

Ninety-nine independent genetic loci influencing general cognitive function include genes associated with brain health and structure (N = 280,360)

Gail Davies^{1,181}, Max Lam^{2,181}, Sarah E Harris^{1,3}, Joey W Trampush⁴, Michelle Luciano¹, W David Hill¹, Saskia PHagenaars^{1,5}, Stuart J Ritchie¹, Riccardo E Marioni^{1,3}, Chloe Fawns-Ritchie¹, David CM Liewald¹, Judith A Okely¹, Ari V Ahola-Olli^{6,7}, Catriona LK Barnes⁸, Lars Bertram⁹, Joshua C Bis¹⁰, Katherine E Burdick^{11,12,13}, Andrea Christoforou^{14,15}, Pamela DeRosse^{2,16}, Srdjan Djurovic^{14,17}, Thomas Espeseth^{18,19}, Stella Giakoumaki²⁰, Sudheer Giddaluru^{14,15}, Daniel E Gustavson^{21,22}, Caroline Hayward^{23,24}, Edith Hofer^{25,26}, M Arfan Ikram^{27,28,29}, Robert Karlsson³⁰, Emma Knowles³¹, Jari Lahti^{32,33}, Markus Leber³⁴, Shuo Li³⁵, Karen A Mather³⁶, Ingrid Melle^{14,18}, Derek Morris³⁷, Christopher Oldmeadow³⁸, Teemu Palviainen³⁹, Antony Payton⁴⁰, Raha Pazoki⁴¹, Katja Petrovic²⁵, Chandra A Reynolds⁴², Muralidharan Sargurupremraj⁴³, Markus Scholz^{44,45}, Jennifer A Smith^{46,47}, Albert V Smith^{48,49}, Natalie Terzikhan^{27,50}, Anbu Thalamuthu³⁶, Stella Trompet⁵¹, Sven J van der Lee²⁷, Erin B Ware⁴⁷, B Gwen Windham⁵², Margaret J Wright^{53,54}, Jingyun Yang^{55,56}, Jin Yu¹⁶, David Ames^{57,58}, Najaf Amin²⁷, Philippe Amouyel⁵⁹, Ole A Andreassen^{18,62}, Nicola J Armstrong⁶³, Amelia A Assareh³⁶, John R Attia⁶⁴, Deborah Attix^{65,66}, Dimitrios Avramopoulos^{67,68}, David A Bennett^{55,56}, Anne C Böhrer^{69,70}, Patricia A Boyle^{55,71}, Henry Brodaty^{36,72}, Harry Campbell⁸, Tyrone D Cannon⁷³, Elizabeth T Cirulli⁷⁴, Eliza Congdon⁷⁵, Emily Drabant Conley⁷⁶, Janie Corley¹, Simon R Cox¹, Anders M Dale^{21,77,78,79}, Abbas Dehghan^{41,80}, Danielle Dick⁸¹, Dwight Dickinson⁸², Johan G Eriksson^{83,84,85,86}, Evangelos Evangelou^{41,83}, Jessica D Faul⁴⁷, Ian Ford⁸⁸, Nelson A Freimer⁷⁵, He Gao⁴¹, Ina Giegling⁸⁹, Nathan A Gillespie⁹⁰, Scott D Gordon⁹¹, Rebecca F Gottesman^{92,93}, Michael E Griswold⁹⁴, Vilmundur Gudnason^{48,49}, Tamara B Harris⁹⁵, Annette M Hartmann⁸⁹, Alex Hatzimanolis^{96,97,98}, Gerardo Heiss⁹⁹, Elizabeth G Holliday⁶⁴, Peter K Joshi⁸, Mika Kähönen^{100,101}, Sharon LR Kardia⁴⁶, Ida Karlsson³⁰, Luca Kleindam^{60,102,150}, David S Knopman¹⁰³, Nicole A Kochan^{36,104}, Bettina Konte⁸⁹, John B Kwok^{105,106}, Stephanie Le Hellard^{14,15}, Teresa Lee^{36,104}, Terho Lehtimäki^{107,108}, Shu-Chen Li^{109,110}, Tian Liu^{9,109}, Marisa Koini²⁵, Edythe

London⁷⁵, Will T Longstreth, Jr^{111,112}, Oscar L Lopez¹¹³, Anu Loukola³⁹, Tobias Luck^{114,45}, Astri J Lundervold^{116,14}, Anders Lundquist^{117,118}, Leo-Pekka Lyytikäinen^{107,108}, Nicholas G Martin⁹¹, Grant W Montgomery^{91,119}, Alison D Murray^{120,24}, Anna C Need¹²¹, Raymond Noordam⁵¹, Lars Nyberg^{117,122,123}, William Ollier¹²⁴, Goran Papenberg^{109,125}, Alison Pattie¹²⁶, Ozren Polasek^{61,127}, Russell A Poldrack¹²⁸, Bruce M Psaty^{10, 130,131}, Simone Reppermund^{36,179}, Steffi G Riedel-Heller¹¹⁴, Richard J Rose¹³², Jerome I Rotter^{133,134}, Panos Roussos^{11,135,136}, Suvi P Rovio⁶, Yasaman Saba¹³⁷, Fred W Sabb¹³⁸, Perminder S Sachdev^{36,104}, Claudia Satizabal¹³⁹, Matthias Schmid¹⁴⁰, Rodney J Scott⁶⁴, Matthew A Scult¹⁴¹, Jeannette Simino⁹⁴, P Eline Slagboom¹⁴², Nikolaos Smyrnis^{96,97}, Aïcha Soumaré⁴³, Nikos C Stefanis^{96,97,98}, David J Stott¹⁴³, Richard E Straub¹⁴⁴, Kjetil Sundet^{18,19}, Adele M Taylor¹²⁶, Kent D Taylor^{133,134}, Ioanna Tzoulaki^{41,80,145}, Christophe Tzourio^{43,146}, André Uitterlinden^{27,147}, Veronique Vitart²³, Aristotle N Voineskos¹⁴⁸, Jaakko Kaprio^{39,83,149}, Michael Wagner^{102,150}, Holger Wagner¹⁰², Leonie Weinhold¹⁴⁰, K Hoyan Wen²⁷, Elisabeth Widen³⁹, Qiong Yang³⁵, Wei Zhao⁴⁶, Hieab HH Adams^{27,180}, Dan E Arking^{67,68}, Robert M Bilder⁷⁵, Panos Bitsios¹⁵², Eric Boerwinkle^{153,154}, Ornit Chiba-Falek⁶⁵, Aiden Corvin¹⁵⁵, Philip L De Jager^{156,157}, Stéphanie Debette^{43,158}, Gary Donohoe¹⁵⁹, Paul Elliott^{41,80}, Annette L Fitzpatrick^{112,160}, Michael Gill¹⁵⁵, David C Glahn³¹, Sara Hägg³⁰, Narelle K Hansell⁵³, Ahmad R Hariri¹⁴¹, M Kamran Ikram^{27,29}, J. Wouter Jukema¹⁶¹, Eero Vuoksimaa^{39,149}, Matthew C Keller¹⁶², William S Kremen^{21,22}, Lenore Launer⁹⁵, Ulman Lindenberger¹⁰⁹, Aarno Palotie^{39,163,164}, Nancy L Pedersen³⁰, Neil Pendleton¹⁶⁵, David J Porteous^{1,3,24}, Katri Räikkönen³², Olli T Raitakari^{6,166}, Alfredo Ramirez^{34,69,102}, Ivar Reinvang¹⁹, Igor Rudan⁸, Dan Rujescu⁸⁹, Reinhold Schmidt²⁵, Helena Schmidt¹³⁷, Peter W Schofield¹⁶⁷, Peter R Schofield^{168,169}, John M Starr^{170,1}, Vidar M Steen^{14,15}, Julian N Trollor^{36,179}, Steven T Turner¹⁷¹, Cornelia M Van Duijn²⁷, Arno Villringer^{172,173}, Daniel R Weinberger¹⁴⁴, David R Weir⁴⁷, James F Wilson^{8,23}, Anil Malhotra^{16,174,175}, Andrew M McIntosh^{1,176}, Catharine R Gale^{1,177}, Sudha Seshadri^{139,178}, Thomas H Mosley, Jr.⁵², Jan Bressler¹⁵³, Todd Lencz^{16,175,182}, Ian J Deary^{1,182}

¹Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology, Department of Psychology, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

²Institute of Mental Health, Singapore

³Medical Genetics Section, Centre for Genomic & Experimental Medicine, MRC Institute of Genetics & Molecular Medicine, University of Edinburgh, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, UK.

⁴BrainWorkup, LLC, Los Angeles, CA

⁵MRC Social, Genetic and Developmental Psychiatry Centre, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, King's College London, De Crespigny Park, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 8AF, UK

⁶Research Centre of Applied and Preventive Cardiovascular Medicine, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

⁷Department of Internal Medicine, Satakunta Central Hospital, Pori, Finland

⁸Centre for Global Health Research, Usher Institute of Population Health Sciences and Informatics, University of Edinburgh, Teviot Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9AG, Scotland.

⁹Max Planck Institute for Molecular Genetics, Berlin, Germany

¹⁰Cardiovascular Health Research Unit, Department of Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

¹¹Department of Psychiatry, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, USA

¹²Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (VISN 3), James J. Peters VA Medical Center, Bronx, NY, USA

¹³Department of Psychiatry, Brigham and Women's Hospital; Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA USA

¹⁴NORMENT, K.G. Jebsen Centre for Psychosis Research, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway

¹⁵Dr. Einar Martens Research Group for Biological Psychiatry, Center for Medical Genetics and Molecular Medicine, Haukeland University Hospital, Bergen, Norway

¹⁶Center for Psychiatric Neuroscience, Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, Manhasset, NY, USA

¹⁷Department of Medical Genetics, Oslo University Hospital, University of Bergen, Oslo, Norway

¹⁸Department of Psychology, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

¹⁹Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Oslo University Hospital, Oslo, Norway

²⁰Department of Psychology, University of Crete, Greece

²¹Department of Psychiatry, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA

²²Center for Behavior Genetics of Aging, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA

²³Medical Research Council Human Genetics Unit, Institute of Genetics and Molecular Medicine, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH4 2XU, UK

²⁴Generation Scotland, Centre for Genomic and Experimental Medicine, University of Edinburgh

²⁵Clinical Division of Neurogeriatrics, Department of Neurology, Medical University of Graz, Austria

²⁶Institute of Medical Informatics, Statistics and Documentation, Medical University of Graz, Austria

²⁷Department of Epidemiology, Erasmus University Medical Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

²⁸Department of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine, Erasmus University Medical Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

²⁹Department of Neurology, Erasmus University Medical Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

³⁰Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden

³¹Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, CT, USA

³² Department of Psychology and Logopedics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

³³Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

³⁴Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

³⁵Department of Biostatistics, Boston University School of Public Health, Boston, MA, USA

³⁶Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing, School of Psychiatry, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

³⁷Neuroimaging, Cognition & Genomics (NICOG) Centre, School of Psychology and Discipline of Biochemistry, National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland

³⁸Medical Research Institute and Faculty of Health, University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia

³⁹Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland (FIMM), University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

⁴⁰Centre for Epidemiology, Division of Population Health, Health Services Research & Primary Care, The University of Manchester

⁴¹Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health, Imperial College London, London, W2 1PG, UK

⁴²Department of Psychology, University of California Riverside, Riverside, CA, USA

⁴³University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux Population Health Research Center, INSERM UMR 1219, F-33000 Bordeaux, France

⁴⁴Institute for Medical Informatics, Statistics and Epidemiology, University of Leipzig

⁴⁵LIFE - Leipzig Research Center for Civilization Diseases, University of Leipzig

⁴⁶Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 48109

⁴⁷Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

⁴⁸Icelandic Heart Association, Kopavogur, Iceland

⁴⁹University of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland

⁵⁰Department of Respiratory Medicine, Ghent University Hospital, De Pintelaan 185, 9000 Ghent, Belgium

⁵¹Section of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Department of Internal Medicine, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, the Netherlands

⁵²Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics, University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS

⁵³Queensland Brain Institute, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

⁵⁴Centre for Advanced Imaging, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

⁵⁵Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL, USA

⁵⁶Department of Neurological Sciences, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL, USA

⁵⁷National Ageing Research Institute, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Victoria, Australia

⁵⁸Academic Unit for Psychiatry of Old Age, University of Melbourne, St George's Hospital, Kew, Australia

⁵⁹Univ. Lille, Inserm, CHU Lille, Institut Pasteur de Lille, U1167 - LabEx DISTALZ, F-59000 Lille, France

⁶⁰Department of Psychiatry, Medical Faculty, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

⁶¹Gen-Info LLC, Zagreb, Croatia

⁶²Norwegian Centre for Mental Disorders Research (NORMENT), Institute of Clinical Medicine, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

⁶³Mathematics and Statistics, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia

⁶⁴Hunter Medical Research Institute and Faculty of Health University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia

⁶⁵Department of Neurology, Bryan Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, and Center for Genomic and Computational Biology, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC, USA

⁶⁶Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Division of Medical Psychology, and Department of Neurology, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC, USA

⁶⁷Department of Psychiatry, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, MD, Baltimore, USA

⁶⁸McKusick-Nathans Institute of Genetic Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, MD, Baltimore, USA

⁶⁹Institute of Human Genetics, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

⁷⁰Department of Genomics, Life and Brain Center, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

⁷¹Departments of Behavioral Sciences, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL, USA

⁷²Dementia Centre for Research Collaboration, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia

⁷³Department of Psychology, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA

⁷⁴Human Longevity Inc, Durham, NC, USA

⁷⁵UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, Los Angeles, CA, USA

⁷⁶23andMe, Inc., Mountain View, CA, USA

⁷⁷Department of Cognitive Science, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA

⁷⁸Department of Neurosciences, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA

⁷⁹Department of Radiology, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA

⁸⁰MRC-PHE Centre for Environment, School of Public Health, Imperial College London, London, W2 1PG, UK

⁸¹Department of Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University, VA, USA

⁸²Clinical and Translational Neuroscience Branch, Intramural Research Program, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute of Health, Bethesda, MD, USA

⁸³National Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki, Finland

⁸⁴Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

⁸⁵Helsinki University Central Hospital, Unit of General Practice, Helsinki, Finland

⁸⁶Folkhälsan Research Centre, Helsinki, Finland

⁸⁷Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, University of Ioannina Medical School, Ioannina, Greece

⁸⁸Robertson Centre for Biostatistics, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom

⁸⁹Department of Psychiatry, Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Halle, Germany

⁹⁰Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA

⁹¹QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, Brisbane, Australia

⁹²Department of Neurology, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD

⁹³Department of Epidemiology, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD

⁹⁴Department of Data Science, University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS

⁹⁵Intramural Research Program National Institutes on Aging, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, USA

⁹⁶Department of Psychiatry, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Medical School, Eginition Hospital, Athens, Greece

⁹⁷University Mental Health Research Institute, Athens, Greece

⁹⁸Neurobiology Research Institute, Theodor-Theohari Cozzika Foundation, Athens, Greece

⁹⁹Department of Epidemiology, University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health, Chapel Hill, NC

¹⁰⁰Department of Clinical Physiology, Tampere University Hospital, and Finnish Cardiovascular Research Center, Tampere, Faculty of Medicine and Life Sciences, University of Tampere, Tampere 33521, Finland

¹⁰¹Department of Clinical Physiology, Finnish Cardiovascular Research Center - Tampere, Faculty of Medicine and Life Sciences, University of Tampere, Tampere 33014, Finland

¹⁰²Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

- ¹⁰³Department of Neurology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN
- ¹⁰⁴Neuropsychiatric Institute, Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney, Australia
- ¹⁰⁵Brain and Mind Centre - The University of Sydney, Camperdown, NSW, Australia 2050
- ¹⁰⁶School of Medical Sciences, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
- ¹⁰⁷Department of Clinical Chemistry, Fimlab Laboratories, Finnish Cardiovascular Research Center - Tampere, Faculty of Medicine and Life Sciences, University of Tampere, Tampere 33014, Finland
- ¹⁰⁸Department of Clinical Chemistry, Finnish Cardiovascular Research Center - Tampere, Faculty of Medicine and Life Sciences, University of Tampere, Tampere 33014, Finland
- ¹⁰⁹Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany
- ¹¹⁰Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany
- ¹¹¹Department of Neurology, School of Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA
- ¹¹²Department of Epidemiology, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA
- ¹¹³Department of Neurology and Psychiatry, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
- ¹¹⁴Institute of Social Medicine, Occupational Health and Public Health (ISAP), University of Leipzig
- ¹¹⁵LIFE - Leipzig Research Center for Civilization Diseases, University of Leipzig
- ¹¹⁶Department of Biological and Medical Psychology, University of Bergen, Norway
- ¹¹⁷Umeå Center for Functional Brain Imaging (UFBI), Umeå University, Sweden
- ¹¹⁸Department of Statistics, USBE Umeå University, S-907 97 Umeå, Sweden
- ¹¹⁹Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
- ¹²⁰The Institute of Medical Sciences, Aberdeen Biomedical Imaging Centre, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, AB25 2ZD, UK
- ¹²¹Division of Brain Sciences, Department of Medicine, Imperial College, London, UK
- ¹²²Department of Radiation Sciences, Umeå University, Sweden
- ¹²³Department of Integrative Medical Biology, Umeå University, Sweden
- ¹²⁴Centre for Integrated Genomic Medical Research, Institute of Population Health, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom
- ¹²⁵Karolinska Institutet, Aging Research Center, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden
- ¹²⁶Department of Psychology, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK
- ¹²⁷Faculty of Medicine, University of Split, Split, Croatia
- ¹²⁸Department of Psychology, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA, USA

¹²⁹Cardiovascular Health Research Unit, Department of Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

¹³⁰Department of Health Services, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

¹³¹Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute, Seattle, Washington, USA

¹³²Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Indiana University, Indiana, USA

¹³³Institute for Translational Genomics and Population Sciences, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

¹³⁴Department of Pediatrics, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Torrance, California, USA

¹³⁵Department of Genetics and Genomic Science and Institute for Multiscale Biology, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, USA

¹³⁶Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (VISN 2), James J. Peters VA Medical Center, Bronx, NY, USA

¹³⁷Institute of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Centre for Molecular Medicine, Medical University of Graz

¹³⁸Robert and Beverly Lewis Center for Neuroimaging, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, USA

¹³⁹Department of Neurology, Boston University School of Medicine

¹⁴⁰Department of Medical Biometry, Informatics and Epidemiology, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

¹⁴¹Laboratory of NeuroGenetics, Department of Psychology & Neuroscience, Duke University, Durham, NC, USA

¹⁴²Department of Molecular Epidemiology, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, the Netherlands

¹⁴³Department of Cardiovascular and Medical Sciences, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom

¹⁴⁴Lieber Institute for Brain Development, Johns Hopkins University Medical Campus, Baltimore, MD, USA

¹⁴⁵Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, University of Ioannina Medical School, Ioannina, Greece

¹⁴⁶Department of Public Health, University Hospital of Bordeaux, France

¹⁴⁷Department of Internal Medicine, Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

¹⁴⁸Campbell Family Mental Health Institute, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

¹⁴⁹Department of Public Health, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

¹⁵⁰German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE), Bonn, Germany

¹⁵¹McKusick-Nathans Institute of Genetic Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, MD, Baltimore, USA

¹⁵²Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Crete, Heraklion, Crete, Greece

¹⁵³Human Genetics Center, School of Public Health, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, TX

¹⁵⁴Human Genome Sequencing Center, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX

¹⁵⁵Neuropsychiatric Genetics Research Group, Department of Psychiatry and Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

¹⁵⁶Center for Translational and Systems Neuroimmunology, Department of Neurology, Columbia University Medical Center, New York, NY, USA

¹⁵⁷Program in Medical and Population Genetics, Broad Institute, Cambridge, MA, USA

¹⁵⁸Department of Neurology, University Hospital of Bordeaux, France

¹⁵⁹Neuroimaging, Cognition & Genomics (NICOG) Centre, School of Psychology and Discipline of Biochemistry, National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland

¹⁶⁰Department of Global Health, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

¹⁶¹Department of Cardiology, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, the Netherlands

¹⁶²Institute for Behavioral Genetics, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado

¹⁶³Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, Wellcome Trust Genome Campus, Cambridge, UK

¹⁶⁴Department of Medical Genetics, University of Helsinki and University Central Hospital, Helsinki, Finland

¹⁶⁵Division of Neuroscience and Experimental Psychology, School of Biological Sciences, Manchester Academic Health Science Centre, and Manchester Medical School, Institute of Brain, Behaviour, and Mental Health, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

¹⁶⁶Department of Clinical Physiology and Nuclear Medicine, Turku University Hospital, Turku, Finland

¹⁶⁷School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia

¹⁶⁸Neuroscience Research Australia, Sydney Australia

¹⁶⁹Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia

¹⁷⁰Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Research Centre, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

¹⁷¹Division of Nephrology and Hypertension, Department of Internal Medicine, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN, USA

¹⁷²Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences, Leipzig

¹⁷³Day Clinic for Cognitive Neurology, University Hospital Leipzig, Leipzig

¹⁷⁴Division of Psychiatry Research, Zucker Hillside Hospital, Glen Oaks, NY, USA

¹⁷⁵Department of Psychiatry, Hofstra Northwell School of Medicine, Hempstead, New York

¹⁷⁶Division of Psychiatry, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

¹⁷⁷MRC Lifecourse Epidemiology Unit, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK.

¹⁷⁸The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Framingham Heart Study, Framingham, MA, USA

¹⁷⁹Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry, School of Psychiatry, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

¹⁸⁰Department of Radiology, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands

¹⁸¹These authors contributed equally.

¹⁸²These authors contributed equally.

Correspondence should be addressed to

Ian J. Deary, Department of Psychology, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH8 9JZ, UK.

Tel. +44 131 650 3452

email i.deary@ed.ac.uk

Correspondence may be sent to either i.deary@ed.ac.uk or Gail.Davies@ed.ac.uk

General cognitive function is a prominent human trait associated with many important life outcomes^{1,2}, including longevity³. The substantial heritability of general cognitive function is known to be polygenic, but it has had little explication in terms of the contributing genetic variants^{4,5,6}. Here, we combined cognitive and genetic data from the CHARGE and COGENT consortia, and UK Biobank (total N=280,360; age range = 16 to 102). We found 9,714 genome-wide significant SNPs ($P < 5 \times 10^{-8}$) in 99 independent loci. Most showed clear evidence of functional importance. Among many novel genes associated with general cognitive function were *SGCZ*, *ATXN1*, *MAPT*, *AUTS2*, and *P2RY6*. Within the novel genetic loci were variants associated with neurodegenerative disorders, neurodevelopmental disorders, physical and psychiatric illnesses, brain structure, and BMI. Gene-based analyses found 536 genes significantly associated with general cognitive function; many were highly expressed in the brain, and associated with neurogenesis and dendrite gene sets. Genetic association results predicted up to 4% of general cognitive function variance in independent samples. There was significant genetic overlap between general cognitive function and information processing speed, as well as many health variables including longevity.

Since its discovery in 1904⁷, hundreds of studies have replicated the finding that around 40% of the variance in people's test scores on a diverse battery of cognitive tests can be accounted for by a single general factor⁸. General cognitive function is peerless among human psychological traits in terms of its empirical support and importance for life outcomes^{1,2}. Individual differences in general cognitive function show phenotypic and genetic stability across most of the life course⁹⁻¹¹. Twin studies find that general cognitive function has a heritability of more than 50% from adolescence through adulthood to older age^{4,12,13}. SNP-based estimates of heritability for general cognitive function are about 20-30%⁵. To date, little of this substantial heritability has been explained; only a few relevant genetic loci have been discovered (**Table 1** and **Fig. 1**). Like other highly polygenic traits,

a limitation on uncovering relevant genetic loci is sample size¹⁴; to date, there have been fewer than 100,000 individuals in studies of general cognitive function^{5,6}.

General cognitive function, unlike height for example, is not measured the same way in all samples. Here, this was mitigated by applying a consistent method of extracting a general cognitive function component from cognitive test data in the cohorts of the CHARGE and COGENT consortia; all individuals were of European ancestry (**Supplementary Materials**). Cohorts' participants were required to have scores from at least three cognitive tests, each of which tested a different cognitive domain. Each cohort applied the same data reduction technique (principal component analysis) to extract a general cognitive component. Scores from the first unrotated principal component were used as the general cognitive function phenotype. Using a general cognitive function phenotype in a genetically informative design is supported by the observation that the well-established positive manifold of cognitive tests is best presented by a highly heritable higher-order latent general cognitive function phenotype that mediates genetic and environmental covariances among cognitive tests^{4,8,13}. The psychometric characteristics of the general cognitive component from each cohort in the CHARGE consortium are shown in **Supplementary Materials**. In order to address the fact that different cohorts had applied different cognitive tests, we previously showed that two general cognitive function components extracted from different sets of cognitive tests on the same participants correlate highly⁵. The cognitive test from the large UK Biobank sample was the so-called 'fluid' test, a 13-item test of verbal-numerical reasoning, which has a high genetic correlation with general cognitive function¹⁵. With the CHARGE and COGENT samples' general cognitive function scores and UK Biobank's verbal-numerical reasoning scores (in two samples: assessment centre-tested, and online-tested), there were 280,360 participants included in the present report's genome-wide association study (GWAS) analysis. We performed two post-GWAS meta-analyses separately: first, on the CHARGE and COGENT cohorts; and, second, on UK Biobank's two samples. Prior to running the subsequent meta-analysis of CHARGE-COGENT with UK Biobank, the genetic correlation,

calculated using linkage disequilibrium score (LDSC) regression, was estimated at 0.82 (SE=0.02), indicating very substantial overlap between the genetic variants influencing general cognitive function in these two groups. We performed an inverse-variance weighted meta-analysis of CHARGE-COGENT and UK Biobank.

Genome-wide results for general cognitive function showed 9,714 significant ($P < 5 \times 10^{-8}$) SNP associations, and 17,563 at a suggestive level ($1 \times 10^{-5} > P > 5 \times 10^{-8}$); see **Fig. 2a** and **Supplementary Tables 3 and 4**. There were 120 independent lead SNPs identified by Functional Mapping and annotation of genetic associations (FUMA)¹⁶. A comparison of these lead SNPs with results from the largest previous GWAS of cognitive function⁶ and educational attainment¹⁷—which included a subsample of individuals contributing to the present study—confirmed that 4 and 12 of these, respectively, were genome-wide significant in the previous studies (Supplementary Table 14). Five SNPs in the present study were completely novel (i.e., $P > .05$ in these previous studies): rs7010173 (chromosome 8; intronic variant in *SGCZ*); rs179994 (chromosome 6; intronic variant in *ATXN1*), rs8065165 (chromosome 17; intronic variant 2KB upstream of *MAPT*); rs2007481 (chromosome 7; intronic variant in *AUTS2*); and rs188236525 (chromosome 11; intronic variant 2KB upstream of *P2RY6*). The 120 lead SNPs were distributed within 99 loci across all autosomal chromosomes. Using the GWAS catalog (<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/gwas/>) to look up each locus, only 12 of these loci had been reported previously for other GWA studies of cognitive function or educational attainment (novel loci are indicated in **Supplementary Table 16**). Therefore, our study uncovered 87 novel independent loci associated with cognitive function. Of the five completely novel loci, two of these are in/near interesting candidate genes: *MAPT* gene mutations are associated with neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and frontotemporal dementia¹⁸; and *AUTS2* is a candidate gene for neurological disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, developmental delay¹⁹, and for alcohol consumption^{20,21}. These general cognitive function-associated genes also showed significant gene associations in the gene-based tests (except for

P2RY6); see **Supplementary Table 7 and Fig. 2b** for the results for 536 genes that the present study finds to be significantly associated with general cognitive function.

For the 120 lead SNPs, a summary of previous SNP associations is listed in **Supplementary Table 15**. They have been associated with many physical (e.g., BMI, height, weight), medical (e.g., lung cancer, Crohn's disease, blood pressure), and psychiatric (e.g., bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, autism) traits, as well as with cognitive function and educational attainment (12 loci). Of the novel SNP associations, we highlight previous associations with autism/ADHD (3 loci), bipolar disorder/schizophrenia (14 loci), and infant head circumference/intracranial volume/subcortical brain region volumes (2 loci).

We sought to identify lead and tagged SNPs within the 99 significant genomic risk loci associated with general cognitive function that are potentially functional, using FUMA¹⁶ (**Supplementary Table 16**). See online methods for further details. Seventy-nine of the genomic risk loci contained at least one SNP with a Combined Annotation Dependent Depletion (CADD) score > 12.37, indicating that they are likely to be deleterious SNPs. Sixty-five of the genomic risk loci contained at least one SNP with a RegulomeDB score < 3, indicating that they are likely to be involved in gene regulation. Ninety-seven of the loci contained at least one SNP with a minimum 15-core chromatin state score of < 8, indicating that they are located in an open chromatin state consistent with the SNP being in a regulatory region. Sixty-eight of the loci contained at least one eQTL. Of interest, rs1135840 in *CYP2D6* ($P=1.42 \times 10^{-11}$) is a non-synonymous SNP (Ser486Thr), that has previously been associated with the metabolism of several commonly-used drugs²².

MAGMA gene-set analysis identified two significant gene sets associated with general cognitive function: neurogenesis ($P = 1.1 \times 10^{-7}$) and dendrite ($P = 1.6 \times 10^{-6}$) (**Supplementary Table 18; see Online Methods**). Identification of these gene sets is consistent with genes associated with cognitive

function regulating the generation of cells within the nervous system, including the formation of neuronal dendrites. MAGMA gene-property analysis indicated that genes expressed in all brain regions—except the brain spinal cord and cervical c1—and genes expressed in the pituitary share a higher level of association with general cognitive function than genes not expressed in the brain or pituitary (**Fig. 3** and **Supplementary Tables 20 and 21**). The most significant enrichments were for genes expressed in the cerebellum and the brain's cortex.

We estimated the proportion of variance explained by all common SNPs in four of the largest individual samples, using univariate GCTA-GREML analyses (see Online Methods): English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA: $N = 6,661$, $h^2 = 0.12$, $SE = 0.06$), Understanding Society ($N = 7,841$, $h^2 = 0.17$, $SE = 0.04$), UK Biobank Assessment Centre ($N = 86,010$, $h^2 = 0.25$, $SE = 0.006$), and Generation Scotland ($N = 6,507$, $h^2 = 0.20$, $SE = 0.05^{23}$) (**Table 2**). Genetic correlations for general cognitive function amongst these cohorts, estimated using bivariate GCTA-GREML, ranged from $r_g = 0.88$ to 1.0 (**Table 2**). There were slight differences in the test questions and the testing environment for the UK Biobank's 'fluid' (verbal-numerical reasoning) test in the assessment centre versus the online version. Therefore, we investigated the genetic contribution to the stability of individual differences in people's verbal-numerical reasoning using a bivariate GCTA-GREML analysis, including only those individuals who completed the test on both occasions (mean time gap = 4.93 years). We found a significant perfect genetic correlation of $r_g = 1.0$ ($SE = 0.02$).

We tested how well the genetic results from our CHARGE-COGENT-UK Biobank general cognitive function GWAS analysis accounted for cognitive test score variance in independent samples. We re-ran the GWAS analysis excluding three of the larger cohorts: ELSA, Generation Scotland, and Understanding Society. These new GWAS summary results were used to create polygenic profile scores in the three cohorts. The polygenic profile score for general cognitive function explained 2.37% of the variance in ELSA ($\beta = 0.16$, $SE = 0.01$, $P = 1.40 \times 10^{-46}$), 3.96% in Generation Scotland ($\beta =$

0.21, SE = 0.01, $P = 3.87 \times 10^{-72}$), and 4.00% in Understanding Society ($\beta = 0.21$, SE = 0.01, $P = 1.31 \times 10^{-81}$). Full results for all five thresholds are shown in **Supplementary Table 11**.

Using the CHARGE-COGENT-UK Biobank GWAS results, we tested the genetic correlations between general cognitive function and 25 health traits. Sixteen of the 25 health traits were significantly genetically correlated with general cognitive function (**Supplementary Table 12**). Novel genetic correlations were identified between general cognitive function and ADHD ($r_g = -0.36$, SE = 0.03, $P = 3.91 \times 10^{-32}$), bipolar disorder ($r_g = -0.09$, SE = 0.04, $P = 0.008$), major depression ($r_g = -0.30$, SE = 0.05, $P = 4.13 \times 10^{-12}$), and longevity ($r_g = 0.15$, SE = 0.06, $P = 0.014$).

We explored the genetic foundations of reaction time and its genetic association with general cognitive function. Reaction time is an elementary cognitive task that assesses a person's information processing speed. It is both phenotypically and genetically correlated with general cognitive function, and accounts for some of its association with health^{24,25}. We note the limitation that the UK Biobank's reaction time variable is based on only four trials per participant. Full results and methods are in Supplementary materials. There were 330,069 individuals in the UK Biobank sample with both reaction time and genetic data. GWAS results for reaction time uncovered 2,022 significant SNPs in 42 independent genomic regions; 122 of these SNPs overlapped with general cognitive function, with 76 having a consistent direction of effect (sign test $P = 0.008$) (**Supplementary Table 9**). These genomic loci showed clear evidence of functionality (**Supplementary Table 17**). Using gene-based GWA, 191 genes attained statistical significance (**Supplementary Table 8**), 28 of which overlapped with general cognitive function (**Supplementary Table 10**). Gene-sets constructed using expression data indicated a role for genes expressed in the brain (**Supplementary Tables 22 and 23; Supplementary Fig. 3**). There was a genetic correlation (r_g) of 0.227 ($P = 4.33 \times 10^{-27}$) between reaction time and general cognitive function. The polygenic score

for reaction time explained 0.43% of the general cognitive function variance in ELSA ($P = 1.42 \times 10^{-9}$), 0.56 % in Generation Scotland ($P = 2.49 \times 10^{-11}$), and 0.26% in Understanding Society ($P = 1.50 \times 10^{-6}$).

People with higher general cognitive function are broadly healthier^{26,27}; here, we find overlap between genetic loci for general cognitive function and a number of physical health traits. These shared genetic associations may reflect a causal path from cognitive function to disease, cognitive consequences of disease, or pleiotropy²⁸. For psychiatric illness, conditions like schizophrenia (and, to a lesser extent, bipolar disorder) are characterised by cognitive impairments²⁹, and thus reverse causality (i.e. from cognitive function to disease) is less likely. In terms of localising more proximal structural and functional causes of variation in cognitive function, researchers could prioritise the genetic loci uncovered here that overlap with brain-related measures.

General cognitive function has prominence and pervasiveness in the human life course, and it is important to understand the environmental and genetic origins of its variation in the population⁴. The unveiling here of many new genetic loci, genes, and genetic pathways that contribute to its heritability (**Supplementary Tables 3, 7 and 18; Fig. 2**)—which it shares, as we find here, with many health outcomes, longevity, brain structure, and processing speed—provides a foundation for exploring the mechanisms that bring about and sustain cognitive efficiency through life.

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Author Disclosure

Anders Dale is a Founder of and holds equity in CorTechs Labs, Inc., and serves on its Scientific Advisory Board. He is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of Human Longevity, Inc., and receives funding through research agreements with General Electric Healthcare and Medtronic, Inc. The terms of these arrangements have been reviewed and approved by UCSD in accordance with its conflict of interest policies. Bruce Psaty serves on a DSMB for a clinical trial of a device funded by the manufacturer (Zoll LifeCor), and on the steering committee of the Yale Open Data Access Project funded by Johnson & Johnson. Ian Deary is a participant in UK Biobank.

Contributions

GD and IJD drafted the manuscript with contributions from M Luciano, SEH, WDH, SJR, SPH, CF-R, and JO. GD, JWT and M Lam performed quality control of the CHARGE-COGENT data. IJD designed and overviewed the cognitive psychometric analyses in the CHARGE cohorts. GD and REM performed quality control of UK Biobank data. GD, JWT and M Lam analysed the data. SEH, WDH, SPH and M Luciano performed/assisted with downstream analysis. GD and IJD co-ordinated the CHARGE and UK Biobank work, and their integration with COGENT; TL, JWT and M Lam co-ordinated the COGENT work. All authors supplied phenotype data, genotype data, and GWA results, and commented on and approved the manuscript.

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Online Methods

Participants and Cognitive Phenotypes

This study includes 280,360 individuals of European ancestry from 57 population-based cohorts brought together by the Cohorts for Heart and Aging Research in Genomic Epidemiology (CHARGE), the Cognitive Genomics Consortium (COGENT) consortia, and UK Biobank. All individuals were aged between 16 and 102 years. Exclusion criteria included clinical stroke (including self-reported stroke) or prevalent dementia.

For each of the CHARGE and COGENT cohorts, a general cognitive function component phenotype was constructed from a number of cognitive tasks. Each cohort was required to have tasks that tested at least three different cognitive domains. Principal component analysis was applied to the cognitive test scores to derive a measure of general cognitive function. Principal component analyses results for the CHARGE cohorts were checked by one author (IJD) to establish the presence of a single component. Scores on the first unrotated component were used as the cognitive phenotype (general cognitive function). UK Biobank participants were asked 13 multiple-choice questions that assessed verbal and numerical reasoning (VNR: UK Biobank calls this the 'fluid' test). The score was the number of questions answered correctly in two minutes. Two samples of UK Biobank participants with verbal-numerical reasoning scores were used in the current analysis. The first sample (VNR Assessment Centre) consists of UK Biobank participants who completed the verbal-numerical reasoning test at baseline in assessment centres ($n = 107,586$). The second sample (VNR Web-Based) consists of participants who did not complete the verbal-numerical reasoning test at baseline but did complete this test during the web-based cognitive assessment online ($n = 54,021$). Details of the cognitive phenotypes for all cohorts can be found in Supplementary Information Section 2.

At the baseline UK Biobank assessment, 496,790 participants completed the reaction time test. Details of the test can be found in Supplementary Information Section 2. A sample of 330,069 UK Biobank participants with both scores on the reaction time test and genotyping data was used in this study.

Genome-wide association analyses

Genotype–phenotype association analyses were performed within each cohort, using an additive model, on imputed SNP dosage scores. Adjustments for age, sex, and population stratification, if required, were included in the model. Cohort-specific covariates—for example, site or familial relationships—were also fitted as required. Cohort specific quality control procedures, imputation methods, and covariates are described in Supplementary Table S2. Quality control of the cohort-level summary statistics was performed using the EasyQC software³⁶, which implemented the exclusion of SNPs with imputation quality < 0.6 and minor allele count < 25.

Meta-analysis

A meta-analysis of the 56 CHARGE-COGENT cohorts was performed using the METAL package with an inverse variance weighted model implemented and single genomic control applied (<http://www.sph.umich.edu/csg/abecasis/Metal>). The two UK Biobank groups, VNR Assessment Centre and VNR Web-Based, were also meta-analysed using the same method. An inverse-variance weighted meta-analysis of the CHARGE-COGENT and UK Biobank summary results was then performed.

Reaction Time Genome-wide association analysis

The GWAS of reaction time from the UK Biobank sample was performed using the BGENIE v 1.2 analysis package (<https://jmarchini.org/bgenie/>). A linear SNP association model was tested which accounted for genotype uncertainty. Reaction time was adjusted for the following covariates; age, sex, genotyping batch, genotyping array, assessment centre, and 40 principal components.

Gene-based analysis (MAGMA)

Gene-based analysis was conducted using MAGMA³⁷. All SNPs that were located within protein coding genes were used to derive a *P*-value describing the association found with general cognitive function and reaction time. The SNP-wise model from MAGMA was used and the NCBI build 37 was used to determine the location and boundaries of 18,199 autosomal genes. Linkage disequilibrium within and between each gene was gauged using the 1000 genomes phase 3 release³⁸. A Bonferroni correction was applied to control for multiple testing; the genome-wide significance threshold was $P < 2.75 \times 10^{-6}$.

Estimation of SNP-based heritability

Univariate GCTA-GREML analyses³⁹ were used to estimate the proportion of variance explained by all common SNPs in four of the largest individual cohorts: ELSA, Understanding Society, UK Biobank, and Generation Scotland. Sample sizes for all of the GCTA analyses in these cohorts differed from the association analyses, because one individual was excluded from any pair of individuals who had an estimated coefficient of relatedness of > 0.025 to ensure that effects due to shared environment were not included. The same covariates were included in all GCTA-GREML analyses as for the SNP-based association analyses.

Univariate Linkage Disequilibrium Score Regression (LDSC)

Univariate LDSC regression was performed on the summary statistics from the GWAS on general cognitive function and reaction time. The heritability Z-score provides a measure of the polygenic signal found in each data set. Values greater than 4 indicate that the data are suitable for use with bivariate LDSC regression⁴⁰. The mean χ^2 statistic indicates the inflation of the GWAS test statistics that, under the null hypothesis of no association (i.e. no inflation of test statistics), would be 1. For each GWAS, an LD regression was carried out by regressing the GWA test statistics (χ^2) on to each SNP's LD score (the sum of squared correlations between the minor allele frequency count of a SNP with the minor allele frequency count of every other SNP).

Genetic correlations

Genetic correlations were estimated using two methods, bivariate GCTA-GREML⁴¹ and LDSC⁴⁰. Bivariate GCTA was used to calculate genetic correlations between phenotypes and cohorts where the genotyping data were available. This method was used to calculate the genetic correlations between different cohorts for the general cognitive function phenotype. It was also employed to investigate the genetic contribution to the stability of UK Biobank's participants' verbal-numerical reasoning test scores in the assessment centre and then in web-based, online testing. In cases where only GWA summary results were available, LDSC was used to estimate genetic correlations between two traits—for example, general cognitive function and longevity—in order to estimate the degree of overlap between polygenic architecture of the traits. Genetic correlations were estimated between general cognitive function and reaction time and a number of health outcomes.

Polygenic prediction

Polygenic profile score analysis was used to predict cognitive test performance in Generation Scotland, the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing, and Understanding Society. Polygenic profiles were created in PRSice⁴² using results of a general cognitive function meta-analysis that excluded the Generation Scotland, the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing, and Understanding Society cohorts. Polygenic profiles were also created based on the UK Biobank GWA reaction time results.

Functional Annotation and Loci Discovery

Genomic risk loci were derived using FUnctional MApping and annotation of genetic associations (FUMA)¹⁶. Firstly, independent significant SNPs were identified using the SNP2GENE function and defined as SNPs with a P -value of $\leq 5 \times 10^{-8}$ and independent of other genome wide significant SNPs at $R^2 < 0.6$. Using these independent significant SNPs, candidate SNPs to be used in subsequent annotations were identified as all SNPs that had a $MAF \geq 0.0005$ and were in LD of $R^2 \geq 0.6$ with at least one of the independent significant SNPs. These candidate SNPs included those from the 1000 genomes reference panel and need not have been included in the GWAS performed in the current study. Lead SNPs were also identified using the independent significant SNPs and were defined as those that were independent from each other at $R^2 < 0.1$. Genomic risk loci that were 250kb or closer were merged into a single locus.

The lead SNPs and those in LD with the lead SNPs were then mapped to genes based on the functional consequences of genetic variation of the lead SNPs which was measured using ANNOVAR⁴³ and the Ensembl genes build 85. Intergenic SNPs were mapped to the two closest up- and down-stream genes which can result in their being assigned to multiple genes. All SNPs found in 1000 genomes phase 3 were then annotated with a CADD score⁴⁴, RegulomeDB score⁴⁵, and 15-core chromatin states⁴⁶⁻⁴⁸.

The mapping of eQTLs was performed using each independent significant SNP and those in LD with it. eQTL information was obtained from the following databases: GTEx (<http://www.gtexportal.org/home/>), BRAINEAC (<http://www.braineac.org/>), Blood eQTL Browser (<http://genenetwork.nl/bloodeqtlbrowser/>), and BIOS QTL browser (<http://genenetwork.nl/biosqtlbrowser/>).

Gene-set analysis

Gene-set analysis was conducted in MAGMA³⁷ using competitive testing, which examines if genes within the gene set are more strongly associated with each of the cognitive phenotypes than other genes. Such competitive tests have been shown to control for Type 1 error rate as well as facilitating an understanding of the underlying biology of cognitive differences^{49,50}. A total of 10 891 gene-sets (sourced from Gene Ontology⁵¹, Reactome⁵², and, SigDB⁵³) were examined for enrichment of intelligence. A Bonferroni correction was applied to control for the multiple tests performed on the 10,891 gene sets available for analysis.

Gene property analysis

In order to indicate the role of particular tissue types that influence differences in general cognitive function and reaction time, a gene property analysis was conducted using MAGMA. The goal of this analysis was to determine if, in 30 broad tissue types and 53 specific tissues, tissue-specific differential expression levels were predictive of the association of a gene with general cognitive function and reaction time. Tissue types were taken from the GTEx v6 RNA-seq database⁵⁴ with expression values being log2 transformed with a pseudocount of 1 after winsorising at 50, with the average expression value being taken from each tissue. Multiple testing was controlled for using a Bonferroni correction.

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Figure Captions

Figure 1 Summary of molecular genetic association studies with general cognitive function to date.

Figure 2 SNP-based (a) and gene-based (b) association results for general cognitive function in 280,360 individuals. The red line indicates the threshold for genome-wide significance: $P < 5 \times 10^{-8}$ for (a), $P < 2.75 \times 10^{-6}$ for (b); the blue line in (a) indicates the threshold for suggestive significance: $P < 1 \times 10^{-5}$.

Figure 3 Functional analyses of general cognitive function association results, lead SNPs, and all SNPs in LD with lead SNPs. Functional consequences of SNPs on genes (a) indicated by functional annotation assigned by ANNOVAR. MAGMA gene-property analysis results; results are shown for average expression of 30 general tissue types (b) and 53 specific tissue types (c). The dotted line indicates the Bonferroni-corrected α level.

Table 1. Details of GWA studies of general cognitive function to date, including the present study

Author; doi	Year	N	GWAS-sig SNP hits	GWAS-sig gene hits	SNP-based h^2
Davies et al., 2011 ³⁰	2011	3511	0	1 gene	0.51 (0.11)
Lencz et al., 2013 ³¹	2013	5000	0	NA	NA
Benyamin et al., 2014 ³²	2014	17989	0	0	0.46 (0.06)
Kirkpatrick et al. 2014 ³³	2014	7100	0	0	0.35 (0.11)
Davies et al. 2015 ³⁴	2015	53,949	3 loci (13 SNPs)	1 gene	0.29 (0.05)
Davies et al. 2016 ⁵ ; results for 'fluid' test	2016	36,035	3 loci (149 SNPs)	7 loci 17 genes	0.31 (0.02)
Trampush et al., 2017 ³⁵	2017	35,298	2 loci (7 SNPs)	3 loci 7 genes	0.22 (0.01)
Sniekers et al., 2017 ⁶	2017	78,308	18 loci (336 SNPs)	47 genes	0.20 (0.01)
Davies et al., 2017; present study	2017	280,360	99 loci (9714 SNPs)	536 genes	0.25 (0.006)

For SNP-based heritability, the value from the largest sample is given.

Table 2. Genetic correlations and heritability estimates of a general cognitive function component in three United Kingdom cohorts

Cohort	ELSA	US	GS
ELSA	0.12 (0.06)		
US	1.0 (0.33)	0.17 (0.04)	
GS	1.0 (0.38)	0.88 (0.24)	0.20 (0.05)

Below the diagonal, genetic correlations (standard error) of general cognitive function amongst three cohorts are shown: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA); Generation Scotland (GS); and Understanding Society (US). SNP-based heritability (standard error) estimates appear on the diagonal.





