

Dr. David Reich

David Reich received a bachelor's degree in physics in 1996 from Harvard College, and carried out his doctoral work in statistical methods for learning about evolutionary history with applications to gene mapping at the University of Oxford (mentor David Goldstein), graduating in 1999. He completed his post-doctoral work at the Whitehead Institute / MIT Center for Genome Research working on using insights about population history to improve searches for disease genes in 2003 (mentor Eric Lander), before starting as faculty at the Harvard Medical School Department of Genetics. He became a full professor in 2011, and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator in 2013.

Dr. Reich's work focuses on studying population mixture, with application to both medicine and human history. In medical genetics, he has developed and applied methods to use the history of mixture of populations in the history of African Americans to find genetic risk factors that contribute to health disparities. His laboratory has also developed and applied methods that have led to the discovery of ancient population mixtures in South Asians, Europeans, and Remote Oceanians, as well as interbreeding between archaic and modern humans.

Dr. Reich built the first state-of-the-art ancient lab for studying genome-wide human DNA in the United States in 2013, and much of his work at present focuses on using the transformative power of ancient DNA to gain new insight about medical and evolutionary genetics.

His new book, "Who We Are and How We Got Here: Ancient DNA and the New Science of the Human Past," summarizes the state of this field.

