Augmented prediction of multi-species protein–RNA interactions using evolutionary conservation of RNA-binding proteins

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Highlights

- MuSIC integrates RBP-binding peaks with conservation-weighted label smoothing to predict RBP–RNA interactions across eleven species
- MuSIC outperforms state-of-the-art computational methods in predicting cross-species RBP–RNA interactions
- Cross-species prediction accuracy of RBP-binding peaks correlates with the conservation of RBPs
- MuSIC quantifies the effects of homologous SNVs on RBP binding with experimental validation in mouse

Abstract

RNA-binding proteins (RBPs) play critical roles in gene expression regulation. Recent studies have begun to detail the RNA recognition mechanisms of diverse RBPs. However, given the array of RBPs studied so far, it is implausible to experimentally profile RBP-binding peaks for hundreds of RBPs in multiple non-model organisms. Here, we introduce MuSIC (**Mu**lti-**S**pecies RBP–RNA **I**nteractions using **C**onservation), a deep learning-based framework for predicting cross-species RBP–RNA interactions by leveraging label smoothing and evolutionary conservation of RBPs across 11 diverse species ranging from human to yeast. MuSIC outperforms state-of-the-art computational methods, and provides predicted RBP-binding peaks across species with high accuracy. The prediction confidence is higher in the closely related species, partially due to the RBP conservation patterns. Finally, the effects of homologous genetic variants on RBP binding can be computationally quantified across species, followed by experimental validations. The target transcripts with disrupted binding events are enriched with the ubiquitination-associated pathways. To summarize, MuSIC provides a useful computational framework for predicting RBP–RNA interactions cross-species and quantifying the effects of genetic variants on RBP binding, offering novel insights into the RBP-mediated regulatory mechanisms implicated in human diseases.

Keywords

RBP–RNA interaction, deep learning, protein conservation, cross-species prediction, post-transcriptional regulation

Introduction

RNA-binding proteins (RBPs) play an important role that interact with intracellular RNAs by recognizing specific RNA motifs, and perform important biological functions including RNA transcription, splicing, transport, translation, and stability [1–3]. Disruptions in RBP–RNA interactions have been implicated in the pathogenesis of various diseases, particularly cancer and neurodegenerative diseases [4,5].

Genetic variants, including single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) and single nucleotide variants (SNVs), can alter the RBP-binding affinity, thereby disrupting RNA recognition and contributing to the development of various diseases [6–8]. For example, the genetic variants in the iron-responsive element of *FTL* can impair the binding of IRP1 to *FTL* mRNA, leading to hyperferritinaemia-cataract syndrome [9]. Similarly, the genetic variants in *TCF3* can hinder the binding of hnRNPH1 to exon 18b, thus disrupting alternative splicing of *TCF3* and promoting Burkitt lymphoma development [10]. These cases highlight the critical roles of RBP–RNA interactions in human disease pathogenesis.

Model organisms, such as mouse and zebrafish, are widely used in revealing the pathogenic mechanisms of complex human diseases [11,12], where normal RBP–RNA interactions could be potentially disrupted by genetic variants [13,14]. Various high-throughput experimental methods have been applied to identify RBP-binding peaks both *in vitro* [15–17] and *in vivo* [18–21]. For example, PAR-CLIP technology has been applied to the mouse for exploring the regulatory roles of IGF2BP3 and LIN28B in hematopoietic reprogramming [22]. However, it is still unrealistic to generate the binding profiles of hundreds of RBPs in human and animal models using *in vivo* high-throughput experimental methods.

With the recent advancements in AI technologies, computational methods leveraging large-scale RBP–RNA binding data can effectively learn RBP binding characteristics [19,23,24]. Several computational methods using machine learning [25,26] and deep learning [27–31] technologies have been developed to predict RBP-binding

peaks and model their RNA sequence preferences. However, the predictions by these

traditional computational methods are generally restricted in the specific species,

where the CLIP-seq datasets are generated. Given the fact that only a minority of the

RBPs that have been studied by CLIP-seq technologies are from non-human

organisms—65 RBPs identified in yeast, 45 in mouse, and only 5-6 in species such

as fly, worm, and *A. thaliana* [32], it is vital to develop novel computational methods to

predict RBP–RNA interactions in the cross-species tasks[33,34].

The style transfer methods have been successfully applied in the field of computer

vision, where similarity-guided label smoothing strategy could improve the cross-style

performance [35–37]. In our study, the analogies of the similarity features in label

smoothing can be the sequence and structural conservation of RBPs. RBPs have

been shown to be relatively highly conserved across species, particularly for the core

RNA-binding domains (RBDs) [38–40]. Consistently, the RBP-binding motifs from the

RBPs containing highly conserved RBDs also show notable degree of conservation

[41–43]. These observations inspire us to apply the label smoothing strategy to the

prediction of cross-species RBP–RNA interactions.

In this study, we develop MuSIC (**Mu**lti-**S**pecies RBP–RNA **I**nteractions using

Conservation), a deep learning framework for cross-species RBP–RNA interaction

prediction by leveraging the multi-level conservation patterns of RBPs. We show that

MuSIC can accurately predict RBP-binding peaks across species and outperforms

existing state-of-the-art computational methods, particularly in the closely related

species. We then apply MuSIC to systematically profile the RBP-binding peaks and

motifs for 186 RBPs across 11 species. Finally, we use MuSIC to quantify the effects

of SNVs on RBP binding, providing insights into the RBP-mediated regulatory

mechanisms associated with human diseases.

Results

Evolutionarily conserved RBPs exhibit similar RNA-binding preference

Previous studies have revealed that RBDs, the core functional elements in RBPs, exhibit a significantly slower rate of sequence evolution compared to genomic sequence context surrounding these RBDs, indicating their critical functions in regulating RNA recognition [38]. We collected protein sequences and predicted structures of 216 RBPs from 11 species ranging from human to yeast, including human, orangutan, monkey, mouse, rat, chicken, frog, zebrafish, fly, *A. thaliana* and yeast, to systematically assess the conservation patterns of RBPs and their core RBDs (see **Methods** for details). Briefly, the conservation patterns of RBPs and their core RBDs was evaluated based on sequence and structure similarity, respectively (**Fig. 1a**, **Supplementary Fig. 1** and **Supplementary Table 1**). As expected, both sequence and structural similarities between human and non-human species declined with the increasing evolutionary distance (**Fig. 1a**). In particular, the protein sequence exhibited higher conservation for the core RBDs compared to the full-length RBPs; however, the structural similarity for both core RBDs and full-length RBPs remained relatively high across the 11 species ranging from human to yeast (**Fig. 1a** and **Supplementary Fig. 1**), indicating the fundamental importance of local structures of core RBDs for RNA recognition.

We then sought to partition the 216 RBPs into different groups based on their conservation patterns across the 11 species (**Supplementary Table 2**) and showed cases in each group (**Fig. 1b**): (i) highly conserved (1169, accounting for 49.0%), showing conservation in both sequence and structure in closely related species such as human and mouse, exemplified with the case of AGO2 protein; (ii) considerable conserved (769, accounting for 32.2%), showing conservation in full-length and RBD structure, such as DDX51; (iii) intermediately conserved (426, accounting for 17.8%), showing conservation in only RBD structure, such as RBM10; and (iv) weakly conserved (23, accounting for 1.0%), such as SERBP1. We found that almost all the RBPs (>99% of the total) exhibit structural conservation in their RBDs, consistent with previous studies showing that RBDs of the same RBP are highly structurally conserved across species [44,45].

Previous studies have shown that RBPs containing structurally conserved RBDs tend to recognize and bind their RNA target with similar sequence patterns [41,45,46]. We first compared the distribution of RBP-binding peaks from the homologous RBPs along mRNAs in human and mouse, exemplified with the case of SRRM4 and LIN28A (Fig. 1c and Supplementary Fig. 2a). As expected, we observed a high correlation of the RBP-binding peak distributions between human and mouse (SRRM4 r = 0.96, LIN28A r = 0.91, Spearman's rank correlation test). Notably, SRRM4 showed stronger preference of binding on the stop codon and a depletion around the start codon (Fig. 1c), suggesting the critical roles of SRRM4 in regulating alternative splicing of RNA within these regions [47]. Next, we explored the motif-level conservation of RBPs using the ATtRACT database [48], which contains experimentally validated binding motifs in multiple species. Comparative analysis of RBP-binding motifs between human and mouse revealed a high degree of conservation (e.g., UUCUGUG motif for RC3H1, GGGGGCUG motif for HNRNPF, GGAG motif for LIN28A) (Fig. 1d). Moreover, both the structures derived from X-ray diffraction (Fig. 1e) and AlphaFold3 [49] prediction (Supplementary Fig. 2b-e) suggest that the homologous RBPs from different species exhibit similar three-dimensional interaction patterns between the interface residues in RBPs and their recognized target binding motifs (PDB ID 4QIL in human and 4QI2 in mouse) (Fig. 1e). Taken together, these results suggest that RBPs show high sequence and structural conservation across species, and maintain high conservation in their RNA-binding patterns, including motifs, binding regions within transcripts, and key interacting residues.

Inspired by the aforementioned observations and previous studies[30,33,43], we aim to develop a novel computational model to systematically predict the RBP–RNA interactions in the target species (e.g., non-human species) by integrating the RBP-binding peaks from the source species (e.g., human) and the RBP similarity patterns between species. We leveraged the large-scale RBP-binding peaks from different species (human, mouse, and zebrafish) to construct the computational model. We initially found 23 homologous RBPs between human and mouse, and one homologous RBP between human and zebrafish with available datasets from POSTAR3

179 (**Supplementary Fig. 2f**), among which 38 datasets from 14 RBPs were curated for
180 the training and validation of the cross-species model (see **Methods** for details;
181 **Supplementary Table 3**).

Overview of MuSIC algorithm

We developed MuSIC, a deep learning framework that could integrate RBP-binding
peaks and cross-species conservation information of RBPs to accurately model and
predict RBP–RNA interactions in diverse non-human species. Briefly, the MuSIC
framework consists of four components (**Fig. 2a**): (i) pre-processing input data:
collecting peaks of RBPs from multiple species, and constructing training and
validation sets; (ii) feature engineering: incorporating nucleotide sequences and RNA
secondary structures to learn RBP-binding preferences and enhance the prediction
ability of the model (**Fig. 2b**); (iii) predicting RBP–RNA interactions**:** dynamic
optimization on the prediction results using label smoothing regularization and gradient
weight adaptation in a convolutional neural network (CNN); and (iv) analyzing RBP–
RNA interactions: cross-species motif identification and other downstream
applications.

We realized that the cross-species prediction tasks often have great challenges
in generalization, e.g., the ability to accurately predict RBP–RNA interactions in mouse
based on the same distribution as the training data in human [33,34]. There are several
disadvantages in the existing deep learning-based methods, such as overfitting
caused by the limitations of one-hot label loss functions, and heightened sensitivity to
label noise and boundary ambiguities inherent in one-hot supervision [36]. To this end,
we leveraged the label smoothing strategy that has been widely used in the field of
computer vision to facilitate the cross-style classification [35]. In MuSIC, the conservation
of RBPs across species can be used to enhance the model generalization and mitigate
overfitting in a similar way. Briefly, MuSIC employs a novel approach in applying the
label smoothing strategy, in which the one-hot labels were converted into soft labels
based on the pre-defined RBP conservation scores [37]. The cross-entropy loss was
computed for both label types, with the final loss obtained by weighting and summing
the two components (**Fig. 2c**). In addition, we used gradient weight adaptation

algorithm to dynamically adjust the weight of each loss component during the model
training (**Fig. 2d**). Next, the MuSIC model combines several convolutional layers,
residual blocks and the Squeeze-and-Excitation (SE) module to capture and enhance
RBP binding features learning, in which overfitting could be minimized by dropout and
early stopping (**Fig. 2a, e**). Finally, the learned features were integrated using the fully
connected layers to generate the prediction outputs (see **Methods** for details).

Existing state-of-the-art computational methods typically utilize input sequence
lengths of 101nt [28,30,31] or 400nt [26,50]. We found that increasing the input sequence
length to 200nt could significantly improve the Area Under the Curve (AUC) score in
cross-species prediction (**Fig. 2f** and **Supplementary Fig. 3a**). The inclusion of label
smoothing, and gradient adaptation could further improve the AUC score (**Fig. 2f** and
Supplementary Fig. 3b). Notably, incorporating predicted RNA structures could
further enhance the AUC score to 0.85 in cross-species prediction (**Fig. 2f**). We also
evaluated the prediction performance using the experimentally measured *in vivo* RNA
structures instead of the predicted RNA structures (**Supplementary Fig. 3c**). The
predicted RNA structures were used in the model because of the limited performance
gains by using the *in vivo* RNA structures, as well as very few *in vivo* RNA structure
datasets are available in other species. Taken together, these results reveal that
extending the sequence length and applying label smoothing could significantly
improve the performance of cross-species generalization.

We then characterized the contribution of each component of the MuSIC
framework to the performance of feature learning. The positive and negative samples
of input RNA sequences cannot be clearly separated in the original feature space
using t-SNE (**Supplementary Fig. 3d**). After adding the SE module and residual block
processing, the t-SNE clustering performance on the positive and negative samples
could be significantly improved, thus leading to the apparent discriminative power of
the final output from the fully connected layers (**Supplementary Fig. 3d**).

The classification performance of MuSIC's classifier was benchmarked against
diverse machine learning and deep learning classifiers using the identical input
features. We found that MuSIC consistently outperformed all the baseline classifiers,
confirming the robustness and effectiveness of MuSIC in modeling RBP binding
across species (**Supplementary Fig. 3e, f**).

MuSIC outperforms existing computational methods in predicting cross-species RBP–RNA interactions

We evaluated the prediction performance of MuSIC using 262 datasets from 186
RBPs, benchmarked under both within-species (224 datasets from 186 RBPs) and
cross-species (38 datasets from 14 RBPs) scenarios (**Supplementary Table 3**). All
the datasets were processed using a uniform preprocessing pipeline to ensure
fairness in the performance evaluation (see **Methods** for details). Briefly, we
performed a systematic comparison of prediction accuracy with four state-of-the-art
computational methods, including HDRNet [31], PrismNet [30], DeepBind [28], and
GraphProt [26]. As expected, MuSIC showed better prediction accuracy than other
methods for the within-species prediction (AUC: MuSIC = 0.88, HDRNet = 0.87,
PrismNet = 0.86, DeepBind = 0.67, GraphProt = 0.72) (**Supplementary Fig. 4a**).

We then evaluated the prediction accuracy of MuSIC and other computational
methods in the cross-species prediction, where we trained the model in human and
validated in mouse and zebrafish (19 datasets). MuSIC outperformed other methods,
showing an obvious improvement of in AUC (AUC: MuSIC = 0.85, HDRNet = 0.73,
PrismNet = 0.73, DeepBind = 0.71, GraphProt = 0.70; **Fig. 3a**), as well as in the Area
Under the Precision-Recall Curve (PRAUC) and accuracy (ACC) metrics
(**Supplementary Fig. 4b, c**). In addition, we found that MuSIC a significant
performance improvement of AUC for predicting RBP–RNA interactions in the closely
related predictions, e.g., trained in human and validated in mouse (**Supplementary**
Fig. 4d-f). For example, MuSIC showed AUCs of 0.88 for YTHDC2 and 0.89 for TAF15
in the cross-species prediction, a significant improvement than other computational
methods (**Fig. 3b** and **Supplementary Fig. 5a**). Taken together, these results showed
that MuSIC could improve the prediction accuracy of RBP–RNA interactions than other

computational methods, especially under the cross-species scenario. Consistently,

MuSIC showed better performance in separating the positive and negative samples of

input RNA sequences in the feature space than other computational methods (Fig. 3c

and Supplementary Fig. 5b).

Finally, we compared the prediction accuracy of MuSIC and other computational

methods by evaluating to what degree the RBP-binding peaks from CLIP-seq

experiments could be rediscovered (see Methods for details). Briefly, the model was

trained based on the RBP-binding peaks in human, followed by predicting peaks

across all the transcripts in mouse (for 22 RBPs) and zebrafish (for 1 RBP)

(Supplementary Table 4). For each RBP, we observed that MuSIC showed

consistently better performance than other computational methods (Fig. 3d),

particularly on the cases of AGO2, SRRM4, and Hnrnpa1 (Fig. 3e). Notably, HDRNet

was excluded in this analysis due to its reliance on the experimental RNA structure

features, which were not available in the relevant mouse datasets. For all the 23 RBPs

analyzed here, the predicted peaks by MuSIC showed high correlation with the

experimentally derived ones (r = 0.73, Spearman's rank correlation test;

Supplementary Fig. 6a-c). Here, we showcased the site-level prediction performance

of MuSIC using SRSF3 within the local genomic region (chr7: 96,200,000–96,400,000)

in mouse, where 13 out of 17 experimentally derived peaks could be successfully

recovered by MuSIC (Fig. 3f). In contrast, only 4 peaks could be predicted by other

computational methods. These findings confirm the feasibility and effectiveness of

MuSIC in accurately capturing RBP–RNA interactions across species.

MuSIC generates systematic RBP-binding predictions in diverse species

The aforementioned results reveal that MuSIC could generate better cross-species

predictions than other computational methods, particularly when the source and target

species are more evolutionarily closed. It will be useful to explore to what degree the

source and target species are evolutionarily closed, then the MuSIC can generate

reliable prediction results. We then evaluated the relationship between the prediction

accuracy and the RBP conservation between species in terms of both their sequence

and structure (Supplementary Fig. 7a; see Methods for details). Notably, we

observed a strong positive correlation (r = 0.76, Pearson's correlation test; **Fig. 4a**)
between the prediction accuracy (measured by AUC) and the RBP conservation based
on 14 RBPs shared between mouse and zebrafish, indicating that the degree of RBP
conservation could be used to quantificationally threshold the prediction results of
RBP–RNA interactions. We then predicted the RBP–RNA interactions for the 10
species in a broad evolutionary range using MuSIC, and filtered low-confidence
prediction results based on the degree of RBP conservation equivalent to AUC of 0.8
(see **Methods** for details).

As expected, more than 90% of the RBPs showed high-confidence prediction
results (i.e., with prediction AUC > 0.8) in the species closely related to human,
including orangutan, monkey, mouse and rat (**Supplementary Fig. 7b**). In contrast,
only a small fraction (32.9%–68.1%) of the RBPs showed high-confidence prediction
results in the remaining distantly related species, such as yeast, *A. thaliana* and fly
(**Supplementary Fig. 7b**). Taken together, these findings confirm that MuSIC performs
significantly better in the closely related species, by leveraging the RBP conservation
patterns in terms of both sequence and structure (**Supplementary Fig. 7b** and
Supplementary Table 5).

MuSIC improves RBP-binding motif identification in diverse species

Previous studies have revealed that conserved RBPs tend to have conserved RBP-
binding motifs during evolution, which has been validated by some specific RBPs [41,42].
However, this hypothesis has not been systematically tested in a broad set of RBPs.
To this end, we first predicted the RBP-binding peaks across all the 11 species using
the trained 2,046 RBP models, and identified the enriched RBP-binding motifs in the
human and non-human species (**Supplementary Table 5**). The predicted enriched
motifs in the non-human species could be successfully recapitulated by the well-known
RBP binding sequence preference [48]. For example, the motif CAUCU for YBX3, GGA
for SRSF1 and polyC for KHSRP could be rediscovered in mouse, rat and chicken,
respectively (**Fig. 4b** and **Supplementary Fig. 7c**). We then generated a catalog of
RBP-binding motifs in all the 11 species ranging from human to yeast, and visualized
the motif clustering based on their similarities (**Fig. 4c**; see **Methods** for details).
Notably, RBP-binding motif prediction failed for certain RBPs due to their weak or

undetectable binding signals in the distantly related species, such as yeast, fly, and
zebrafish.

The inferred RBP-binding motifs with high confidence showed distinct degree of
conservation during evolution (**Supplementary Fig. 7d** and **8**, **Supplementary Table**
5). For example, HNRNPA1 was predicted to contain GA-rich (e.g., GAA/AG) motifs
in the closely related species (e.g., orangutan, monkey, and mouse) (**Supplementary**
Fig. 7d). In contrast, the UGUANA-like motifs for PUM2 could be predicted in diverse
species ranging from human to yeast (**Supplementary Fig. 7d**), consistent with the
well-known motif UGUANAUA for PUM2 across multiple species [51]. Overall, the
predicted RBP-binding peaks by MuSIC enables the identification of RBP-binding
motifs in diverse non-human species, revealing the conserved and diverged binding
preference of specific RBPs.

MuSIC reveals evolutionarily conserved RBP-binding peaks

It has been shown that the RBP-binding peaks from an RBP are either evolutionarily
conserved or species-specific [43,52]. The conservation patterns of RBP-binding peaks
could be influenced by both the RBP itself and the conservation of the target RNA
sequence. To systematically evaluate the conservation of RBP-binding across species,
we analyzed the predicted RBP-binding peaks of 186 RBPs across 11 species in the
conserved transcripts (**Supplementary Fig. 9a, b**; see **Methods** for details). As
expected, we observed higher proportion of conserved RBP-binding peaks in the more
closely related species (**Fig. 5a**). Almost 64% of the total RBPs analyzed here
exhibited considerable global patterns of RBP-binding peaks conservation (**Fig. 5a**).
We highlighted two RBPs, RBM15B and ALKBH1, with their RBP-binding peaks from
9 species on the evolutionarily conserved genomic region (**Fig. 5b**). Notably, there
were fewer or none evolutionarily conserved RBP-binding peaks in the distantly
related species.

We further investigated the conservation of RBP-binding peaks by analyzing the
RBPs containing the same protein family from different species. The YTH family RBPs,

which contain YTH protein domains, exhibited consistently strong RBP-binding peaks conservation across species (**Supplementary Fig. 9c**). In contrast, the CPSF family RBPs showed lower RBP-binding peaks conservation in the distantly related species (**Supplementary Fig. 9c**), consistent with previous studies reporting gradient conservation of the RBP-binding peaks [43]. Further exploration of the relationship between RBP-binding peaks conservation and species evolution revealed that, while CPSF family RBPs maintained the steady degree of RBP-binding peaks conservation of in mammals, an obviously decrease showed among the distantly related species (i.e., from frog; **Fig. 5c**). Similar patterns could be also observed in the YTH family RBPs (**Supplementary Fig. 9d**). Taken together, these results indicate that the RNA-binding domains may play critical roles in maintaining the conserved RBP-binding peaks across species.

MuSIC prioritizes genetic variation with consistent effects influencing RBP-binding across species

Genetic variations, such as SNVs, can potentially alter RBP-binding affinity by disrupting RNA target recognition, and thus cause functional abnormalities and severe diseases [8,53,54]. The ability of predicting RBP-binding peaks across species by MuSIC enables us to quantify and analyze the effects of SNVs on RBP binding in the homologous regions between human and non-human species, which will be valuable for leveraging model organisms such as mouse to interpret the RBP-mediated mechanisms of human disease-associated SNVs [10,55].

We first quantified and compared the binding affinity on the local regions with (i.e., alternative allele) and without (i.e., reference allele) SNVs using the eCLIP data [56] from 103 RBPs (**Supplementary Fig. 10a**; see **Methods** for details). We found that SNVs detected in CLIP data were relevant to modulating RBP-binding affinity (**Supplementary Table 6**). Inspired by these findings, we further evaluated the consistency between MuSIC predictions and experimental data for SNV effects. We found that MuSIC could accurately predict the RBP-binding affinity on the local region containing the reference and alternative alleles, which was exemplified with the cases

of SRSF1 and DDX3X (**Fig. 6a, b** and **Supplementary Fig. 10b**; see **Methods** for

details).

Next, we ask whether MuSIC could be applied in quantifying the effects of SNVs

in the homologous regions between species (**Fig. 6c**; see **Methods** for details). By

applying the analysis framework, we systematically screened the 32,207 synonymous

SNVs in human genome, corresponding to 85,599 SNVs in the homologous regions

in mouse genome. We predicted 59,811 SNVs in mouse genome that could potentially

disrupt RBP binding (i.e., ΔSNV < -0.5) (**Fig. 6c**). Here, we showed an example: the

SNV NC_000006.11: g.4059022A>G in the human transcript NM_003913.5 was

predicted as disrupting PUM2 binding (ΔSNV = -0.898) (**Fig. 6d**), consistent with the

predicted effect of the SNV located in the homologous mouse transcript

ENSMUST00000220965.2 (ΔSNV = -0.805) (**Fig. 6e**). Furthermore, we performed

RNA pull-down *in vitro* and POND-qPCR [57] *in vivo* assays to validate the predictions

by MuSIC. The POND (**P**rotein nanocage-emp**O**wered **N**on-**D**estructive) method is a

recently developed novel technique for *in vivo* detection of RBP–RNA interactions,

which enables selective packaging of RBP–RNA complexes into extracellular

nanovesicles [57] (**Supplementary Fig. 11a**). We focused on three SNVs predicted by

MuSIC showing disrupted binding affinity by PUM2 in both human and mouse

(**Supplementary Table 7**). The RNA pull-down *in vitro* results confirmed that the

alternative allele could indeed significantly impact PUM2 binding on the target RNA

sequences in human and mouse (**Fig. 6f** and **Supplementary Fig. 11b, c**). In addition,

the POND-qPCR *in vivo* results also supported these observations in human and

mouse (**Fig. 6g**), confirming that MuSIC can generate accurate and reliable prediction

on the effects of homologous SNVs on RBP binding across species.

Pervasive influenced RBP-binding implicated in disease mechanisms

Among all the 186 RBPs analyzed for their binding affinity changes on the SNVs

in mouse genome, 79 (42.5%) RBPs were found to be enriched with the biological

processes associated with ubiquitination regulation and protein degradation (**Fig. 6h**

and **Supplementary Fig. 12a, b**). Previous studies have revealed that ubiquitination-

related processes are implicated in the pathogenesis of complex diseases, such as

cancer [58–61] and neurodegenerative diseases [62–65], which can be also validated by the
predictions by MuSIC (**Supplementary Fig. 12c**). These findings suggest the critical
roles of SNVs in modulating RBP binding and influencing the ubiquitination-associated
processes, which may be implicated in complex disease mechanisms through
disrupting protein homeostasis.

In our analysis, TARDBP was prioritized as highly related to the ubiquitination-
related processes. TARDBP has been reported to be critical in regulating protein
homeostasis and protein folding, and abnormal TARDBP binding on the target RNA
transcripts can lead to several diseases in human and mouse [66–70]. We confirmed that
the SNV in mouse could disrupt TARDBP binding to *Usp25*, a gene involved in
ubiquitin metabolism (**Supplementary Fig. 13a**). Moreover, the TARDBP-bound
genes perturbed by SNVs were significantly enriched in the functions related to neural
development, ubiquitination, deubiquitination, and protein metabolism
(**Supplementary Fig. 13b, c**).

Discussion

Existing computational methods for predicting RBP–RNA interactions [26,28,30,31] were
generally developed for the within-species tasks, having difficulties in predicting cross-
species. In this study, we developed MuSIC, a novel computational method that can
accurately predict RBP-binding peaks in the species lacking available CLIP datasets
by leveraging the multi-level conservation patterns of the RBP. Compared to other
similar computational methods, MuSIC showed superior performance in predicting
RBP-binding peaks on the cross-species tasks. We then systematically predicted
RBP-binding peaks and their enriched sequence motifs for 186 RBPs in human and
10 non-human species using MuSIC. We confirmed that the conservation patterns of
the predicted RBP-binding peaks were consistent with previous studies [42,43,52]. Finally,
we applied MuSIC to investigate the effects of SNVs on RBP binding, particularly
focusing on the imbalance in RBP binding induced by SNVs and exploring their
potential connections to diseases such as cancer and neurodegenerative disorders.

The following improvements in the model architecture are critical for the
augmented prediction performance of MuSIC in the cross-species tasks: optimization
of input feature length and label smoothing. Previous studies have showed that
increasing input sequence length can dramatically improve the model performance
[24,71]. In our study, we revealed that increasing the input sequence length from 101nt to
200nt could significantly improve the prediction performance across species (AUC
from 0.55 to 0.75). In contrast, increasing the input sequence length from 200nt to
400nt would lead to decreased model performance. Increasing the input sequence
length can not only provide more useful sequence information, but also may include
noisy and redundant sequence information for modeling RBP binding. Inspired by the
concepts from computer vision, we implemented label smoothing in the model to
further improve prediction performance [35–37]. We showed that label smoothing and the
gradient weight adaptation mechanism could significantly improve cross-species
predictions. This strategy reflects the inherently dynamic nature of biomolecular
recognition, which operates on a continuum rather than a binary decision framework
[72].

The MuSIC model exhibited lower prediction confidence in the distantly related
species, such as fly, *A. thaliana* and yeast, partially due to the decreased evolutionary
conservation of RBPs in these species. With the advancement in large language
models, RBP-guided RNA generation strategies could increase the prediction
confidence of RBP-binding peaks in distantly related species [73]. For example, BERT-
RBP [74] was developed by adapting the pretrained BERT architecture and leveraging
long-range RNA sequence features in predicting RNA-RBP interactions with improved
performance. Similarly, ZHMolGraph [75] was proposed to predict novel RBP–RNA
interactions by combining graph neural networks with unsupervised large language
models. In the future, we hope that incorporating large language model-based
diffusion methods into the MuSIC model can improve the prediction performance by
complementing the low conservation of RBPs in the distantly related species.

Previous studies revealed that genetic variation in RNA can potentially reduce
RBP-binding affinity [8,53,76]. However, the effects of SNVs on RBP binding has not fully

explored, particularly in the non-model organisms. In our study, we quantified the
effects of SNVs on RBP binding in the homologous regions between human and
mouse, and furthermore experimentally validated these prediction results *in vitro* and
in vivo. Our results revealed the evolutionary conservation of genetic variation
influencing RBP binding across species, and found that the SNVs that could potentially
alter RBP–RNA interactions are associated with human diseases [9,10]. We then
performed a comprehensive analysis on the homologous human SNVs in mouse to
quantify their binding affinity changes for each of the 186 RBPs. Interestingly, the
disrupted binding events generally are recognized by TARDBP, and the target
transcripts are enriched with the ubiquitination-associated pathways [31]. The
dysregulation of ubiquitin–proteasome system (UPS) can lead to protein misfolding
and accumulation, which has been linked to human diseases including cancer and
neurodegenerative disorders [65,77].

In summary, we propose MuSIC as a model to predict RBP-binding peaks across
species. MuSIC outperformed state-of-the-art prediction models, and generated a
catalog of predicted RBP-binding peaks of 186 RBPs with high accuracy in 11 species.
The detailed analysis quantified the effects of genetic variants on RBP binding,
particularly highlighted in the homologous regions between human and mouse. MuSIC
provides insights into the RNA-RBP interactions in non-model organisms, and
generates novel hypotheses on the interplays between RBP-mediated regulation and
disease mechanisms.

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Author's Contribution

L.S. conceived the project. L.S., Y.T.Y. and Y.W. supervised the project. J.H., and T.Z. established the initial technical framework. J.H. performed the computational analyses, data curation, and methods development. J.H., Q.C. and S.Y. trained the deep learning models. L.H. and Y.W. conducted *in vivo* and *in vitro* experimental design and validation. Y.J., T.Z. and S.J. collected and re-analyzed the RBP similarity data. J.H. and J.W. collected and re-analyzed RBP-binding peaks data based on CLIP-seq. The initial draft of the manuscript was written by J.H. and T.Z., with Y.T.Y., L.H. and Q.C. providing critical feedback and suggestions for improvement. J.H. formatted the figures, and the final version of the manuscript was prepared by L.S. and Y.T.Y.

Availability of data and materials

An implementation of the MuSIC script and benchmarking data is available at https://github.com/GALE1228/MuSIC.

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Methods

Compiling RBP-binding peak datasets

We obtained the RBP-binding peaks of 216 RBPs from POSTAR3 [32] for the within- and cross-species model training and testing. We applied a uniform preprocessing pipeline to the peak datasets to minimize putative bias in the datasets. Briefly, we first removed the duplicated and short (length < 5nt) peaks in each dataset. Then, we selected the top 5000 peaks with the highest binding strength in each dataset for the downstream analysis. Next, the peaks were extended by 200nt on both sides. We used GFF Annotation Parser (https://github.com/lipan6461188/GAP) to extract the RNA sequences of these extended peaks, which were considered as the positive peaks (i.e., RBP-binding peaks) in the model training and validation. We randomly selected 5000 RNA sequences of 200nt in length from the remaining genomics regions as the negative ones.

For the within-species prediction, 224 datasets of 186 RBPs from human, mouse, and zebrafish were used. For the cross-species prediction, 17 datasets of 13 RBPs shared between human and mouse, and 2 datasets of one RBP shared between human and zebrafish were used. Notably, the datasets of the same RBP generated by different CLIP-seq technologies were excluded in the cross-species analysis. For the within-species prediction, we used randomly 80% of the positive and negative peaks for the model training, whereas 20% were used for the model validation. For the cross-species prediction, we simply maintained a training-to-validation ratio of 4:1 by randomly selecting the positive and negative peaks from the source and target species.

Reconstructing phylogenetic tree among the 11 species

We aim to develop a novel computational method to systematically predict RBP–RNA interactions in 11 species, including *Homo sapiens* (human), *Pongo abelii* (orangutan), *Macaca fascicularis* (monkey), *Mus musculus* (mouse), *Rattus norvegicus* (rat), *Gallus gallus* (chicken), *Xenopus laevis* (frog), *Danio rerio* (zebrafish), *Drosophila melanogaster* (fly), *Arabidopsis thaliana* (*A. thaliana*), and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (yeast).

We retrieved the 18S rRNA sequences of the 11 species from RNAcentral [78] (Release 24) for evaluating the evolutionary distance among these species. We then performed multiple sequence alignment of the 18S rRNA sequences using the Sequence Alignment tool in MEGA [79] v11.0.13, followed by constructing a phylogenetic tree among the 11 species using the neighbor-joining method. We then evaluated the reliability of the reconstructed phylogenetic tree using the Bootstrap test with 1000 replicates.

Compiling sequence and structural datasets of RBPs

We collected the protein IDs of 216 RBPs [32] that were used in this study in the 11 species from UniProt [51] (**Supplementary Table 1**). For each RBP, the corresponding sequences and structural data were retrieved from UniProt [51]. In the cases where predicted structural data for certain RBPs were unavailable in UniProt, we used AlphaFold2 [80] to predict and supplement the missing ones. The sequence similarity of the full-length RBPs between human and other species was computed using ClustalX [81] v2.1.1. We used US-align [82] to evaluate the structural similarity of the full-length RBPs by calculating two metrics: TM-score (overall structure similarity) and pLDDT (confidence of predicted structure).

We obtained the annotations of 130 RBDs in the 11 species from InterPro [83] (Release 103.0), including their sequence positions and respective fragments in their full-length RBPs. The local structures of RBDs were extracted from the structures of full-length RBPs, ensuring the local structures of RBDs were aligned with the structures of full-length RBPs. Finally, ClustalX [81] v2.1.1 and US-align [82] were used to calculate the sequence and structural similarity of the RBDs between human and other species.

Comparing RBP–RNA interactions in three-dimensional structures between species

We collected three-dimensional structures of homologous RBP RC3H1 (PDB ID 4QIL

in human, PDB ID 4QI2 in mouse) and their bound RNA fragments from the PDB [84].

In addition, we used AlphaFold3 [49] webserver to predict the interactions between

homologous RBP IGF2BP1 and bound RNA fragments in human and mouse based

on the IGF2BP1 protein sequence in human and mouse, as well as well-known RNA

sequence with strong preference by IGF2BP1 (5'-UGACUUACUUCAUUAUUGAA-3').

The cartoon and surface diagrams displaying the bound RNA, RBDs, and the residues

involved in the interactions were generated using PyMOL v3.1.0

(http://www.pymol.org/pymol).

Pre-processing MuSIC input data

The RNA sequence of each peak in the datasets was first transformed into a one-hot

encoded matrix of size (4, 200), where the four rows correspond to the nucleotides A,

C, G, and U. The secondary structure of each RNA sequence was predicted using

RNAfold [85] v2.1.0 with default settings. The resulting structure was encoded into a 2-

dimensional matrix of size (2, 200), with 'P' and 'U' representing the paired and

unpaired bases, respectively. The sequence and structure matrices were then

concatenated along the channel axis to generate a unified (6, 200) representation

encoding both sequence and structural features, which will be used as the input data

for the MuSIC model.

Overview of MuSIC architecture

The input data for MuSIC is defined as S, which contains N peaks. Each sample, $s \in$

S, is an RNA sequence of length $L = 200$nt. As described above, s corresponds to a

sequence-and-structure vector of $D = 6$ dimensions. Therefore, S is encoded into a

tensor $X \in R^{N \times D \times L}$ and the binding probability $Y \in R^N$ is computed by as follows:

$$Y = \text{MuSIC}(X)$$

MuSIC is defined as follows:

$$\text{MuSIC}(X) = \sigma(\text{FC}(f_R(f_S(f_C(X)))))$$

where σ is the sigmoid activation function, FC is the fully connected layer, f_R is the
residual blocks, f_S is the squeeze-excitation block (SE), and f_C is the convolutional
block, respectively.

Convolutional Block

653 First, we use a convolutional layer to extract features. The convolutional block $f_C(X)$
654 is defined as follows:

658
$$f_C(X) = \text{ReLU}\left(\text{BN}\left(\text{Conv}_{K,P}(X)\right)\right)$$

655 where $\text{Conv}_{K,P}(X)$ is a 2D convolutional layer with kernel K and padding P. The
656 convolutional layer is designed to extract local sequence and structural features from
657 the input data.

Squeeze-and-Excitation (SE) Block

660 We apply a Squeeze-and-Excitation (SE) block to recalibrate channel-wise feature
661 responses. The SE block is defined as follows:

662
$$f_S(X) = X \otimes \text{SE}(X)$$

667
$$\text{SE}(X) = \sigma\left(f_{\text{ex}}\left(f_{sq}(X)\right)\right)$$

663 where σ is the activation function, f_{sq} is a global average pooling function to squeezes
664 the global sequence and structural features into a channel statistic and f_{ex} applies a
665 nonlinear transformation to the squeezed feature map. The SE block helps the model
666 focus on the most relevant features for RBP binding.

Residual Blocks

669 We then use residual blocks to capture both sequence and structural features over
670 long ranges. These residual blocks are designed to learn the hierarchical features by
671 passing information through several convolutional layers. Two types of residual blocks
672 are used here:

673 ResidualBlock2D, which operates on 2D feature maps, is defined as follows:

675
$$f_R(X) = \text{ResidualBlock2D}\left(\text{Conv}\left(\text{SE}(X)\right)\right)$$

674 ResidualBlock1D, which operates on 1D feature maps, is defined as follows:

677
$$f_R(X) = \text{ResidualBlock1D}\Big(\text{AvgPool}\big(\text{ResidualBlock2D}(X)\big)\Big)$$

676 ***Fully Connected Layer***

678 Finally, we apply a fully connected layer to generate the binding probability prediction

679 for each RNA input sequence, which is defined as follows:

680
$$Y = \sigma\big(f_{\text{FC}}(x)\big)$$

682 **Label smoothing strategy and gradient weight adaptation**

683 We applied the label smoothing strategy to smooth the one-hot label distribution.

684 Given a one-hot label vector $q(x)$, the smoothed label distribution $q'(x)$ is defined as

685 follows:

686
$$q'(x) = \alpha q(x) + (1 - \alpha)u(x)$$

687 where α is the RBP conservation score as a smoothing coefficient, and $u(x)$ is the

688 uniform distribution.

690 The one-hot label distribution $q(x)$ and a predicted binding probability distribution

691 $p(x)$ are used for computing the classification loss as follows:

692
$$L_{ture} = \mathcal{H}\big(q(x), p(x)\big) = -\sum_{i=1}^{C} q(x_i)\log\big(p(x_i)\big)$$

694 The smoothed label distribution $q'(x)$ and a predicted binding probability

695 distribution $p(x)$ are used for computing the smoothing loss as follows:

696
$$L_{smooth} = \mathcal{H}\big(q'(x), p(x)\big) = -\sum_{i=1}^{C} q'(x_i)\log\big(p(x_i)\big)$$

697
$$L_{smooth} = \mathcal{H}\big(q'(x), p(x)\big) = -\sum_{i=1}^{C} \alpha q(x_i)\log\big(p(x_i)\big) - \sum_{i=1}^{C} (1-\alpha)u(x_i)\log\big(p(x_i)\big)$$

698  The first term, L_{true}, represents the typical classification loss, while the second

699 term, L_{smooth}, is the smoothing loss. Finally, the total loss is defined as the weighted

700 combination of classification loss and smoothing loss as follows:

701
$$L_{total} = \alpha L_{ture} + \beta L_{smooth}$$

703  We proposed gradient weight adaptation to address the conflict between the

704 gradient directions of L_{ture} and L_{smooth}. First, the gradients of both losses are

705 computed with respect to the feature encoder parameters and classifier parameters

706 as follows:

707
$$\nabla L_{ture(\text{encoder})} = \frac{\partial L_{ture}}{\partial \theta_{\text{encoder}}}, \quad \nabla L_{smooth(\text{encoder})} = \frac{\partial L_{smooth}}{\partial \theta_{\text{encoder}}}$$

708
$$\nabla L_{ture(\text{classifier})} = \frac{\partial L_{ture}}{\partial \theta_{\text{classifier}}}, \quad \nabla L_{smooth(\text{classifier})} = \frac{\partial L_{smooth}}{\partial \theta_{\text{classifier}}}$$

710  The weight of each loss term can be dynamically adjusted based on the ratio of

711 the current loss to the previous one as follows:

712
$$\Delta_{ture} = \frac{L_{ture}}{L_{ture}^{t-1}}, \quad \Delta_{smooth} = \frac{L_{smooth}}{L_{smooth}^{t-1}}$$

713
$$w_{smooth} = \frac{1}{\Delta_{smooth}}, \quad w_{ture} = \frac{1}{\Delta_{true}}$$

714
$$w_{smooth} = \frac{w_{smooth}}{w_{smooth} + w_{ture}}, \quad w_{ture} = \frac{w_{\text{cls}}}{w_{smooth} + w_{ture}}$$

716  Subsequently, the gradient can be expressed as follows:

717
$$\nabla L_{\text{total(encoder)}} = w_{smooth} \nabla L_{smooth(\text{encoder})} + w_{ture} \nabla L_{ture(\text{encoder})}$$

718
$$\nabla L_{\text{total(classifier)}} = w_{smooth} \nabla L_{smooth(\text{classifier})} + w_{ture} \nabla L_{ture(\text{classifier})}$$

720   By dynamically adjusting w_{ture} and w_{smooth}, the model can effectively prioritize
721   the loss terms that show significant changes in the optimization process

MuSIC model training

We applied the label smoothing strategy to smooth the one-hot label distribution and
calculated the total loss as described above. The gradient weight adaptation
dynamically modulated relative weights between L_{ture} and L_{smooth} according to the
ratio of the current loss to the previous one, ensuring efficient gradient propagation.

The parameters in MuSIC model were optimized by minimizing the total loss—
this loss integrates the classification loss and the smoothed label loss. We used Adam
to optimize the model parameters, and Gradual Warmup Scheduler to adjust the
learning rates. Throughout model training, we periodically evaluated the prediction
performance of the model on the validation set to find the optimized parameters for
the model.

MuSIC hyperparameter settings

The hyperparameters of MuSIC were empirically adjusted based on the cross-species
datasets. The hyperparameter settings for MuSIC are defined as follows:

Convolutional layer: the convolutional layer uses a kernel size of (3, 3) with 16 output
channels, followed by Batch Normalization (BN) and ReLU activation for non-
linearity.

Pooling layer: average pooling is applied with a kernel size of (6, 1), which reduces
the feature map along the first axis of the input tensor.

Full connection layer: the fully connected layer at the end of the network has 1 output
unit, which corresponds to the predicted binding probability for each sample.

Dropout probability: dropout is applied with probabilities of 0.1, 0.5, and 0.3 at
different layers in the network to prevent overfitting.

L2 norm penalty: the L2 norm penalty (weight decay) is set to 1×10^{-6}, which
applies regularization to the model's weights during optimization.

Batch size: the batch size is set to 64 for training and evaluation.

Learning rate: the learning rate is set to 0.001 for the Adam optimizer, which is used
to optimize the network's parameters.

Positive weight in loss function: the positive weight in the loss function is set to 2,
which accounts for class imbalance in the dataset, giving more importance to
positive samples during training.

Training epochs: the number of training epochs is set to 200, which determines how
many times the model will iterate over the entire training dataset.

Early stop: early stopping is applied with a patience of 20 epochs, meaning training
will halt if the model's performance does not improve on the validation set for 20
consecutive epochs.

Initial weights: the initial weights of the model are set using the Kaiming normal
initialization for convolutional layers and Xavier initialization for fully connected
layers.

Ablation experiments of MuSIC model

We performed the ablation experiments to explore to what degree the features could
enhance the model performance: (i) input sequence length: we tried different input
sequence lengths of 101nt, 200nt and 400nt; (ii) label smoothing strategy: we added
and removed the label smoothing strategy in the models; (iii) sequence and structural
features: we constructed the models using different types of input data, including only
sequences, only predicted structures, combined sequences and predicted structures,
and combined sequences and experimentally-measured structures.

Performance comparison with other computational methods

We compared the prediction performance of MuSIC with other recently published
computational methods, including HDRNet (https://github.com/zhuhr213/HDRNet) [31],

PrismNet (https://github.com/kuixu/PrismNet) [30], DeepBind

(https://github.com/jisraeli/DeepBind) [28], and GraphProt

(https://github.com/dmaticzka/GraphProt) [26]. Notably, to make a fair comparison, each

of these computational methods was trained and validated on the same datasets as

used in MuSIC, using their default parameter settings.

We extracted the features from the fully connected layers of MuSIC and the other

four computational methods, including HDRNet [31], PrismNet [30], DeepBind [28], and

GraphProt [26]. These features were projected into a two-dimensional space using t-

SNE to visualize and compare their classification performance.

We used MuSIC and the other four computational methods to train cross-species

models and predict RBP-binding peaks for 22 RBPs from mouse and one RBP from

zebrafish. We then estimated the prediction performance of the computational

methods based on the overlap between the predicted peaks with binding probabilities

above 0.9 and the experimentally-derived peaks. We also calculated the correlation

between the predicted peaks and experimentally-derived peaks as we did in the meta-

transcript analysis mentioned above.

Thresholding high-confidence RBP across species predicted by MuSIC

We considered the six RBP features for RBP conservation analysis, including the full-

length sequence similarity, the full-length structural TM-score, the full-length structural

pLDDT, the RBD sequence similarity, the RBD structural TM-score, and the RBD

structural pLDDT. We then applied Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to calculate

the first principal component (PC1) as RBP conservation.

We then analyzed the correlation between the RBP conservation scores and the

AUC scores of 14 RBPs derived from the cross-species analysis. We observed a linear

correlation and constructed a regression model between the two variables, which can

be used for estimating the cross-species prediction accuracy (i.e., AUC score) of the

peaks (**Supplementary Table 4**). We applied a threshold of 0.8 for the AUC scores to
retain the high-confidence predicted peaks.

Identifying and clustering RBP-binding motifs

A total of 2046 models for predicting RBP–RNA interactions in 11 species were trained
using 186 high-quality peak datasets from human [32]. RNA sequences from each
species were segmented into the fragments of 200nt in length, and 20,000 fragments
were randomly sampled for further analysis. In each species, each of the MuSIC
models of the 186 RBPs generated predicted peaks on these fragments. We then
applied MEME [86] v5.5.7 to identify the enriched RBP-binding motifs using the
fragments with binding probabilities above 0.9.

We performed motif clustering in two steps. First, for each motif, we calculated
base frequency by averaging the nucleotide frequencies (A, C, G, U) from its position
weight matrix (PWM) as follows:

$$\text{Base Frequencies}_i = (A_i, C_i, G_i, U_i)$$

where A_i, C_i, G_i, U_i are the average frequencies of adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine
(G), and uracil (U) for the motif i, respectively.

Second, we calculated the similarity matrix by integrating the Jensen–Shannon
(JS) divergence of PWM distributions and the Euclidean distance between base
frequency vectors:

$$S_{ij} = \alpha \cdot JS(i,j) + (1-\alpha) \cdot d_{\text{euclid}}(i,j)$$

$$JS(i,j) = \frac{1}{8} \sum_{k=1}^{8} \text{Jensen-Shannon}\big(\text{PWM}_i[k], \text{PWM}_j[k]\big)$$

$$d_{\text{euclid}}(i,j) = \sqrt{\left(A_i - A_j\right)^2 + \left(C_i - C_j\right)^2 + \left(G_i - G_j\right)^2 + \left(U_i - U_j\right)^2}$$

where $\text{PWM}_i[k]$ is the k-th row of the PWM matrix for motif i, $\text{PWM}_j[k]$ is the k-th row
of the PWM matrix for motif i, $d_{\text{euclid}}(i,j)$ is the Euclidean distance between the base

frequency vectors of motif i and j, α is a hyperparameter balancing the weight of the
JS divergence and Euclidean distance.

Finally, we grouped the motifs using hierarchical clustering to show their overall
similarity. We used the itol.toolkit package [87] v1.1.10 to visualize and map the motif
logo to the clustering results.

Analyzing conservation patterns of RBP-binding peaks predicted by MuSIC

Using human transcripts as the reference, we applied the Mashmap [88] v3.1.3 to
compare pairwise species (i.e., human and non-human species) and select the highest
conserved transcripts with segment length > 500nt. For each species, MuSIC was
used to predict RBP-binding peaks with 200nt and high attention regions [30] with 40nt
for 186 RBPs in these conserved transcripts.

The conserved transcripts from 11 species were subjected to multi-sequence
alignment by using Muscle5 [89] v5.1 with default parameters, and high attention region
coordinates were aligned accordingly. RBP-binding peaks overlap counts across
species were statistically analyzed within an extended window of 200nt. We then used
IGV [90] v2.16.2 to visualize the RBP-binding peaks in the conserved transcripts from
11 species.

Evaluating consistency between MuSIC predictions and experimental data for
SNV effects

We downloaded the eCLIP peaks of 103 RBPs in HepG2 cell line from ENCODE
(https://www.encodeproject.org/publication-data/ENCSR456FVU/). The SNVs in the
RBP-binding peaks of each RBP were then identified from the eCLIP mapping files
(i.e., BAM files) using the BCFtools mpileup [91] v1.20, where the replicates were
merged. Peaks regions were filtered (p.adj ≤ 0.05) and merged across three replicates
to retain high-confidence RBP-binding peaks. Using BEDTools [92] v2.27.1 , SNV
positions were overlapped with peak regions to classify peaks into SNV-overlapping

and non-overlapping groups. A paired t-test was then applied to compare signal
differences between the two groups.

We analyzed the RNA-seq alignment files from the smartSHAPE datasets
(GSE145805) to estimate the background allele ratio. For both eCLIP and RNA-seq
datasets, we calculated their reference allele (REF) and alternative allele (ALT) ratios
using BCFtools mpileup [91] v1.20, and then obtained $diff_{ratio}$, the difference between
the REF and ALT ratios from the RNA-seq and eCLIP datasets as follows:

872
$$diff_{ratio} = \frac{eCLIP_{ALTratio}}{RNAseq_{ALTratio}} - \frac{eCLIP_{REFratio}}{RNAseq_{REFratio}}$$

874 In parallel, we also calculated $diff_{score}$, the predicted difference between the REF
875 and ALT ratios as follows:

876
$$diff_{score} = Pred_{ALT} - Pred_{REF}$$

where $Pred_{ALT}$ and $Pred_{REF}$ are predicted binding possibilities for the sequences
containing the ALT and REF, respectively.

We pre-processed the SNV effects by retaining $|diff_{ratio}| \geqslant 0.2$ and $|diff_{score}| \geqslant$
0.2, and then extracting the top 80% ranked by $diff_{score}$. We used the experimental
labels ($label_{exp}$) and the predicted labels ($label_{pre}$) to evaluate the consistency
between experimental data and MuSIC predictions for SNV effects. The $label_{exp}$ and
$label_{pre}$ are defined as follows:

885
$$label_{exp} = 1 \text{ when } diff_{ratio} \geqslant 0; label_{exp} = 0 \text{ when } diff_{ratio} < 0$$

886
$$label_{pre} = 1 \text{ when } diff_{score} \geqslant 0; label_{pre} = 0 \text{ when } diff_{score} < 0$$

887 The consistency between $label_{exp}$ and $label_{pre}$ was evaluated using Fisher's
888 exact test, with multiple testing corrected by the Benjamini–Hochberg method, and
889 results with FDR ≤ 0.05 were considered statistical significance.

Quantifying the effects of homologous SNVs between human and mouse on RBP-binding using MuSIC

We downloaded the human and mouse RNA sequences from Ensembl [93] (Release 113). We extracted the human RNA sequences overlapping with the nonsense SNV positions from dbSNP [6] using the GAP (https://github.com/lipan6461188/GAP), and then generated the two sequences containing the REF and ALT for each SNV. We then identified the homologous regions of the human SNV-containing sequences in the mouse genome using BLAST [94] v2.16.0. In total, 32,207 nonsense SNVs in human, and 85,599 homologous nonsense SNVs in mouse were included for further analyses.

We then used MuSIC to predict the binding possibilities on the RNA sequences containing the REF and ALT in human and mouse for each of the 186 RBPs. For each sequence, the effect of the SNV on RBP binding was defined as follows:

$$\Delta SNV = P_{ALT} - P_{REF}$$

where P_{REF} is the binding probability for the REF, P_{ALT} is the binding probability for the ALT.

Cell transfection

150,000 HEK293T cells per well were seeded in a well of poly-D-lysine-coated 24-well plates. After 16-20 h, cells were co-transfected with 200 ng EPN24-PUM2 plus 75ng GFP-REF or GFP-SNV target plasmid using JetPRIME reagent (Polyplus), the medium was refreshed at 4-6 h post-transfection, and the supernatant was collected for subsequent analysis 24 h after medium change.

RNA pull-down assay

The *in vitro* RNA pull-down assay was performed as described [95]. Briefly, 200 pmol biotinylated RNA oligonucleotides were refolded by heating at 90 °C for 1 min, and then incubated at 30 °C for 5 min. About 1×10^7 myc-PUM2-expressing HEK293T cells were lysed in 500 µl lysis buffer (150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA, 1% Triton X-100, 0.5 mM

DTT, 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 0.5% sodium deoxycholate) with 5 µl PMSF (100mM, Beyotime), 10 µl phosphatase inhibitor cocktail (50 ×, Beyotime), 10 µl protease inhibitor cocktail (50 ×, Beyotime), 2.5 µl SUPERase In inhibitor (20U/µl Invitrogen) and 5 µl RNase Inhibitor (40U/µl, Beyotime). Refolded RNA (8 µl) and 500 µl cell lysate were incubated at 4 °C for 3-4 h. Then 100 µl pre-washed VAHTS CA-28 Streptavidin Beads (Vazyme) were added into the buffer and incubated at 4 °C for 1h. The beads were washed first with high salt buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 1 M NaCl, 1% TRITON X-100) at room temperature for 5 min and then 2 more times with low salt buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 150mM NaCl, 1% TRITON X-100), at room temperature and for 5 min. Proteins were eluted in 50 µl 1× SDS-PAGE loading buffer (Beyotime) at 98 °C for 20 min.

Protein electrophoresis was performed using BeyoGel™ Elite Precast PAGE Gel (8-16%, Beyotime), followed by protein transfer onto polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) membrane. The Myc Tag Mouse Monoclonal Antibody (HRP Conjugated) (Beyotime, AF2867) were diluted (1:1000) and incubated with the membrane at 4°C overnight. After three washes with 1×TBST buffer, the membrane was treated with electrochemiluminescence (ECL) reagent (Merck Millipore, WBKLS0050) and imaged with eBLOT14 Touch Imager (e-BLOT).

POND-qPCR

Cell supernatant was clarified by centrifugation at 3,000 g for 5 minutes, then filtrated through a cellulose acetate filter with 0.45 µm pore size (Corning). 200 µl of supernatant was mixed with 800 µl TRIzol reagent (Magen) and 1 µl diluted External RNA Controls Consortium (ERCC, 1:1000) synthetic spike-in RNAs (ThermoFisher). RNA was extracted and dissolved in 20 µl nuclease-free water.

Next, 3 µl of supernatant RNAs or 250 ng cellular total RNA were reverse transcribed using HiScript® III RT Super Mix (Vazyme) at 37°C for 15 minutes. The cDNA products were diluted five-fold with 20 µl nuclease-free water, and 1 µl aliquot was used for real-time qPCR with AceQ qPCR SYBR Green Master Mix (Vazyme) in

96-well plates on the StepOne Plus Real-Time PCR System (Applied Biosystems)
following standard protocols.

Large-scale screening of RBPs affected by SNVs in UPS

For each RBP, SNVs with strong effects were identified: ΔSNV < -0.2 and P_{WT} > 0.6.
We annotated the transcripts affected by SNVs using the GAP
(https://github.com/lipan6461188/GAP).

We used the STRING [96] database (https://string-db.org/) to annotate the enriched
biological functions of SNV-affected transcripts. Among the top five enriched biological
functions, we selected those related to ubiquitination or deubiquitination. Then, we
categorized the RBPs into four groups according to the functional enrichment with
ubiquitination or deubiquitination for their target transcripts affected by SNVs, i.e., the
highly ubiquitin-related (both ubiquitination- and deubiquitination-related), the weakly
ubiquitin-related (either ubiquitination- or deubiquitination-related), the not ubiquitin-
related (not ubiquitination- or deubiquitination-related), and the not function-enriched.

We then performed the KEGG enrichment analysis on the SNV-affected
transcripts annotated with highly ubiquitin-related. The enriched disease pathways
revealed potential regulatory associations among SNVs, RBPs, and disease-relevant
UPS genes.

Quantification and statistical analysis

All statistical analyses were performed with R. Where applicable, the sample size
(N) was specified either in the plot or in the corresponding figure legends. Analysis
details could be found in the method section, such as statistical tests, definitions,
etc. Boxplots were used to visualize the distribution of the data, with the box
representing the interquartile range (IQR). The median was indicated by a horizontal
line within the box, while the upper and lower hinges represented the 75th and 25th
percentiles, respectively. The whiskers extended to the most extreme data points

within 1.5 times the IQR from the box. Any data points beyond this

range were considered outliers and plotted individually. Statistical significance was

determined using appropriate tests, with P reported in the figure legends or main text.

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Figure Legends

Figure 1: Evolutionary conservation of RBPs and their target RNAs

(a) Bar plots showing the sequence and structural similarity of RBPs across 11 species, in terms of full-length sequence (SeqS in blue), full-length structure (StrS in red), RBD sequence (DseqS in blue) and RBD structure (DStrS in red). The phylogenetic tree is constructed based on the 18S rRNA sequences in the 11 species, and shows the relative relationships between human and non-human species.

(b) Examples of structural alignment of homologous RBPs, including AGO2 (the highly conserved), DDX51 (the considerable conserved), RBM10 (the intermediately conserved), and SERBP1 (the weakly conserved). The RBP structure in human (red) is compared to that in non-human species (blue).

(c) SRRM4 binding distribution along meta-transcript in human (red line) and mouse (cyan line).

(d) Binding motif alignment of homologous RBPs in human (left) and mouse (right).

(e) Three-dimensional structure of RC3H1 in human (PDB ID 4QIL, left) and mouse (PDB ID 4QI2, right), showing bound RNA residues (orange), RBDs residues (blue), and other remaining RNA and protein residues (grey).

See also **Supplementary Fig. 1** and **2**.

Figure 2: The workflow of MuSIC

(a) Schematic showing the workflow of MuSIC. Step 1 (data pre-processing): collecting peaks of RBPs from multiple species, defining the positive and negative peaks, and constructing the training and validation set. Step 2 (feature engineering): encoding for the RBP-binding peaks and predicted RNA structures. Step 3 (Deep learning model): predicting RBP–RNA interactions using a CNN framework integrated with label smoothing strategy. Step 4 (Applications): comparing prediction performance with state-of-the-art computational methods, identifying and clustering RBP-binding motifs, analyzing conservation patterns of RBP-binding peaks, and quantifying the effects of SNVs on RBP binding.

(b) Flowchart showing data pre-processing and feature encoding. Top: positive (red)

and negative (blue) peaks are encoded into one-hot vectors. Bottom:

computationally predicted RNA structures are encoded into one-hot vectors.

(c) Diagram showing label smoothing strategy. Top left: using the image similarities

between Cartoon and Sketch in computer vision for label smoothing strategy. Top

right: using the RBP similarities between human (blue) and mouse (red) for label

smoothing. Bottom: transforming the one-hot labels into smoothed labels based

on RBP conservation and computing cross-entropy loss for both one-hot labels

and smoothed labels.

(d) Diagram showing two components of the total loss L_{total}, L_{ture} (human in black) and

L_{smooth} (mouse in red).

(e) Overview of the deep learning model architecture. One-hot encoded input (b) is

processed sequentially through the convolutional layers, SE modules, residual

blocks, max pooling, and fully connected layers to predict the binding probability.

(f) Boxplot showing the prediction performance for different types of input features,

including only sequence (101nt / 200nt) (blue), 200nt sequence with label

smoothing (green), sequence with label smoothing and predicted structure (red).

See also **Supplementary Fig. 3**.

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Figure 3: Comparison of prediction performance between MuSIC and other
computational methods

(a) Violin plot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other

computational methods (blue) for 19 cross-species datasets. *** $P < 0.005$, paired

paired t-test.

(b) ROC curves showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other

computational methods (blue) for two RBPs, YTHDC2 (left) and TAF15 (right).

(c) t-SNE clustering showing the output feature maps by MuSIC and other

computational methods for separating the positive (cyan) and negative (grey)

peaks.

(d) Bar plot showing the overlapping ratio between the experimentally-derived and predicted peaks by MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (blue). *** $P <$ 0.005, paired t-test; ****, $P < 0.0001$, paired t-test.

(e) Heatmap showing the overlapping ratio between the experimentally-derived and predicted peaks by MuSIC and other computational methods.

(f) An example of predicted peaks distribution along the local region in mouse genome (chr7:96,200,000–96,400,000). Red indicates true positives and black indicates false negatives, as evaluated against the experimentally-derived peaks.

See also **Supplementary Fig. 4, 5** and **6**.

Figure 4: Reliable predictions of RBP-binding peaks and motif clustering by MuSIC

(a) Scatter plot showing the correlation between the cross-species prediction accuracy and RBP conservation for the 14 RBPs (mouse in red, zebrafish in blue).

(b) Examples showing the consistency of the predicted binding motifs and experimentally-derived motifs (from ATtRACT database) of several RBPs.

(c) Hierarchical clustering of 186 predicted binding motifs in human, mouse, zebrafish, and yeast. Stars indicate that there are no motifs enriched.

See also **Supplementary Fig. 7** and **8**.

Figure 5: Cross-species conservation of RBP-binding peaks

(a) Heatmap showing the percentage of homologous transcripts containing the conserved peaks bound by RBPs across the 11 species, where all the 186 RBPs can be categorized into three groups. Boxplot showing the conservation degree (measured by percentage of species) of the homologous transcripts containing the conserved peaks.

(b) Examples showing the predicted peaks bound by RBM15B and ALKBH1 along the transcript ENST00000688663.1.

1291 (c) Forest plot showing the conservation of the peaks bound by the CPSF family. We

1292 include the predicted peaks ranging from human to each of the non-human species

1293 shown here according to the phylogenetic tree.

1294 See also **Supplementary Fig. 9**.

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Figure 6: RBP–RNA interactions affected by SNVs and their associations with

human diseases

(a) The experimentally-derived and predicted effects of SNVs on SRSF1 and DDX3X

binding. Obs.REF, the binding strength from CLIP-seq data for the reference allele;

Obs.ALT, the binding strength from CLIP-seq data for the alternative allele;

Pre.REF, the binding strength from MuSIC prediction for the reference allele; and

Pre.ALT, the binding strength from MuSIC prediction for the alternative allele.

(b) Consistency between the experimentally-derived and predicted effects of SNVs on

RBP binding for the 186 RBPs. Green bar indicates high consistency (-logFDR $\geqslant$

1.3), whereas grey bar indicates no significance.

(c) Schematic showing the workflow for quantifying the effects of homologous SNVs

on RBP binding.

(d) An example showing the effect of a homologous SNV (NC_000006.11:

g.4059022A>G) on PUM2 binding in human. The saliency maps show the

predicted effect of REF (A) (top) and ALT (G) (bottom) on PUM2 binding. In each

saliency map, the two heatmap tracks display the sequence response (top) and

structure response (bottom) of the model at the base level. The homologous SNV

position is highlighted by a dashed box.

(e) An example showing the effect of a homologous SNV (ENSMUST00000220965.2

1446 A>G) on PUM2 binding in mouse. The saliency maps show the predicted

effect of REF (A) (top) and ALT (G) (bottom) on PUM2 binding.

(f) Examples showing *in vitro* RNA pull-down assays (n = 3) examining the effects of

three homologous SNVs on PUM2 binding in human (top) and mouse (bottom).

(g) Examples showing *in vivo* POND-qPCR (n = 3) quantification of REF/ALT target

RNAs binding to human and mouse PUM2 in HEK293T. Relative RNA enrichment

was calculated as: (RNA $^{\text{supernatant}}$/ERCC spike-in)/ (RNA $^{\text{cellular}}$/GAPDH). Then the

ALT group was normalized to the REF group. Green bar represents RNA

enrichment for REF sequences, and blue bar for ALT sequences.

(h) Enriched biological functions of the SNV-affected transcripts. The 186 RBPs can

be categorized into four groups according to the enriched functions of their target

transcripts. In total, 21 RBPs are identified as highly ubiquitin-related, some of

which have been revealed as associated with neurodegenerative diseases (red)

and cancer (blue).

See also **Supplementary Fig. 10, 11, 12** and **13**.

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Supplementary Figure Legends

Supplementary Figure 1: Evolutionary conservation of RBPs across 11 species

(a-b) Heatmaps showing the full-length sequence similarity (a) and structural similarity (b) of RBPs across species.

(c-d) Heatmaps showing the RBD sequence similarity (c) and structural similarity (d) of RBPs across species

Supplementary Figure 2: Evolutionary conservation of RBP-targeted RNAs

(a) LIN28A binding distribution along meta-transcript in human (red line) and mouse (cyan line).

(b-c) Three-dimensional structures of IGF2BP1 in human (b) and mouse (c), showing the bound RNA residues and three KH domains residues.

(d-e) Heatmaps showing residue interaction score for IGF2BP1 in human (d) and mouse (e), with darker green represents stronger interaction scores.

(f) Venn diagrams showing the overlap of RBPs between different species (human, mouse, zebrafish, fly, worm, *A. thaliana*, and yeast) collected from POSTAR3 database.

Supplementary Figure 3: Optimization of input feature and model architecture

(a) Boxplot showing the prediction performance for different input sequence length (101nt, 200nt, and 400nt) on MuSIC performance. *** $P < 0.005$, paired t-test.

(b) Boxplot showing the prediction performance of label smoothing, including only sequence (blue), and sequence with label smoothing (green). ** $P < 0.01$, paired t-test.

(c) Boxplot showing the prediction performance of different structural features, including only predicted structure (cyan), only sequence (blue), sequence with predicted structure (red), and sequence with experimentally-measured structure (red).

(d) t-SNE clustering showing the output feature maps by different blocks (input, SE block, residual block, FCL) for separating the positive (cyan) and negative (grey) peaks.

(e) Boxplot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other machine learning models (grey). **** $P < 0.001$, paired t-test.

(f) Boxplot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other deep learning models (grey). * $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$, **** $P < 0.001$, paired t-test.

Supplementary Figure 4: The performance comparison between MuSIC and other computational methods

(a) Violin plot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (blue) across 224 within-species datasets. * $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.005$, paired t-test.

(b-c) Violin plot showing the prediction accuracy (PRAUC and ACC) of MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (blue) across 19 cross-species datasets. *** $P < 0.005$, paired t-test.

(d) Violin plot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (blue) across 38 cross-species datasets. ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.005$, paired t-test.

(e) Violin plot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (blue) across 17 cross-species datasets. *** $P < 0.005$, paired t-test.

(f) Violin plot showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (gradient blue) across 8 cross-species datasets. * $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.005$, paired t-test.

Supplementary Figure 5: Comparison of feature learning discriminative power between MuSIC and other computational methods

(a) ROC curves showing the prediction accuracy of MuSIC (red) and other computational methods (blue) for 6 RBPs, 2RBPs for human (left), 2 RBPs for mouse (middle), and 2 RBPs for zebrafish (right).

(b) t-SNE clustering showing the output feature maps by MuSIC and other computational methods for separating the positive (cyan) and negative (grey) peaks.

Supplementary Figure 6: Consistency of RBP-binding distributions between MuSIC predictions and experimental data

(a-b) ELAVL1 binding distributions along meta-transcript in MuSIC predictions (red line) and experimentally-derived data (black line). Scatter plot showing the correlation of RBP-binding distributions from MuSIC predictions and experimental data for ELAVL1.

(c) Scatter plot showing the correlation of RBP-binding distributions from MuSIC predictions and experimental data for 23 RBPs.

Supplementary Figure 7: Evolutionary conservation of high-confidence RBP-binding motifs

(a) Flowchart showing the calculation of RBP conservation.

(b) Scatter plot showing the correlation between the MuSIC-predicted accuracy and RBP conservation for RBPs from the 10 non-human species.

(c) Examples showing the consistency of the predicted binding motifs and experimentally-derived motifs (from ATtRACT database) of several RBPs.

(d) Examples showing high-confidence RBP-binding motifs across the 11 species, including human, orangutan, monkey, mouse, rat, chicken, frog, zebrafish, fly, *A. thaliana*, and yeast.

Supplementary Figure 8: Clustering of RBP-binding motifs

Hierarchical clustering of 186 predicted binding motifs in human, orangutan, monkey, rat, chicken, frog, fly, and yeast. Stars indicate that there are no motifs enriched.

Supplementary Figure 9: Cross-species conservation of predicted RBP-binding peaks

(a) Schematic showing the workflow for cross-species RBP-binding peaks conservation analysis.

(b) Histogram showing the conservation of RBP-binding peaks across 11 species for 186 RBPs.

(c) Boxplot showing the conservation degree of RBP-binding peaks across 11 species for CPSF family (top) and YTH (bottom) family.

(d) Forest plot showing the conservation of the peaks bound by the YTH family. We include the predicted peaks ranging from human to each of the non-human species shown here according to the phylogenetic tree.

Supplementary Figure 10: Consistency between the predicted and experimentally-derived effects of SNVs on RBP–RNA interactions

(a) Schematic showing the workflow for separating peak signals into the REF and ALT groups. *** $P < 0.005$, unpaired t-test.

(b) Schematic showing the workflow for evaluating consistency of SNV effects between MuSIC predictions and experimental data.

Supplementary Figure 11: Experimental validations for the predicted effects of SNVs on RBP–RNA interactions in human and mouse

(a) Flowchart of using the POND method to detect the interaction between PUM2 and REF/ALT target RNA. PUM2 is fused to the C-terminus of the EPN24 nanocage monomer, while REF and ALT RNA targets are cloned into the 3'UTR of GFP on a separate plasmid. In HEK293T cells, EPN24-PUM2 is co-transfected with either GFP-REF or GFP-ALT RNA target plasmids. After transfection, EPN24-PUM2 packaged target RNAs into extracellular supernatant. Both supernatant and cells are collected for RNA extraction, followed by analysis of differential enrichment between REF and ALT target RNAs with RT-qPCR.

(b) RNA pull-down assays and immunoblots for human PUM2 (left) and mouse PUM2
(right). Biotin-labeled REF and ALT RNA probes were used to perform RNA pull-
down assays from lysates of 293T cells overexpressing myc-tagged PUM2. The
pulled-down complexes were then analyzed by immunoblotting to detect the
presence of PUM2 protein. The upper blot represents the results of repeat 2, and
the lower blot represents the results of repeat 3.

(c) Bar plot quantifying *in vitro* RNA pull-down (n = 3) enrichment of human and mouse
PUM2 protein binding to REF and ALT target RNAs. For each condition, pulled-
down PUM2 levels were normalized to PUM2 in the input lysate. Then the ALT
group was normalized to the REF group. Green bars represent REF sequences,
and blue bars represent ALT sequences. All *P* values are calculated using two-
tailed unpaired Student's t-test.

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Supplementary Figure 12: Predicted effects of SNVs on RBP–RNA interactions
and their associations with human diseases

(a) Schematic showing the workflow of biological function enrichment analysis for
RBPs affected by SNVs.

(b) Bar chart showing the terms of biological functions associated with the weakly
ubiquitin-related RBPs.

(c) Sankey diagram showing the potential regulatory associations among SNVs, RBPs,
and UPS-related disease.

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Supplementary Figure 13: Predicted effects of SNVs on TARDBP binding and
the enriched biological functions of the transcripts containing the SNVs

(a) An example showing the effect of a homologous SNV (ENSMUST00000239066
1473 U>C) on TARDBP binding in mouse. The saliency maps show the predicted
effect of REF (U) (top) and ALT (C) (bottom) on TARDBP binding.

(b) Gene Ontology enrichment result showing the biological process pathways for the
TARDBP-bound genes perturbed by SNVs.

(c) Reactome pathway enrichment result showing the biological functions for

TARDBP-bound genes perturbed by SNVs.

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1478　**Supplementary Table Legends**

1479　**Supplementary Table 1: Evolutionary conservation of RBPs across 11 species**

1480

1481　**Supplementary Table 2: Conservation-based grouping of 216 RBPs**

1482

1483　**Supplementary Table 3: MuSIC training and validation datasets**

1484

1485　**Supplementary Table 4: Prediction performance of MuSIC**

1486

1487　**Supplementary Table 5: Predicted RBP-binding motifs from MuSIC**

1488

1489　**Supplementary Table 6: Consistency of SNV effects**

1490

1491　**Supplementary Table 7: Experimental validation of SNV effects**

1492

1493　**Supplementary Table 8: Functional enrichment of SNV-affected genes**

1494

Figure 1

Figure 2

a

Data pre-processing — Feature engineering — Deep learning model — Applications

Train and validate MuSIC across species

Positive peaks
Negative peaks

Sequence

Secondary structure prediction (RNAfold)

One-hot label
Label smoothing strategy
$q(x)' = P_{simi}\, q(x) + (1 - P_{simi})u(x)$
Smoothed label

L_{true} L_{smooth}

Comparing with state-of-the-art computational methods

Identifying and clustering RBP-binding motifs

Analyzing conservation patterns of RBP-binding sites

Quantifying the effects of SNVs on RBP-binding

b

Positive peaks
Negative peaks
One-hot
GGGUACAAAACCU

Sequence

Secondary structure prediction (RNAfold)
One-hot

c

Image similarity
Cartoon   Sketch

RBP similarity
Human RBP   Mouse RBP

One-hot label   Label smoothing strategy   Smoothed label
1 0 1 1 0 1   0.8 0.1 0.8 0.9 0 0.8

$L_{true} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} T_i \cdot \log(p_i)$ $L_{smooth} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} S_i \cdot \log(p_i)$

Forward   Backward
MuSIC

d

L_{total}

$w_{true} = \frac{L_{true}^{i-1}}{L_{true}^{i}}$

$\nabla L_{true} = \frac{\partial L_{true}}{\partial \theta_{true}}$

Human

$w_{smooth} = \frac{L_{smooth}^{i-1}}{L_{smooth}^{i}}$

$\nabla L_{smooth} = \frac{\partial L_{smooth}}{\partial \theta_{smooth}}$

Mouse

∇L_{smooth}

∇L_{true}

e

GGGUACAAAACCU

Convolution   SE   2D residual   Pooling + 1D residual   Full connection   Binding probability

f

AUC

1.0
0.9
0.8
0.7
0.6
0.5
0.4

*** **

only sequence 101nt   only sequence 200nt   +label smoothing   +pre-structure

Figure 3

a

b

YTHDC2 in mouse

AUC
MuSIC = 0.88
HDRNet = 0.70
PrismNet = 0.61
DeepBind = 0.73
GraphProt = 0.59

TAF15 in mouse

AUC
MuSIC = 0.89
HDRNet = 0.77
PrismNet = 0.73
DeepBind = 0.63
GraphProt = 0.69

c

YTHDC2 in mouse

Positive
Negative

MuSIC   HDRNet   PrismNet   DeepBind   GraphProt

d

e

Overlapping ratio
between exp-peaks and pre-peaks (%)

f

chr7:96,200,000-96,400,000

True positive
False negative

96.20 mb   96.30 mb   96.40 mb

MuSIC   SRSF3:13/17

PrismNet   SRSF3:4/17

GraphProt   SRSF3:4/17

DeepBind   SRSF3:4/17

Figure 4

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

a

SRSF1

Obs.REF 0 - 8.00   7.70

Obs.ALT 0 - 8.00   4.37

Pre.REF 0 - 1.00   0.92

Pre.ALT 0 - 1.00   0.29

chr7:99,081,575-99,081,874

DDX3X

Obs.REF 0 - 4.00   3.34

Obs.ALT 0 - 4.00   2.16

Pre.REF 0 - 1.00   0.83

Pre.ALT 0 - 1.00   0.49

chr15:40,453,246-40,453,411

b

PPIG
BUD13
G3BP1
BCLAF1
FXR2
SRSF1
DDX3X

FDR < 0.05
FDR > 0.05

$-\log_{10}$ FDR

Rank of RBPs

c

Sequence alignment

Human ...CATCGGTATTCAGTTTAC...

Mouse ...CATCCGTATTCAGTTTAC...

Mutate

REF ...CATCCGTAT CAGTTTAC...

ALT ...CATCCGTAT CAGTTTAC...

Input

Predict

Predicted binding probabilities

		AARS	AATF	AGO2	...	YTHDC1	ZNF622	ZRANB2
人	REF	0.098	0.727	0.120	...	0.811	0.012	0.988
	ALT	0.972	0.526	0.877	...	0.890	0.523	0.113
鼠	REF	0.198	0.734	0.186	...	0.966	0.932	0.128
	ALT	0.832	0.577	0.812	...	0.952	0.509	0.324

Difference

$$\triangle SNV = P_{ALT} - P_{REF}$$

d

PUM2 binding probability: 0.971
NM_003913.5 2820-3021
NC_000006.11:g.4059022A>G

REF

AAAAUCUCAACCUUCAUGUACAUAGAAGUUGAUAAA

PUM2 binding probability: 0.073
NM_003913.5 2820-3021
NC_000006.11:g.4059022A>G

ALT

AAAAUCUCAACCUUCAUGUACGUAGAAGUUGAUAAA

e

PUM2 binding probability: 0.836
ENSMUST00000220965.2:1446A>G
NC_000006.11:g.4059022A>G

REF

AAAAUCUGAACCUUCAUGUACAUAGAGGUUGAUAAA

PUM2 binding probability: 0.031
ENSMUST00000220965.2:1446A>G
NC_000006.11:g.4059022A>G

ALT

AAAAUCUGAACCUUCAUGUACGUAGAGGUUGAUAAA

f

人 SNV1—NC_000006.11:g.1613873A>G 0.97 to 0.06
SNV2—NC_000006.11:g.4059022A>G 0.97 to 0.07
SNV3—NC_000017.10:g.30327255T>C 0.99 to 0.32

anti-myc Pull down REF ALT REF ALT REF ALT
Input
SNV1 SNV2 SNV3

鼠 SNV1—ENSMUST00000062292.5:3767A>G 0.99 to 0.46
SNV2—ENSMUST00000220965.2:1446A>G 0.84 to 0.03
SNV3—ENSMUST00000163272.2:3488T>C 0.97 to 0.19

anti-myc Pull down REF ALT REF ALT REF ALT
Input
SNV1 SNV2 SNV3

g

REF
ALT

人 $P = 0.031$ $P = 0.0098$ $P = 0.017$

Relative RNA enrichment

SNV1 SNV2 SNV3

鼠 $P = 0.020$ $P = 9.44e-05$ $P = 0.0024$

Relative RNA enrichment

SNV1 SNV2 SNV3

h

40.3%
17.2%
11.3%
31.2%

Highly ubiquitin-related
Weakly ubiquitin-related
Not ubiquitin-related
Not function-enriched

AATF	ATXN2	FMR1	TARDBP	NDD-related
FBL	HLTF	METTL3	UCHL5	Cancer-related
PPIG	DDX3	GRWD1	CPSF1	
NOLC1	CNBP	SF3B4	QKI	
U2AF65	FASTKD2	HNRNPU	YTHDC2	
APOBEC3C				

RBP Count

- log FDR

Ub-specific processing proteases
Deubiquitination
Metabolism of proteins
Signal Transduction
Post-translational protein modification
PCP/CE pathway
Gene expression (Transcription)
Nuclear Receptor transcription pathway
UCH proteinases
RNA Polymerase II Transcription
Chromatin modifying enzymes
Transcriptional regulation by RUNX1
Regulation of mRNA stability by proteins that bind AU-rich elements
Membrane Trafficking
L1CAM interactions
Hedgehog off state
HATs acetylate histones
Generic Transcription Pathway
Clathrin-mediated endocytosis
Antigen processing-Cross presentation

Figure S1

Figure S2

Figure S3

Figure S4

Figure S5

a

b

c

Figure S7

Figure S8

★ No significant motifs enriched

Figure S9

a

b

c

d

Figure S10

Figure S11

Figure S12

a

Filtering SNV effects | Conversing information | Gene symbols | Function annotation

AARS — $\Delta SNV <= -0.2$ $P_{REP} >= 0.6$

AATF — $\Delta SNV <= -0.2$ $P_{REP} >= 0.6$

⋮

ZNF800 — $\Delta SNV <= -0.2$ $P_{REP} >= 0.6$

ZRANB2 — $\Delta SNV <= -0.2$ $P_{REP} >= 0.6$

Conversing transcripts to gene symbol

Prkch Abhd4 Usp1
Pcnx Fancm Fggy
Gm5814 Zc3h12b Aspscr1
...
→ STRING → PCP/CE pathway / Transcriptional regulation by RUNX2 / Signal Transduction / Signaling by WNT / Beta-catenin independent WNT signaling

Psmc6 Psmd11 Usp1
Psmc1 Ubb Thra
Psmb11 Unk Usp25
...
→ STRING → Deubiquitination / UCH proteinases / Post-translational protein modification / Metabolism of proteins / Ub-specific processing proteases

⋮

Prkch Fras1 Usp1
Tunar Fancm Rcor1
Gm5814 Gm15725 Aspscr1
...
→ STRING → Generic Transcription Pathway / Signal Transduction / Deubiquitination / RNA Polymerase II Transcription / Gene expression (Transcription)

Prkch Abhd4 Usp1
Pcnx Usp25 Fggy
Psmc1 Zc3h12b Psmd11
...
→ STRING → PRC2 methylates histones and DNA / Deubiquitination / Signal Transduction / Gene expression (Transcription) / RNA Polymerase II Transcription

b

RBP count (0–60). - log FDR scale: 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

Deubiquitination / Signal Transduction / Metabolism of proteins / Gene expression (Transcription) / RNA Polymerase II Transcription / Generic Transcription Pathway / Post-translational protein modification / PCP/CE pathway / Chromatin modifying enzymes / UCH proteinases / Nuclear Receptor transcription pathway / Signaling by Rho GTPases, Miro GTPases and RHOBTB3 / PRC2 methylates histones and DNA / Membrane Trafficking / Beta-catenin independent WNT signaling

c

RBP: AATF, APOBEC3C, ATXN2, CNBP, CPSF1, DDX3, FASTKD2, FBL, FMR1, GRWD1, HLTF, HNRNPU, METTL3, NOLC1, PPIG, QKI, SF3B4, TARDBP, U2AF65, UCHL5, YTHDC2

Gene: Ar, Esr1, Hif1a, Myc, Psma3, Psma6, Psmb3, Psmb6, Psmc1, Psmc2, Psmc5, Psmc6, Psmd11, Psmd2, Psmd3, Tgfbr1, Traf3, Ubb, Uchl1

Disease: AD, ALS, HD, PKD, Cancer, PD

AD : Alzheimer disease   HD : Huntington disease
ALS : Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis   PKD : Parkinson disease   PD : Prion disease

Figure S13