

If Windows RT Isn't Enough of a Prophylactic...

Written by Marco Attard
27 March 2013

He used to dominate PCs, but these days Bill Gates wants to reinvent far more humble everyday technologies-- the condom is the next target of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



"What if we could develop a condom that would provide all the benefit of our current versions, without the drawbacks?" the Foundation blog asks. "Even better, what if we could develop one that was preferred to no condom?"

Through the current Grand Challenges Explorations round Bill Gates offers \$10000 to whoever invents the next best thing in condoms. After all, condoms are serious business-- but despite being the best way to halt the spread of HIV and AIDS, they are also "a trade-off that many men find unacceptable."

One team working on the future of prophylactics comes from the University of Washington, whose "electrospinning" manufacturing process creates tightly woven fabric out of nanometer-sized polymer strands deliver spermicidal or microbicidal agents in addition to being a barrier.

As well as cash, the Foundation also provides winners with manufacturing capacity, marketing and distribution channels to the winning condom, not to mention the added visibility via Gates himself.

Bill Gates' previous target was no other than the toilet-- the Foundation challenged the finest

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minds in the world to create a porcelain throne in order serving the 2.6 billion people currently lacking one. The prize went to the California Institute of Technology, whose potty of the future generates electricity and hydrogen through a solar-powered electrochemical reactor.

Go [Reinventing the Condom](#)