

1 **Evolution of substrate specificity in a retained enzyme driven by gene loss**

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35

36 **Abstract**

37

38 The connection between gene loss and the functional adaptation of retained
39 proteins is still poorly understood. We apply phylogenomics and metabolic
40 modeling to detect bacterial species that are evolving by gene loss, with the
41 finding that *Actinomycetaceae* genomes from human cavities are undergoing
42 sizable reductions, including loss of L-histidine and L-tryptophan biosynthesis.
43 We observe that the dual-substrate phosphoribosyl isomerase A or *priA* gene, at
44 which these pathways converge, appears to coevolve with the occurrence of *trp*
45 and *his* genes. Characterization of a dozen PriA homologs shows that these
46 enzymes adapt from bifunctionality in the largest genomes, to a monofunctional,
47 yet not necessarily specialized, inefficient form in genomes undergoing reduction.
48 These functional changes are accomplished via mutations, which result from
49 relaxation of purifying selection, in residues structurally mapped after sequence
50 and X-ray structural analyses. Our results show how gene loss can drive the
51 evolution of substrate specificity from retained enzymes.

52

53 **Introduction**

54 Genome dynamics, or the process by which an organism gains or loses genes, plays a
55 fundamental role in bacterial evolution. Acquisition of new functions due to horizontal
56 gene transfer (HGT) or genetic duplications is broadly documented (1,2). Gene loss has
57 also been implicated in rapid bacterial adaptation after experimental evolution (3), but
58 this process has not yet been confirmed in natural populations. Phylogenomics involves
59 the comparative analysis of the gene content of a set of phylogenetically related genomes
60 to expose new insights into genome evolution and function, and this approach has been
61 classically applied to study how gene gain is associated with functional divergence in
62 bacteria (4). Here, we propose that bacterial phylogenomics can be similarly applied to
63 study evolution by gene loss (5), specifically where enzymes are evolving within
64 bacterial species that are undergoing genome decay (6,7).

65 The current bias toward in-depth functional analysis of proteins from genomes
66 that are undergoing gene gain by HGT versus gene loss by decay is likely due to two
67 factors. First, in genomes that are undergoing decay, there is a relaxation in the selection
68 pressure that increases mutation rates in functioning proteins as these proteins begin to
69 contribute less to cell fitness (8,9). As a result, these proteins display higher-than-normal
70 mutation rates, making *in vitro* analysis of protein function a challenge (10). Second,
71 there is only a brief window of opportunity to study the evolution of most proteins during
72 genome decay in bacteria. This is because most proteins are monofunctional, and they are
73 rapidly removed from the bacterial genome once they become dispensable due to gene
74 loss. To overcome this limitation, we propose to use a bifunctional enzyme to study the
75 evolution of substrate specificity after gene loss, as these enzymes may continue to

76 operate when only one of their associated metabolic pathways becomes dispensable. We
77 use genome-scale metabolic models to determine when each pathway is lost as well as
78 when they become non-functional (11).

79 The phylum *Actinobacteria*, Gram-positive organisms with high (G+C)-content,
80 are ubiquitous and show one of the highest levels of bacterial metabolic diversity (12).
81 This phylum is known to display significant metabolic specialization, and phylogenomics
82 has been previously applied to correlate genome dynamics with metabolic pathway
83 evolution and enzyme specialization (13, 14, 15). Moreover, within the deep-rooted
84 family *Actinomycetaceae*, phylogenetic analyses have suggested the occurrence of
85 genome decay (16). Furthermore, we have observed that many actinobacterial species
86 lack a *trpF* gene, while retaining a copy of the potentially bi-functional *priA* gene. The
87 PriA enzyme is capable of operating in the L-histidine biosynthesis pathway as HisA,
88 while also functioning in the L-tryptophan biosynthesis pathway as TrpF (13, 14, 17). As
89 such, we suggest PriA is an ideal candidate to study protein evolution during the process
90 of genome decay.

91 The product of the *priA* gene, which is a *hisA* homolog, catalyzes two analogous
92 isomerizations of structurally similar substrates: (i) the conversion of *N*-(5'-
93 phosphoribosyl)-anthranilate (PRA) into 1-(*O*-carboxyphenylamino)-1'-deoxyribulose-5'-
94 phosphate (CdRP) (TrpF or PRA isomerase activity); and (ii) the conversion of *N*-[(5-
95 phosphoribosyl) formimino]-5-aminoimidazole-4-carboxamide ribonucleotide (ProFAR)
96 into *N*-[(5-phosphoribulosyl)formimino]-5-aminoimidazole-4-carboxamide
97 ribonucleotide (PRFAR) (HisA or ProFAR isomerase activity) (17). Moreover, evolution
98 of PriA in response to genome dynamics has lead to the appearance of the SubHisA and

99 PriB subfamilies, which have been shown to have different substrate specificities (13, 14)
100 (Figure 1). While these enzyme subfamilies were respectively discovered using
101 phylogenetics in the genera *Corynebacterium* and *Streptomyces*, no study has ever
102 centered on the metabolic genes associated with *priA* in the deep-branching organisms
103 belonging to the phylum *Actinobacteria*, such as those of the family *Actinomycetaceae*
104 where the transition from HisA into PriA must have taken place (18, 19).

105 Here we exploit the intrinsic features of PriA to explore the link between the
106 evolution of enzyme function and gene loss within the family *Actinomycetaceae*, which
107 includes many human oral cavity commensal and pathogenic organisms (16, 20, 21). We
108 classify this bacterial family into four major evolutionary lineages, including two specific
109 for the genus *Actinomyces*. One of these lineages shows extensive gene loss, including *his*
110 and *trp* biosynthetic genes. After the loss of constrictions imposed by the retention of
111 biosynthetic pathways, we found that evolutionary patterns correlate with the sub-
112 functionalization, yet not necessarily specialization, of PriA into two new subfamilies,
113 which we named SubHisA2 and SubTrpF. We support this classification by
114 comprehensive *in vivo* and *in vitro* biochemical characterization of a dozen PriA
115 homologs from *Actinomyces* and closely related taxa. X-ray structural analysis and
116 molecular docking simulations were further used to start investigating the evolution of
117 substrate specificity by gene loss in structural grounds. Our results demonstrate that gene
118 loss can drive functional protein divergence, and provide unprecedented insights into the
119 evolution of enzyme substrate specificity in retained enzymes after gene loss in the
120 bacterial genome.

121

122 **Results**

123

124 *Phylogenomic resolution of the Actinomycetaceae family.*

125 To find evidence of gene loss in deep-branching organisms of the phylum *Actinobacteria*,
126 specifically within genera belonging to the order *Actinomycetales*, we selected 133
127 representative organisms from 18 families with available genome sequences (Figure 2A –
128 Figure 2-source data 1). We then aimed at resolving their taxonomic relationships using
129 35 single-copy proteins that are conserved among all 133 genomes analyzed (see
130 Methods and Figure 2A – Figure 2-source data 2). We concatenated these proteins to
131 reconstruct their phylogeny, and supported the resulting tree by significant Bayesian
132 posterior probabilities. The phylogenetic tree shows several long branches, which
133 correspond to the families *Actinomycetaceae*, *Micrococcaceae*, *Propionibacteriaceae* and
134 *Coriobacteriaceae*, and to the genus *Tropheryma*. The tree also includes a clade with the
135 family *Bifidobacteriaceae* as the root of six different sister families, including the
136 *Actinomycetaceae* (blue branch and grey box in Fig. 2A).

137 As expected, all of the organisms contained in the rapidly evolving lineages
138 trended towards smaller genomes and lower (G+C)-content (Fig. 2B). The
139 *Actinomycetaceae* genomes were characterized by particularly broad variances in genome
140 size and (G+C)-content, with the variation being most apparent for organisms belonging
141 to the genus *Actinomyces*. Representative organisms of this genus, e.g. *A. sp.* oral taxon
142 848 str. F0332, *A. oris* MG-1, *A. neuii*, and *A. odontolyticus*, are distributed throughout
143 the *Actinomycetaceae* clade (blue dots in Fig. 2B). Given these observations, we selected

144 the genus *Actinomyces* as the ideal target for a deeper analysis of rapid evolution by gene
145 loss.

146 We then carried out a phylogenomic analysis using the genome sequences of 33
147 organisms from the family *Actinomycetaceae* (Figure 3 - Figure 3-source data 1), from
148 which 27 are classified as *Actinomyces* (16, 20), including the model strain *A. oris* MG-1
149 sequenced in this study. The remaining sequences came from the genera *Actinotignum*,
150 formerly *Actinobaculum* (21), *Trueperella*, *Varibaculum* and *Mobiluncus*. As an out-
151 group we used the genera *Bifidobacterium*, which included 8 genome sequences. We
152 identified a total of 205 single-copy proteins shared among all these 41 organisms, which
153 were used for constructing a concatenated phylogenetic tree by Bayesian (Fig. 3 - Figure
154 3-source data 2), and maximum likelihood approaches (Fig. 3 - supplement Fig. 1). Based
155 in this analysis, the family *Actinomycetaceae* separated into four evolutionary lineages
156 contained in three sub-clades: Lineage I, which includes *A. sp.* oral taxon 848 str. F0332
157 (Org10); lineage II, which includes *A. oris* MG-1 (Org21); and lineages III and IV, which
158 form a monophyletic group and include *A. neuii* (Org27) and *A. odontolyticus* (Org41),
159 respectively. Remarkably, these lineages group depending on their mammalian hosts and
160 human body niches from which they were isolated (Figure 3 - Figure 3-source data 1).

161 Our phylogenetic analysis also shows that 25 of the 27 *Actinomyces* species
162 analyzed have a paraphyletic origin leading to lineages II and IV. These two lineages can
163 be distinguished not only according to their genome size and (G+C)-content, but also to
164 the number of coding sequences (CDS) and metabolic functions or subsystems (Fig. 3 -
165 supplement Fig. 2). Specifically, as revealed by genome annotation using RAST (22),
166 lineage II, which has the highest (G+C)-content (68.32% on average) and the biggest

167 genome size (3.04 Mbp on average), has the largest number of amino acid biosynthetic
168 pathways (see next section). This observation contrasts with the results obtained for
169 lineage IV, which shows reduced (G+C)-content (60.66% on average) and genome size
170 (2.19 Mbp on average), as well as less amino acid biosynthetic pathways. Indeed, the
171 genomic differences between lineages II and IV were found to be statistically significant,
172 including the presence or absence of the *his* and *trp* biosynthetic genes (Fig. 3 - Figure 3-
173 figure supplement 2-source data 1). We explore this observation in more detail by
174 constructing metabolic models for all of the analyzed genomes in the following section.

175

176 ***Metabolic evolution of the Actinomycetaceae family***

177 In order to reduce the risk of overreaching conclusions based only in homology sequence
178 searches, we constructed genome-scale metabolic models of all 33 organisms comprising
179 this family, plus the 9 outgroup *Bifidobacterium* species (see Methods). Next, flux
180 balance analysis was applied to predict the minimal nutrients required to support growth
181 for each genome. Finally, after automated curation of the metabolic reconstructions (23),
182 which includes not only homologous but also analogous enzymes, we classified each
183 reaction in each model as: (i) essential for growth on predicted minimal media; (ii)
184 functional but not essential; and (iii) nonfunctional. All model results, which represent
185 the highest quality functional annotation available for metabolism, are provided as source
186 data of Fig. 4: model overview (Figure 4-source data 1), reaction content and
187 classifications (Figure 4-source data 2) and predicted minimal media (Figure 4-source
188 data 3).

189 The lineage II models were generally the largest with an average of 1019 gene-
190 associated reactions, which is to be expected since the lineage II genomes are also the
191 largest. These models also had the fewest predicted essential nutrients with an average of
192 19 nutrients required. This result indicates that most biosynthetic pathways for essential
193 biomass precursors are complete in the lineage II models. The lineage I and IV models
194 were substantially smaller with an average of 850 and 843 gene-associated reactions,
195 respectively. Although similar in size, the lineage I models had more required nutrients
196 (25 on average) compared with the lineage IV models (22 on average). Finally, the
197 lineage III models were the smallest of all, with an average of 817 gene-associated
198 reactions. Surprisingly, these models still had fewer required nutrients than the lineage I
199 models (23 on average). These results provide a meaningful biochemical context in which
200 biosynthetic enzymes are evolving.

201 To study the metabolic diversity of each lineage in more detail we performed a
202 comparative analysis of the gene-associated reactions of our models (Fig. 4A - 4D).
203 Given the large metabolic and genetic diversity, we used less stringent parameters than
204 those used for our core genome analysis sustaining our phylogenomics of previous
205 section (see Methods). This comparative analysis revealed that the lineage II genomes
206 were the least diverse, with a very large fraction of reactions present in all models,
207 including those for amino acid biosynthesis (Fig. 4 - supplement Fig. 1). All other
208 lineages were more diverse. Interestingly, a comparative analysis of our models found
209 that all models across all lineages share a common conserved core of 695 reactions.
210 When we similarly compute a conserved core for each individual lineage (Fig. 4E), we

211 find that the 89% of reactions in the conserved core for each lineage are contained in the
212 conserved core across all lineages.

213 From these modeling results, we clearly see that lineages I, III and IV are all
214 undergoing the process of gene loss, resulting in a reduction towards a common set of
215 core metabolic pathways. This explains the rapid development of diversity within each
216 lineage, as well as the variability in minimal required nutrients predicted by our models.
217 We can also apply our models to study the gene loss process from a mechanistic
218 perspective by looking for patterns in the presence and absence of genes and reactions for
219 two specific pathways of interest: L-tryptophan and L-histidine biosynthesis. Our models
220 predicted genomes in lineages I, III, and IV (but none from lineage II) that required these
221 amino acids as a supplemental nutrient, indicating the loss of these biosynthetic pathways
222 in these organisms. We also observed that the presence of the *priA* gene, which takes part
223 in both L-tryptophan and L-histidine biosynthesis, closely tracked with the presence of
224 these pathways in these genomes (Fig. 5A). This observation suggests that gene losses
225 could have an effect on the evolution of the retained PriA enzymes.

226

227 ***Molecular evolution of PriA within the family Actinomycetaceae.***

228 To bring down these observations at the enzyme level, we carried out comparable
229 phylogenetic analyses of PriA (Fig. 5), and we measured the evolutionary rate of its gene
230 by estimating the d_N/d_S ratio (ω value) for each resulting clade (Table 1). The PriA
231 phylogeny was complemented with an analysis of the occurrence of the *his* and *trp*
232 biosynthetic genes, including *priA* for both pathways (Fig. 5 - Figure 5-source data 1).
233 Excluding the out-group, our phylogenetic reconstructions show that PriAs from different

234 lineages are grouped in three sub-clades, highlighted in purple, orange, and yellow boxes
235 in Fig. 5A, which have distinguishable selection pressures operating upon them. This
236 analysis also shows that PriA coevolves with the presence or absence of the *his* and *trp*
237 biosynthetic genes (Fig. 5B).

238 The purple box denotes a paraphyletic clade that includes PriAs from lineage II,
239 as well as the PriAs from the genus *Bifidobacterium* used as an out-group. The d_N/d_S
240 value of this lineage, which retains the entire set of *his* and *trp* genes, is 0.0636,
241 consistent with purifying selection. The orange and yellow boxes denote polyphyletic
242 groups that include PriAs from lineages I, III, and IV. Interestingly, the included taxa
243 within these lineages lost their extant *his* or *trp* genes differentially (Fig. 4A), and their
244 d_N/d_S values are 0.0901 and 0.1459, respectively, which is suggestive of relaxation of
245 purifying selection. Moreover, the higher d_N/d_S values in the clade shown in yellow seem
246 to be due to accumulation of nonsynonymous substitutions, in other words, higher values
247 of d_N that may relate to changes in enzyme specificity (Table 1).

248 Thus, in the basis of these evolutionary observations we proposed three functional
249 and testable hypotheses related with the emergence of novel PriA enzyme subfamilies in
250 the bacterial family *Actinomycetaceae* (Fig. 6A). In H1 (purple box) we assume that PriA
251 homologs are conserved as enzymes with dual-substrate specificity, capable of converting
252 both PRA and ProFAR substrates. In H2 (orange box) and H3 (yellow box) the PriA
253 homologs are expected to be monofunctional isomerases, yet not necessarily specialized
254 enzymes, capable of converting ProFAR or PRA as substrates, respectively. Moreover,
255 given that relaxation of purifying selection is associated with the latter two hypothetical
256 scenarios, H2 and H3, our model predicts monofunctional, yet not necessarily specialized

257 enzymes capable of supporting growth. Representative enzymes of each hypothesis were
258 selected for further biochemical characterization, as described.

259

260 ***Biochemical confirmation of the evolution of PriA by gene loss.***

261 Before evaluating the functional implications of our evolutionary hypotheses from
262 previous section, we confirmed that the *priA* gene is functional in *Actinomyces*. For this
263 purpose we used allelic exchange to delete the *priA* gene from the chromosome of *A. oris*
264 MG-1 (Org21) (24, 25), a model strain that belongs to lineage II and whose genome was
265 sequenced as part of this study. Mutation of *priA* in this organism was confirmed by
266 sequencing the entire genome of the resulting $\Delta priA$ mutant strain (Supplementary file 1).
267 Determination of the growth requirements of this strain, termed $\Delta priA$ _Org21, showed
268 that *priA* mutation leads to L-tryptophan auxotrophy, demonstrating the physiological
269 relevance of PriA in this organism. Unexpectedly, however, the $\Delta priA$ mutant remains
270 prototrophic for L-histidine, which could not be explained in the basis of current data.
271 Thus, it is tempting to speculate that this phenotype may found an explanation in the
272 previously reported association between enzyme promiscuity and genome decay (6,7).

273 To biochemically evaluate the functional implications of our evolutionary
274 hypotheses (Fig. 6A), we characterized nine selected PriAs, both *in vivo*, by
275 complementation assays using *trpF* and *hisA Escherichia coli* mutants; and *in vitro*, by
276 estimation of their Michaelis Menten steady-state enzyme kinetic parameters, as we have
277 previously done (13, 14, 26). The results of these experiments are included in Table 2.
278 First, *in vivo* complementation assays using appropriate *priA* constructs, showed that PriA
279 homologs from Org15, Org21, and Org22 (H1) were able to rescue growth of both HisA

280 and TrpF deficient strains. Second, *priA* homologs from Org34 and Org36 (H2)
281 complemented the HisA activity and, to a lesser extent, the TrpF activity. Third, those
282 *priA* homologs from Org10, Org13, Org39 and Org41 (H3) were able to complement the
283 TrpF activity but not the HisA activity.

284 The *priA* homologs were then heterologously expressed and purified to
285 homogeneity in *E. coli* (see Methods). Only five enzymes out of nine were found to be
286 soluble and could be purified as needed, which agrees with the high mutation rate
287 encountered in previous section. Fortunately, we obtained Michaelis Menten enzyme
288 kinetics parameters for representative enzymes of all three evolutionary hypotheses,
289 namely, three enzymes belonging to H1 and one enzyme each for H2 and H3, with the
290 following results (Fig. 6B and Table 2). First, enzymes from Org15, Org21, and Org22
291 (H1) showed dual-substrate specificity but also poor catalytic efficiencies, namely,
292 $k_{cat}/K_M^{\text{ProFAR}}$ from 0.01 to 0.1 $\mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$ and k_{cat}/K_M^{PRA} around 0.01 $\mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$. Second, only
293 ProFAR isomerase activity could be detected *in vitro* using pure enzyme from Org36
294 (H2), with a catalytic efficiency of $k_{cat}/K_M^{\text{ProFAR}}$ of 0.002 $\mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$, but not PRA isomerase
295 activity, as suggested by our highly sensitive *in vivo* complementation assay. Third, PRA
296 isomerase activity as the sole activity present in H3 was confirmed in the enzyme purified
297 from Org42, with a k_{cat}/K_M^{PRA} of 0.02 $\mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$.

298 The obtained enzyme kinetics parameters suggest that mutations that accumulate
299 during relaxation of purifying selection, which make these enzymes difficult to work
300 with, affect the turnover (k_{cat}). In the case of the H1 enzymes, the poor turnovers are
301 compensated for by relatively high substrate affinities (K_M), mainly for ProFAR.

302 However, this does not seem to be the case for the enzymes belonging to H2 and H3,
303 which have poor K_M parameters not only for the substrate of the missing activity but also
304 for the substrates they are active against, ProFAR and PRA, respectively. Therefore, PriA
305 homologs from *Actinomyces* have poor catalytic efficiencies when compared with *bona*
306 *fide* PriAs from its closely related genus *Bifidobacterium* (Table 2). This suggests that
307 enzyme evolution—from bifunctionality to monofunctionality—under relaxation of
308 purifying selection does not necessarily express itself in the same way as recorded during
309 purifying or positive selection, where specialization and enzyme proficiency come
310 together.

311 The case of the *in vivo* PRA isomerase activity detected for the enzyme from
312 Org36, which could not be confirmed *in vitro*, may be related to the different resolutions
313 of our enzyme assays. For instance, the detection limits for the PRA and ProFAR
314 isomerase assay used in the present study are $0.0001 \mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$ and $0.001 \mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$,
315 respectively (13,14,26). However, despite the poor catalytic efficiency of all *Actinomyces*
316 enzymes investigated, these detection limits guarantee that our enzyme parameters are in
317 agreement between them and with our hypotheses. Based on these results the family
318 related to H1, which has both activities, is referred to as PriA, whereas the latter two
319 enzyme subfamilies, related to H2 and H3, were renamed as SubHisA2 and SubTrpF,
320 respectively. These names, together with the name of the organism from which the
321 enzymes were obtained, are used in Table 2 and in the following sections.

322

323 ***Structural insights into the evolution SubHisA2 and SubTrpF.***

324 To potentially identify mutations in active-site residues that may affect k_{cat} and K_M
325 parameters, we attempted to elucidate the structure of the five PriA homologs that we
326 were able to *in vitro* characterize. However, we were only able to crystallize and solve the
327 structure of PriA_Org15 (H1) at atomic resolution of 1.05 Å (PDB: 4X2R, Fig. 7 - Figure
328 7-source data 1). To compare this structure with SubHisA2_Org36 (H2) and
329 SubTrpF_Org41 (H3), we opted for the construction of structural homology models.
330 Since the ability of PriA to accept both ProFAR and PRA as substrates requires
331 productive conformations, we also explored these interactions using molecular docking.
332 This was complemented with detailed structure-based multiple sequence alignments
333 taking into account all available PriA functional and structural data (Fig. 7B). This
334 combined approach allowed us to identify mutations that may be driving the evolution of
335 PriA into SubHisA2 and SubTrpF enzyme subfamilies.

336 Changes of conserved residues from PriA (H1) into SubHisA2 (H2) enzymes
337 include Ile47Leu and Ser79Thr. Previous independent mutation of these two residues,
338 even into similar amino acids, in SubHisA from *Corynebacterium* abolished the PRA
339 isomerase activity of this monofunctional enzyme (13). Analogously, the
340 SubHisA2_Org36 has a change of Ser79 into Thr79 (Fig. 7B). In this mutation, the
341 methyl group of the threonine residue may affect the contact between PRA and the
342 hydroxyl group common to these residues (Fig. 7A), thus abolishing PRA isomerase
343 activity. This effect agrees with the estimated binding affinities for ProFAR (-9.5
344 kcal/mol) and PRA (-9.2 kcal/mol) obtained after molecular docking (Supplementary file
345 2). The energy-minimized docking model of the productively bound PRA, in agreement
346 with the kinetic parameters from the preceding section, indicates that the catalytic residue

347 Asp11 does not interact with the 2'-hydroxyl group from the substrate. A precedent for
348 this contact is found in previous X-ray structural and mutagenesis analysis of *bona fide*
349 PriA enzymes (26, 27).

350 Comparison of PriA (H1) with SubTrpF (H3) revealed the mutations Gly126Cys
351 and Trp139Gly. In PriA, Gly126 faces the active site near the catalytic residue Asp128.
352 The introduction of the Cys side-chain in SubTrpF could influence the positioning of
353 Arg137 with respect to Asp128, obstructing the accommodation of ProFAR, as this
354 region interacts with a large phosphosugar moiety that is absent from PRA (Fig. 7B).
355 Furthermore, Trp139, which is catalytically important for conversion of ProFAR by PriA,
356 is mutated into several different amino acid residues in SubTrpFs. Trp139 is important
357 for the correct positioning of the catalytic residues present in loop 5, and for substrate
358 binding through stacking interactions (14, 27). Indeed, the indole group of Trp139 in
359 PriAs can form a hydrogen bond with Asp128, stabilizing the knot-like conformation
360 observed during ProFAR binding. Thus, mutation of this residue in SubTrpF is in
361 agreement with the loss of ProFAR isomerase activity. Arg83 is also interesting as it is
362 differentially missing from SubTrpF, and/or the fragment preceding it contains a two-
363 residue insertion (Fig. 7B). Arg83 interacts with the second phosphate group of ProFAR,
364 allowing its correct position in the substrate-binding pocket of PriA. Overall, these
365 modifications in key residues disfavor the ProFAR binding affinities, a result that is in
366 agreement with the enzyme kinetic parameters and the estimated binding affinities for
367 ProFAR (-9.5 kcal/mol) and PRA (-9.7 kcal/mol) obtained after molecular docking
368 (Supplementary file 2).

369 Although further research will be needed to confirm the exact mutations, and their
370 roles, leading to SubTrpF and SubHisA2 sub-families, our results provide a promising
371 first step towards deciphering at the atomic level how relaxation of purifying selection
372 influences the evolution of substrate specificity. At this point in time, when PriA,
373 SubTrpF and SubHisA2 sequences and structures are still scarce, the effects of genetic
374 drift, i.e. mutations related to taxonomic distance rather than functional divergence (as
375 previously shown for the evolution of PriB from PriA [14]) cannot be ruled out. An extra
376 factor potentially hampering sequence and structural analysis is the higher-than-normal
377 mutation rates of these protein sub-families, which translates into lack of sequence
378 conservation and disordered regions in X-ray crystal structures. Our structural data,
379 including the estimates for molecular binding affinities, can therefore only be used to
380 support other biochemical and evolutionary evidence.

381

382 **Discussion**

383

384 Our study highlights the use of phylogenomics and metabolic models to identify and
385 investigate gene loss in bacteria. Our results indicated that the distinctive reactions
386 retained in each *Actinomyces* genome reflect the preservation of some full biosynthetic
387 pathways over others, conferring a capacity to grow on different sets of environmental
388 nutrients. This result in turn implies an exposure of these genomes to a diverse range of
389 environmental conditions and selection pressures, while the phylogenetic proximity of
390 these functionally diverse genomes speaks to a strong capacity for rapid adaptation to the
391 diverse conditions present in the human body. The process of gene loss, associated with

392 relaxation of purifying selection, is the key driver of this adaptation strategy. Thus,
393 metabolic diversity in complex systems as the human microbiome might be characterized
394 after reconstruction of evolutionary trajectories, which may reflect different bacterial
395 functions and ecological sub-niches. The pattern of reaction conservation seen in our
396 metabolic modeling analysis exemplifies a likely signature for gene loss, which could be
397 used to identify these phenomena among other genome families. Remarkably, in this
398 context, enzyme specialization does not necessarily means catalytic proficiency.

399 Our study of this gene loss process exposed evolutionary patterns of PriA in L-
400 tryptophan and L-histidine biosynthesis pathways, with the potential to unveil the
401 underpinning mechanisms driving the evolution of substrate specificity of retained
402 enzymes. Because multifunctional enzymes may have more than one constraint operating
403 on them, tracking functional evolution promptly after selection is relaxed during genome
404 decay might be done more readily than with monofunctional enzymes. As shown here,
405 only partial selection may be released in the retained bifunctional enzyme PriA. Indeed,
406 the predicted metabolic phenotypes unveiled by flux balance analysis did correlate better
407 with the evolutionary patterns revealed by metabolic gene occurrence and PriA
408 phylogenetic reconstructions than they did with the natural history told by the species
409 tree. To confirm this sort of evolutionary behavior, other instances of well-known
410 multifunctional proteins, such as moonlighting proteins, may be investigated.

411 The occurrence of SubHisA2 in *Actinomyces*, together with the appearance of
412 SubHisA in *Corynebacterium*, demonstrates that subfunctionalization of PriA leading
413 into HisA-like enzymes has occurred at least twice. Such phenotypic plasticity is a
414 reflection of the intrinsic enzymatic proficiency of PriA upon two related but

415 topologically dissimilar substrates; but, more interestingly, the evolutionary histories
416 behind these independent subfunctionalization events responded to somehow contrasting
417 evolutionary mechanisms. Whereas SubHisA is the result of positive selection after the
418 acquisition of an entire *trp* operon by HGT (13), SubHisA2 responded to the loss of *trp*
419 genes, and it evolved under relaxation of purifying selection. Consequently, SubHisA has
420 drastic mutations in its catalytic active site, which have been shown to be responsible for
421 its inability to catalyze PRA, whilst SubHisA2 shows some residual PRA isomerase
422 activity, congruent with the observation that its active-site architecture is almost
423 completely conserved.

424 The subfunctionalization of PriA into SubTrpF, in contrast, has been documented
425 only here. This functional shift had to involve ‘non-proficient’ enzyme specialization,
426 since the ancestral activity of PriA is ProFAR isomerase (19). Thus, the appearance of
427 SubTrpF with substitutions in its catalytic active-site could be discussed based on
428 previous knowledge about PriA. These mutations actually resulted in the elimination of
429 the ancestral ProFAR activity, which is remarkable because the driving force behind this
430 process relates to the relaxation of purifying selection. In agreement, a recent study of
431 PriA sequences obtained from a diverse metagenome, complemented by some of the
432 SubTrpF sequences studied here, classified this enzyme subfamily at the transition from
433 HisA into PriA (18). Since *Actinomyces* undergoes interspecies recombination with
434 protein functional implications (28), such a mechanism may provide a means to explain
435 the sequence heterogeneity found in these *Actinomyces* PriA homologs.

436 Our study, therefore, provides experimental evidence that gene loss can drive
437 functional protein divergence. It also shows that, despite the fact that the retained

438 enzymes possess low catalytic activities, they contribute to the maintenance of
439 metabolism, and therefore, to fitness. Taken together, our evolutionary observations
440 backed with metabolic modeling, biochemical and structural data, suggest multiple
441 selection types associated with ecological micro-niches, e.g. environmental cues provided
442 by the human body. Thus, enzyme subfamilies are the result of processes involving
443 different selection types upon proteins with more than one function. Although further
444 examples showing metabolic-driven evolutionary histories need to be identified, our
445 study provides a strategy for the in-depth use of genome sequences for protein and
446 bacterial evolutionary studies to understand enzyme function.

447

448 **Materials and Methods**

449

450 *Phylogenomic and evolutionary analysis.* The genomes of the genus *Bifidobacterium*
451 and the family *Actinomyceatceae* were obtained from NCBI (NCBI accession numbers
452 are provided as Figure 3-source data 1). The genomes were annotated by using RAST
453 (22). We identified core orthologous genes using BBHs (29) with a defined e-value of
454 0.001. The sequences were aligned with MUSCLE 3.8.31 (30) and edited with
455 GBLOCKS (31). We concatenated all the orthologous groups for phylogenomic analysis.
456 The phylogenetic analyses were carried out using MrBayes v.3.2.1 (32) and maximum
457 likelihood analysis using RAxML v.8 (33). For MrBayes we used a mixed model, and for
458 the maximum likelihood analysis we used the generalized time reversible (GTR) model.
459 Branch support was measured as the posterior probability of clades in the consensus tree
460 for Bayesian analysis; and with 1,000 bootstrapping replicates in the maximum likelihood
461 analysis. To calculate the nonsynonymous (d_N) and synonymous (d_s) substitution rates
462 between PriA and homologous subfamilies, we aligned all the sequences by codon using
463 RevTrans 1.4 Server (34). To calculate the d_N/d_s ratio we used codeml in the PAML 4
464 package (35). GC content, genome size, CDS content, and number of subsystems
465 between the lineages were compared by using the T-test in the package R. All the
466 boxplots were done with R.

467 The *A. oris* MG-1 strain (25) was sequenced using an in-house Illumina MiSeq
468 sequencing platform. We used Trimmomatic (36) to filter the reads and Velvet v1.2.10
469 (37) to assemble the reads. The Whole Genome Shotgun (WGS) *A. oris* MG-1 project has
470 been deposited at GenBank under the project accession [MAUB000000000].

471

472 *Metabolic model reconstruction and flux balance analysis.* We applied the DOE
473 Systems-biology Knowledgebase (KBase) to construct draft genome-scale metabolic
474 models. The model reconstruction process was optimized as previously (23), and
475 comprised of three steps: (i) genome annotation by RAST (22); (ii) reconstruction of a
476 draft model using the ModelSEED approach (11); and (iii) gapfilling of the model to
477 permit growth and plug holes in mostly complete pathways (38). In the gap-filling
478 process, we identified the minimal set of reactions that could be added to each model to
479 permit biomass production in a media containing every transportable metabolite. We also
480 favored the addition of reactions that would permit more gene-associated reactions in
481 each model to carry flux.

482 Once models were built, we applied flux balance analysis (FBA) (39) to predict
483 minimal feasible media and classify reactions using a six step process: (i) set the biomass
484 flux to a nonzero value; (ii) minimize the number of active exchange reactions to identify
485 the minimal set of external nutrients that must be provided to permit growth; (iii)
486 constrain exchange fluxes so that only the minimal exchanges are allowed to function;
487 (iv) minimize and maximize each reaction flux to classify each reaction during growth on
488 minimal media (40); (v) maximize biomass flux on minimal media and fix the biomass
489 flux at its maximum value; and (vi) minimize the sum of all fluxes in the model to
490 produce the simplest flux profile possible (e.g. removing all flux loops). Reactions with
491 only positive or negative fluxes are classified as *essential*; reactions with only zero flux
492 values are classified as *nonfunctional*; and reactions with zero and non-zero flux values
493 are classified as *functional*.

494 For construction of the overall model per lineage, we identified all reactions that
495 were associated with genes (i.e. not gapfilled) in at least 75% of the models included in
496 the lineage, using a permissive e-value of 0.01. These reactions formed the basis of our
497 lineage model. Then we applied the same gapfilling algorithm used with our genome
498 models to permit the lineage model to grow. Finally, we applied our FBA pipeline to
499 predict minimal media and classify reactions in the lineage model. All the models,
500 associated genomes, minimal media predictions, reaction classifications, and flux
501 predictions generated in this study are presented using the KBase Narrative Interface and
502 are accessible at <https://narrative.kbase.us/narrative/ws.17193.obj.1>. See also Figure 4-
503 source data 1, Figure 4-source data 2 and Figure 4-source data 3.

504

505 **Biochemical analysis of *PriA* enzymes.** The *priA* genes from Org15, Org10, and Org41
506 were synthesized by GeneArt (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA). Additionally, *priA* genes
507 from Org13, Org22, Org34, Org36, and Org39 were synthesized by GenScript
508 (GenScript, USA). Codons were optimized for *E. coli* heterologous expression. The *priA*
509 homologs from *A. oris* MG-1, *B. longum*, *B. gallicum* and *B. adolescentis* were PCR
510 cloned from our genomic DNA collection. Oligonucleotide sequences of primers used in
511 this study are included in Supplementary file 3. All genes were inserted into pET22b,
512 pET28a (Novagen) for expression and protein purification, and pASK for
513 complementation assays, by using the *NdeI* and *HindIII* restriction sites (18). The *in vivo*
514 *trpF* and *hisA* complementation assays, and *in vitro* determination of the Michaelis-
515 Menten steady-state enzyme kinetics parameters for both PRA and ProFAR as substrates,

516 were done as previously (13, 14, 26). Lack of enzyme activity *in vitro* was confirmed
517 using active-site saturation conditions, as before (13, 14).

518 To create a *ΔpriA* mutation in *A. oris* MG1 1.5 Kbp fragments upstream and
519 downstream of this organism were amplified by PCR (Supplementary file 3). The
520 upstream fragment was digested with *EcoRI* and *NdeI*, the downstream fragment with
521 *NdeI* and *XbaI*. The upstream and downstream fragments were ligated together in a single
522 step. The fragment was cloned into pCWU3 pre-cut with *EcoRI* and *XbaI* after digestion
523 with appropriate enzymes. The generated plasmid was then introduced into *A. oris* MG-1
524 (Org21) by electroporation. Corresponding in-frame deletion mutants were selected by
525 using mCherry fluorescence as a counter-selectable marker and resistance to kanamycin
526 (24). The deletion mutant was confirmed by PCR and by sequencing of the entire genome
527 of the resulting mutant strain.

528

529 ***Crystallization, X-ray data collection, structure determination, and refinement.***

530 PriA_Org15 was expressed and produced in BL21 Magic cells bearing the plasmid
531 pMCSG68_PriA_Org15. The protein was purified by immobilized metal-affinity
532 chromatography (IMAC) followed by His6-tag cleavage using recombinant His-tagged
533 TEV protease. A second IMAC step was used to remove the protease, the uncut protein,
534 and the affinity tag. Concentrated protein (37 mg ml⁻¹) was crystallized by sitting-drop
535 vapor-diffusion technique in 96-well CrystalQuick plates (Greiner Bio-One, USA). The
536 crystals appeared at 289 K in conditions consisting of 0.2 M Li₂SO₄, 0.1 M CAPS:NaOH
537 pH 10.5, and 1.2 M NaH₂PO₄/0.8 M K₂HPO₄. Prior to data collection crystals were
538 cryoprotected in 2.4 M K₂HPO₄ and subsequently flash-cooled. Diffraction data were

539 collected at 100 K. Native datasets were collected at 19-ID equipped with an ADSC
540 quantum Q315r CCD detector at 0.979 Å wavelength. The images were processed by
541 using the HKL3000 software suite (41). Molecular replacement was carried out by using
542 the coordinates of PriA from *M. tuberculosis* (27) used as a search probe in Phaser (42).
543 The initial model was then improved by the automatic rebuilding protocol in Arp/wArp,
544 and further modified by iterations of manual rebuilding in COOT (43) and fully
545 anisotropic crystallographic refinement in PHENIX (44) with hydrogen atoms in riding
546 positions. The PriA_Org15 model comprises residues Ser-2-Arg137 and Gly143-Ala247,
547 305 water molecules, 4 phosphate ions, and 1 CAPS moiety. The mFo-DFc difference
548 map reveals two strong positive peaks (near Asp51 and Leu230) that could not be
549 unambiguously assigned. The quality of the refined models was verified using the
550 Molprobity server (45). Data collection statistics and the refinement results are provided
551 as Figure 7-source data 1.

552

553 ***Structural alignment, homology modeling and molecular docking.*** T-coffe package was
554 used for all multiple sequence alignments (46). Protein structural homology models of
555 SubHisA_Org36 and SubTrpF_Org41 were based on the crystal structure of PriA from
556 PriA_Org15 (PDB:4X2R; this study). A standard modeling strategy using Robetta and
557 Rosetta 3.5 (47) was adopted. Molecular models of PRA and ProFAR were built using
558 Molden (48), and optimal atomic configuration of both substrates was obtained using
559 Gaussian 09 (Gaussian Inc., Wallingford CT, USA) through a quantic geometry
560 optimization using a self-consistent field at the Hartree-Fock 6-31G* level. Polar
561 hydrogen atoms and Gasteiger-Marsili empirical atomic partial charges were added using

562 AutoDockTools (49). An extensive configuration sampling of PRA and ProFAR binding
563 biophysical interactions with PriA catalytic site was performed with Autodock Vina (50).
564 Results were merged, refined, clustered, and energy sorted to produce a set of complex
565 configuration predictions.
566
567

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579

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- 723

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727 **Table 1.** Selective pressures in PriA homologs from H1, H2 and H3 hypotheses

Hypothesis	d_N/d_s	d_N	d_s
H1	0.0636	0.3151	4.9559
H2	0.0901	1.8687	20.736
H3	0.1459	1.8703	12.8227

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733 **Table 2.** Biochemical characterization of PriA, SubHisA2 and SubTrpF homologs

Enzymes	<i>In vivo</i> activity		<i>In vitro</i> activity ^a					
			ProFAR isomerase (HisA)			PRA isomerase (TrpF)		
	HisA	TrpF	K_M (μM)	k_{cat} (s^{-1})	k_{cat}/K_M ($\text{s}^{-1}\mu\text{M}^{-1}$)	K_M (μM)	k_{cat} (s^{-1})	k_{cat}/K_M ($\text{s}^{-1}\mu\text{M}^{-1}$)
PriA_Org3_B. longum	+	+	2.7 ± 0.5	0.4 ± 0.1	0.1	6.1 ± 0.1	2.1 ± 0.5	0.3
PriA_Org1_B. gallicum	+	+	1.7 ± 0.3	0.3 ± 0.1	0.2	40 ± 9	3.5 ± 0.1	0.09
PriA_Org6_B. adolescentis	+	+	17 ± 4.3	2.3 ± 0.01	0.1	21 ± 5	0.9 ± 0.2	0.04
PriA_Org15_A. urogenitalis	+	+	4.0 ± 0.9	0.2 ± 0.03	0.04	23 ± 6.5	0.5 ± 0.05	0.02
PriA_Org22_A. sp. oral taxon 171	+	+	3 ± 0.3	0.3 ± 0.09	0.1	8 ± 2	0.4 ± 0.1	0.04
PriA_Org21_A. oris MG-1	+	+	10 ± 2	0.2 ± 0.09	0.02	30 ± 7	0.3 ± 0.03	0.01
SubHisA2_Org34_A. vaccimaxillae	+	+						
SubHisA2_Org36_A. cardiffensis	+	+	56 ± 17	0.14 ± 0.05	0.002	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
SubTrpF_Org10_A. sp. oral taxon 848	-	+	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	0.0001
SubTrpF_Org13_A. graevenitzii	-	+						
SubTrpF_Org39_A. sp. oral taxon 180	-	+						
SubTrpF_Org41_A. odontolyticus	-	+	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	8.5 ± 0.9	0.15 ± 0.06	0.02

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^a Each data point comes from at least three independent determinations using freshly purified enzyme. n.d., activity not detected, even using active-site saturation conditions. Empty entries reflect our inability to properly express and/or solubilize these proteins. The detection limits for the PRA and ProFAR isomerase assay used in the present study are 0.0001 $\mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$ and 0.001 $\mu\text{M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$, respectively (13,14,26).

738 **Legends to Figures**

739

740 **Figure 1 - ($\beta\alpha$)₈ barrel isomerases at which L-tryptophan and L-histidine biosynthesis converge.**

741 Selected L-tryptophan (blue) and L-histidine (red) biosynthetic enzymes are shown. The committed
742 reaction catalyzed by PriA and PriB, or phosphoribosyl isomerase A or B in *Actinobacteria* (dashed
743 arrows), is independently catalyzed by the enzymes TrpF or PRA isomerase, and HisA or ProFAR
744 isomerase (standard arrows) in most bacteria. Furthermore, the divergent SubHisA enzyme, resulting
745 from divergent evolution after an event of HGT and positive selection in certain *Corynebacterium*
746 species, is also shown.

747

748 **Figure 2. Identification of reduced genomes in *Actinobacteria*. A.** Protein-based phylogeny of 133

749 representative deep-branching *Actinobacteria* using Bayesian reconstruction. The tree shows a clade with
750 the family *Bifidobacteriaceae* as the root of the families *Dermabacteraceae*, *Cellulomonadaceae*,
751 *Demequinaceae*, *Jonesiaceae*, *Promicromonosporaceae* and *Actinomycetaceae*, shown in blue and
752 highlighted with a grey box. **B.** Relationship between genome size and percentage of (G+C) content. The
753 color key used for taxonomic associations is provided at the bottom, and it is the same for both panels.

754

755 **Figure 3. Concatenated phylogenetic tree of the family *Actinomycetaceae* and occurrence of L-**

756 **histidine and L-tryptophan biosynthetic genes.** The tree was constructed using 205 single-copy
757 conserved proteins using Bayesian methods. Only posterior probabilities are shown but significant
758 bootstrap values close to 100 using maximum likelihood were also calculated (Fig. 3 - supplement Figure
759 1). A new classification of the family, into four major groups, is proposed: lineage I (orange); lineage II
760 (blue); lineage III, (green); and lineage IV (red). Based in the species phylogenetic tree of Fig. 2A, we

761 selected as out-group the genus *Bifidobacterium*. Occurrence of L-histidine (His, black) and L-tryptophan
762 (Trp, grey) biosynthetic genes as revealed by standard genome annotation using RAST is shown next to
763 the tree. Each square represents a complete pathway including all expected genes (10 and 7 for the *his*
764 and *trp* genes respectively) up to 90%. The only missing *his* gene refers to the enzyme histidinol-
765 phosphatase (EC 3.1.3.15), which belongs to a broad enzyme family difficult to annotate.

766

767 **Figure 3 - supplement Figure 1. Concatenated phylogenetic tree of the family Actinomycetaceae**
768 **using maximum likelihood.** The phylogenetic tree shows four major groups: lineage I (orange clade),
769 lineage II (blue clade), lineage III (green clade) and lineage IV (red clade). Bootstrap values are shown.
770 Representative sequences from the closely related genus *Bifidobacterium* were used as out-group (purple
771 clade). Name nomenclature of organisms used in the text is provided. Both phylogenetic trees using
772 different algorithms supported the taxonomic relationships between the selected taxa.

773

774 **Figure 3 - supplement Figure 2. Lineage-specific genomic features of the family Actinomycetaceae.**
775 Lineages and the out-group are as defined in the text. **A.** Percentage of (G+C)-content in whole genomes,
776 where each point in the box-plot represent a genome. **B.** Genome size (Mbp), where each point in the
777 box-plot represents a genome. **C.** Number of coding sequences, where each point in the box-plot
778 represents a CDS. **D.** Number of subsystems based in RASTtk annotation, where each point represents a
779 subsystem. The median is highlighted with a black line. All the box-plots were created with R package.

780

781 **Figure 4. Metabolic diversity amongst the genomic lineages of the genus *Actinomyces*.** The Venn
782 diagrams show the overlap in gene-associated reactions included in models of genomes of lineage I (A),
783 lineage II (B), lineage III (C), and lineage IV (D). The diagrams for lineages I and III show the overlap of
784 all models in these lineages, while the lineage II and IV diagrams show the overlap of a subset of models
785 sampled based on their metabolic diversity. Overlap in gene-associated reaction content for each of the
786 core lineage models (E), which are comprised of conserved reactions present in at least 75% of the
787 models in each lineage, is also shown.

788

789 **Figure 4 - supplement Figure 1.** Phylogenetic projection of amino acid biosynthetic pathways
790 throughout the family Actinomycetaceae as confirmed after genome-scale metabolic modeling. The tree
791 is the same as in Fig. 3, but without the names of organisms to facilitate visual inspection. Occurrence of
792 amino acid biosynthetic pathways, denoted with standard nomenclature, is shown. Each square represents
793 a complete pathway including all expected genes up to 90%. His and Trp pathways are highlighted with
794 an asterisk.

795

796 **Figure 5. Phylogenetic reconstruction of PriA and coevolution with L-histidine and L-tryptophan**
797 **biosynthesis. A.** Analysis of the occurrence of *his* and *trp* biosynthetic genes (*priA* is included in both
798 pathways), marked as absent (white) or present (gray), using the phylogenomics species tree of Fig. 3 as a
799 map (same color code). The missing *his* gene, when almost the entire pathway is present, refers to the
800 enzyme histidinol-phosphatase (EC 3.1.3.15), which belongs to a broad enzyme family difficult to
801 annotate. **B.** Same gene occurrence analysis using the PriA phylogenetic tree as a map. Three
802 evolutionary scenarios where PriA is coevolving with the occurrence of *his* and *trp* genes, and in
803 agreement with the intensity of purifying selection (Table 1, gradient shown in the left-hand side of the

804 panel), are marked as H1 (purple), H2 (orange), and H3 (yellow). The same color code as in Fig. 3 is
805 used, and the selected enzymes that were biochemically characterized are underlined.

806

807 **Figure 6. Evolutionary hypotheses and steady-state enzyme kinetics of PriA homologs. A.**

808 Evolutionary hypothesis (H1, H2 and H3) with functional implications leading to PriA enzyme
809 subfamilies, expressed as biochemical conversions, as obtained from Fig. 5. **B.** Comparison of the
810 catalytic efficiencies (k_{cat}/K_M) of selected enzymes from different scenarios, including the three
811 postulated evolutionary hypotheses. Values for ProFAR (x axis) and PRA (y axis) isomerase activities,
812 expressed as \log_{10} , are compared. Data from PriAs of *Bifidobacterium* (purple circle), PriA from H1
813 (purple triangle), SubHisA2 from H2 (orange), and SubTrpF from H3 (yellow pentagon) is included.

814

815 **Figure 7. PriA from *Org15_A. urogenitalis* active site and sequence alignment of PriA sub-families.**

816 **A.** The structure of PriA from *A. urogenitalis* (purple, PDB: 4X2R) superimposed with PriA from *M.*
817 *tuberculosis* in a complex with rCdRP (cyan, PDB: 2Y85) and PrFAR (pink, PDB: 2Y88) is used to
818 illustrate the position of the respective substrates. The catalytic residues and those critical for divergence
819 into SubHisA2 or SubTrpF are shown. Since the loop contributing Trp139 and Arg137 is mostly
820 disordered, and Arg137 itself does not adopt substrate binding-relevant position in the structure from *A.*
821 *urogenitalis*, only the equivalent elements from the *M. tuberculosis* homolog are shown. **B.** Multiple
822 sequence alignment of PriA (purple), SubHisA2 (red) and SubTrpF (bold) sequences. Catalytic residues,
823 Asp9 and Asp169, are marked in red. PRA and ProFAR binding residues are shown in blue. SubHisA2
824 and SubTrpF loss-of-function residues are framed. The secondary structure is shown below the
825 sequences. Loops are shown in orange, α helices are shown in gray and β sheets are shown in green.
826 Sequence corresponding to loops 1, 5, and 6 is highlighted in gray.

827 **List of Tables provided as Source Data**

828

829 **Figure 2-source data 1.** Actinobacterial genome sequences from early-diverging families used in this
830 study

831

832 **Figure 2-source data 2.** Conserved orthologs in early-diverging actinobacterial families used for
833 phylogenetic reconstruction

834

835 **Figure 3-source data 1.** Genome sequences of the familiy Actinomycetaceae and the genus
836 *Bifidobacterium* used in this study

837

838 **Figure 3-source data 2.** Conserved orthologs between the family Actinomycetaceae and the genus
839 *Bifidobacterium* and best fit model used to construct the phylogenetic tree with Mr.Bayes

840

841 **Figure 3-figure supplement 2-source data 1.** Statistical analysis of the genomic differences between
842 Lineage II and IV

843

844 **Figure 4-source data 1.** Model overview

845

846 **Figure 4-source data 2.** Model reactions

847

848 **Figure 4-source data 3.** Predicted minimal media

849

850 **Figure 5-source data 1.** Occurrence of L-Histidine and L-Tryptophan biosynthetic enzymes throughout
851 the family Actinomycetaceae and the genus *Bifidobacterium*

852

853 **Figure 7-source data 1.** X-ray crystallographic data processing and refinement statistics for PriA_Org15.

854

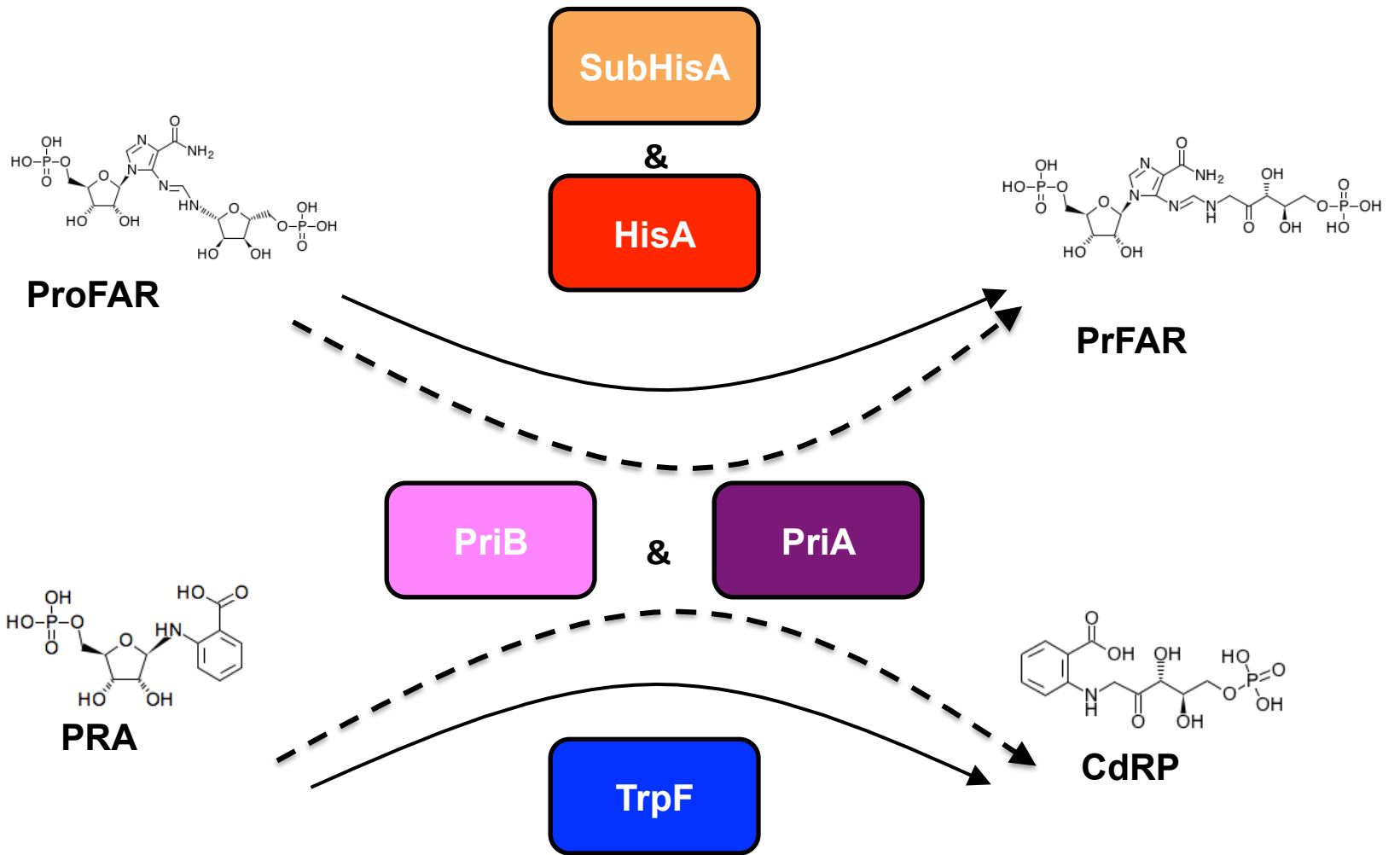
855 **Supplementary file 1.** Genome analysis of the priA minus *Actinomyces oris* mutant

856

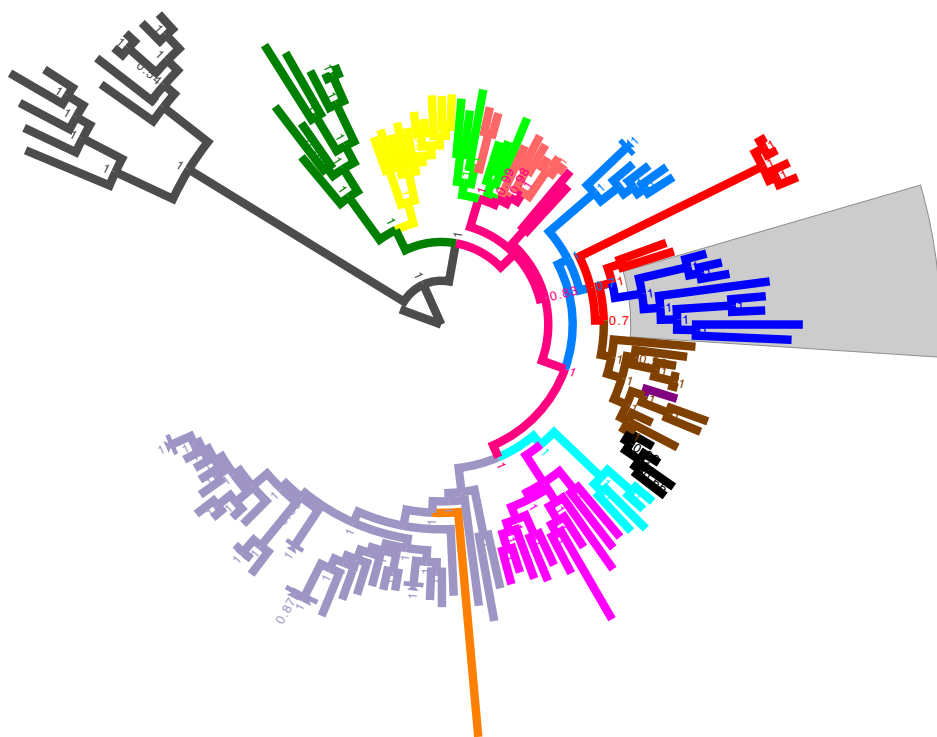
857 **Supplementary file 2.** Predicted affinities for PRA and ProFAR

858

859 **Supplementary file 3.** Primers used in this study



A



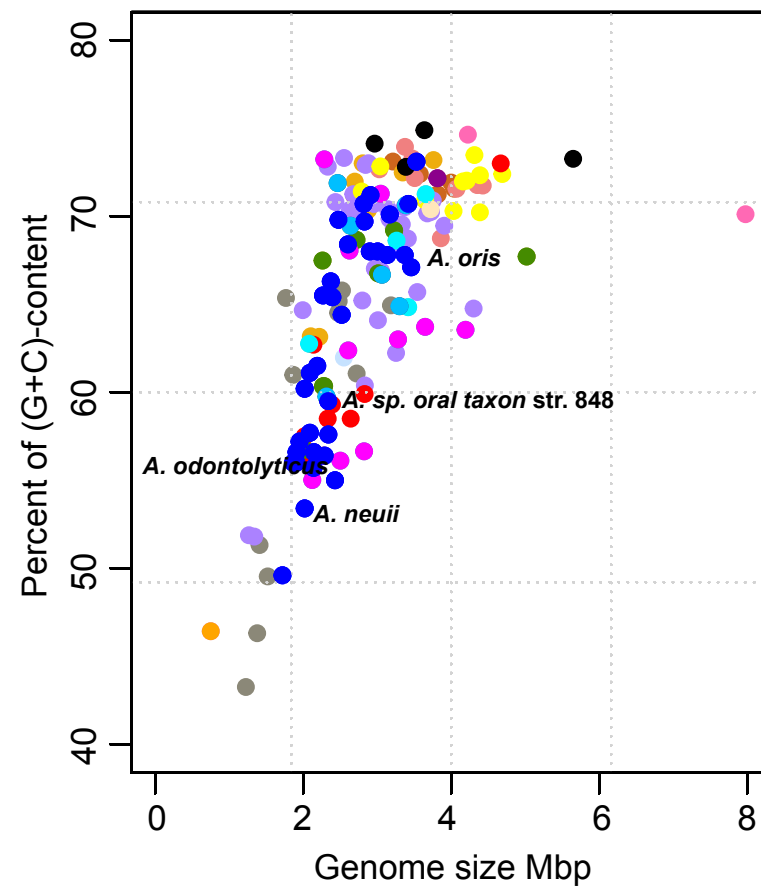
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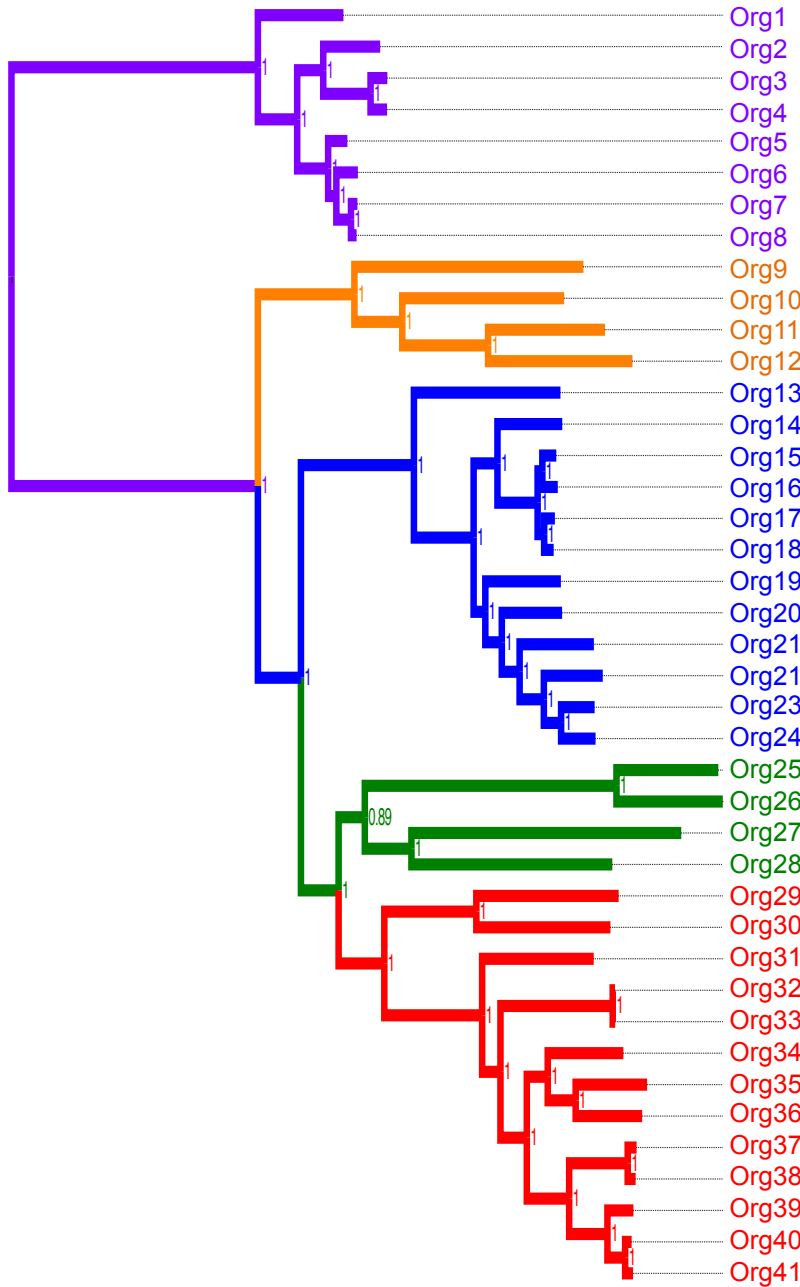
- *Brevibacteriaceae*
- *Bifidobacteriaceae*
- *Actinomycetaceae*
- *Tropheryma whippelii*
- *Sanguibacteraceae*
- *Kineosporaceae*

- *Intrasporangiaceae*
- *Dermacoccaceae/Dermatophilaceae*
- *Dermabacteraceae*
- *Coriobacteriaceae/Acidothermaceae*
- *Cellulomonadaceae/Demequinaceae/Timonella/Jonesiaceae*

- *Propionibacteriaceae*
- *Promicromonosporaceae*
- *Nocardiodaceae*
- *Micrococcaceae*
- *Microbacteriaceae*

B





His	Tip
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Out-group

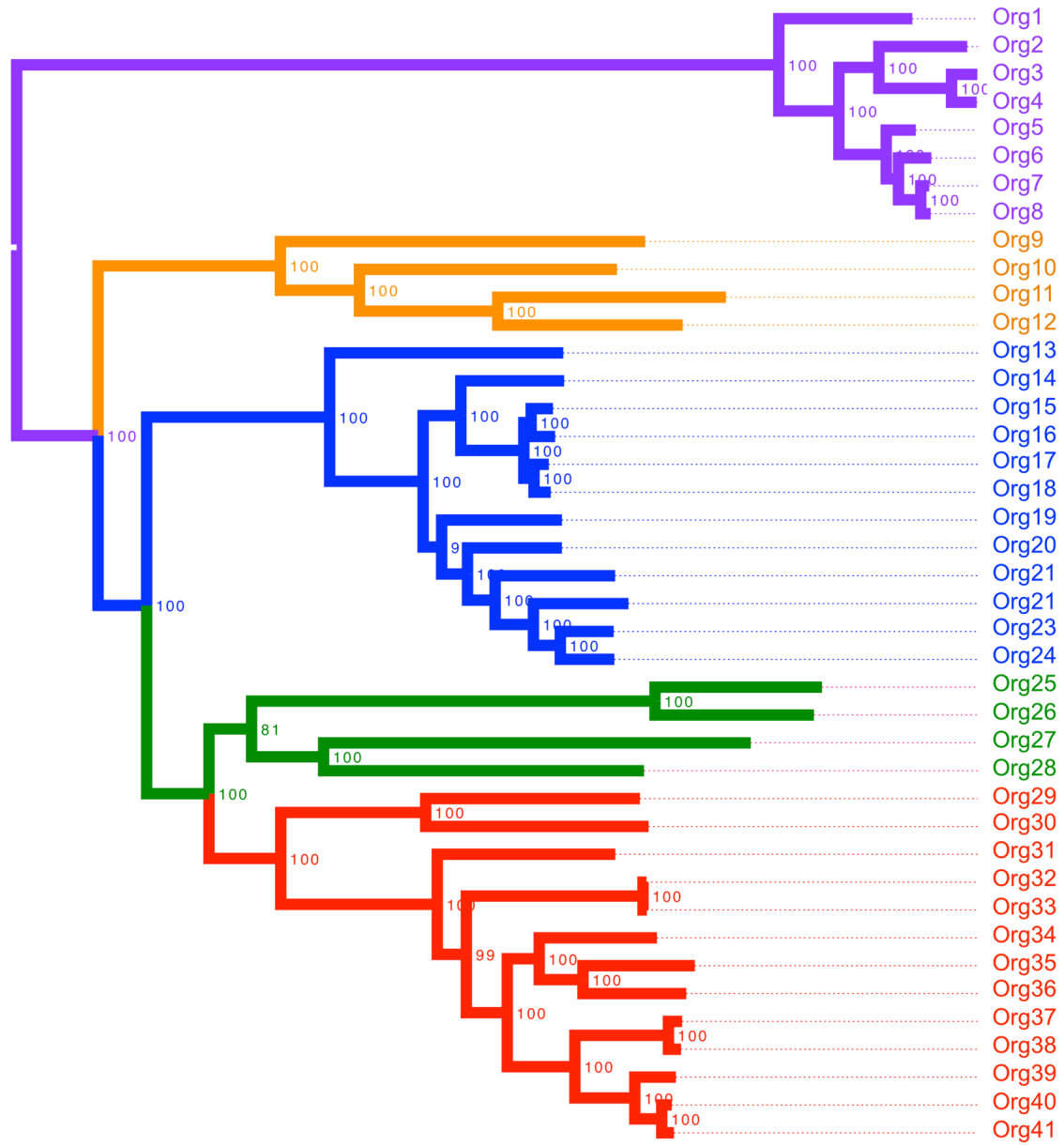
Lineage I

Lineage II

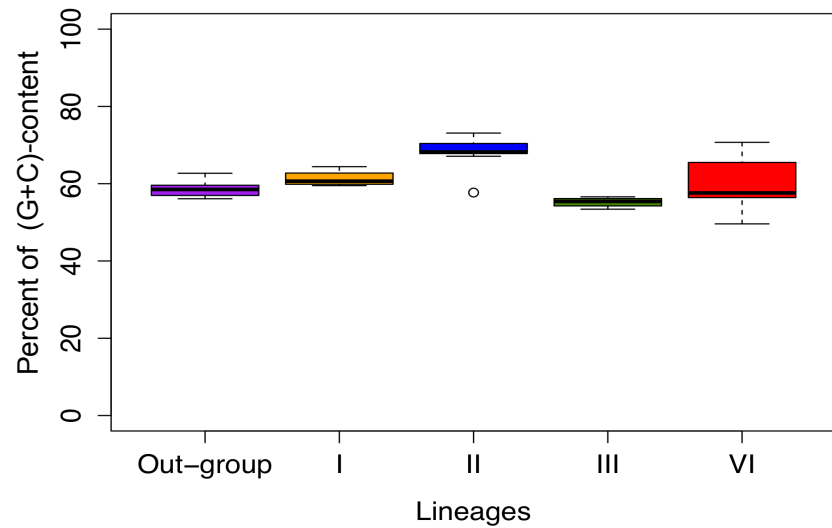
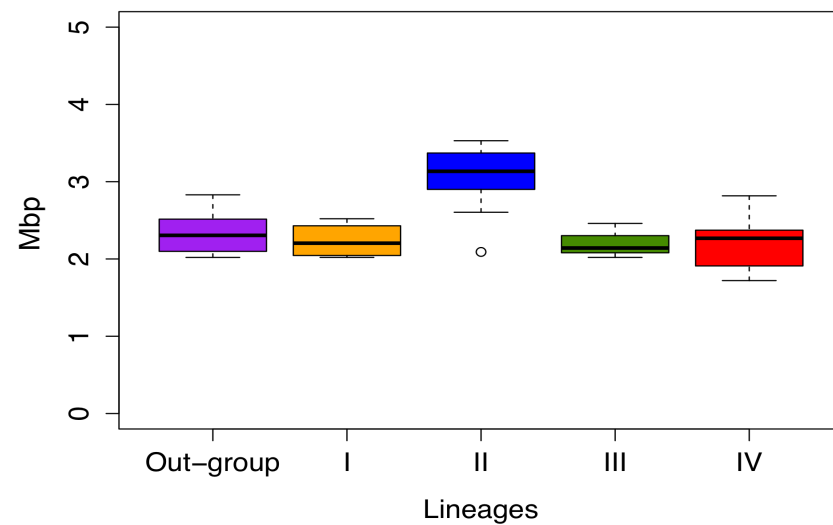
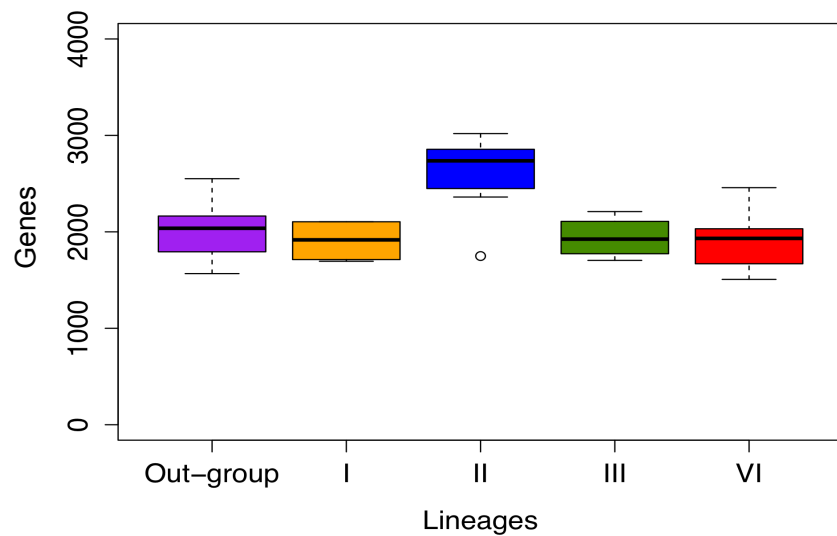
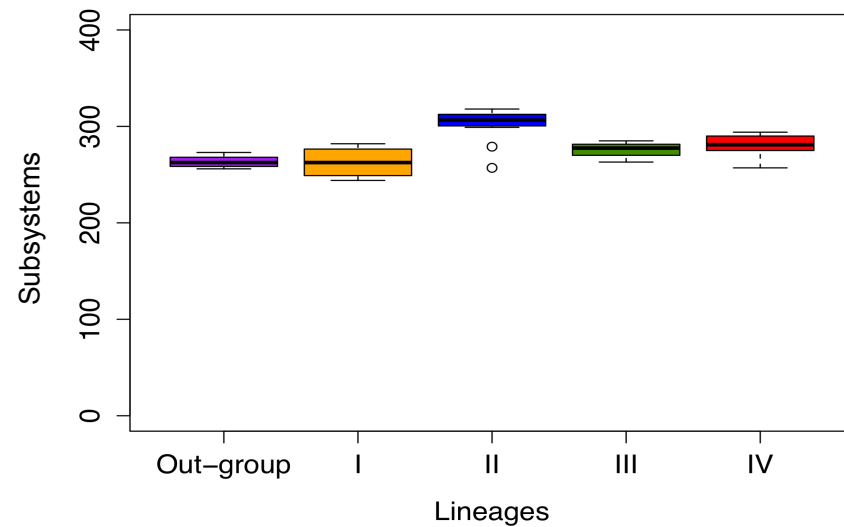
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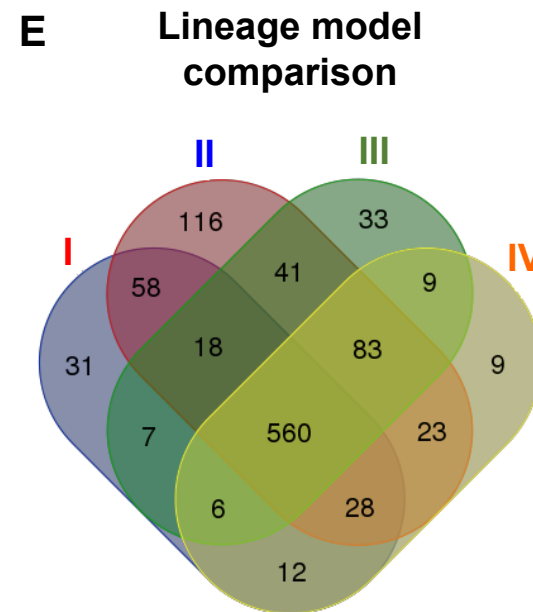
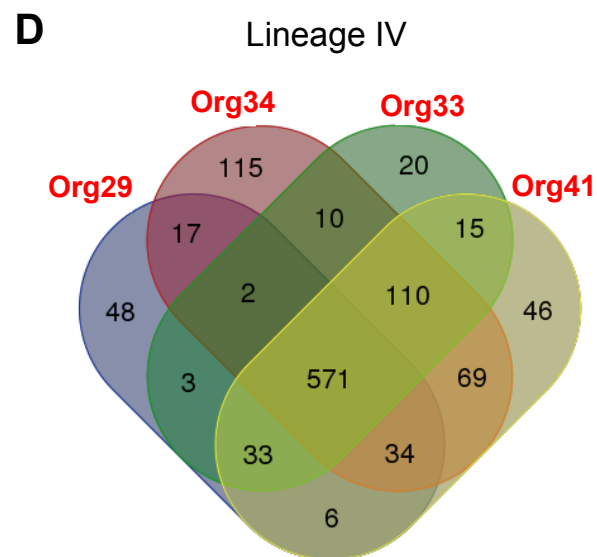
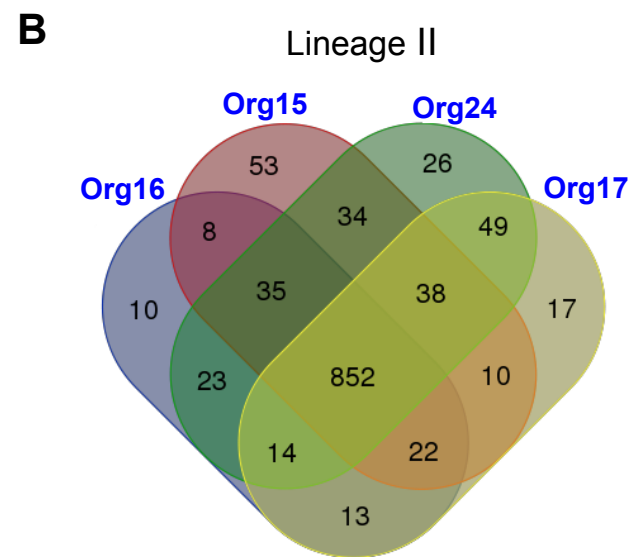
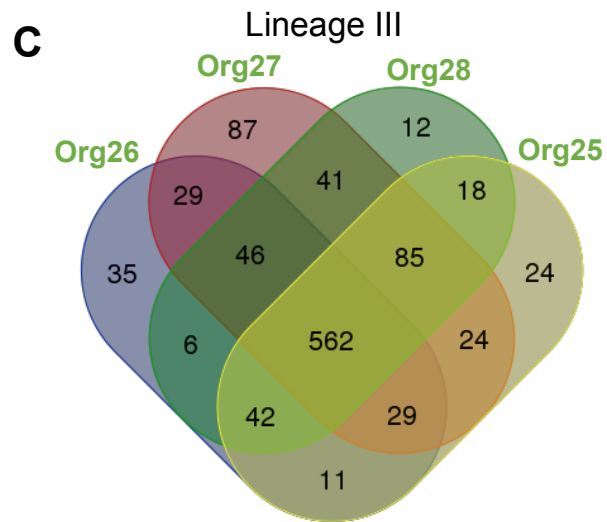
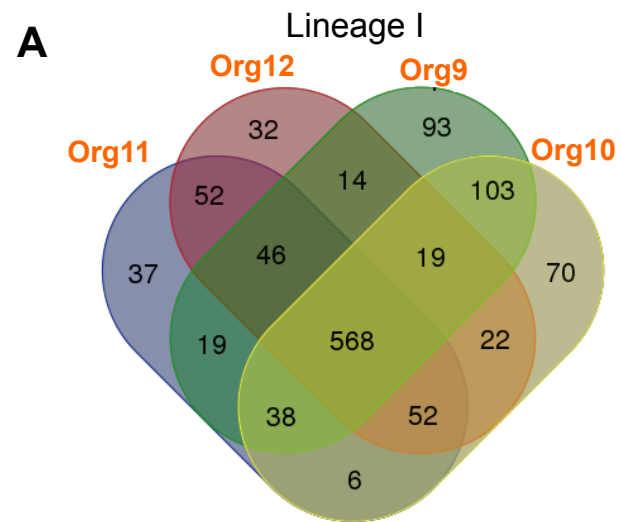
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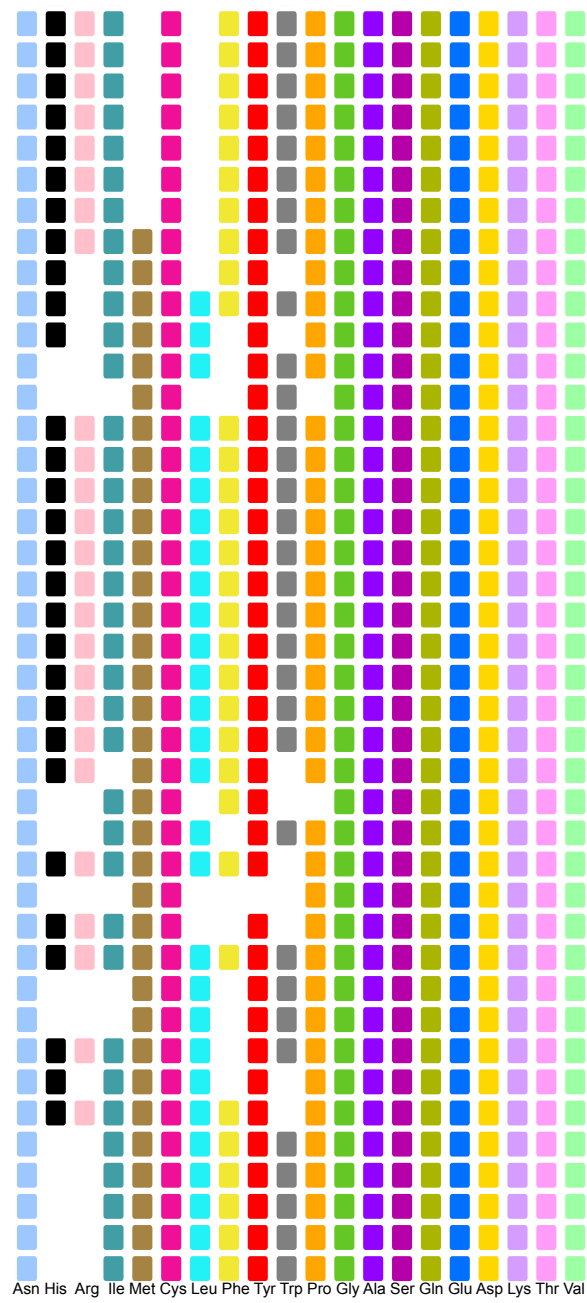
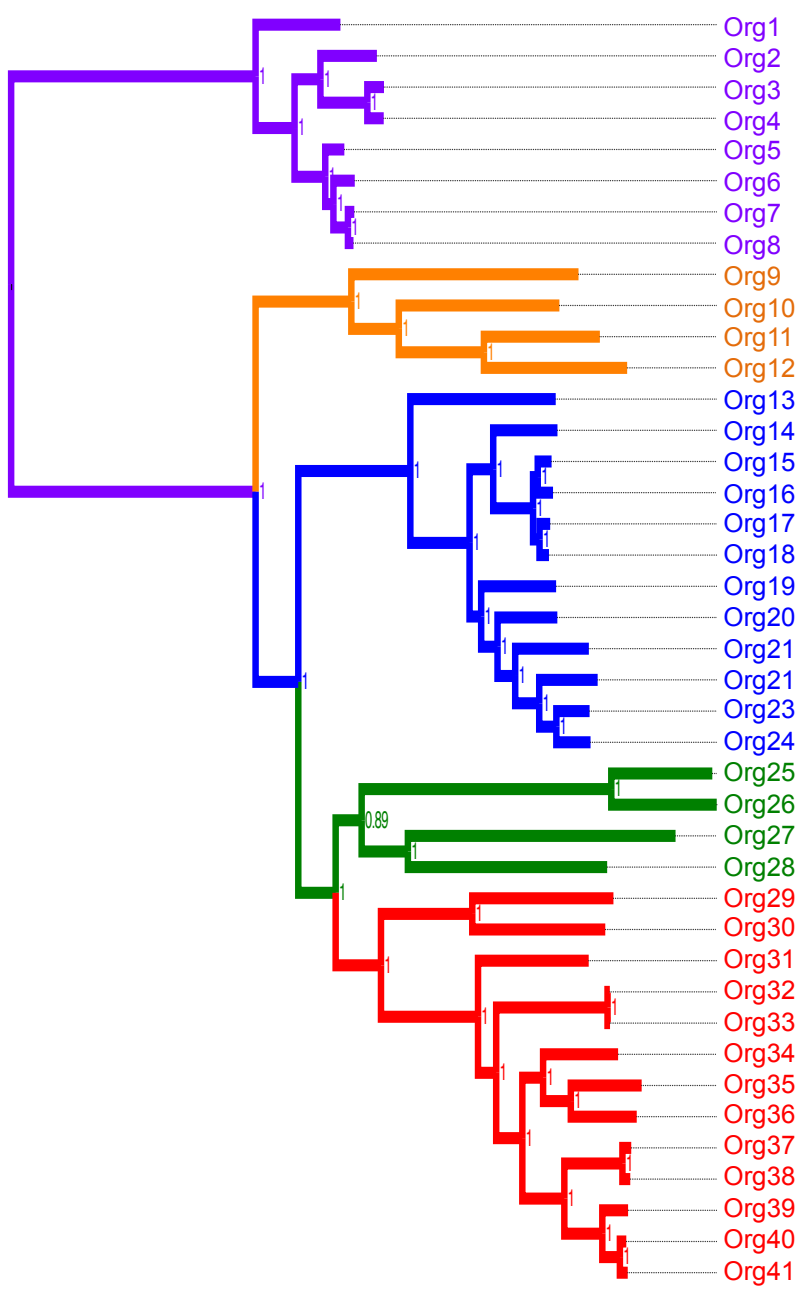
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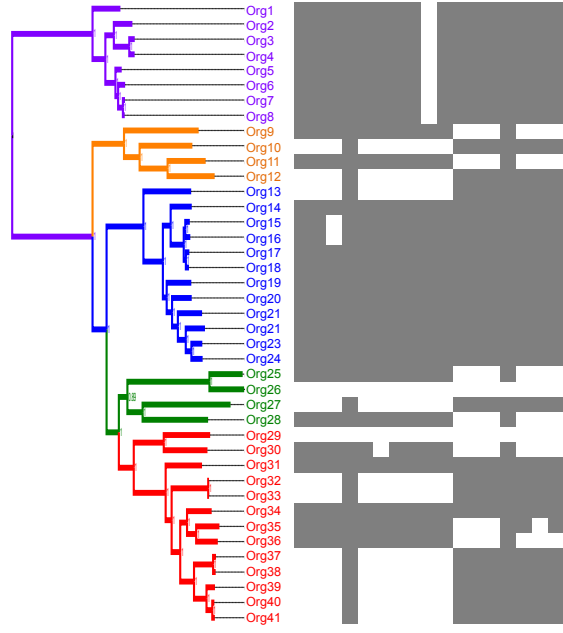
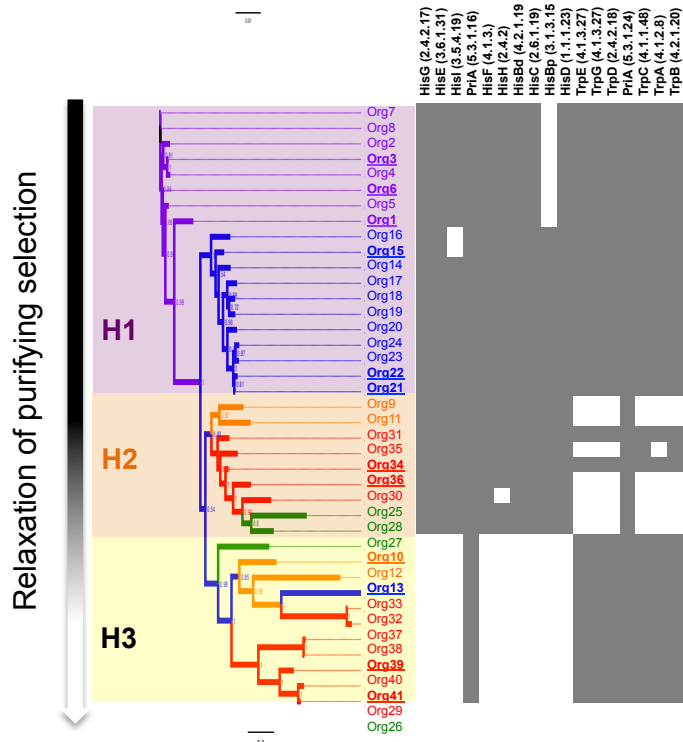
A**B****C****D**

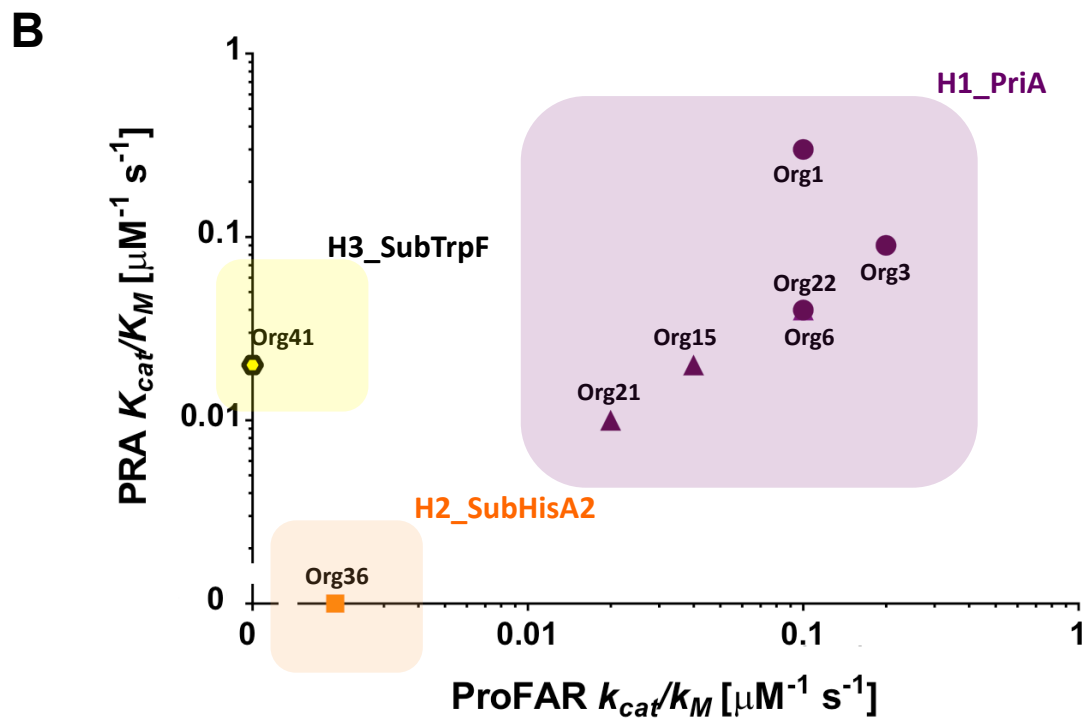
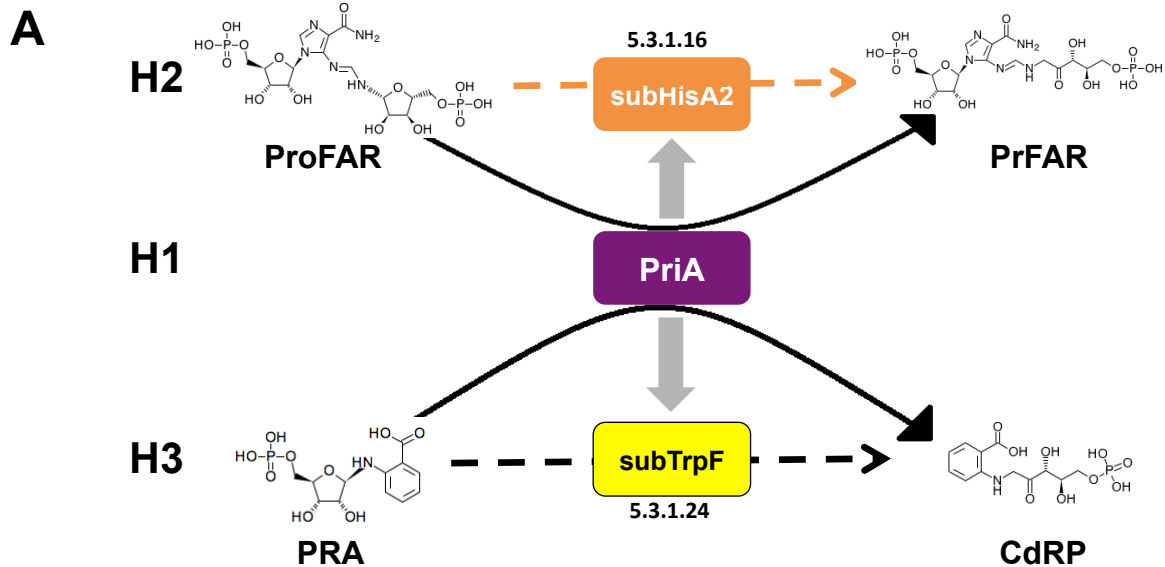




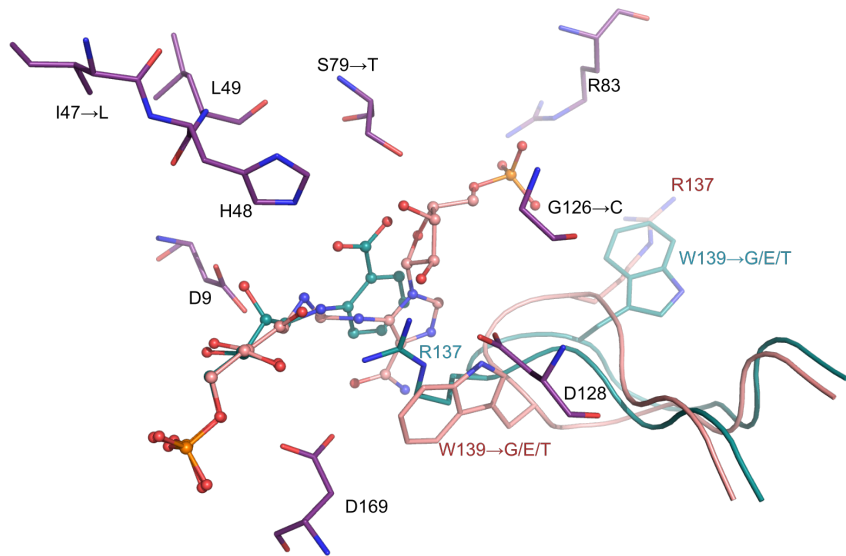
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Asn His Arg Ile Met Cys Leu Phe Tyr Trp Pro Gly Ala Ser Gln Glu Asp Lys Thr Val

A**B**



A



B

1	PriA_Mtuber	---MPLILLPAVDVVEGRAVRLVQGKAGSQTEYGSVDAALGWQDGAEWIHLVDLDAAFGRGSNHELLAEVVG-KL---
	PriA_Scoo	-M-SKLELLPAVDVRDQAVRLVHGSGTETSYSGPSLEAALAWQRSGAEWHLVDLDAAFGTGDNRLIAEVAQ-AM---
	PriA_Org15	----MLTLLPAVDVADGKAVRLQGEAGSETDYGSPTEAARDWVEAGAEWIHLVDLDAAFGRGSNAPLLERIVG-EV---
	PriA_Org21	----MLTLLPAVDVADGKAVRLQGEAGSETDYGSPTEAARDWVEAGAEWIHLVDLDAAFGRGSNAPLLERIVG-EV---
	PriA_Org22	----MLTLLPAVDVADGKAVRLQGEAGSETDYGSPTEAARDWVEAGAEWIHLVDLDAAFGRGSNAPLLERIVG-EV---
	subHisA2_Org34	MS--ANLILLPAVDVVDGQAVRLTQGEAGTETNYGHPLEAARSFVEAGAQWHLVDLDAAFGRGSNAPLLADITR-EL---
	subHisA2_Org36	MS--TLILLPAVDVVGQAVRLTQGEAGTETVYGTPLAARSFVEAGAKWHLVDLDAAFGRGSNAELLQSITA-QL---
	subTrpF_Org10	MT--LPLQLLPAVDVANGRAVRLTRGEASSACSFDPMPRAVDFVEAGAAWIHLADIDAAFGRGSNRALLTEIVR-EA---
	subTrpF_Org13	MAVGPLRLLPAVDVANGRAVRLTRGEASSACSFDPMPRAVDFVEAGAAWIHLADIDAAFGRGSNAALLAQVIADLARLH
	subTrpF_Org39	MN--RIELLPADVDTGGRAVRLSSGVVD-DRSWADPAQVARSFEEAGARWHLVDLDRAFPGRGNDELLARVMN-EV---
	subTrpF_Org41	MT--ILELLPAIDVTGGQAVRLSSGVVD-EGSWGSPIDVARSFDEAGARWHLVDLDAAFGRGENSELLARVIR-EV---

		β1	β-α1	α1	α-β1 β2	β-α2	α2	α-β2
80	PriA_Mtuber	----DVQVELSGGIRDDESLLAALATGTCARVNVGTAALENPQWC-ARVIGEHGDQVAVGLDVQIIDGEHRLRG-----						
	PriA_Scoo	----DIKVELSGGIRDDETLAAALATGCTRVNLGTALETPEWV-AKVIAEHGDKIAVGLDVRG-----TTLRG-----						
	PriA_Org15	----GIKVELSGGIRDDESLTRALKAGAARVNLGTALEDPEWT-ARVIAEHGDKIAVGLDVRG-----TTLAA-----						
	PriA_Org21	----GIKVELSGGIRDDESLTRALKAGAARVNLGTALEDPEWT-ARVIAEHGDKIAVGLDVRG-----STLAA-----						
	PriA_Org22	----GIKVELSGGIRDDESLTRALKAGAARVNLGTALEDPEWT-ARVIAEHGDKIAVGLDVRG-----STLAA-----						
	subHisA2_Org34	----PINVELSGGIRDDESLRRALDAGARRVNLGTALEDPEWT-ERVIAEFGDRIAVGLDVRG-----ETLSA-----						
	subHisA2_Org36	----PINVELTGGIRDDESLRRALECGARRVNLGTAALENPEWT-EKVI GEFADRIALGLDVRG-----ETLAG-----						
	subTrpF_Org10	QTRHGVRIEWSGGVRDEESLLAAVASGAARVNLATGALADLEWA-ASAIERFGSQVAVGLDVRG-----DVLAA-----						
	subTrpF_Org13	P---GVSVQWSSGGVSSADDERALAAGAKRVNLGAGALKDLAATLAVGRF-GRHLNVCLDVSAAASAPNPAPADPATP						
	subTrpF_Org39	----DVAIQLSGGIVSRGDVEAALAEAGPDRVNIATQALDDLDVAV-RDAIDAFGPRVSVCLDVRG-----ERLAA-----						
	subTrpF_Org41	----PVRVELSGGITSPAAVEAGLAMGPVERNIAATQALDDIDAV-CEAVDTFGERVAVCLDVRG-----DRLAA-----						

		β3	β-α3	α3	α-β3	β4	β-α4	α4	α-β4	β5	β-α5
160	PriA_Mtuber	RGWETDGGDLWDVLERLDSSEGCRRFVVTDITKDGTLGGPNLDDLAVADR									
	PriA_Scoo	RGWTRDGGDLVETLDRLNKEGCARYVVTDIAKDGTLQGNLELLKNVCAA									
	PriA_Org15	RGWTKEGGDLWQTLDRLEAGCRRYVVTDVTKDGTLTGNTELLRQVAAR									
	PriA_Org21	RGWTKEGGDLWESLERLNAAGCARYVVTDVTRDGTLSGPNLTALLTEVCQR									
	PriA_Org22	RGWTKEGGDLWETLERLNTAGCARYVVTDVTRDGTLSGPNLTALLTEVCQR									
	subHisA2_Org34	RGWTRDGGDLVETIERLDAAGCRRYVVTDVARDGMLSGPNTELLRRVCEA									
	subHisA2_Org36	RGWTRDGGDLVETIERLDAAGCRRYVVTDVARDGMLSGPNTELLRRVCEA									
	subTrpF_Org10	RGWTRDGGDLVETIERLDAAGCRRYVVTDVARDGMLSGPNTELLRRVCEA									
	subTrpF_Org13	RGEAEVGRVLDVLPALAEAGCARYVVTDVARDGAMGNPNTELLRVAEA									
	subTrpF_Org39	GAAQLAGAQGAAQAPATQPSADLATYVVHPRQGGPVGPLEPILAAALNEAGTGAAYVVTDVTRDGLSGPNLPLLAGLSGA									
	subTrpF_Org41	RCTSRGGNVVEVLSALNEAGIARLVVTDVTRDGMQRGANLELLARVADA									
		RGSGEGGNVWEALRVLEAGVARLVVTDVTRDGMQNGSNRELLARVADQ									

		β-α5	α5	α-β5 β6	β-α6	α6
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