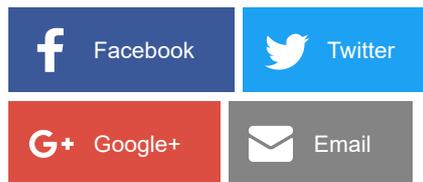# First Indian genomics beacon launched in UK

The aim of the Indian beacon is to address the gap in shared Indian genomics data, which helps scientists better understand disease and develop more effective drug delivery systems and therapeutics

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Representational Image

Global Gene Corp and Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH) Tuesday launched the first-ever beacon for Indian genomics data, which is expected to help scientists develop more effective drug delivery systems.

A beacon is an online web service that allows researchers to determine whether an institution has particular genomic data in its data set. The aim of the Indian beacon is to address the gap in shared Indian genomics data, which helps scientists better understand disease and develop more effective drug delivery systems and therapeutics.

"Genomics is the science that will define healthcare in our lifetime. Solving healthcare problems at scale is exceptionally important for India to ensure quality of life for our 1.3 billion citizens. Cutting-edge genomics will provide truly innovative solutions that will benefit individuals and the population as a whole," said Dinesh Patnaik, Indian deputy high commissioner to the UK, at the launch in Cambridge.

The Indian beacon joins those already on the Wellcome Genome Campus supplied by EMBL-EBI and the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute in Hinxton, Cambridgeshire. Cambridge-based Global Gene Corp (GCC) is based at the Wellcome Genome Campus and is co-founded by alumni from the Indian Institute of Technology, Harvard and National University of Singapore with the mission to "democratise genomics".

Sumit Jamuar, chairman & CEO of GCC, creator of the ggcINDIA beacon, said: "Indian genomics data is one of the biggest missing pieces in the genomics puzzle. The promise of precision medicine can only be realised with usable and sharable genomics data.

"As a member of GA4GH, our ggcINDIA beacon will start to address the lack of shared Indian genomics data to enable researchers globally to accelerate development of precision medicine." The Beacon Project is hosted with the DNAStack platform, and the ggcINDIA beacon core engine is supported by the National Supercomputer Center (NSCC), the national facility of petascale standard to support high performance scientific and engineering computing needs in Singapore.

"The addition of Indian genome data to the worldwide research network will help to power research worldwide," said Julia Wilson, Associate Director, Sanger Institute. Peter Goodhand, Executive Director, GA4GH, said: "We are creating the platform and protocols to enable collaborations across the world's leading genomics institutions such as Sanger Institute, Broad Institute, and EMBL-EBI. Lack of data from India has been a glaring gap. The first Indian beacon, ggcINDIA, is a milestone for GA4GH.

"We look forward to further enhancement of the beacon and are grateful for Global Gene Corp's initiative and for the support of the Governments of India and the UK."