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THROUGH GAME, PLAYERS AID GENE RESEARCH

 SPORT & FITNESS

GeneGame is a smartphone app that challenges users to form the best combinations of genes – aiding research in the area in the process.

Cancer Research UK's [ClicktoCure](#) platform has already enabled anyone to help out researchers by analyzing their data. Putting a gamification twist on this concept, [GeneGame](#) challenges users to form the best combinations of genes – aiding research in the area in the process.

Created by games developer [Guerilla Tea](#) at a Cancer Research UK hackathon in March, the game is based on the fact that researchers have reams of data about genes and their role in diseases such as cancer. In order to produce reliable results from these datasets, it's necessary to combine at least 25 different variables each time for each human gene – of which there are around 20,000. Rather than leaving this job up to researchers alone, the GeneGame app turns these combinations into winning 'hands' that the player has to build using their knowledge or searching the web for answers. The best players get to show off their knowledge through league placings, which researchers can then use to find out the players that are producing the most reliable datasets.

Although the game requires a certain knowledge of genes and how they relate to diseases, the GeneGame shows how scientists could develop platforms to engage the public in research that benefits society while competing with friends. Are there other fields of research – medical or otherwise – that could be gamified?

Spotted by: Murtaza Patel

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Website: www.genegames.org

Contact: www.genegames.org/cure/contact.jsp

