We thank the reviewers for their appraisal of this manuscript and are glad that it was well received. We are very excited by this model system and hope that it will be of use to the broad microbiology research community.

The only correction that was suggested has been made. Specifically, we have added the following sentence to the saliva collection protocol, “In particular, depending on the institution, IRB or ethics approval might need to be sought and approved before saliva collection from human volunteers can proceed”. We thank reviewer one for this suggestion as we want to make absolutely sure that any other researchers that wish to use this system have appropriate approvals.