

GUIDEseq user's guide

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Abstract

Instructions on using GUIDEseq in analyzing GUIDEseq data.

Package

GUIDEseq 1.27.3

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1 Introduction

The most recently developed genome editing system, CRISPR-Cas9 has greater inherent flexibility than prior programmable nuclease platforms because sequence-specific recognition resides primarily within the associated sgRNA, which permits a simple alteration of its recognition sequence. The short Protospacer Adjacent Motif (PAM), which is recognized by Cas9, is the chief constraint on the target site design density. Because of its simplicity and efficacy, this technology is revolutionizing biological studies and holds tremendous promise for therapeutic applications (Ledford 2015; Cox, Platt, and Zhang 2015).

However, imperfect cleavage specificity of CRISPR/Cas9 nuclease within the genome is a cause for concern for its therapeutic application. *S. pyogenes* Cas9 (SpyCas9)-based nucleases can cleave an imperfect heteroduplex formed between the guide sequence and a DNA sequence containing a functional PAM where the number, position and type of base mismatches can impact the level of activity (Mali et al. 2013; Hsu et al. 2013; Fu et al. 2013). This degree of promiscuity is problematic for therapeutic applications, since the generation of DNA breaks at unintended (off-target) sites has the potential to alter gene expression and function through direct mutagenesis or the generation of genomic rearrangements. Experimentally defining the number and activity of off-target sites for a given Cas9/sgRNA complex genome-wide is critical to assess and improve nuclease precision.

A new suite of genome-wide off-target detection methods have recently been described that can identify sites with low cleavage activity within a population of nuclease-treated cells. One of the most sensitive and straightforward methods to employ is GUIDE-seq (Tsai et al. 2015). This method relies on erroneous NHEJ-mediated DNA repair to capture co-introduced blunt-ended double stranded oligonucleotides (dsODNs) at Cas9-induced breakpoints within the genome. The GUIDE-seq dsODNs display high insertion frequency (up to 50% of the measured indel rate (Tsai et al. 2015)) at Cas9-induced DSBs, thereby tagging these loci for selective amplification and subsequent deep sequencing. The method is quite sensitive as off-target sites with $>0.1\%$ indel frequency can be detected, and the frequency of dsODN insertion appears to be correlated with the frequency of Cas9-induced lesions at each site (Tsai et al. 2015). This method has been used successfully to evaluate the precision of Cas9 and its variants (tru-sgRNAs (Tsai et al. 2015) or PAM variants (Kleinstiver et al. 2015)). Given its favorable properties, GUIDE-seq could become a standard in the nuclease field for off-target analysis.

While the GUIDE-seq method is straightforward to employ, to date no bioinformatic tools have been released to the community to support the analysis of this data. We developed [GUIDEseq](#) package (Zhu et al. 2017) to facilitate the analysis of GUIDE-seq dataset, including retaining one read per unique molecular identifier (UMI), filtering reads lacking integration oligo sequence (dsODNs), identifying peak locations (cleavage sites) and heights, merging cleavage sites from plus strand and those from minus strand, and performing target and off target search of the input gRNA. This analysis leverages our [ChIPPeakAnno](#) package (Zhu et al. 2010) for merging cleavage sites from plus strand and minus strand, and [CRISPRseek](#) package (Zhu et al. 2014) for defining the homology of any identified off-target site to the guide sequence and Cas9 PAM specificity.

2 Workflow of GUIDE-seq data analysis

Here is the workflow of GUIDE-seq data analysis with human sequence. First load [GUIDEseq](#) and [BSgenome.Hsapiens.UCSC.hg19](#).

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To find BSgenome of other species, please refer to available.genomes in the [BSgenome](#) package. For example, [BSgenome.Hsapiens.UCSC.hg19](#) for hg19, [BSgenome.Mmusculus.UCSC.mm10](#) for mm10, [BSgenome.Celegans.UCSC.ce6](#) for ce6, [BSgenome.Rnorvegicus.UCSC.rn5](#) for rn5, [BSgenome.Drerio.UCSC.danRer7](#) for Zv9, and [BSgenome.Dmelanogaster.UCSC.dm3](#) for dm3

Then specify the alignment file path as alignment.inputfile, and a umi file path as umi.inputfile containing unique molecular identifier for each sequence.

```
library(GUIDEseq)
umifile <- system.file("extdata", "UMI-HEK293_site4_chr13.txt", package = "GUIDEseq")
bedfile <- system.file("extdata", "bowtie2.HEK293_site4_chr13.sort.bed", package = "GUIDEseq")
bamfile <- system.file("extdata", "bowtie2.HEK293_site4_chr13.sort.bam", package = "GUIDEseq")
```

The alignment.inputfile is an alignment file in bed format containing CIGAR information. The alignment.inputfile contains chromosome, start, end, readID, mapping quality, strand and CIGAR information as a tab delimited file. Here is an example line.

```
chr13 27629253 27629403 HWI-M01326:156:1:113:4572:6938/1 44 + 150M
```

Scripts for bin reads, remove adaptor, mapping to genome are available at [GUIDE-seq](#).

The umi.inputfile is a tab delimited file containing at least two columns, read IDs and corresponding unique molecular identifiers (UMI). Script for creating umi.inputfile is available as [getUmi.pl](#). An example input file is at [testGetUmi](#). Please make sure to use R1 reads as input to [getUmi.pl](#).

2.1 Step 1: Remove PCR bias and obtain unique cleavage events

PCR amplification often leads to biased representation of the starting sequence population. To track the sequence tags present in the initial sequence library, unique molecular identifiers (UMI) are added to the 5 prime of each sequence in the starting library. The function `getUniqueCleavageEvents` uses the UMI sequence in the umi.inputfile (optionally contains umi plus the first few sequence from R1 reads) to obtain the starting sequence library. It also filters out reads that does not contain the integration oligo sequence, too short or not in the right paired configuration.

For detailed parameter settings for function `getUniqueCleavageEvents`, please type `help(getUniqueCleavageEvents)` or `?getUniqueCleavageEvents`.

```
uniqueCleavageEvents <- getUniqueCleavageEvents(bamfile, umifile, n.cores.max = 1)
uniqueCleavageEvents$cleavage.gr
## GRanges object with 3841 ranges and 1 metadata column:
##           seqnames      ranges strand |      total
##           <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> | <numeric>
##      [1]   chr13  69979989      + |         1
##      [2]   chr13  39262929      + |         1
##      [3]   chr13  94623776      + |         1
##      [4]   chr13  28089785      + |         1
##      [5]   chr13  27629410      + |         1
##      ...      ...      ...      ... .      ...
## [3837]   chr13  51894561      - |         1
```

```
## [3838] chr13 93491789 - | 1
## [3839] chr13 27629409 - | 1
## [3840] chr13 98262510 - | 1
## [3841] chr13 37190177 - | 1
## -----
## seqinfo: 25 sequences from an unspecified genome; no seqlengths
```

2.2 Step 2: Summarize cleavage events

Calling the function `getPeaks` with the results from `getUniqueCleavageEvents` outputs summarized cleavage events for each moving window with at least `min.reads` of cleavage events.

By default, `window.size` is set to 20, `step` is set to 20, and `min.reads` is set to 2. For detailed parameter settings using function `getPeaks`, please type `help(getPeaks)`.

```
peaks <- getPeaks(uniqueCleavageEvents$cleavage.gr, min.reads = 80)
peaks.gr <- peaks$peaks
peaks.gr
## GRanges object with 4 ranges and 5 metadata columns:
##      seqnames      ranges strand |      count      bg      p.value
##      <Rle>        <IRanges> <Rle> | <integer> <numeric> <numeric>
## [1] chr13 27629413-27629420      + |      146    0.584 1.49081e-291
## [2] chr13 39262922-39262939      + |      156    0.624 3.20197e-311
## [3] chr13 27629400-27629416      - |      103    0.412 5.74504e-207
## [4] chr13 39262918-39262920      - |      157    0.636 2.53405e-312
##      SNratio adjusted.p.value
##      <numeric>      <numeric>
## [1] 250.000 1.49081e-291
## [2] 250.000 3.20197e-311
## [3] 250.000 5.74504e-207
## [4] 246.855 2.53405e-312
## -----
## seqinfo: 25 sequences from an unspecified genome; no seqlengths
```

2.3 Step 3: Merge peaks from plus and minus strand

Calling the function `mergePlusMinusPeaks` with the output from `getPeaks` to merge peaks from plus strand and minus strand with specific orientation and within certain distance apart.

By default, `plus.strand.start.gt.minus.strand.end` is set to `TRUE` and `distance.threshold` is set to 40, i.e., twice of the `window.size`. For detailed parameter settings using function `mergePlusMinusPeaks`, please type `help(mergePlusMinusPeaks)`.

```
mergedPeaks <- mergePlusMinusPeaks(peaks.gr = peaks.gr, output.bedfile = "mergedPeaks.bed")
mergedPeaks$mergedPeaks.gr
## GRanges object with 2 ranges and 2 metadata columns:
##      seqnames      ranges
##      <Rle>        <IRanges>
## chr13+:27629413:27629420:chr13-:27629400:27629416 chr13 27629400-27629420
## chr13+:39262922:39262939:chr13-:39262918:39262920 chr13 39262918-39262939
##      strand |      count
```

```
##                                     <Rle> | <numeric>
## chr13+:27629413:27629420:chr13-:27629400:27629416      + |      249
## chr13+:39262922:39262939:chr13-:39262918:39262920      + |      313
##                                                         bg
##                                                         <numeric>
## chr13+:27629413:27629420:chr13-:27629400:27629416      0.996
## chr13+:39262922:39262939:chr13-:39262918:39262920      1.260
## -----
## seqinfo: 25 sequences from an unspecified genome; no seqlengths

head(mergedPeaks$mergedPeaks.bed)
##   seqnames minStart   maxEnd                                     names
## 1   chr13 27629400 27629420 chr13+:27629413:27629420:chr13-:27629400:27629416
## 2   chr13 39262918 39262939 chr13+:39262922:39262939:chr13-:39262918:39262920
##   totalCount strand
## 1         249      +
## 2         313      +
```

2.4 Step 4: Off target analysis of extended regions around the identified cleavage sites

Calling the function `offTargetAnalysisOfPeakRegions` with input gRNA, peaks and genome of interest, to annotate identified cleavage sites with sequence homology to input gRNA. For detailed parameter settings using function `offTargetAnalysisOfPeakRegions`. For more information, please type `help(offTargetAnalysisOfPeakRegions)`.

```
library(BSgenome.Hsapiens.UCSC.hg19)
peaks <- "mergedPeaks.bed" # from step 3
gRNAs <- system.file("extdata", "gRNA.fa", package = "GUIDEseq")
outputDir <- getwd()

offTargets <- offTargetAnalysisOfPeakRegions(
  gRNA = gRNAs,
  peaks = peaks,
  format=c("fasta", "bed"),
  peaks.withHeader = FALSE,
  BSgenomeName = Hsapiens,
  outputDir = outputDir,
  orderOfftargetsBy = "predicted_cleavage_score",
  allowed.mismatch.PAM = 2,
  overwrite = TRUE,
  upstream = 50,
  downstream = 50,
  PAM.size = 3,
  gRNA.size = 20,
  PAM = "NGG",
  PAM.pattern = "(NAG|NGG|NGA)$",
  max.mismatch = 8)
```

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```
head(offTargets)
##               offTarget peak_score
## 1 chr13:-:27629404:27629426         249
## 2 chr13+:39262912:39262934         313
##
##               names predicted_cleavage_score
## 1 chr13+:27629413:27629420:chr13:-:27629400:27629416         3.2
## 2 chr13+:39262922:39262939:chr13:-:39262918:39262920         1.2
##
##               name                gRNAplusPAM      offTarget_sequence
## 1 HEK239_site4 GGCACCTGCGGCTGGAGGTGGNGG GGCACCTGGGGTTGGAGGTGGGGG
## 2 HEK239_site4 GGCACCTGCGGCTGGAGGTGGNGG AGCAGTGC GGCTAGAGGTGGTGG
##
## guideAlignment20offTarget offTargetStrand mismatch.distance2PAM n.mismatch
## 1      .....G..T.....          -          13,10          2
## 2      A...G.....A.....          +          20,16,8          3
##
## targetSeqName offTarget_Start offTarget_End chromosome peak_start peak_end
## 1 HEK239_site4      27629404      27629426      chr13      27629400 27629420
## 2 HEK239_site4      39262912      39262934      chr13      39262918 39262939
##
## peak_strand
## 1          +
## 2          +
```

Another example:

```
peaks <- system.file("extdata", "T2plus100OffTargets.bed", package = "CRISPRseek")
gRNAs <- system.file("extdata", "T2.fa", package = "CRISPRseek")
offTargets <- offTargetAnalysisOfPeakRegions(
  gRNA = gRNAs,
  peaks = peaks,
  format=c("fasta", "bed"),
  peaks.withHeader = TRUE,
  BSgenomeName = Hsapiens,
  outputDir = outputDir,
  orderOfftargetsBy = "predicted_cleavage_score",
  allowed.mismatch.PAM = 2,
  overwrite = TRUE,
  upstream = 50,
  downstream = 50,
  PAM.size = 3,
  gRNA.size = 20,
  PAM = "NGG",
  PAM.pattern = "(NAG|NGG|NGA)$",
  max.mismatch = 8)
```

```
head(offTargets)
##               offTarget peak_score
## 1 chr10:-:116294250:116294272         5
## 2 chr10+:135149931:135149953         3
## 3 chr11+:12308918:12308940         27
## 4 chr11+:13948354:13948376         22
## 5 chr11:-:31817477:31817499        108
## 6 chr1+:151031869:151031891         24
##
##               names predicted_cleavage_score
```

```
## 1 chr10+:116294243:116294268chr10-:116294160:116294185 1.4
## 2 chr10+:135149940:135149965chr10-:135149850:135149875 0.8
## 3 chr11+:12308937:12308962chr11-:12308837:12308862 0.1
## 4 chr11+:13948362:13948387chr11-:13948273:13948298 1.1
## 5 chr11+:31817476:31817501chr11-:31817386:31817411 5.1
## 6 chr1+:151031877:151031902chr1-:151031782:151031807 0.1
## name gRNAplusPAM offTarget_sequence guideAlignment20ffTarget
## 1 T2 GACCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCNGG CCCCACCCACCCCGCCTCAGG CC..A..C.....
## 2 T2 GACCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCNGG CGCCCTCCCCACCCCGCCTCCGG CG...T.C.....
## 3 T2 GACCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCNGG ATCCCTCCACCCACCCCTGG AT.....A..C.
## 4 T2 GACCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCNGG TACCCCTCCACCCGCCACAGG T.....C.....A.
## 5 T2 GACCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCNGG GGGCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCTGG .GG.....
## 6 T2 GACCCCTCCACCCCGCCTCNGG CCTCCCCACCCCGCATCCGG CCT....CA.....A..
## offTargetStrand mismatch.distance2PAM n.mismatch targetSeqName
## 1 - 20,19,16,13 4 T2
## 2 + 20,19,15,13 4 T2
## 3 + 20,19,5,2 4 T2
## 4 + 20,13,2 3 T2
## 5 - 19,18 2 T2
## 6 + 20,19,18,13,12,3 6 T2
## offTarget_Start offTarget_End chromosome peak_start peak_end peak_strand
## 1 116294250 116294272 chr10 116294160 116294268 +
## 2 135149931 135149953 chr10 135149850 135149965 +
## 3 12308918 12308940 chr11 12308837 12308962 +
## 4 13948354 13948376 chr11 13948273 13948387 +
## 5 31817477 31817499 chr11 31817386 31817501 +
## 6 151031869 151031891 chr1 151031782 151031902 +
```

Note that in the above example, `peaks.withHeader` is set to `TRUE` because `T2plus1000ffTargets.bed` contains a header line. In contrast, the `mergedPeaks.bed` file created with step3 doesn't contain a header line and `peaks.withHeader` was set to `FALSE` accordingly.

2.5 Run all steps in one workflow function

The function `GUIDEseqAnalysis` is a wrapper function that uses the UMI sequence or plus the first few bases of each sequence from R1 reads to estimate the starting sequence library, piles up reads with a user defined window and step size, identify the cleavage sites, merge cleavage sites from plus strand and minus strand, followed by off target analysis of extended regions around the identified cleavage sites. For detailed parameter settings using function `GUIDEseqAnalysis`, please type `help(GUIDEseqAnalysis)`.

```
gRNA.file <- system.file("extdata", "gRNA.fa", package = "GUIDEseq")
system.time(guideSeqRes <- GUIDEseqAnalysis(
  alignment.inputfile = bamfile,
  umi.inputfile = umifile,
  gRNA.file = gRNA.file,
  orderOfftargetsBy = "peak_score",
  descending = TRUE,
  n.cores.max = 1,
  BSgenomeName = Hsapiens,
  min.reads = 1))
```

```
names(guideSeqRes)
## [1] "offTargets"      "merged.peaks"    "peaks"           "uniqueCleavages"
## [5] "read.summary"
```

3 References

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- Zhu, L. J., M. Lawrence, A. Gupta, H. Pages, A. Kucukural, M. Garber, and S. A. Wolfe. 2017. "GUIDEseq: A Bioconductor Package to Analyze GUIDE-Seq Datasets for CRISPR-Cas Nucleases." Journal Article. *BMC Genomics* 18 (1): 379. doi:[10.1186/s12864-017-3746-y](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12864-017-3746-y).

4 Session info

```
sessionInfo()
## R version 4.2.0 (2022-04-22)
## Platform: x86_64-pc-linux-gnu (64-bit)
## Running under: Ubuntu 16.04.7 LTS
```


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```
##
## Matrix products: default
## BLAS:   /usr/lib/libblas/libblas.so.3.6.0
## LAPACK: /usr/lib/lapack/liblapack.so.3.6.0
##
## locale:
## [1] LC_CTYPE=en_US.UTF-8      LC_NUMERIC=C
## [3] LC_TIME=en_US.UTF-8      LC_COLLATE=en_US.UTF-8
## [5] LC_MONETARY=en_US.UTF-8  LC_MESSAGES=en_US.UTF-8
## [7] LC_PAPER=en_US.UTF-8     LC_NAME=C
## [9] LC_ADDRESS=C             LC_TELEPHONE=C
## [11] LC_MEASUREMENT=en_US.UTF-8 LC_IDENTIFICATION=C
##
## attached base packages:
## [1] stats4      stats      graphics  grDevices  utils      datasets  methods
## [8] base
##
## other attached packages:
## [1] BSgenome.Hsapiens.UCSC.hg19_1.4.3 BSgenome_1.64.0
## [3] rtracklayer_1.56.0                Biostrings_2.64.0
## [5] XVector_0.36.0                    GUIDEseq_1.27.3
## [7] GenomicRanges_1.48.0              GenomeInfoDb_1.32.1
## [9] IRanges_2.30.0                    S4Vectors_0.34.0
## [11] BiocGenerics_0.42.0               BiocStyle_2.24.0
##
## loaded via a namespace (and not attached):
## [1] colorspace_2.0-3                seqinr_4.2-8
## [3] rjson_0.2.21                    ellipsis_0.3.2
## [5] futile.logger_1.4.3             base64enc_0.1-3
## [7] ChIPpeakAnno_3.30.0            hash_2.2.6.2
## [9] bit64_4.0.5                     AnnotationDbi_1.58.0
## [11] fansi_1.0.3                     xml2_1.3.3
## [13] splines_4.2.0                   cachem_1.0.6
## [15] knitr_1.39                      zeallot_0.1.0
## [17] ade4_1.7-19                     jsonlite_1.8.0
## [19] Rsamtools_2.12.0               dbplyr_2.1.1
## [21] png_0.1-7                      tfruns_1.5.0
## [23] graph_1.74.0                   BiocManager_1.30.17
## [25] compiler_4.2.0                 httr_1.4.3
## [27] lazyeval_0.2.2                 assertthat_0.2.1
## [29] Matrix_1.4-1                   fastmap_1.1.0
## [31] limma_3.52.0                   cli_3.3.0
## [33] formatR_1.12                   htmltools_0.5.2
## [35] prettyunits_1.1.1              tools_4.2.0
## [37] gtable_0.3.0                   glue_1.6.2
## [39] GenomeInfoDbData_1.2.8         dplyr_1.0.9
## [41] mltools_0.3.5                  rappdirs_0.3.3
## [43] Rcpp_1.0.8.3                   Biobase_2.56.0
## [45] vctrs_0.4.1                    rhdf5filters_1.8.0
## [47] multtest_2.52.0                xfun_0.30
## [49] stringr_1.4.0                  lifecycle_1.0.1
```

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```
## [51] ensemblldb_2.20.1      restfulr_0.0.13
## [53] XML_3.99-0.9           InteractionSet_1.24.0
## [55] scales_1.2.0           zlibbioc_1.42.0
## [57] MASS_7.3-57            ProtGenerics_1.28.0
## [59] hms_1.1.1              MatrixGenerics_1.8.0
## [61] parallel_4.2.0         SummarizedExperiment_1.26.1
## [63] RBGL_1.72.0            rhdf5_2.40.0
## [65] AnnotationFilter_1.20.0 lambda.r_1.2.4
## [67] yaml_2.3.5             curl_4.3.2
## [69] memoise_2.0.1          reticulate_1.24
## [71] ggplot2_3.3.6          keras_2.8.0
## [73] biomaRt_2.52.0         stringi_1.7.6
## [75] RSQLite_2.2.13         tensorflow_2.8.0
## [77] BiocIO_1.6.0           GenomicFeatures_1.48.0
## [79] filelock_1.0.2         BiocParallel_1.30.0
## [81] rlang_1.0.2            pkgconfig_2.0.3
## [83] matrixStats_0.62.0     bitops_1.0-7
## [85] evaluate_0.15          lattice_0.20-45
## [87] purrr_0.3.4            Rhdf5lib_1.18.0
## [89] GenomicAlignments_1.32.0 bit_4.0.4
## [91] tidyselect_1.1.2       magrittr_2.0.3
## [93] bookdown_0.26          R6_2.5.1
## [95] generics_0.1.2         DelayedArray_0.22.0
## [97] DBI_1.1.2              pillar_1.7.0
## [99] whisker_0.4            survival_3.3-1
## [101] KEGGREST_1.36.0        RCurl_1.98-1.6
## [103] tibble_3.1.7           crayon_1.5.1
## [105] futile.options_1.0.1    utf8_1.2.2
## [107] BiocFileCache_2.4.0     rmarkdown_2.14
## [109] progress_1.2.2         grid_4.2.0
## [111] data.table_1.14.2       blob_1.2.3
## [113] digest_0.6.29          VennDiagram_1.7.3
## [115] regioneR_1.28.0        CRISPRseek_1.36.0
## [117] munsell_0.5.0
```