All *of* Us RESEARCH PROGRAM | Researcher Academy

Connections

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New Academy Train-the-Trainer Program Focuses on Scalability

The *All of Us* Researcher Academy's new Train-the-Trainer program is designed to build a scalable and sustainable model for training researchers to use the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench. The program prepares site trainers to deliver hands-on instruction within their own labs and institutions, empowering them to train others and expand data use capacity.

(Left to Right) RTI's Researcher Academy Train-the-Trainer Program staff: Javan Carter, Lissette Saavedra, Trey-Rashad Hawkins, Stefanee Tillman, Ifeoluwa Adewumi, and Leslie Zapata Leiva

RTI is implementing and evaluating two delivery models: a lab systems approach, where site trainers train members within their own labs, and a network systems approach, in which site trainers train across multiple institutions. This latter approach is being modeled at Morehouse School of Medicine within the Atlanta University Center Consortium.

Site trainers receive a 2-day, in-person training, followed by biweekly virtual training support meetings to reinforce engagement and instructional skills. This program aims to foster scalable, sustainable learning communities that expand access to and use of *All of Us* data.

The Researcher Academy launched the training program in February 2025, hosting four trainers at RTI International's Research Triangle Park headquarters in North Carolina. ■

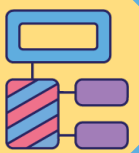—Sula Hood and Brian Southwell, *All of Us* Researcher Academy co-leaders

Academy Announcements...................

Researcher Workbench consultations: Supported by *All of Us*, the University of Arizona–Banner Health has launched the Biomedical Informatics Core Consulting Services to assist researchers with Researcher Workbench projects. Consultations are offered at no cost to registered researchers and can support a range of needs, from feasibility assessments to methodological and analytical support, phenotyping, interpretation and visualization of results, and dissemination of research. Researchers can apply for up to 15 hours of consultation. **Request a consultation**.

"A Researcher's Guide to the *All of Us* Research Program": Researchers are encouraged to **read the new guide** to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and nuances of the *All of Us* dataset before developing methods to answer their scientific questions and interpret their results. This may help researchers avoid errors in methodology and data use.

REMINDER: Academy course catalog and asynchronous training now available. These resources enable researchers to explore a range of academy courses independently to enhance data analysis, writing, and publishing skills or to learn about a new topic. The course catalog organizes course descriptions, instructor bios, and course materials from past courses, which are available on Amaze—the learning and collaboration platform for the Researcher Academy. The catalog also contains instructions on how to set up your Amaze account and access materials for each course. **Access the Researcher Academy Course Catalog and email AllofUs_Academy@rti.org with questions.**

Help Us Build a Strong Researcher Academy Community

In addition to providing training and technical assistance for leveraging the *All of Us* dataset in the Researcher Workbench, the Researcher Academy also provides a unique opportunity for networking. Its ability to connect researchers with an array of focus areas, expertise, and experience—from undergraduates and postdocs to senior investigators—is powerful. With your participation, our community will only grow stronger.

Here's how you can engage right now:

- **Join the Researcher Academy's New Discussion Board**

  The new Researcher Academy Discussion Board on Amaze is the ideal space for sharing insights, asking questions, and connecting with other researchers to foster collaborations. Whether you join the board to explore new topics, access resources, or contribute your expertise, we hope you find the experience engaging and useful. If you already have an Amaze account, **log in** and and click Join Group.

  If you need assistance creating an Amaze account or have questions, email AllofUs_Academy@rti.org.

- **Add Your Bio to the Researcher Academy Directory**

  The Researcher Academy uses the learning and collaboration platform Amaze to host its member directory along with courses and a discussion board. To connect with fellow researchers, you can search the directory by name or research interest. If you've previously participated in a Researcher Academy course, we invite you to add your bio to this resource.

  It's easy!, just **log in to your account** and follow these steps:

  1. Click your profile icon on the top right of the page.
  2. Scroll down your profile and select Edit.
  3. Enter your bio, key research interests, and any other additional information you would like to share. Be sure to select Save Changes when you are finished.

  If you need assistance creating an Amaze account or have questions, email AllofUs_Academy@rti.org.

Funding Opportunities.......................

- ***All of Us* data and tools:** The National Institutes of Health makes funding available to researchers to advance precision medicine and health impact. These opportunities can harness the power of the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench. Visit NIH Research Funding Opportunities page for available options.

- **Substance use research:** The National Institute on Drug Abuse seeks to support researchers interested in applying cutting-edge data science techniques to address timely and challenging research questions related to substance use and substance use disorders. This award aims to support research projects that can be carried out in a short period of time with limited resources. Learn more and apply by June 16, 2025. Additional deadlines are noted.

- **Dental, oral, and craniofacial research:** The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research seeks to support research projects that address research questions through analysis of existing and publicly available genomic data using statistical and computational approaches. Learn more and apply by June 16, 2025.

- **Heart, lung, and blood disease research:** The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute seeks to support secondary analyses using existing datasets in areas relevant to its mission. Learn more and apply by October 28, 2025.

Save the Date
Upcoming Webinar

Thursday, June 12, 2025
4:30-5:30 p.m. ET

Exploring Health Together: What the *All of Us* Dataset Can Teach Us

Join us for an engaging webinar designed for research audiences to discover how the *All of Us* Research Program is transforming health research to enable new kinds of individualized health care. Learn what this powerful dataset is, how it protects participant privacy, and how it is helping researchers uncover new insights that can improve health outcomes. **Learn more and register here.**

Angela Balfour Franklin, MDiv
Engagement Lead, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

Sula Hood, PhD
Senior Research Scientist; Co-Lead for *All of Us* Researcher Academy, RTI International

Stefanee Tillman, MS
Statistician and Data Analyst; Adjunct Professor at North Carolina Central University

Researcher Academy Webinar Explores Cancer Research Using *All of Us* Dataset

On May 21, 2025, the Researcher Academy, in partnership with Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, hosted a webinar entitled **"Unraveling Immune Exhaustion Genes and Racial Disparities in Early-Onset Breast Cancer Using the *All of Us* Dataset."**

In this webinar, Dr. Sula Hood (RTI International) provided an overview of the *All of Us* Research Academy and the Researcher Workbench. Dr. Oyomoare L. Osazuwa-Peters (Duke University School of Medicine) presented her research using the *All of Us* dataset on the role of immune exhaustion (IE) genes as risk factors in early-onset breast cancer. Using the *All of Us* dataset, Dr. Osazuwa-Peters' research was completed through the AIM-AHEAD training program and examined associations between single nucleotide polymorphisms in 785 IE-related genes and early-onset breast cancer. She discussed her research methods, key findings, and implications for addressing racial disparities in aggressive breast cancer. Dr. Tomi Akinyemiju (Duke Cancer Institute) also joined the discussion as an expert in cancer and social epidemiology focusing on modifiable risk factors that underlie disparities.

Participants learned how this work can inform future studies and how researchers can leverage the *All of Us* dataset in health research. [Watch the recording here](#).

All of Us Data and Research Center to Host Training Bootcamp

The *All of Us* Data and Research Center's Train-the-Trainer Bootcamp will empower attendees with the knowledge and skills necessary to become resource persons within their own institutions. Participants of this 2-day virtual hands-on workshop will gain the following:

- An understanding of the Researcher Workbench
- Overview of electronic health data and survey data
- Opportunities for post-event continued learning
- $300 in compensation for full attendance both days

Applicants should have an interest in training other researchers. They must be an early-career investigator at any U.S.-based institution that holds a DURA ([see list of registered institutions](#)) and be a fully registered user by July 31, 2025.

Space is limited to 30 attendees. If interested in participating, scan the QR code or [link to application form](#). **All applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. CST, July 31, 2025.** Applicants will be notified of their admission status by August 2025.

If you have questions, please contact support@researchallofus.org.

Coach's Corner.........................

Meet Researcher Academy Coach Monica Desjardins

Monica Desjardins is one of the Researcher Academy coaches supporting the *All of Us* Train-the-Trainer program. In this role, she supports new educators who are preparing to teach others how to navigate and use the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench effectively. For future trainers, the skill and leadership development provided by both the program and the coaches is key to future success.

The Train-the-Trainer program ensures that Researcher Academy continues to grow a knowledgeable, self-sustaining community of researchers. By empowering the trainers with the tools and knowledge to effectively teach others, the program ensures consistent, high-quality instruction of the Researcher Workbench. This approach enhances data accessibility, reinforces ethical research practices, and promotes equity in research training.

"The most exciting part of being a coach is supporting researchers as they discover the potential of this rich dataset," says Monica. "It is incredibly rewarding to witness their progress and know that their work has the potential to advance population health by contributing data-driven research outcomes."

One positive surprise has been how user friendly and intuitive the Researcher Workbench interface is, especially given

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the complexity of the underlying data. That being said, she notes, it is common for new users to underestimate the learning curve involved in working with large-scale biomedical data, especially if they are unfamiliar with Python or R.

Monica always advises new researchers on the Workbench to start with a clear research focus and explore the training resources provided to support finalizing their research question with the available *All of Us* data. Also, she says, "I recommend that they connect with the *All of Us* community, whether it be other researchers or coaches like me. There is a strong network ready to help them succeed." ∎

Monica Desjardins is a public health analyst in RTI International's Center for Public Health Surveillance and Technology, with an interest in health disparity, behavioral and mental health, and Indigenous health equity. She has a Master of Public Health, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and a Public Health Training Certificate for American Indian Health Professionals from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Spotlight..

Dr. Stacy J. Jones, Coahoma Community College

When Coahoma Community College joined the *All of Us* Researcher Academy as an affiliate to Institutional Champion Jackson State University, Dr. Stacy Jones was thrilled. This initiative marked a significant milestone for Coahoma, positioning it as the first community college to participate in the academy. At Coahoma, a Historically Black College and University in Clarksdale, Mississippi, Dr. Jones had limited access to resources and instrumentation to pursue basic research. When he learned about the Researcher Academy, he recognized the unique opportunity it afforded to researchers and students at institutions like his. " *All of Us* enables us to add to the body of medical and health research," he emphasizes, "including students interested in STEM careers who can be involved in research during the first two years of their program."

This exposure will have a profound effect on students' experiences as they enter the health research field. "The Researcher Workbench gives my student an opportunity to explore research questions along with the tools and statistical methods used to answer them," Jones explains.

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" The Researcher Workbench gives my student an opportunity to explore research questions along with the tools and statistical methods used to answer them.

"They can also learn about the impact that limitation in data has on health research and the importance of programs like *All of Us*." The dataset helps to remove the barrier to access created by limited institutional resources so a broader group of researchers can seek to answer relevant research questions.

Dr. Jones can trace his interest in the sciences back to his high school days. "I had an amazing chemistry teacher in high school—Mr. Pryor," he recalls. "He and my mom encouraged me to attend enrichment camps during the summer, several of which had laboratory activities that exposed me to 'active science' for the first time." During freshman year, Jones was fortunate enough to be recruited by his general chemistry instructor to participate in undergraduate research. "After my first year in college, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in research," he says.

Currently, Dr. Jones is interested in how environmental pollutants and contaminants can affect health and wellness. He is especially interested in their impact on rural, economically disadvantaged, and underrepresented communities, who often have less access to healthcare. For individuals at the intersection of these groups, environmental exposures can cause even wider gaps in health outcomes. The *All of Us* dataset is a game changer for exploring these sorts of research questions. "The dataset provides an amazing opportunity for research to access surveys, health records, and genetic information for a broad group of participants across the nation and a platform to analyze the data," says Jones.

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The journey has been fulfilling. "Initially, the amount of information available and the ability to navigate it can be overwhelming," Jones acknowledges. "However, the number of resources available to assist researchers on the Workbench were surprising. The training videos, code snippets, and office hours make it possible for any motivated researcher to conduct a meaningful research study."

What advice does Dr. Jones have for researchers working on the Workbench with the powerful *All of Us* dataset? "Fortune favors the bold! If you feel a research question is relevant but not being pursued, remember that if you don't undertake the research, it may be left undone. I feel that you owe it to the members of that community to seek answers to that question. If you are inexperienced, but willing to work hard and learn, you can still make a meaningful contribution to health research. Trust me—it's worth it." ■

New Peer Review Process Aims to Simplify the Review Process

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has introduced new reviewing guidance aimed at simplifying the peer review process. This initiative seeks to enhance accessibility for researchers while preserving rigorous scientific evaluation. Key features of the new guidance include clearer evaluation criteria. This will help researchers better understand how their proposals are assessed and how to align them with NIH priorities.

This is important for early-stage researchers because it shifts attention from factors that can unfairly advantage established researchers—for example, reputation, past funding, or affiliation with well-known institutions. Instead, the emphasis is on the research question and the feasibility of the proposed work. This helps to ensure that all applicants, regardless of institution or career stage, are evaluated on the strength of their ideas and research plan.

The new criteria offers additional benefits as well. Administrative burdens on reviewers are reduced, and early-stage career researchers can focus more heavily on the scientific aspects of their proposals. These streamlined processes may lead to quicker funding decisions, allowing for timely project initiation. Moreover, clearer feedback from reviewers will facilitate improved applications in future submissions, ultimately enhancing the quality of research supported by the NIH.

NIH's new 2025 reviewing guidance represents an important step toward creating a more efficient and fair funding landscape that supports the advancement of scientific research.

Additional [review process framework](#) information, including templates, summary statement mock-ups, and specific guidance is available from NIH.

If you have an Amaze account, log in and view the new Researcher Academy discussion board. This [post](#) provides access to webinars and additional resources on the topic.

All of Us Researcher Academy

The [*All of Us* Researcher Academy](#) provides training and technical assistance to researchers who are conducting research with the [*All of Us* Researcher Workbench](#), the cloud-based analytics platform where registered researchers can access data contributed by *All of Us* participants. The academy also supports peer-to-peer learning and network-building among researchers and students.

All of Us Researcher Academy Partners

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