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Supporting Information

Site-Specific Antibody Fragment Conjugates for Reversible Staining in Fluorescence Microscopy

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K.B. Data curation:Equal; Methodology:Equal; Visualization:Equal; Writing – review & editing:Supporting
M.G. Methodology:Supporting; Writing – review & editing:Supporting
P.O. Methodology:Supporting
J.H. Writing – review & editing:Supporting
C.H. Funding acquisition:Equal; Writing – review & editing:Supporting
H.H. Data curation:Supporting; Writing – review & editing:Supporting
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A.S. Conceptualization:Equal; Project administration:Equal; Supervision:Equal; Visualization:Equal; Writing – original draft:Equal; Writing – review & editing:Equal

Experimental Procedures

Oligonucleotide sequences

name	sequence 5’ -> 3’ / N -> C	functionalization
DNA docking strand	TAACTGGACTTCATC	5' azide
PNA docking strand	TAACTGGACTTCATC	N-term N3-acetic acid
DNA probe.A594	GATGAAGTCCAGTTA	3' AF594
DNA probe A647	GATGAAGTCCAGTTA	3' AF647
DNA non-complementary	GTTCATGTGCTGATT	3' AF647

5’ azide-DNA docking strand was purchased from metabion. N terminally modified N3-acetic acid PNA docking strand was purchased from Eurogentech. Fluorophore conjugated DNA imager strands were purchased from Eurofins.

TTL expression and purification

Tubulin tyrosine ligase (TTL) was expressed and purified as previously published. [1]

In short, TTL was expressed as a N-terminally His-tagged SUMO-TTL fusion protein in pET28 backbone in *E. coli* BL21(DE3) cells. Expression was induced with 0.5 mM IPTG for 18 h at 18 °C. Cells were lysed for 2 h at 4 °C in TTL binding buffer (20 mM Tris, 250 mM NaCl, 20 mM Imidazole, 3 mM ß-mercaptoethanol, pH 8.2) in the presence of 100 µg/ml lysozyme and 25 µg/ml DNase followed by sonification (7x8 s, 40 % amplitude, Branson Sonifier) and centrifugation at 20.000 g for 30 min, 4 °C for debris removal. Purification was done on an Äkta pure system (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) using a 5 ml HisTrap HP column (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Peak fractions were pooled, desalted on a PD10 column (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) and the buffer exchanged to TTL storage buffer (20 mM MES, 100 mM KCl, 10 mM $MgCl_2$, 50 mM *L*-glutamate, 50 mM *L*-arginine, 3 mM ß-mercaptoethanol, pH 7.0).

Expression of N-terminally His-tagged GBP-TT and eGFP

Green fluorescent protein binding nanobody (GBP) was expressed and purified as previously published. [1]

In short, nanobody was expressed with N-terminal His-tag and C-terminal tub-tag in *E. coli* JM109 cells. Expression was induced with 1 mM IPTG and bacteria incubated at 18 °C, 180 rpm over night. Cells were lysed for 2 h in NiNTA binding buffer (20 mM Tris-HCl, 250 mM NaCl, 20 mM imidazole, pH 8.2) in the presence of 100 µg/ml lysozyme and 25 µg/ml DNase

followed by sonification (7x8 s, 40 % amplitude, Branson Sonifier) and centrifugation at 20.000 g for 30 min, 4 °C for debris removal. Purification was done on an Äkta pure system (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) using a 5 ml HisTrap HP column (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Peak fractions were pooled, concentrated in Amicon Ultra Centrifugal Filters (4 ml, 3 NMWL, Merck Millipore) and buffer exchanged to 1x PBS using Zeba Spin desalting columns (7 MWCO). The eluate was injected onto a Superdex 200 Increase 300/10 column (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) at a flow rate of 1 ml/min in PBS. Peak fractions were pooled and concentrated in Amicon Ultra Centrifugal Filters (4 ml, 3 NMWL, Merck Millipore).

His-tagged eGFP was thankfully provided by H. Flaswinkel (LMU Munich, Germany) and expressed and purified in the same manner as described above for GBP-TT.

GBP DNA/PNA conjugation

Conjugation of nanobodies via CuAAC was adapted from a previous publication. [2]

The ligation of O-propargyl-*L*-tyrosine to GBP-TT was catalyzed by the TTL enzyme in TTL reaction buffer (20 mM MOPS, 100 mM KCl, 10 mM $MgCl_2$, 2.5 mM ATP and 5 mM reduced glutathione, pH 7.0) using 298 µM GBP-TT, 29.8 µM TTL and 10 mM O-propargyl-*L*-tyrosine in minimal volume. The reaction was incubated for 3 h at 30 °C and desalted via Zeba Spin desalting columns (7 MWCO, Thermo Fisher Scientific) for removal of excess O-propargyl-*L*-tyrosine.

For conjugation of O-propargyl-*L*-tyrosine-GBP with 3-azido-DNA binding strands (metabion), CuAAC reactions were performed in volumes of up to 115 µl with either 40 µM alkynyl-GBP and 4x excess of azide-DNA for SDS-PAGE and analytical AEX or 70 µM concentration of propargyl-GBP and 2x excess of azide-DNA for preparative AEX in CuAAC reaction buffer (final concentrations in the reaction: 0.25 mM $CuSO_4$, 1.25 mM THPTA, 5 mM aminoguanidine, 5 mM sodium ascorbate, 20 mM MOPS, pH 7.0) for 1 h at 25 °C.The reaction was immediately quenched by the addition of 50 mM EDTA and samples were desalted via Zeba Spin desalting columns (7 MWCO) to 1x PBS. Conjugation with N-terminally modified azido-PNA (Eurogentech) was performed as described above using 60 µM propargyl-GBP with 2x excess of azido-PNA. For control reactions, 10 mM 6-Fluorescein azide (baseclick) were used. Reaction products were analyzed by Coomassie staining and anion exchange chromatography. Reaction efficiency was calculated by densitometric analysis using GelAnalyzer (GelAnalyzer 19.1, www.gelanalyzer.com, by Istvan Lazar Jr., PhD and Istvan Lazar Sr., PhD, CSc)

Purification of nanobody conjugates by anion exchange chromatography

Preparative anion exchange chromatography was performed on an Äkta pure system (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) using a ResourceQ column (Amersham Pharmacia Biotech) equilibrated in buffer A (20 mM MOPS, pH 7.0). Separation was performed by linear increase to 50% buffer B (20 mM MOPS, 1 M NaCl, pH 7.0) over 20 CV followed by 100% buffer B for 5 CV

and protein absorption measured at 280 nm. Peak fractions were collected, concentrated using Amicon Ultra Centrifugal Filters (0.5 ml, 3 NMWL, Merck Millipore) and buffer exchanged to 1x PBS using Zeba Spin desalting columns (7 MWCO).

Quadrupol time-of-flight mass spectrometry of intact proteins

Intact proteins were analyzed using a Waters H-class instrument equipped with a quaternary solvent manager, a Waters sample manager-FTN, a Waters PDA detector and a Waters column manager with an Acquity UPLC protein BEH C4 column (300 Å, 1.7 µm, 2.1 mm x 50 mm). 3 µl of buffered Protein solution were injected and eluted with a flow rate of 0.3 ml/min. The following gradient was used: A: 0.01% FA in H_2O; B: 0.01% FA in MeCN. 5-95% B 0-6 min. Mass analysis was conducted with a Waters XEVO G2-XS QTof analyzer. Proteins were ionized in positive ion mode applying a cone voltage of 40 kV. Raw data was analyzed with MaxEnt 1 and the recorded ion series was deconvoluted for a mass range from 3000 to 25000 Da.

Antigen binding and imager strand annealing/dissociation assay

Purified eGFP (the antigen) was immobilized on 96-well µClear plates multiwell plates (Greiner) at a concentration of 5 µM for 1 h at room temperature. Antigen coated wells and uncoated control wells were blocked with 1% BSA solution for 1 h at room temperature followed by two washing steps with PBST (PBS/0.05 % Tween20). 7.5 µM GBP-PNA and GBP-DNA conjugate were added to for 1 h at room temperature followed by three PBST wash steps. Fluorophore labelled DNA strands (imager strands) with DNA sequences complementary or non-complementary to the GBP-conjugated oligonucleotide were added at 10 µM for 30 min and washed three times with PBST. Fluorescence signal was recorded on a Tecan Infinite 1000 multiwell plate reader system with excitation wavelengths set to 488 nm (eGFP), 603 nm (Atto594) and 646 nm (Atto647) and emission wavelength to 509 nm, 626 nm and 664 nm, respectively. Mean fluorescence intensity of duplicate wells was calculated and depicted as colour intensities.

For *in vitro* cell binding assays, eGFP-actin transfected or untransfected control cells were seeded on 96-well µClear plates multiwell plates (Greiner), fixed and permeabilized as described in the imaging section below. Wells were blocked with 1% BSA solution for 1 h at room temperature followed by two washing steps with PBST (PBS/0.05 % Tween20). 7.5 µM GBP-PNA conjugate were added to for 1 h at room temperature followed by three PBST wash steps. Fluorophore labelled DNA strands (imager strands) with DNA sequences complementary or non-complementary to the GBP-conjugated oligonucleotide were added at 10 µM for 30 min and washed three times with PBST. The annealed imager strand was dissociated by a 2 h wash in PBS/50% formamide, followed by three PBST wash steps. Imager strand was re-annealed for 1 h at room temperature followed by three PBST wash steps. Fluorescence signal was recorded on a Tecan Infinite 1000 multiwell plate reader system with excitation wavelengths set to 603 nm (Atto594) and emission wavelength to 626 nm. Mean fluorescence intensity of duplicate wells was calculated and depicted as colour intensities.

Cell lines generation and cell culture

HEK293Freestyle (Thermo Fisher Scientific) cells were seeded on poly-*L*-lysine coated µ-Slide 8 Well ibiTreat (cat.no 80826, ibidi) containing DMEM/F12 medium (Thermo Fisher Scientific) supplemented with 10% FBS at 40.000 cells per well and incubated at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 5% CO2 to allow attachment. Cells were transiently transfected with plasmid bearing eGFP gene and laminB1 gene (Daigle *et al.*, 2001) at DNA concentration of 2.5 µg/ml using MAXreagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific).

The human cervical carcinoma HeLa Kyoto cells (ATCC No. CCL-2), HeLa Kyoto eGFP-PCNA cells, HeLa Kyoto mCherry-PCNA cells, and HeLa Kyoto eGFP-laminB1 cells were grown in DMEM medium supplemented with 10% FCS, L-glutamine and antibiotics at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 5% CO2. HeLa Kyoto cell lines expressing fluorescent PCNA variants were generated in (Chagin *et al.*, 2016) using the Flp-In recombinant system. HeLa Kyoto eGFP-laminB1 cells were obtained by transfection with the plasmid bearing eGFP gene and laminB1 gene (Daigle *et al.*, 2001). Positively transfected cells were selected visually. Cells were seeded on the µ-Slide 8 Well ibiTreat (cat.no 80826, ibidi) at a concentration 20.000 cells per well. Cells were incubated for 24 h in a humidified atmosphere as described above.

Cell staining with conjugates, imaging and microscopy

eGFP-laminB1 transfected HEK cells were fixed in PBS/4% PFA solution for 10 min at room temperature, washed twice in PBS/0.05% Tween20 (Carl Roth) and permeabilized with PBS/0,25% TritonX-100 (Sigma Aldrich) for 10 min at room temperature. Cells were washed in PBS, blocked in PBS/5% BSA for 1 h at room temperature and incubated overnight at 4 °C with anion exchange purified DNA/PNA conjugated nanobody (16,6 µM in PBS/5% BSA). Samples were washed twice in PBS and stained with 10 nM imager strand for 5 min at room temperature in imaging buffer (500 mM NaCl in PBS, pH 8.0) followed by two washes with imaging buffer prior to imaging. After imaging, samples were washed twice in 0.01x PBS followed by two washes in stripping buffer (PBS/30% formamide for DNA-GBP and PBS/50% formamide for PNA-GBP samples) with 3 min incubation times at room temperature. Samples were washed twice in PBS prior to restaining. For HeLa Kyoto and HeLa Kyoto with fluorescent variants of PCNA and laminB1 the staining procedure was identical as for HEK cells.

For HEK293F cells, spinning disk confocal imaging was carried out on a Nikon TiE microscope equipped with a Yokogawa CSU-W1 spinning disk confocal unit (50 µm pinhole size), an Andor Borealis illumination unit, Andor ALC600 laser beam combiner (405 nm / 488 nm / 561 nm / 640 nm), and Andor IXON 888 Ultra EMCCD camera. The microscope was controlled by software from Nikon (NIS Elements, ver. 5.02.00). Images were acquired with a pixel size of 217 nm using a Nikon CFI Apochromat TIRF 60x NA 1.49 oil immersion objective (Nikon). eGFP, Alexa594 and Alexa647 were excited for 500 ms using the 488, 561 and 640 nm laser lines, respectively. The emission of eGFP, Alexa594 and Alexa647 was captured by using a 525/50 nm, a 600/50 nm and a 700/75 nm filter, respectively. In addition, differential interference contrast (DIC) images were acquired. Confocal microscopy images of HeLa Kyoto cells were acquired using a Leica TCS

SP5II confocal laser scanning microscope (Leica Microsystems, Wetzlar, Germany) equipped with an oil immersion Plan-Apochromat x100/1.44 NA objective lens (pixel size in XY set to 100 nm, Z-step=290 nm) and laser lines at 488, 561 and 633 nm. For the second round of imaging cells were recorded as z-stacks with a z-spacing of 290 nm to find the exact plane corresponding to the first round of imaging.

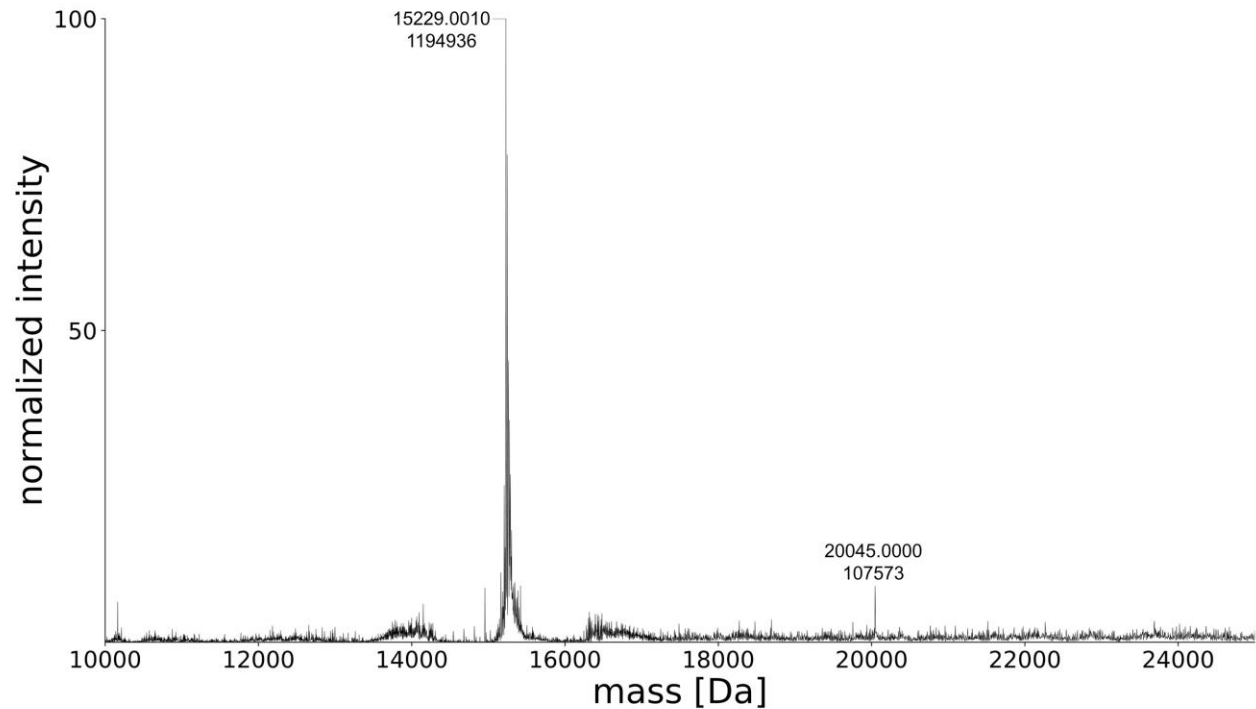

Figure S1: Quadrupol time-of-flight mass spectrometry of alkynyl GBP functionalized with azide-DNA. Calculated mass of alkynyl-GBP: 15229 Da. Calculated mass of GBP-DNA conjugate: 20045 Da (15229 Da alkynyl GBP + 4816 Da of azide-DNA).

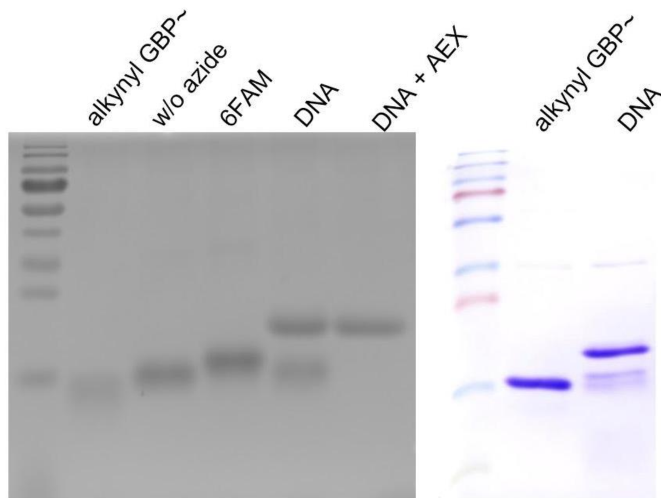

Figure S2: Uncropped and unadjusted images of coomassie stained SDS gels. Left image was recorded in grayscale right image in color mode. SDS-PAGE analysis of functionalized alkynyl GBP as shown in Figure 2A. Alkynyl GBP was generated by TTL catalyzed ligation of O-propargyl-*L*-tyrosine (298 µM GBP-TT, 29.8 µM TTL and 10 mM O-propargyl-*L*-tyrosine for 3 h at 30 °C). Conjugation with azide-DNA was performed using 40 µM akynyl GBP and 160 µM azide-DNA; conjugation with azide-PNA was performed using 60 µM alkynyl GBP and 120 µM azide-PNA (0.25 mM $CuSO_4$, 1.25 mM THPTA, 5 mM aminoguanidine and 5 mM sodium ascorbate).

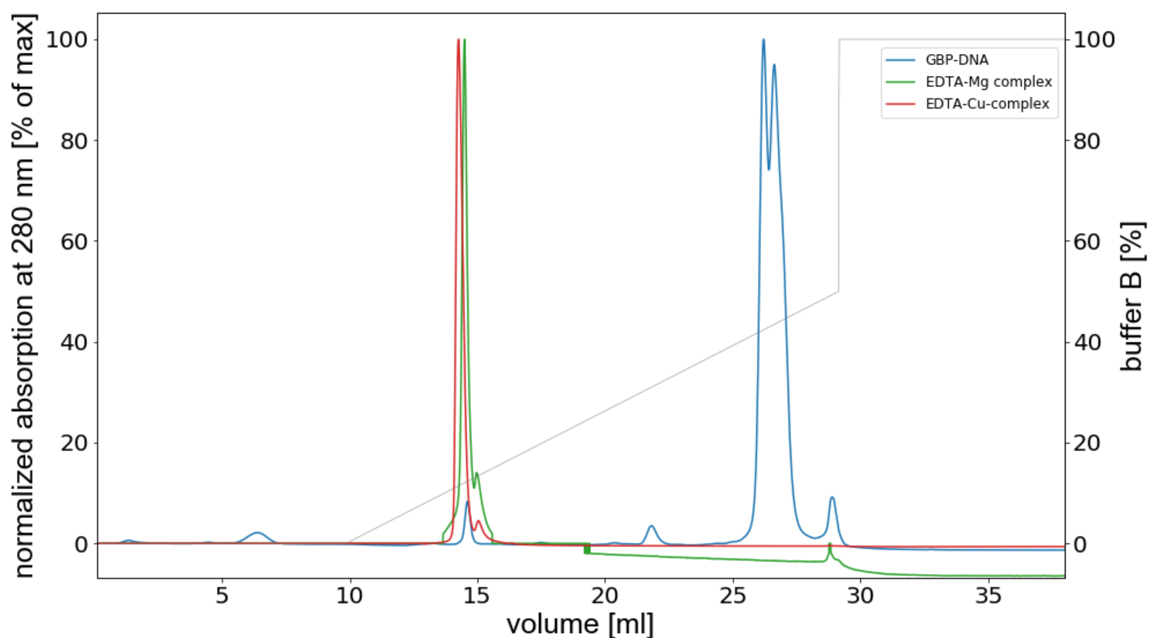

Figure S3: Anion exchange chromatography of EDTA in complex with Cu or Mg ions. Overlay of EDTA chromatograms with GBP-DNA conjugate chromatogram shows elution of residual EDTA that was added for competitive complexation of Cu ions in the buffer exchanged conjugation product

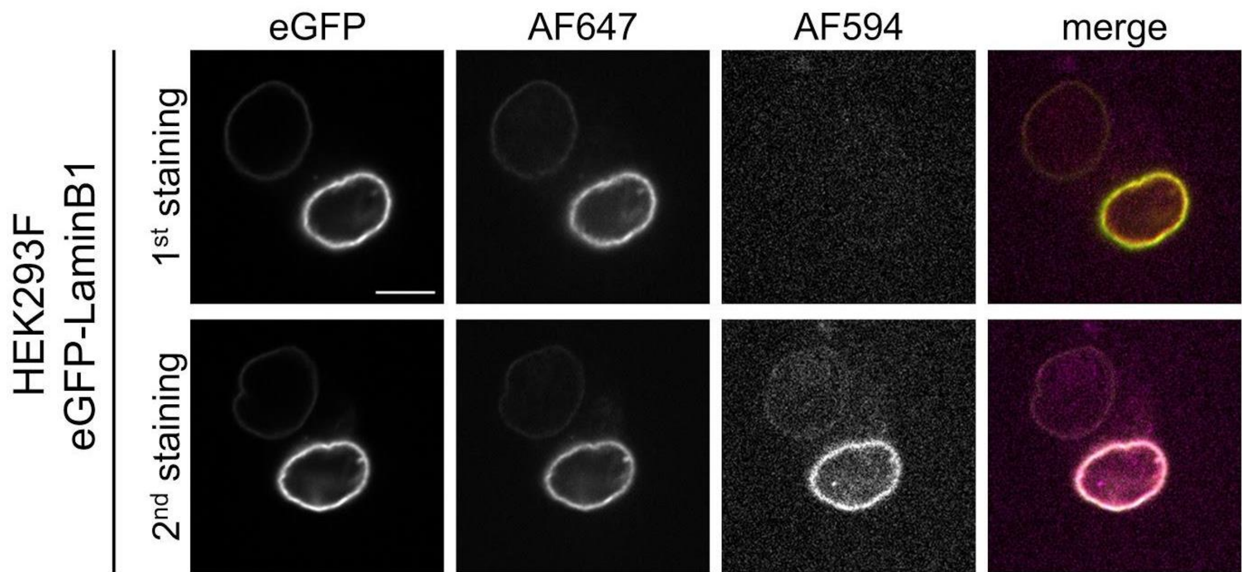

Figure S4. Staining of HEK293F cells expressing eGFP-Lamin. eGFP-LaminB1 is stained by binding of the nanobody-PNA conjugate and subsequent annealing of a complementary imager strand leading to colocalized signals of imager strand and eGFP. Attempted disruption under the same conditions as for nanobody-DNA conjugate does not lead to a major decrease in fluorescence. However, annealing of a second imager strand leads to additional signal in the respective channel. Scale bar represents 10 μm.

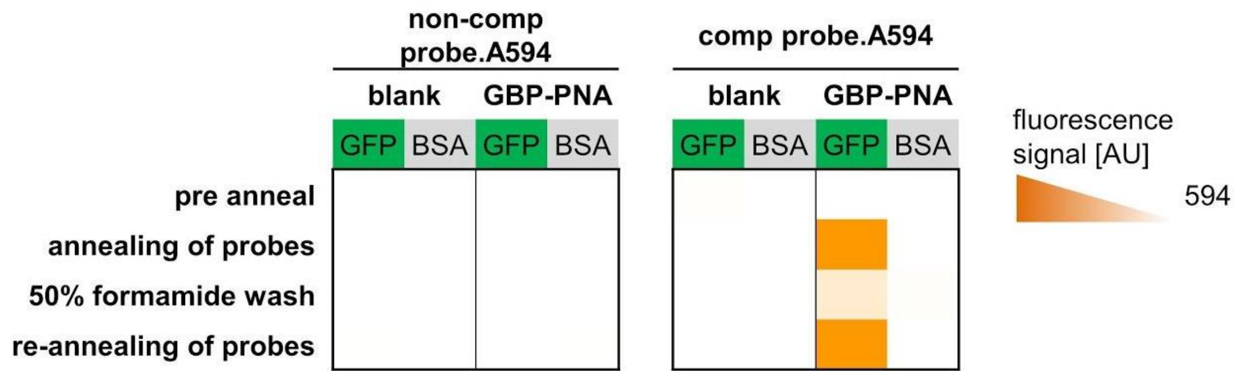

Figure S5. *In vitro* binding assay of GBP-PNA conjugates. Sequence-specific binding of imager strands to GBP-PNA conjugates bound to immobilized eGFP and reversible annealing of fluorescent imager strands. Disruption with formamide leads to an incomplete decrease in fluorescence. Fluorescence signal intensity per well is represented by the respective colour coding.

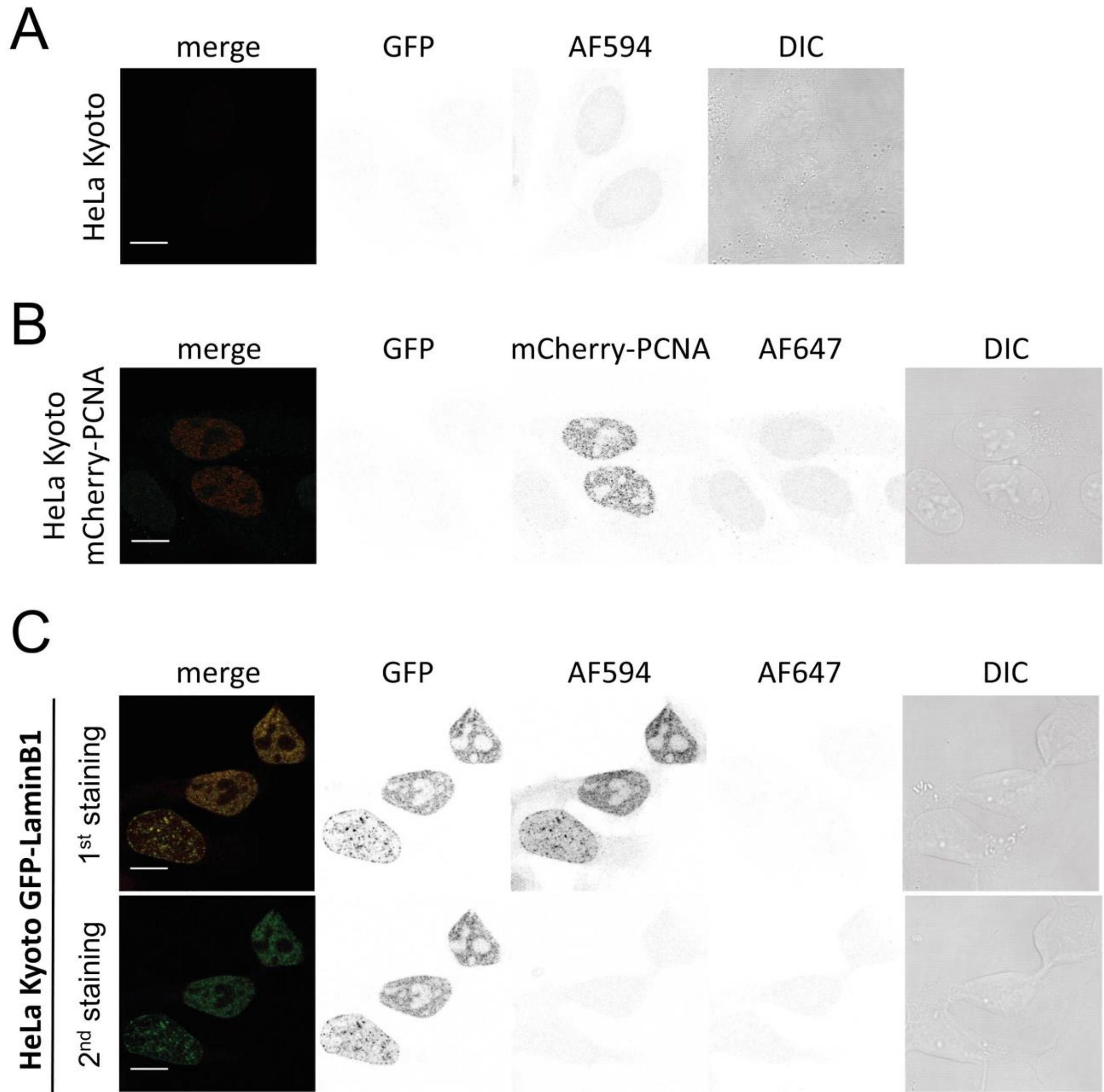

Figure S6. HeLa Kyoto cell lines expressing (A) no fluorescent protein, treated with GBP-DNA conjugate followed by addition of complementary imager strand (AF594), (B) mCherry-PCNA fusion protein, treated with GBP-DNA conjugate followed by addition of complementary imager strand (AF647) or (C) GFP-LaminB1, treated with GBP-DNA conjugate followed by addition of complementary (AF594) and non-complementary (AF647) imager strand (1st and 2nd staining, respectively). Staining with nanobody-DNA conjugate and subsequent annealing of imager strand leads to a minor, non-specific background signal especially within the nucleus. Expression of mCherry-PCNA does not lead to colocalization of mCherry and imager strand. Expression of GFP and binding of GBP-DNA conjugate enables specific binding of complementary imager strand, but not a non-complementary sequence. Scale bars represent 10 µm.

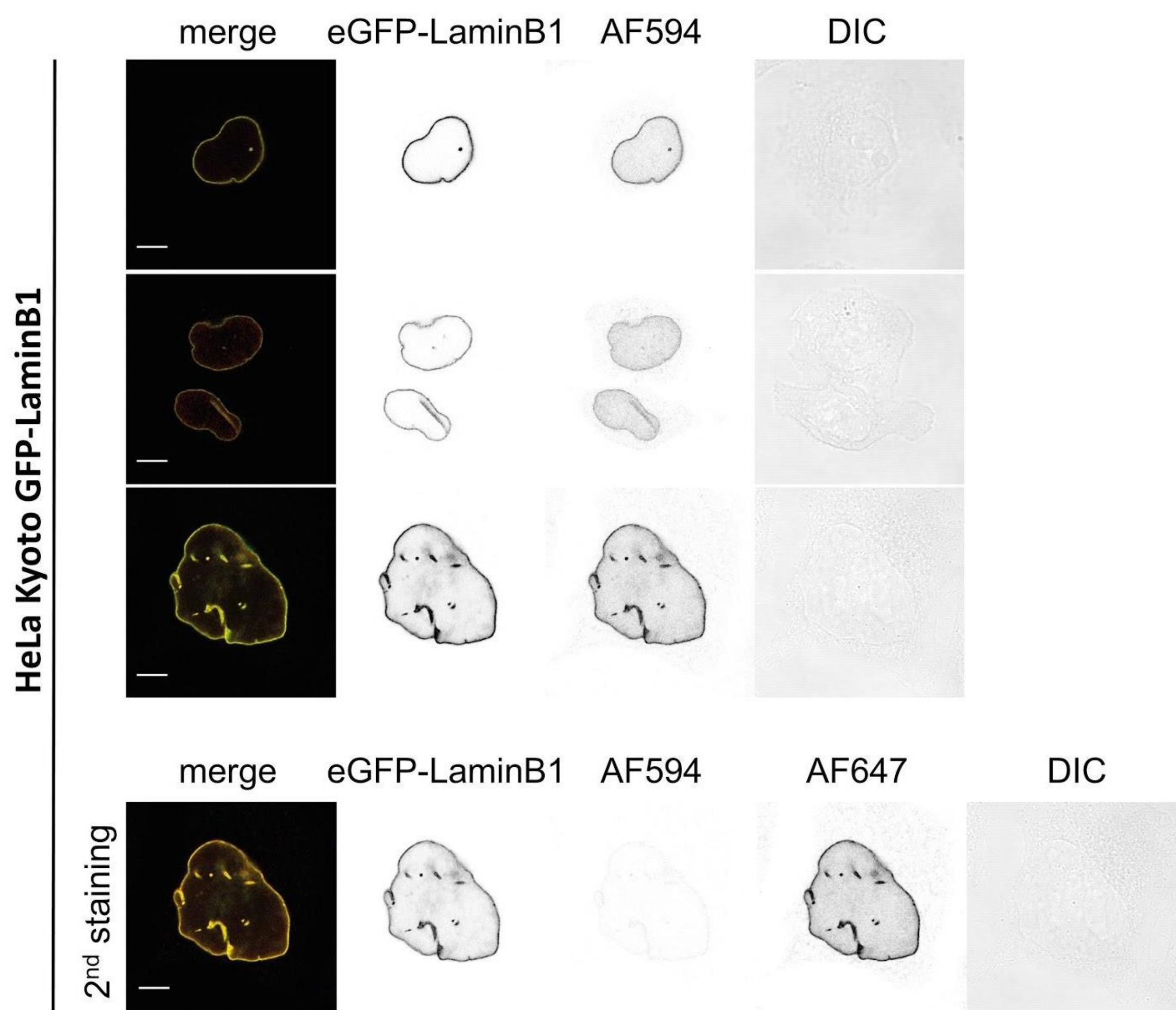

Figure S7. Staining of HeLa Kyoto cells expressing eGFP-LaminB1. eGFP-LaminB1 was stained by binding of the nanobody-DNA conjugate and subsequent annealing of a complementary imager strand leading to colocalized signals of imager strand and eGFP. Disruption of the interaction of imager and docking strand leads to almost complete loss of fluorescence, allowing for restaining with a complementary imager strand detectable in a different channel (bottom panels). Scale bars represent 10 µm.

References

[1] D. Schumacher, J. Helma, F. A. Mann, G. Pichler, F. Natale, E. Krause, M. C. Cardoso, C. P. Hackenberger, H. Leonhardt, *Angewandte Chemie International Edition* **2015**, *54*, 13787-13791.

[2] A. Stengl, M. Gerlach, M.-A. Kasper, C. P. R. Hackenberger, H. Leonhardt, D. Schumacher, J. Helma, *Organic & Biomolecular Chemistry* **2019**, *17*, 4964-4969.