

Biosciences team develops Star Trek 'tricorder'

Posted on Thursday 26th April 2012

A team from the University of Birmingham, led by Dr Tim Dafforn a Senior Lecturer in the School of Biosciences, is developing a real-life version of Star Trek medic Dr McCoy's diagnostic marvel, the tricorder, using viruses that behave like spaghetti.

The shoe box-sized prototype can already detect dangerous E.coli bugs in a sample in five minutes. Future devices will identify a whole range of infections at the same time and may be small enough to attach to a smartphone. The device is an example of new applications coming out of the emerging field of "synthetic biology", which involves re-engineering biological systems.

Dr Tim Dafforn thinks that the team might be in with a chance to win the \$10 million prize, launched at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, waiting to be claimed by anyone who can build a tricorder – or something like it.

Find out more about this story at the following news sites:

- [MSN news - UK team develop Trek 'tricorder'](http://news.uk.msn.com/health/uk-team-develops-trek-tricorder-1) (<http://news.uk.msn.com/health/uk-team-develops-trek-tricorder-1>) (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-16518171>)
- BBC News - *Star Trek-style 'tricorder' invention offered \$10m prize*



Dr Tim Dafforn
(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk>
ReferenceId=9224&Name=dr-
tim-dafforn)

