

Altman, however, says that the system is secure and that the company will not be storing user data. Every picture of an iris will be converted into a digital code, called IrisHash, which will be stored in Worldcoin's database to check against future IrisHashes and deny coins to known users; the pictures themselves will be erased from the database. "We take a picture of your irises, we don't even store it, we calculate a code from it, the code is uploaded, but the the image never is," Altman says. "We don't know any more information about you than that image."

Right now, in fact, Worldcoin is running a pilot, involving about 30 Orbs in various countries, and storing a lot of data, including images of peoples' eyes, bodies, and faces and their three-dimensional scans, according to the company's own promotion material. "Without it, we wouldn't be able to fairly and inclusively give a share of Worldcoin to everyone on Earth. But we can't wait to stop collecting it and we want to make it clear that it will never be our business to sell your personal data," reads a blogpost titled "Privacy During Field Testing." In what Worldcoin calls its "field testing phase," these images are being collected in order to improve the fraud-detection algorithms powering the Orbs. This phase will likely continue until early 2022; the data collected up to that point will be deleted once the algorithms "are fully trained."

Alex Blania, who cofounded the company alongside Altman and Max Novendstern, explains that the Orb system allows for beneficial "incentive-alignments." Not only will people be enticed by the prospect of getting something for free, but an army of Orb Operators will be actively recruiting them in order to get their rewards. (And in turn, Worldcoin has been hiring people to recruit the Orb Operators, [according to an ad posted on a Kenyan job bulletin](#)).

Worldcoin itself will remain in charge of distributing the Orbs, and also of kicking out any operators that try to tamper with the devices in order to extract unwarranted rewards (for instance, by scanning someone twice). Could Orb Operators get their rewards by surreptitiously scanning the irises of clueless people who never heard about Worldcoin? Blania says the company is testing fraud detection systems, adding that he cannot be "extremely specific." But, in theory, the company could use metrics such as whether the user has actually claimed the Worldcoin or carried out any transaction, in order to spot untoward behavior and root out sneaky Orb-ers.

Over the course of the pilot, more than 130,000 users have claimed their Worldcoins—60,000 in the past month. To date, the project has used 30 Orbs run by 25 entrepreneurs in various countries, including Chile, Kenya, Indonesia, Sudan, and France. Blania reckons that the production of new Orbs will be increased to 50,000 devices a year, a number on which the 1 billion users projection is based.

A launch date for the actual coin, which will be released as an ERC-20 token on the Ethereum blockchain, has not been released yet. A person familiar with the matter says a launch should happen in early 2022. For Altman, this will be just the start of a "wonderful, grand social experiment" about the power of networks, and also a dress rehearsal for future UBI ambitions. "One thing I believe is that you do an experiment, you do a first thing, and then you learn and you'll discover all sorts of things about what works here and what we can improve," he says. "There will be many answers to how

something like this could become closer to a UBI.”

Source: [You Can Get This Free Crypto—If the ‘Orb’ Scans Your Eye](#)