

# Supporting Information

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## SI Text

**Pharmacology of Human Prodrug-Activating Enzymes.** A designed cytosine deaminase with a sequence close to that of a human protein might retain low immunogenicity while providing prodrug-activating ability. Cellular expression of cytosine deaminase activity causes susceptibility to the toxic effects of the prodrug 5-fluoro-cytosine (5FC), which, after deamination to 5-fluoro-uracil, is metabolized to the cytotoxin 5-fluoro-dUMP (1). Because the human genome does not encode a free cytosine deaminase (2), 5FC is used clinically for treatment of infections by organisms that do express cytosine deaminase, such as fungi (3). 5FC has also been used in suicide gene chemotherapy of human tumors into which microbial cytosine deaminase has been introduced by means of either antibody targeting or transfection (4). However, prodrug-activating enzymes derived from microbes have high immunogenicity and hence are inappropriate for some suicide gene therapy regimens when an initial phase of viability is required, such as preemptive suicide gene therapy for graft vs. host disease (5–7). We consider human guanine deaminase (hGDA) to be the best candidate enzyme for specificity alteration to cytosine and 5FC by means of our de novo loop design algorithm. hGDA is the only free nucleobase deaminase in the human genome (8, 9). It shares significant structural homology with bacterial cytosine deaminase (bcd) (10, 11), although not enough to allow for direct loop grafting. Other aspects of cytosine and guanine that differ remain to be investigated.

**Materials and Methods. Computational Method.** Our general method for enzyme specificity alteration comprises 4 stages. First, a model of the desired substrate bound to the enzyme in the transition state configuration is created. Knowledge of the reaction and structure of the enzyme is incorporated at this stage, although subsequent stages are independent of the precise method used to create the transition state model.

Second, protein side-chain functional groups important for specific interactions between the enzyme and the desired substrate are optimally positioned in the model. These ideal positions can be derived from crystal structures containing the desired substrate or from energetic considerations. When the side chain of a given residue is assigned to an ideal position, the backbone is also implicitly assigned to a set of possible positions, depending on the rotameric configuration of the side chain, analogous to the “inverse rotamers” described in a previous study (12). In general, it is possible that no residue in a given scaffold protein will have its backbone atoms located at any of these positions.

Third, we attempt to remodel the polypeptide backbone of the scaffold protein in such a way that it is able to host the newly introduced side chain in its ideal position. A segment of the scaffold is chosen for modification, and backbone discontinuities are introduced at the beginning and the end of that segment. The position of the segment is transformed so that the backbone atoms of a randomly chosen residue in the segment are relocated to one of the implicitly assigned positions determined by the desired side-chain interaction. A small random number of residues are added to or deleted from the segment at this stage, because the optimal loop length is unknown but not necessarily equal to that of the scaffold. At this point, the backbone of the model will be discontinuous both at the beginning and end of the segment. To reform a closed chain, several general methods from protein structure prediction are applied. Fragment insertion (13), in which backbone segments of unrelated protein

crystal structures are randomly combined, is used to generate alternative configurations that differ substantially from the original structure. These configurations are accepted or rejected according to the Metropolis criterion (14), using a low-resolution energy function reflecting chain closure, atomic overlap, and backbone torsional angle preference. Gradient-based minimization (15, 16) and cyclic coordinate-descent (17) are used to optimize chain closure beyond what can be achieved with crystallographically observed torsional angles. A kinematic framework that represents both intramolecular torsional angles as well as intermolecular rigid-body transformations was used to generate atomic coordinates for energy evaluation (18–20). Such a framework allows us to explicitly specify the rigid-body transformation desired between substrate and side chain and thus focus sampling of backbone configurations exclusively in that conformational subspace (Fig. S7).

Fourth, standard computational design protocols, in conjunction with a high-resolution energy function (21), are used to identify sequences that maximally stabilize the generated backbone structures and thus optimize transition state binding. De novo loop-modeling methods (22) are used to corroborate that designed sequences computationally fold to the desired structure when the constraint between substrate and side chain is removed. Some sequences are observed to fold to configurations that do not satisfy the substrate–side-chain constraint and are thus not further evaluated.

**Modeling of hGDA with cytosine and ammelide.** A model of a hypothetical cytosine deaminase was created, using the structure of hGDA as the enzyme scaffold and using the structure of bcd as a source of ideal interactions between enzyme and substrate. In this model, cytosine was superimposed on the 6-membered ring of guanine in the orientation corresponding to the transition state for deamination. The interaction between cytosine N1/O2 and glutamine 156 observed in bcd was used to position the side chain of a new amide-containing residue (either asparagine or glutamine). Alternate backbone configurations of hGDA residues 211–220 were sampled, including configurations containing insertions and deletions of residues in that loop. The optimal loop identified by this protocol involved sequence changes only to residues 213–218.

Mutations of residues other than those in the loop were also predicted by our design protocol. The mutation M171S was predicted to stabilize the conformation of the 213–216 loop, and thus improve transition state binding. However, experimental characterization showed that this mutation did not significantly affect activity. Loops that were longer than the wild type by 2 residues were also predicted to adopt conformations compatible with substrate binding and catalysis. However, experimental characterization showed that mutants with this longer loop length were not active.

Cytosine differs from guanine not only in the N1/O2 moiety, but also the C5/C6 moiety of the 6-membered ring. Interactions with that moiety could not be made on the basis of changes to hGDA residues 213–218. Results of the loop modeling protocol targeting N1/O2 of cytosine or ammelide did not depend on other aspects of the substrate. Therefore, for subsequent experimental characterization, we assayed activity toward ammelide, which is similar to the N1/C6/O6 moiety of guanine in that region.

**Cloning.** cDNA for hGDA (NM004293) was obtained from Origene Technologies (TC111122; Origene Technologies). Oligonucleotides were obtained from Integrated DNA Technologies (IDT). The wild-type gene was amplified with primers pET29-

hGDA-fwd and pET29-hGDA-rev and ligated into pET29b+ (Novagen) between the NdeI and XhoI restriction sites, giving construct pET29b-hGDA-wt.

Overlap assembly PCR (23) using primers des-fwd and des-rev was used to introduce mutations for pET29b-hGDA-des. Point mutants of pET29b-hGDA-wt and pET29b-hGDA-des were made by means of Kunkel mutagenesis (24, 25) using primers shown in Table S2.

hGDA-des was also ligated into pET15b between the NdeI and BamHI restriction sites after amplification by primers pET15-hGDA-fwd and pET15-hGDA-rev, to allow for proteolytic removal of the hexahistidine affinity tag and further purification.

**Expression and purification.** Proteins were expressed in an autoinduction media (26) at 18 °C for 24 h, after growth to log phase at 37 °C for 8 h. Cells were pelleted and lysed by using the BugBuster Protein Extraction Reagent (Novagen) or by sonication. Proteins were purified by using 2 mL of NiNTA His\*Bind Resin (Qiagen) and dialyzed at 4 °C against 100 volumes of PBS (pH 7.5). Relative rates of activity were determined by using protein expressed from pET29b+ after this stage of purification.

Thrombin cleavage was also performed on expressed pET15-hGDA-des to remove the hexahistidine tag in a stage of further purification before determination of Michaelis–Menten parameters. One-half unit of biotinylated thrombin (Novagen) per milligram of purified protein was added during dialysis. The digest was allowed to proceed for 24 h, at which point, 1 mL of Ni NTA His\*Bind Resin and 200  $\mu$ L of Streptavidin Agarose (Novagen) were added, as well as imidazole to a final concentration of 20 mM. Flow through containing purified protein was collected after 1 h.

Purified protein was concentrated to  $\approx$ 5 mg/mL by using Amicon Ultra Centrifugal Filter Devices, 10,000 MWCO (Millipore). Protein concentration was determined by using a Nanodrop-1000 spectrophotometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific) to measure the absorbance at 280 nm. A molar extinction coefficient of 40840  $M^{-1} cm^{-1}$  was calculated by using the amino acid sequence and ProtParam online tools (27).

**Ammelide deamination assay.** Ammelide and cyanuric acid were obtained from Sigma–Aldrich. Relative rates of activity for the designed, wild type, and other control variants were assayed in triplicate at concentrations of 20  $\mu$ M enzyme and 500  $\mu$ M substrate in PBS (pH 7.5) at 25 °C. Reactions were stopped at 6, 24, and 48 h by addition of acetonitrile to a final concentration of 78% (vol/vol). Michaelis–Menten parameters were determined by assaying in triplicate at 10  $\mu$ M enzyme and 50, 75, 100, 125, 250, 500, and 750  $\mu$ M substrate for 12 and 18 h, in PBS (pH 7.5) at 25 °C.

Product formation was determined by HPLC, using a protocol derived from ref. 28. An Agilent 1200 Series HPLC (Agilent) was used with a Zorbax NH2 Analytical Column, 4.6  $\times$  250 mm, 5  $\mu$ m (Agilent). Isocratic elution with 22% 5 mM sodium phosphate (pH 6.0) and 78% acetonitrile was performed at 1 mL/min, and absorption at 210 nm was monitored. Ammelide eluted between 12.7 and 13.0 min, whereas cyanuric acid eluted between 5.7 and 6.0 min.

Kinetic parameters were determined by fitting the Michaelis–Menten equation with nonlinear least-squares regression in R (29).

**Crystallization.** pET15b-hGDA-des was expressed as described above. Cell pellets were lysed by sonication in 25 mM Hepes (pH 7.5), 200 mM sodium chloride, 5% glycerol, 10 mM imidazole, with 1 mM TCEP, 30  $\mu$ M ammelide, 20  $\mu$ M zinc acetate, and 1 mM PMSF. After centrifugation and filtration as described above, lysate was flowed across Talon resin (Clontech) and subsequently washed and eluted. Wash and elution buffers were identical to sonication buffer, but had 20 and 300 mM imidazole, respectively. Eluted protein was dialyzed into 25 mM Hepes (pH 7.5), 200 mM sodium chloride, 5% glycerol, with 1 mM TCEP, and 100  $\mu$ M ammelide. Overnight digestion with biotinylated

thrombin was performed during dialysis, and streptavidin capture was performed as described above. Size-exclusion chromatography using a Superdex 200 26/60 column (GE Healthcare) was performed with buffer identical to dialysis buffer except for having 300 mM sodium chloride. Purified protein was concentrated to 10 mg/mL, and during this process, buffer conditions were adjusted to 25 mM Hepes (pH 7.5), 100 mM sodium chloride, 2% glycerol, 1 mM TCEP, 200  $\mu$ M ammelide. Protein was crystallized by vapor-phase equilibration in the hanging-drop geometry against a mother liquor of 100 mM Mes (pH 6.5), 200 mM sodium chloride, and 1.8 M ammonium sulfate. Crystals appeared in 1–4 days and were flash cooled in 2 stages with mother liquor plus 12% glycerol and subsequently 22% glycerol. **Crystallography.** Crystals belonged to the space group I212121, with dimensions  $a = 86.83$   $b = 107.31$   $c = 233.62$ . X-ray diffraction data were collected to 2.4-Å resolution at beamline 5.0.1 at the ALS (Advanced Light Source, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, Berkeley, CA) at wavelength 0.9774. Data were processed and scaled by using HKL-2000 (30). The structure was built by using the CCP4 suite of programs (31, 32). Phases were determined by molecular replacement using a truncated model of wild-type hGDA derived from 2UZ9, by using PHASER. Model building and refinement were performed with COOT and REFMAC, respectively, excluding a random 5% of the data for cross-validation. Final statistics are provided in Table S4. Coordinates were deposited into the RCSB Protein Data Bank (accession no. 3E0L).

**Calculation of RMSDs.** RMSDs reported in the text were calculated by superimposing static, nondesigned portions of the structures (that is, excluding residues 90–109, 213–216, and 412–422 in the calculation of the transformation for superimposition). Distances between  $C\alpha$  atoms for the specified regions were computed after this superimposition was applied.

#### DNA Sequence of hGDA.

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atgtgtgccgctcagatgccgcccctggcgacacatcttccgagg
gacgttgcctccactccactggacctgcccattggagggtgctcgg
gatcacctcctcggcgtagcgacagcggcaaaatagtgtttttag
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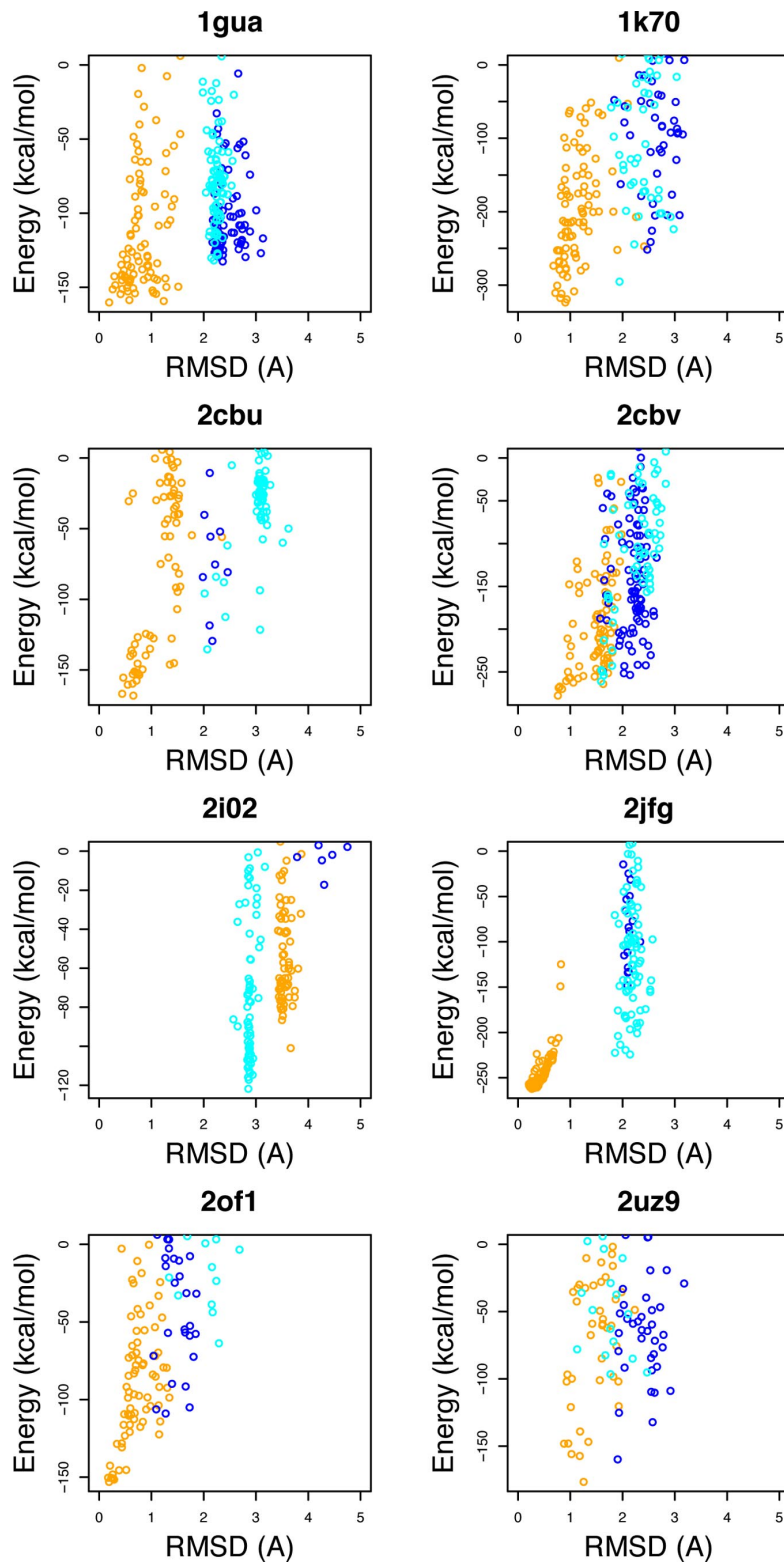
## Amino Acid Sequence of hGDA.

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AGSSIDLPLELWLTKYTFPAEHRFQNI DFAEEVYTRVVRRLTKNGT  
TTACYFATIH TDS SLL LADITDKFGQRAFVGVKVCMDLNDTFPEYKE  
TTEESIKETERFVSEMLQKNYSRVKPIVTPRFSLSCSETLMGELGN  
IAKTRDLHIQSHISENDEVEAVKNLYPSYKNTSVYDKNNLLTNK  
TVMAHGCVLSAEELNVFHERGASIAHC PNSNLSLSSGFLNVLEVLK  
HEVKIGLGT DVAGGYSY SMLDAIRRAVMVSNILLINKVNEKSLTLK  
EVFRLATLGGSQLGLDGEIGNFEVKGKFDAILINPKASDSPIDL F  
YGDFFGDIS EAVIQKFLYLGDDRNI EEVYVGGKQVVPFSSSV

## Amino Acid Sequence of hGDA-des.

MCAAQMPPLAHIFRGTFFVHSTWTCPMEVLRDHLGLVSDSGKIVF  
LEEASQQEKLAKWEKCFKPCETRELSHHEFFMPGLVDTHIHASQYSF  
AGSSIDLPLELWLTKYTFPAEHRFQNI DFAEEVYTRVVRRLTKNGT  
TTACYFATIH TDS SLL LADITDKFGQRAFVGVKVCMDLNDTFPEYKE  
TTEESIKETERFVSEMLQKNYSRVKPIVTPGNGVSETLMGELGNIA  
KTRDLHIQSHISENDEVEAVKNLYPSYKNTSVYDKNNLLTNKTV  
MAHGCVLSAEELNVFHERGASIAHC PNSNLSLSSGFLNVLEVLKHE  
VKIGLGT DVAGGYSY SMLDAIRRAVMVSNILLINKVNEKSLTLKVE  
FRLATLGGSQLGLDGEIGNFEVKGKFDAILINPKASDSPIDL F  
YDFFGDIS EAVIQKFLYLGDDRNI EEVYVGGKQVVPFSSSV

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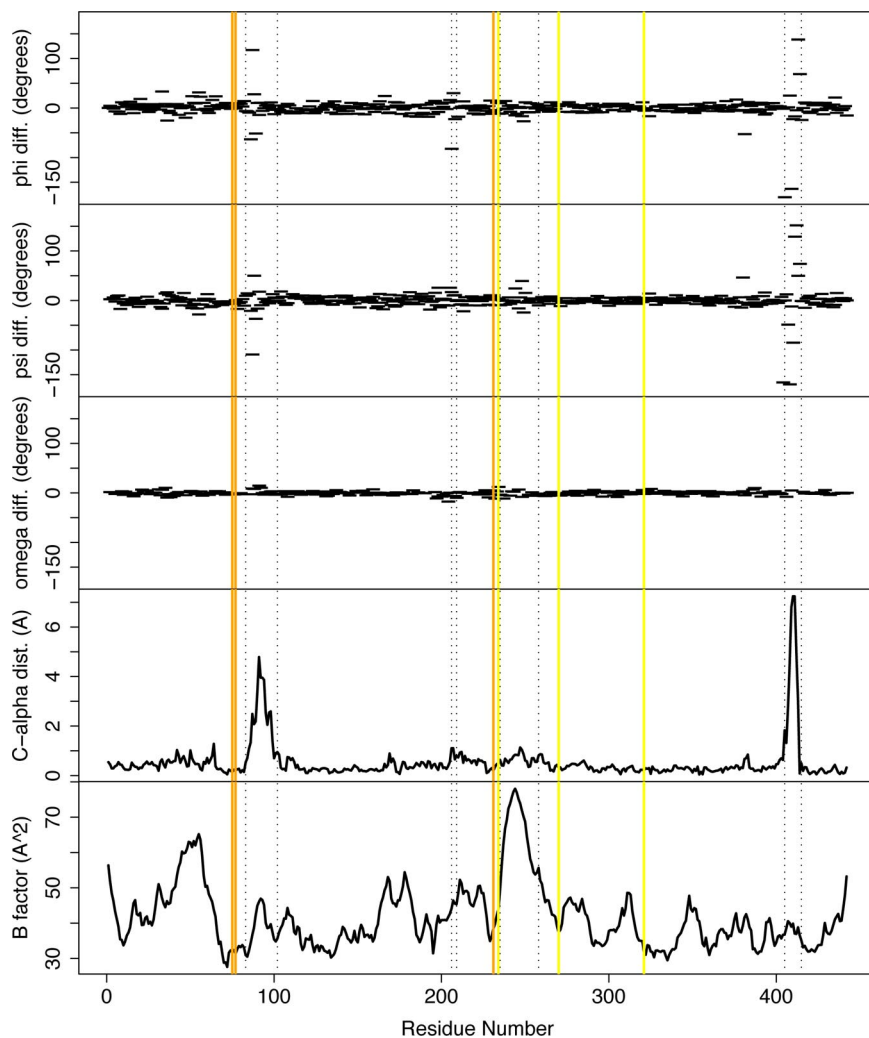


**Fig. S1.** Benchmark energy vs. RMSD plots. The score and RMD to the native structure are plotted for each of 200 models generated during benchmarking for loops of the native length. Note that this includes loops of the correct anchor position (3 residues before, 3 residues after, orange), as well as loops of incorrect anchor position that still have the native loop length (2, 4, cyan; 4, 2, blue). RMSD to the native structure is not defined for loops of nonnative lengths and thus is not plotted. In most cases, subangstrom structures of the correct loop length can be identified energetically. In the case of 2I02, inadequate sampling contributed to the failure to identify the correct loop length, because no structure was generated with a score comparable with that of the crystal structure conformation ( $-235.38$  kcal/mol).

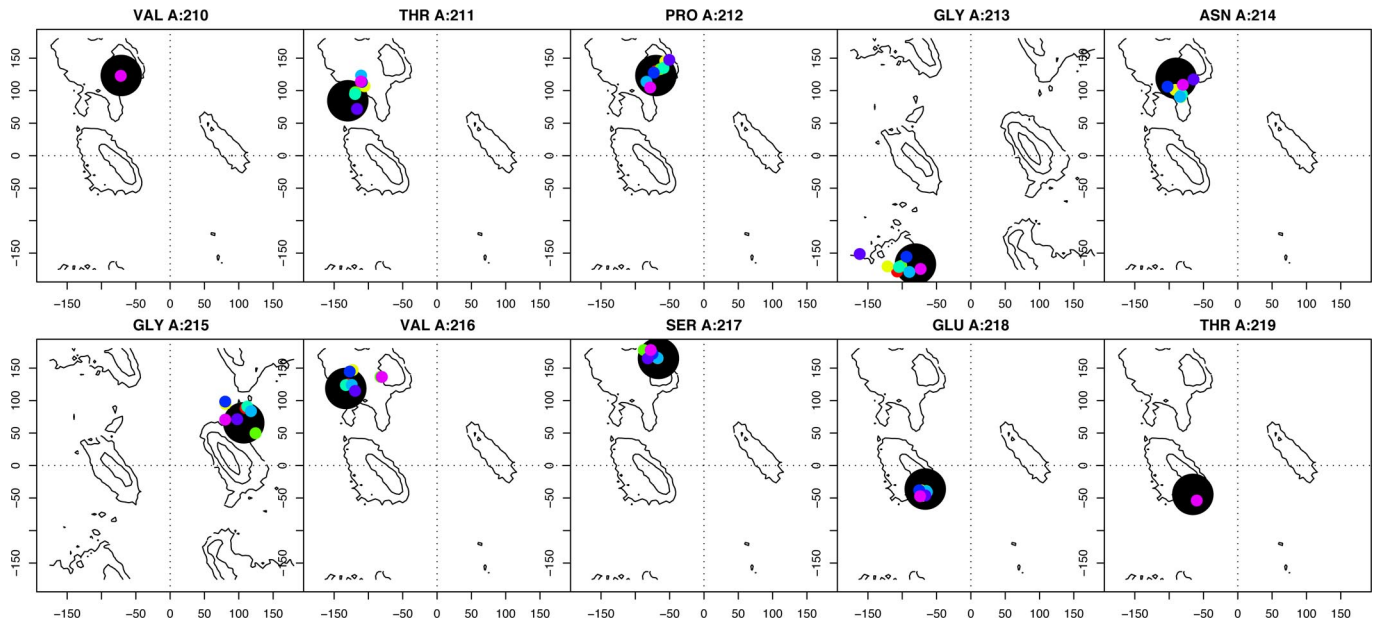






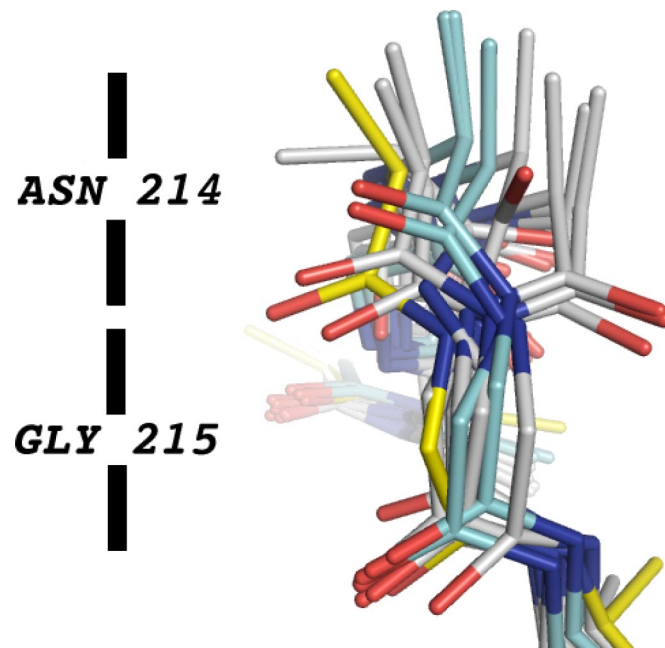


**Fig. S4.** Parametric comparison of hGDA-des computational model and crystal structure A chain. For each residue in the designed protein, 5 parameters relevant to interpreting the differences between the computational model and the crystal structure are plotted. The angular difference between backbone  $\phi$ ,  $\psi$ , and  $\omega$  angles for each residue in the structure is shown in the upper 3 images.  $C\alpha$  distance after superimposition is shown in the fourth image, and B-factor for each  $C\alpha$  atom is shown in the fifth image. Vertical lines represent residues of note in the structure. Orange lines indicate the location of metal-binding histidines H82, H84, H238. Yellow lines indicate the location of catalytic residues D328, E241, H277. Sequential pairs of dotted black lines indicate the location of residues 90–109 (active site lid), 213–216 (designed loop), 242–265 (high B-factor region adjacent to designed loop), 412–422 (loop adjacent to active site lid).

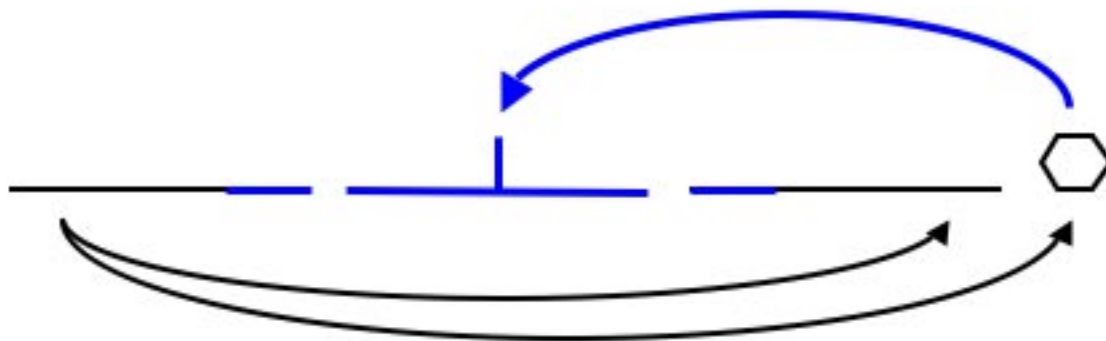


**Fig. S5.** Ramachandran plot for designed residues of hGDA-des crystal structure and computational models. For each residue of the designed loop, the  $\phi$ - $\psi$  angles of the backbone of the crystal structure are in the same region of the Ramachandran plot as the computational models. The value of the  $\phi$ - $\psi$  angles of the crystal structure are depicted as a larger black dot, whereas the value of the  $\phi$ - $\psi$  angles of several computational models consistent with transition state binding are shown as smaller colored dots. The  $\phi$ - $\psi$  angles of surrounding residues were not perturbed by the design. Contours represent the log frequency of  $\phi$ - $\psi$  angles in protein loop regions in high-resolution crystal structures.





**Fig. S6.** Backbone structure of designed loop. The 2 chains in the crystal structure are shown in cyan. The backbone structure of the computational design model, which is optimally compatible with transition state binding, is shown in yellow. An isoenergetic ensemble of structures, produced at the corroborative loop-modeling stage, is shown in gray. This ensemble was modeled in the absence of ligand to assess the prebound conformation of the designed loop. The ensemble is shifted slightly from the optimal binding conformation and is consistent with the conformation of the crystal structure, which also does not contain substrate.



**Fig. S7.** MiniRosetta fold tree. The structure of the miniRosetta fold tree used for kinematics during the course of the loop remodeling and design phase of the protocol is depicted. The polypeptide backbone is depicted as a horizontal line; the constrained side chain is depicted as a vertical line; the ligand is depicted as a hexagon. Jumps between the polypeptide and backbone are depicted as curved arcs. Rigid degrees of freedom are shown in black, whereas moveable degrees of freedom are shown in blue. Chain breaks in the backbone are shown as gaps in the horizontal line representing the polypeptide backbone.

**Table S1. Benchmark and design parameters and results**

PDB ID code	Ligand				Anchor			Loop		
	Type	Index	Atom	Type	Index	Atom	Begin	End	MinRMSD	MinE RMSD
1gua	GNP	B:170	HN1	ASP	A:119	OD1	A:116	A:122	0.19	0.19
1k70	HPY	B:501	O2	GLN	A:153	1HE2	A:150	A:156	0.68	0.91
2cbu	CTS	B:1447	O4	GLN	A:18	1HE2	A:15	A:21	0.44	0.65
2cbv	CGB	B:1447	HO5	GLU	A:402	OE2	A:399	A:405	0.76	0.76
2i02	FMN	B:200	O1P	LYS	A:55	H	A:52	A:58	3.40	3.66
2jfg	ADP	B:1441	N7	ASN	A:270	1HD2	A:267	A:273	0.21	0.27
2of1	THP	B:501	O5P	ARG	A:81	2HH1	A:78	A:84	0.17	0.19
2uz9	XAN	B:1453	N7	ARG	A:206	HE	A:203	A:209	0.88	1.26
2uz9	HPY	B:501	O2	ASN	(Designed)	1HD2	A:204	A:212	n/a	n/a
2uz9	HPY	B:501	O2	GLN	(Designed)	1HE2	A:204	A:212	n/a	n/a

The benchmark and design results used to generate the data in Fig. 1 and Fig. S1 were produced by using the above parameters. The PDB file of the specified accession number was downloaded from [www.rcsb.org](http://www.rcsb.org). The ligand was assigned chain B, the polypeptide was assigned chain A and was renumbered starting from 1 to account for missing density. The residues between the Loop Begin and End were excised from a model of the structure. The rigid-body orientation between the Ligand Atom and Anchor Atom was preserved, and 100 structures were generated for each loop length. The residue numbers reported in the manuscript have not been renumbered to account for missing density. For each of the 200 loops generated for the native loop length and anchor position (3 residues before, 3 residues after), 2 RMSDs are reported above. The MinRMSD column shows the lowest RMSD of any of the 200 loops, whereas the MinE RMSD column shows the RMSD of the minimum energy structure. Many of these RMSDs are below 1 Å, indicating that energy is a sensitive test for proximity to the native structure, and that our sampling protocol tightly constrains generated structures to near-native configurations.

**Table S2. Sequences of oligonucleotides used for cloning and mutagenesis of hGDA**

Oligonucleotide	Sequence
pET29b(+)-hGDA-fwd (Nde)	GAC-CAC-ATA-TGT-GTG-CCG-CTC-AGA-TGC-CG
pET29b(+)-hGDA-rev (Xho)	GCA-ACC-TCG-AGC-GAG-CCC-ACT-GAG-CTG-GAA-AAC-GGA-AC
pET15b-hGDA-fwd (Nde)	GAC-CAC-ATA-TGT-GTG-CCG-CTC-AGA-TGC-CG
pET15b-hGDA-rev (BamHI)	GCA-ACG-GAT-CCT-TAC-ACT-GAG-CTG-GAA-AAC-GGA-AC
des-fwd	CCA-GGC-AAT-GGC-GTG-TCT-GAG-ACT-TTG-ATG-GG
des-rev	CAA-AGT-CTC-AGA-CAC-GCC-ATT-GCC-TGG-TGT-CAC-TAT-GGG-C
des-N213Q-rev	CAA-AGT-CTC-AGA-CAC-GCC-CTG-GCC-TGG-TGT-CAC-TAT-GGG-C
des-N213A-rev	CAA AGT CTC AGA CAC GCC CGC GCC TGG CTGT CAC TAT GGG
wt-R213N-rev	GGA-AAA-ATT-TGG-TGT-CAC-TAT-GGG-C
wt-R213Q-rev	GGA-AAA-CTG-TGG-TGT-CAC-TAT-GGG-C
wt-F214N-rev	GAG-GGA-ATT-ACG-TGG-TGT-CAC-TAT-GG
wt-F214Q-rev	GAG-GGA-CTG-ACG-TGG-TGT-CAC-TAT-GG
E243A-rev	CGA-TTC-GCA-CTT-ATA-TGG-CTC-TGA-ATG-TG

**Table S3. Slope of kinetic traces of Fig. 5A**

Clone	Slope, $\mu$ M/h	95% CI	●●●
wt	0.05004	-0.01825	0.1183
wt-E243A	0.08115	-0.04104	0.2033
wt-R213N	0.8677	0.7198	1.015
wt-R213Q	0.1294	0.03710	0.2216
wt-F214N	0.1436	0.03899	0.2481
wt-F214Q	0.04544	-0.01317	0.1040
des	5.424	5.121	5.725
des-E241A	0.05626	-0.01274	0.1252
des-N214Q	0.5031	0.3530	0.6531
des-N214A	0.4462	0.3051	0.5873



**Table S4. Data collection and refinement statistics**

Wavelength, Å	0.9774
Resolution, Å	117–2.37
(Highest shell)	2.45–2.37
Total reflections	44,921
Unique reflections	43,645
Completeness, %	97.3
$R_{\text{merge}}$	8.6
Average $I/\sigma I$	11.8
Refinement statistics	
Resolution, Å	117–2.37
No. of reflections	44,845
Test set (5%)	2,205
$R_{\text{cryst}}$	20.5
$R_{\text{free}}$	24.8
RMS deviations	
Bonds, Å	0.007
Angles, °	1.027
No. of atoms	7,011
Protein/water/metal	6,965/44/2
Average B-factors, Å <sup>2</sup>	41.34
Protein/water/metal	41.40/31.73/36.72

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