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Version 4

## DIMPLE library generation and assembly protocol V.4

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DIMPLE



i'm DMSin' it

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**We use this protocol and it's working.**

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## Abstract

This is a protocol for generating and QCing mutagenic libraries using the DIMPLE protocol. This version is updated to include expanded descriptions of QC and to clarify certain steps.



## Materials

### Enzymes and cells

- ✕ PrimeSTAR GXL DNA Polymerase **Catalog #R050A**
- ✕ MegaX DH10B T1R Electrocompetent Cells **Life Technologies Catalog #C6400-03**
- ✕ NEB Golden Gate Assembly Mix **New England Biolabs Catalog # E1601S** (Bsal)

### Kits (NEB kits given only as examples - any comparable kit should work)

- ✕ Monarch PCR and DNA Cleanup Kit - 50 preps **New England Biolabs Catalog #T1030S**
- ✕ Monarch® DNA Gel Extraction Kit **New England Biolabs Catalog #T1020**
- ✕ Monarch Plasmid Miniprep Kit - 250 preps **New England Biolabs Catalog #T1010L**

### Media and chemicals

- ✕ SOC Outgrowth Medium - 100 ml **New England Biolabs Catalog #B9020S**
- ✕ PCR Water (nuclease free) **Catalog #PCPW**

### Equipment and consumables

- Thermocycler
- Electroporator
- Shaker
- Horizontal electrophoresis system
- Benchtop centrifuge
- OD meter
  
- Electroporation cuvettes (0.1 cm)
- Cuvettes for OD measurement
- Selection agar plates
- Agarose
- Optional: large BioAssay plates for plasmid purification

## Troubleshooting

## Preparation

### 1 Use DIMPLE to generate mutagenic oligos and primers.

The screenshot shows the DIMPLE Deep Indel Missense Programmable Library Engineering GUI. The interface includes the following fields and options:

- Working Directory
- Target Gene File
- Oligo Length: 230
- Fragment Length: auto
- Fragment Overlap (This will change if deletions are selected)
- Barcode Start position: 0
- Type IIS restriction sequence: CGTCTC
- Sequences to avoid: CGTCTC, GGTCTC
- ☐ Include Stop Codons
- Codon Usage
  - ☐ E. coli
  - ☒ Human
- Custom Codon Usage
- Select Mutations
  - ☐ List of Deletions: 3,6
  - ☐ List of Insertions: GGG,GGGGGG
  - ☐ Include Substitutions
- Run DIMPLE

A large empty text area is located at the bottom of the form.

Snapshot of the default DIMPLE GUI

- 2 **Important notes:** DIMPLE breaks a gene up into sub-library fragments and generates mutagenic insert oligo pools, where each oligo contains barcodes, Type IIS restriction cutsites, and a sub-region of the gene. Be sure to review your library generation vector and gene sequences and look for pre-existing Type IIS restriction sites. Use site-directed mutagenesis to remove unwanted off-target sites. Also note that, by default, DIMPLE

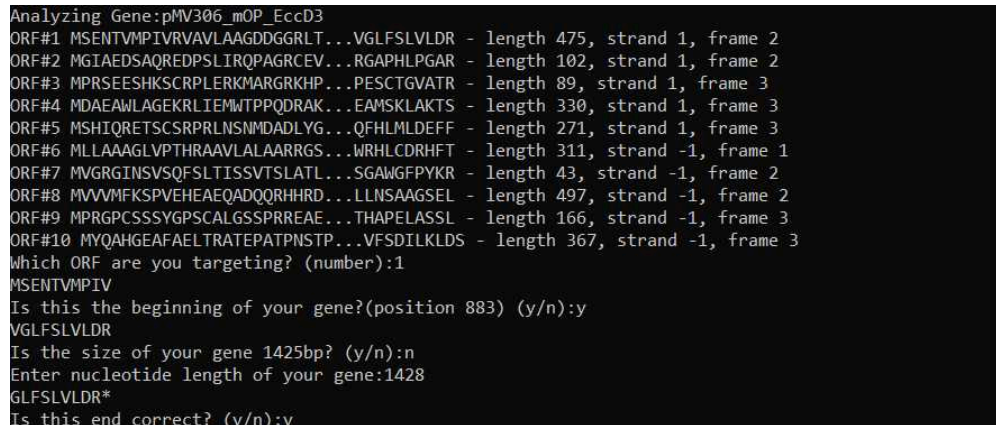
expects restriction enzymes with 6 bp recognition sites and 4 bp overhang lengths (as with BsaI and BsmBI).

- 3 **Input wild type gene sequence:** Input your gene sequence, including backbone, in fasta format. Place all genes to be mutagenized in the same fasta file. You can define which positions your genes start and end in the fasta header. Note that this uses 0 indexing; for example, if your first nucleotide is 884 on snapgene, use 883 in the fasta header).

■ **For example:** >geneA start:35 end:250



\*If you do not define your start & end position, the software will analyze different ORFs and ask you to define these positions.



It is important to include the plasmid backbone so that the software can avoid making primers that nonspecifically recognize a region outside of your gene.

```
Non specific Fragment:8
[162, 159, 159, 159, 156, 156, 159, 159, 159]
Creating Gene:pmV306_mOP_EccD3 --- Fragment:2-54
no thermodynamic data for neighbors 'AT/GT' available. Please check position manually:352 reverse
Primer:ATAGGTCTCcgccgatccggccgc
Match: ggccgcagcgcgcgcacccggccgc
Found non-specific match at 790bp:
match:cgaccacgcggcgacaccggccgc
primer:ATAGGTCTCcgccgatccggccgc Tm:35.03620585066153
----- Fragment size swapped due to non-specific primers -----
```

## 4 Using the DIMPLE GUI

- 4.1 *Working Directory:* When you open the DIMPLE GUI, first designate your working directory. This is the folder you wish your mutagenic oligo & primer outputs to be saved in.
- 4.2 *Target Gene File:* Upload your gene fasta text file with the Target Gene File button.
- 4.3 *Oligo length:* Designate the length of your oligo. This will include the barcodes, Type IIS restriction cutsite, and a region of your target gene that will be mutagenized. So, target gene +50bp.
- 4.4 *Fragment length:* You can adjust the length of your fragments, we recommend leaving the fragment length set to auto.
  - DIMPLE will automatically break up your gene into roughly the same fragment sizes, and will determine which lengths work best to avoid matching overhangs.
- 4.5 *Fragment overlap:* The number of base pairs shared between sub-regions. We have seen that setting overlap to 0 base pairs leads to errors. The overlap is set to 4 base pairs by default.
- 4.6 *Barcode start position:* The software selects from a set pool of barcodes when designing oligos. You can define which number barcode in the list this starts from.
- 4.7 *Type IIS restriction sequence:* You can select which Type IIS restriction cutsite you'd like to append to your inserts and backbone. You can choose between the BsmBI (CGTCTC) or BsaI (GGTCTC) sequences.
- 4.8 *Sequences to avoid:* This will allow the code to design fragments without the cutsite you selected in the *Type IIS restriction sequence* section. If there is an error when running, this implies you have a cutsite in your gene or vector that needs to be removed.

```
Exception in Tkinter callback
Traceback (most recent call last):
  File "C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\PythonSoftwareFoundation.Pyth
    return self.func(*args)
  File "C:\Users\ASUS\Desktop\Fraser_CoyoteMaestas_Lab\DMS\DIMPLE-
    OLS = addgene(app.geneFile)
  File "C:\Users\ASUS\Desktop\Fraser_CoyoteMaestas_Lab\DMS\DIMPLE-
    tmpOLS.append(DIMPLE(gene, start, end))
  File "C:\Users\ASUS\Desktop\Fraser_CoyoteMaestas_Lab\DMS\DIMPLE-
    raise ValueError('Unwanted Restriction cut sites found. Please
ValueError: Unwanted Restriction cut sites found. Please input pla
```

- 4.9 *Codon usage:* Your oligos can be codon optimized to your organism of choice. The default options are *E. coli* or *Human*, but you can also upload a codon usage table for any organism by pressing "Custom codon usage."

4.10 *Select mutations:*

*Deletions:* If you'd like to generate a library with deletions across your gene, select "List of deletions". Enter how many base pairs you'd like to be deleted across your library.

- **For example,** if you'd like deletions that are one codon long, enter "3" for 3 nucleotides.
- **For example,** If you'd like to include both deletions that are one codon long AND two codons long in the same pool, enter "3,6" for both 3, and 6 nucleotide long deletions.

*Insertions:* If you'd like to generate a library with different amino acids inserted across your gene, select "List of Insertions".

- **For example,** If you'd like to insert glycines across your gene, include "GGG" in the box.
- **For example,** If you'd like to insert glycine-serine across your gene, include "GGGTGC" in the box.
- **For example,** if you'd like to insert glycine AND glycine-serine across your gene, include "GGG,GGGTGC" in the box.

*Substitutions:* If you'd like to generate a library where an amino acid at each position is swapped with every other possible amino acid, select "Include Substitutions."

- 4.11 *Run DIMPLE:* Hit "Run DIMPLE" when you are ready to generate your pool.



## 5 Examples of what the running code and outputs look like:

The code will first iterate the ideal fragment length sizes across each gene of interest.

```
----- Analyzing Gene:pMV306_mOP_EccD3 -----  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:1  
[162, 156, 159, 159, 159, 159, 159, 159, 156]  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:2  
[162, 159, 156, 159, 159, 159, 159, 159, 156]  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:3  
[162, 159, 159, 156, 159, 159, 159, 159, 156]  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:4  
[162, 159, 159, 159, 156, 159, 159, 159, 156]  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:6  
[162, 159, 159, 159, 156, 156, 162, 159, 156]  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:7  
[162, 159, 159, 159, 156, 156, 159, 162, 156]  
----- Fragment size swapped due to matching overhangs -----  
Non specific Fragment:8  
[162, 159, 159, 159, 156, 156, 159, 159, 159]
```

- 5.1 Next, barcodes are assigned to each fragment. The code will update how many barcodes it attempted to use to generate each fragment pool, and will remove these from the remaining barcode pool.

This will continue for each gene included in your fasta file.

```
Creating Gene:Hikeshi --- Fragment:43-81  
Barcodes used:9  
Barcodes Remaining:1066  
Creating Gene:Hikeshi --- Fragment:83-119  
Barcodes used:3  
Barcodes Remaining:1063  
Creating Gene:Hikeshi --- Fragment:121-158  
Barcodes used:6  
Barcodes Remaining:1057  
Creating Gene:Hikeshi --- Fragment:160-198  
no thermodynamic data for neighbors 'GT/AG' available. Please check position manually:258 forward  
Primer:ATAGGTCTCAGACAGCAAATGATGAAGCAAAATTGTAG  
Match: CACGAATGGGAAGCCAAGTGCCATCTTCAAAATTTTCAG  
Barcodes used:9  
Barcodes Remaining:1048
```

- 5.2 There is a final QC check for each primer set generated.





```
Running QC for barcode primer specificity
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-1
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-2
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-3
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-4
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-5
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-6
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-7
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-8
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-9
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-10
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-11
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-12
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-13
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-14
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-15
Checking primer set:TSHR_oligoP_DMS-16
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-1
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-2
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-3
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-4
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-5
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-6
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-7
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-8
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-9
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-10
Checking primer set:ABCG2_oligoP_DMS-11
```

### 5.3 All outputs are saved in your working directory.

If you are using DIMPLE to mutagenize several genes, there will be separate files for the primers and mutagenic inserts for each gene, as well as a master list of **all** oligos and primers.

|                          |                       |           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| All_Oligos               | FASTA File            | 16,745 KB |
| All_Primers              | FASTA File            | 19 KB     |
| GPR161_DMS_Gene_Primer   | FASTA File            | 2 KB      |
| GPR161_DMS_Oligo_Primer  | FASTA File            | 2 KB      |
| GPR161_DMS_Oligos        | FASTA File            | 2,655 KB  |
| GPR161_mutations         | Microsoft Excel Co... | 20 KB     |
| Hikeshi_DMS_Gene_Primer  | FASTA File            | 1 KB      |
| Hikeshi_DMS_Oligo_Primer | FASTA File            | 1 KB      |
| Hikeshi_DMS_Oligos       | FASTA File            | 996 KB    |
| Hikeshi_mutations        | Microsoft Excel Co... | 21 KB     |

For each gene, DIMPLE generates a list of:

- **EXAMPLE\_DMS\_Oligos.** This is the list of sub-library oligo pools, where each oligo contains barcodes, Type IIS restriction cutsites, and a sub-region of the gene.

 GPR161\_DMS\_Oligos - Notepad

File Edit Format View Help

&gt;GPR161\_DMS-1\_Ser2Cys

```
GAATAGGTGGCAAAACGCTGAGATAGATGCGGTCTCCcgatatgTGCctgaactcaagtc
tgtcctgccgaaaagaactctctaacctcacagaggaggaagggggagaaggcggcgtga
taattacgcagttcattgccatcatcgtgataaccatattcgtatgtttgggaaacctcg
tcatttggtgaGGAGACCACCTAAACGTGACGGGTGCGCGTAAAGTGAGC
```

&gt;GPR161\_DMS-1\_Ser2Asp

```
GAATAGGTGGCAAAACGCTGAGATAGATGCGGTCTCCcgatatgGACctgaactcaagtc
tgtcctgccgaaaagaactctctaacctcacagaggaggaagggggagaaggcggcgtga
taattacgcagttcattgccatcatcgtgataaccatattcgtatgtttgggaaacctcg
tcatttggtgaGGAGACCACCTAAACGTGACGGGTGCGCGTAAAGTGAGC
```

&gt;GPR161\_DMS-1\_Ser2Ser

```
GAATAGGTGGCAAAACGCTGAGATAGATGCGGTCTCCcgatatgTCCctgaactcaagtc
tgtcctgccgaaaagaactctctaacctcacagaggaggaagggggagaaggcggcgtga
taattacgcagttcattgccatcatcgtgataaccatattcgtatgtttgggaaacctcg
tcatttggtgaGGAGACCACCTAAACGTGACGGGTGCGCGTAAAGTGAGC
```

Screenshot of mutagenic inserts generated by DIMPLE

- **EXAMPLE\_DMS\_Gene\_Primer**s. These are primers used to add cutsites to and amplify the backbone each mutagenic insert will be ligated into.

 GPR161\_DMS\_Gene\_Primer - Notepad

File Edit Format View Help

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-1\_R Frag2-46 59.4C

ATAGGTCTCTatcgatgctggcgtcatcatc

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-1\_F Frag2-46 53.5C

ATAGGTCTCggtgaccctgtataaaaaatcata

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-2\_R Frag48-90 57.6C

ATAGGTCTCcgagggttcccaaacatacga

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-2\_F Frag48-90 60.3C

ATAGGTCTCgatctttggagtcgtgtgtgc

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-3\_R Frag92-134 61.2C

ATAGGTCTCttctgattgaactagtcacgacaaaagg

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-3\_F Frag92-134 61.1C

ATAGGTCTCgaaaataacaggcaatcgcgcc

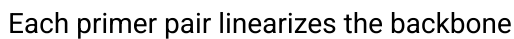
&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-4\_R Frag136-178 57.2C

ATAGGTCTCacaccatagggtacagaacgg

&gt;GPR161\_geneP\_Mut-4\_F Frag136-178 56.3C

ATAGGTCTCctggcaccggaaccc

Screenshot of backbone primers generated by DIMPLE. Each primer name also lists its melting temperature.



- GPR161\_DMS\_Oligo\_Primer - Notepad

- **EXAMPLE\_mutations.** This is the list of mutations that will be present in your final library.

|    | A          | B | C | D |
|----|------------|---|---|---|
| 1  | >Gly486Cys |   |   |   |
| 2  | ['TGC']    |   |   |   |
| 3  | >Gly486Asp |   |   |   |
| 4  | ['GAC']    |   |   |   |
| 5  | >Gly486Ser |   |   |   |
| 6  | ['TCC']    |   |   |   |
| 7  | >Gly486Gln |   |   |   |
| 8  | ['CAA']    |   |   |   |
| 9  | >Gly486Met |   |   |   |
| 10 | ['ATG']    |   |   |   |
| 11 | >Gly486Asn |   |   |   |
| 12 | ['AAT']    |   |   |   |
| 13 | >Gly486Pro |   |   |   |
| 14 | ['CCC']    |   |   |   |
| 15 | >Gly486Lys |   |   |   |
| 16 | ['AAA']    |   |   |   |
| 17 | >Gly486Thr |   |   |   |
| 18 | ['ACA']    |   |   |   |
| 19 | >Gly486Phe |   |   |   |
| 20 | ['TTC']    |   |   |   |
| 21 | >Gly486Ala |   |   |   |
| 22 | ['GCT']    |   |   |   |

## Library assembly

3d

### 6 Prepare oligo pool stock

Follow any recommendations for oligo pool resuspension: typically, this results in a 10 ng/μL solution, which the following steps assume. Lower or higher concentrations may require alterations.

### 7 PCR amplification of oligos, backbone

Thaw all components beforehand and follow general directions provided by manufacturer.

Amplification of mutagenic inserts and backbones should ideally be performed in parallel, assuming one has two thermocyclers. Alternatively, the backbone amplification can be performed first, then the the insert amplification can be done during the gel purification of the backbone.

### 8 PCR amplification of backbone.



Prepare a master mix with PrimeSTAR GXL polymerase:

|  | A                              | B                                      | C                    | D                                      | E                 |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------|
|  | Component                      | <b>Total amount in master mix (μL)</b> | Amount/reaction (μL) | Comment                                | Number of regions |
|  | dNTP                           | <b>20</b>                              | 4                    |                                        | 5                 |
|  | 5X buffer                      | <b>50</b>                              | 10                   |                                        |                   |
|  | Template (vector)              | <b>5</b>                               | 1                    | ~10 ng                                 |                   |
|  | Enzyme                         | <b>5</b>                               | 1                    |                                        |                   |
|  | Nuclease-free H <sub>2</sub> O | <b>160</b>                             | 32                   |                                        |                   |
|  | Primers                        |                                        | 2                    | Fwd & reverse combined at 20 μM (each) |                   |
|  | Total                          | <b>240</b>                             | 50                   |                                        |                   |
|  |                                |                                        |                      |                                        |                   |

Mix by vortexing and spin down.

- 8.1 Transfer  48 μL of master mix into separate tubes for each reaction.
- 8.2 Add reaction-specific primers to each tube:  2 μL (paired at 20 μM, each) . Mix and spin down.
- 8.3 Place on thermocycler and amplify:

|  | A    | B       | C          |
|--|------|---------|------------|
|  | Step | T (° C) | Time (sec) |
|  | 1    | 98      | 10         |
|  | 2    | 55      | 15         |
|  | 3    | 68      | 60 per kb  |

|  | A | B                         | C        |
|--|---|---------------------------|----------|
|  | 4 | Repeat 1-3<br>15-24 times | See note |
|  | 5 | 10                        | Hold     |

**Note:** the number of cycles should be optimized to minimize PCR cycles. Increasing cycles introduces the possibility of error. An initial comparison of 16, 18, and 22 total cycles can be used to find a minimum number of cycles which yields sufficient DNA for the assembly reaction (see **step 11** below) and no more. Increasing the template concentration (to 50 or 100 ng) could be preferable to increasing PCR cycles if large numbers are required for amplification.

#### 8.4 **Purify amplified product by gel extraction.**

Prepare an agarose gel for gel purification (0.5% - 0.75%). Ideally, it should be of sufficient size to load all samples.

#### 8.5 Load and run backbone products.

#### 8.6 Use a scalpel or razor blade to (carefully!) cut out each product. Using a gel extraction kit, purify the product and elute in 10 µL elution buffer .

#### 8.7 **Important QC step** - evaluate the quality of the amplification with the gel. Each lane should have a single, crisp band at the expected size. Multiple bands, or no bands, might indicate improper annealing and may require T<sub>m</sub> or extension time optimization. Blurry and smeary bands might indicate problems with the electrophoresis or amplification conditions. It is essential to get specific, clean amplification of the backbone, and libraries should not be generated with messy reactions.



Example visualization of expected backbone amplification reactions on SYBR Safe-stained agarose gel. Each lane has a single, crisp band at the expected position that is well-separated from other lanes.

## 9 PCR amplification of mutagenic inserts.

Prepare a master mix with PrimeSTAR GXL polymerase:

|  | A                              | B                                      | C                    | D                                                     | E       |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------|
|  | Component                      | <b>Total amount in master mix (μL)</b> | Amount/reaction (μL) | Comment                                               | Regions |
|  | 5X buffer                      | <b>50</b>                              | 10                   |                                                       | 5       |
|  | dNTP                           | <b>20</b>                              | 4                    |                                                       |         |
|  | Oligo pool                     | <b>5</b>                               | 1                    | 10 ng pool per reaction, assuming a stock at 10 ng/μL |         |
|  | Enzyme (PrimeSTAR GXL)         | <b>5</b>                               | 1                    |                                                       |         |
|  | Primers                        |                                        | 2                    | Fwd & rev combined, 20 μM (each)                      |         |
|  | Nuclease-free H <sub>2</sub> O | <b>160</b>                             | 32                   |                                                       |         |
|  | Total                          | <b>240</b>                             | 50                   |                                                       |         |
|  |                                |                                        |                      |                                                       |         |





|  | A | B | C | D | E |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |   |   |   |   |   |

Mix by vortexing.

- 9.1 Transfer  48  $\mu$ L insert master mix into separate tubes for each reaction.
- 9.2 Add reaction-specific primers to each tube:  2  $\mu$ L (paired at 20  $\mu$ M, each) . Mix and spin down.
- 9.3 Place on thermocycler and amplify:

|  | A    | B                         | C          |
|--|------|---------------------------|------------|
|  | Step | T (° C)                   | Time (sec) |
|  | 1    | 98                        | 10         |
|  | 2    | 55                        | 15         |
|  | 3    | 68                        | 60         |
|  | 4    | Repeat 1-3<br>15-24 times | See note   |
|  | 5    | 10                        | Hold       |

**Note:** the number of cycles should be optimized to minimize PCR cycles. Increasing cycles introduces both PCR bias and error. An initial comparison of 16, 18, and 22 total cycles can be used to find a minimum number of cycles which yields sufficient DNA for assembly step and no more. For the example libraries here, this is ~100 ng per oligo pool, and

- 9.4 Use a PCR cleanup kit to purify each product. Elute in  10  $\mu$ L elution buffer .

- 10 **Important QC step** - run a gel with each PCR product and visualize it. Ideally, each reaction should ideally give a single strong band at the expected size. Failure to do so may require changing PCR conditions.

## 11 **Golden gate assembly**

Prepare a master mix for the assembly. Use the table below to calculate: adjust number of regions and amount of necessary backbone and insert for desired amounts per

reaction. We have found 3  $\mu\text{L}$  backbone and 1  $\mu\text{L}$  oligo (insert) are usually good.

|  | A                              | B                                              | C                                 | D                                                      | E                 |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|  | Component                      | <b>Total amount (<math>\mu\text{L}</math>)</b> | Amount/reaction ( $\mu\text{L}$ ) | Notes                                                  | Number of regions |
|  | 10X buffer                     | <b>20</b>                                      | 4                                 |                                                        | <b>5</b>          |
|  | Enzyme                         | <b>10</b>                                      | 2                                 |                                                        |                   |
|  | Backbone                       |                                                | 3                                 | 300 ng                                                 |                   |
|  | Insert                         |                                                | 1                                 | 2:1 molar ratio: for example libraries here, ~30-40 ng |                   |
|  | Nuclease-free H <sub>2</sub> O | <b>150</b>                                     | 30                                |                                                        |                   |
|  | Total                          | <b>200</b>                                     | 40                                |                                                        |                   |
|  |                                |                                                |                                   |                                                        |                   |

Vortex to mix.

- 11.1 Transfer appropriate master mix into separate tubes for each reaction.

Example: if each reaction has 3  $\mu\text{L}$  backbone and 1  $\mu\text{L}$  insert, then transfer **36  $\mu\text{L}$**  to each tube.

- 11.2 To each tube, add the appropriate vector/insert pair:

For this example:

 3  $\mu\text{L}$  backbone (purified)

 1  $\mu\text{L}$  insert (purified)

Mix well and spin down.

- 11.3 Place on thermocycler and run the following program:

|  | A    | B                        | C          |
|--|------|--------------------------|------------|
|  | Step | T ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) | Time (min) |
|  | 1    | 37                       | 5          |



|  | A | B                                              | C    |
|--|---|------------------------------------------------|------|
|  | 2 | 16                                             | 10   |
|  | 3 | Repeat 1-2<br>34 times<br>(35 total<br>cycles) |      |
|  | 4 | 60                                             | 5    |
|  | 5 | 10                                             | Hold |
|  |   |                                                |      |

**Important: This assumes the assembly is performed with Bsal.** If using a different enzyme (such as BsmBI), check the recommended temperatures from the vendor.

- 11.4 Use a PCR cleanup kit to purify each product. **Elute in**  10 µL nuclease-free H<sub>2</sub>O .

**Important: using elution buffer or TE may cause electroporation to fail!**

- 11.5 **Important QC step:** before electroporating libraries, transform 1 µL of each library into chemically competent cells and plate. If no or very few colonies are observed the next day, this could suggest a failure during assembly. Further check the assembly by running a small portion on a gel.

## Transformation and recovery of sublibraries

2d

- 12 Using a high-efficiency electrocompetent strain of *E. coli*, such as MegaX DH10B, prepare a transformation for each assembly:  3 µL assembly product with  20 µL electrocompetent cells in a 0.1 cm cuvette. Follow the specific instructions for voltage and outgrowth media corresponding to your cells and electroporator. Outgrow cells for 1 hour before proceeding.
- 13 **Essential QC step:** Count total number of transformants to ensure adequate coverage.
- Prepare 5 10-fold serial dilutions: for each reaction, add  900 µL H<sub>2</sub>O to six 1.5 mL microcentrifuge tubes. Add  100 µL of the outgrowth mixture to the first, then mix well and add  100 µL of this to the second tube. Repeat for the rest of the tubes.
- 13.1 Plate  100 µL of the last three dilutions (1:1000, 1:10000, 1:100000) on LB-agar with appropriate antibiotic. Grow overnight and count colonies the next day. Calculate the total number of transformants and determine the variant coverage per reaction. At least

50-fold coverage is **essential**. Note: the relevant measurement here is not transformation *efficiency* (i.e., cfu/ng), but simply *total transformants*!

## 13.2 Example calculations

Let's say you are working with oligos with fragments of 50 codons from the protein of interest. For each residue, you generated 20 substitutions (including 1 synonymous), 3 insertions, and 3 deletions, for a total of 26 different variants at each position. Then this subpool will have a total of **1300** possible variants.

In order to have 50-fold coverage of these subpool, you would need to obtain  $50 \times 1300 = 65000$  total transformed bacteria. In order to get 200-fold coverage, you would need  $200 \times 1300 = 2.6 \times 10^5$  total transformed bacteria.

Now suppose for two subpool transformations with 1300 variants in each, dilutions were performed as directed. The minimum number of colonies one would need to see for 50-fold coverage would be:

|  | A                        | B                          | C       |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------|
|  | Dilution factor of plate | Minimum number of colonies | Rounded |
|  | 1:10 <sup>4</sup>        | 104                        | 104     |
|  | 1:10 <sup>5</sup>        | 10.4                       | 11      |
|  | 1:10 <sup>6</sup>        | 1.04                       | 2       |

We normally average the results of each dilution in order to get a better sense of our coverage. With good transformations, we often see very dense plates at lower dilutions. To be conservative, we typically just note that there are a much larger number than necessary and leave them out of the average. On the flip side, sometimes we observe no colonies at very high dilutions. These should be included during averaging.

Suppose two subpools were cloned and the following colony counts were obtained for the dilution plates:

|  | A         | B                                  | C                                  | D                                  |
|--|-----------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|  | Reaction  | Colonies (1:10 <sup>3</sup> plate) | Colonies (1:10 <sup>4</sup> plate) | Colonies (1:10 <sup>5</sup> plate) |
|  | Subpool 1 | 36                                 | 5                                  | 0                                  |



|  | A         | B    | C  | D |
|--|-----------|------|----|---|
|  | Subpool 2 | Many | 18 | 2 |

The total number of implied transformants in the starting outgrowth media was calculated with the following formula:

$$N = C_n \times 10^n \times 100$$

where  $C_n$  is the total number of colonies on a particular plate,  $10^n$  accounts for the serial dilutions, and 100 accounts for the fact that only 100  $\mu$ L out of the 1 mL outgrowth media is being sampled, and only 1/10 of each dilution is being plated. If a large number of colonies are seen on a lower dilution, we typically ignore that one, but a lack of colonies is counted as a zero. Here, we would calculate the following implied transformants:

|  | A         | B             | C             | D             | E       |
|--|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------|
|  | Reaction  | Transformants | Transformants | Transformants | Average |
|  | Subpool 1 | 3.6e6         | 5e6           | 0             | 1e6     |
|  | Subpool 2 |               | 2e7           | 2e7           | 2e7     |

Next, the total transformants per variants in each pool is calculated, using the average number of transformants.

|  | A         | B                | C        |
|--|-----------|------------------|----------|
|  | Reaction  | Variants in pool | Coverage |
|  | Subpool 1 | 10000            | 300      |
|  | Subpool 2 | 1300             | 14000    |

Both these subpools would be good to proceed with.

**13.3 Important QC step:** pick single colonies from the QC plates and use clonal sequencing to check for mutations (e.g., Sanger sequencing or whole-plasmid sequencing). We typically pick 5 colonies per subpool and expect the majority to contain a desired mutation. Too much WT could indicate problems during the backbone amplification, and too many off-target mutations could suggest a failure to amplify or purify properly. In both cases, these would be extremely deleterious to the quality of the final library.

**14** Add the remaining outgrowth culture to  30 mL LB supplemented with appropriate antibiotic for further outgrowth in either a Falcon tube or glass culture tube. Shake until



the culture reaches OD 0.6–0.7.

**Note:** it is important to harvest the cells in the exponential phase. This takes 4–6 hours in our experience, but may vary (including between samples in the same day).

- 15 Harvest DNA from cultures using a miniprep kit, splitting each reaction across 3 columns. Elute each column in  40  $\mu\text{L}$  elution buffer and combine elutions corresponding to a single sublibrary.

## Sublibrary pooling and subcloning

2d

- 16 Measure each sublibrary concentration with a fluorometric method, such as Qubit. With the lowest concentration as the target concentration, prepare a dilution of each sublibrary in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ . Mix  2  $\mu\text{L}$  of this dilution from each sublibrary to create an equimolar library pool.
- 17 Subclone library to transfer from library vector to selection vector. Depending on construct design, this may require digestion/ligation or a Golden Gate reaction.
- 18 Use PCR cleanup kit to purify reaction, and elute in  10  $\mu\text{L}$   $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ .
- 19 Using a high-efficiency electrocompetent strain of *E. coli*, such as MegaX DH10B, transform  3  $\mu\text{L}$  subcloned product with  50  $\mu\text{L}$  electrocompetent cells cells in a 0.1 cm cuvette. Follow the specific instructions for voltage and outgrowth media corresponding to your cells and electroporator. Outgrow cells for 1 hour before proceeding.
- 20 Repeat transformation and isolation following steps for subpool cloning and quantification as above, except perform 6 serial dilutions and plate samples at 1:10000, 1:100000, and 1:1000000 dilutions and use variant counts for the total library. Again, at least 200-fold coverage is **essential** for maintaining unbiased libraries. Pick colonies and submit for clonal sequencing as well: we typically submit ~10 samples for our final pooled library.