



ask the
EXPERT
eurofins

Q & A WITH...



ENDOTOXIN, PCR,
QUALITY CONTROL EXPERT

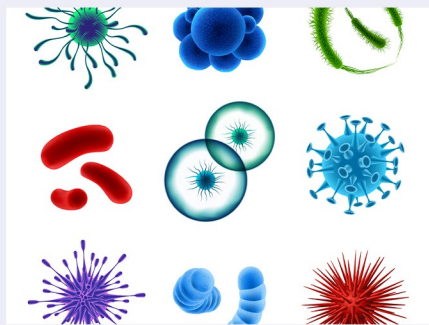
MANDY TRIEU

QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER
FOR



Built Environment Testing

Q: Given your extensive experience with qPCR for pathogen detection, what do you see as the biggest emerging challenges in environmental pathogen testing?



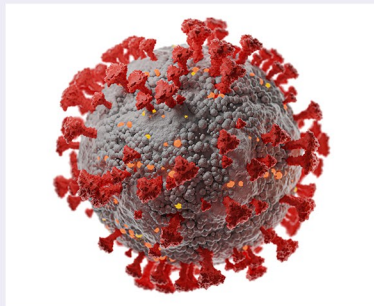
A: One of the biggest challenges in environmental pathogen testing with qPCR is accurately distinguishing between viable and nonviable organisms. Since qPCR detects genetic material regardless of viability, it can overestimate counts, making it difficult to assess actual living species without complementary viability assays.



Q: With your background in both lab work and Quality Assurance, what's one key piece of advice you'd give to a new microbiologist looking to advance their career in a regulated lab environment?

A: Prioritize understanding the “why” behind quality systems and documentation. Strong technical skills are essential, but consistently applying good documentation practices, following SOPs, and embracing audits as learning opportunities will set you apart and build trust in both your science and your compliance mindset.

Q: You've worked with a wide range of pathogens including SARS-CoV-2 and Aleutian mink disease. Are there any common threads or unique challenges you've encountered across such diverse targets?



A: A common thread across diverse pathogens is the unique challenge each sample matrix presents—whether it's swabs, wastewater, or animal tissues. Adapting extraction methods with proper PPE and overcoming matrix-specific inhibition are critical to ensuring accurate, reliable detection across varied testing types.





Q: As a Quality Assurance Manager overseeing compliance with multiple standards like ISO 17025 and CDC ELITE, how do you prioritize and manage the continuous improvement of laboratory quality programs?

A: I prioritize continuous improvement by fostering a strong quality culture, using audit results and feedback to identify opportunities for positive change. I ensure changes meet accreditation standards while streamlining procedures, making processes clear and understandable, and encouraging the team to take ownership of quality and compliance to help the lab excel.

