An ultra-high affinity synthetic nanobody blocks SARS-CoV-2 infection by locking Spike into an inactive conformation

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Abstract

Without an effective prophylactic solution, infections from SARS-CoV-2 continue to rise worldwide with devastating health and economic costs. SARS-CoV-2 gains entry into host cells via an interaction between its Spike protein and the host cell receptor angiotensin converting enzyme 2 (ACE2). Disruption of this interaction confers potent neutralization of viral entry, providing an avenue for vaccine design and for therapeutic antibodies. Here, we develop single-domain antibodies (nanobodies) that potently disrupt the interaction between the SARS-CoV-2 Spike and ACE2. By screening a yeast surface-displayed library of synthetic nanobody sequences, we identified a panel of nanobodies that bind to multiple epitopes on Spike and block ACE2 interaction via two distinct mechanisms. Cryogenic electron microscopy (cryo-EM) revealed that one exceptionally stable nanobody, Nb6, binds Spike in a fully inactive conformation with its receptor binding domains (RBDs) locked into their inaccessible down-state, incapable of binding ACE2. Affinity maturation and structure-guided design of multivalency yielded a trivalent nanobody, mNb6-tri, with femtomolar affinity for SARS-CoV-2 Spike and picomolar neutralization of SARS-CoV-2 infection. mNb6-tri retains stability and function after aerosolization, lyophilization, and heat treatment. These properties may enable aerosol-mediated delivery of this potent neutralizer directly to the airway epithelia, promising to yield a widely deployable, patient-friendly prophylactic and/or early infection therapeutic agent to stem the worst pandemic in a century.

62 **Introduction**

63 Over the last two decades, three zoonotic β-coronaviruses have entered the human population,
64 causing severe respiratory symptoms with high mortality [1-3]. The ongoing COVID-19
65 pandemic is caused by SARS-CoV-2, the most readily transmissible of these three
66 coronaviruses [4-7]. SARS-CoV-2 has wrecked the world's economy and societies to an
67 unprecedented extent, to date (Aug. 3, 2020) causing 691,320 reported deaths around the
68 globe [8]. Although public health measures have slowed its spread in many regions, infection
69 hotspots keep reemerging. No successful vaccine or preventive treatment has yet been
70 manufactured for any coronavirus, and the time to develop an effective and broadly available
71 vaccine for SARS-CoV-2 remains uncertain. The development of novel therapeutic and
72 prophylactic approaches thus remains essential, both as temporary stopgaps until an effective
73 vaccine is generated and as permanent solutions for those segments of the population for which
74 vaccination proves ineffective or contraindicated.

75

76 Coronavirus virions are bounded by a membrane envelope that contains ~25 copies of the
77 homotrimeric transmembrane spike glycoprotein (Spike) responsible for virus entry into the host
78 cell [9]. The surface-exposed portion of Spike is composed of two domains, S_1 and S_2 [10]. The
79 S_1 domain mediates the interaction between virus and its host cell receptor, the angiotensin
80 converting enzyme 2 (ACE2), while the S_2 domain catalyzes fusion of the viral and host cell
81 membranes [3, 11-13]. During its biogenesis, the Spike protein is proteolytically cleaved
82 between the S_1 and S_2 domains, which primes the virus for cellular entry [10]. Contained within
83 S_1 is the receptor binding domain (RBD), which directly binds to ACE2. The RBD is attached to
84 the body of Spike by a flexible region and can exist in an inaccessible down-state or an
85 accessible up-state [14, 15]. Binding to ACE2 requires the RBD in the up-state and enables
86 cleavage by host proteases TMPRSS2 or cathepsin, triggering a dramatic conformational
87 change in S_2 that enables viral entry [16]. In SARS-CoV-2 virions, Spike oscillates between an
88 active, open conformation with at least one RBD in the up-state and an inactive, closed
89 conformation with all RBDs in the down-state [9, 11, 14, 15].

90

91 By screening a high-complexity yeast surface-displayed library of synthetic nanobodies, we
92 have uncovered a collection of nanobodies that block the Spike-ACE2 interaction. Biochemical
93 and structural studies revealed that two classes of these nanobodies act in distinct ways to
94 prevent ACE2 binding. Combining affinity maturation and structure-guided multimerization, we
95 optimized these agents and generated Spike binders that match or exceed the potency of most

96 monoclonal antibodies disclosed to date. Our lead neutralizing molecule, mNb6-tri, blocks
97 SARS-CoV-2 entry in human cells at picomolar efficacy and withstands aerosolization,
98 lyophilization, and elevated temperatures. mNb6-tri provides a promising approach to deliver a
99 potent SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing molecule directly to the airways for prophylaxis or therapy.
100
101 **Results**
102 **Synthetic nanobodies that disrupt Spike-ACE2 interaction**
103 To isolate nanobodies that neutralize SARS-CoV-2, we screened a yeast surface-displayed
104 library of >$2x10^9$ synthetic nanobody sequences. Our strategy was to screen for binders to the
105 full Spike protein ectodomain, in order to capture not only those nanobodies that would compete
106 by binding to the ACE2-binding site on the RBD directly but also those that might bind
107 elsewhere on Spike and block ACE2 interaction through indirect mechanisms. We used a
108 mutant form of SARS-CoV-2 Spike, Spike*, as the antigen [15]. Spike* lacks one of the two
109 activating proteolytic cleavage sites between the S_1 and S_2 domains and introduces two
110 mutations to stabilize the pre-fusion conformation. Spike* expressed in mammalian cells binds
111 ACE2 with a K_D = 44 nM (Supplementary Fig. 1), consistent with previous reports [17]. Next, we
112 labeled Spike* with biotin or with fluorescent dyes and selected nanobody-displaying yeast over
113 multiple rounds, first by magnetic bead binding and then by fluorescence-activated cell sorting
114 (Fig. 1A).
115
116 Three rounds of selection yielded 21 unique nanobodies that bound Spike* and showed
117 decreased Spike* binding in the presence of ACE2. Closer inspection of their binding properties
118 revealed that these nanobodies fall into two distinct classes. One group (Class I) binds the RBD
119 and competes with ACE2 (Fig. 1B). A prototypical example of this class is nanobody Nb6, which
120 binds to Spike* and to RBD alone with a K_D of 210 nM and 41 nM, respectively (Fig. 1C; Table
121 1). Another group (Class II), exemplified by nanobody Nb3, binds to Spike* (K_D = 61 nM), but
122 displays no binding to RBD alone (Fig. 1C, Table 1). In the presence of excess ACE2, binding of
123 Nb6 and other Class I nanobodies is blocked entirely, whereas binding of Nb3 and other Class II
124 nanobodies is decreased only moderately (Fig. 1B). These results suggest that Class I
125 nanobodies target the RBD to block ACE2 binding, whereas Class II nanobodies target other
126 epitopes and decrease ACE2 interaction with Spike allosterically or through steric interference.
127 Indeed, surface plasmon resonance (SPR) experiments demonstrate that Class I and Class II
128 nanobodies can bind Spike* simultaneously (Fig. 1D).
129

130 Analysis of the kinetic rate constants for Class I nanobodies revealed a consistently greater
131 association rate constant (k_a) for nanobody binding to the isolated RBD than to full-length Spike*
132 (Table 1), which suggests that RBD accessibility influences the K_D. We next tested the efficacy
133 of our nanobodies, both Class I and Class II, to inhibit binding of fluorescently labeled Spike* to
134 ACE2-expressing HEK293 cells (Table 1, Fig. 1E). Class I nanobodies emerged with highly
135 variable activity in this assay with Nb6 and Nb11 as two of the most potent clones with IC_{50}
136 values of 370 and 540 nM, respectively (Table 1). For unexplained reasons, Class II nanobodies
137 showed little to no activity in this assay (Table 1, Fig. 1E).
138
139 Going forward, we prioritized two Class I nanobodies, Nb6 and Nb11, that combine potent
140 Spike* binding with relatively small differences in k_a between binding to Spike* or RBD. We
141 reasoned that the epitopes recognized by Nb6 and Nb11 would be more readily accessible in
142 the Spike protein on intact virions. For Class II nanobodies we prioritized Nb3 because of its
143 optimal stability and yield during purification.
144
145 **Nb6 and Nb11 target the RBD and directly compete with ACE2**
146 To define the binding sites of Nb6 and Nb11, we determined their cryogenic electron
147 microscopy (cryo-EM) structures bound to Spike* (Fig. 2A-B, Supplementary Fig. 2-4,
148 Supplementary Table 1). Both nanobodies recognize RBD epitopes that overlap the ACE2
149 binding site (Fig. 2E). For Nb6 and Nb11, we resolved nanobody binding to both the open and
150 closed conformations of Spike*. We obtained a 3.0 Å map of Nb6 bound to closed Spike*, which
151 enabled modeling of the Nb6-Spike* complex (Fig. 2A), including the complementarity
152 determining regions (CDRs). We also obtained lower resolution maps for Nb6 bound to open
153 Spike* (3.8 Å), Nb11 bound to open Spike* (4.2 Å), and Nb11 bound to closed Spike* (3.7 Å).
154 For these lower resolution maps, we could define the nanobody's binding orientation but not
155 accurately model the CDRs.
156
157 Nb6 bound to closed Spike* straddles the interface between two adjacent RBDs. The majority of
158 the contacting surfaces are contributed by CDR1 and CDR2 of Nb6 (Fig. 2C). CDR3 contacts
159 the adjacent RBD that is counterclockwise positioned when viewed from the top of Spike* (Fig.
160 2C). The binding of one Nb6 therefore stabilizes two adjacent RBDs in the down-state. We
161 surmise that this initial binding event pre-organizes the binding site for a second and third Nb6
162 molecule to stabilize the closed Spike* conformation. Indeed, binding of two Nb6 molecules
163 would lock all three RBDs into the down-state, thus highly favoring binding of a third Nb6

because binding would not entail any further entropic cost. By contrast, Nb11 bound to down-state RBDs only contacts a single RBD (Fig. 2D).

Nb3 interacts with the Spike S_1 domain external to the RBD

Our attempts to determine the binding site of Nb3 by cryo-EM proved unsuccessful. We therefore turned to radiolytic hydroxyl radical footprinting to determine potential binding sites for Nb3. Spike*, either apo or bound to Nb3, was exposed to 5-50 milliseconds of synchrotron X-ray radiation to label solvent exposed amino acids with hydroxyl radicals. Radical-labeled amino acids were subsequently identified and quantified by mass spectrometry of trypsin/Lys-C or Glu-C protease digested Spike*[18]. Two neighboring surface residues on the S_1 domain of Spike (M177 and H207) emerged as highly protected sites in the presence of Nb3 (Supplementary Fig. 5). The degree of protection is consistent with prior observations of antibody-antigen interactions by hydroxyl radical footprinting [19]. Both M177 and H207 are greater than 40 Å distant from the ACE2 binding site on the RBD, suggesting that Nb3 may inhibit Spike-ACE2 interactions through allosteric means.

Rationally engineered multivalency increases potency

The structure of Nb6 bound to closed Spike* enabled us to engineer bivalent and trivalent nanobodies predicted to lock all RBDs in the down-state. To this end, we inserted flexible Gly-Ser linkers of either 15 or 20 amino acids to span the 52 Å distance between adjacent Nb6 monomers bound to down-state RBDs in closed Spike* (Supplementary Fig. 6). Both linker lengths are too short to span the distance (72 Å) between Nb6 bound to a down-state RBD and an up-state RBD that would co-exist in an open Spike. Moreover, binding of three RBDs in the previously reported conformation of Nb6-bound open Spike* would be physically impossible even with longer linker length because of steric clashes (Supplementary Fig. 6). By contrast, the minimum distance between adjacent Nb11 monomers bound to either open or closed Spike* is 68 Å (Supplementary Fig. 6). We therefore predicted that multivalent binding by Nb6 constructs would display significantly slowed dissociation rates due to the enhanced avidity afforded by Spike's trimeric architecture.

We assessed multivalent Nb6 binding to Spike* by SPR. Both bivalent Nb6 with a 15 amino acid linker (Nb6-bi) and trivalent Nb6 with two 20 amino acid linkers (Nb6-tri) dissociate from Spike* in a biphasic manner. The dissociation phase can be fitted to two components: a fast phase with kinetic rate constants k_{d1} of 2.7×10^{-2} s^{-1} for Nb6-bi and 2.9×10^{-2} s^{-1} for Nb6-tri, which are of the

198 same magnitude as that observed for monovalent Nb6 (k_d = 5.6x10^{-2} s^{-1}) and a slow phase that
199 is dependent on avidity (k_{d2} = 3.1x10^{-4} for Nb6-bi and k_{d2} < 1.0x10^{-6} s^{-1} for Nb6-tri, respectively)
200 (Fig. 3A). The relatively similar k_d for the fast phase suggests that a fraction of the observed
201 binding for the multivalent constructs is nanobody binding to a single Spike* RBD. By contrast,
202 the slow dissociation phase of Nb6-bi and Nb6-tri indicates engagement of two or three RBDs.
203 We observed no dissociation for the slow phase of Nb6-tri over 10 minutes, indicating an upper
204 boundary for k_{d2} of 1x10^{-6} s^{-1} and subpicomolar affinity. This measurement remains an upper-
205 bound estimate rather than an accurate measurement because the technique is limited by the
206 intrinsic dissociation rate of Spike* from the chip imposed by the chemistry used to immobilize
207 Spike*.
208
209 We reasoned that the biphasic dissociation behavior could be explained by a slow
210 interconversion between up- and down-state RBDs, with conversion to the more stable down-
211 state required for full trivalent binding. According to this view, a single domain of Nb6-tri
212 engaged with an up-state RBD would dissociate rapidly. The system would then re-equilibrate
213 as the RBD flips into the down-state, eventually allowing Nb6-tri to trap all RBDs in closed
214 Spike*. To test this notion directly, we varied the time allowed for Nb6-tri binding to Spike*.
215 Indeed, we observed an exponential decrease in the percent fast-phase with a $t_{1/2}$ of 65 s (Fig.
216 3B), which, we surmise, reflects the timescale of conversion between the RBD up- and down-
217 states in Spike*. Taken together, dimerization and trimerization of Nb6 afforded 750-fold and
218 >200,000-fold gains in K_D, respectively.
219
220 **Class I and II nanobodies prevent SARS-CoV-2 infection**
221 We next tested the neutralization activity of trivalent versions of our top Class I (Nb6 and Nb11)
222 and Class II (Nb3) nanobodies against SARS-CoV-2 pseudotyped lentivirus. In this assay,
223 SARS-CoV-2 Spike is expressed as a surface protein on a lentiviral particle that contains a
224 ZsGreen reporter gene, which is integrated and expressed upon successful viral entry into cells
225 harboring the ACE2 receptor [20]. Nb6 and Nb11 inhibited pseudovirus infection with IC_{50}
226 values of 2.0 μM and 2.4 μM, respectively, and Nb3 inhibited pseudovirus infection with an IC_{50}
227 of 3.9 μM (Fig. 3C, Table 1). Nb6-tri shows a 2000-fold enhancement of inhibitory activity, with
228 an IC_{50} of 1.2 nM, whereas trimerization of Nb11 and Nb3 resulted in more modest gains of 40-
229 and 10-fold (51 nM and 400 nM), respectively (Fig. 3C).
230

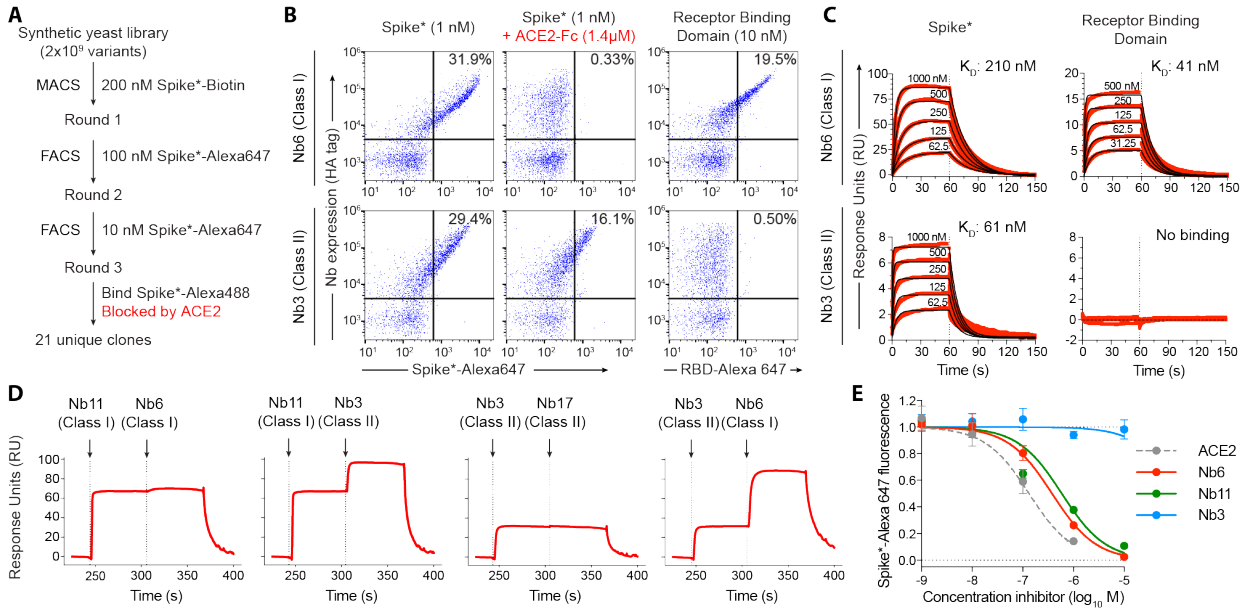
231 We next confirmed these neutralization activities with a viral plaque assay using live SARS-
232 CoV-2 virus infection of VeroE6 cells. Consistent with its activity against pseudotyped lentivirus,
233 Nb6-tri proved exceptionally potent, neutralizing SARS-CoV-2 with an average IC_{50} of 160 pM
234 (Fig. 3D). Nb3-tri neutralized SARS-CoV-2 with an average IC_{50} of 140 nM (Fig. 3D).
235
236 **Affinity maturation yields a femtomolar K_D Spike inhibitor**
237 We further optimized the potency of Nb6 by selecting high-affinity variants. To this end, we
238 prepared a new library, starting with the Nb6 coding sequence, in which we varied each amino
239 acid position of all three CDRs by saturation mutagenesis (Fig. 4A). After two rounds of
240 magnetic bead-based selection, we isolated a population of high-affinity clones. Sequencing
241 revealed two highly penetrant mutations: I27Y in CDR1 and P105Y in CDR3. We incorporated
242 these two mutations into Nb6 to generate matured Nb6 (mNb6), which binds with 500-fold
243 increased affinity to Spike* as measured by SPR (Fig. 4B). As a monomer, mNb6 inhibits both
244 pseudovirus and live SARS-CoV-2 infection with low nanomolar potency, a ~200-fold
245 improvement compared to Nb6 (Fig. 4I-J, Table 1).
246
247 A 2.9 Å cryo-EM structure of mNb6 bound to Spike* shows that, like the parent nanobody Nb6,
248 mNb6 binds to closed Spike (Fig. 4C, Supplementary Fig. 7). The higher resolution map allowed
249 us to build a model with high confidence and determine the effects of the I27Y and P105Y
250 substitutions. mNb6 induces a slight rearrangement of the down-state RBDs as compared to
251 both previously determined structures of apo-Spike* and Spike* bound to Nb6, inducing a 9°
252 rotation of the RBD away from the central three-fold symmetry axis (Fig. 4H) [14, 15]. This
253 deviation likely arises from a different interaction between CDR3 and Spike*, which nudges the
254 RBDs into a new resting position. While the I27Y substitution optimizes local contacts between
255 CDR1 in its original binding site on the RBD, the P105Y substitution leads to a marked
256 rearrangement of CDR3 in mNb6 (Fig. 4F-G). This conformational change yields a different set
257 of contacts between mNb6 CDR3 and the adjacent RBD (Fig. 4D). Remarkably, an X-ray crystal
258 structure of mNb6 alone revealed dramatic conformational differences in CDR1 and CDR3
259 between free and Spike*-bound mNb6, suggestive of significant conformational heterogeneity
260 for the unbound nanobodies and induced-fit rearrangements upon binding to Spike* (Fig. 4E).
261
262 The binding orientation of mNb6 is similar to that of Nb6, supporting the notion that our
263 multivalent design would likewise enhance binding affinity. Unlike Nb6-tri, trivalent mNb6
264 (mNb6-tri) bound to Spike with no observable fast-phase dissociation and no measurable

265 dissociation over ten minutes, yielding an upper bound for the dissociation rate constant k_d of
266 1.0×10^{-6} s^{-1} ($t_{1/2}$ > 8 days) and a K_D of <1 pM (Fig. 4B). As above, more precise measurements
267 of the dissociation rate are precluded by the surface chemistry used to immobilize Spike*.
268
269 mNb6-tri displays further gains in potency in both pseudovirus and live SARS-CoV-2 infection
270 assays with IC_{50} values of 120 pM (5.0 ng/mL) and 54 pM (2.3 ng/mL), respectively (Fig. 4H-I,
271 Table 1). Given the sub-picomolar affinity observed by SPR, it is likely that these viral
272 neutralization potencies reflect the lower limit of the assays. mNb6-tri is therefore an
273 exceptionally potent SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibody, among the most potent molecules
274 disclosed to date.
275
276 **Nb6, Nb6-tri, mNb6, and mNb6-tri are robust proteins**
277 One of the most attractive properties that distinguishes nanobodies from traditional monoclonal
278 antibodies is their extreme stability [21]. We therefore tested Nb6, Nb6-tri, mNb6, and mNb6-tri
279 for stability regarding temperature, lyophilization, and aerosolization. Temperature denaturation
280 experiments using circular dichroism measurements to assess protein unfolding revealed
281 melting temperatures of 66.9, 62.0, 67.6, and 61.4 °C for Nb6, Nb6-tri, mNb6 and mNb6-tri,
282 respectively (Fig 5A). Aerosolization and prolonged heating of Nb6, mNb6, and mNb6-tri for 1
283 hour at 50°C induced no loss of activity (Fig 5B). Moreover, mNb6 and mNb6-tri were stable to
284 lyophilization and to aerosolization using a mesh nebulizer, showing no aggregation by size
285 exclusion chromatography and preserved high affinity binding to Spike* (Fig. 5C-D).
286
287 **Discussion**
288 There is a pressing need for prophylactics and therapeutics against SARS-CoV-2 infection.
289 Most recent strategies to prevent SARS-CoV-2 entry into the host cell aim at blocking the
290 ACE2-RBD interaction. High-affinity monoclonal antibodies, many identified from convalescent
291 patients, are leading the way as potential therapeutics [22-29]. While highly effective *in vitro*,
292 these agents are expensive to produce by mammalian cell expression and need to be
293 intravenously administered by healthcare professionals. Moreover, large doses are likely to be
294 required for prophylactic viral neutralization, as only a small fraction of systemically circulating
295 antibodies cross the epithelial cell layers that line the airways [30]. By contrast, single domain
296 antibodies (nanobodies) provide significant advantages in terms of production and deliverability.
297 They can be inexpensively produced at scale in bacteria *(E. coli)* or yeast *(P. pastoris)*.

298 Furthermore, their inherent stability enables aerosolized delivery directly to the nasal and lung
299 epithelia by self-administered inhalation [31].
300
301 Monomeric mNb6 is among the most potent single domain antibodies neutralizing SARS-CoV-2
302 discovered to date. Multimerization of single domain antibodies has been shown to improve
303 target affinity by avidity [31, 32]. In the case of Nb6 and mNb6, however, our design strategy
304 enabled a multimeric construct that simultaneously engages all three RBDs, yielding profound
305 gains in potency. Furthermore, because RBDs must be in the up-state to engage with ACE2,
306 conformational control of RBD accessibility can serve as an added neutralization mechanism.
307 Indeed, our Nb6-tri and mNb6-tri molecules were designed with this functionality in mind. Thus,
308 when mNb6-tri engages with Spike, it prevents ACE2 binding by both directly occluding the
309 binding site and by locking the RBDs into an inactive conformation. Although a multitude of
310 other monoclonal and single-domain antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 Spike have been
311 discovered to date, there are few if any molecules as potent and stable as mNb6-tri [32-42].
312 Resistance to aerosolization, in particular, offers unprecedented opportunity for patient-friendly
313 nasal and pulmonary administration.
314
315 Our discovery of Class II neutralizing nanobodies demonstrates the presence of previously
316 unexplored mechanisms of blocking Spike binding to ACE2. For one Class II nanobody, Nb3,
317 we identified a likely binding site in the Spike S_1 domain external to the RBDs. Previously
318 discovered neutralizing antibodies from convalescent patients bind an epitope in a similar region
319 of Spike [24, 26, 27]. Binding of Nb3 to this epitope may allosterically stabilize RBDs in the
320 down-state, thereby decreasing ACE2 binding. Pairing of Class I and Class II nanobodies in a
321 prophylactic or therapeutic cocktail could thus be a highly advantageous strategy for both potent
322 neutralization and prevention of escape variants. The combined stability, potency, and diverse
323 epitope engagement of our anti-Spike nanobodies therefore provide a unique potential
324 prophylactic and therapeutic strategy to limit the continued toll of the COVID-19 pandemic.
325

326 **MAIN TEXT FIGURES**

Figure 1



327

328

329 **Figure 1. Discovery of two distinct classes of anti-Spike nanobodies. A,** Selection strategy
330 for identification of anti-Spike nanobodies that disrupt Spike-ACE2 interactions using magnetic
331 bead selections (MACS) or fluorescence activated cell sorting (FACS). **B,** Flow cytometry of
332 yeast displaying Nb6 (a Class I nanobody) or Nb3 (a Class II nanobody). Nb6 binds Spike*-
333 Alexa 647 and receptor binding domain (RBD-Alexa 647). Nb6 binding to Spike* is completely
334 disrupted by an excess (1.4 μM) of ACE2-Fc. Nb3 binds Spike*, but not the RBD. Nb3 binding
335 to Spike* is partially decreased by ACE2-Fc. **C,** SPR of Nb6 and Nb3 binding to either Spike* or
336 RBD. Red traces are raw data and global kinetic fits are shown in black. Nb3 shows no binding
337 to RBD. **D,** SPR experiments with immobilized Spike* show that Class I and Class II nanobodies
338 can bind Spike* simultaneously. By contrast, two Class I nanobodies or Class II nanobodies do
339 not bind simultaneously. **E,** Nanobody inhibition of 1 nM Spike*-Alexa 647 binding to ACE2
340 expressing HEK293T cells. n = 3 (ACE2, Nb3) or 5 (Nb6, Nb11) biological replicates. All error
341 bars represent s.e.m.

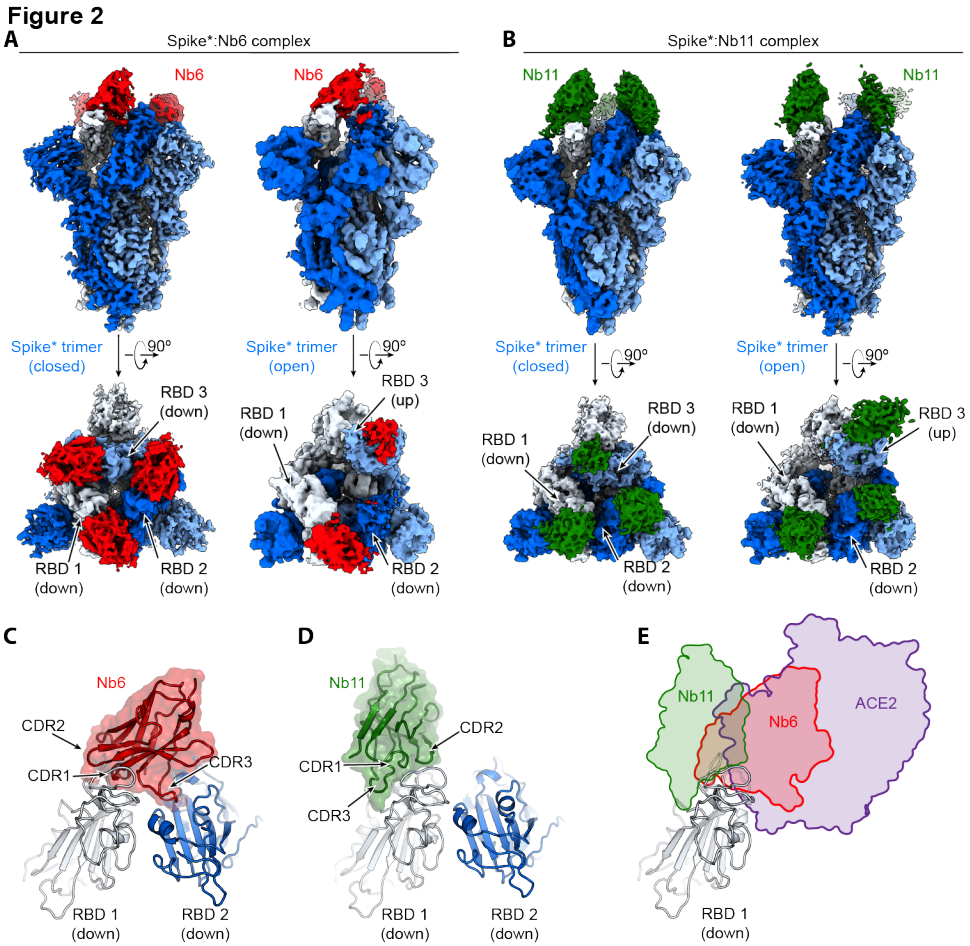


Figure 2. Cryo-EM structures of Nb6 and Nb11 bound to Spike. A, Cryo-EM maps of Spike*-Nb6 complex in either closed (left) or open (right) Spike* conformation. **B,** Cryo-EM maps of Spike*-Nb11 complex in either closed (left) or open (right) Spike* conformation. The top views show receptor binding domain (RBD) up- or down-states. **C,** Nb6 straddles the interface of two down-state RBDs, with CDR3 reaching over to an adjacent RBD. **D,** Nb11 binds a single RBD in the down-state (displayed) or similarly in the up-state. No cross-RBD contacts are made by Nb11 in either RBD up- or down-state. **E,** Comparison of RBD epitopes engaged by ACE2 (purple), Nb6 (red), or Nb11 (green). Both Nb11 and Nb6 directly compete with ACE2 binding.

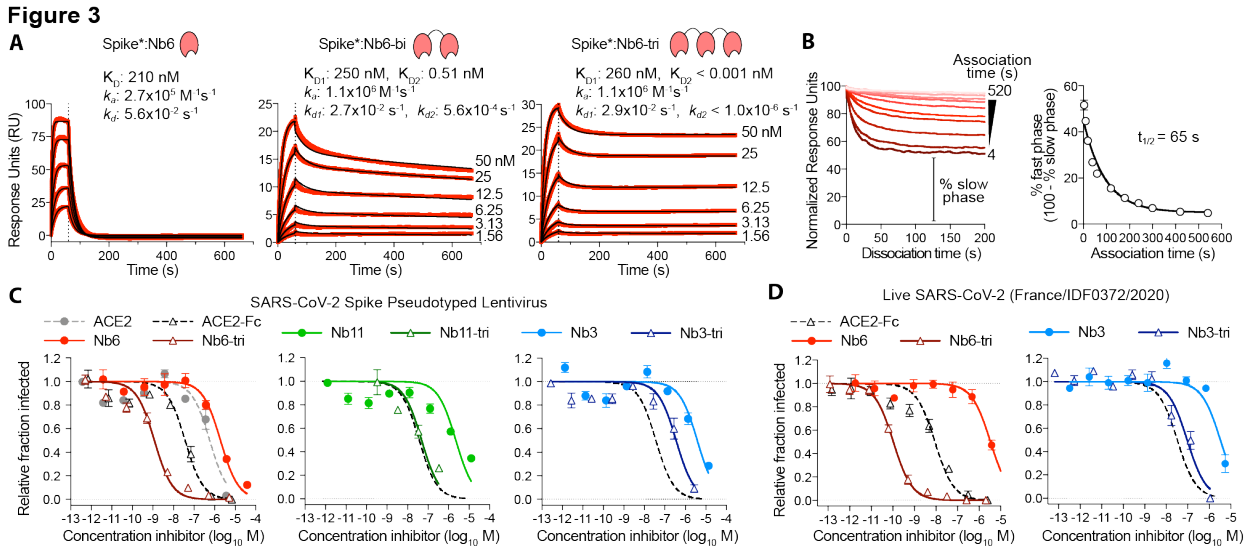


Figure 3. Multivalency improves nanobody affinity and inhibitory efficacy. A, SPR of Nb6 and multivalent variants. Red traces show raw data and black lines show global kinetic fit for Nb6 and independent fits for association and dissociation phases for Nb6-bi and Nb6-tri. **B,** Dissociation phase SPR traces for Nb6-tri after variable association time ranging from 4 to 520 s. Curves were normalized to maximal signal at the beginning of the dissociation phase. Percent fast phase is plotted as a function of association time (right) with a single exponential fit. n = 3 independent biological replicates. **C,** Inhibition of pseudotyped lentivirus infection of ACE2 expressing HEK293T cells. n = 3 biological replicates for all but Nb11-tri (n = 2) **D,** Inhibition of live SARS-CoV-2 virus. Representative biological replicate with n = 3 (right panel) or 4 (left panel) technical replicates per concentration. n = 3 biological replicates for all but Nb3 and Nb3-tri (n = 2). All error bars represent s.e.m.

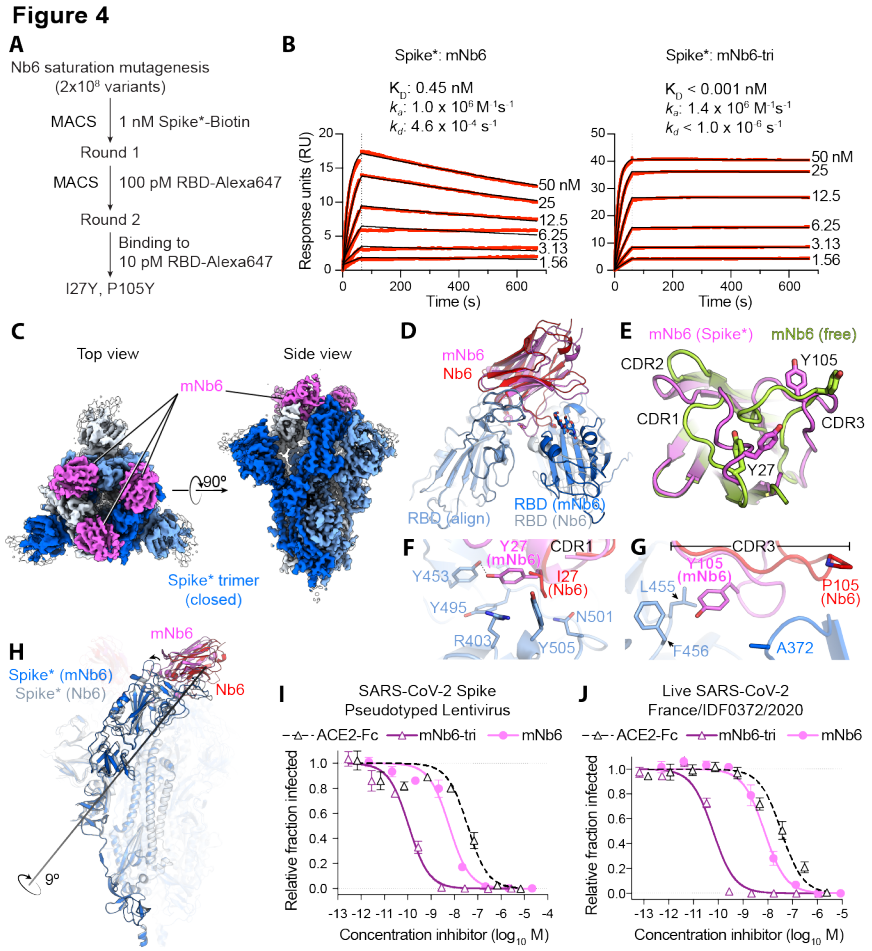
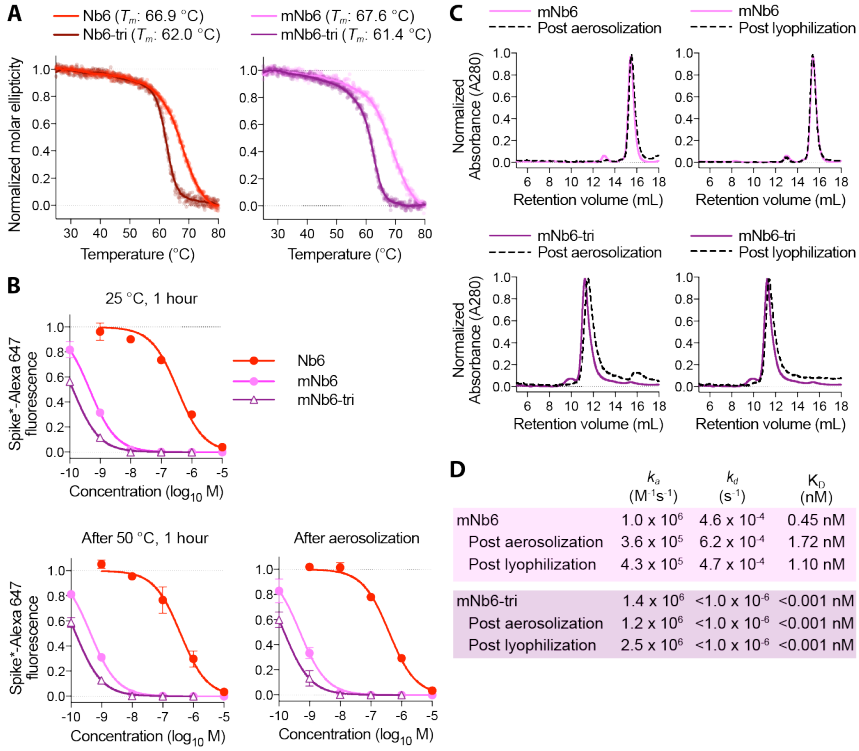


Figure 4. Affinity maturation of Nb6 yields a picomolar SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing molecule. A, A saturation mutagenesis library of Nb6 was subjected to two rounds of selection to identify consensus mutations I27Y and P105Y. **B,** SPR of mNb6 and mNb6-tri binding to immobilized Spike*. Red traces show raw data and black lines show global kinetic fit. No dissociation was observed for mNb6-tri over 10 minutes. **C,** Cryo-EM structure of Spike*-mNb6 complex. **D,** Comparison of receptor binding domain (RBD) engagement by Nb6 and mNb6. One RBD was used to align both structures (RBD align), demonstrating changes in Nb6 and mNb6 position and the adjacent RBD**. E,** Comparison of mNb6 complementarity determining regions in either the cryo-EM structure of the Spike*-mNb6 complex or an X-ray crystal structure of mNb6 alone. **F,** CDR1 of Nb6 and mNb6 binding to the RBD. As compared to I27 in Nb6, Y27 of mNb6 hydrogen bonds to Y453 and optimizes pi-pi and pi-cation interactions with the RBD. **G,** CDR3 of Nb6 and mNb6 binding to the RBD demonstrating a large conformational rearrangement of the entire loop in mNb6. **H,** Comparison of closed Spike* bound to mNb6 and Nb6. Rotational axis for RBD movement is highlighted. **I,** Inhibition of pseudotyped lentivirus

382 infection of ACE2 expressing HEK293T cells by mNb6 and mNb6-tri. n = 3 biological replicates
383 **J,** mNb6 and mNb6-tri inhibit SARS-CoV-2 infection of VeroE6 cells in a plaque assay.
384 Representative biological replicate with n = 4 technical replicates per concentration. n = 3
385 biological replicates for all samples. All error bars represent s.e.m.
386

Figure 5



D

	k_a ($M^{-1}s^{-1}$)	k_d (s^{-1})	K_D (nM)
mNb6	1.0×10^6	4.6×10^{-4}	0.45 nM
Post aerosolization	3.6×10^5	6.2×10^{-4}	1.72 nM
Post lyophilization	4.3×10^5	4.7×10^{-4}	1.10 nM
mNb6-tri	1.4×10^6	$<1.0 \times 10^{-6}$	<0.001 nM
Post aerosolization	1.2×10^6	$<1.0 \times 10^{-6}$	<0.001 nM
Post lyophilization	2.5×10^6	$<1.0 \times 10^{-6}$	<0.001 nM

Figure 5. Nb6 and its derivates are robust proteins. A, Thermal denaturation of nanobodies assessed by circular dichroism measurement of molar ellipticity at 204 nm. Apparent melting temperatures (T_m) for each nanobody are indicated. **B,** Nanobody inhibition of 1 nM Spike*-Alexa 647 binding to ACE2 expressing HEK293T cells after incubation at either 25 °C or 50 °C for 1 hour or after aerosolization. **C,** Size exclusion chromatography of nanobodies after lyophilization or aerosolization. **D,** Summary table of SPR kinetics data and affinities for aerosolized or lyophilized mNb6 and mNb6-tri.

396 **Table 1. Anti-Spike nanobody affinity and neutralization potency**

Nanobody	Class	Spike* Binding			RBD Binding			Spike* Competition IC_{50} (s.e.m) (M)[a]	SARS-CoV-2 Pseudovirus IC_{50} (s.e.m.) (M)[b]	Live SARS-CoV-2 IC_{50} (s.e.m.) (M)[c]
		k_a ($M^{-1}s^{-1}$)	k_d (s^{-1})	K_D (M)	k_a ($M^{-1}s^{-1}$)	k_d (s^{-1})	K_D (M)			
Nb2	I	$9.0x10^5$	$5.3x10^{-1}$	$5.9x10^{-7}$	$1.0x10^6$	$9.9x10^{-1}$	$9.7x10^{-7}$	$8.3x10^{-6}$ ($1.7x10^{-6}$)	NP	NP
Nb3	II	$1.8x10^6$	$1.1x10^{-1}$	$6.1x10^{-8}$	NB			NC	$3.9x10^{-6}$ ($7.9x10^{-7}$)	$3.0x10^{-6}$ ($3.2x10^{-7}$)
Nb6	I	$2.7x10^5$	$5.6x10^{-2}$	$2.1x10^{-7}$	$2.1x10^6$	$8.7x10^{-2}$	$4.1x10^{-8}$	$3.7x10^{-7}$ ($4.9x10^{-8}$)	$2.0x10^{-6}$ ($3.5x10^{-7}$)	$3.3x10^{-6}$ ($7.2x10^{-7}$)
Nb8	I	$1.4x10^5$	$8.1x10^{-1}$	$5.8x10^{-6}$	$6.6x10^5$	$3.3x10^{-1}$	$5.1x10^{-7}$	$4.8x10^{-6}$ ($4.9x10^{-7}$)	NP	NP
Nb11	I	$1.2x10^6$	$1.6x10^{-1}$	$1.4x10^{-7}$	$3.2x10^6$	$2.4x10^{-1}$	$7.6x10^{-8}$	$5.4x10^{-7}$ ($1.2x10^{-7}$)	$2.4x10^{-6}$ ($5.4x10^{-7}$)	NP
Nb12	I	$1.2x10^2$	$2.0x10^{-4}$	$1.6x10^{-6}$	Biphasic	Biphasic	Biphasic	$2.5x10^{-7}$ ($5.5x10^{-8}$)	$1.2x10^{-6}$ ($9.0x10^{-7}$)	NP
Nb15	I	$1.7x10^5$	$2.3x10^{-1}$	$1.3x10^{-6}$	$6.0x10^5$	$2.2x10^{-1}$	$3.6x10^{-7}$	$2.2x10^{-6}$ ($2.5x10^{-7}$)	$6.7x10^{-6}$ ($3.6x10^{-6}$)	NP
Nb16	I	$1.1x10^5$	$1.3x10^{-1}$	$1.3x10^{-6}$	NP			$9.5x10^{-7}$ ($1.1x10^{-7}$)	NP	NP
Nb17	II	$7.3x10^5$	$2.0x10^{-1}$	$2.7x10^{-7}$	NB			NC	$7.6x10^{-6}$ ($1.0x10^{-6}$)	NP
Nb18	II	$1.4x10^5$	$6.4x10^{-3}$	$4.5x10^{-8}$	NB			$5.2x10^{-5}$ ($1.5x10^{-5}$)	NP	NP
Nb19	I	$2.4x10^4$	$1.1x10^{-1}$	$4.5x10^{-6}$	$1.0x10^5$	$8.9x10^{-2}$	$8.8x10^{-7}$	$4.1x10^{-6}$ ($4.9x10^{-7}$)	$2.4x10^{-5}$ ($7.7x10^{-6}$)	NP
Nb24	I	$9.3x10^5$	$2.7x10^{-1}$	$2.9x10^{-7}$	$2.4x10^6$	$3.5x10^{-1}$	$1.5x10^{-7}$	$7.5x10^{-7}$ ($1.0x10^{-7}$)	NP	NP
ACE2	N/A	$2.7x10^5$	$1.2x10^{-2}$	$4.4x10^{-8}$	NP	NP	NP	$1.7x10^{-7}$ ($6.6x10^{-8}$)	$6.2x10^{-7}$ ($1.7x10^{-7}$)	NP
mNb6	I	$1.0x10^6$	$4.5x10^{-4}$	$4.5x10^{-10}$	$1.1x10^6$	$6.4x10^{-4}$	$5.6x10^{-10}$	$1.3x10^{-9}$ ($4.1x10^{-10}$)	$6.3x10^{-9}$ ($1.6x10^{-9}$)	$1.2x10^{-8}$ ($2.5x10^{-9}$)
Nb3-bi	II	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	$3.6x10^{-7}$ ($1.5x10^{-7}$)	$1.8x10^{-7}$ ($1.2x10^{-8}$)
Nb3-tri	II	Biphasic	Biphasic	Biphasic	NP	NP	NP	$4.1x10^{-8}$ ($1.6x10^{-8}$)	$4.0x10^{-7}$ ($1.6x10^{-7}$)	$1.4x10^{-7}$ ($4.9x10^{-8}$)
Nb6-bi	I	Biphasic	Biphasic	Biphasic	NP	NP	NP	NP	$6.3x10^{-8}$ ($1.5x10^{-8}$)	NP
Nb6-tri	I	Biphasic	Biphasic	Biphasic	NP	NP	NP	$1.5x10^{-9}$ ($5.2x10^{-10}$)	$1.2x10^{-9}$ ($2.5x10^{-10}$)	$1.6x10^{-10}$ ($2.6x10^{-11}$)
Nb11-tri	I	Biphasic	Biphasic	Biphasic	NP	NP	NP	NP	$5.1x10^{-8}$ ($1.6x10^{-8}$)	NP
ACE2-Fc	N/A	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	$5.3x10^{-9}$ ($2.5x10^{-9}$)	$4.0x10^{-8}$ ($8.8x10^{-9}$)	$2.6x10^{-8}$ ($8.5x10^{-9}$)
mNb6-tri	I	$1.4x10^6$	$<1.0x10^{-6}$	$<1.0x10^{-12}$	NP	NP	NP	$4.0x10^{-10}$ ($1.4x10^{-10}$)	$1.2x10^{-10}$ ($2.8x10^{-11}$)	$5.4x10^{-11}$ ($1.0x10^{-11}$)

397

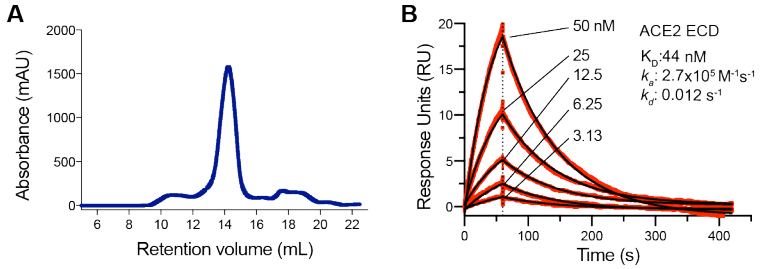
398 [a]Average values from n = 5 biological replicates for Nb6, Nb11, Nb15, Nb19 are presented, all

399 others were tested with n = 3 biological replicates.

400 [b]Average values from n = 2 biological replicates for Nb12, Nb17, and Nb11-tri are presented, all
401 others were tested with n = 3 biological replicates.
402 [c]Average values from n = 2 biological replicates for Nb3, Nb3-bi, and Nb3-tri. n = 3 biological
403 replicates for all others.
404 NB – no binding
405 NC – no competition
406 NP – not performed
407
408

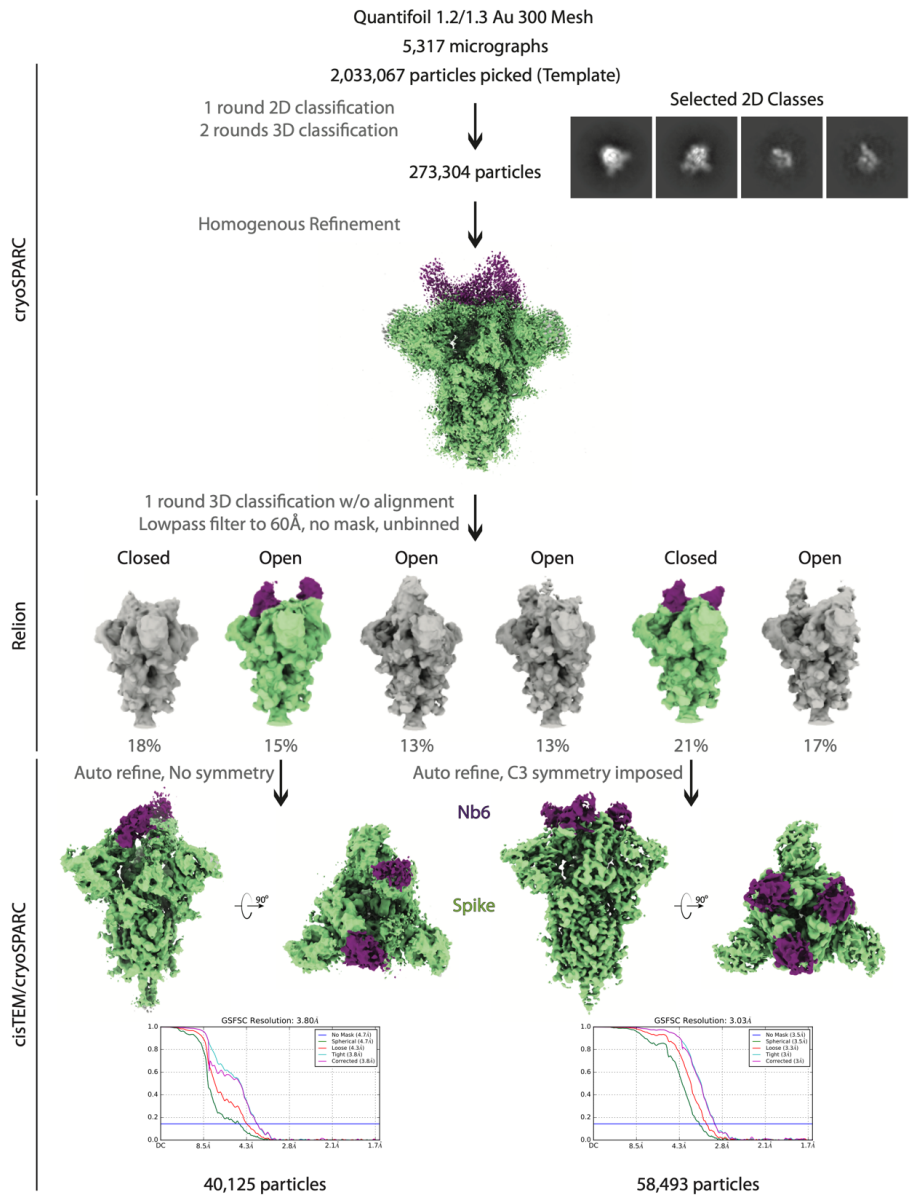
409 **Supplementary Figures**

410



411

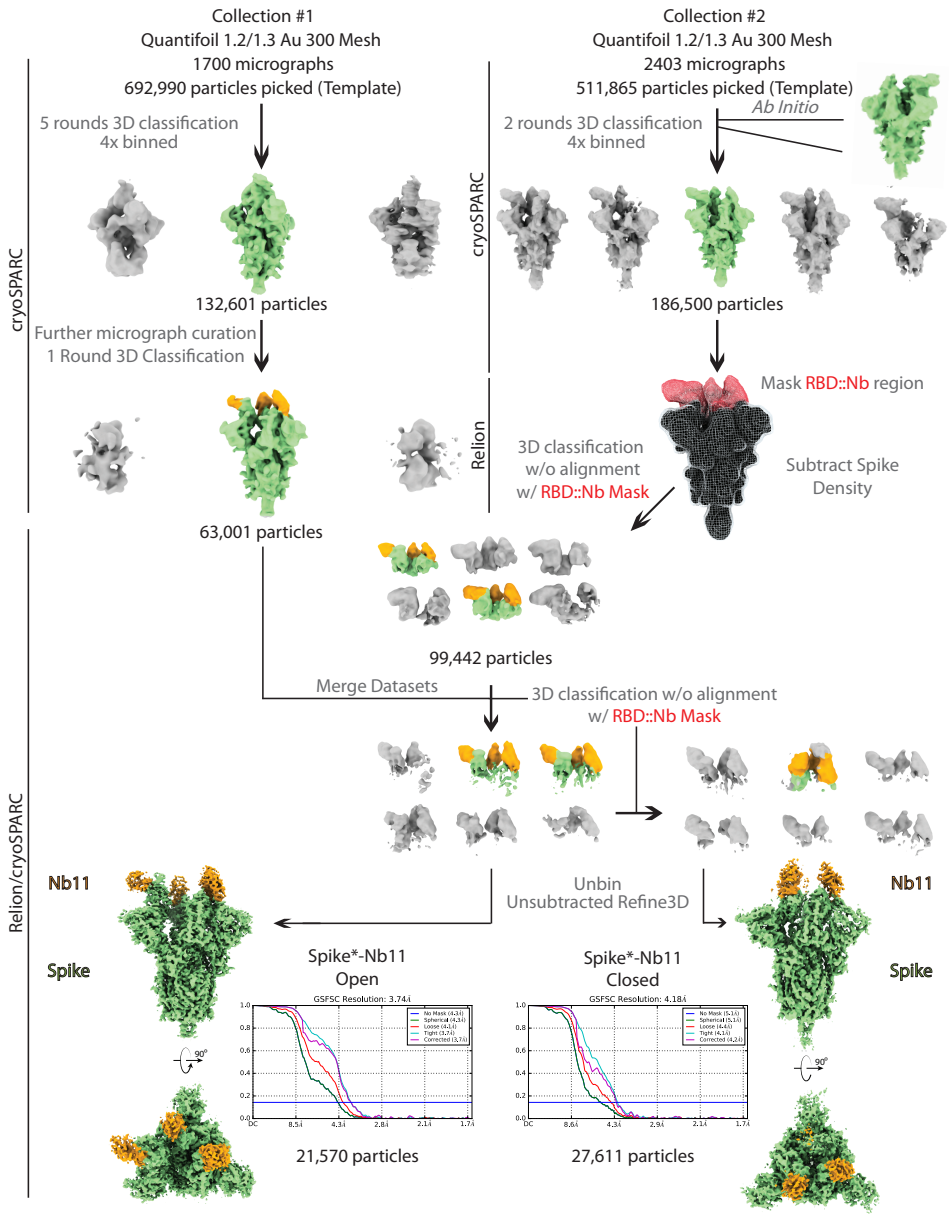
412 **Supplementary Fig. 1. Validation of purified Spike*. A,** Size exclusion chromatogram of
413 purified Spike* from ExpiCHO cells. **B,** SPR of immobilized Spike* binding to monomeric ACE2
414 extracellular domain (ECD).



Supplementary Fig. 2. Cryo-EM workflow for Nb6

A flowchart representation of the classification workflow for Spike*-Nb6 complexes yielding open and closed Spike* conformations. From top to bottom, particles were template picked with a set of 20 Å low-pass filtered 2D backprojections of apo-Spike* in the closed conformation. Extracted particles in 2D classes suggestive of various Spike* views were subject to a round of heterogenous refinement in cryoSPARC with two naïve classes generated from a truncated *Ab initio* job, and a 20 Å low-pass filtered volume of apo-Spike* in the closed conformation. Particles in the Spike* 3D class were subject to 25 iterations of 3D classification into 6 classes without alignment in RELION, using the same input volume from cryoSPARC 3D classification,

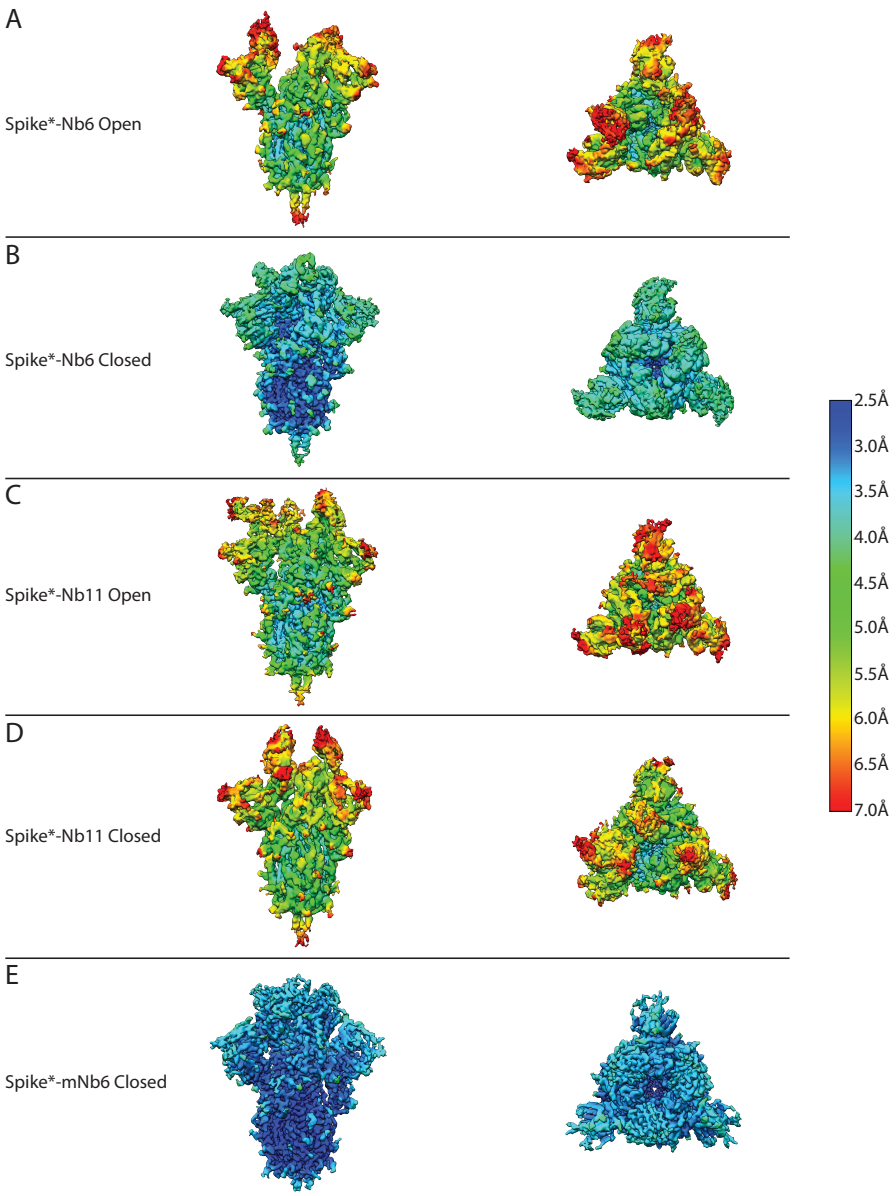
425 low pass filtered to 60 Å, T = 8. Particles in classes representing the open and closed Spike*
426 conformations were imported into cisTEM for automatic refinement. Half maps from refinement
427 were imported into cryoSPARC for local resolution estimation as shown in Supplementary Fig.
428 4.



Supplementary Fig. 3. Cryo-EM workflow for Nb11

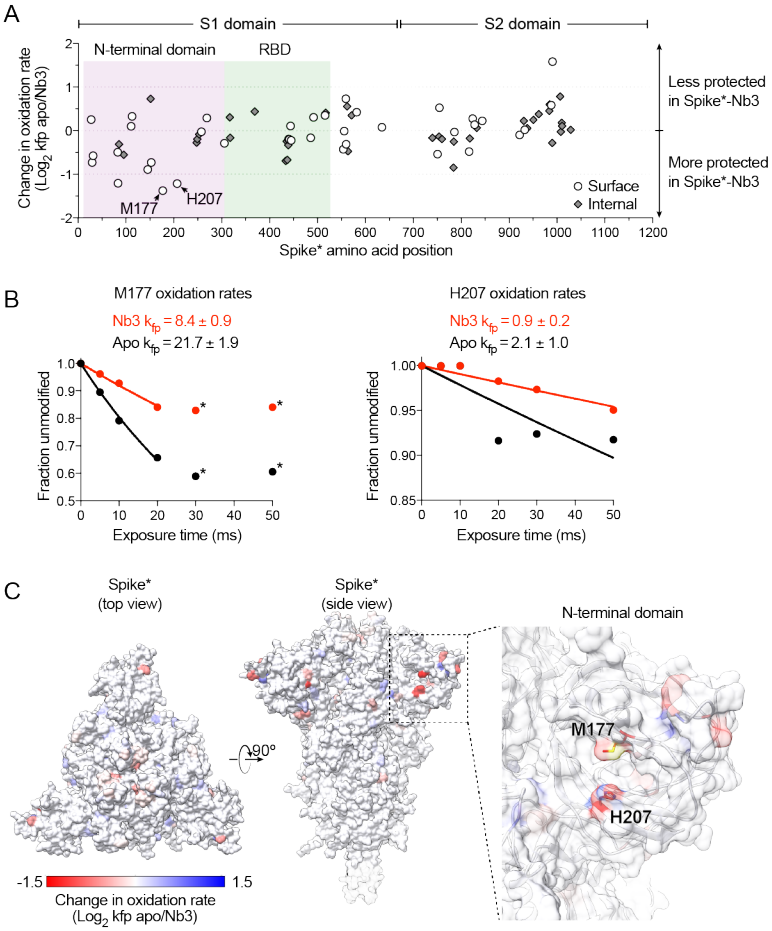
A flowchart representation of the classification workflow for Spike*-Nb11 complexes yielding open and closed Spike* conformations. From top to bottom, particles were template picked from two separate collections with a set of 20 Å low-pass filtered 2D backprojections of apo-Spike* in the closed conformation. Extracted particles were Fourier cropped to 128 pixels prior to extensive heterogenous refinement in cryoSPARC, using a 20 Å low-pass filtered volume of apo-Spike* in the closed conformation and additional naïve classes for removal of non-Spike* particles. After cryoSPARC micrograph curation and heterogenous refinement, Spike* density corresponding to all regions outside of the ACE2 RBD::Nanobody interface were subtracted. A

439 mask around the ACE2 RBD::Nanobody interface was generated, and used for multiple rounds
440 of 3D classification without alignment in RELION. Particles in classes representing open and
441 closed Spike* conformations were selected, unsubtracted and unbinned prior to refinement in
442 RELION. Half maps from refinement were imported into cryoSPARC for local resolution
443 estimation as shown in Supplementary Fig. 4.

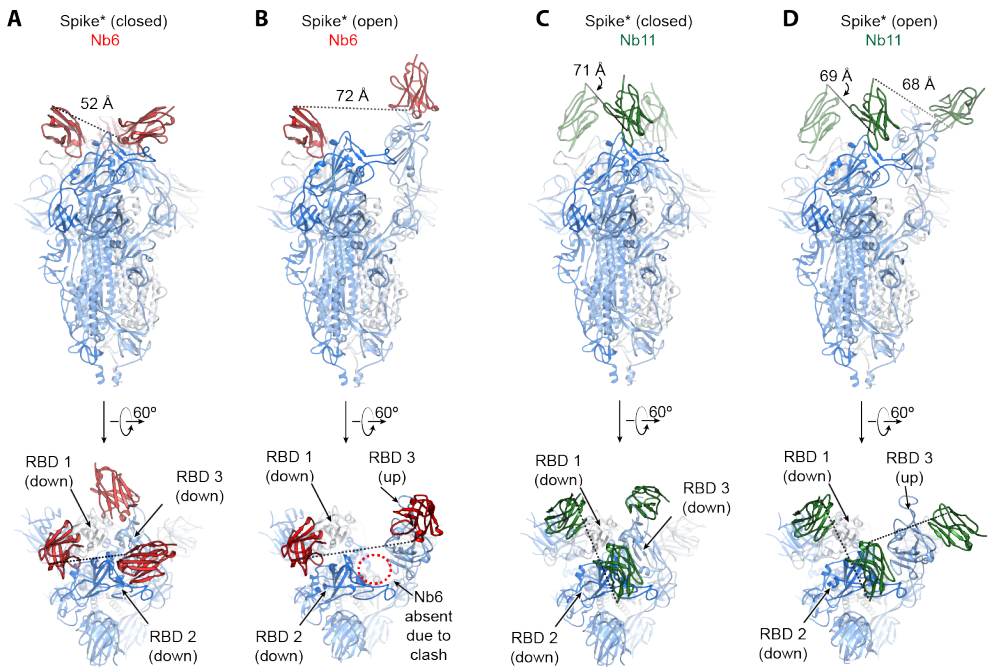


Supplementary Fig. 4. Local resolution of cryo-EM maps

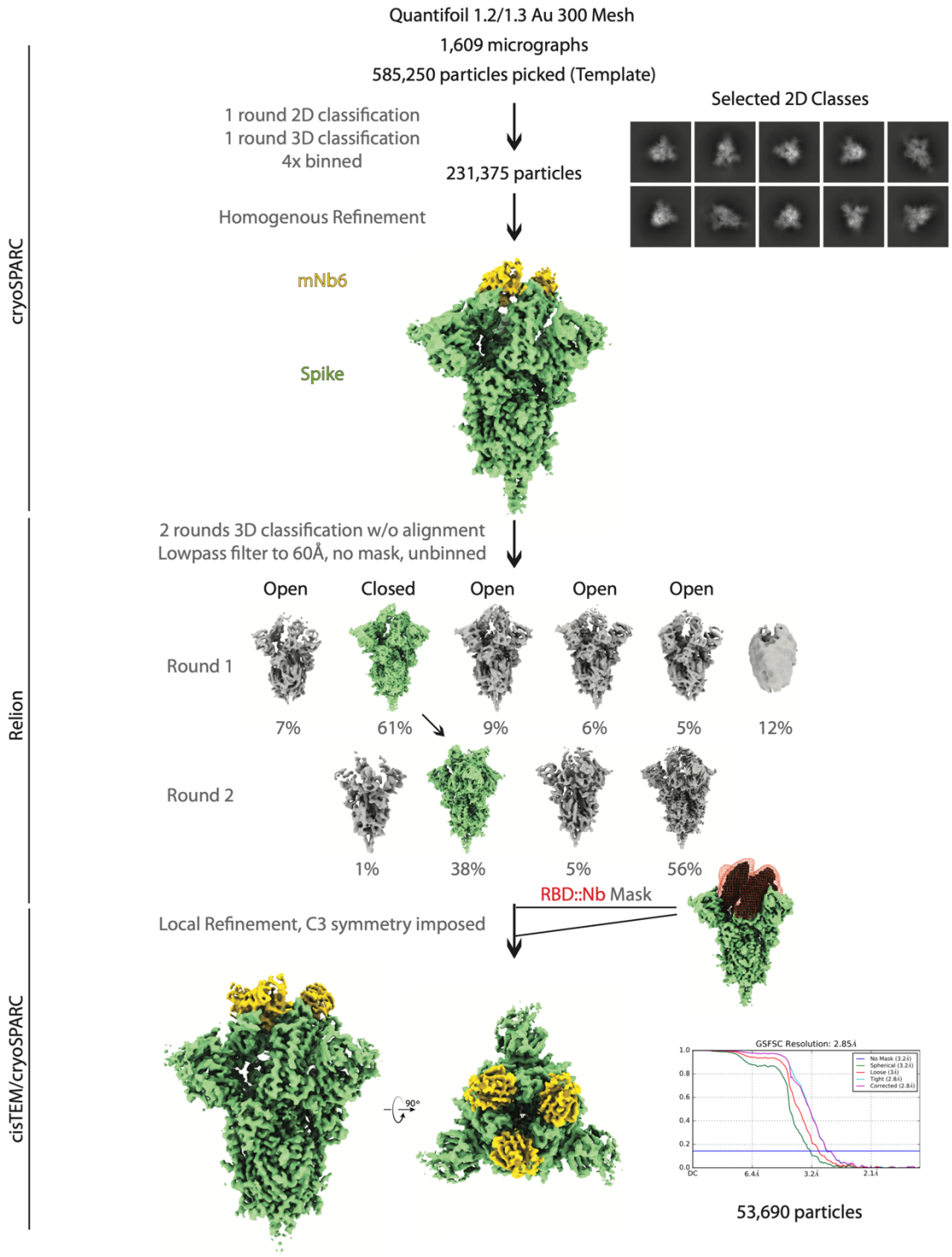
Local resolution estimates of Spike* complexes with A-B) Nb6, C-D) Nb11, and E) mNb6 as generated in cryoSPARC. All maps (except mNb6) are shown with the same enclosed volume. All maps are colored on the same scale, as indicated.



Supplementary Fig. 5. Radiolytic hydroxyl radical footprinting of Spike*. **A,** Change in oxidation rate between Spike* and Nb3-Spike* complexes at all residues. A cluster of highly protected residues in the Spike*-Nb3 complex is observed in the N-terminal domain. **B,** Oxidation rate plots of the two (M177, H207) most heavily protected residues upon Nb3 binding to Spike*. Data points labeled with an asterisk are excluded from rate calculations as these values fall outside of the first order reaction, likely due to extensive oxidation-mediated damage. **C,** Change in oxidation rate mapped onto Spike in the all RBD down conformation.



Supplementary Fig. 6. Modeling of distances for multimeric nanobody design. A, Model of Spike*:Nb6 complex in the closed state. The minimal distance between adjacent Nb6 N- and C-termini is 52 Å (dashed line). **B,** Model of Spike*:Nb6 complex in the open state with Nb6 docked into the cryo-EM density for up-state RBD. Minimal distance between N- and C-termini of both nanobodies is 72 Å**.** Nb6 cannot bind RBD2 in open Spike*, as this would sterically clash with RBD3. **C,** Model of Spike*:Nb11 complex in the closed state. The minimal distance between adjacent Nb6 N- and C-termini is 71 Å (dashed line). **D,** Model of Spike*:Nb11 complex in the open state. The minimal distance between adjacent Nb6 N- and C-termini is 68 Å between Nb11 bound to RBD2 in the down-state and RBD3 in the up-state. For B, the model of Nb6 from A was docked into the cryo-EM map to enable modeling of distance between N- and C-termini. For C and D, a generic nanobody was docked into cryo-EM maps to model the distance between N- and C-termini.



Supplementary Fig. 7. CryoEM workflow for mNb6

A flowchart representation of the classification workflow for the Spike*-mNb6 complex yielding a closed Spike* conformation. From top to bottom, particles were template picked from two separate collections with a set of 20Å low-pass filtered 2D backprojections of apo-Spike* in the

477 closed conformation. Extracted particles were Fourier cropped to 96 pixels prior to 2D
478 classification. Particles in Spike* 2D classes were selected for a round of heterogeneous
479 refinement in cryoSPARC using a 20 Å low-pass filtered volume of apo-Spike* in the closed
480 conformation and additional naïve classes for removal of non-Spike* particles. In RELION,
481 particles in the Spike* 3D class were subject to two rounds of 3D classification without
482 alignment into 6 classes using the same input volume from cryoSPARC 3D classification, low
483 pass filtered to 60 Å, T = 8. Unbinned particles in the Spike*-closed conformation were exported
484 into cisTEM for automatic refinement, followed by local refinement using a mask around the
485 ACE2 RBD::Nanobody interface. Half maps from refinement were imported into cryoSPARC for
486 local resolution estimation as shown in Supplementary Fig. 4.
487
488

489 **Supplementary Table 1. CryoEM datasets**

Sample:	Spike*-Nb6		Spike*-Nb11		Spike*-mNb6
Spike* conformation:	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Closed
EMDB:	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
PDB:		XXXX			XXXX
Data collection and processing					
Microscope/Detector	Titan Krios/Gatan K3 with Gatan Bioquantum Energy Filter				
Imaging software and collection	SerialEM, 3x3 image shift				
Magnification	105,000				
Voltage (kV)	300				
Electron exposure (e–/Å^2)	66				
Dose rate (e–/pix/sec)	8				
Frame exposure (e–/Å^2)	0.55				
Defocus range (μm)	-0.8 to -2.0				
Pixel size (Å)	0.834 (physical)				
Micrographs	5,317		4,103		1,609
Reconstruction					
Autopicked particles (template-based in cryosparc)	2,033,067		1,204,855		585,250
Particles in final refinement	40,125 (cisTEM)	58,493 (cisTEM)	21,570 (cisTEM)	27,611 (RELION)	53,690 (cisTEM)
Symmetry imposed	C1	C3	C1	C1	C3
Map sharpening *B* factor (Å^2)		-90			-140
Map resolution, global FSC (Å)					
FSC 0.5, unmasked/masked	7.8/4.6	4.1/3.4	7.0/4.4	7.6/5.3	3.9/3.3
FSC 0.143, unmasked/masked	4.7/3.8	3.5/3.0	4.3/3.7	5.1/4.2	3.2/2.9
Refinement					
Initial model used (PDB code)		6VXX, 3P0G			6VXX, 3P0G
Model resolution (Å)					
FSC 0.5, unmasked/masked		3.5/3.1			3.2/2.9
Model composition					
Non-hydrogen atoms		26904			27015
Protein residues		3360			3360
B factors (Å^2)					
Protein		97.0			57.5
Ligand		107.4			85.7
R.m.s. deviations					
Bond lengths (Å)		0.014			0.007
Bond angles (°)		1.379			1.027
Validation					
MolProbity score		1.99			1.71
Clashscore		12.70			6.46
Poor rotamers (%)		0.45			0.41
EMRinger score		2.98			4.01
CaBLAM score		3.11			2.95
Ramachandran plot					
Favored (%)		94.49			94.92
Allowed (%)		5.51			5.08
Disallowed (%)		0			0

490
491

492 **Supplementary Table 2. X-ray data collection and refinement statistics**

	mNb6 (PDB XXXX)
Data collection	
Space group	$P2_1$
Cell dimensions	
a, *b*, *c* (Å)	44.56, 71.25, 46.43
α, β, γ (°)	90.0, 114.93, 90.0
Molecules in asymmetric unit	2
Resolution (Å)	71.25 - 2.05 (2.09 - 2.05)[a]
R_{sym} or R_{merge}	0.13 (0.94)[b]
$I / \sigma I$	7.2 (0.9)
Completeness (%)	97.8 (96.6)
Redundancy	6.4 (5.7)
CC (1/2) (%)	99.8 (64.4)
Refinement	
Resolution (Å)	71.25 – 2.05
No. reflections	104195
R_{work} / R_{free} (%)	21.16 / 24.75
No. atoms	
Protein	1798
Ligand/ion	21
Water	131
B-factors	
Protein	33.1
Ligand/ion	76.1
Water	42.2
R.m.s. deviations	
Bond lengths (Å)	0.07
Bond angles (°)	0.826
Ramachandran plot	
Allowed (%)	99.06
Generous (%)	0.94
Disallowed (%)	0

493 [a] Values in parentheses correspond to the highest resolution shell.
494 [b] $R_{merge} = \Sigma|I - \langle I \rangle|/\Sigma I$
495 [c] $R_{work} = \Sigma|F_O - F_C|/\Sigma F_O$
496 [d] $R_{free} = \Sigma|F_O - F_C|/\Sigma F_O$, calculated using a random set containing 5% reflections that were not included throughout
497 structure refinement.

498 **Supplementary Table 3. Nanobody expression plasmids**

499

Plasmid	Nanobody	Plasmid backbone	Resistance Marker
pPW3544	Nb2	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3545	Nb3	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3546	Nb6	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3547	Nb8	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3548	Nb11	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3549	Nb12	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3550	Nb15	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3551	Nb16	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3552	Nb17	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3553	Nb18	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3554	Nb19	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3555	Nb24	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3557	Trivalent Nb6, 20AA length GS linker	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3558	Trivalent Nb3, 15AA length GS linker	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3559	Trivalent Nb11, 15AA length GS linker	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3560	Bivalent Nb3, 15AA length GS linker	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3561	Bivalent Nb6, 15AA length GS linker	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3563	Trivalent mNb6, 20AA length GS linker	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin
pPW3564	mNb6	pet-26b(+)	kanamycin

500

501

502

503 **METHODS**

504 **Expression and purification of SARS-CoV-2 Spike, RBD, and ACE2.**

505 We used a previously described construct to express and purify the pre-fusion SARS-CoV-2
506 Spike ectodomain (Spike*) [15]. ExpiCHO or Expi293T cells (ThermoFisher) were transfected
507 with the Spike* construct per the manufacturer's instructions for the MaxTiter protocol and
508 harvested between 3-9 days after transfection. Clarified cell culture supernatant was loaded
509 onto Ni-Excel beads (Cytiva) followed by extensive washes in 20 mM HEPES pH 8.0, 200 mM
510 sodium chloride, and 10 mM imidazole and elution in the same buffer supplemented with 500
511 mM imidazole. Spike* was concentrated using a 100 kDa MWCO spin concentrator (Millipore)
512 and further purified by size exclusion chromatography over a Superose 6 Increase 10/300
513 column (GE Healthcare) in 20 mM HEPES pH 8.0 and 200 mM sodium chloride. All purification
514 steps were performed at room temperature. The resulting fractions for trimeric Spike* were
515 pooled and either used directly for cryo-EM studies or concentrated and flash frozen in liquid
516 nitrogen with 15% glycerol for other biochemical studies.
517
518 We used a previously described construct to express and purify the SARS-CoV-2 Receptor
519 binding domain (RBD) [43]. Expi293T cells (ThermoFisher) were transfected with the RBD
520 construct per the manufacturer's instructions and harvested between 3-6 days after transfection.
521 Clarified cell culture supernatant was loaded onto Ni-Excel beads (Cytiva) or a His-Trap Excel
522 column (GE Healthcare) followed by washes in 20 mM HEPES pH 8.0, 200 mM sodium
523 chloride, and 10 mM imidazole and elution using the same buffer supplemented with 500 mM
524 imidazole. RBD was concentrated using a 30 kDa MWCO spin concentrator (Millipore) and
525 further purified by size exclusion chromatography over a Superdex 200 Increase 10/300 GL
526 column (GE Healthcare) in 20 mM HEPES pH 8.0 and 200 mM sodium chloride. The resulting
527 fractions were pooled, concentrated, and flash frozen in liquid nitrogen with 10% glycerol.
528
529 For biochemical and yeast display experiments, Spike* and RBD were labeled with freshly
530 prepared stocks of Alexa 647-NHS, Alexa 488-NHS, or Biotin-NHS (ThermoFisher) with a 5-fold
531 stoichiometry for 1 hour at room temperature followed by quenching of NHS with 10 mM Tris pH
532 8.0 for 60 minutes. Labeled proteins were further purified by size exclusion chromatography,
533 concentrated using a spin concentrator (Millipore), and flash frozen in liquid nitrogen with 10-
534 15% glycerol.
535

536 We used an ACE2-ECD (18-614) Fc fusion expression plasmid to express and purify Fc tagged
537 ACE2-ECD [44]. Expi293T cells (ThermoFisher) were transfected with the ACE2-Fc construct
538 per the manufacturer's instructions and harvested between 5-7 days after transfection. Clarified
539 cell culture supernatant was loaded onto a MabSelect Pure 1 mL Column (GE Healthcare).
540 Column was washed with Buffer A (20 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl) and protein was
541 eluted with Buffer B (100 mM Sodium Citrate pH 3.0, 150 mM NaCl) into a deep well block
542 containing 1 M HEPES pH 7.5 to neutralize the acidic elution. ACE2-Fc was concentrated using
543 a 30 kDa MWCO spin concentrator (Millipore) and further purified by size exclusion
544 chromatography over a Superdex 200 Increase 10/300 GL column (GE Healthcare) in SEC
545 Buffer (20 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 5% v/v Glycerol). The resulting fractions were
546 pooled, concentrated, and flash frozen in liquid nitrogen. To obtain monomeric ACE2, 1:50
547 (w/w) His-tagged TEV protease was added to ACE2-Fc and incubated at 4 °C overnight. This
548 mixture was then purified by size exclusion chromatography in SEC Buffer. Monomeric ACE2
549 fractions were pooled and washed with His-resin (1 mL of 50% slurry) to remove excess TEV.
550 The resulting supernatant was pooled, concentrated, and flash frozen in liquid nitrogen.
551
552 **Identification of anti SARS-CoV2 Spike nanobodies**
553 To identify nanobodies against the SARS-CoV-2 Spike ECD, we used a yeast surface displayed
554 library of synthetic nanobody sequences that recapitulate amino acid position specific-variation
555 in natural llama immunological repertoires. This library encodes a diversity of $>2x10^9$ variants,
556 and uses a synthetic stalk sequence for nanobody display, as described previously in a modified
557 vector encoding nourseothricin (NTC) resistance [45]. For the first round of selection, $2x10^{10}$
558 yeast induced in YPG (Yeast Extract-Peptone-Galactose) supplemented with NTC were washed
559 repeatedly in selection buffer (20 mM HEPES, pH 7.5, 150 mM sodium chloride, 0.1% (w/v) low
560 biotin bovine serum albumin, BSA) and finally resuspended in 10 mL of selection buffer
561 containing 200 nM biotinylated-Spike*. Yeast were incubated for 30 minutes at 25 °C, then
562 washed repeatedly in cold selection buffer, and finally resuspended in 10 mL of cold selection
563 buffer containing 200 µL of Miltenyi anti-Streptavidin microbeads. After 30 minutes of incubation
564 at 4 °C, yeast were again washed with cold selection buffer. Spike* binding yeast were captured
565 on a Miltenyi MACS LS column and recovered in YPD (Yeast Extract-Peptone-Dextrose)
566 medium supplemented with NTC.
567
568 For round 2, $4x10^8$ induced yeast from Round 1 were incubated with 100 nM Spike* labeled with
569 Alexa647 in 1 mL of selection buffer for 1 hr at 25 °C. After extensive washes with cold selection

570 buffer, Spike* binding yeast were isolated by fluorescence activated cell sorting (FACS) on a
571 Sony SH800 instrument. A similar approach was used for round 3, with substitution of 10 nM
572 Spike* labeled with Alexa647. Post round 3 yeast were plated on YPD+NTC solid media and
573 768 individual colonies were induced with YPG+NTC media in 2 mL deep well plates. Each
574 individual clone was tested for binding to 4 nM Spike*-Alexa488 by flow cytometry on a
575 Beckman Coulter Cytoflex. To identify nanobodies that disrupt Spike-ACE2 interactions, Spike*
576 binding was repeated in the presence of 0.5-1 μM ACE2-Fc. Out of 768 clones, we identified 21
577 that strongly bind Spike* and are competitive with ACE2 (Supplementary Table 3).
578
579 **Expression and purification of nanobodies**
580 Nanobody sequences were cloned into the pET26-b(+) expression vector using In-Fusion HD
581 cloning (Takara Bio), transformed into BL21(DE3) *E. coli*, grown in Terrific Broth at 37 °C until
582 OD 0.7-0.8, followed by gene induction using 1 mM IPTG for 18-22 hours at 25°C. *E. Coli* were
583 harvested and resuspended in SET Buffer (200 mM Tris, pH 8.0, 500 mM sucrose, 0.5 mM
584 EDTA, 1X cOmplete protease inhibitor (Roche)) for 30 minutes at 25 °C before a 45 minute
585 osmotic shock with a two-fold volume addition of water. NaCl, MgCl2, and imidazole were
586 added to the lysate to 150 mM, 2 mM, and 40 mM respectively before centrifugation at 17-
587 20,000xg for 15 minutes to separate cell debris from the periplasmic fraction. For every liter of
588 bacterial culture, the periplasmic fraction was then incubated with 4 mL of 50% HisPur Ni-NTA
589 resin (Thermo Scientific) which had been equilibrated in Nickel Wash Buffer (20 mM HEPES,
590 pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 40 mM imidazole). This mixture was incubated for 1 hr with rotation at
591 RT before centrifugation at 50xg to collect the resin. The resin was then washed with 5 volumes
592 of Nickel Wash buffer 3 times, each time using centrifugation to remove excess wash buffer.
593 Bound proteins were then eluted using three washes with Elution Buffer (20 mM HEPES, pH
594 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 500 mM imidazole). The eluted protein was concentrated using a 3.5 kDa
595 MWCO centrifugal filter unit (Amicon) before injection onto a Superdex 200 Increase 10/300 GL
596 column equilibrated with 20 mM HEPES, pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl. Nanobody constructs were
597 concentrated again using a 3.5k MWCO centrifugal filter unit, and flash frozen in liquid nitrogen.
598
599 **Affinity determination by surface plasmon resonance**
600 Nanobody (Nb) affinity determination experiments were performed on Biacore T200 and 8K
601 instruments (Cytiva Life Sciences) by capturing the StreptagII-tagged Spike* at 10 μg/mL on a
602 StreptactinXT-immobilized (Iba Life Sciences) CM5 Series S sensor chip (Cytiva Life Sciences)
603 to achieve maximum response (Rmax) of approximately 30 response units (RUs) upon

604 nanobody binding. 2-fold serial dilutions of purified nanobody from 1 μM to 31.25 nM (for
605 monovalent constructs) or from 50 nM to 1.56 nM (for affinity matured and multimeric
606 constructs) were flowed over the captured Spike* surface at 30 μL/minute for 60 seconds
607 followed by 600 seconds of dissociation flow. Following each cycle, the chip surface was
608 regenerated with 3 M guanidine hydrochloride.
609
610 Separately, biotinylated SARS-CoV-2 RBD at 8 μg/mL was loaded onto a preconditioned Series
611 S Sensor Chip CAP chip (Cytiva Life Sciences) to achieve an Rmax of approximately 60 RUs
612 upon nanobody binding. 2-fold serial dilutions in the same running buffer and sample series
613 (parent or affinity matured clone) as the Spike* runs were flowed over the RBD surface at 30
614 μL/minute for 60 seconds followed by 600 seconds of dissociation flow. Chip surface
615 regeneration was performed with a guanidine hydrochloride/sodium hydroxide solution.
616
617 The resulting sensorgrams for all monovalent clones were fit to a 1:1 Langmuir binding model
618 using the Biacore Insight Evaluation Software (Cytiva Life Sciences) or the
619 association/dissociation model in GraphPad Prism 8.0. For determination of kinetic parameters
620 for Nb6-bi and Nb6-tri binding, the dissociation phase was fit to a biexponential decay
621 constrained to two dissociation rate constants shared between each concentration. The
622 association phase was fit separately using an association kinetics model simultaneously fitting
623 the association rate constant for each concentration.
624
625 For nanobody competition experiments, Spike* was loaded onto a StreptactinXT-immobilized
626 CM5 sensor chip as previously described. As in the kinetics experiments, the primary nanobody
627 was flowed over the captured Spike* surface for 60 seconds at 30 μL/minute to achieve
628 saturation. Immediately following this, a second injection of a mixture of primary and variable
629 nanobody at the same concentration as in the primary injection was performed.
630
631 **ACE2 cellular surface binding competition assays**
632 A dilution series of nanobody was generated in PBE (PBS + 0.5% (w/v) BSA + 2 mM EDTA and
633 mixed with Spike*-Alexa647 or RBD-Alexa647. ACE2 expressing HEK293T cells were
634 dissociated with TrypLE Express (ThermoFisher) and resuspended in PBE [20]. The cells were
635 mixed with the Spike*-nanobody solution and incubated for 45 minutes, washed in PBE, and
636 then resuspended in PBE. Cell surface Alexa647 fluorescence intensity was assessed on an
637 Attune Flow Cytometer (ThermoFisher).

638

639 **Affinity maturation of Nb6**

640 A site saturation mutagenesis library of Nb6 was generated by assembly PCR of overlapping
641 oligonucleotides encoding the Nb6 sequence. Individual oligos for each position in CDR1,
642 CDR2, and CDR3 were designed with the degenerate "NNK" codon. The assembled gene
643 product was amplified with oligonucleotides with overlapping ends to enable homologous
644 recombination with the yeast surface display vector as previously described and purified with
645 standard silica-based chromatography [45]. The resulting insert DNA was transformed into
646 *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* strain BJ5465 along with the yeast display vector pYDS2.0 to
647 generate a library of $2x10^8$ transformants. After induction in YPD+NTC medium at 20 °C for 2
648 days, $2x10^9$ yeast were washed in selection buffer (20 mM HEPES, pH 8.0, 150 mM sodium
649 chloride, 0.1% (w/v) low biotin BSA) and incubated with 1 nM biotin-Spike* for 1 hour at 25 °C.
650 Yeast were subsequently washed in selection buffer, resuspended in 1 mL selection buffer, and
651 incubated with 10 µL streptavidin microbeads (Miltenyi) for 15 min. at 4 °C. Yeast were washed
652 again with cold selection buffer and Spike*-binding yeast were isolated by magnetic separation
653 using an LS column (Miltenyi). Recovered yeast were grown in YPD+NTC at 37 °C and induced
654 in YPG+NTC at 20 °C. A second round of selection was performed as above, substituting 100
655 pM RBD-Alexa647 as the antigen. Yeast displaying high affinity clones were selected by
656 magnetic separation using Anti-Cy5 microbeads (Miltenyi) and an LS column. Analysis of the
657 library after the second round of selection revealed a population of clones with clear binding of
658 10 pM RBD-Alexa647. Therefore, 96 individual clones were screened for binding to 10 pM RBD-
659 Alexa647 by flow cytometry. Sequence analysis of eight clones that showed robust binding to
660 10 pM RBD-Alexa647 revealed two consensus mutations, I27Y and P105Y, which were used to
661 generate the affinity matured clone mNb6.

662

663 **Structures of Spike-nanobody complexes by cryo-EM**

664 *Sample preparation and microscopy*

665 To prepare Spike*-nanobody complexes, each nanobody was incubated on ice at a 3-fold molar
666 excess to Spike* at 2.5 µM for 10 minutes. 3 µL of Spike*-nanobody complex was added to a
667 300 mesh 1.2/1.3R Au Quantifoil grid previously glow discharged at 15 mA for 30 seconds.
668 Blotting was performed with a blot force of 0 for 4 seconds at 4°C and 100% humidity in a FEI
669 Vitrobot Mark IV (ThermoFisher) prior to plunge freezing into liquid ethane.

670

For each complex, 120-frame super-resolution movies were collected with a 3x3 image shift collection strategy at a nominal magnification of 105,000x (physical pixel size: 0.834 Å/pix) on a Titan Krios (ThermoFisher) equipped with a K3 camera and a Bioquantum energy filter (Gatan) set to a slit width of 20 eV. Collection dose rate was 8 e^-/pixel/second for a total dose of 66 e^-/$Å^2$. Each collection was performed with semi-automated scripts in SerialEM [46].

Image Processing

For all datasets, dose fractionated super-resolution movies were motion corrected with MotionCor2 [47]. Contrast transfer function determination was performed with cryoSPARC patch CTF [48]. Particles were picked with a 20 Å low-pass filtered apo Spike 2D templates generated from a prior data collection.

Nb6-Spike* and mNb6-Spike* particles were extracted with a 384 pixel box, binned to 96 pixels and subject to single rounds of 2D and 3D classification prior to unbinning for homogenous refinement in cryoSPARC [48]. Refined particles were then imported into Relion3.1 for 3D classification without alignment using the input refinement map low pass filtered to 40 Å [49]. Particles in classes representing the closed conformation of Spike were imported into cisTEM and subject to autorefinement followed by local refinement within a RBD::nanobody masked region [50]. Following local refinement, a new refinement package symmetrized to the C3 axis was created for a final round of local refinement without masking. Final particle counts for each map are as follows: Nb6-Open: 40,125, Nb6-Closed: 58,493, mNb6: 53,690.

Nb11-Spike* particles were extracted with a 512 pixel box, binned to 128 pixels for multiple rounds of 3D classification as described in Figure S4. Following homogenous refinement, particles were exported to Relion3.1. Particle density roughly corresponding to RBD-nanobody complexes was retained post-particle subtraction. 3D classification without alignment was performed on the particle subtracted stacks. Particles in classes with robust RBD-nanobody density were selected, unsubtracted and refined in Relion followed by post-processing. 21,570 particles contributed to the final maps. Final particle counts for each map are as follows: Nb11-Open: 21,570, Nb11-Closed: 27,611. For all maps, final local resolution estimation and GSFSC determination was carried out in cryoSPARC.

Structure modeling

704 Models of Nb6-Spike* and mNb6-Spike* were built using a previously determined structure of
705 closed Spike* (PDB: 6VXX) [14]. A composite model incorporating resolved regions of the RBD
706 was made using a previously determined X-ray crystal structure of the SARS-CoV-2 RBD (PDB:
707 6M0J) [51]. For Nb6, the beta2-adrenergic receptor nanobody Nb80 (PDB: 3P0G) was used as
708 a template to first fit the nanobody into the cryo-EM density map for the Nb6-Spike* complex
709 [52]. Complementarity determining loops were then truncated and rebuilt using RosettaES [53].
710 The final structure was inspected and manually adjusted in COOT and ISOLDE, followed by real
711 space refinement in PHENIX [54-56]. The higher resolution structure of mNb6 enabled manual
712 building of nanobody CDR loops *de novo*, and therefore the Rosetta-based approach was not
713 used for modeling. Final models were analyzed in PHENIX, with statistics reported in
714 Supplementary Table 1.
715
716 For models of Nb11-Spike* complexes presented here, the closest nanobody by sequence in
717 the PDB (beta2-adrenergic receptor Nb60, PDB ID: 5JQH) was fit by rigid-body refinement in
718 COOT into the cryo-EM density map using only the framework regions [57]. While the lower
719 resolution of these maps precluded confident assignment of loop conformations, the overall
720 orientation of Nb11 relative to Spike* was well constrained, enabling accurate modeling of
721 distances between the N- and C- termini of two Nb11 molecules bound to Spike*.
722
723 **Radiolytic hydroxyl radical footprinting and mass-spectrometry of Spike* and Nb3-Spike***
724 Spike* and Nb3 samples were buffer exchanged into 10 mM phosphate buffer (pH 7.4) by
725 extensive dialysis at 25 °C. A 1.5-fold molar excess of Nb3 was added to 5 μM Spike* and the
726 complex was incubated for >24 hr at 25 °C. For radiolytic footprinting, protein concentrations
727 and beam parameters were optimized using an Alexa-488 fluorophore assay [58]. Apo Spike*
728 and Spike*-Nb3 complex at concentrations of 1-3 μM were exposed to a synchrotron X-ray
729 white beam at 6 timepoints between 0-50 ms at beamline 3.2.1 at the Advanced Light Source in
730 Berkeley, CA and were quenched with 10 mM methionine amide immediately post-exposure.
731 Glycans were removed by treatment with 5% SDS, 5 mM DTT at 95 °C for five minutes and
732 subsequent PNGase (Promega) digestion at 37°C for 2 hours. Samples were buffer exchanged
733 into ammonium bicarbonate (ABC) buffer (pH 8.0) using ZebaSpin columns (Thermo Fisher).
734 Alkylation of cysteines was achieved by treatment with 8 M urea and 5 mM DTT at 37°C for 30
735 minutes followed by an incubation with 15 mM iodoacetamide at 25 °C in the dark for 30
736 minutes. All samples were further buffer exchanged to ABC pH 8.0 using ZebaSpin columns

737 and digested with either Trypsin/Lys-C or Glu-C (Promega) at an enzyme:protein ratio of 1:20
738 (w/w) at 37 °C for 8 hours.
739
740 Samples were lyophilized and resuspended in 1% formic acid at 200 fmol/µL concentration. For
741 each MS analysis, 1 µL of sample was injected onto a 5 mm Thermo Trap C18 cartridge, and
742 then separated over a 15 cm column packed with 1.9 µm Reprosil C18 particles (Dr. Maisch
743 HPLC GmbH) by a nanoElute HPLC (Bruker). Separation was performed at 50 °C and a flow
744 rate of 400 µL/min by the following gradient in 0.1% formic acid: 2% to 17% acetonitrile from 0
745 to 20 min, followed by 17% to 28% acetonitrile from 20 to 40 min. The eluent was electrospray
746 ionized into a Bruker timsTOF Pro mass spectrometer and data was collected using data-
747 dependent PASEF acquisition. Database searching and extraction of MS1 peptide abundances
748 was performed using the FragPipe platform with either trypsin or GluC enzyme specificity, and
749 all peptide and protein identifications were filtered to a 1% false-discovery rate [59]. Searches
750 were performed against a concatenated protein database of the Spike protein, common
751 contaminant proteins, and the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* proteome (downloaded July 23,
752 2020). Note, the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* proteome was included to generate a sufficient
753 population of true negative identifications for robust false discovery rate estimation of peptide
754 and protein identifications. Lastly, the area under the curve MS1 intensities reported from
755 FragPipe were summarized for each peptide species using MSstats [60].
756
757 The peak areas of extracted ion chromatograms and associated side-chain modifications were
758 used to quantify modification at each timepoint. Increasing beamline exposure time decreases
759 the fraction of unmodified peptide and can be represented as a site-specific dose-response plot
760 (Supplementary Fig. 5B). The rate of hydroxyl radical reactivity (k_{fp}) is dependent on both the
761 intrinsic reactivity of each residue and its solvent accessibility and was calculated by fitting the
762 dose-response to a pseudo-first order reaction scheme in Graphpad Prism Version 8. The ratio
763 of k_{fp} between apo Spike* and the Spike-Nb3 complex at specific residues gave information on
764 solvent accessibility changes between the two samples. These changes were mapped onto the
765 SARS-CoV-2 Spike (PDB 6XR8) [11]. In some cases, heavily modified residues show a
766 flattening of dose-response at long exposures which we interpret as radical induced damage.
767 These over-exposed timepoints were excluded from the calculation of k_{fp}.
768
769 **mNb6 crystallography and structure determination**

770 Purified mNb6 was concentrated to 18.7 mg/mL and filtered using 0.1 µm hydrophilic PVDF
771 filters (Millipore). mNb6 crystal screens were set up in 96 well plates in hanging drop format at
772 2:1 protein:reservoir in Index and AmSO4 screens (Hampton Research, Aliso Viejo, CA).
773 Crystals in over 60 different screening conditions with various morphologies appeared overnight
774 at ambient temperature and were obtained directly from the screens without further optimization.
775 The crystals were cryoprotected by quick dipping in a solution containing 80% reservoir and
776 20% PEG400 or 20% Glycerol, then mounted in CrystalCap HT Cryoloops (Hampton Research,
777 Aliso Viejo, CA) and flash cooled in a cryogenic nitrogen stream (100 K). All data were collected
778 at the Advanced Light Source (Berkeley, CA) beam line 8.3.1. A single crystal of mNb6 that
779 grew in 0.1 M Tris.HCl pH 8.5, 1.0 M Ammonium sulfate diffracted to 2.05 Å. Integration, and
780 scaling were performed with Xia2, using XDS for indexing and integration and XSCALE for
781 scaling and merging [61]. The structure was solved molecular replacement using PHASER
782 using the structure of nanobody, Nb.b201 (PDB 5VNV) as search model [45, 62]. Model building
783 was performed with COOT and refined with PHENIX and BUSTER[54, 56, 63].
784
785 **Pseudovirus assays for nanobody neutralization**
786 ZsGreen SARS-CoV-2-pseudotyped lentivirus was generated according to a published protocol
787 [20]. The day before transduction, 50,000 ACE2 expressing HEK293T cells were plated in each
788 well of a 24-well plate. 10-fold serial dilutions of nanobody were generated in complete medium
789 (DMEM + 10% FBS + PSG) and pseudotyped virus was added to a final volume of 200 µL.
790 Media was replaced with nanobody/pseudotyped virus mixture for four hours, then removed.
791 Cells were washed with complete medium and then incubated in complete medium at 37 °C.
792 Three days post-transduction, cells were trypsinized and the proportion of ZsGreen+ cells was
793 measured on an Attune flow cytometer (ThermoFisher).
794
795 **Authentic SARS-CoV-2 neutralization assay**
796 SARS-CoV-2, isolate France/IDF0372/2020, was supplied by the National Reference Centre for
797 Respiratory Viruses hosted by Institut Pasteur (Paris, France) and headed by Pr. Sylvie van der
798 Werf. Viral stocks were prepared by propagation in Vero E6 cells in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's
799 medium (DMEM) supplemented with 2% (v/v) fetal bovine serum (FBS, Invitrogen). Viral titers
800 were determined by plaque assay. All plaque assays involving live SARS-CoV-2 were
801 performed at Institut Pasteur Paris (IPP) in compliance with IPP's guidelines following Biosafety
802 Level 3 (BSL-3) containment procedures in approved laboratories. All experiments were
803 performed in at least three biologically independent samples.

804

805 Neutralization of infectious SARS-CoV-2 was performed using a plaque reduction neutralization
806 test in Vero E6 cells (CRL-1586, ATCC). Briefly, nanobodies (or ACE2-Fc) were eight-fold
807 serially diluted in DMEM containing 2% (v/v) FBS and mixed with 50 plaque forming units (PFU)
808 of SARS-CoV-2 for one hour at 37°C, 5% CO_2. The mixture was then used to inoculate Vero E6
809 cells seeded in 12-well plates, for one hour at 37 °C, 5% CO2. Following this virus adsorption
810 time, a solid agarose overlay (DMEM, 10% (v/v) FBS and 0.8% agarose) was added. The cells
811 were incubated for a further 3 days prior to fixation using 4% formalin and plaques visualized by
812 the addition of crystal violet. The number of plaques in quadruplicate wells for each dilution was
813 used to determine the half maximal inhibitory concentrations (IC_{50}) using 3-parameter logistic
814 regression (GraphPad Prism version 8).
815

816 **Nanobody stability studies**

817 Nanobody thermostability by circular dichroism was assessed using a Jasco J710 CD
818 spectrometer equipped with a Peltier temperature control. Individual nanobody constructs were
819 diluted to 5 μM in phosphate buffered saline. Mollar ellipticity was measured at 204 nm (2 nm
820 bandwidth) between 25 °C and 80 °C with a 1 °C/min heating rate. The resulting molar ellipticity
821 values were normalized and plotted in GraphPad Prism 8.0 after applying a nearest neighbor
822 smoothing function.
823

824 For nanobody competition experiments on ACE2 expressing HEK293T cells, nanobodies were
825 incubated at either 25°C or 50°C for one hour. Alternatively, each nanobody was aerosolized
826 with a portable mesh nebulizer producing 2-5 μm particles at a final concentration of 0.5 mg/mL.
827 The resulting aerosol was collected by condensation into a 50 mL tube cooled on ice. Samples
828 were then treated as indicated above to determine IC50 values for binding to Spike*-Alexa647.
829

830 Further experiments assessing mNb6 and mNb6-tri stability to aerosolization and lyophilization
831 used a starting concentration of 0.5 mg/mL of each construct. Aerosolization was performed as
832 described above. For lyophilization, nanobodies were first flash frozen in liquid nitrogen and the
833 solution was dried to completion under vacuum. The resulting dried material was resuspended
834 in 20 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl. Size exclusion chromatography of the unstressed,
835 post-aerosolization, and post-lyophilization samples were performed an a Superdex 75 Increase
836 10/300 column in 20 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl. SPR experiments to assess binding to
837 Spike* were performed as described above.

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QCRG Structural Biology Consortium.

In addition to those listed explicitly in the author contributions, the structural biology portion of this work was performed by the QCRG (Quantitative Biosciences Institute Coronavirus Research Group) Structural Biology Consortium. Listed below are the contributing members of the consortium listed by teams in order of team relevance to the published work. Within each team the team leads are italicized (responsible for organization of each team, and for the experimental design utilized within each team), then the rest of team members are listed alphabetically. *CryoEM grid freezing/collection team:* *Caleigh M. Azumaya,*

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Author Contributions

M.Schoof purified Spike*, RBD, and ACE2 proteins, performed yeast display selections to identify and affinity mature nanobodies, expressed and purified nanobodies, tested activity in cell-based assays, cloned, expressed, and purified multivalent nanobody constructs, and

906 coordinated live virus experiments. B.Faust purified and characterized Spike* protein and
907 candidate nanobodies, developed, performed and analyzed SPR experiments for Spike* and
908 RBD-nanobody affinity determination, developed, performed and analyzed SPR binning,
909 experiments, determined optimal freezing conditions for cryo-EM experiments, processed,
910 refined and generated figures for Nb6, Nb11, and mNb6 EM datasets. R.Saunders expressed
911 and purified ACE2 and nanobodies, developed and performed cell-based assays for inhibition of
912 Spike* binding and pseudovirus assays for determining nanobody efficacy. S.Sangwan
913 expressed and purified Spike*, RBD, ACE2-Fc, and nanobodies, processed cryo-EM data,
914 optimized RBD-nanobody complexes for crystallography, grew crystals of mNb6, collected
915 diffraction data, and refined the X-ray crystal structure of mNb6. V.Rezelj tested efficacy of
916 nanobody constructs in live SARS-CoV-2 infection assays under the guidance of M.Vignuzzi.
917 N.Hoppe purified nanobodies, developed, performed and analyzed SPR binning experiments,
918 developed performed and analyzed variable Nb6-bi and Nb6-tri association experiments, and
919 performed thermal melting stability assays for nanobody constructs. M.Boone developed
920 approaches to express and purify nanobodies from *Pichia pastoris* and developed, performed,
921 and analyzed approaches to quantify nanobody efficacy in live virus assays. C.Azumaya and
922 C.Puchades determined optimal freezing conditions for cryo-EM experiments with B.Faust,
923 optimized data collection approaches, and collected cryo-EM datasets. C.B.Billesbølle
924 expressed and purified Spike*, generated affinity maturation library for Nb6, and performed
925 yeast display selections to identify mNb6. I.Deshpande expressed and purified nanobody
926 constructs. J.Liang and C.B.Billesbølle built the yeast nanobody library enabling discovery of
927 nanobodies in this study. B.Zha. performed live SARS-CoV-2 virus assays to test nanobody
928 efficacy with guidance from O.Rosenberg. C.R.Simoneau and K.Leon performed live SARS-
929 CoV-2 virus assays to test nanobody efficacy with guidance from M.Ott. K.M.White performed
930 live SARS-CoV-2 virus assays to test nanobody efficacy with guidance from A.Garcia-Sastre.
931 A.W.Barile-Hill performed SPR experiments with B.Faust. A.A.Anand, N.Dobzinski, B.Barsi-
932 Rhyne, and Y.Liu. assisted in cloning, expression, and purification of nanobody and pseudovirus
933 constructs. V.Belyy perfomed single-molecule nanobody-Spike* interaction studies. S.Nock
934 prepared media and coordinated lab usage during UCSF's partial shutdown. M.Zimanyi and
935 S.Gupta performed radiolytic footprinting experiments with guidance from C.Ralston and
936 analyzed mass spectrometry data generated by D.L.Swaney. Several members of the QCRG
937 Structural Biology Consortium played an exceptionally important role for this project. A.Rizo,
938 A.Smith, F.Moss collected cryo-EM data on Spike*-nanobody complexes. S.Dickinson,
939 H.Nguyen, K.Verba, C. Chio, U.S.Chio, M.Gupta, M.Jin, F.Li, Y.Liu, G.Merz, K.Zhang analyzed

cryo-EM data from 15 Spike*-nanobody complex datasets. H.Kratochvil set up crystallization trials of various RBD-nanobody complexes, and crystallized, collected diffraction data for, and refined the mNb6 structure. M.Thompson collected, processed, and refined the mNb6 structure. D.Devanji and K.Schaefer expressed and purified Spike*. A.Manglik expressed and purified Spike*, labeled Spike* for biochemical studies, designed selection strategies for nanobody discovery, cloned nanobodies for expression, designed affinity maturation libraries and performed selections, analyzed SPR data, and performed nanobody stability studies. The overall project was supervised by P.Walter and A.Manglik.

Competing Interests

M.Schoof, B.Faust, R.Saunders, N.Hoppe, P.Walter, and A.Manglik are inventors on a provisional patent describing anti-Spike nanobodies described in this manuscript.

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