AmyloGram: a novel predictor of amyloidogenicity

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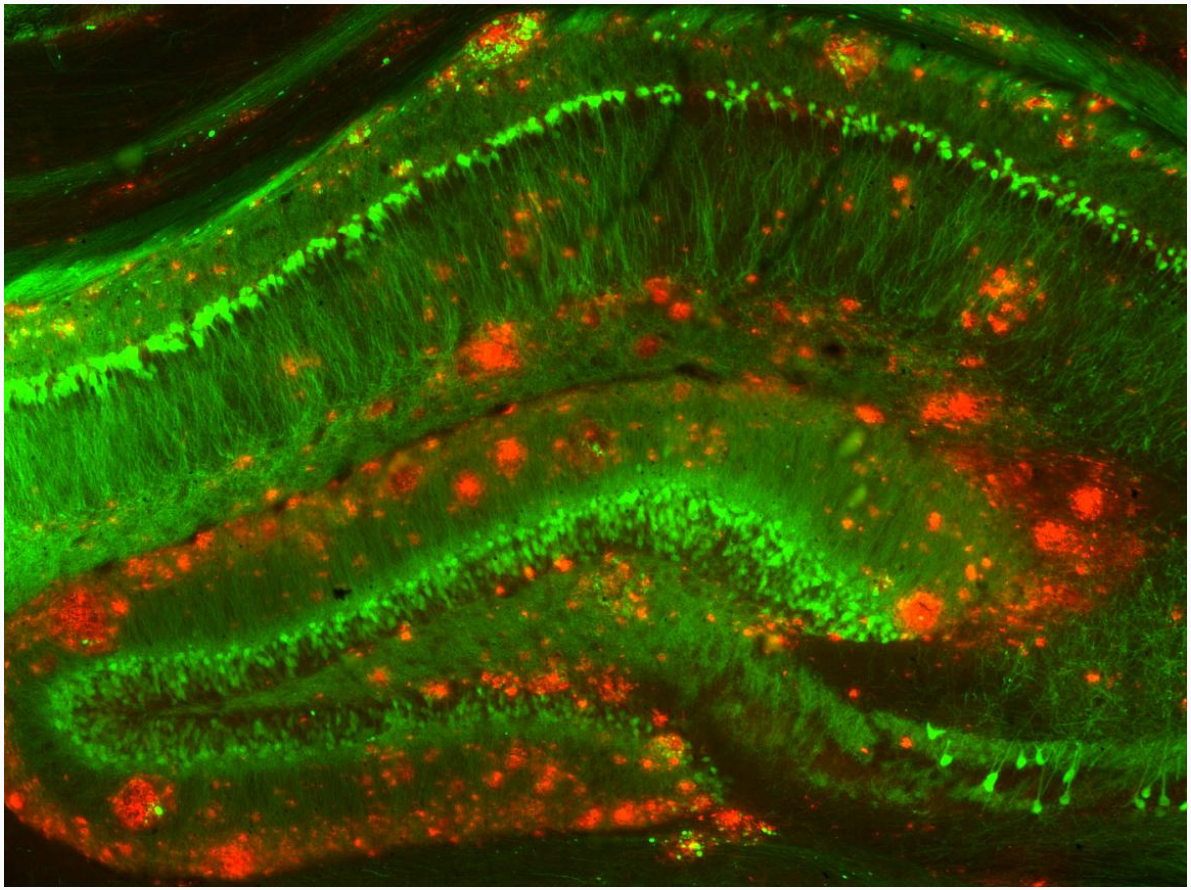
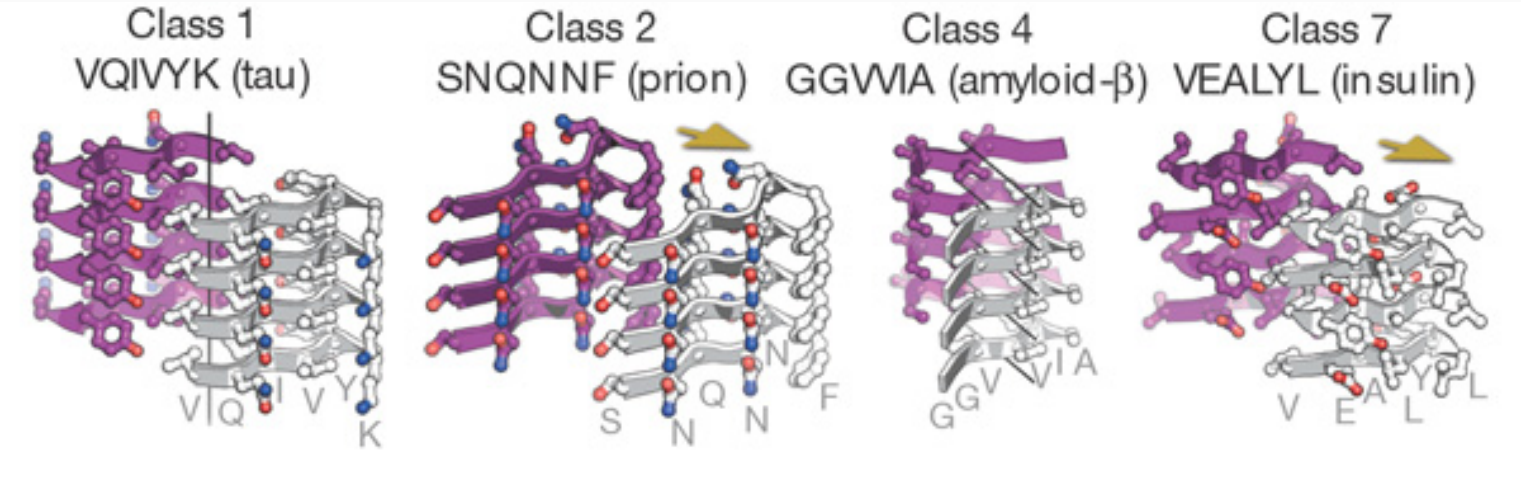
Amyloids

Proteins associated with various neurodegenerative disorders (e.g., Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Creutzfeldta-Jakob's diseases) creating harmful aggregates.



Amyloid aggregates (red) around neurons (green). Strittmatter Laboratory, Yale University

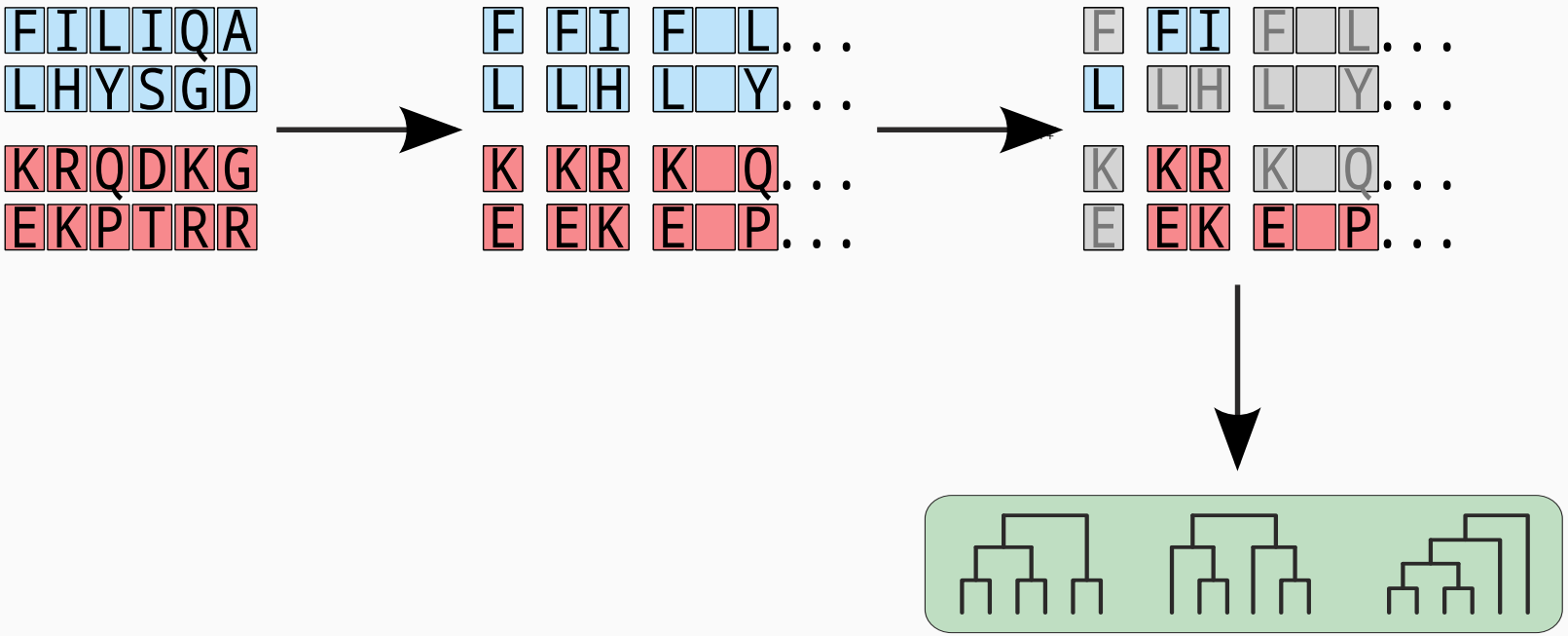
The aggregation of amyloids is initiated by 6- to 15-residue segments called hot spots, diverse subsequences that form unique zipper-like β-structures.



Sawaya et al. (2007)

Amyloidogenic motifs

Which motifs (countinous or gapped subsequences of amino acids) are associated with amyloidogenicity?


FILIQA
LHYSGD
KRQDKG
EKPTRR
F FI F L...
L LH L Y...
K KR K Q...
E EK E P...
F FI F L...
L LH L Y...
K KR K Q...
E EK E P...

Quick Permutation Test

Informative n-grams are usually selected using permutation tests.

During a permutation test we shuffle randomly class labels and compute a defined statistic (e.g. information gain). Values of statistic for permuted data are compared with the value of statistic for original data.

$$\text{p-value} = \frac{N_{T_P > T_R}}{N}$$

$N_{T_P > T_R}$: number of cases, where T_P (permuted test statistic) has more extreme values than T_R (test statistic for original data).

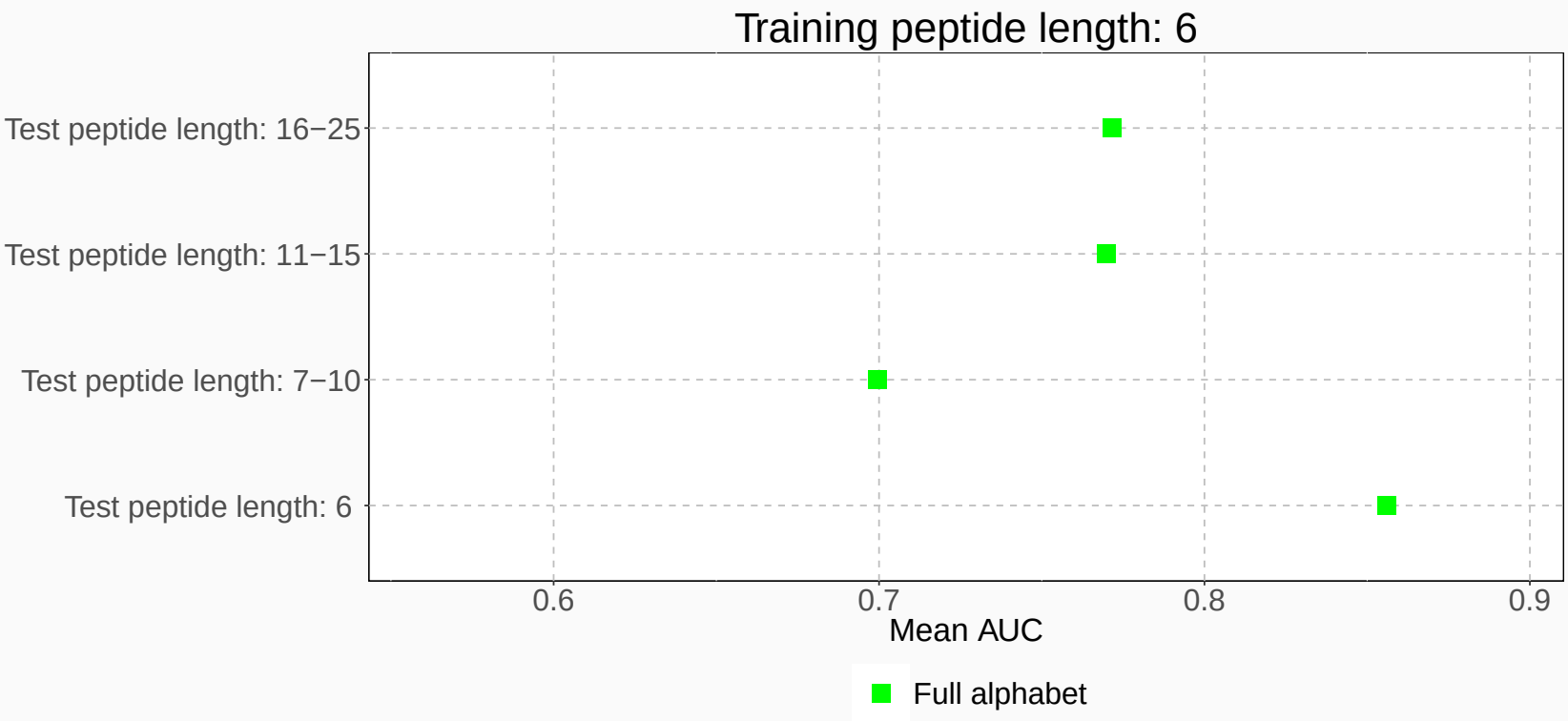
N: number of permutations.

QuiPT

Quick **P**ermutation **T**est is a fast alternative to permutation tests for n-gram data. It also allows precise estimation of p-value.

QuiPT is avaible as part of the **biogram** R package.

Cross-validation



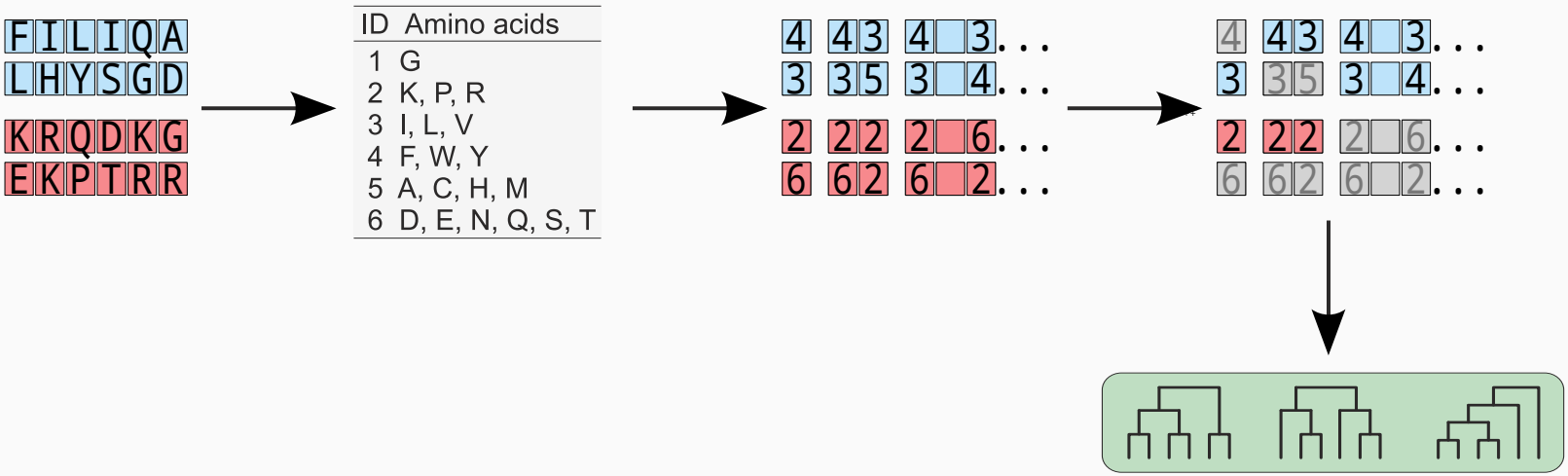
Reduced amino acid alphabets

Does amyloidogenicity depend on the exact sequence of amino acids?

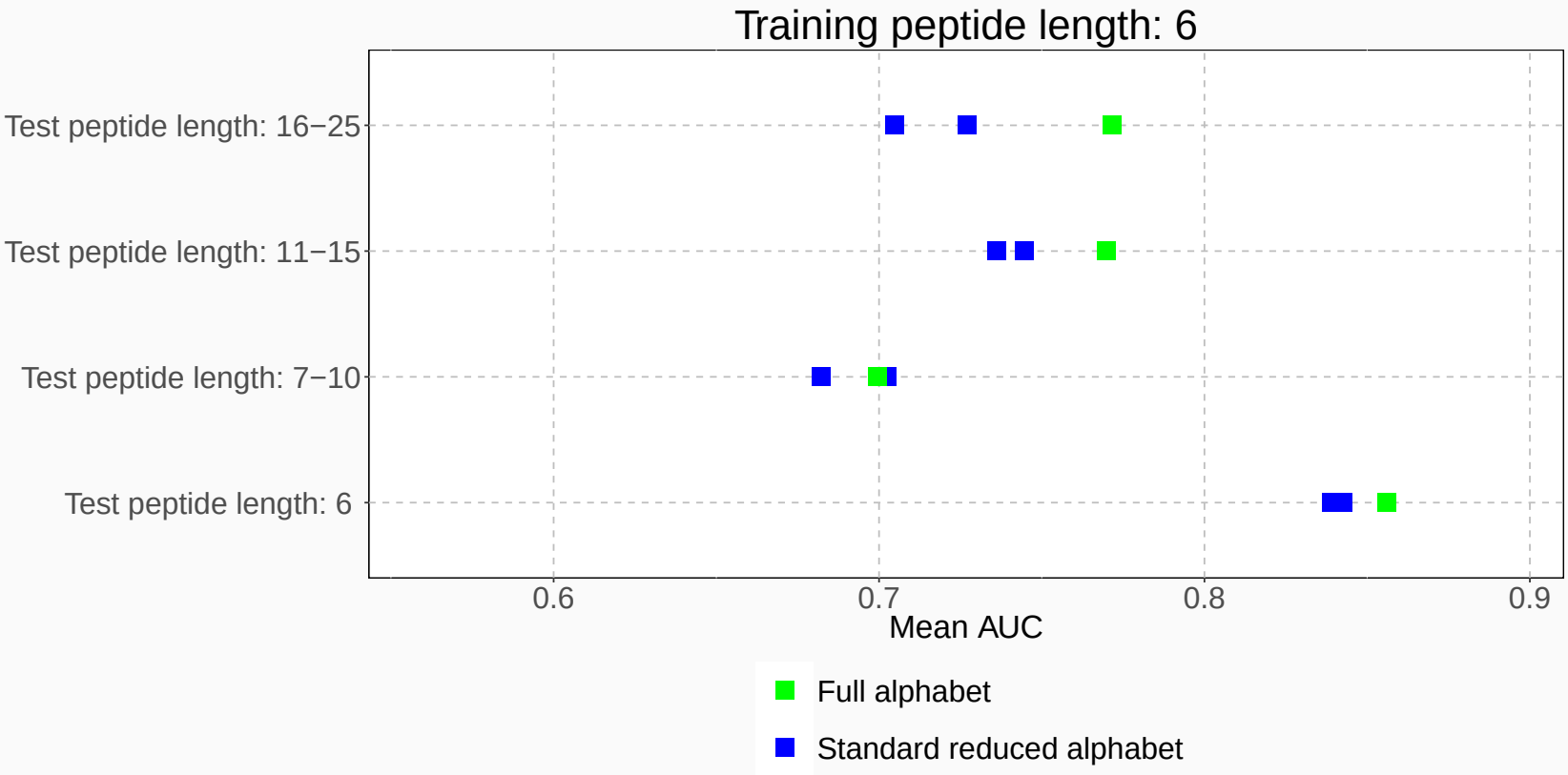
Standard reduced amino acid alphabets

To date, several reduced amino acid alphabets have been proposed, which have been applied to (among others) protein folding and protein structure prediction (Kosiol et al., 2004; Melo and Marti-Renom, 2006).

Standard reduced amino acid alphabets



Cross-validation

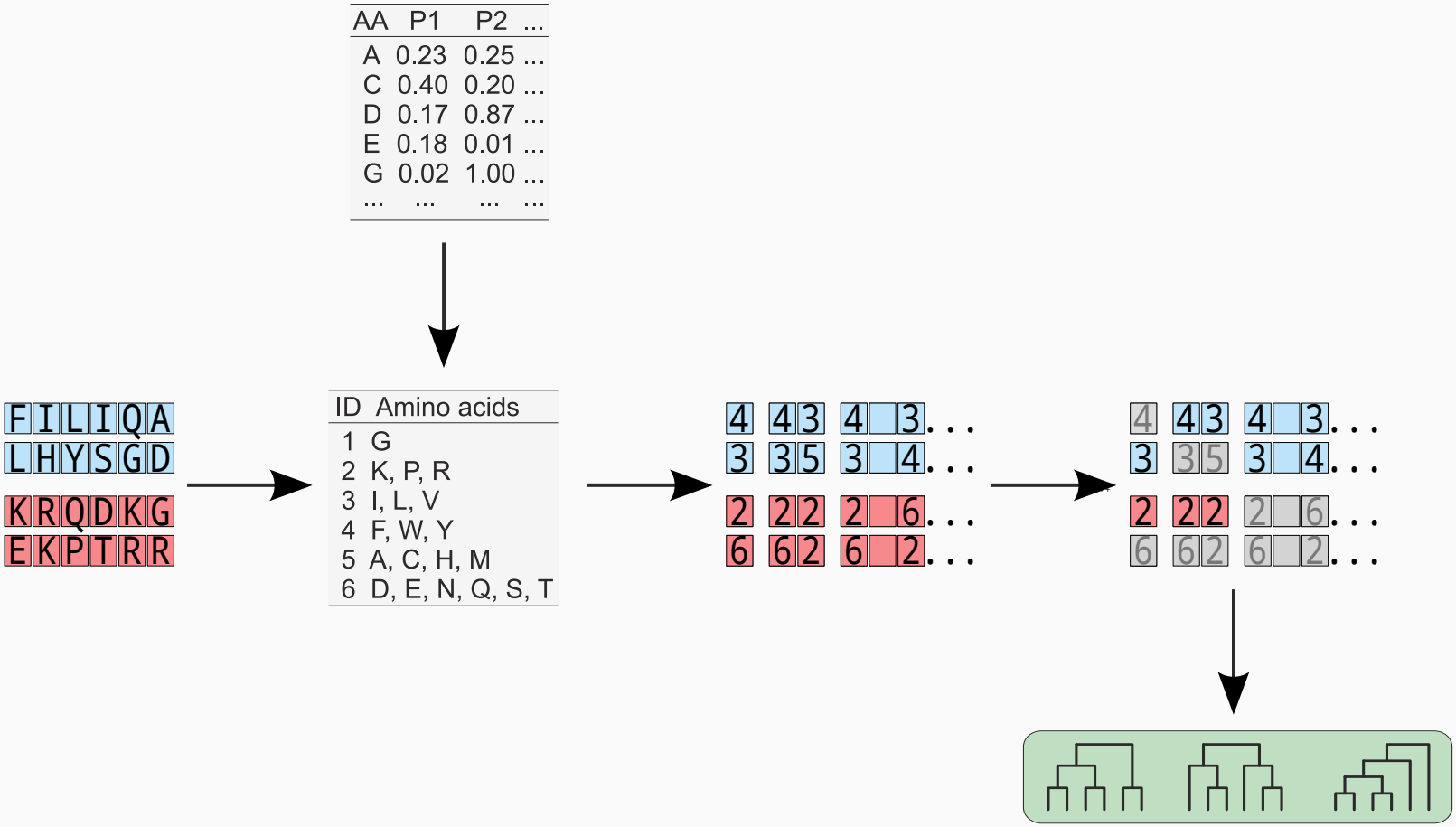


Standard reduced amino acid alphabets do not enhance discrimination between amyloidogenic and non-amyloidogenic proteins.

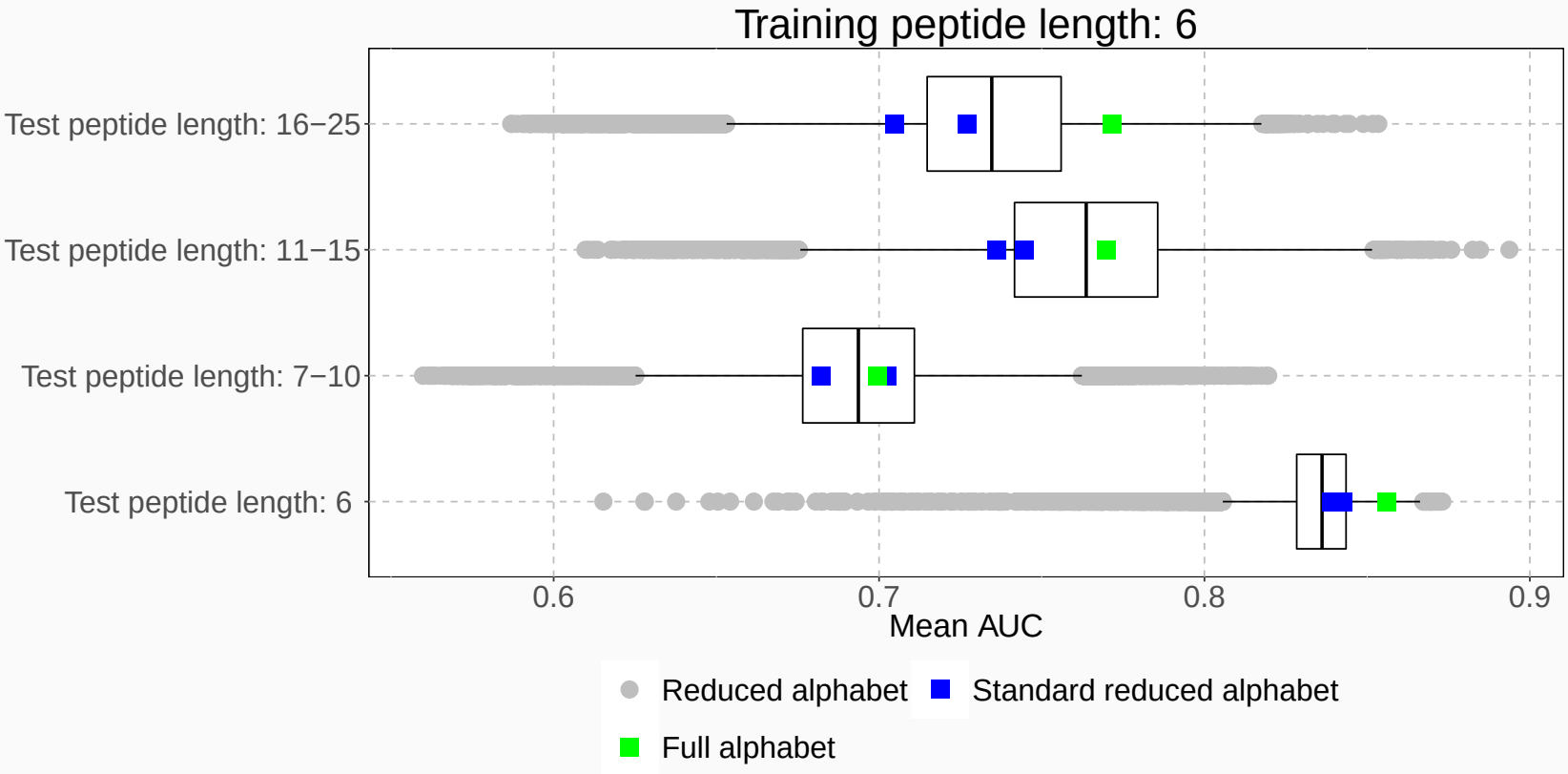
Novel reduced amino acid alphabets

- 17 measures handpicked from AAIndex database:
  - size of residues,
  - hydrophobicity,
  - solvent surface area,
  - frequency in β-sheets,
  - contactivity.
- 524 284 amino acid reduced alphabets with different level of amino acid alphabet reduction (three to six amino acid groups).

Novel reduced amino acid alphabets

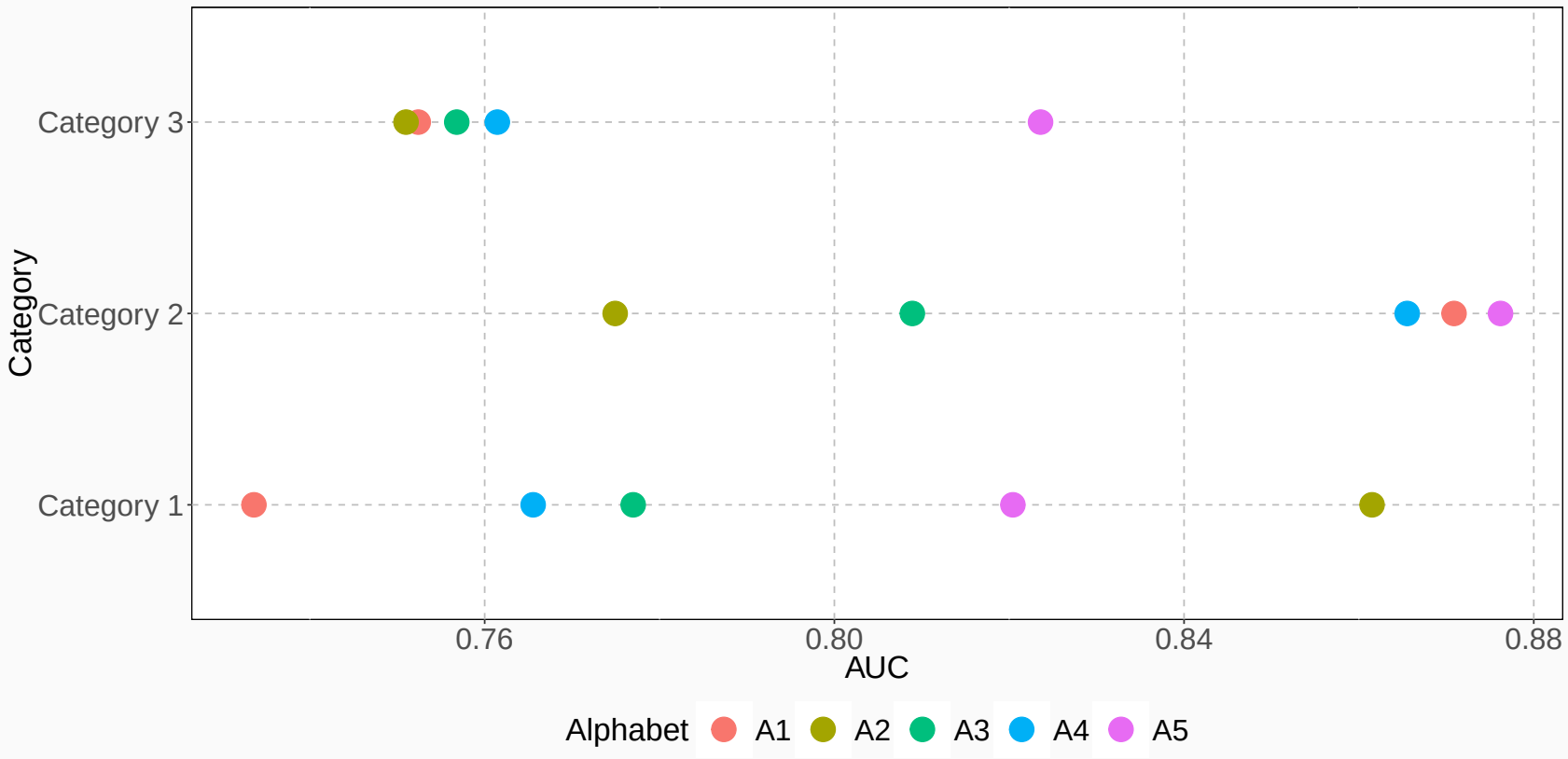


Cross-validation

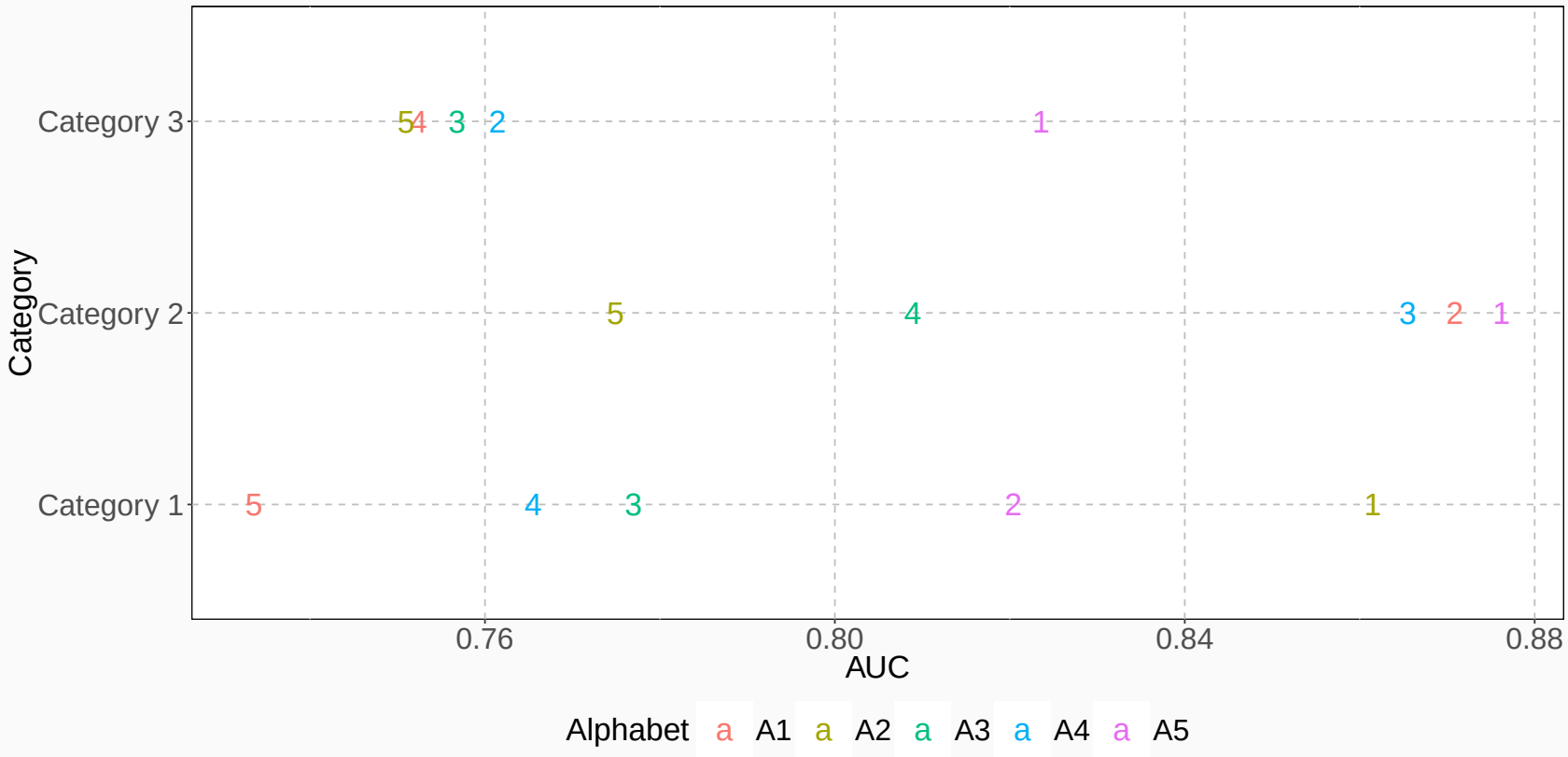


Hinges of boxes correspond to the 0.25 and 0.75 quartiles. The bar inside the box represents the median. The gray circles correspond to the reduced alphabets with the AUC outside the 0.95 confidence interval.

Ranking alphabets

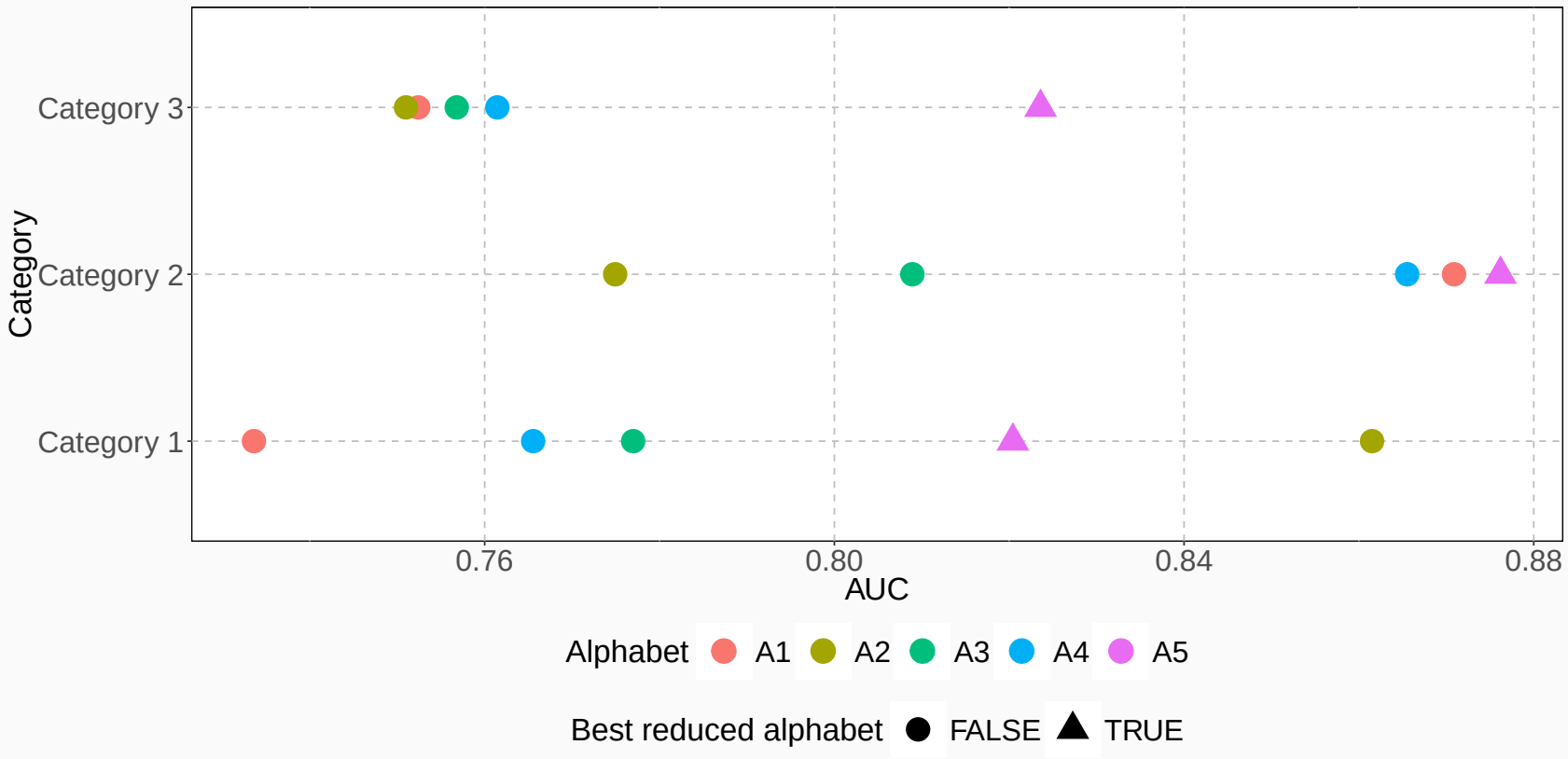


Ranking alphabets

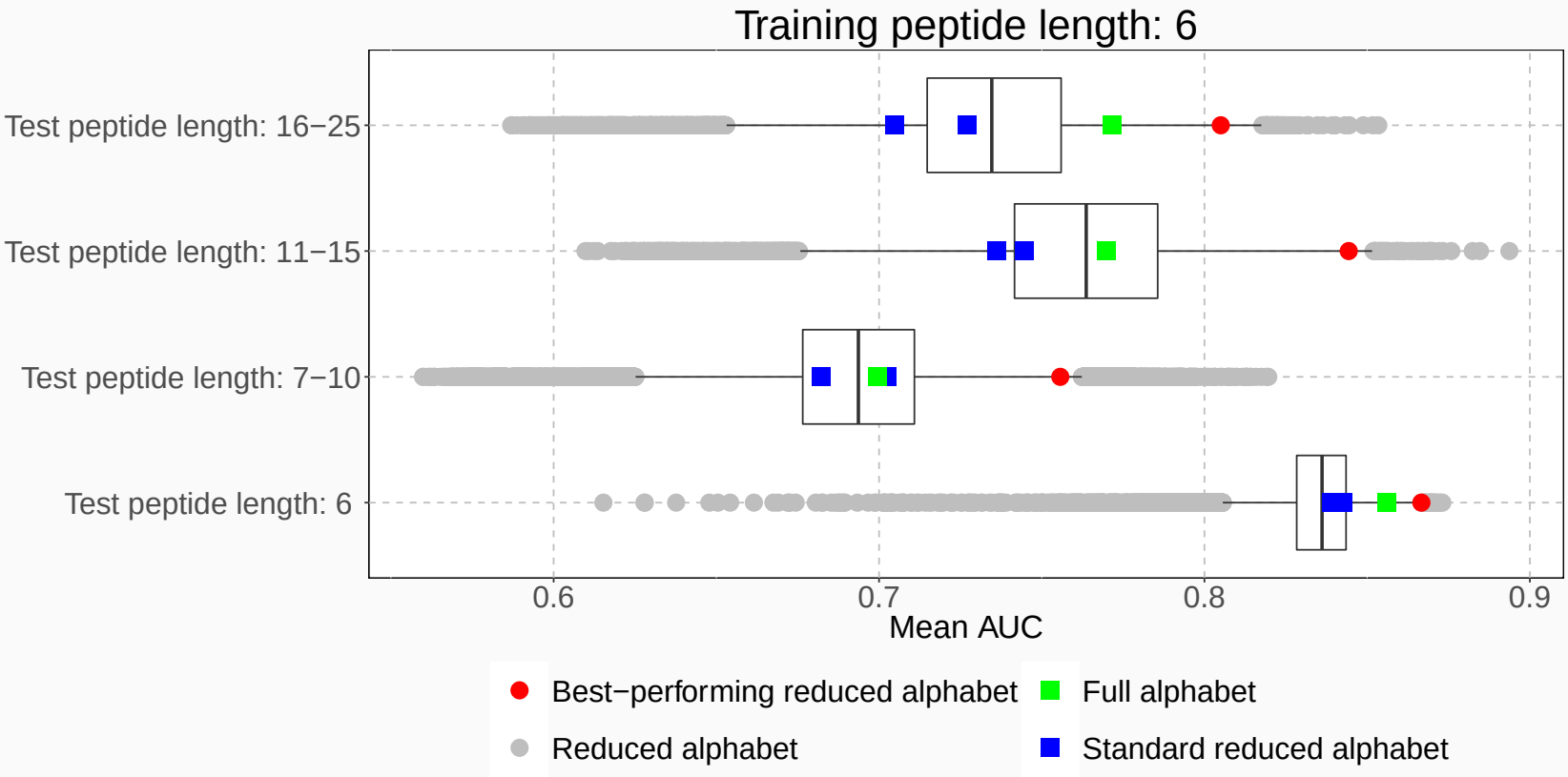


We rank alphabets separately in all length categories assuming the rank 1 for the best AUC, rank 2 for the second best AUC and so on.

Ranking alphabets



The best-perfoming reduced alphabet



The best-performing alphabet has the lowest sum of ranks.

The best-perfoming reduced alphabet

Subgroup ID	Amino acids
1	G
2	K, P, R
3	I, L, V
4	F, W, Y
5	A, C, H, M
6	D, E, N, Q, S, T

The best-perfoming reduced alphabet

Subgroup ID	Amino acids
1	G
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Group 3 and 4 - hydrophobic amino acids.

The best-perfoming reduced alphabet

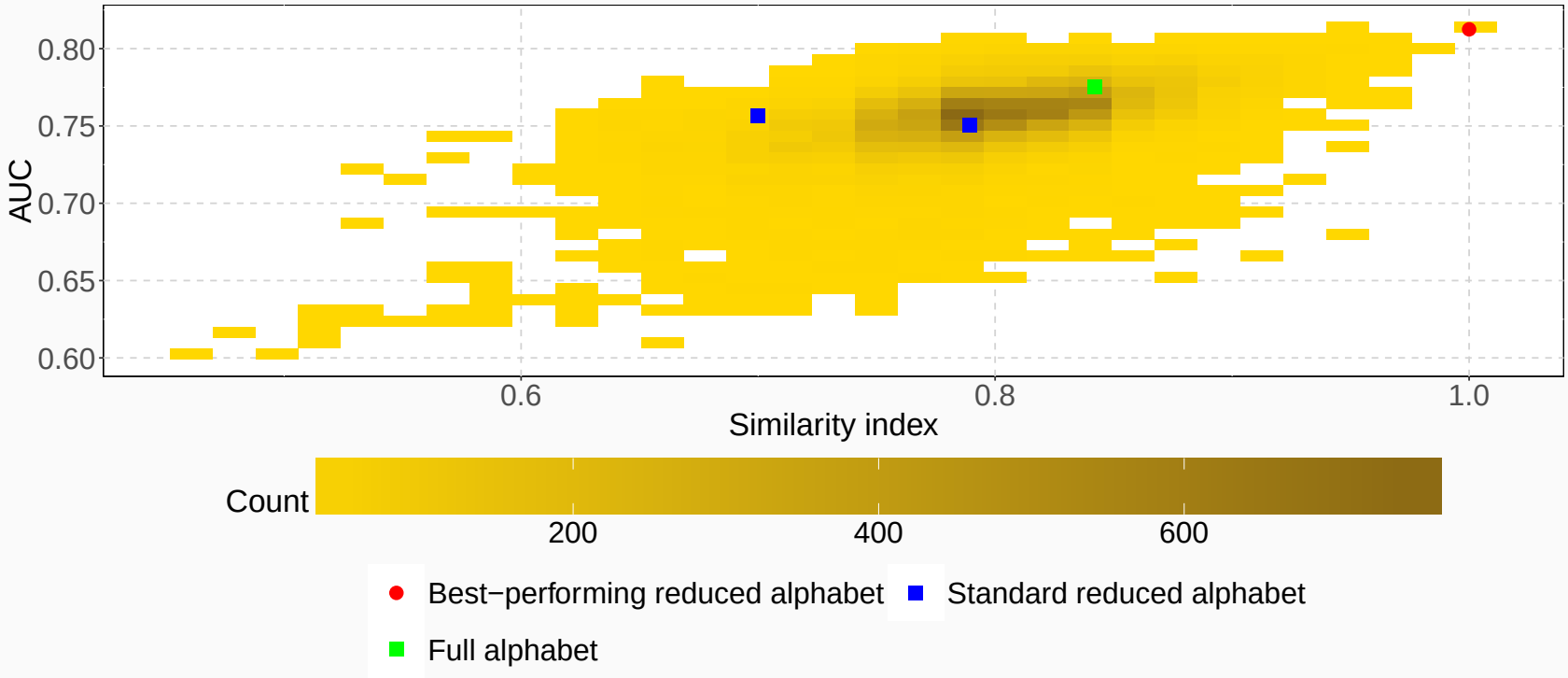
Subgroup ID	Amino acids
1	G
2	K, P, R
3	I, L, V
4	F, W, Y
5	A, C, H, M
6	D, E, N, Q, S, T

Group 2 - charged breakers of β-structures.

Alphabet similarity and performance

Is the best-performing reduced amino alphabet associated with amyloidogenicity?

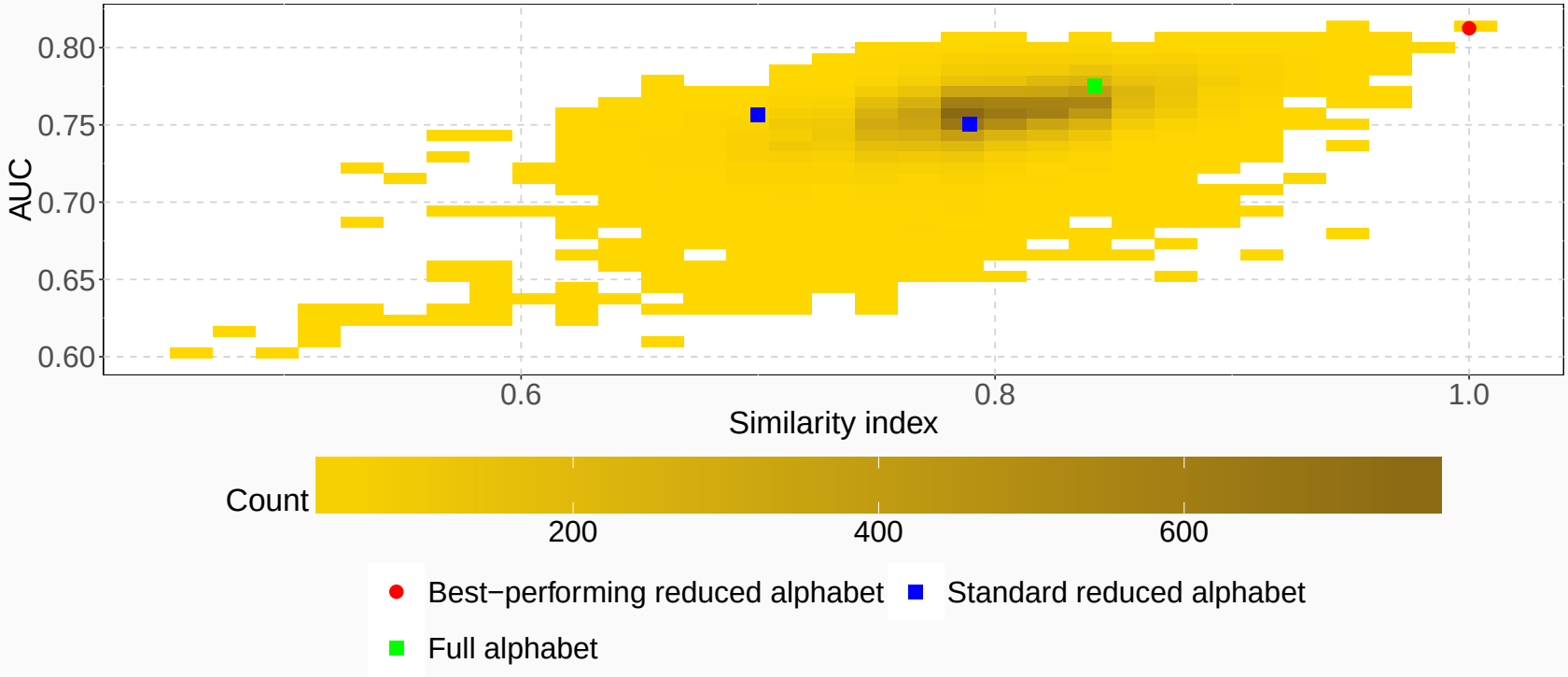
Similarity index



Similarity index (Stephenson and Freeland, 2013) measures the similarity between two reduced alphabets (1 - identical, 0, totally dissimilar).

The color of a square is proportional to the number of reduced alphabets in its area.

Similarity index

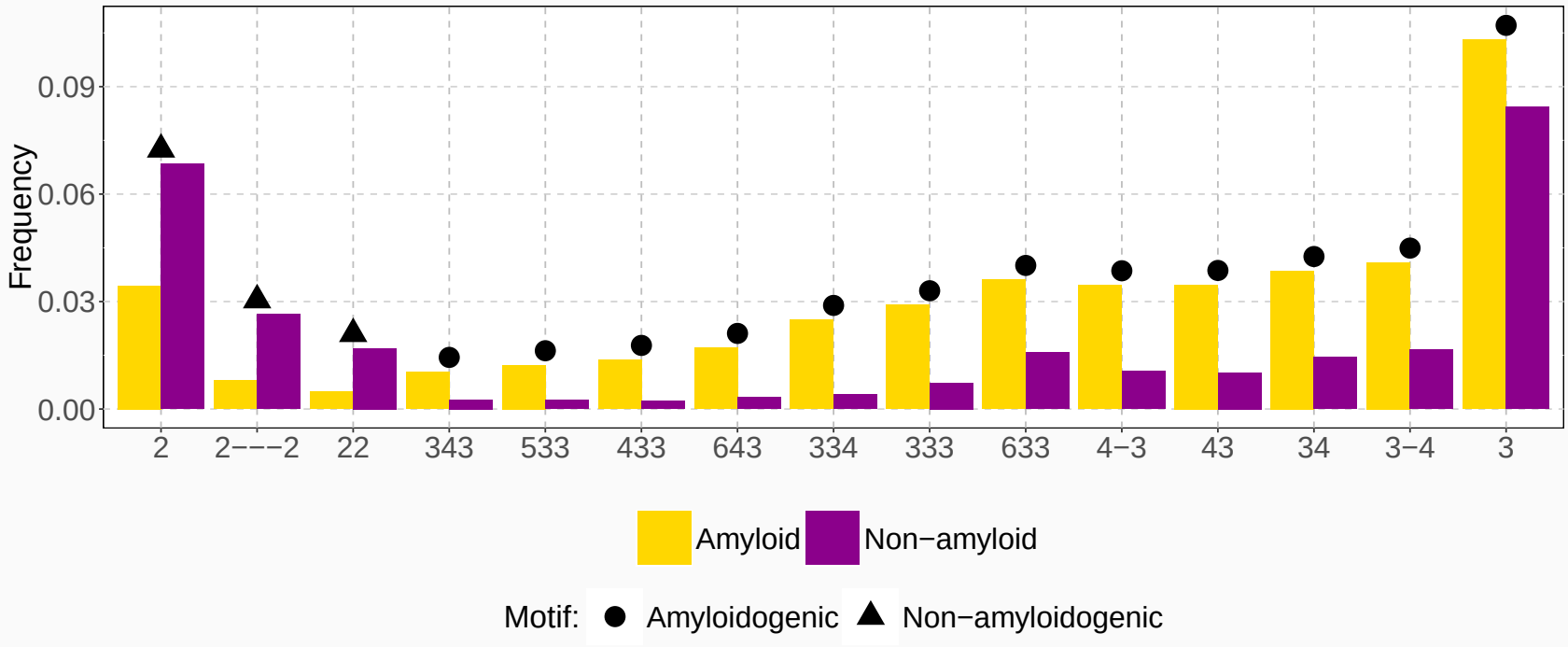


The correlation between mean AUC an similarity index is significant ($\text{p-value} \leq 2.2^{-16}$; $\rho = 0.51$).

Knowledge-discovery

Are informative n-grams found by QuiPT associated with amyloidogenicity?

Informative n-grams



Out of 65 the most informative n-grams, 15 (23%) were also found in the motifs validated experimentally (Paz and Serrano, 2004).

Benchmark and summary

Is performance of the AmyloGram, the classifier based on the best-performing reduced amino acid alphabet, also adequate on the independent dataset?

Benchmark results

Classifier	AUC	MCC
AmyloGram	**0.8972**	**0.6307**
PASTA 2.0 (Walsh et al., 2014)	0.8550	0.4291
FoldAmyloid (Garbuzynskiy et al., 2010)	0.7351	0.4526
APPNN (Família et al., 2015)	0.8343	0.5823

The predictor based on the best-performing alphabet, called AmyloGram, was benchmarked against the most popular tools for the detection of amyloid peptides using an external data set *pep424*.

Summary

We identified a group of reduced amino acid alphabets which capture properties of amyloids.

Our algorithm was also capable of extracting n-gram associated with amyloidogenicity, partially confirming experimental results.

Our software is available as a web-server: `smorfland.uni.wroc.pl/amylogram`.

n-gram analysis workflow is implemented in the R package **biogram**: `https://cran.r-project.org/package=biogram`.

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  - Piotr Sobczyk,
  - Chris Lauber,
- **AmyLoad** database (`comprec-lin.iiar.pwr.edu.pl/amyload`):
  - Paweł Woźniak,

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