

## A Facebook for sharing your genetic information?

Three years ago, biologist Bastian Greshake spit in a vial and sent it off to personal genomics company 23andMe for analysis.

Soon after he got his results, he published his genetic information to the collaboration site Github, and then went looking for others who were open-sourcing their DNA. But even when he found the occasional person willing to put his or her genes online for public perusal, the data were hard to use for science. They didn't come with any phenotypic information—eye color, weight, height, medical history. That information, tied to your genetic data, is what's really valuable and interesting. By themselves, genes are kind of dull.

What was really needed, Greshake realized, was a social network for DNA, one that would make it easy to upload genetic information and share it with others. “Maybe there are people who are interested in publishing their genetic information on the web to make it available, but those people don't have the opportunity,” Greshake says he thought at the time.

So, he set out to build an open-source website—[OpenSNP](#)—that would be able to pull in genetic information from services like 23andMe, plus any other data users wanted to upload, with ease.

Greshake and other open-source evangelists hope that the availability of simple, cheap genetic testing kits, coupled with open-source platforms like openSNP, Promethease and SNPedia, will spark interest in genetics among the general public—not just for finding hints of horrible disease lurking in the future, but for more pedestrian applications as well.

**Read full, original article:** This guy is the Mark Zuckerberg of open-source genetics