Mayflower and the emergence of family trees in New England.

"We're thrilled to work with the prestigious Whitehead Institute at MIT to help give science better understanding of people around the world, who they are and where they come from," said Noah Tutak, General Manager of MyHeritage, USA and former CEO of Geni.com.

About MyHeritage

MyHeritage is a family history network helping millions of families around the world discover and share their legacy online. As technology thought leaders and innovators in the space, MyHeritage is transforming family history into an activity that's more accessible, exciting, and easier than ever before. MyHeritage empowers its global community of users with unique social tools, a massive library of historical content, and powerful search and data matching technologies. The service is available in 40 languages. For more information, visit www.myheritage.com.



About Whitehead Institute

Whitehead Institute is a world-renowned non-profit research institution dedicated to improving human health through biomedical research. Wholly independent in its governance, finances, and research programs, Whitehead shares a close affiliation with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology through its faculty members, who hold joint MIT appointments.

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