

Searching Google for "TIRF microscopy cost"  
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Dear Colleagues:

After another frustrating week of trying to get a decent image out of the Olympus TIRF system I purchased several months ago, I am prepared to give up and to offer the entire unit for sale to anyone who is more familiar with its optics, or more familiar with TIRF optics in general, and who might be able to get some good use out of it. It's the latest inverted microscope from Olympus, the IX-81, which cost me in the neighborhood of \$80,000 with all its fancy TIRF lenses and illuminators (and a plenty strong blue laser, which I'm willing to unload also). I'm prepared to sell this all to any decent bidder, immediately!

I have been thwarted in my own efforts to do TIRF by several factors that might not be such a problem for others wanting to use TIRF, and who might want to save some \$\$\$'s to get set up to do so. That is why I don't feel too badly about offering the microscope up for sale — I don't think I'll be doing anyone else a great disservice. (Although, for my own part, I am hoping to use any funds I do recoup to purchase the Nikon TIRF setup, which I think will be vastly superior for my purposes.)

For anyone who is interested, these are the reasons the Olympus setup is not working for me:

First, I'm generally studying GFP-transfected Dictyostelium amoebae, which are uniquely light-sensitive cells and which have the ability to "stand up" and avoid the evanescent wave of light emanating from the surface of the coverslip, thereby leaving my field of view.

Second, I have very poor technical backup from the local Olympus dealers in St. Louis, so I haven't even been able to get the IX-81 'scope working properly, in general (let alone the fact that these folks have zero experience with TIRF).

Third, it is imperative for me to do interference-reflection microscopy at the same time as I do TIRF, because Dicty amoebae alter their attachment to the substrate so readily, and I need to constantly monitor how far away from the evanescent field they are....if I am ever going to understand the TIRF images I do manage to get from them. But for IRM, the Olympus 60x NA1.45 lens and the Olympus 100x NA1.65 lenses are particularly poor, as they give severe spurious reflections, and the IX-81 microscope is not equipped (nor equip-able) with the aperture diaphragm in the epi- lightpath that would minimize such spurious reflections.

Please address all inquiries about purchasing this setup to me, or look me up at the Cell Biology meeting and let's make arrangements to get this instrument into a laboratory where someone can get some decent use out of it.

Thanks!

John H.

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