

1 **Fully human single-domain antibodies against SARS-CoV-2**

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27 **Abstract**

28 The COVID-19 pandemic is spreading rapidly, highlighting the urgent need for an
29 efficient approach to rapidly develop therapeutics and prophylactics against
30 SARS-CoV-2. We describe here the development of a phage-displayed single-domain
31 antibody library by grafting naïve CDRs into framework regions of an identified
32 human germline IGHV allele. This enabled the isolation of high-affinity
33 single-domain antibodies of fully human origin. The panning using SARS-CoV-2
34 RBD and S1 as antigens resulted in the identification of antibodies targeting five
35 types of neutralizing or non-neutralizing epitopes on SARS-CoV-2 RBD. These fully
36 human single-domain antibodies bound specifically to SARS-CoV-2 RBD with
37 subnanomolar to low nanomolar affinities. Some of them were found to potently
38 neutralize pseudotyped and live virus, and therefore may represent promising
39 candidates for prophylaxis and therapy of COVID-19. This study also reports unique
40 immunogenic profile of SARS-CoV-2 RBD compared to that of SARS-CoV and
41 MERS-CoV, which may have important implications for the development of effective
42 vaccines against SARS-CoV-2.

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47 Recently, an outbreak of novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) has spread rapidly around
48 the globe ¹⁻⁴. As of 29 March, 2020, there have been 634,835 laboratory-confirmed
49 human infections globally, including 29,891 deaths
50 (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>).
51 This marks the third major outbreak caused by a new coronavirus in the past two
52 decades, following severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and
53 Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). Furthermore,
54 SARS-CoV-2 is one of the most transmissible coronaviruses identified so far, with the
55 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) quickly accelerating into a global pandemic. These
56 facts highlight the urgent need for an efficient approach to rapidly develop
57 therapeutics and prophylactics against SARS-CoV-2, which could not only be
58 potentially implemented in dealing with COVID-19 during the current outbreak, but
59 also strengthen our preparedness and response capacity against emerging
60 coronaviruses in the future.

61 Monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) are showing unprecedented value, and represent
62 the largest and fastest-growing sector in pharmaceutical industry. During the previous
63 SARS and MERS outbreaks, a number of neutralizing mAbs have been developed
64 and proved their therapeutic potential in the treatment of coronavirus infections ⁵⁻¹⁰.
65 Despite this, their clinical usefulness has been hampered by the time-consuming and
66 costly antibody manufacturing processes in eukaryotic systems. The large-scale
67 production of mAbs typically takes at least 3 to 6 months, making them difficult to be
68 timely produced and used in an epidemic setting. An attractive alternative for mAbs is

69 single-domain antibodies from camelid immunoglobulins, termed VHH or nanobodies
70 that are the smallest naturally occurring antigen-binding protein domains with a
71 molecular weight of 12-15 kDa¹¹. Their small size provides several advantages over
72 conventional mAbs (150 kDa), including larger number of accessible epitopes,
73 relatively low production costs, and easiness of rapid production at kilogram scale in
74 prokaryotic expression systems. More importantly, nanobodies can be administered
75 by inhaled delivery due to the small size and favorable biophysical characteristics,
76 and thus are considered to be particularly suitable for the treatment of respiratory
77 diseases¹². For instance, ALX-0171, an inhaled anti-respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)
78 nanobody developed by Ablynx, was found to have robust antiviral effects and reduce
79 signs and symptoms of RSV infection in animal models, and well tolerated at all
80 doses when administered by inhalation in clinical trials¹³. These findings confirmed
81 the feasibility of administering nanobodies via inhalation. However, the camelid
82 origin of nanobodies limits their application as therapeutics in human. To reduce the
83 risk of immunogenicity, strategies for humanization of camelid nanobodies have
84 become available in recent years but suffered from time- and labor-consuming¹¹.
85 Besides, humanized nanobodies still retain a small number of camelid residues,
86 especially those within the framework region 2 (FR2), in order to maintain the
87 solubility and antigen-binding affinity of parental antibodies^{11,14}.

88 In contrast to the camelid nanobodies which are naturally devoid of light chains,
89 heavy chain variable domains (VH) of conventional antibodies are paired with light
90 chain variable domains (VL), and generally poorly expressed or easy to aggregate in

91 the absence of light chains. It was proposed that several specific “hallmark” residues
92 (F37, E44, R45, and G47) within FR2 may contribute to the high solubility and
93 stability of isolated nanobodies ¹⁵. Interestingly, the analysis of 2391 nanobody
94 sequences from a public database revealed that their FR2 regions are relatively
95 divergent including the hallmark residues which have been considered to be strictly
96 conserved (Fig. 1a). Furthermore, we and others have previously identified some
97 isolated human VH single domains, which were independently folded and exhibited
98 very similar biophysical properties to camelid nanobodies ^{16,17}. These findings
99 inspired us to revisit the structural feature of single-domain antibodies, and
100 hypothesize that certain VH framework regions could compensate for the absence of
101 VL, resulting in the soluble human single-domain antibodies. Therefore, we first
102 searched the IMGT database for the human IGHV alleles sharing the same germline
103 framework regions (FR1, FR2, or FR3) with m36, an HIV-1 neutralizing VH that was
104 found to be highly soluble and stable. As a result, 17 human germline IGHV alleles,
105 along with a camelid nanobody (VHH#3) as control ¹⁸, were cloned, expressed in
106 *Escherichia coli*, and characterized for their biophysical properties (Fig. 1b). Nine out
107 of 17 alleles could be highly expressed with yields of over 10 mg/L bacterial culture,
108 and 10 out of 17 possess protein A binding capabilities. Notably, germline 3-66*01
109 exhibited the most advantageous properties, including comparable midpoint transition
110 temperature (T_m) to that of nanobody measured by intrinsic protein fluorescence, and
111 the highest aggregation temperature (T_{agg}) among all tested single-domain antibodies
112 measured by static light scattering. These results confirmed the feasibility of using

113 human single-domain antibodies as ideal alternatives to camelid nanobodies in
114 therapeutic applications.

115 Next, we aimed to establish a generalizable platform for rapid development of
116 human single-domain antibodies. We used germline 3-66*01 framework regions as
117 the scaffold for grafting of heavy chain CDRs cloned from several naïve antibody
118 libraries. These libraries were previously constructed from the blood of healthy adult
119 donors, and their effectiveness has been proved by the successful isolation of potent
120 germline-like human monoclonal antibodies against various targets such as H7N9
121 avian influenza virus ¹⁹, MERS-CoV ²⁰, and Zika virus ²¹. Consequently, such CDR
122 grafting resulted in a very large and highly diverse phage-displayed single-domain
123 antibody library (size $\sim 2 \times 10^{11}$). To validate the quality of the library, several parallel
124 bio-panning were performed against a set of representative antigens, including viral
125 antigen, cytokine, and surface antigens on immune or tumor cells. In all the tests,
126 potent phage enrichments were observed after two or three rounds of panning (Fig.
127 1c), and panels of single-domain antibodies could be identified with binding affinities
128 in the low nanomolar/subnanomolar range (Fig. 1d). These antibodies are monomeric
129 and could be solubly expressed at high levels in *Escherichia coli* with yields ranging
130 from 15 to 65 mg/L culture. Moreover, their sequences are of fully human origin with
131 minimal divergence from the germline predecessors.

132 This technology enabled us to rapidly develop fully human single-domain
133 antibodies against SARS-CoV-2. To this end, the receptor binding domain (RBD) of
134 SARS-CoV-2 was produced and biotinylated at a specific site for use as the target

135 antigen during bio-panning. Significant enrichment was achieved after two rounds of
136 panning, and a panel of 37 unique single-domain antibodies was identified using the
137 soluble expression-based monoclonal ELISA. According to the sequence similarities
138 among these antibodies, 18 of them were selected for further studies. They bound
139 potently and specifically to the SARS-CoV-2 RBD with subnanomolar to nanomolar
140 affinities as measured by bio-layer interferometry (BLI) and ELISA (Fig. 2 and
141 Supplementary Fig. 1). Most of the antibodies displayed the fast-on/slow-off kinetic
142 pattern, except for n3063 which had the slow-on/slow-off binding kinetics with the
143 slowest rate constant of association ($k_{\text{on}} = 9.0 \times 10^3 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$) and dissociation ($k_{\text{off}} =$
144 $4.5 \times 10^{-4} \text{ s}^{-1}$). The antibody n3021, in contrast, had the fastest association rate ($k_{\text{on}} =$
145 $8.0 \times 10^5 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$), resulting in the highest binding affinity ($K_{\text{D}} = 0.6 \text{ nM}$) among all
146 tested antibodies.

147 To test whether these single-domain antibodies recognize different epitopes on
148 RBD, the competition binding assays were performed, and the percentage of binding
149 during competition compared to non-competed binding was quantitatively measured
150 (Fig. 2a and Supplementary Fig. 2). We found that 18 antibodies could be divided into
151 three competition groups (group A, B or C) that did not show any competition with
152 each other. Most of the group A antibodies competed strongly with each other for
153 binding to RBD, indicating that they recognized the same epitope. These results
154 suggest that group A, B and C antibodies bound to different epitopes on RBD.

155 To further elucidate their binding epitopes, we measured the competition of
156 single-domain antibodies and human ACE2 for binding to SARS-CoV-2 RBD (Fig. 2a

157 and Supplementary Fig. 3). The antibodies n3063 (group B) and n3010 (group C) did
158 not show any competition, while all the group A antibodies showed moderate
159 competition with ACE2 for the binding to RBD. Therefore, the epitopes targeted by
160 group A antibodies may be located within or adjacent to the ACE2-binding motifs of
161 RBD.

162 To investigate the potential of these single-domain antibodies in neutralizing
163 SARS-CoV-2, we measured their inhibitory activities in a well-established
164 SARS-CoV-2 pseudovirus infection assay. To our surprise, none of these antibodies
165 showed efficient neutralization at 50 µg/ml (data not shown), implying that moderate
166 competition with ACE2 is not sufficient for potent SARS-CoV-2 neutralization.
167 Interestingly, we also found that the group C antibody n3010 bound potently to
168 SARS-CoV-2 RBD but did not show any binding to S1 protein, indicating that it
169 recognized a cryptic epitope hidden in S1. These results taken together suggest that
170 some non-neutralizing epitopes are relatively immunogenic in the isolated
171 SARS-CoV-2 RBD, in contrast to that of SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV in which the
172 neutralizing subregion were found to be highly immunogenic ²².

173 Next, we performed another set of panning using SARS-CoV-2 S1 protein instead
174 of RBD as the target antigen in order to isolate single-domain antibodies targeting
175 more diverse epitopes. A panel of 41 unique antibodies were identified after 4 rounds
176 of panning. Notably, two of them were found to be identical to the previously isolated
177 group A antibody n3021 or group B antibody n3063. The binding of 6 representative
178 antibodies (n3072, n3077, n3086, n3088, n3113 and n3130) to SARS-CoV-2 S1 or

179 RBD were measured by ELISA and BLI (Fig. 3 and Supplementary Fig. 4). Most of
180 them showed potent binding to both S1 and RBD, while only one antibody, n3072,
181 had strong binding to S1 but no binding to RBD (Fig. 3a,c). The competition binding
182 assay suggests that n3077 recognized the same epitope as the previously identified
183 group A antibodies (Fig. 3b and Supplementary Fig. 5). The other 4 antibodies could
184 be divided into two distinct competition groups, group D (n3088, n3130) and group E
185 (n3086, n3113). These two groups had no competition with each other or with
186 previously identified antibodies for RBD binding, indicating that two novel epitopes
187 on SARS-CoV-2 RBD were identified by this new panel of single-domain antibodies.

188 We further measured the neutralization activities of these antibodies using the
189 pseudovirus neutralizing assay. As shown in Fig. 4a, the group D antibodies exhibited
190 potent neutralization of SARS-CoV-2 pseudovirus. The most potent antibody, n3130,
191 could neutralize SARS-CoV-2 pseudovirus infection with >90% neutralization at 10
192 $\mu\text{g/ml}$. The other group D antibody n3088 neutralized ~80% pseudovirus at 10 $\mu\text{g/ml}$.
193 The group E antibodies n3086 and n3113 showed moderate neutralization activities,
194 which inhibited SARS-CoV-2 pseudovirus infection in a dose-dependent manner with
195 IC_{50} values of 26.6 and 18.9 $\mu\text{g/ml}$, respectively. The group A antibody n3021 and
196 group B antibody n3063 could neutralize pseudovirus only at concentrations higher
197 than 50 $\mu\text{g/ml}$, and group C antibody n3010 did not show evident neutralization
198 activity. We next tested the neutralization of group D and E antibodies against live
199 SARS-CoV-2 virus (Fig. 4b). Single-domain antibodies at 20 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ were mixed with
200 200 PFU SARS-CoV-2 and observed for cytopathic effects (CPE) on Vero E6 cells.

201 Similarly, no CPE was observed for n3130 and only very slight sign of CPE was
202 found for n3088, while a significant level of CPE was detected in the wells containing
203 group E antibodies.

204 It is very intriguing that the panning using SARS-CoV-2 S1 or RBD protein as
205 antigen resulted in substantially different spectra of antibodies. The single-domain
206 antibodies identified from S1 panning were very diverse, covering four distinct
207 epitopes on SARS-CoV RBD (competition groups A, B, D and E). In contrast, most
208 of the antibodies from RBD panning belonged to the competition group A,
209 represented by n3021 which was also the most dominant clone after two rounds of
210 panning. Furthermore, the group A antibodies showed moderate competition with
211 ACE2 for RBD binding but insufficient to provide effective viral neutralization. This
212 phenomenon is quite different from that of SARS-CoV, in which the dominance of an
213 antigenic loop within RBD makes it relatively easy to isolate potent SARS-CoV
214 neutralizing antibodies independent of repertoire, species, quaternary structure, and
215 the technology used to derive the antibodies ²². Similarly, we previously used
216 MERS-CoV S1 or RBD to isolate antibodies from a naïve antibody library, and the
217 panning using either of the two antigens led to dominant enrichment of m336 and
218 m336-like monoclonal antibodies, which precisely targeted 90% of the receptor
219 binding site within RBD and neutralized the virus potently ²⁰. It was proposed that
220 viruses like SARS-CoV perhaps did not have sufficient evolutionary time to evolve
221 their membrane glycoproteins to avoid direct immune recognition of a single site
222 critical to the virus pathogenesis ²². It is noteworthy to point out that the difference in

223 the immunogenicity of RBD was observed solely based on in vitro experiments, and it
224 may not correlate with humoral immune responses in vivo. In this regard, it is
225 imperative to investigate the immunogenic characteristics of SARS-CoV-2 RBD with
226 special attention to the potentially antigenic and non-neutralizing epitopes. Besides,
227 another interesting finding is that the SARS-CoV-2-specific neutralizing antibodies
228 from competition groups D and E are not capable of competing with ACE2 for
229 SARS-CoV-2 RBD binding (Fig. 3 and Supplementary Fig. 6). We found that the
230 group E antibody n3113 did not exhibit any binding to the RBD of SARS-CoV-2
231 isolate SZTH-004 that had two mutations (N341D/D351Y) to the most prevalent
232 isolate (Fig. 4c), indicating that the epitope of group D antibodies was located at a
233 region surrounding N341 or D351 which is distinct from the ACE2 binding site (Fig.
234 4d). This phenomenon was also not observed in SARS-CoV. All the
235 SARS-CoV-specific human neutralizing monoclonal antibodies, as far as we know,
236 competed with ACE2 for binding to the spike protein. CR3022, a cross-reactive
237 human monoclonal antibody that could neutralize SARS-CoV and was found to bind
238 potently to SARS-CoV-2 RBD²³ but not capable of neutralizing SARS-CoV-2²⁴.
239 These findings confirmed the unique immunogenic profile of SARS-CoV-2. Further
240 investigations are needed to understand the underlying mechanisms that govern these
241 diverse sets of neutralizing and non-neutralizing SARS-CoV-2 antibodies, which may
242 have important implications for the development of effective vaccines.

243 The fully human single-domain antibodies offer the potential for prevention and
244 treatment of COVID-19. First, antibodies derived entirely of human sequences would

245 be less immunogenic than camelid or humanized nanobodies, leading to improved
246 safety and efficacy when used in humans. Indeed, despite humanization,
247 caplacizumab, the first nanobody approved by FDA still contains multiple camelid
248 residues to maintain the antigen binding affinity. Second, the small size and favorable
249 biophysical properties allows for large-scale production of single-domain antibodies
250 within a few weeks in prokaryotic expression systems, and thus enables rapid
251 implementation in an outbreak setting. Furthermore, single-domain antibodies could
252 be delivered to the lung via inhalation, which may offer considerable advantages for
253 treatment of COVID-19 including fast onset of action, low systemic exposure, and
254 high concentration of therapeutics at the site of disease. Lastly, single-domain
255 antibodies can be used alone or synergistically with other neutralizing antibodies.
256 Their small size making them ideal building block for generation of bispecific or
257 multi-specific antibodies to prevent the appearance of viral escape mutants. They can
258 also be easily engineered to further increase the neutralization activity by increasing
259 binding moieties. For instance, the trivalent nanobody ALX-0171 was found to have
260 6,000-fold increased neutralization potency against RSV-A and >10,000-fold against
261 RSV-B compared to its monovalent format ²⁵.

262 In summary, we report here the development of a versatile platform for rapid
263 isolation of fully human single-domain antibodies, and its application for screening of
264 antibodies against SARS-CoV-2. A variety of single-domain antibodies have been
265 isolated targeting five types of epitopes on SARS-CoV-2, and the antibody n3130 was
266 found to potently neutralize both pseudotyped and live virus. These antibodies may

267 represent promising candidates for prophylaxis and therapy of COVID-19, and also
268 serve as reagents to facilitate the vaccine development.

269

270 **Author contributions**

271 TY, YW and CT conceived and designed the study. YW, TY and CL performed most
272 of the experiments with assistance from XT, ZW, and YK. SX, LL and SJ performed
273 pseudovirus neutralization assay. CG, RZ and YX performed live SARS-CoV-2
274 neutralization assay. TY and YW integrated the data and wrote the manuscript. All
275 authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

276

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288 **Declaration of interest statement**

289 No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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295 **Figure legend**

296 **Figure 1 Development of a versatile platform for rapid isolation of fully-human**
297 **single-domain antibodies.**

298 **a**, Representation of camelid nanobody framework (FR) and
299 complementarity-determining (CDR) regions, showing the four hydrophilic amino
300 acids (Phe37, Glu44, Arg45, Gly47) in the FR2 region that may contribute to high
301 solubility and stability of isolated nanobodies. **b**, Characterization of biophysical
302 properties (protein yield, protein A binding capacity, stability and aggregation) of 17
303 isolated human germline IGHV alleles along with a camelid nanobody. **c**, Polyclonal
304 phage ELISA showing the binding of the first to fourth rounds of phages to target
305 antigens. Bound phages were detected with anti-M13-HRP conjugate. **d**, Binding
306 activity of purified single-domain antibodies against target antigens evaluated by
307 ELISA.

308

309 **Figure 2 Characterization of human single-domain antibodies identified from**
310 **antibody library using SARS-CoV-2 RBD as panning antigen.**

311 **a**, We tested 18 human single-domain antibodies targeting SARS-CoV-2 RBD in
312 competition binding assays. Top: competition of human single-domain antibodies
313 with ACE2 for RBD binding. The single-domain antibodies are displayed in three
314 groups (A, B or C) based on a competition binding assay. The values are the
315 percentage of binding that occurred during competition compared to non-competed
316 binding, which was normalized to 100%, and the range of competition is indicated by
317 the box colours. Black filled boxes indicate strongly competing pairs (residual binding
318 <30%), grey filled boxes indicate intermediate competition (residual binding
319 30–69%), and white filled boxes indicate non-competing pairs (residual binding
320 $\geq 70\%$). **b**, Binding of human single-domain antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 RBD or S1 as
321 represented by competition group A antibody n3021, group B antibody n3063 and
322 group C antibody n3010. **c**, Binding kinetics of competition groups A, B and C
323 antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 RBD and binding specificity, as measured by BLI. **d**, List
324 of binding properties of human single-domain antibodies. Association-rate (k_{on}),

325 dissociation-rate (k_{off}) and affinity (K_D) are shown. The representative single-domain
326 antibodies of three groups are shown in yellow box.

327

328 **Figure 3 Characterization of human single-domain antibodies identified from**
329 **antibody library using SARS-CoV-2 S1 as panning antigen.**

330 **a**, Binding capacities of single-domain antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 S1 or RBD
331 measured by ELISA. **b**, Top: competition of human single-domain antibodies with
332 ACE2 for RBD binding. The single-domain antibodies in another two competition
333 groups (D or E) distinct from groups A, B, and C are displayed. **c**, The binding
334 kinetics of competition groups D and E antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 S1 or RBD. **d**,
335 List of binding properties of human single-domain antibodies. Association-rate (k_{on}),
336 dissociation-rate (k_{off}) and affinity (K_D) are shown. The group D is shown in blue, and
337 group E is shown in orange.

338

339 **Figure 4 Neutralization activities of anti-SARS-CoV-2 human single-domain**
340 **antibodies.**

341 **a**, Antibody-mediated neutralization against luciferase-encoding pseudotyped virus
342 with spike protein of SARS-CoV-2. Pseudotyped viruses pre-incubated with
343 antibodies at indicated concentrations were used to infect Huh-7 cells and inhibitory
344 rates (%) of infection were calculated by luciferase activities in cell lysates. Dotted
345 lines indicate inhibitory concentration at 50%. Error bars indicate mean \pm s.d. from
346 three independent experiments. **b**, The SARS-CoV-2 clinical isolate nCoV-SH01 was
347 incubated with 20 μ g/mL of single-domain antibodies for 1 h at 37°C prior to
348 infection of Vero E6 cells. Subsequently, cytopathic effects (CPE) were observed
349 daily and recorded on Day 3 post-exposure. **c**, Sequence alignment of three
350 SARS-CoV-2 clinical isolates (nCoV-SH01, SZTH-004 and IDF0372) in which the
351 mutations are highlighted in red box, and binding capacity of neutralizing
352 single-domain antibodies (group D antibody n3088 and group E antibody n3113) to
353 RBD of three SARS-CoV-2 clinical isolates measured by ELISA, with an irrelevant
354 protein (Tim-3) as control. **d**, Potential epitopes of antibodies from five competition

355 groups A, B, C, D and E on RBD. RBD in the S protein of SARS-CoV-2 is shown
356 green, and ACE2 binding site is colored blue. The two mutation sites (D351 and N341)
357 of isolate SZTH-004 are shown in red.

358

359 **Figure S1 Binding kinetics of 15 human single-domain antibodies to**
360 **SARS-CoV-2 RBD (a), SARS-CoV RBD (b), or control antigen (c), as measured**
361 **by BLI using OctetRED96.** Biotinylated SARS-CoV-2 RBD, SARS-CoV RBD or
362 control antigen (Tim-3) was immobilized on SA biosensors. The analytes consisted of
363 serial dilutions of single-domain antibodies between 22.5 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ and 0.3 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ or a
364 single concentration at 15 $\mu\text{g/mL}$. Binding kinetics were evaluated using a 1:1
365 Langmuir binding model by Fortebio Data Analysis 10.0 software.

366

367 **Figure S2 Competition of 18 human single-domain antibodies identified from**
368 **antibody library using SARS-CoV-2 RBD as panning antigen, as measured by**
369 **BLI.** The competition assay was performed among 18 human single-domain
370 antibodies for binding to RBD. Immobilized SARS-CoV-2 RBD was first saturated
371 with 15 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ of the first testing antibody. The capacity of the second antibody
372 binding to RBD was monitored by measuring further shifts after injecting the second
373 single-domain antibody (15 $\mu\text{g/mL}$) in the presence of the first single-domain
374 antibody (15 $\mu\text{g/mL}$). The grams show binding patterns of the second single-domain
375 antibody to SARS-CoV-2 RBD with (green curve) or without (purple curve) prior
376 incubation with each testing single-domain antibody.

377

378 **Figure S3 Human single-domain antibodies and ACE2 competition for binding to**
379 **SARS-CoV-2 RBD.** Immobilized SARS-CoV-2 RBD was first saturated with 15
380 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ of the testing single-domain antibodies. The capacity of ACE2 binding to RBD
381 was monitored by measuring further shifts after injecting the ACE2 (17 $\mu\text{g/mL}$) in the
382 presence of the testing single-domain antibody (15 $\mu\text{g/mL}$). The grams show binding
383 patterns of ACE2 to SARS-CoV-2 RBD with (green curve) or without (purple curve)
384 prior incubation with each testing single-domain antibody.

385

386 **Figure S4 Binding kinetics of n3130 and n3086 to SARS-CoV-2 S1 and RBD.**

387 Sensors immobilized SARS-CoV-2 S1 or RBD were incubated with five dilutions of
388 n3130 and n3086 for 300 s or 600 s, and then transferred into kinetic buffer for
389 dissociation.

390

391 **Figure S5 Competition of human single-domain antibodies identified from**
392 **antibody library using SARS-CoV-2 S1 as panning antigen, as described in**
393 **legend of Fig S2.**

394

395 **Figure S6 Human single-domain antibodies of group A, B, D or E and ACE2**
396 **competition for binding to SARS-CoV-2 RBD, as described in legend of Fig S3.**

397

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Figure 1

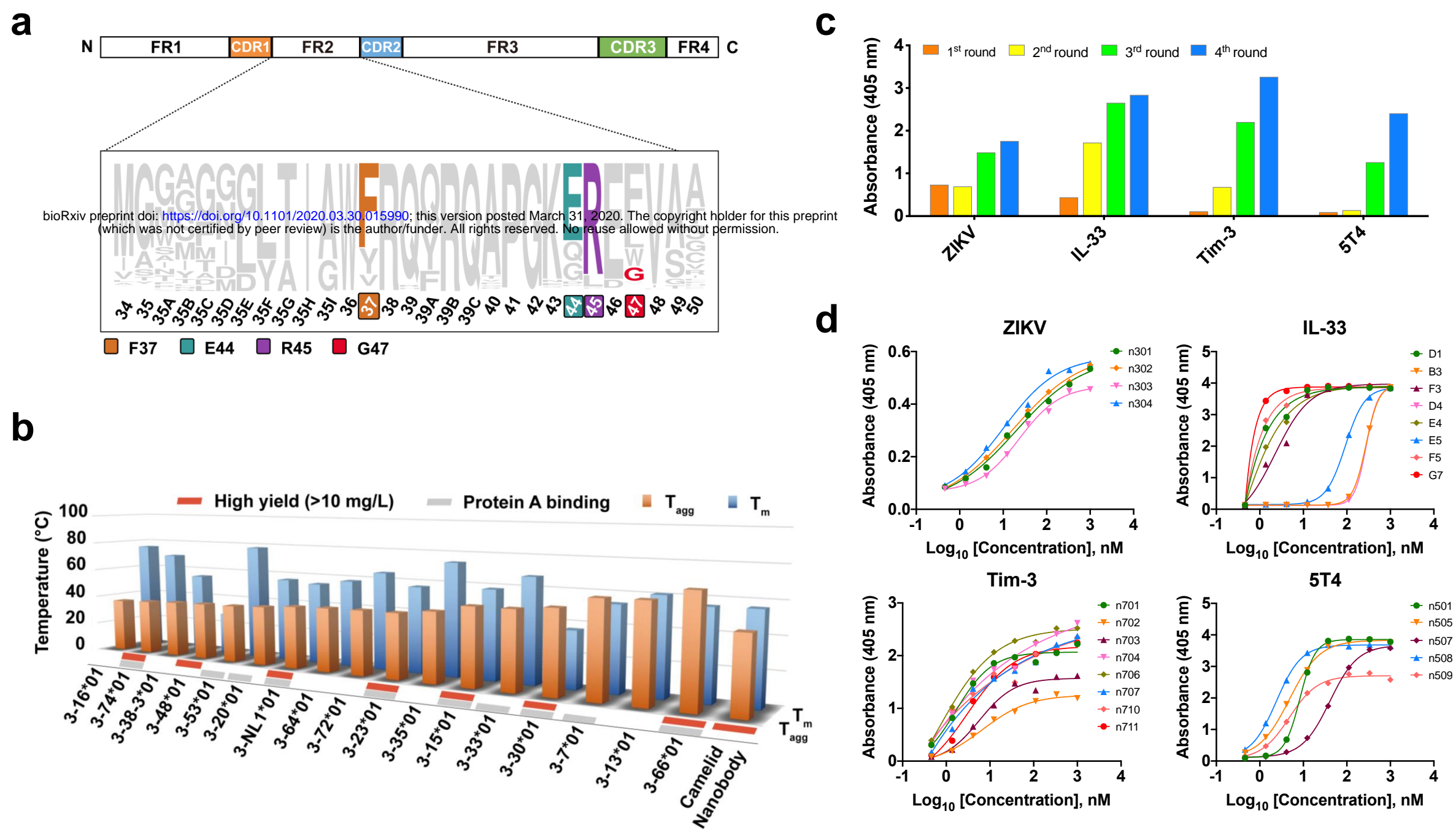


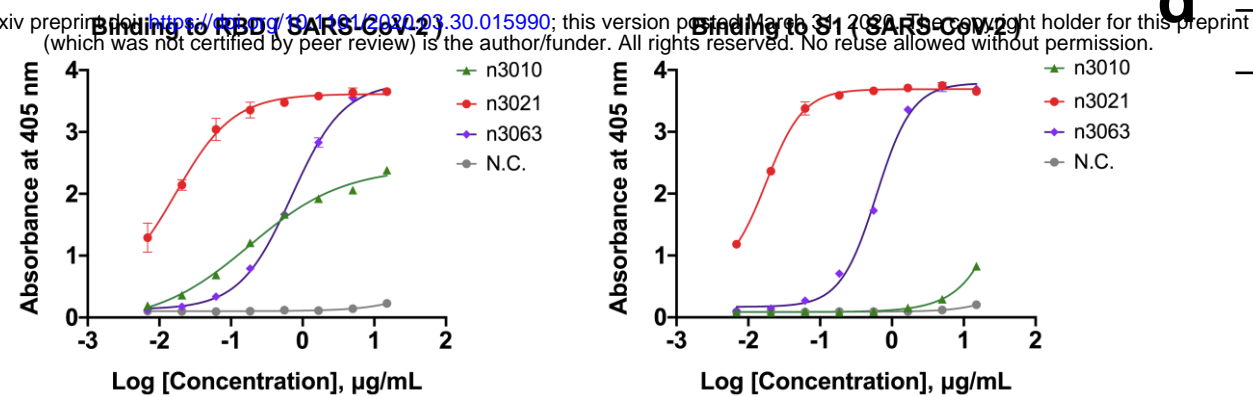
Figure 2

a

		First antibody																			
Competition group		N.C.	A																B	C	
		n501	n3001	n3002	n3003	n3004	n3008	n3009	n3011	n3014	n3020	n3021	n3025	n3026	n3047	n3051	n3055	n3065	n3063	n3010	
	ACE2	93.29	41.6	47.1	62.6	41.2	42.8	46.7	42.9	51.6	42.7	47.8	40.7	42.3	41.0	48.7	38.1	48.3	70.4	71.5	
Second antibody	A	n3055	97.65	5.4	4.0	-1.6	7.8	6.9	6.3	9.2	6.3	18.7	7.2	8.0	7.5	9.8	6.5	1.6	4.3	55.8	91.4
	B	n3063																	3.7	97.2	
	C	n3010																			2.9

■ Strong competition (<30% residual biding)
■ Intermediate competition (30-69% residual biding)
□ No competition (>70% residual biding)

b



d

Antibody	K_D (M)	k_{on} (Ms^{-1})	k_{off} (s^{-1})
n3001	8.19×10^{-9}	2.18×10^5	1.78×10^{-3}
n3002	1.16×10^{-8}	2.25×10^5	2.62×10^{-3}
n3003	2.40×10^{-8}	4.90×10^5	1.18×10^{-2}
n3004	1.13×10^{-8}	2.42×10^5	2.75×10^{-3}
n3008	2.33×10^{-8}	2.06×10^5	4.80×10^{-3}
n3009	1.28×10^{-8}	3.75×10^5	4.80×10^{-3}
n3010	7.53×10^{-8}	2.14×10^5	1.61×10^{-3}
n3011	7.35×10^{-9}	1.97×10^5	1.45×10^{-3}
n3014	7.93×10^{-9}	2.70×10^5	2.14×10^{-3}
n3020	4.71×10^{-8}	4.28×10^4	2.01×10^{-3}
n3021	6.32×10^{-10}	7.97×10^5	5.04×10^{-4}
n3025	9.21×10^{-9}	2.19×10^5	2.02×10^{-3}
n3026	2.67×10^{-8}	3.00×10^5	8.01×10^{-3}
n3047	1.91×10^{-8}	3.67×10^5	7.02×10^{-3}
n3051	1.65×10^{-8}	4.20×10^5	6.92×10^{-3}
n3055	1.76×10^{-8}	1.37×10^5	2.39×10^{-3}
n3063	4.96×10^{-8}	8.97×10^5	4.45×10^{-4}
n3065	1.77×10^{-8}	3.50×10^5	6.16×10^{-3}

c

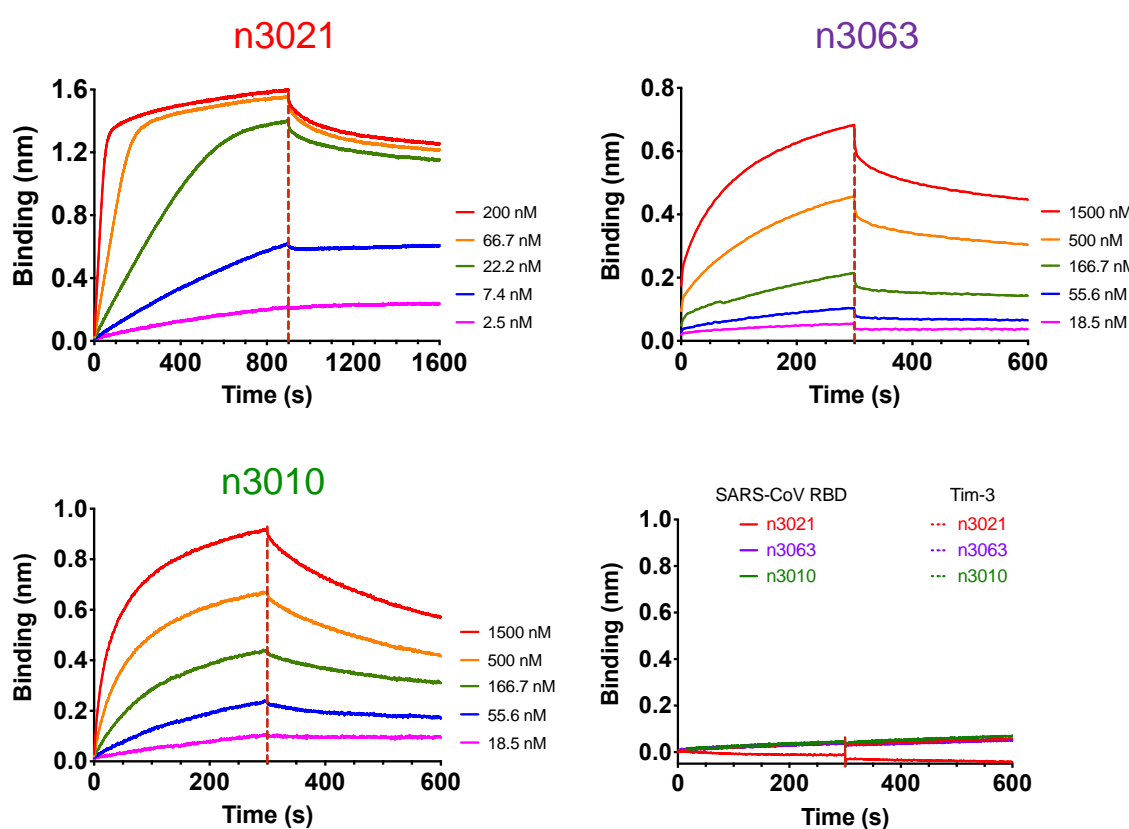
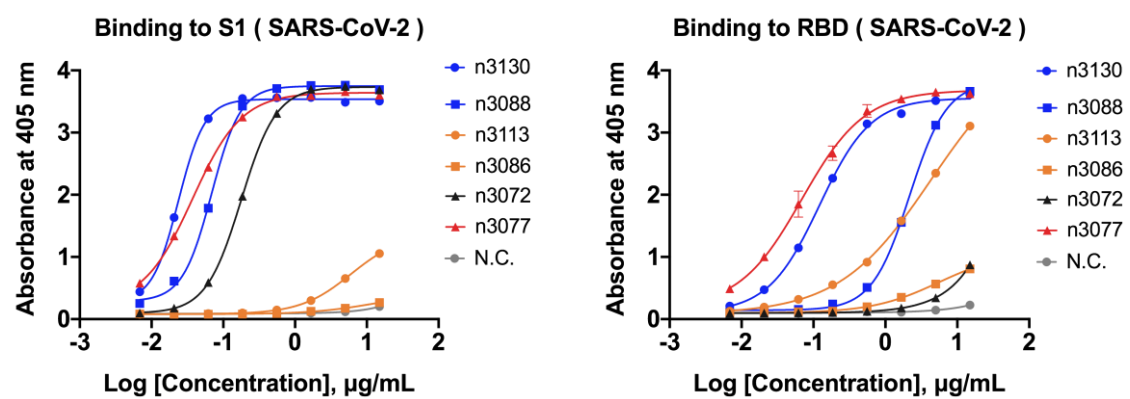


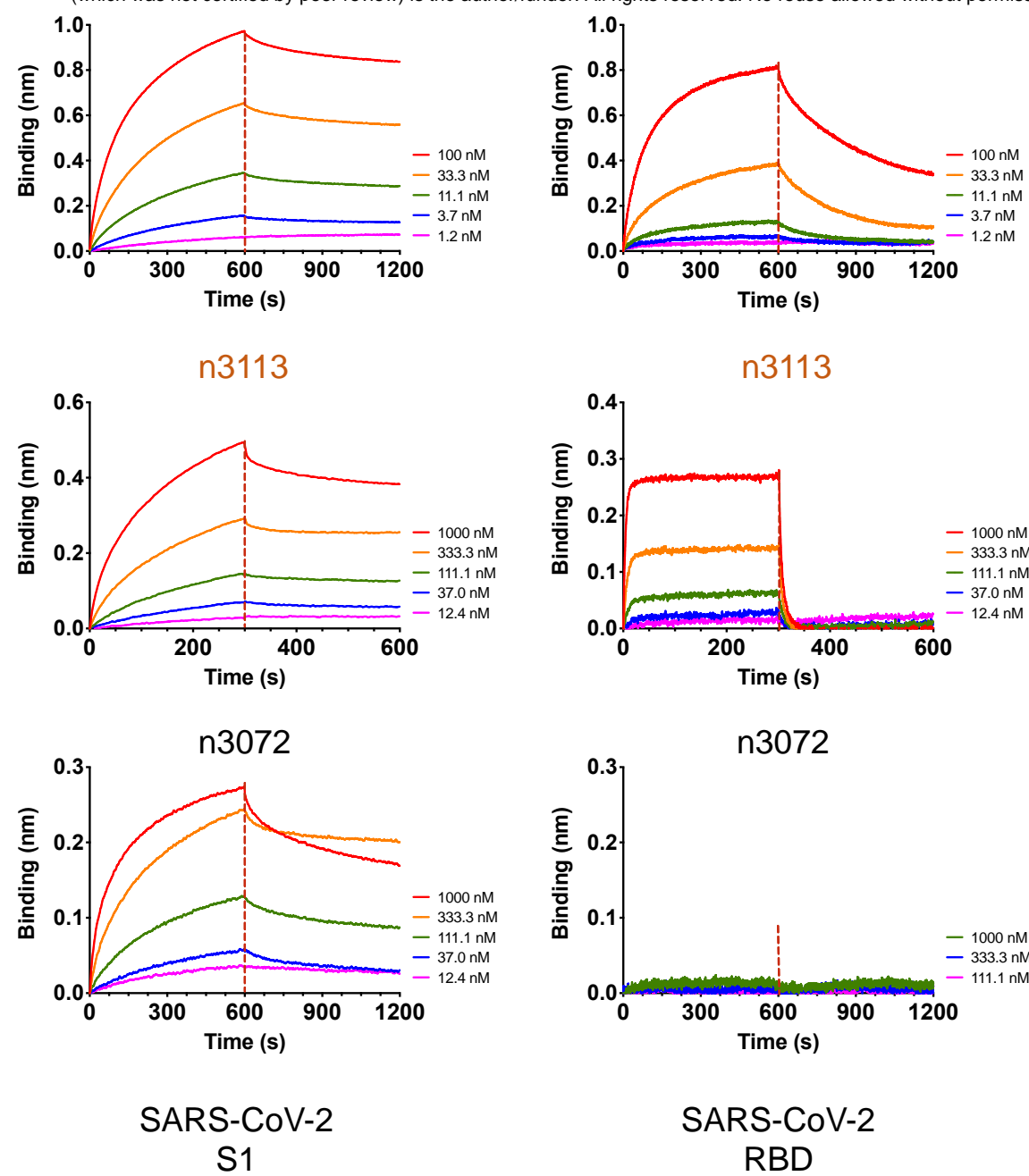
Figure 3

a



c

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b

Competition group		First antibody							
		A		B	D		E		
		n3021	n3077	n3063	n3088	n3130	n3086	n3113	
Second antibody	ACE2	51.3	57.4	92.3	70.6	75.9	109.8	112.1	
	A	n3021	0.1	28.3	90.6	97.1	97.3	103.2	132.3
		n3077		20.8	75.3	70.0	78.2	76.2	97.1
	B	n3063			35.3	85.1	93.0	80.2	76.1
		n3088				10.9	20.0	90.8	94.9
	D	n3130					10.7	79.9	129.3
n3086							8.6	29.7	
E	n3113							20.7	

■ Strong competition (<30% residual binding)

■ Intermediate competition (30-69% residual binding)

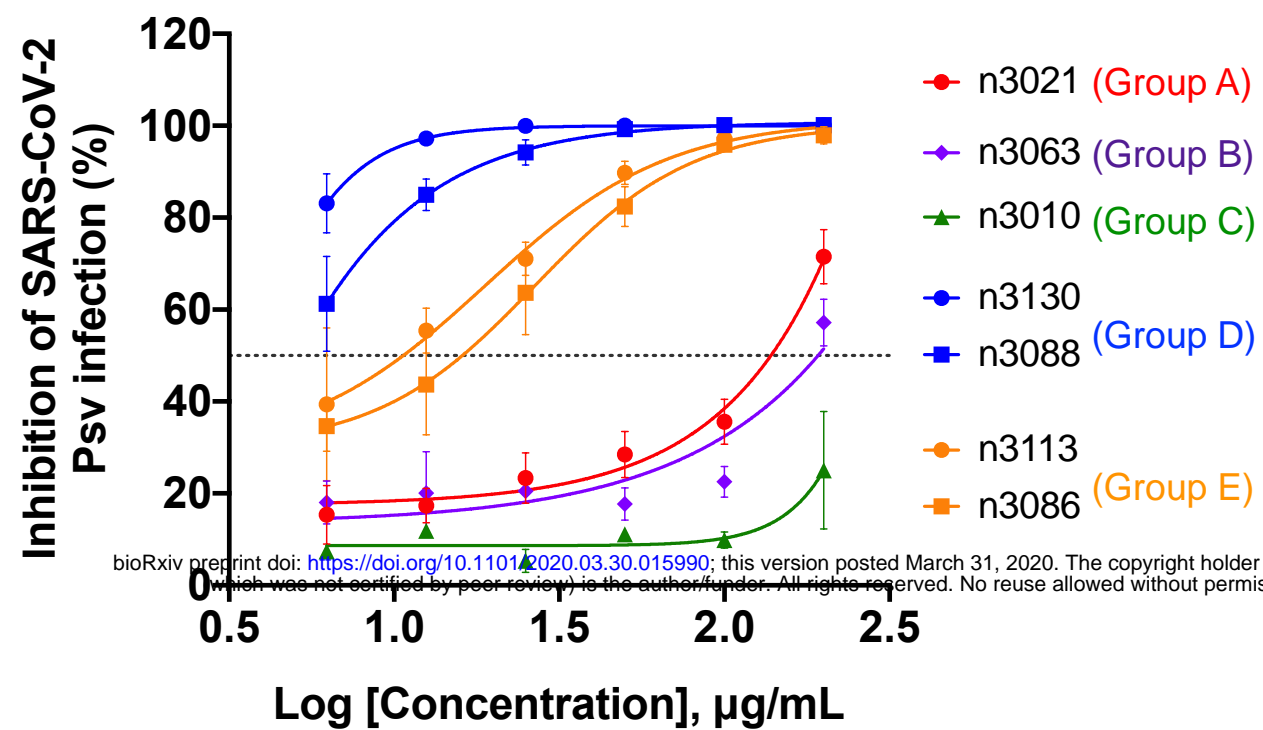
□ No competition (>70% residual binding)

d

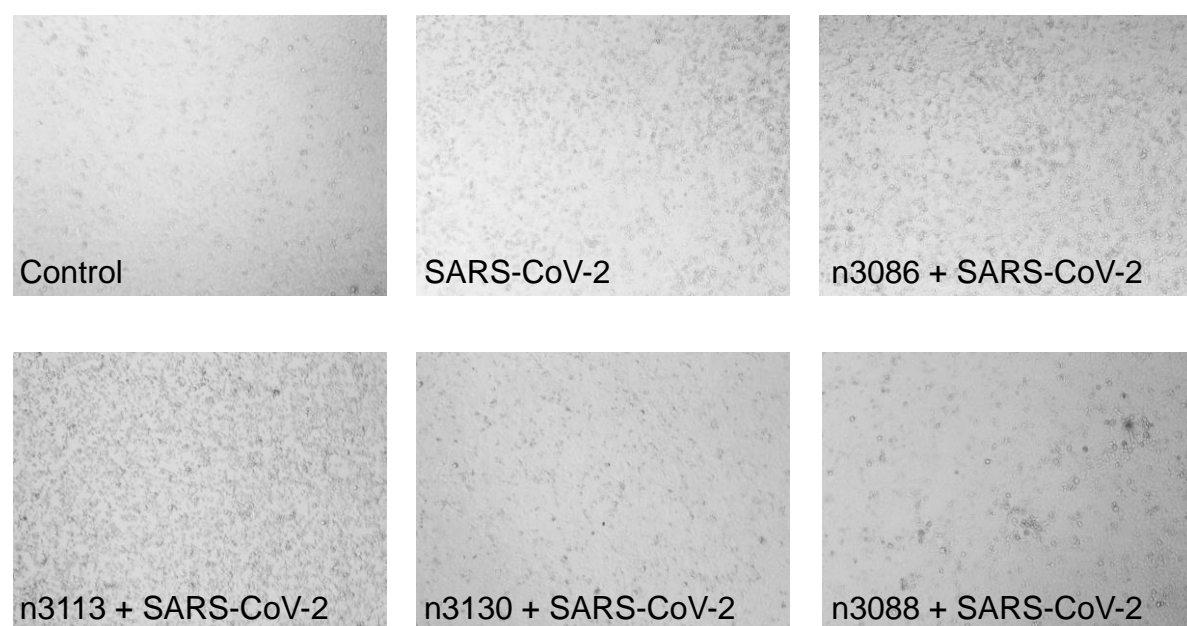
	Antibody	K_D (M)	k_{on} (Ms ⁻¹)	k_{off} (s ⁻¹)
SARS-CoV-2 S1	n3088	1.05×10^{-9}	9.04×10^4	9.51×10^{-5}
	n3130	5.54×10^{-8}	1.01×10^4	5.62×10^{-4}
	n3086	8.90×10^{-8}	7.42×10^3	6.60×10^{-4}
	n3113	5.70×10^{-8}	1.26×10^4	7.21×10^{-4}
	n3072	5.06×10^{-8}	1.21×10^4	6.11×10^{-4}
SARS-CoV-2 RBD	n3088	3.25×10^{-8}	7.34×10^4	2.38×10^{-3}
	n3130	1.26×10^{-8}	2.72×10^5	3.42×10^{-3}
	n3086	1.15×10^{-6}	1.57×10^5	0.18
	n3113	1.90×10^{-6}	6.81×10^4	0.13
	n3072	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Figure 4

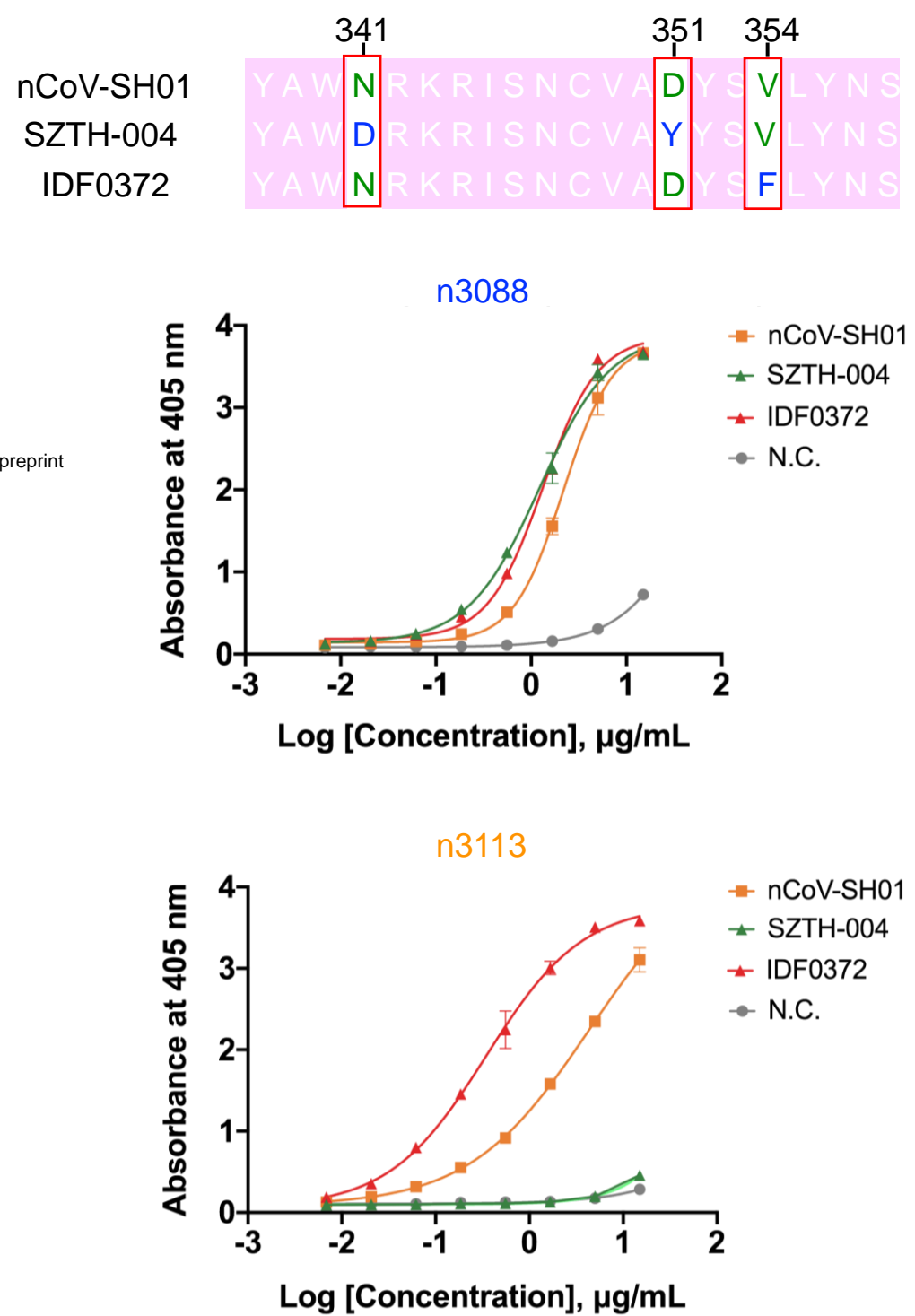
a



b



c



d

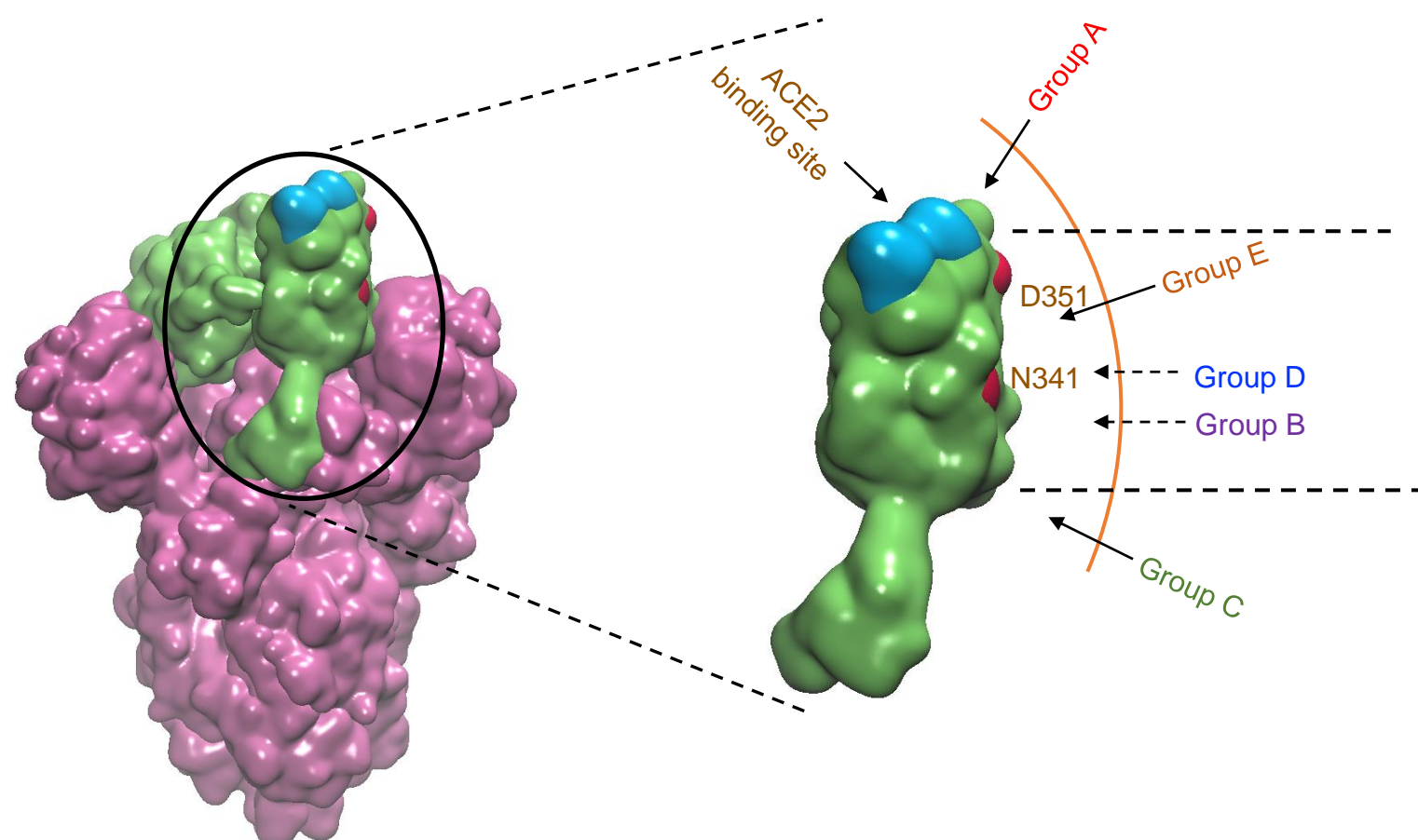
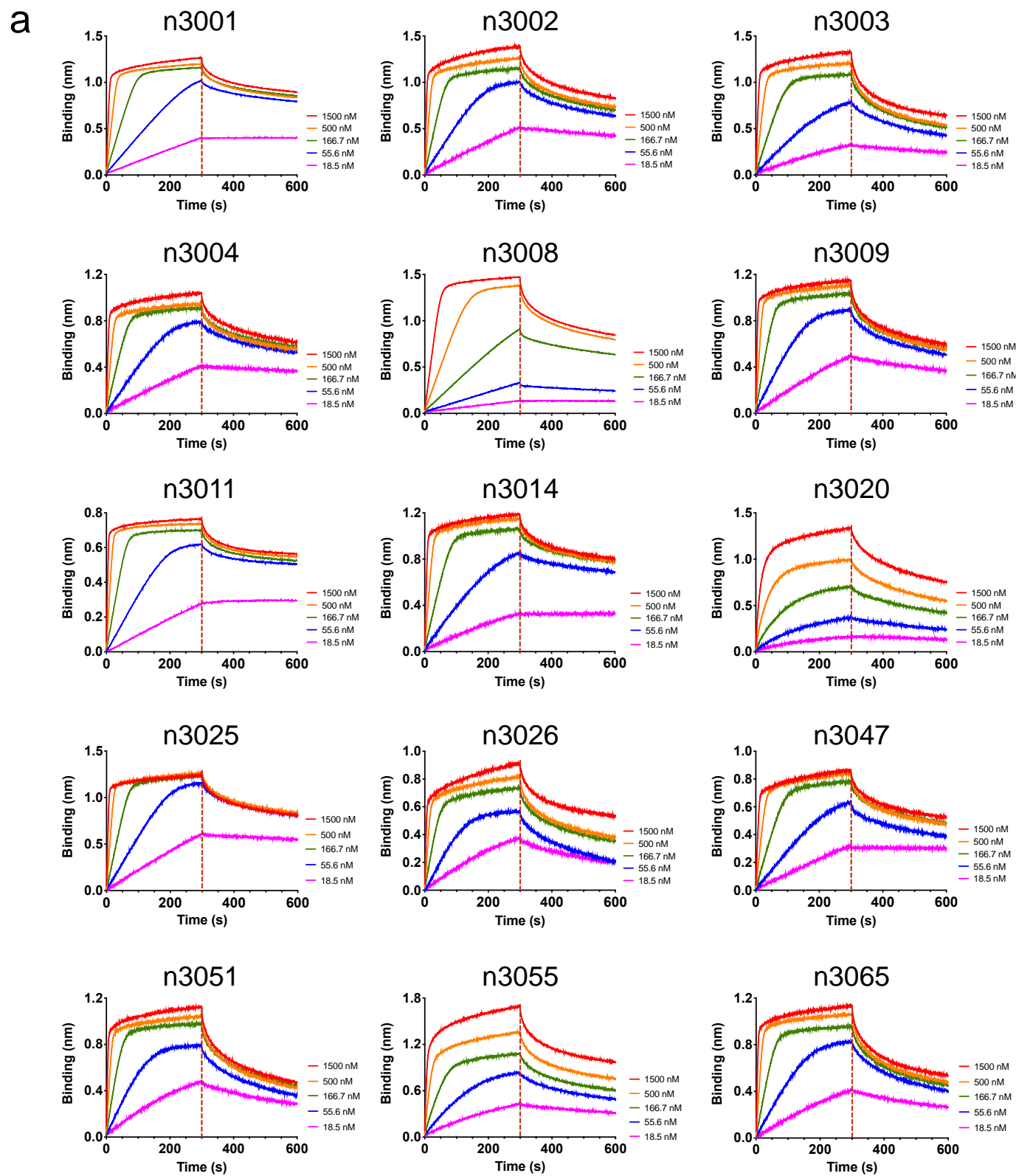
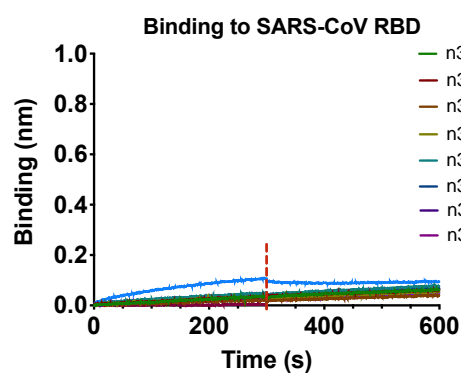


Fig. S1



b



c

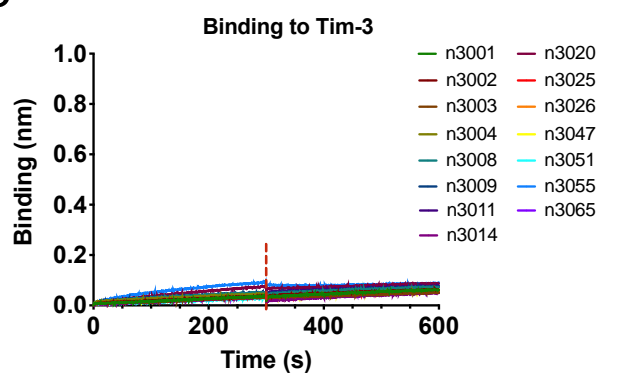


Fig. S2

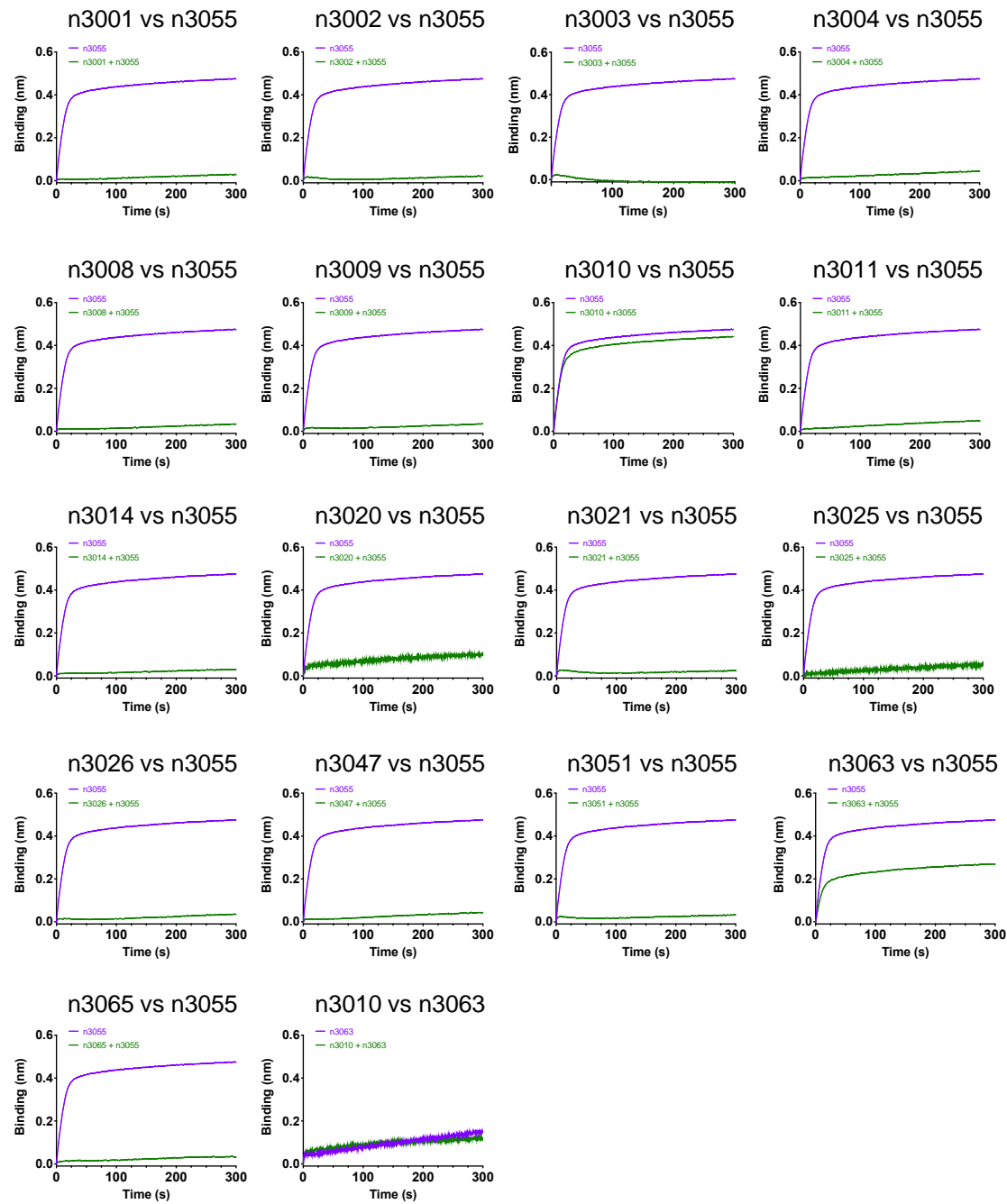


Fig. S3

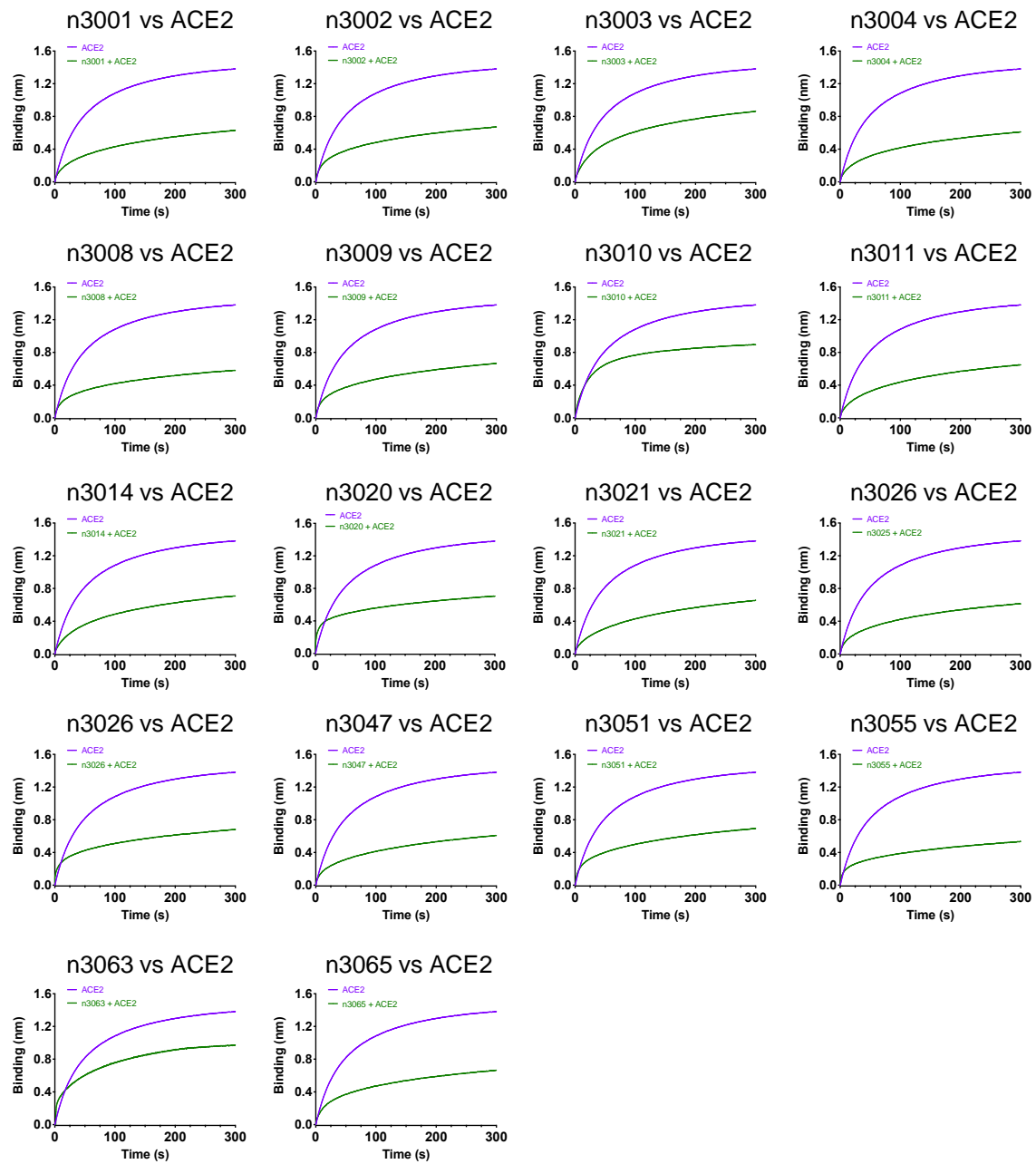


Fig. S4

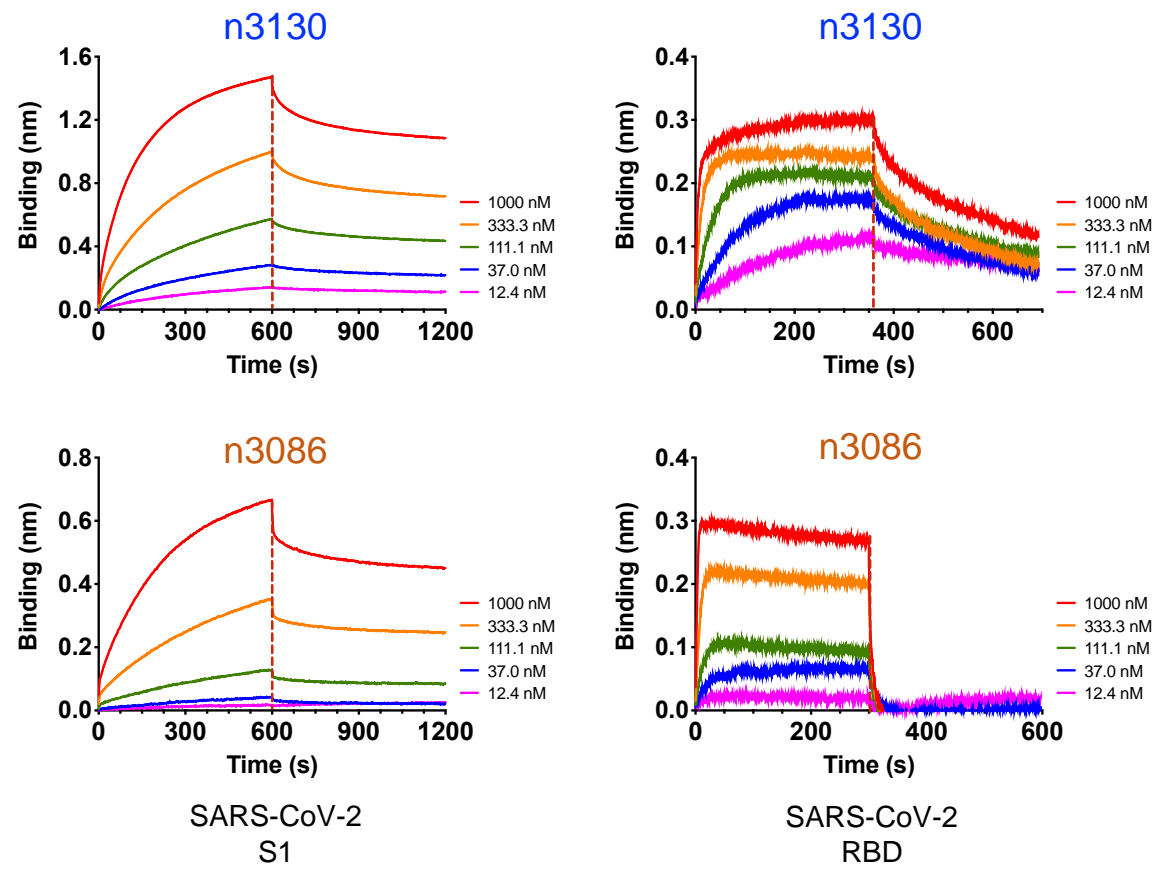


Fig. S5

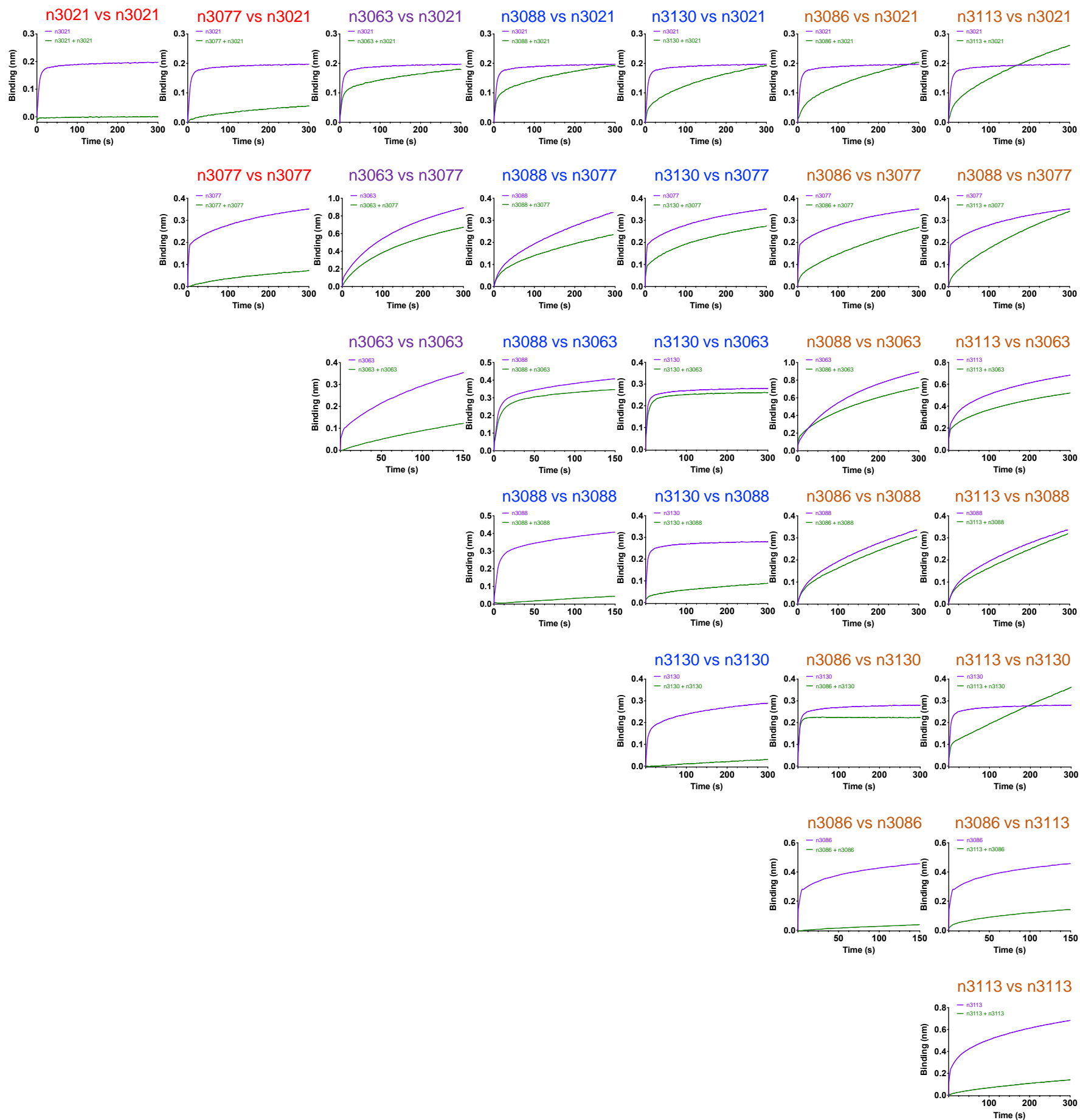


Fig. S6

