

Why resurrecting near-replicas of extinct woolly mammoths might work

[Woolly mammoths](#), the iconic giants of the last ice age, went extinct around 4,000 years ago.

But one company is trying to revive the species—or at least something resembling it—and the scientist at the head of the project envisions thousands of these animals roaming the Arctic.

Colossal Biosciences is a start-up launched by tech entrepreneur Ben Lamm and renowned geneticist George Church that is aiming to resurrect the woolly mammoth, or more accurately to create a genetically engineered [Asian elephant](#) that will be cold-resistant and have all the core biological traits of its extinct relative.

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[Church] said Colossal was planning to make a number of [gene] edits in cells taken from Asian elephants, an endangered species that is the woolly mammoth’s closest living relative, sharing around 99.6 percent of its DNA.

“Indeed, the Asian elephant and the woolly mammoth are closer to each other than either of them is to the African,” Church told *Newsweek*.

In order to determine which edits to make, Colossal’s researchers have to compare elephant genomes to that of the woolly mammoth to identify where the key differences are. Fortunately, some mammoth remains have been preserved remarkably well, with some tissue samples containing intact DNA, from which researchers can build at least partial genomes.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here](#)