# Scientists have created the first 3-D bio-printed artificial versions of what human body part?

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Around 15 million people worldwide are in need of donor corneas, but unfortunately those are in short supply. Researchers at Newcastle University hope that their recent breakthrough could one day drastically reduce that number.

Using collagen and algae mixed with healthy stem cells from a cornea donor, the team was able to create a new bio-ink that can be 3-D printed into a cornea. Previous attempts to do so were unsuccessful because the material needed to be stiff enough to hold shape once printed, but also thin and flexible enough to be squeezed through the needle used for bioprinting.

While the technology is still a long way from clinical use, Newcastle professor of tissue engineering Che Connon, who worked on the project, is optimistic that the prototype may one day revolutionize the practice of cornea transplants. In an interview with *Mashable*, Connon said he thinks these corneas would be very impactful “in less developed nations, where they don’t have such well executed donor eye banks. Approaches such as ours with the 3D bio-printing could really open up and make cornea transplants more accessible in the future.”

http://www.govtech.com/question-of-the-day/Question-of-the-Day-for-06042018.html