



Supplementary Materials for

Translational termination without a stop codon

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This PDF file includes:

Materials and Methods
Figs. S1 to S5
Table S1
References

Materials and Methods

ArfA purification

A pET16b vector encoding *E. coli* ArfA with a twelve-residue C-terminal truncation and a decahistidine N-terminal tag followed by a Factor Xa cleavage site was a kind gift from Dr. Yoshihiro Shimizu (RIKEN). The protein was expressed in *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) cells (Novagen) for 4 h at 37 °C after induction at OD₆₀₀ 0.5 with a final concentration of 1 mM IPTG. The cells were resuspended and lysed by sonication in lysis buffer (50 mM HEPES–KOH (pH 7.5), 1 M NH₄Cl, 5 mM MgCl₂, 40 mM imidazole and 6 mM 2-mercaptoethanol) and applied to a HisTrap column (GE Healthcare). The protein was eluted over a gradient up to 1 M imidazole before being dialyzed overnight against dialysis buffer (50 mM HEPES–KOH (pH 7.5), 50 mM KCl, 5 mM MgCl₂, 2 mM CaCl₂ and 6 mM 2-mercaptoethanol) containing Factor Xa (NEB). Untagged ArfA was obtained by passing the solution through a HisTrap column. ArfA was purified further by size-exclusion chromatography with a Superdex 75 16/600 column (GE Healthcare) equilibrated with buffer G (5 mM HEPES–KOH (pH 7.4), 50 mM KCl, 10 mM NH₄Cl, 10 mM Mg(OAc)₂ and 6 mM 2-mercaptoethanol). ArfA(A18T) was prepared following the same procedure.

Sample preparation and electron cryomicroscopy

E. coli 70S ribosomes were purified as described previously (31). *T. thermophilus* RF2 (TtRF2) was purified as described (16). Dr. Ramanujan S. Hegde (MRC LMB) provided His-tagged *E. coli* RF2 from the PURE system (32). *E. coli* fMet-NH-tRNA^{fMet} containing a nonhydrolyzable amide bond between A76 and the *N*-formylmethionine was prepared as described (33). A truncated version of Z4C mRNA (34) that ends immediately after the AUG start codon was chemically synthesized (GE Dharmacon).

Reaction mixtures of 500 µl were prepared in buffer G containing 130 nM *E. coli* 70S ribosomes. The mixtures were incubated for 5 min at 37 °C after addition of each of the following components: 520 nM mRNA, 1.3 µM fMet-NH-tRNA^{fMet}, 1.3 µM wild-type ArfA, and either 1.3 µM RF2 or TtRF2. Additional reactions were prepared with 3.2 µM ArfA(A18T) and 1.3 µM RF2, and with 1.3 µM wild-type ArfA but lacking RF2. The mixtures were then held on ice before being frozen onto grids.

UltrAuFoil R 1.2/1.3 grids (for the complex with TtRF2) and QUANTIFOIL R 2/2 grids (for the other complexes) were coated with a continuous carbon film (~60 Å in thickness) and glow-discharged for 30 s at 6 V. Aliquots of 3 µl of reaction mixture were incubated on the grids for 30 s at 4 °C and 100% humidity. The grids were then blotted for 4 to 5 s and flash-frozen in liquid ethane using a Vitrobot Mark III (FEI).

Micrographs were collected using a Titan Krios microscope at 300 keV with a Falcon II detector and EPU software (all FEI). A dose rate of $40 e\cdot\text{Å}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ was used. The defocus values ranged from -2.0 to -3.0 µm, the exposures were 1.2 s with 20 movie frames and the calibrated magnification of 134,615× resulted in a pixel size of 1.04 Å.

Image processing

The movie frames of each image were aligned using MotionCorr (35). Parameters of the contrast transfer function were obtained using Gctf (36) for each motion-corrected micrograph. All subsequent processing was performed in RELION-2.0 (37), except for the dataset with TtRF2, which was processed in RELION-1.4. Semiautonomous particle picking (38) was used to select ribosomes from the micrographs. Incorrectly selected nonribosomal particles were discarded after reference-free two-dimensional classification. A cryo-EM map of the 70S–RelA complex (EMD-8107) (31), low-pass-filtered to 40 Å, was used as an initial reference for the first three-dimensional refinement. An initial round of three-dimensional classification without further aligning the particles was used to discard empty 70S ribosomes, free 50S subunits and poorly aligned particles (Fig. S1). After another refinement, motion correction was performed for each particle using a running average of three movie frames and a standard deviation of one pixel for the translational alignment. In addition, each frame was weighted with a B-factor to compensate for radiation damage. After this “particle-polishing” step, focused classification with signal subtraction (FCwSS) (39) was used to isolate particles containing ArfA and RF2 (or an empty A site for the dataset without RF2). An additional three-dimensional classification without alignments and two rounds of FCwSS were performed on the dataset with TtRF2 to improve the quality of the map. For the other datasets, a final three-dimensional classification with local angular searching was performed as a final clean-up of the data. Despite multiple

rounds of classification, no ArfA was visible in the dataset without RF2. This dataset was used to model a nonstop complex with an unoccupied A site.

The final statistics for each dataset are given in Table S1. Reported resolutions are based on the Fourier-shell-correlation (FSC) 0.143 criterion (40). High-resolution noise substitution was used to correct for the effects of applying a mask during the FSC calculations (41). Before visualization, density maps were corrected for the modulation transfer function of the Falcon II detector and sharpened by applying a negative B-factor that was estimated using automated procedures (40). Local resolution was quantified using ResMap (42) (Fig. S2).

Model building

Models of the *E. coli* 70S ribosome and fMet-tRNA^{fMet} (31) were docked into the maps using Chimera (43) and each chain was subsequently rigid-body-fitted in Coot (44). All chains were manually adjusted to fit the density. The crystal structures of *E. coli* RF2 (PDB accession code 1GQE) (21) and TtRF2 (PDB accession code 2IHR) (23) were rigid-body-fitted into the A site and partially rebuilt to fit the densities. ArfA was built *de novo*.

Model refinement and validation

Reciprocal-space refinement was carried out in REFMAC v5.8 optimized for cryo-EM maps using external restraints generated by ProSMART and LIBG (45). The fit of the model to the map density was quantified using FSC_{average} (45) and CRef (40). CRef is a measure of the resolution when the FSC between the refined model and map is 0.5, and should closely agree with resolution of the map by the FSC=0.143 criterion (40). Model statistics were obtained using MolProbity (46) and provided in Table S1. Cross-validation against overfitting was performed as previously described (45) (Fig. S2A).

All figures were created using PyMOL (47) or Chimera (43).

Supplementary Figures

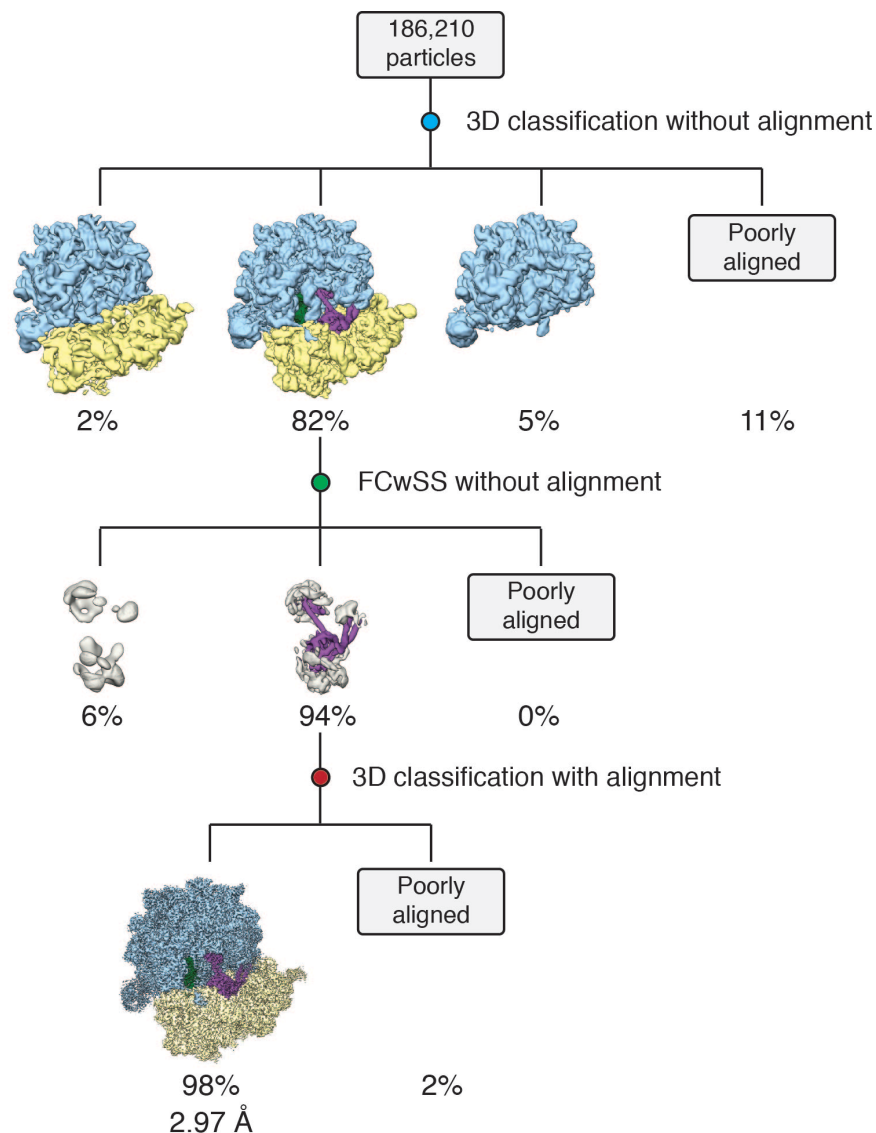


Fig. S1. *In-silico* classification. Three rounds of *in-silico* classification were used to isolate a single well-defined map for the nonstop complex recognized by wild-type ArfA and RF2. 186,210 particles selected from 2D classification were classified while preserving the Euler angles from a prior 3D refinement step. This separated nonstop complexes from empty ribosomes, isolated 50S subunits and poorly aligned particles. FCwSS using a mask over RF2 removed further empty ribosomes. A final 3D classification, this time allowing angular sampling, removed any remaining poorly aligning particles. The final reconstruction has a nominal resolution of 2.97 Å. All other datasets were classified similarly, with any changes to the scheme described in the methods.

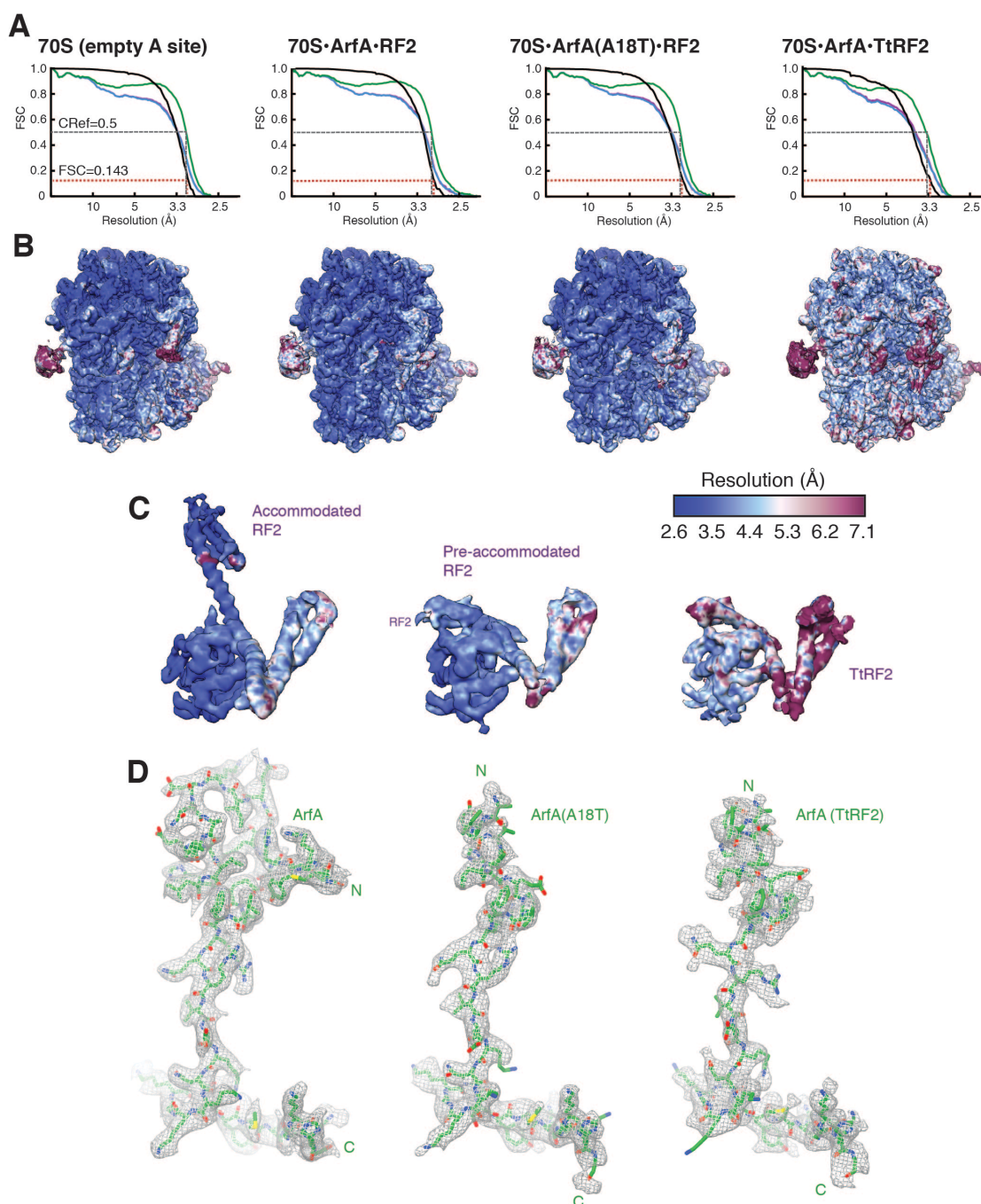


Fig. S2. Quality of maps and models. (A) Fourier-shell-correlation (FSC) curves for each reported cryo-EM reconstruction (black). The resolution at FSC=0.143 is indicated with a red dashed line. Also shown are FSC curves of the fit of the refined model to the final map (green) for each structure. The resolution at FSC=0.5 (CRef) is indicated with a grey dashed line. The self- and cross-validated correlations are shown in purple and blue, respectively. (B) The cryo-EM map for each complex is colored by local resolution. (C) Isolated density for RF2 and TtRF2 colored by local resolution for each complex. (D) Density and model for ArfA from each complex.

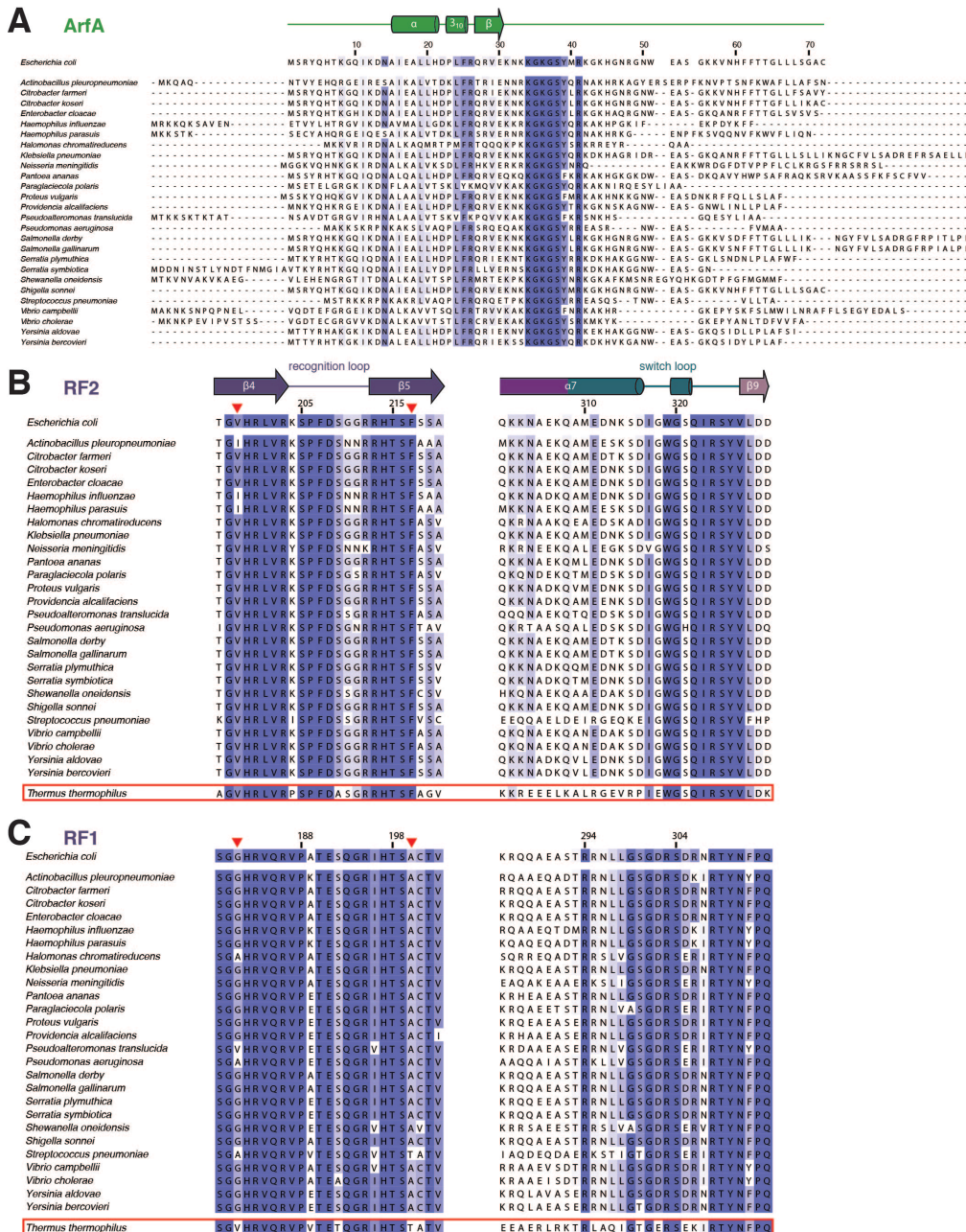


Fig. S3. Sequence alignments. (A) Alignment of selected ArfA sequences. Numbering and secondary structure corresponds to *E. coli* ArfA. (B) Alignment of the recognition and switch loops of RF2 from ArfA-containing species and from *T. thermophilus*, which lacks an ArfA ortholog. Numbering and secondary structure corresponds to *E. coli* RF2. Hydrophobic residues that confer specificity for ArfA are indicated with arrowheads. (C) Alignment of the recognition and switch loops of RF1. The numbering corresponds to *E. coli* RF1. All sequences were obtained from UniProt (48), aligned with MUSCLE (49) and visualized in Jalview (50). Residues are colored only when they agree with the consensus sequence and shaded according to the percentage of agreeing residues.

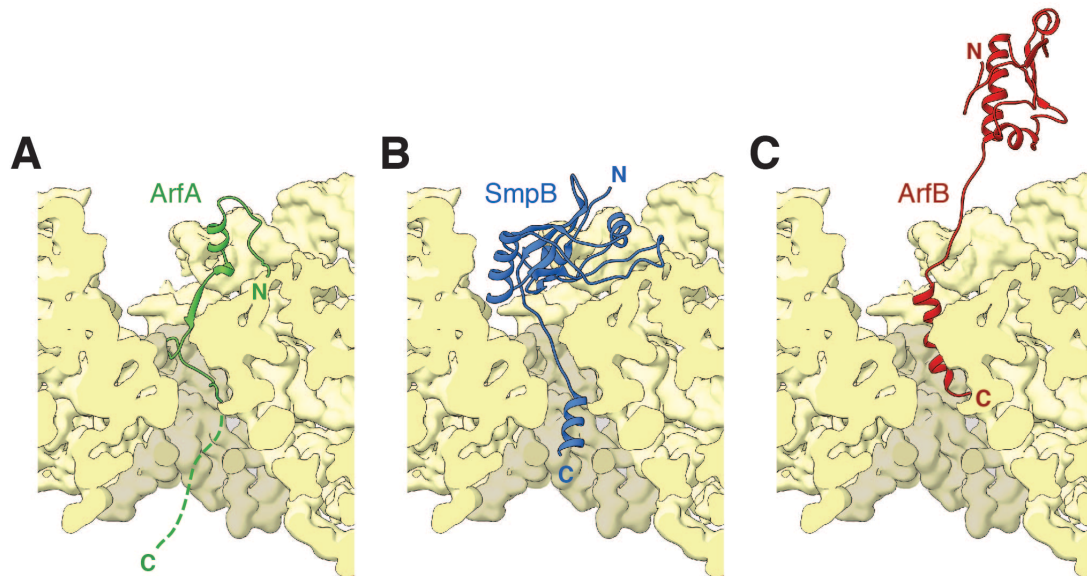


Fig. S4. ArfA, SmpB and ArfB bind the mRNA entry channel through distinct C-termini. (A) ArfA has an unstructured C-terminal tail that protrudes into the mRNA channel. (B) SmpB (PDB accession code 4V8Q) (14) positions a C-terminal α -helix at the entrance to the mRNA channel and has a globular N domain that binds tmRNA. (C) The C-terminal α -helix of ArfB (PDB accession code 4V95) (12) occupies the mRNA channel close to the decoding center. The globular N domain has structural homology to domain 3 of RF2 and accommodates into the PTC.

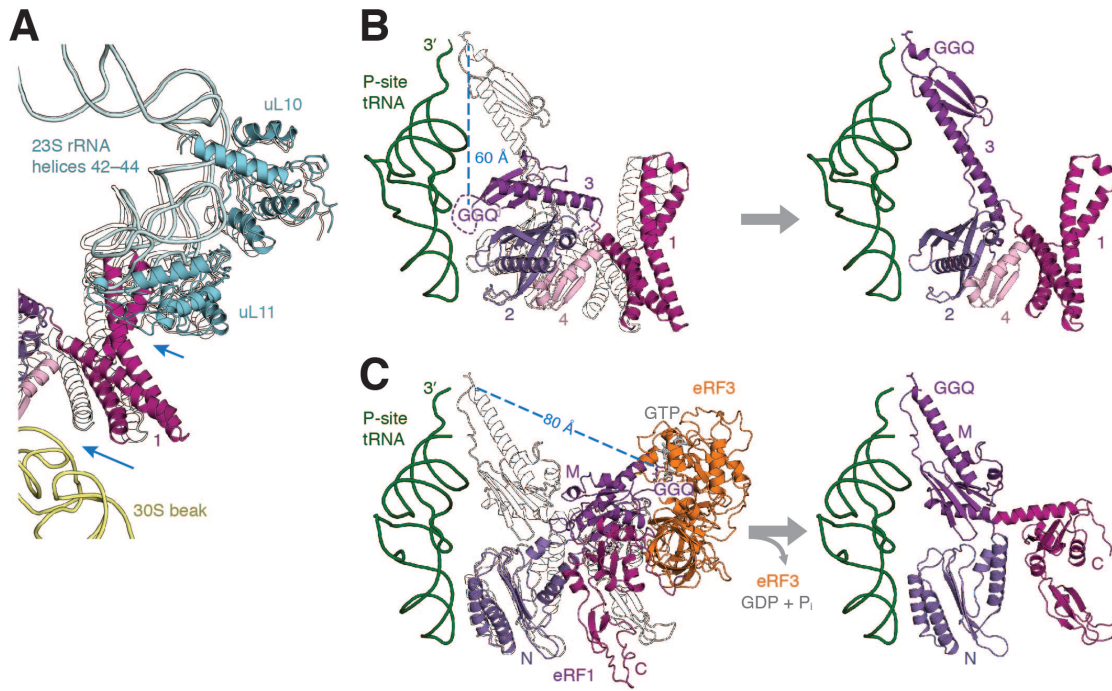


Fig. S5. Release-factor domain rearrangements. (A) ArfA-mediated accommodation of RF2 results in an inward movement of domain 1 together with the L7/L12 stalk base (23S rRNA helices 42–44 and the ribosomal proteins uL10 and uL11). This movement brings the three-stranded coiled coil of domain 1 into closer contact with the rRNA of the 30S beak, which may help to stabilize the accommodated state. (B) A superposition of pre-accommodated RF2 with accommodated RF2 (outlined) shows that all four domains move during accommodation. The GGQ loop of domain 3 rises approximately 60 Å to accommodate into the PTC. This movement is associated with a rotation of domains 2 and 4 and an inward movement of domain 1. (C) The conformational changes that RF2 undergoes on ArfA are analogous to those that the structurally unrelated eukaryotic release factor 1 (eRF1) undergoes on a stop codon. eRF1 is delivered to the ribosome in a pre-accommodated conformation by eRF3, a GTP-bound translational GTPase (PDB accession code 5LZT) (28). GTP is hydrolyzed upon stop-codon recognition and eRF3 dissociates from the ribosome. Without its GTPase partner, eRF1 changes conformation and the catalytic GGQ motif of the M domain accommodates into the PTC (PDB accession code 5LZU) (28).

	70S (empty A site)	70S•ArfA• RF2	70S•ArfA (A18T)•RF2	70S•ArfA• TtRF2
Data Collection				
Particles	140,027	139,792	141,950	54,465
Pixel size (Å)	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04
Defocus mean (µm)	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.4
Defocus range (µm)	0.7–3.9	0.6–4.8	0.5–5.8	1.1–3.9
Voltage (kV)	300	300	300	300
Electron dose ($e\cdot\text{Å}^{-2}$)	48	48	48	48
Model composition				
Non-hydrogen atoms	146,646	149,895	149,614	149,470
Protein residues	5,971	6,379	6,344	6,321
RNA bases	4,628	4,628	4,628	4,628
Ligands (Zn ²⁺ /Mg ²⁺ /H ₂ O)	2/449/2	2/453/2	2/450/2	2/462/3
Refinement				
Resolution (Å)	3.10	2.97	3.06	3.35
Map sharpening B- factor (Å ²)	-79.6	-77.0	-75.8	-91.3
Average B factor (Å ²)	95.8	75.3	99.1	85.2
FSC _{average}	0.89	0.90	0.89	0.85
CRef (Å)	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.4
Rms deviations				
Bond lengths (Å)	0.006	0.006	0.007	0.006
Bond angles (°)	1.08	1.10	1.16	1.20
Validation (proteins)				
MolProbity score (percentile)	2.0 (99 th)	2.1 (99 th)	2.2 (99 th)	2.4 (98 th)
Clashscore, all atoms (percentile)	2.7 (100 th)	2.8 (100 th)	3.2 (100 th)	4.2 (100 th)
Good rotamers (%)	83.0	82.2	80.9	77.1
Ramachandran plot				
Favored (%)	94.9	94.7	93.9	93.4
Outliers (%)	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6
Validation (RNA)				
Correct sugar puckers (%)	97.8	97.9	98.2	97.8
Good backbone conformations (%)	81.4	81.3	80.8	78.8
Accession codes				
EMDB	EMD-3493	EMD-3489	EMD-3490	EMD-3492
PDB	5MDZ	5MDV	5MDW	5MDY

Table S1. Data-collection and model statistics.

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