

# IndyGeneUS AI & Aurum Institute Establish 500K Pan-African Genome Project on Blockchain-Secured Health Data Platform

*IndyGeneUS AI and Aurum Institute Establish 500K Pan-African Genome Project Leveraging Blockchain-Secured Health Data Platform*



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Today, IndyGeneUS AI announced plans to launch their secure digital health portal and research initiative to sequence the genomes of 500,000 Africans over the next three-years. The 500k Pan-African Genome Project will focus on non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases like TB, HIV, malaria and others impacting populations throughout Southern Africa and the rest of the continent.

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All of the samples collected by the 500K Pan-African Genome Project will remain on the continent.”

*IndyGeneUS AI Founder & CEO, Yusuf Henriques*

Earlier this year, IndyGeneUS AI forged a public-private partnership with Global Health Innovations (GHI), which is a subsidiary of [The Aurum Institute NPC](#) (Aurum) with its headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa. This collaboration is expected to accelerate IndyGeneUS's ability to engage patients, enroll participants in research studies, and empower Africans to securely access, control, and

manage their genomic and medical data within the IndyGeneUS Patient Portal launching in September.

“Our ability to protect sensitive health data using propriety blockchain-secured technology recently acquired through [EncrypGen](#) addresses data privacy concerns by recording all data-related events to a decentralized ledger,” said IndyGeneUS AI Founder & CEO, Yusuf Henriques. “Our innovative federated data model and ability to scale population genomics on the continent have garnered the attention of Microsoft and Johnson & Johnson Innovation, Inc.”

This project is being self-funded by IndyGeneUS to build sequencing capacity, increase genomic data diversity, and facilitate translational genomics research and precision medicine for the African Diaspora.

“The underrepresentation of individuals of African descent in genomic research severely limits science's ability to comprehensively understand diseases at the molecular level, identify biomarkers for accurate early diagnoses, and precisely target pathways for therapeutics that will be effective in diverse patient populations,” said IndyGeneUS AI’s Co-Founder & CSO, human and molecular geneticist, Dr. Bradford Wilson. “In addition, it paints an incomplete picture of genetic variation, human biology, and health as some variants may be protective against disease.”

Existing partnerships with esteemed institutions like The Aurum Institute NPC, Global Health Innovations and the Kenya AIDS Vaccine Institute (KAVI) of Clinical Research in Nairobi, places IndyGeneUS in a good position to achieve its 500,000-participant goal. “We are delighted to be partnering with IndyGeneUS in this crucially important project that advances global health research whilst genuinely investing in the sovereignty of Africans to determine and safeguard their health data,” says Aurum’s Group Chief Operating Officer, Prof. Dave Clark.

“All of the samples collected by the 500K Pan-African Genome Project will remain on the continent. Our sequencing lab in Cape Town, South Africa, positions IndyGeneUS to be the premier whole-genome sequencing services supplier in support of clinical research driving precision medicine in South Africa,” said Henriques. “We applaud the recent initiatives on the continent that have generated some whole genome sequencing data for research purposes. However, it’s our understanding that the sequencing and bioinformatics were conducted outside of the continent, which compromises participants’ data sovereignty and privacy rights.”

IndyGeneUS remains steadfast in its mission to create a platform for Africans to control, manage, and own their genetic and clinical data, while also building capacity and infrastructure which maintains the sovereignty of the data with the people who contribute to the genetic material.

“We have created a wonderful partnership which will provide researchers with potential access to genetically diverse data, and hopefully contribute to shaping the future of personalized medicine,” says Prof. Vinodh Edward, who is the founder and CEO of GHI as well as the CEO of Aurum South Africa.

Samples recruited for the 500k Pan-African Genome Project will be sequenced at IndyGeneUS’ newest lab located at 108 Albeit Road, Cape Town, South Africa. IndyGeneUS will continue to build capacity on the Continent by working with non-profit organizations like CPGR that support genomics research in South Africa. To learn more about the 500K Pan-African Genome Project or IndyGeneUS AI initiatives, contact Angel Livas at [angel@indygeneus.ai](mailto:angel@indygeneus.ai).

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About IndyGeneUS AI

IndyGeneUS AI is a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) and minority-

owned biotechnology (biotech) company based in Washington, DC, with a presence in Cape Town, South Africa. The biotech firm is creating the world's largest block-chain encrypted repository of indigenous and diasporic African clinical and multi-omics data to advance novel therapeutic gene target discovery and to drive precision health equity. Recently featured in [GenomeWeb](#).

#### About IndyGeneUS™ Discovery Platform

IndyGeneUS AI secured acquisition of EncrypGen, the world's first block-chain-mediated marketplace for genetic data and the crypto-currency \$DNA coin. The IndyGeneUS Discovery Platform utilizes IndyGeneUS AI's - multi-omics bioinformatics pipeline to enhance the original EncrypGen infrastructure to accommodate whole genome sequencing data, while also creating a robust and secure marketplace. The IndyGeneUS Discovery Platform is designed to drive precision health equity and solve two problems: it provides scientists with diverse genomic data to conduct research, and allows individuals an opportunity to generate revenue each time their data is queried for research insights.

#### About The Aurum Institute NPC

Established in 1998, Aurum is an African Public Benefit Organization whose mission is to advance science and innovation in global health by developing evidence for policy and translate policy into practice to impact the health of communities globally. Operationally, the organization has international entities that manage multi-national projects, and country offices in Ghana, Mozambique and South Africa that focus on work in each country respectively. With an overall staff complement of 3000 employees, Aurum's work spans the cascade of healthcare from innovation to implementation.

#### About Global Health Innovations

Founded in 2018 as a subsidiary of Aurum, GHI is a specialist provider of world-class, integrated, research services and products that enables clients to deliver on clinical research outcomes. GHI forges sustainable partnerships with stakeholders who share our passion to improve the lives of our communities.

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