



Strategies of Life Detection

By Oliver Botta

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Two of the overarching questions asked in the pursuit of scientific knowledge are: (1) Is there life outside the Earth and (2) How did life originate on the Earth? Not coincidentally, these questions are major milestones on the roadmap of the new interdisciplinary science field of Astrobiology. A significant part in the quest for answers to these questions requires the involvement of space exploration, either in the form of the deployment of planetary probes to various target objects in the Solar System or of the construction of large telescopes and spectrometers in various orbits around the Earth or the Sun. It does not come as a surprise that space agencies such as NASA or ESA have established programs in support of these missions as well as the development of instruments. In the case of planetary probes, which in the current epoch are mainly focusing on the exploration of Mars, but also include missions to asteroids and comets, the development...

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