# Throwing caution to the wind

From a holiday in the 'Axis of Evil', post-conflict resolution and artificial intelligence, to the possibility of robot overlords, the University of Birmingham's first **TEDx (http://www.ted.com/about/programs-initiatives/tedx-program)** conference tackled the theme 'Throwing Caution to the Wind'.

**TED (http://www.ted.com/)** is a non-profit organisation that is devoted to spreading inspirational ideas in the form of 18-minute long talks. TEDx is run independently to share ideas in communities around the world. This event marks the first time TEDx has come to the University of Birmingham campus.

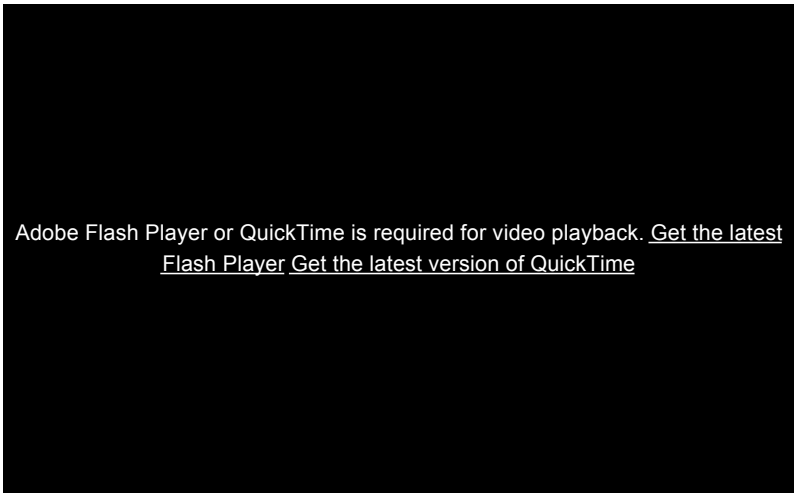
The inaugural conference saw a variety of academic and non-academic speakers. Dr Jeremy Pritchard, Senior Lecturer and Head of Education at the University of Birmingham's School of Biosciences discussed the issues of human evolution, asking questions about how perfect evolution as a process is.

Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics at the University of Birmingham's School of Computer Science, gave a talk about the potential robot overlord uprising, which certain mathematical systems predict, and the use of autonomous robots in everyday life.

Ben Goodwin, International Media Relations Manager at the University spoke about his recent trip to North Korea, discussing his experiences as a tourist in the 'Axis of Evil'. Ben said: 'I was thrilled to be asked to do a TEDx talk as a member of non-academic staff. I think it was a great initiative to be hosted by the University of Birmingham, and I hope we can do something similar in the future so that more people can enjoy the TEDx experience.'

Thomas Farrar, Digital Communications Officer at the University of Birmingham and organiser of the TEDx conference said: 'Organising TEDx was an exhilarating experience and I am proud to have given students, staff and the community an opportunity to gain an insight into a range of academic disciplines and inspirational talks they wouldn't normally be exposed to.'

You can watch all seven talks from the first Birmingham TEDx below.




### Further information

Please contact **Thomas Farrar (mailto:t.s.farrar@bham.ac.uk)** on +44 (0)121 414 8783.



© University of Birmingham 2014