



Canine Genetics Centre

at the University of Cambridge

Canine Genetics Centre Spring 2026 appeal for core funding

The Canine Genetics Centre investigates inherited diseases in dogs and develops DNA tests that breeders use to minimise the risk of breeding affected puppies. Recent data from the Royal Kennel Club (January 2026) shows that approximately 575,000 dogs have been tested, or their DNA test result can be inferred, for at least mutation that the CGC identified. The huge majority of these dogs will be from the UK, so it seems realistic to estimate that globally over a million dogs have a known genotype for one of the CGC's mutations.

Furthermore, the CGC has developed 29 of the DNA tests that are listed as Good or Best Practice in the Royal Kennel Club's recently published [Health Standard](#).

The CGC has identified 40 different mutations, most of which have been [published](#). Collectively these mutations cause inherited diseases that affect over 50 different breeds of dog, and account for more than 1 in 9 of all the 332 monogenic variants that have been identified worldwide (data from [Online Mendelian Inheritance in Animals](#)).

In summary, the CGC's research has a demonstrable positive impact on the health of dogs worldwide.

Its costs approximately £400,000 a year to meet the running costs of the Canine Genetics Centre and undertake all the research that is currently ongoing. The CGC is funded from various sources, including grants (from charities, trusts and other funding bodies) and donations from stakeholders, stakeholders being anyone who values the work of the CGC, values the opportunity to breed or buy dogs that are free from inherited disease and is willing to contribute to its continuation.

Fundraising is now a major focus of the CGC team, and we work continually to apply for grants and encourage donations that will enable the CGC to keep operating. For the twelve-month period from April 2026 – March 2027 we have secured

approximately 78% of the funds we need to keep the team together and all of our research projects progressing.

But we are still **£90,000** short of what is needed to keep the team intact and maintain momentum on all our research projects.

Current research projects

At any point in time the CGC is typically investigating multiple diseases in multiple breeds. These studies range from researching new, emerging monogenic diseases by analysing DNA from a small handful of affected dogs to larger scale and longer-term projects to investigate the genetics of more complex diseases. The CGC tries its best to accommodate all requests for help. But for the first time in over 25 years we find ourselves in the unwelcome position of needing to tell breed communities that we cannot investigate their health issue until further funding is secured. Below is a list of breeds for which we will actively analyse genome sequence over the next six months, and we hope to be able to add more breeds to the list, funding permitting:

Breed

Boxers

Cocker Spaniels

Dachshunds

Dandie Dinmont Terriers

Golden Retrievers

Gordon Setters

Labrador Retrievers

Lancashire Heelers

Miniature Schnauzers

Welsh Springer Spaniels

Whippets

How can people help?

Please help us raise £90,000 and secure the team for another 12 months. If your breed has benefitted from the work of the CGC, or the CGC is currently investigating a health issue that is relevant to your breed (or could do soon, funding permitting) please donate now.

Ways to donate.

Charities and Trusts. If you are involved with a registered charity or trust, please consider awarding a grant to the CGC to help fund our work. You can be quite specific about how the funds are spent, and we can help you with this process. Any donation in excess of ~ £5,000 can be made in this way and will help the CGC avoid overheads (the University of Cambridge waives overheads on grants awarded by charities and trusts).

Become a Friend of the CGC. Our [Friends of the CGC](https://www.canine-genetics.org.uk/about/cgc-friend/) scheme is for supporters who wish to make modest but regular donations each month. Having a regular, predictable income helps us to know to which research projects we can commit. And we can claim Gift Aid if you are a UK taxpayer. Full details of the Friends Scheme can be found at: <https://www.canine-genetics.org.uk/about/cgc-friend/>

Make a one-off donation. We welcome all one-off donations, regardless of size as they all help us to improve the health of dogs. Full details of all the different ways to make a donation can be found on the "[How to support us](#)" page on our website.

Thank you for reading this and for all your support. If you have any questions, please email Cathryn Mellersh directly: cm935@cam.ac.uk