Supplementary Information for

The TLR2/TLR6 ligand FSL-1 mitigates radiation-induced hematopoietic injury in mice and nonhuman primates

W. June Brickey^{a,b}, David L. Caudell^c, Andrew N. Macintyre^d, John D. Olson^c, Yanwan Dai^e, Sirui Li^{b,f}, Gregory

O. Dugan^c, J. Daniel Bourland^g, Lisa M. O'Donnell^c, Janet A. Tooze^h, Guannan Huang^{b,f}, Shuangshuang

Yang^{b,f}, Hao Guo^{b,f}, Matthew N. French^d, Allison N. Schorzmanⁱ, William C. Zamboniⁱ, Gregory D. Sempowski^d, Zhiguo Li^{e,j}, Kouros Owzar^{e,j}, Nelson J. Chao^k, J. Mark Cline^c, Jenny P.Y. Ting^{a,b,f}

aDepartment of Microbiology and Immunology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill,

NC, 27599

^bLineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, Center of Translational Immunology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599

^cDepartment of Pathology, Section on Comparative Medicine, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston Salem, NC, 27157

^dDuke Human Vaccine Institute, Department of Medicine, Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC,

27710

^eDepartment of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, North Carolina,

27705

^fDepartment of Genetics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599

^gDepartment of Radiation Oncology, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston Salem, NC, 27157

hDepartment of Biostatistics and Data Science, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston Salem,

NC, 27157

ⁱDepartment of Pharmacology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599 USA

^jDuke Cancer Institute, ^eDepartment of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Duke University School of Medicine,

Durham, North Carolina, 27705

kDepartment of Medicine, Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, 27705

Supplementary Materials and Methods

Pharmacokinetics (PK)

Synthetic TLR2/TLR6 binding diacyl lipopeptide (Pam2CysGlyAspProLysHisProLysSerPhe) was obtained from Invivogen (San Diego, CA, USA), synthesized in large quantities as a VacciGrade endotoxinfree biomolecule. PK parameters were initially determined in unirradiated mice given 0.4, 0.8, or 4.0 mg/kg FSL-1 and subsequently evaluated in total body irradiated (TBI) mice given 0.8 mg/kg FSL-1. PK analysis was also performed in naïve nonhuman primates (NHP), using 0.03 or 0.09 mg/kg FSL-1 administered subcutaneously. Blood was collected in potassium-Etheylenediaminetetraacetic Acid (K₂-EDTA) vacutainers from treated NHP between 0 to 96 h following drug administration. Plasma samples were processed with 10% trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) and FSL-1 concentrations were measured using liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (Shimadzu LC-20AD liquid chromatograph Thermo TSQ Ultra triple quadrupole mass spectrometer).

Mouse CBC Analysis

To assess hematologic recovery post-radiation, blood was collected into EDTA tubes using terminal cardiac puncture of naïve mice and treated mice at days 8, 17 and 30 after radiation. Complete blood counts (CBC), including hematocrit, red blood cell (RBC) indices, total and differential leukocyte, hemoglobin, and platelet counts were determined using standard animal hematological testing using IDEXX ProCyte Dx™ Hematology Analyzer as conducted at Animal Clinical Laboratory Services, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Mouse Bone Marrow Cell Immunophenotyping

Bone marrow (BM) cells flushed from femurs were treated with ammonium chloride-potassium lysing buffer (Lonza) to lyse red blood cells. BM cells were stained for viability with live/dead fix aqua (Invitrogen) and then all cells were labelled for 30 min at 4°C with fluorescently tagged antibodies in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) with 1% bovine serum albumin (BSA) (Invitrogen). Labelled cells were fixed using 4% paraformaldehyde (ThermoFisher). Fixed cells were stained at room temperature (RT) with 3 μM (4′,6-diamidino-2-phenylindole) (DAPI) in permeabilization buffer (Biolegend) and then all cells were analyzed using an LSRII flow cytometer (BD Biosciences), operating with Diva software v8.0 (BD Biosciences). The resultant data were gated

using FlowJo software v10.4 (BD Biosciences). Cell targets, clones, fluorophores, and suppliers are listed in *SI Appendix***, Table S1**. BM cell populations were defined as follows: common myeloid progenitors (CMP): Lineage or Lin⁻ (CD3ɛ, CD11b, B220, TER-119, Ly-6G/Ly-6C) Sca1⁻c-kit⁺ CD16/32^{int}; granulocyte-macrophage progenitors (GMP): Lin⁻ Sca1⁻c-kit⁺ CD16/32^{hi}; megakaryocyte-erythrocyte progenitors (MEP): Lin⁻ Sca1⁻c-kit⁺ CD16/32^{low}; hematopoietic stem progenitor cells (HSPC): Lin⁻ Sca1⁺ c-kit⁺ (1); eosinophils: Gr1⁻CD115^{low} F4/80⁺ SSC^{high}, macrophages: Gr1⁻ CD115^{low} F4/80⁺SSC^{low/mid} (2); erythroid: Ter119⁺; B cells and B cell progenitors: B220⁺ and T cells: CD3⁺. Representative gating strategies are shown in SI Appendix Fig. S2A-**B**.

NHP Protein Multiplex Bead Array Analysis

Cryopreserved NHP plasma was thawed and assayed using a premixed 23-plex magnetic bead panel for G-CSF, GM-CSF, IFN-γ, IL-1ra, IL-1β, IL-2, IL-4, IL-5, IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, IL-12/23 (p40), IL-13, IL-15, IL-17, IL-18, MCP-1, MIP-1α, MIP-1β, sCD40L, TGF-α, TNF and VEGF (Millipore). The assay was prepared according to the manufacturer's protocol and read using a Bio-Plex 3D bead reader (Bio-Rad). Data were analyzed using Bio-Plex manager software v6.2 (Bio-Rad) and visualized in heatmaps in *SI Appendix,* **Fig. S5**.

NHP PBMC Immunophenotyping

Monkeys were sedated with intramuscular ketamine and then femoral blood was drawn into sodium- or lithiumheparin coated collection tubes (BD Bioscience), transferred by courier to Duke University and stored overnight at RT. The next day, plasma and peripheral blood monocytic cells (PBMC) were isolated using System-Histopaque-1077 media according to the manufacturer's protocol (Sigma-Aldrich). Peripheral blood monocytic cells (PBMC) were immunophenotyped on the day of isolation and plasma was cryopreserved for later use. PBMC were labelled for 40 min at room temperature (RT) with fluorescently tagged antibodies in PBS with 1% BSA, stained for viability using live/dead fix aqua (Invitrogen) and then fixed in 4% paraformaldehyde (ThermoFisher). Fixed cells were analyzed as described for mouse cells. Cell targets, clones, fluorophores, and suppliers are listed in *SI Appendix***, Table S1**. Plasmacytoid and myeloid DC were defined as CD3- CD20- HLA-DR⁺ CD14⁻ CD123⁺ CD11c⁻ and CD3⁻ CD20⁻ HLA-DR⁺ CD14⁻ CD123⁻ CD11c⁺, respectively (3). B cells

3

were defined as CD45⁺CD20⁺; T cells as CD45⁺CD3⁺CD16⁻ and NK-T cells as CD45⁺CD3⁺CD16⁺. Activated monocytes were defined as CD45+CD3 CD20, HLA-DR+/CD14+, CD16+CD14+/low and classic monocytes as CD45⁺ CD3⁻ CD20⁻, HLA-DR⁺/CD14⁺, CD16⁻ CD14⁺ (4). Representative gating strategies are shown in **SI** *Appendix***, Fig. S6A-B**.

Immunoblotting of mouse bone marrow protein lysates

Mouse BM protein lysates were prepared in radio-immunoprecipitation assay (RIPA) lysis buffer (Thermo Fisher), supplemented with protease and phosphatase inhibitors (Roche). The lysates were analyzed by immunoblotting after electrophoresis on 4–12% NuPAGE Bis-Tris polyacrylamide gels (Thermo Fisher) and transferred to nitrocellulose membranes (Bio-Rad). For detection, the following antibodies were used: phosphorylated p38 (#4511), p38 (#9212), phosphorylated H2AX (#9718) (Cell Signaling); Goat anti-rabbit-HRP (#111-035-144, Jackson Immune Research Laboratories) and β -actin-horse radish peroxidase (HRP) conjugate (#47778, Santa Cruz Biotechnology). Protein bands on probed membranes were quantified using ImageJ (NIH public domain). The blot and density quantitation are presented in *SI Appendix***, Fig. S7**.

Statistical Analyses

Data points failing the outlier calculator based on the Grubbs' test or extreme studentized deviate method (5) by GraphPad Prism (version 9) with alpha significance at 0.05 were considered outliers and were removed from the raw data files before any statistical tests were conducted. This affected the following figures: Fig 1 I-L, Fig 2G, Fig 4B-C, Fig S2C-J, Fig S4A, and Fig S7C. All subsequent analyses unless noted otherwise below were conducted using the R statistical environment (6) (version 4.2.2), along with extension packages from the Comprehensive R Archive Network (CRAN).

The association of treatment with overall survival was evaluated. Differences between survival distributions were illustrated in Kaplan-Meier plots and log-rank test was conducted using the SURVIVAL package (7) (version 3.2-13). The Log-rank test *P* values are reported. Power calculations were conducted to determine the minimum detectable effect size for a two-sample Wilcoxon test. The calculations assumed 10 NHP in each of the two treatment groups and quantified the effect as the ratio of the difference of the two

4

means divided by a common standard deviation. For an unadjusted two-sided alpha level of 0.05, we found 0.8 power to detect an effect size of 1.42.

Differences in the distributions of continuous outcomes or calculated changes in outcomes over a period of time among treatment, radiation or genotype groups were evaluated using the two-sample *t* test for unpaired data with Welch's approximation (8). When the assumption of normality was not deemed to be appropriate based on the measurements' distributions, the Wilcoxon rank sum test was applied to unpaired data and asymptotic *P* values were reported (9). To evaluate simultaneously the effect of multiple grouping variables (treatment x radiation or genotype x treatment x radiation) on the outcomes, two-way or three-way ANOVA tests with interaction terms were applied with the function aov from STATS package in R (10).

Repeated measurements data were modeled using linear mixed-effects models implemented by the LME4 package (11) (version 1.1-31). In some cases, the fitted linear mixed-effects model was singular, so Bayesian linear mixed-effects model implemented by the BLME package (12) (version 1.0-5) was applied instead. In cases where the number of pre-treatment days were reported for baseline values or no baseline values were available, the postulated regression model included additive fixed effects for time and treatment, along with their pairwise interaction were reported. For variables where indicated baseline was categorical, the regression model was augmented by including a fixed additive effect for the baseline value along with first- and second-order interaction terms unless otherwise specified. In cases where the outcomes over time did not follow a linear pattern and the data were measured at more than four time points, the turning point of the measurement for each sample was detected according to Kendall's information theory (implemented by the function turnpoint from PASTECS package, version 1.3.21) (13, 14) (*SI Appendix,* **Fig. S3A-E and S4G-L**); the turning point was determined via a majority vote (except where a common turning point was selected to keep consistency in related measurements, *SI Appendix,* **Fig. S4I**). Then, we separated the data at the determined turning point and aligned two mixed-effects models before (pre) and after (post) the turning point, where the model after the turning point included the turning point and the pre-turning point model included the baseline as a fixed additive effect. In cases where the outcomes over time did not follow a linear pattern and the data was measured at less than or equal to four time points, the mixed-effects model was fit for the entire timeline, but the time was treated as discrete unordered factors instead of a continuous variable. If the baseline

5

existed, it was either treated as a fixed additive effect (*SI Appendix,* **Fig. S3J**) or merged into time as the base factor (*SI Appendix,* **Fig. S5**) depending on how the *P* values were reported. To ensure that model residuals did not violate the normality assumption, the Box-Cox power transformation (15) was applied to each outcome prior to each linear mixed-effects analysis. The Box-Cox power used in the transformation was estimated from a fixed effects linear model with the same formula as mixed-effects modeling (excluding the random effects). A constant (1) was added to all values of the data panels with 0 values before transformation. The Box-Cox power estimation was implemented by the MASS package (16) (version 7.3-58.1). In cases where variables were on different scales, rescaling was applied with the function scale from BASE package (i.e., on time, if time was treated as numerical values; on baseline, if baseline was applicable). If the time was treated as continuous or if the time was treated as discrete factors but the baseline was included as a fixed additive effect, the effect of each term in the mixed-effects model at all levels was estimated using the sum of squares for each term (including the interaction term). The F test with Type III sums of squares (17) was implemented by the CAR package (18) (version 3.1.1) and generated *P* values. On the other hand, if time was treated as a discrete factor and the baseline was treated as the base factor merged into the time effect instead of as a fixed additive effect, the *P* values were estimated for each term by t-statistics using Satterthwaite's method implemented by the LMERTEST package (19) (version 3.1-3).

The ordinal logistic regression, implemented by the MASS package (16) (version 7.3-58.1), was applied to analyze the effect of treatment on bruising over time (**Fig. 2K**). The ordinal logistic regression model included additive fixed effects for time and treatment along with their pairwise interaction.

Inference on NHP BM progenitor cell abundance was conducted using Fisher's exact test with the raw data (20). For **Fig. 3G-K**, changes of abundance of cell types (ordinal data) from baseline to day 22, day 22 to day 65 and baseline to day 65 were calculated. Contingency tables were inferred from the abundance changes, which were based on the Fisher's exact test for FSL-1 vs. Vehicle.

NanoString nCounter RNA sequencing counts were generated for 24 genes, along with positive and negative controls (*SI Appendix***, Table S2**). Normalization was performed based on well-correlated (Pearson correlation coefficient >0.8) positive controls, followed by background correction using the negative controls. Specifically, geometric means of the four positive controls were calculated within each sample, then the

average of the geometric means across samples was taken. For each sample, the normalization factor was calculated as the overall average divided by the geometric mean for that sample, and the counts for each gene in the sample were multiplied by this normalization factor. Next, normalized counts for each gene were divided by the geometric mean of all eight negative controls for that sample. For the analysis, $log₂$ transformed ratios of the preprocessed counts for day 22 vs. baseline, day 65 vs. baseline, and day 65 vs. day 22 were identified for each gene. Then, differences in $log₂$ transformed ratios among treatment groups were compared using the two-sample *t* test for unpaired data. Pooled variance was used to estimate the variance in the testing results (8, 21). Both un-adjusted *P* values and *P* values adjusted for multiple testing (false discovery rate) (22) are reported in *SI Appendix,* **Table S2**.

Supplementary Figure S1.

Fig. S1. Pharmacokinetics of FSL-1 subcutaneous administration in mice was evaluated. Pharmacokinetics was evaluated in non-irradiated **(A)** and irradiated **(B)** C57BL/6 mice using 10 to 100 mg FSL-1 administered sc and blood collected over 72 h. Detectable FSL-1 in plasma for the initial 24 h was assayed by LC-MS/MS, with Area Under Curve (AUC) values and half-life $(t_{1/2})$ indicated. Each symbol represents an individual mouse.

Fig. S2. FSL-1 administration impacted maturing myeloid cell lineages in bone marrow and neutrophils in peripheral blood of treated mice.

Bone marrow (BM) cells were isolated from C57BL/6 mice and immunophenotyped by flow cytometry. Control mice were unirradiated (unIR), whereas experimental mice were exposed to 5 Gy total body irradiation (TBI). Mice received sc injections of PBS (-) or FSL-1 (+) on day 1 with BM samples harvested for immunophenotyping on days 8 or 30. **(A)** Flow gating strategy for BM progenitor cells. **(B)** Flow gating strategy for maturing lineages. **(C)** CD11b⁺ myeloid cells, **(D)** CD11c⁺ myeloid cells, **(E)** Gr1⁺ granulocytes, **(F)**

eosinophils, **(G)** F4/80⁺ macrophage, **(H)** CD3⁺ cells, **(I)** B220⁺ cells and **(J)** Ter119⁺ erythroid cells in BM cell suspensions were quantified. Each symbol represents an individual and the bar signifies the mean. Unpaired Wilcoxon rank sum tests between PBS and FSL-1 treatments were applied to determine differences in cell numbers with *P* values shown. Blood cells were measured in peripheral blood samples taken from treated mice on days 8 and 30 after radiation. The constituents include white blood cells, WBC **(K)**, platelets **(L)**, neutrophils **(M)**, red blood cells, RBC **(N)**, hemoglobin **(O)** and hematocrit **(P)**. An unpaired *t* test (two-sided, equal variance) was applied to compare PBS and FSL-1 values at each time point with *P* values displayed. Each symbol represents an individual mouse with bar at mean.

Supplementary Figure S3.

Fig. S3. Administration of FSL-1 in NHP after exposure to sublethal TBI did not cause adverse effects.

(A) Pharmacokinetics testing was conducted in non-irradiated NHP using either 0.03 or 0.09 mg/kg FSL-1 sc with blood collected over 3 d after FSL-1 administration ($N = 3$ per cohort, indicated by symbols). The AUC of FSL-1 in plasma and the half-life $(t_{1/2})$ are shown. To evaluate FSL-1 mitigation of H-ARS in NHP, a sublethal TBI (4 Gy) model was used, followed with subcutaneous FSL-1 administration at 24 h after radiation. **(B)** Initial age and **(C)** body weight of NHP; each symbol represents an individual and the bar signifies the mean.

Wilcoxon rank sum tests were performed to discern statistical differences, with indicated *P* values. Physiologic

measures of **(D)** pulse oximetry and **(E)** mean arterial pressure were analyzed. Blood chemistry markers of **(F)** Creatinine, **(G)** Albumin/Globulin ratio, **(H)** Alkaline Phosphatase, **(I)** Bicarbonate, **(J)** Chloride and **(K)** Calcium in peripheral blood (PB) samples were assessed. For **D-K**, outcomes are represented by mean +/- SEM for *N* = 10 per treatment cohort. A linear mixed-effects model was used to examine the impact of FSL-1 vs. Vehicle treatment over time, with *P* values shown for treatment interaction with time.

Supplementary Figure S4.

Fig. S4. Chronic weight, clinical or hematologic deficits were not evident with FSL-1 administration after radiation in NHP.

NHP were monitored after the 65-d study period for up to 850 d. **(A)** Body weight as a fraction of baseline body weight. Clinical metrics for **(B)** Total Serum Protein, **(C)** Albumin/Globulin ratio, **(D)** Alkaline Phosphatase, **(E)**

Aspartate Transaminase, and **(F)** Blood Urea Nitrogen, BUN were assessed. Hematologic markers in complete blood counts of **(G)** red blood cells, RBC, **(H)** Hemoglobin, **(I)** white blood cells, WBC, **(J)** platelets, PLT, **(K)** Neutrophils, and **(L)** Monocytes were determined. Data points are expressed as mean +/- SEM, for *N* = 10 per cohort with *P* values for treatment interaction with time determined by linear mixed-effects model analyses. For **G-L**, the nadir with linear mixed-effects model was applied pre and post nadir to analyze differences in injury and recovery profiles. *P* values for treatment pre or post nadir and treatment to time interaction (Trt:Time) are shown.

Supplementary Figure S5.

Fig. S5. Minimal changes were observed in serum proteins of NHP treated with radiation plus FSL-1. Serum cytokines were measured by multiplex bead array. Heat maps show mean log transformed abundance (pg/mL) of each analyte for plasma from Vehicle-(V) and FSL-1-(F)treated samples at baseline and on days 8, 15 and 50. The *P* values determined by linear mixed-effects model indicate treatment with time interactions, where treatment or Trt is Vehicle vs. FSL-1 and time periods or Time are baseline (bsln) vs. days (d) 8, 15 or 50.

Supplementary Figure S6.

Peripheral blood (PB) was collected at baseline and selected times for up to 65 d after radiation of treated NHP. **(A)** Flow cytometry gating strategy for dendritic cells (DC). **(B)** Flow cytometry gating strategy for monocytes and lymphocytes. **(C)** Classical monocytes (MC) and **(D)** activated MC were monitored in PB samples. **(E)** Myeloid DC (mDC) and **(F)** plasmacytoid DC (pDC) were quantified. Lymphocyte populations of **(G)** B cells, **(H)** T cells and **(I)** NK-T cells were measured. Data is presented as mean +/- SEM for *N* = 10 for each cohort. Statistical differences between Vehicle and FSL-1 treatments were evaluated using Wilcoxon rank sum testing at each time point and each time bracket, with selected *P* values shown. The brackets span the time points of comparisons.

Supplementary Figure S7.

Fig. S7. Radiation, but not FSL-1, impacted MAPK p38 phosphorylation and a damage marker. (A) The abundance of phosphorylated (Phos or P-) and total p38, phosphorylated H2AX and β -actin proteins in bone marrow cell lysates prepared from C57BL/6 mice necropsied on day 8 after radiation were examined by immunoblotting, with a representative blot shown. **(B)** Quantitation of relative levels of phosphorylated H2AX to -actin. **(C)** Quantitation of phosphorylated P-p38 and total p38 proteins detected by immunoblotting of bone marrow cell lysates prepared from unirradiated (unIR) and irradiated (5 Gy TBI) +/- FSL-1-treated WT mice. The ratio of P-p38 to total p38 protein for each target on the immunoblots was quantified using ImageJ. Each

symbol is an individual biological sample. Data were evaluated for treatment differences using a pairwise *t* test,

with *P* values shown.

Supplementary References

- 1. H. Guo *et al.*, Multi-omics analyses of radiation survivors identify radioprotective microbes and metabolites. *Science* **370** (2020).
- 2. A. Chow *et al.*, Bone marrow CD169+ macrophages promote the retention of hematopoietic stem and progenitor cells in the mesenchymal stem cell niche. *The Journal of experimental medicine* **208**, 261- 271 (2011).
- 3. I. Messaoudi, R. Estep, B. Robinson, S. W. Wong, Nonhuman primate models of human immunology. *Antioxid Redox Signal* **14**, 261-273 (2011).
- 4. P. Autissier, C. Soulas, T. H. Burdo, K. C. Williams, Immunophenotyping of lymphocyte, monocyte and dendritic cell subsets in normal rhesus macaques by 12-color flow cytometry: clarification on DC heterogeneity. *Journal of immunological methods* **360**, 119-128 (2010).
- 5. F. E. Grubbs, Procedures for detecting outlying observations in samples. *Technometrics* **11**, 1-21 (1969).
- 6. R Core Team, (2022) R: A language and environment for statistical computing. (version 2022). R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. https://www.R-project.org/
- 7. T. M. Therneau, P. M. Grambsh, *Modeling Survival Data: Extending the Cox Model* (Springer, New York, 2000).
- 8. B. L. Welch, The generalisation of student's problems when several different population variances are involved. *Biometrika* **34**, 28-35 (1947).
- 9. F. Wilcoxon, Individual Comparisons by Ranking Methods. *Biometrics Bulletin* **1**, 80-83 (1945).
- 10. J. M. Chambers, A. Freeny, R. M. Heiberger, "Analysis of variance; designed experiments" in Statistical Models in S (Wadsworth & Brooks/Cole, 1992), chap. 5.
- 11. D. Bates, M. Machler, B. Bolker, S. Walker, Fitting Linear Mixed-Effects Models Using lme4. *Journal of Statistical Software* **67**, 1-48 (2015).
- 12. Y. Chung, S. Rabe-Hesketh, V. Dorie, A. Gelman, J. Liu, A nondegenerate penalized likelihood estimator for variance parameters in multilevel models. *Psychometrika* **78**, 685-709 (2013).
- 13. F. Ibanez, Sur une nouvelle application de la theorie de l'information a la description des series chronologiques planctoniques. *J. Exp. Mar. Biol. Ecol.* **4**, 619-632 (1982).
- 14. M. G. Kendall, in *Time-series*. (Charles Griffin & Company, London, England, 1976).
- 15. G. E. P. Box, D. R. Cox, An Analysis of Transformations. *J. Roy. Stat. Soc. B.* **26**, 211-252 (1964).
- 16. W. N. Venables, B. D. Ripley, *Modern Applied Statistics with S*, 4th edition (Springer, New York, 2003).
- 17. S. S. Mangiafico, An R Companion for the Handbook of Biological Statistics, version 1.3.4. (2015).
- 18. J. Fox, S. Weisberg, *An R Companion to Applied Regression*, 3rd edition (SAGE Publications Inc., 2019).
- 19. A. Kuznetsova, P. B. Brockhoff, R. H. B. Christensen, lmerTest Package: Tests in Linear Mixed Effects Models. *Journal of Statistical Software* **82**, 1 - 26 (2017).
- 20. R. A. Fisher, *Statistical Methods for Research Workers*. S. J. Kotz, N.L., Ed., Series in Statistics (Springer, New York, 1992).
- 21. NanoString Technologies Inc., (2022) nCounter® Analysis System Grant Application Package [Brochure]. Nanostring Technologies. https://nanostring.com/wpcontent/uploads/2023/03/BR_MK4429_nCounter_Brochure_r10.pdf.
- 22. Y. Benjamini, Y. Hochberg, Controlling the false discovery rate: a practical and powerful approach to multiple testing. *J. Roy. Stat. Soc. B.* **57**, 289-300 (1995).