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# NIH awards Vibrent Health \$39M to backbone All of Us

The health research platform has already helped enroll 356,000 participants into the nationwide research program.

By [Dave Muoio \(/content/dave-muoio\)](#) | September 08, 2020 | 12:28 pm

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Health research platform maker Vibrent Health announced last week that it has received a \$39 million infusion from the National Institutes of Health to continue serving as the hub of the public research organization's All of Us Research Program.

Founded in 2009, Vibrent Health's technology handles large-scale data collection, storage, analysis and security for research organizations, and includes tools for digital participant recruitment and engagement.

The company received its first award from the NIH in 2016, and as the Participant Technology Systems Center of the program will provide a participant-facing portal and participant management tools for more than 100 nationwide program partners. Vibrent Health also said in the announcement that it has partnered with a handful of academic and industry organizations – including Dartmouth College; the University of Virginia; University of California, San Francisco; and ICF – to bring stronger machine learning, cybersecurity and research tools to the All of Us digital platform.

The \$39 million award represents first-year funding for the project, which the company said is expected to run for a total of five years.

### **WHAT'S THE IMPACT?**

The NIH's All of Us Research Program aims to collect demographic, health behavior and genomic data from one million Americans. The effort combines community-level engagement with wearables and other digital tools in its effort to establish a substantive and diverse body of clinical data for future health research.

So far, more than 356,000 participants have been enrolled through Vibrent Health's platform, the company said, about three-quarters of whom have wrapped up all of the initial steps of the program.

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The digital effort also appears to be reaching its diversity goals. Vibrent Health said that 80% of those 356,000 participants "come from populations that are historically underrepresented in biomedical research," and that half of them are also racially and ethnically diverse.

"All of Us is designed to reflect the rich diversity of the United States and give historically underrepresented groups the opportunity to contribute to – and benefit from – a wide range of research studies that will further our understanding of health and disease," Dr. Josh Denny, CEO of All of Us, said in a statement. "As an All of Us technology partner, the [Participant Technology Systems Center] provides the infrastructure to help people enroll, contribute information


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securely and stay connected with the program over time. This provides the foundation for critical discoveries that may help improve health in the future.”

## THE LARGER TREND

Once known as the **Precision Medicine Initiative** (<https://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/nih-taps-intels-eric-dishman-lead-precision-medicine-cohort-program>), the NIH's program has been under works for roughly half a decade, but only **launched in spring of 2018** (<https://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/nih-all-us-research-program-begins-open-enrollment-56>). The ambitious effort reached the **100,000 participant mark** (<https://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/five-months-nih-all-us-has-enrolled-100000-participants>) within its first five months, and **more than 230,000** (<https://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/north-america/all-us-celebrates-one-year-anniversary-public-launch-participant-data>) at the close of its first full year. In the time since its launch, the research program has enabled data sharing **directly from enrollees' Fitbit accounts** (<https://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/all-us-enrollees-can-now-share-health-data-their-fitbit-accounts-researchers>) and online tools for analysis of anonymized participant data. It's also working to **provide genetic counseling services through Color** (<https://www.mobihealthnews.com/news/north-america/genetic-counseling-available-all-us-participants-future>) for its participants.

While the dataset All of Us promises could become the backbone of population health efforts for years to come, the effort has also had its detractors over the years. **These skeptics have questioned** (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/19/health/nih-biobank-genes.html>) whether the agency's publicly-funded project will justify its cost, and whether extensive promises of health data privacy will stand the test of time.



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