

Beating cancer through gaming

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Current City University London students and alumni have been instrumental in producing a new smartphone game in which players analyse real cancer data with the aim of finding new treatments.

While people are playing 'Play to Cure: Genes in Space', the app will sift through a pool of data, highlighting genetic faults which can cause cancer.

Developed by Dundee-based Guerilla Tea, [players](#) guide a spaceship along an intergalactic assault course to collect a precious material known as "Element Alpha".

Every time a player manoeuvres the spaceship on the path of Element Alpha, the information is relayed to Cancer Research UK (CRUK) scientists who provide analyses of gene data. It is hoped that the data processed by players will expedite the search of new medications.

Each section of gene data will be tracked by several different players to ensure accuracy.

Dr Chris Child, a games technology lecturer and the course co-director of City's MSc in Computer Games Technology said:

"The CRUK hackathon last March challenged developers to deliver a game that could analyse gene data. The idea was to put all the hours people spend playing games to use by finding mutations that could cause [cancer](#). The game had to be fun to play, but also had to make the data

analysis the central part of the playing experience. The final game took elements from several of the submissions. It has a sci-fi feel but the mechanics of the game is geared to identifying faulty genomes. Around half of the sixty participants were current City students or alumni. The final [game](#) is based on games from three teams which City students took part in (alongside participants from Google, Amazon and Facebook). I'm really proud of the work they did and they also had a great time doing it."

More information: To play the game, please visit this link:
[play.google.com/store/apps/det ... illatea.elementalpha](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.illatea.elementalpha)

Provided by City University London

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