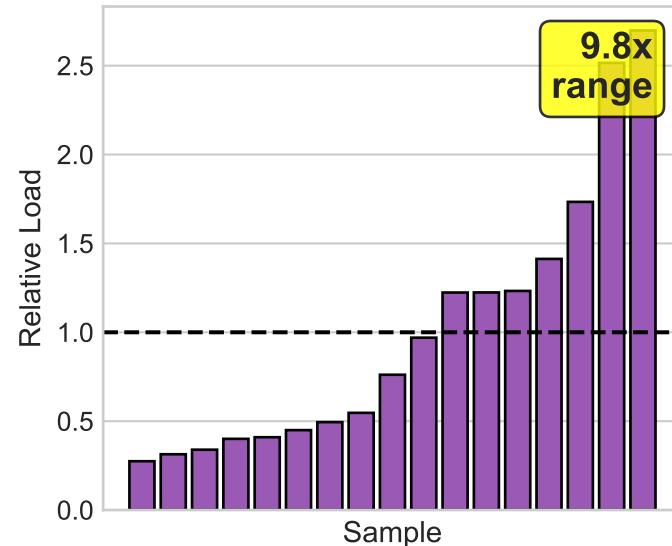
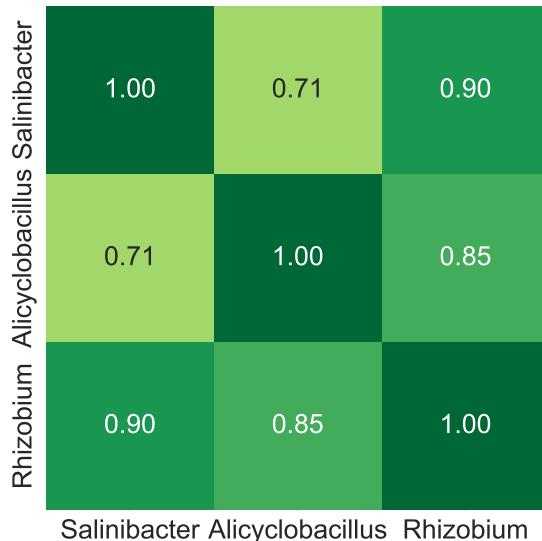
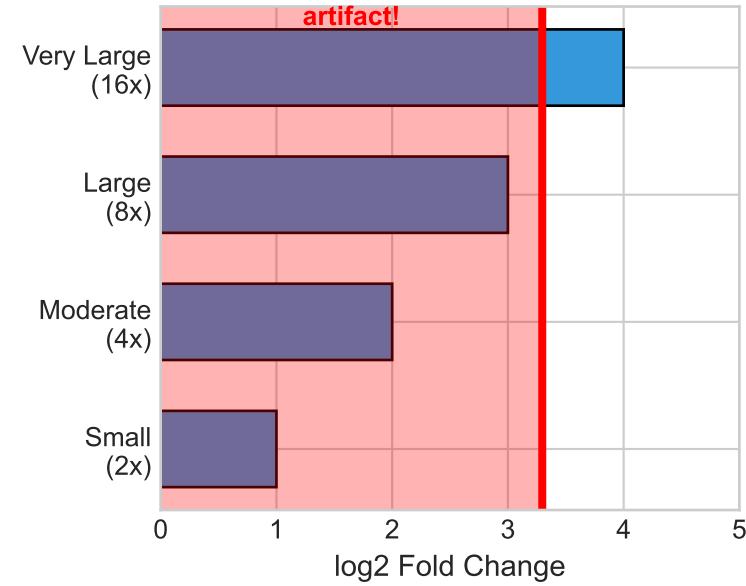


A. 9.8x Load Variation**B. Spike-in Correlations****C. Artifact Potential****KEY FINDINGS FROM STAMMLER 2016 SPIKE-IN ANALYSIS**

1. Total bacterial load varies 9.8x across samples
2. This creates potential artifacts up to 3.3 log2FC
3. Most published microbiome effect sizes are within this range
4. Without load correction, apparent effects may be spurious

SOLUTION: Include spike-in controls and report load-corrected abundances