

# Supplementary Information

The molecular basis of protein toxin HicA–dependent binding of the protein antitoxin

HicB to DNA

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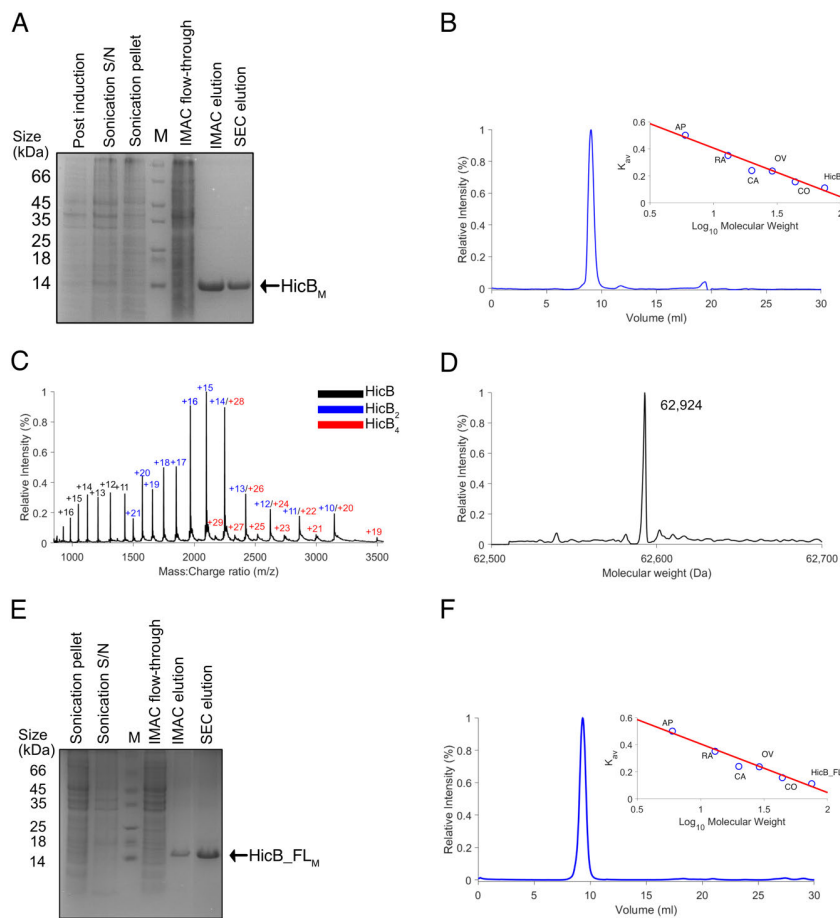
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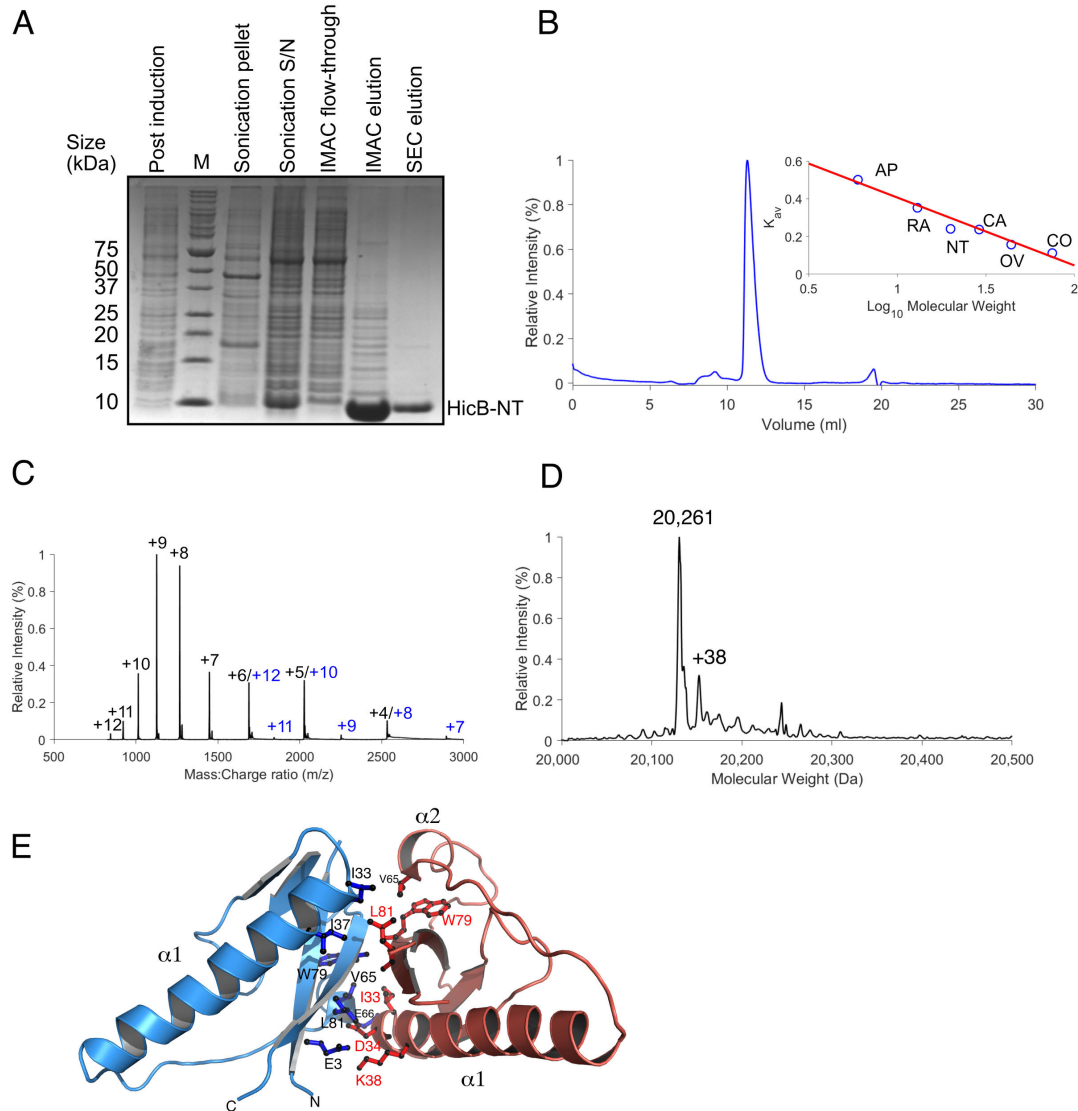
Figs. S1 to S10

Tables S1 to S12



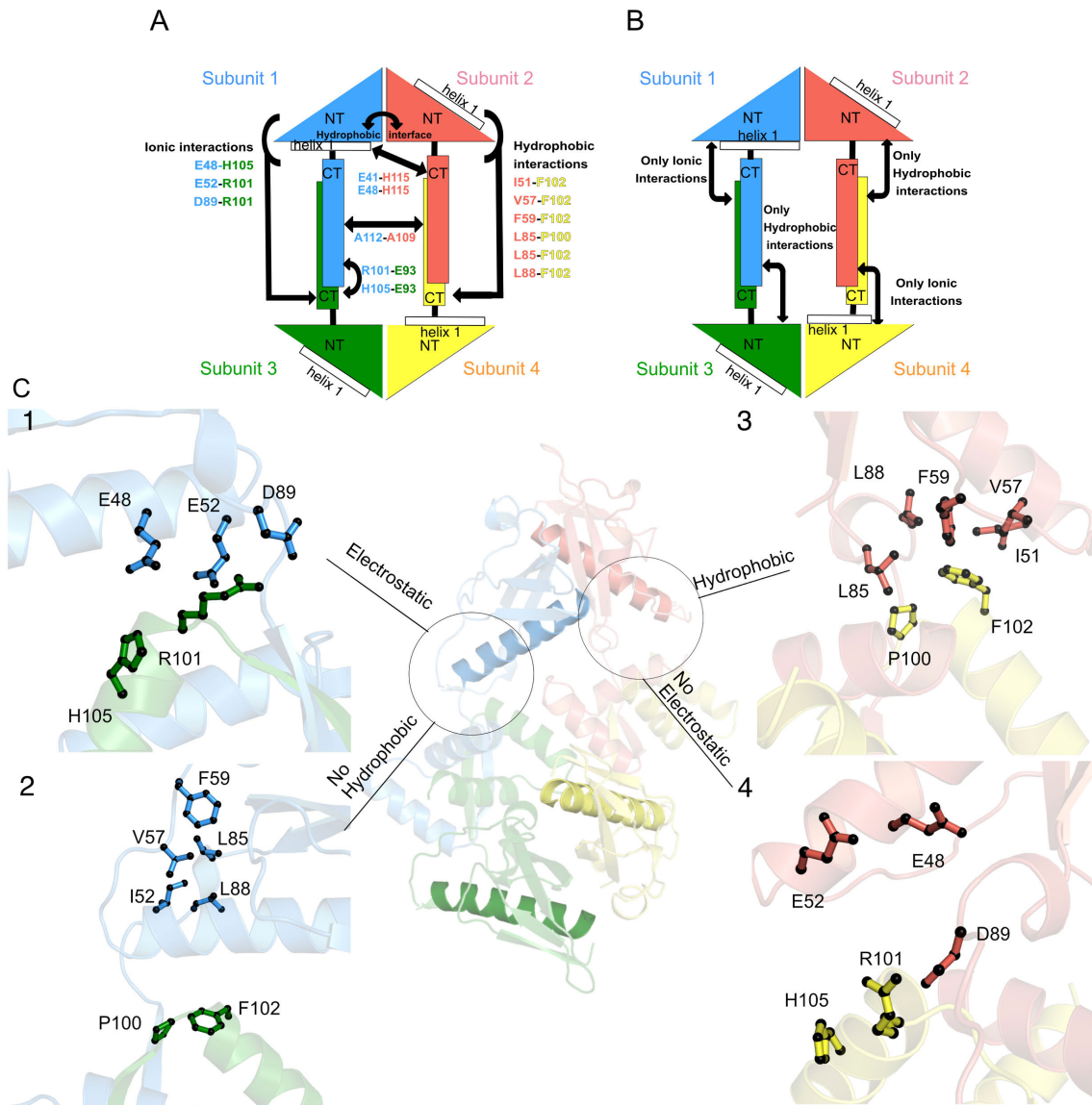
**Figure S1. Characterisation of HicB and HicB\_FL.**

(A) SDS-PAGE following the expression and purification of HicB (lacking C-terminal residues 135-138, Table S1) from post induction to isolation via IMAC and SEC. (B) SEC of HicB, eluting as a single oligomeric species. (C) Native mass spectrometry of HicB. Peaks were assigned based on their charge state: monomeric (black), dimeric (blue) or tetrameric (red). (D) De-convoluted spectrum of the m/z envelope shown in e yielding tetrameric HicB. Expected molecular weight: 62,952 Da. (E) SDS-PAGE following the expression and purification of full length HicB (HicB\_FL, see Experimental procedures and Table S1) from post induction to isolation via IMAC and SEC. ESMS (not shown) (expected 16,201 Da, observed 16,200 Da). (F) SEC of HicB\_FL eluting as a single oligomeric species calculated as 64,800 Da (tetramer). Each SEC profile contains a calibration curve (inset) using known standards: Aprotinin (AP), Ribonuclease A (RA), Carbonic Anhydrase (CA), Ovalbumin (OV) and Conalbumin (CO).



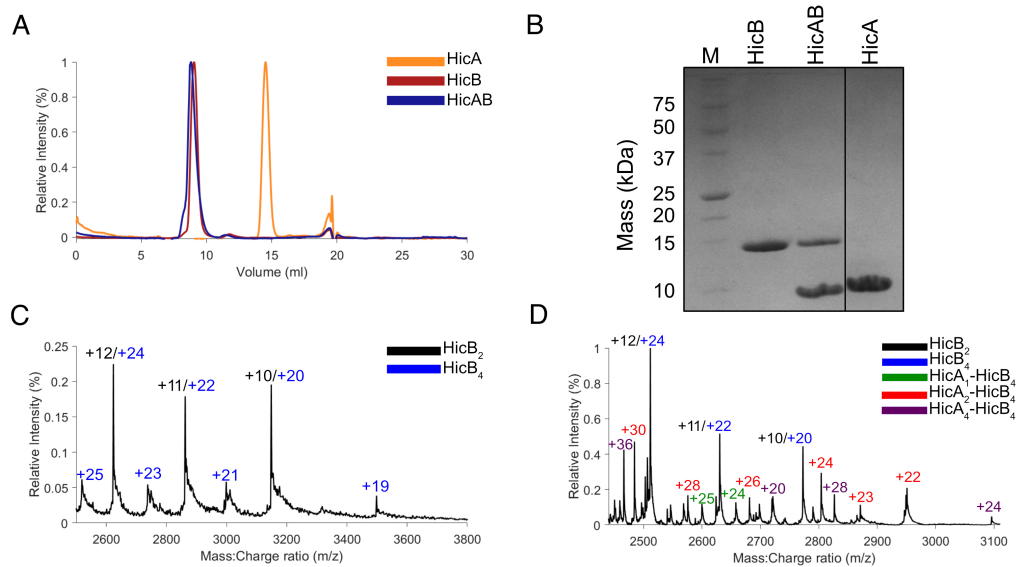
**Figure S2. Characterisation of HicB-NT.**

(A) SDS-PAGE following the expression and purification of HicB-NT from initial induction to isolation via IMAC and SEC. (B) SEC of HicB-NT, eluting as a single oligomeric species. (inset) calibration curves using known standards: Aprotinin (AP), Ribonuclease A (RA), Carbonic Anhydrase (CA), Ovalbumin (OV) and Conalbumin (CO). (C) Native mass spectrometry of HicB-NT. Peaks were assigned on their charge state: monomeric (black) or dimeric (blue). (D) De-convoluted spectrum (spanning 20-20.5 kDa) of the  $m/z$  envelope shown in c yielding dimeric HicB-NT: Expected molecular weight: 20,266 Da. (E) Structural representation of dimeric HicB-NT with subunits coloured blue and red respectively, highlighting the hydrophobic dimerization interface. Adjacent subunits associate via parallel packing of the  $\beta 4$  strands (V77-S82), flanked by the  $\alpha 2$  helix (V64-L67) of each subunit. Adjacent subunits form a hydrogen bond and salt-bridge network between the side chains of  $\beta 4$ - $\beta 4$  (V77-L80)  $\beta 1$ - $\alpha 1$  (E2-K37),  $\alpha 2$ - $\alpha 1$  (E65-I32, V64-D33, E65-D33), together burying 1,271  $\text{\AA}^2$  of the total surface area (10,466  $\text{\AA}^2$ ). The final HicB-NT model comprises 1-85 residues.



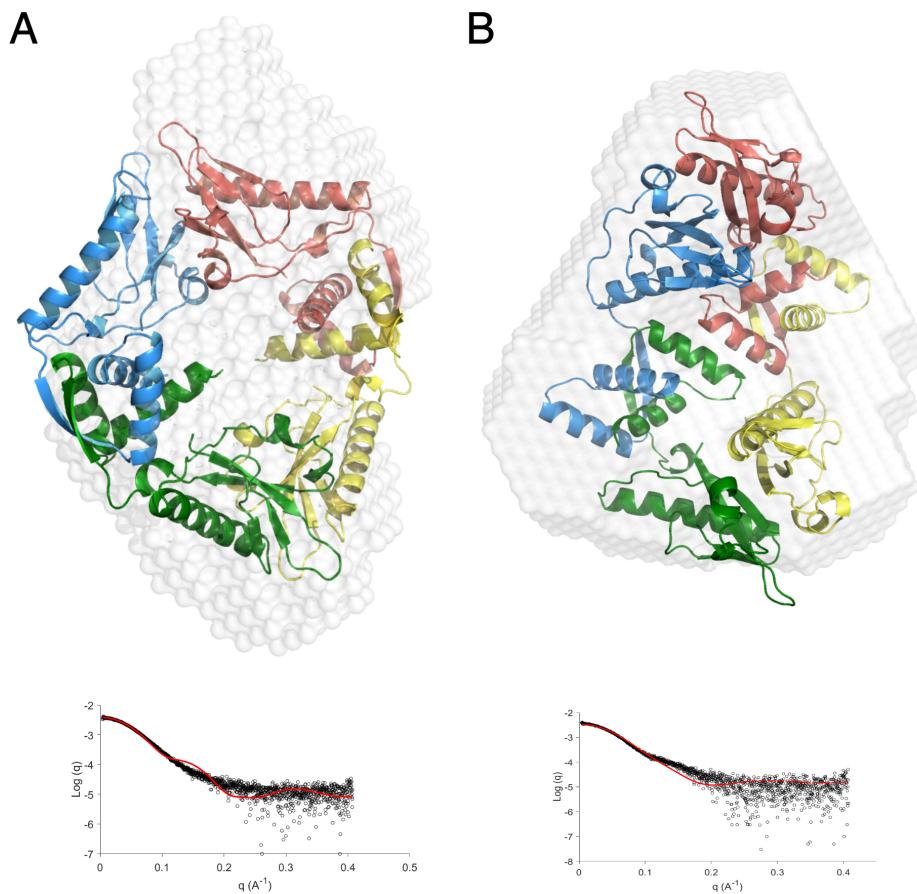
**Figure S3 Tethering interactions between adjacent N-terminal and C-terminal domains of HicB in the unbound conformation.**

(A) Cartoon representation of the hydrophobic and ionic interactions between adjacent C-terminal domains and N-terminal/hinge region. (B) Cartoon representation of the location of hydrophobic and ionic interaction sites that are dependent on the placement of the  $\alpha 1$  helix. (C) Interaction sites within the tetramer. Box 1 highlight electrostatic interaction sites (Residues E48, E52, D89, R101 and H105) and box 2 indicates the absence of hydrophobic interaction sites (Residues I51, V57, F59, L85, L88 with P100 and F102) between adjacent subunits electrostatic sites. Box 3 and 4 show the respective presence and absence of hydrophobic interaction sites (Residues I51, V57, F59, L85, L88 with P100 and F102) and electrostatic sites (Residues E48, E52, D89 with R101 and H105) between adjacent subunits.



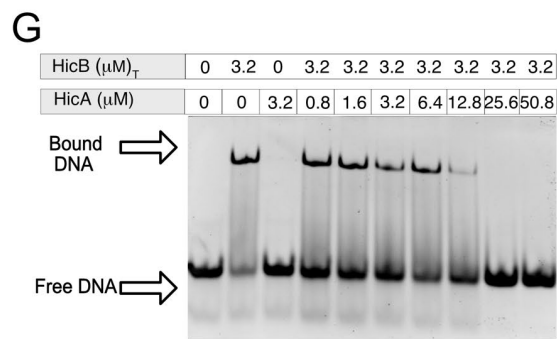
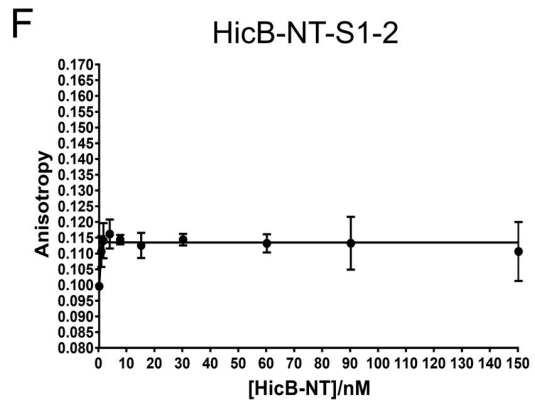
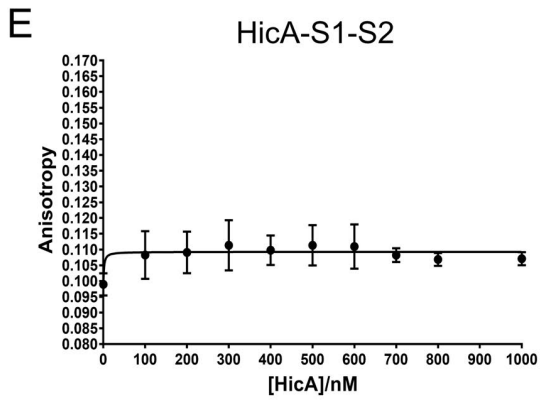
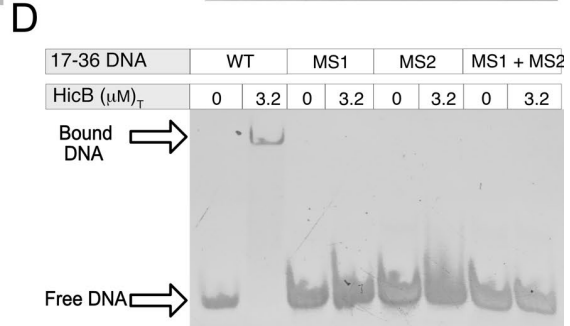
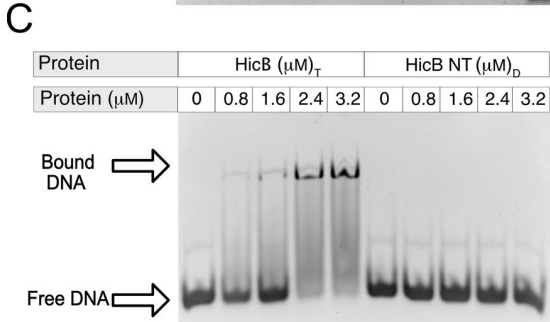
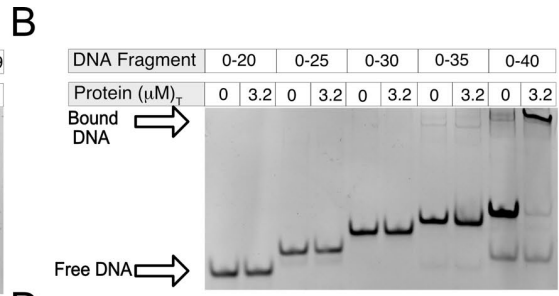
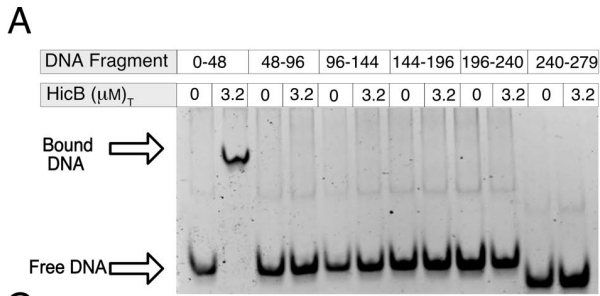
**Figure S4. Binding of HicA to HicB.**

(A) Analytical SEC profiles of HicB, HicAB and HicA. (B) SDS-PAGE of isolated fractions for each analytical S75 profile. The vertical black line indicates where the gel was spliced to remove two unwanted lanes and improve clarity. (C) Native mass spectrometry of HicB within the region 2500-3800 m/z with oligomeric states: dimeric (black) and tetrameric (blue) highlighted based on their charge state value. (D) Native mass spectrometry of HicAB within the region 2450-3150 with oligomeric states of HicB<sub>4</sub> (blue) and HicA<sub>4</sub>-HicB<sub>4</sub> (purple) highlighted. Sub-stoichiometric complexes of HicA<sub>1</sub>-HicB<sub>4</sub> (green), HicA<sub>2</sub>-HicB<sub>4</sub> (red) and HicB<sub>2</sub> were also generated in the gas phase.



**Figure S5. Small angle X-ray scattering of HicB and HicAB.**

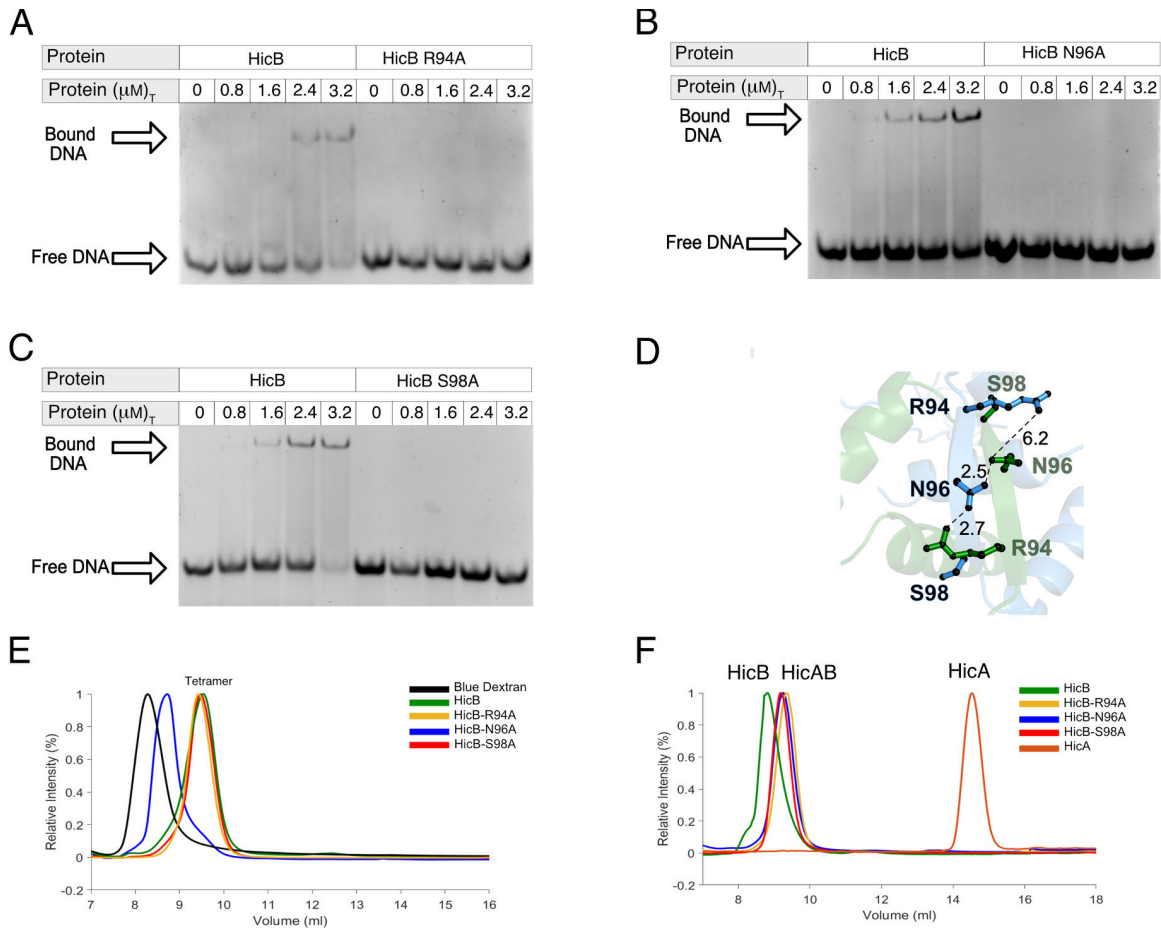
This figure uses the same scattering and shape data as shown in Figure 4, but is demonstrating the poor FoXS fit when the HicB crystal structures used to fit the data are swapped. (A) *Ab initio* modelling of HicB component of the HicAB crystal structure into the shape envelope of HicB (white). The FoXS profile of the proposed scattering for the crystal structure (red) against the experimental raw scattering data (black) is underneath ( $\chi^2= 8.94$ ). (B) *Ab initio* modelling of the crystal structure of the dimer of dimers form of HicB into the shape envelope of HicAB (white), with the corresponding FoXS profile underneath ( $\chi^2= 8.06$ ).



### Figure S6. Overview of DNA binding with HicB

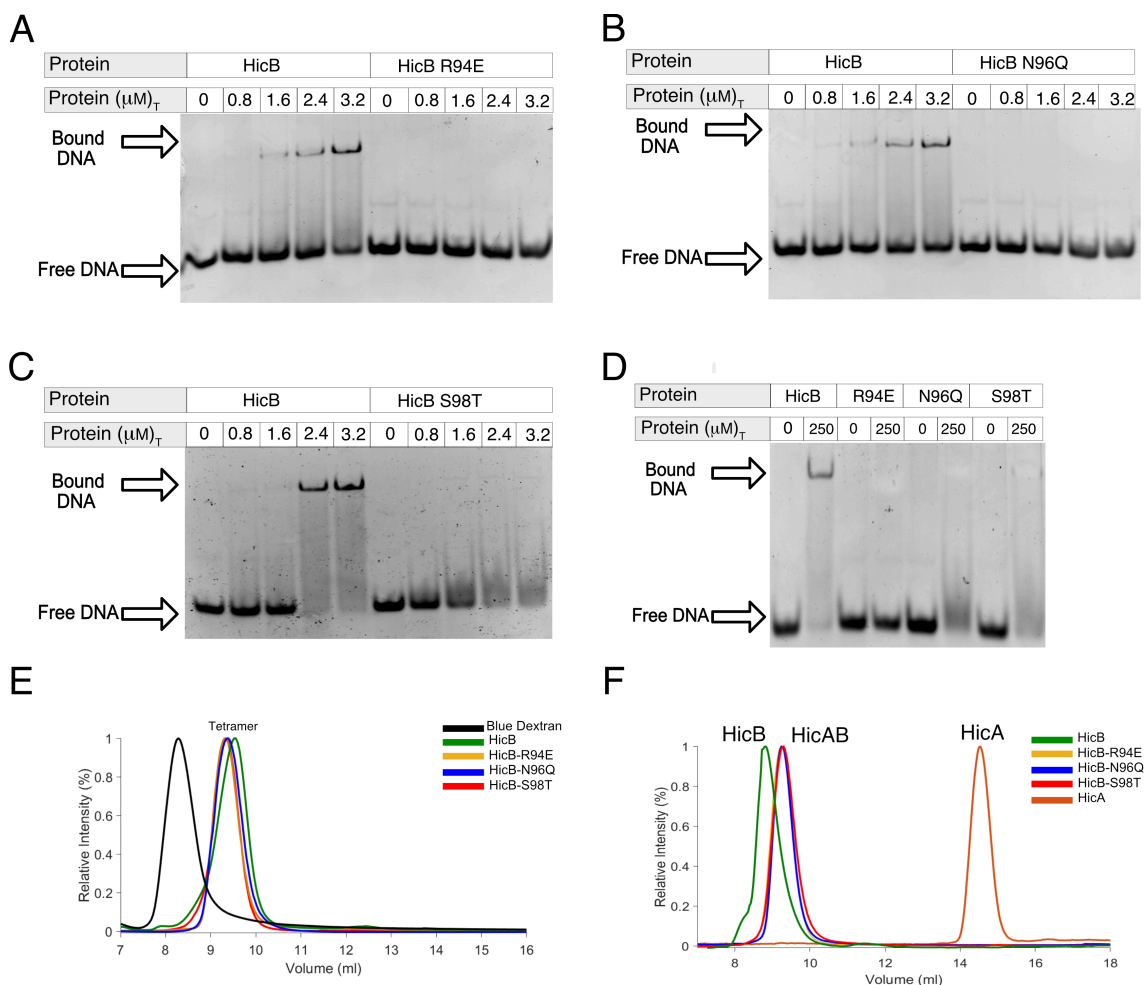
(A) Gel-shift analysis investigating HicB binding of individual fragments of the intergenic region of DNA upstream of the *hicAB* operon. Concentrations quoted at  $(\mu\text{M})_T$  correspond to the concentration of the HicB tetramer. (B) Gel-shift assay probing the HicB DNA target site within the 0-48 bp region. (C) Gel shift assay of HicB and HicB-NT (Concentrations quoted at  $[\mu\text{M}]_T$  or  $[\mu\text{M}]_D$  correspond to the concentration of the HicB tetramer or HicB-NT dimer respectively) binding to 2  $\mu\text{M}$  S1-2. (D) Mutations within S1-2 (2  $\mu\text{M}$ ) at either S1 or S2 abolishes binding to HicB (3.2  $\mu\text{M}$ ). (E) Quantification of HicA binding to HEX-S1-2 (n=1). Three independent repeats were fit to equation (2). (F) Quantification of HicB-NT binding to HEX-S1-2. The proportion of HEX-S1-2 bound by varying concentrations of HicB-NT was followed (n=1). Again 3 independent repeats were fit to equation (2). For each experiment the mean value is plotted with error bars representing the S.E.M. Standard errors of  $K_d$  values were calculated in GraphPad Prism. (G) HicA acts as a de-repressor. EMSA gel of varying HicA ratios (0.8  $\mu\text{M}$  – 50.8  $\mu\text{M}$ ) titrated into HicB (3.2  $\mu\text{M}$ ) resulting in de-repression of HicB-S1-2 binding upon an excess of HicA.





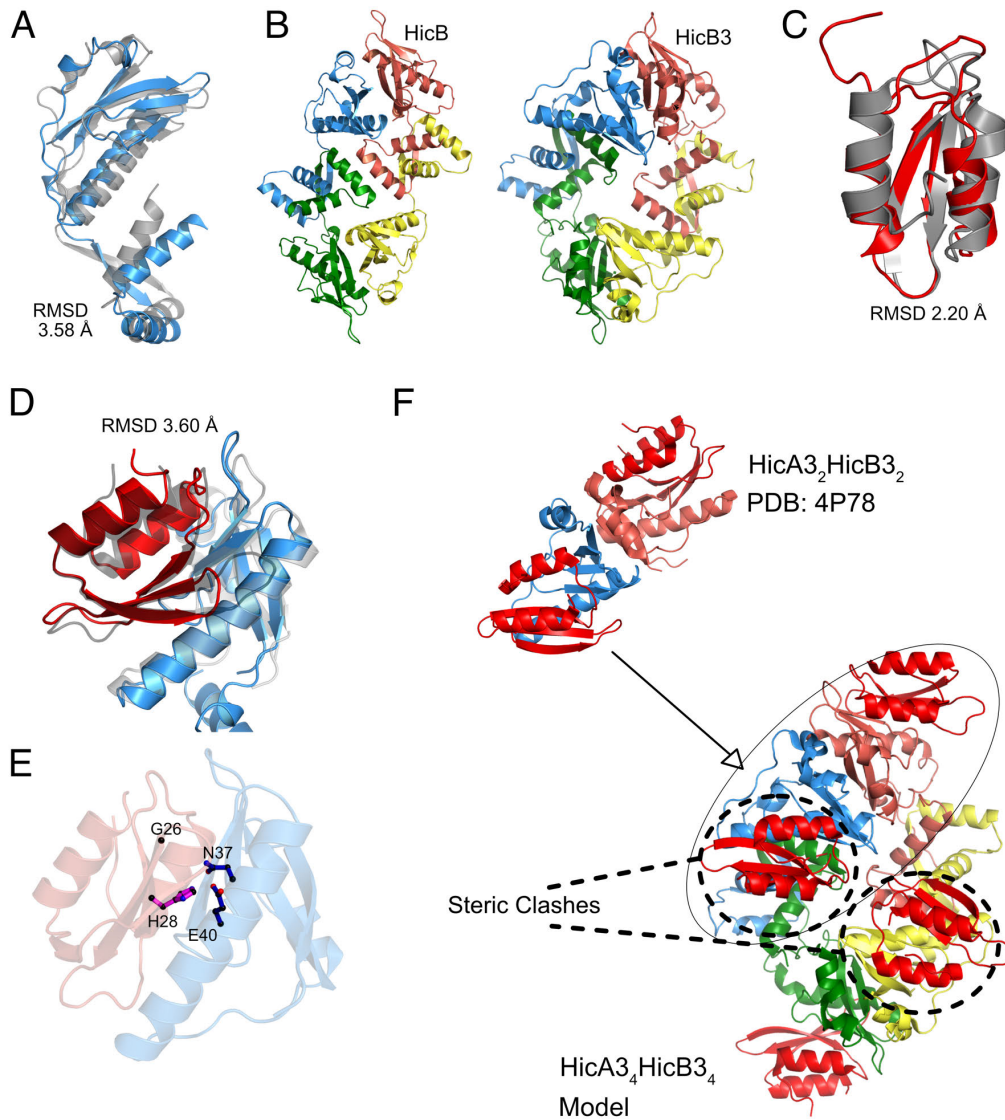
**Figure S7. Gel shift assays of DNA binding with HicB alanine mutants and gel filtration.**

(A) Gel-shift analysis of HicB-R94A against S1-2 (17-36 bp). (B) Gel-shift analysis of HicB-N96A against S1-2. (C) Gel-shift analysis of HicB-S98A against S1-2. (D) Structure of the RHH domain, with key DNA binding residues highlighted. (E) Analytical SEC traces of HicB variants R94A, N96A and S98A and Blue Dextran. (F) Analytical SEC of HicB variants R94A, N96A and S98A complexed with HicA.



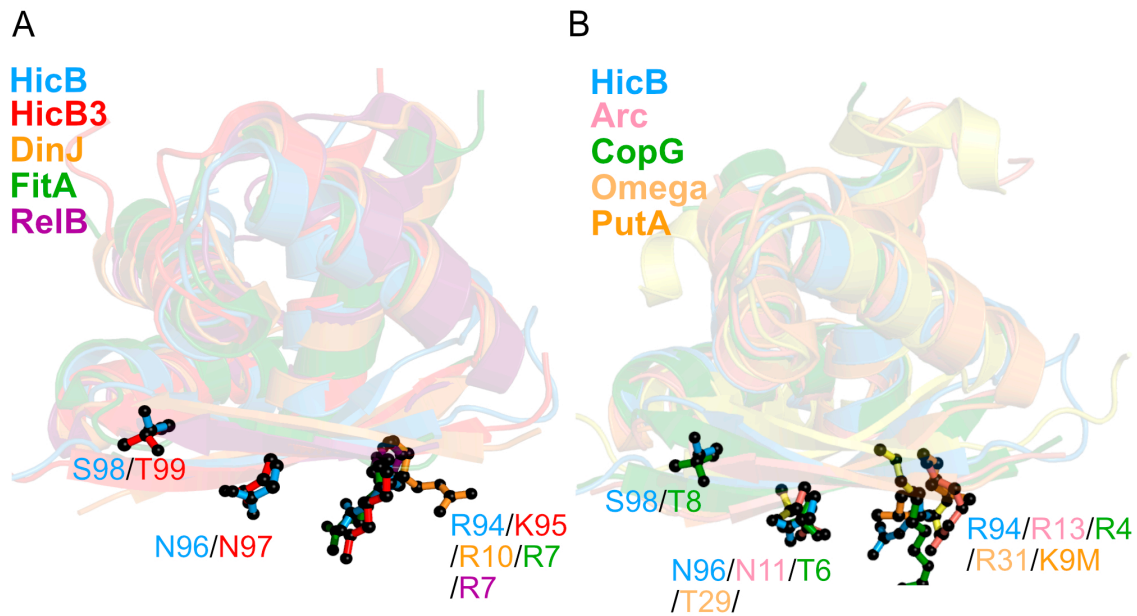
**Figure S8. Gel shift assays of DNA binding of HicB semi-conservative mutants and gel filtration.**

(A) Gel-shift assay of HicB-R94E binding S1-2. (B) Gel-shift assay of HicB-N96Q binding S1-2. (C) Gel-shift assay of HicB-S98T binding S1-2. (D) Gel shift assay of HicB variants, R94E, N96Q and S98T at 1000  $\mu\text{M}$  binding to 2  $\mu\text{M}$  S1-2. (E) Analytical SEC traces of all HicB semi conservative mutants with Blue Dextran standard. (F) Analytical SEC of HicB semi-conservative mutants complexed with HicA.



**Figure S9. Comparison of HicB and HicAB crystal structures to HicB3 and HicA3B3.**

(A) Superimposition of HicB (Blue) to HicB3 (Light grey), RMSD backbone atoms: 3.58 Å. (B) Comparison of the tetrameric organisation of HicB (Left) and HicB3, PDB:4P7D (Right). Individual subunits are highlighted in blue, red, green and yellow. (C) Superimposition of HicA (red) to HicA3 (Dark grey) (PDB:4P78), RMSD backbone atoms: 2.20 Å (D) The superimposition of HicA<sub>1</sub>(red)HicB<sub>1</sub> (blue) to HicA<sub>3</sub><sub>1</sub> (Dark grey) HicB3-NT (Light grey) (PDB:4P78), RMSD backbone atoms: 3.60 Å. (E) Sequestration of G26 and H28 in HicA3HicB3-NT model. (F) The HicA<sub>3</sub><sub>2</sub>HicB3<sub>2</sub> dimer (PDB: 4P78) that was reported (top) and extension to the hypothesized HicA<sub>3</sub><sub>4</sub>HicB3<sub>4</sub> structure with C-domains modelled. This revealed steric clashes between HicA3 monomers and the C-domains of subunit 1 and 4 of HicB3 as the N-terminal domains of complexed HicA3B3 are not correctly rearranged as seen in HicAB.



**Figure S10. Comparisons of the RHH of HicB to other RHH containing proteins.**

(A) Superimposition of HicB (blue) to HicB3 (PDB: 4P7D, red: RMSD: 1.43 Å), DinJ (PDB: 4Q2U, orange: RMSD: 2.66 Å), FitA (PDB: 2H10, green: RMS: 2.05 Å) and RelB (PDB: 4FXE, purple: RMSD: 2.71 Å). Direct conservation of the proximal basic residue is seen. (B) Overlay of Arc (PDB: 1BAZ, red), CopG (PDB: 2CPG, green), ORF Omega (PDB: 2BNZ, light orange) and PutA (PDB: 2AY0, orange) with HicB highlighting conservation of the proximal basic residue and the polar amino acid that flanks this in canonical DNA binding proteins. Individual superimpositions of HicB (Blue) with these protein domains are as follows: Arc (RMSD: 1.3 Å), CopG (RMSD: 1.3 Å), ORF Omega (RMSD: 1.6 Å) and PutA (RMSD: 1.8 Å).

**Table S1. Sequences of the HicB constructs used in this study.** Residues in bold indicate the additional His<sub>6</sub>-tag or cloning artefacts.

|         |   |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|---------|---|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
|         | <b>1</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>20</b>  | <b>30</b>  | <b>40</b>  | <b>50</b>  | <b>60</b>  | <b>70</b> |
| HicB    | <b>M</b> MEFPIAVHKDDGSVYGVTVPDIPGVHSWG <b>E</b> TIDDAIKNTREAI <b>V</b> GHVETLIELGEDVEFT <b>C</b> STVEELVAKPEYAGAV   |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>80</b>   | <b>90</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>110</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>130</b> | <b>134</b> |           |
|         | WALVSV <b>D</b> LSQLDSKPERINVS <b>I</b> PRFVLHKIDAYVASRHETRS <b>G</b> FLARAAL <b>E</b> ALNEG <b>K</b> <b>K</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b>                      |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         |   |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>1</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>20</b>  | <b>30</b>  | <b>40</b>  | <b>50</b>  | <b>60</b>  | <b>70</b> |
| HicB_FL | <b>M</b> MEFPIAVHKDDGSVYGVTVPDIPGVHSWG <b>E</b> TIDDAIKNTREAI <b>V</b> GHVETLIELGEDVEFT <b>C</b> STVEELVAKPEYAGAV   |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>80</b>   | <b>90</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>110</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>130</b> | <b>138</b> |           |
|         | WALVSV <b>D</b> LSQLDSKPERINVS <b>I</b> PRFVLHKIDAYVASRHETRS <b>G</b> FLARAAL <b>E</b> ALNEG <b>K</b> <b>V</b> RH <b>A</b> <b>K</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         |   |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>1</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>20</b>  | <b>30</b>  | <b>40</b>  | <b>50</b>  | <b>60</b>  | <b>70</b> |
| HicB_NT | MEFPIAVHKDDGSVYGVTVPDIPGVHSWG <b>E</b> TIDDAIKNTREAI <b>V</b> GHVETLIELGEDVEFT <b>C</b> STVEELVAKPEYAGAV  |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>80</b>   | <b>85</b> |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | WALVSV <b>D</b> L <b>K</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b>  |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         |   |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>1</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>20</b>  | <b>30</b>  | <b>40</b>  | <b>50</b>  | <b>60</b>  | <b>70</b> |
| HicB_DM | <b>M</b> MEFPIAVHKDDGSVYGVTVPDIPGVHSWG <b>E</b> TIDDAIKNTREAI <b>V</b> GHVETL <b>M</b> ELGEDVEFT <b>C</b> STVEELVAKPEYAGAV  |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |
|         | <b>80</b>   | <b>90</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>110</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>130</b> | <b>134</b> |           |
|         | WALVSV <b>D</b> LSQLDSKPERINVS <b>M</b> PRFVLHKIDAYVASRHETRS <b>G</b> FLARAAL <b>E</b> ALNEG <b>K</b> <b>K</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b> <b>H</b>                      |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |

**Table S2. Crystallisation conditions for each protein in this study.**

Proteins at appropriate concentrations (25 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl) were obtained from the hanging drop vapour diffusion method at 16 °C. Crystals were flash frozen in liquid nitrogen prior to diffraction analysis.

| <b>Protein</b> | <b>Conditions</b>  | <b>Cryoprotectant</b> |
|----------------|--|-----------------------|
| HicB-NT        | 0.1 M NaOAc, pH 4.6, 8% (w/v) PEG 4000   | 10% (v/v) glycerol    |
| HicB_DM        | 0.1 M NaOAc, pH 4.6, 2.0 M HCOONa, 11% (v/v) glycerol                            | N/A                   |
| HicB           | 0.1 M NaOAc, pH 4.2, 0.02 M CaCl <sub>2</sub> .dH <sub>2</sub> O, 15% (v/v) MPD  | 30% (v/v) glycerol    |
| HicAB          | 0.1 M MES pH 6.5, 0.2 M NH <sub>4</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> , 16% (w/v) PEG 5000 MME | 25% (v/v) glycerol    |

**Table S3. Crystallography table with statistics**

| Project                                      | HicB-NT                                       | HicB                          | HicB SeMet                                    | HicAB                          |
|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Wavelength (Å)</b>                        | 0.9763  | 0.9763                        | 0.9790  | 0.9795                         |
| <b>Resolution range (Å)</b>                  | 54.30 - 1.56<br>(1.62-1.56)                   | 39.42 - 1.85 (1.92 -<br>1.85) | 59.85-2.73 (2.86-<br>2.73)                    | 34.02 – 2.49<br>(2.58-2.49)    |
| <b>Space group</b>                           | P2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <sub>1</sub> | P 4 <sub>1</sub>              | P2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <sub>1</sub> | P2 <sub>1</sub>                |
| <b>Unit cell (Å)</b>                         | 63.5 76.7 76.9Å<br>90 90 90°                  | 62.6 62.6 173.5Å<br>90 90 90° | 58.7 59.9 172.8Å<br>90 90 90°                 | 85.1 72.2 85.3Å<br>90 90.1 90° |
| <b>Multiplicity</b>                          | 13.2 (13.0)                                   | 4.7 (4.7)                     | 12.7 (13.1)                                   | 6.8 (6.8)                      |
| <b>Completeness (%)</b>                      | 100.0 (100.0)                                 | 99.0 (99.0)                   | 99.3 (99.3)                                   | 99.9 (99.8)                    |
| <b>Mean I/σ(I)</b>                           | 29.9 (2.1)                                    | 9.84 (0.40)                   | 16.0 (1.5)                                    | 14.1 (1.4)                     |
| <b>Wilson B-factor (Å<sup>2</sup>)</b>       | 36.69   | 54.74                         | 71.3  | 66.6                           |
| <b>R-meas</b>                                | 0.04 (1.26)                                   | 0.07 (3.96)                   | 0.11 (2.09)                                   | 0.12 (1.23)                    |
| <b>CC1/2</b>                                 | 1.000 (0.805)                                 | 0.998 (0.129)                 | 0.998 (0.621)                                 | 0.998 (0.692)                  |
| <b>DelAnom correlation between half-sets</b> | -   | -                             | 0.493 (-0.03)                                 | -                              |
| <b>R/Rfree for partial model</b>             | -   | -                             | 0.327/0.390                                   | -                              |
| <b>Reflections used in refinement</b>        | 53900   | 55828                         | -   | 35696                          |
| <b>R-work</b>                                | 0.2001 (0.3972)                               | 0.2016 (0.4480)               | -   | 0.1814 (0.330)                 |
| <b>R-free</b>                                | 0.2337 (0.4530)                               | 0.2355 (0.4517)               | -   | 0.2204 (0.375)                 |
| <b>Number of protein atoms</b>               | 2502  | 4327                          | -   | 6272                           |
| <b>RMS (bonds)</b>                           | 0.013   | 0.008                         | -   | 0.034                          |
| <b>RMS (angles)</b>                          | 1.14  | 0.86                          | -   | 1.71                           |
| <b>Average B-factors</b>                     |   |                               | -   |                                |
| <b>Protein</b>                               | 41.97   | 67.95                         | -   | 56.73                          |
| <b>Solvent</b>                               | 47.56   | 53.65                         | -   | 52.17                          |

**Table S4. List of interactions between HicA and HicB.**

Residues that have direct equivalents within the HicA3B3 interaction site are underlined.

| <b>Interaction</b>    | <b>HicA-HicB</b>  |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Hydrophobic</b>    | V18-L53<br>A24-A42<br><u>L35-L50</u><br><u>L35-L53</u><br>P39-W28<br>P41-W28<br>L45-V14<br>L45-W28<br>P46-V14 |
| <b>Hydrogen bonds</b> | S23-W28<br><u>T37-H46</u>   |
| <b>Electrostatic</b>  | <u>R19-E48</u><br><u>R19-E52</u><br><u>K28-E55</u><br><u>K43-E30</u>  |



**Table S5. SAXS analysis for HicB and HicAB**

| <b>Data-collection parameters</b>                          |                                      |                     |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Instrument   | SEC-SAXS at B21 Diamond Light Source |                     |
| SEC column   | Supedex 200 (GE Healthcare)          |                     |
| Temperature  | 25 °C                                |                     |
| q range (Å <sup>-1</sup> )                                 | 0.006-0.40                           |                     |
| <b>Structural parameters</b>                               | <b>HicB</b>                          | <b>HicAB</b>        |
| I(0) (cm <sup>-1</sup> ) [from P(r)]                       | 0.00378 ± 0.0000089                  | 0.00349 ± 0.0000375 |
| Rg (Å) [from P(r)]   | 30.12 ± 0.24                         | 31.31 ± 0.21        |
| I(0) (cm <sup>-1</sup> ) (from Guinier)                    | 0.00382 ± 0.0000089                  | 0.00363 ± 0.0000092 |
| Dmax (Å)   | 97                                   | 100                 |
| Rg (Å) (from Guinier)                                      | 30.67 ± 0.37                         | 31.90 ± 0.47        |
| Porod volume estimate (Å <sup>-3</sup> )                   | 100,000                              | 117,000             |
| χ <sup>2</sup>   | 0.07                                 | 0.75                |
| <b>Molecular-mass determination</b>                        |                                      |                     |
| Partial specific volume (cm <sup>3</sup> g <sup>-1</sup> ) | 0.738384                             | 0.738384            |
| Contrast (Δρ x 10 <sup>30</sup> cm <sup>-2</sup> )         | 3.047                                | 3.047               |
| Molecular mass M <sub>r</sub> [from I(0)]                  | 67,000                               | 74,000              |
| Calculated M <sub>r</sub> from sequence (kDa)              | 62,952                               | 91,164              |
| From Porod Volume [Vporod/1.7] (Da)                        | 58,823                               | 73,000              |
| <b>Software employed</b>                                   |                                      |                     |
| Primary data reduction                                     | GDA (Diamond Light Source)           |                     |
| Data processing  | Scatter                              |                     |
| Ab initio analysis   | DAMMIN                               |                     |
| Validation and averaging                                   | DAMAVR                               |                     |
| Rigid-body modelling                                       | N/A                                  |                     |
| Computation of model intensities                           | FoXS                                 |                     |
| Three-dimensional graphics representations                 | Pymol                                |                     |

**Table S6 PISA analysis of HicB tetramer observed.** Monomers were investigated for their total number of atoms ( $N_{at}$ ), residues ( $N_{res}$ ), total number of surface atoms ( $S_{at}$ ) and residues ( $S_{res}$ ). The total surface area (Area) and solvation energy of folding ( $\Delta G$ ) were calculated. Assemblies (Crystal splits) were investigated with the Accessible Solvent Area (ASA), Buried Surface Area (BSA), Standard Free Energy of dissociation into nearest stable assemblies ( $\Delta G_{diss}$ ), Standard Free Energy of dissociation into monomeric units ( $\Delta G_0$ ) and Composition of assembly reported. It was reported that the tetramer was stable in solution. Chains A,B, C and D refer to subunits 2, 3, 1 and 4 in figure 1.

| Monomer | $N_{at}$ | $N_{res}$ | $S_{at}$ | $S_{res}$ | Area ( $\text{\AA}^2$ ) | $\Delta G$ (kcal/mol) |
|---------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| A       | 1019     | 132       | 724      | 128       | 9294.5                  | -105.8                |
| B       | 1019     | 132       | 719      | 128       | 9332.4                  | -106.9                |
| C       | 1041     | 135       | 729      | 130       | 9737.4                  | -108.8                |
| D       | 1041     | 135       | 725      | 129       | 9675.3                  | -107.1                |

| Stable crystal assemblies     |      |      |                        |                        |                              |                         |             |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Split No                      | Size | Type | ASA ( $\text{\AA}^2$ ) | BSA ( $\text{\AA}^2$ ) | $\Delta G_{diss}$ (kcal/mol) | $\Delta G_0$ (kcal/mol) | Composition |
| 1                             | 4    | 1    | 27034.1                | 11005.5                | 12.4                         | 14.0                    | ABCD        |
| 2                             | 2    | 2    | 15352.6                | 3717.2                 | 22.0                         | 11.0                    | BC          |
|                               | 2    | 2    | 15276.3                | 3693.5                 | 21.7                         | 10.9                    | AD          |
| Metastable crystal assemblies |      |      |                        |                        |                              |                         |             |
| 3                             | 2    | 3    | 17179.5                | 1630.8                 | 0.6                          | 0.6                     | AC          |
|                               | 2    | 3    | 17047.7                | 1624.6                 | -0.2                         | -0.2                    | BD          |

**Table S7: Structural conservation of the HicB interfaces within the PDB.** The PISA server reports the PDB entry, interface number, mmSize (number of macromolecular monomers within the assembly), Q score (relates from 0 to 1 for unrelated-identical proteins), Sequence identity (Seq ID), interface area,  $\Delta G$  and Complexation significance score (CSS, relates from 0 to 1 as the interface relevance increases).

| Entry | Interface Number | mmSize | Q score | Seq Id | Interface area, $\text{\AA}^2$ | $\Delta G$ kcal/mol | CSS   |
|-------|------------------|--------|---------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| 4P7D  | 1                | 4      | 0.395   | 0.273  | 2089.2                         | -30                 | 0.844 |
| 4P78  | 3                | 4      | 0.369   | 0.268  | 951.5                          | -21.7               | 0.931 |
| 5YRZ  | 3                | 4      | 0.284   | 0.194  | 604.6                          | -7.7                | 0.268 |
| 3KWR  | 2                | 4      | 0.269   | 0.096  | 523.7                          | -9.4                | 0.815 |

**Table S8: DALI.** The DALI server search result against a single subunit of HicB. The PDB chain, Z score, RMSD, sequence identity and description are highlighted. The Z score relates to the structural similarity between proteins. Proteins with a Z score below 3 were not included in this table.

| <b>Chain</b> | <b>Z score</b> | <b>Rmsd</b> | <b>Identity</b> | <b>Description</b>                                    |
|--------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|---|
| 4P7D-A       | 11.8           | 10.9        | 25              | Antitoxin HicB3 from <i>Yersinia pestis</i>           |
| 5YRZ-A       | 9.9            | 2.6         | 23              | Antitoxin HicB from <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i>   |
| 3KWR-B       | 10             | 3.7         | 15              | Putative RNA binding protein                          |
| 2DSY-C       | 6.1            | 2.2         | 21              | Hypothetical protein TTHA0281                         |
| 3K6Q-A       | 5.0            | 2.3         | 14              | Putative anti-toxin from <i>Syntrophomonas Wolfei</i> |
| 1ZBT-A       | 4.5            | 10          | 13              | Peptide chain release factor                          |
| 6CI7-F       | 3.9            | 14.3        | 8               | YCAO  |
| 5CFF-F       | 3.7            | 2.2         | 10              | Miranda/Staufen dsRBD5 complex                        |
| 3VYY-A       | 3.6            | 3.5         | 10              | ATP-Dependent RNA helicase A                          |
| 4WYQ-B       | 3.5            | 2.6         | 8               | Endoribonuclease DICER                                |
| 2MDR-A       | 3.5            | 2.2         | 4               | Double-stranded RNA-specific adenosine deaminase      |
| 2LTR-A       | 3.4            | 2.6         | 7               | Protein RDE-4   |
| 3P1X-B       | 3.4            | 2.0         | 8               | Interleukin enhancer binding factor 3                 |
| 3ADL-A       | 3.3            | 2.4         | 14              | RISC-loading complex subunit TARBP2                   |
| 1WHQ-A       | 3.1            | 2.9         | 11              | RNA helicase A  |

**Table S9 PISA analysis of HicAB hetero-octamer.** Monomers were investigated for their total number of atoms ( $N_{at}$ ), residues ( $N_{res}$ ), total number of surface atoms ( $S_{at}$ ) and residues ( $S_{res}$ ). The total surface area (Area) and solvation energy of folding ( $\Delta G$ ) were calculated. Assemblies (Crystal splits) were investigated with the Accessible Solvent Area (ASA), Buried Surface Area (BSA), Standard Free Energy of dissociation into nearest stable assemblies ( $\Delta G_{diss}$ ), Standard Free Energy of dissociation into monomeric units ( $\Delta G_0$ ) and Composition of assembly reported. It was reported that the tetramer was stable in solution. Chains A,B,C,D refer to Subunit 4, 1, 3 and 2 of HicB, while chains F, E, G and H refer to HicA moieties bound to each respective subunit.

| Monomer | $N_{at}$ | $N_{res}$ | $S_{at}$ | $S_{res}$ | Area ( $\text{\AA}^2$ ) | $\Delta G$ (kcal/mol) |
|---------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| A       | 1019     | 132       | 724      | 128       | 9294.5                  | -105.8                |
| B       | 1019     | 132       | 719      | 128       | 9332.4                  | -106.9                |
| C       | 1041     | 135       | 729      | 130       | 9737.4                  | -108.8                |
| D       | 1041     | 135       | 725      | 129       | 9675.3                  | -107.1                |
| E       | 479      | 61        | 297      | 56        | 4061.0                  | -55.1                 |
| F       | 466      | 60        | 296      | 56        | 3944.6                  | -53.1                 |
| G       | 472      | 60        | 294      | 56        | 4002.5                  | -54.7                 |
| H       | 461      | 59        | 305      | 57        | 4185.2                  | -49.4                 |

| Stable crystal assemblies     |      |      |                        |                        |                              |                         |             |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Split No                      | Size | Type | ASA ( $\text{\AA}^2$ ) | BSA ( $\text{\AA}^2$ ) | $\Delta G_{diss}$ (kcal/mol) | $\Delta G_0$ (kcal/mol) | Composition |
| 1                             | 8    | 1    | 36213.4                | 17619.7                | 8.8                          | 74.1                    | ABCDEFGH    |
| 2                             | 4    | 2    | 19521.3                | 7473.8                 | 9.2                          | 32.6                    | ADFH        |
|                               | 4    | 2    | 192087                 | 7629.2                 | 8.8                          | 32.6                    | BCEG        |
| 3                             | 2    | 3    | 11537.3                | 1876.5                 | 5.2                          | 5.2                     | CG          |
|                               | 2    | 3    | 11710.0                | 1845.3                 | 4.9                          | 4.9                     | DH          |
|                               | 2    | 3    | 11611.9                | 1827.9                 | 4.9                          | 4.9                     | AF          |
|                               | 2    | 3    | 11567.2                | 1856.8                 | 4.2                          | 4.2                     | BE          |
| 4                             | 4    | 4    | 27426.7                | 10213.1                | 9.6                          | 56.9                    | ABCD        |
| Metastable crystal assemblies |      |      |                        |                        |                              |                         |             |
| 5                             | 4    | 5    | 22004.7                | 4974.7                 | -0.9                         | -0.9                    | BDEH        |
|                               | 4    | 5    | 21905.1                | 4948.5                 | -1.3                         | -1.3                    | ACFG        |
| Marginally stable Assemblies  |      |      |                        |                        |                              |                         |             |
| 6                             | 4    | 4    | 27426.7                | 10213.1                | 9.6                          | 56.9                    | ABCD        |
| 7                             | 2    | 6    | 17460.6                | 1272.6                 | -0.2                         | -0.2                    | BD          |
|                               | 2    | 6    | 17662.5                | 1244.1                 | -0.6                         | -0.6                    | AC          |

**Table S10: Structural conservation of the HicAB interface within the PDB** The PISA server reports the PDB entry, interface number, mmSize (number of macromolecular monomers within the assembly), Q score (relates from 0 to 1 for unrelated-identical proteins), Sequence identity (Seq ID), interface area,  $\Delta G$  and Complexation significance score (CSS, relates from 0 to 1 as the interface relevance increases).

| <b>Entry</b> | <b>Interface Number</b> | <b>mmSize</b> | <b>Q score</b> | <b>Seq Id</b> | <b>Interface area, Å<sup>2</sup></b> | <b><math>\Delta G</math> kcal/mol</b> | <b>CSS</b> |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| 5YRZ         | 6                       | 4             | 0.782          | 0.246         | 1114.5                               | -7.9                                  | 0.468      |
| 4P78         | 2                       | 4             | 0.710          | 0.328         | 1179.3                               | -7.5                                  | 0.608      |
| 3KWR         | 1                       | 4             | 0.241          | 0.091         | 674.4                                | -12.5                                 | 0.436      |

**Table S11. Oligonucleotides used in the project**

| <b>Oligonucleotides</b> |     |   |
|-------------------------|-----|---|
| 0-48 Primer 1           | IDT | gatcgtgattggatgtgtataattacacacaagacattcgggggagct  |
| 0-48 Primer 2           | IDT | agctccccgaatgtcttgtgtgaattatacacatccaatcacgac     |
| 48-96 Primer 1          | IDT | ataggggcgaacaatgtgaaaatacgcacggctacacaaaacttgag   |
| 48-96 Primer 2          | IDT | ctcaagtttgtgtagccgtcgtattttcacattgtttcgccctat     |
| 96-144 Primer 1         | IDT | tcgaggccgcgcgcgatgcttcagtcttcccagcggacgggataaaa   |
| 96-144 Primer 2         | IDT | ttttatcccgtccgctgggcaagactgaagcatcgcgcgcggcctcga  |
| 144-196 Primer 1        | IDT | gccgcccgtggcggcagattacgacgagtggtacacacgaggaatg    |
| 144-196 Primer 2        | IDT | cattctcgtgtgtagccactcgtcgtaatctgccgccagcgggccc    |
| 192-240 Primer 1        | IDT | gtgccgaataagggtaaactatcctgtcaatggtgacgggcaagaggtg |
| 192-240 Primer 2        | IDT | cacctcttcccgtcaacattgacaggatagttacccttattcggc     |
| 240-279 Primer 1        | IDT | gccgaatcctcagtggaatccgcgaggacttagc                |
| 240-279 Primer 2        | IDT | gtgctaaagtctcgcggattttccactgaggattcggc            |
| 0-20 Primer 1           | IDT | acaagacattcgggggagct                              |
| 0-20 Primer 2           | IDT | agctccccgaatgtcttgt                               |
| 0-25 Primer 1           | IDT | tacacacaagacattcgggggagct                         |
| 0-25 Primer 2           | IDT | agctccccgaatgtcttgtgtga                           |
| 0-30 Primer 1           | IDT | ataattacacacaagacattcgggggagct                    |
| 0-30 Primer 2           | IDT | agctccccgaatgtcttgtgtgaattat                      |
| 0-35 Primer 1           | IDT | tgtgtataattacacacaagacattcgggggagct               |
| 0-35 Primer 2           | IDT | agctccccgaatgtcttgtgtgaattatacaca                 |
| 0-40 Primer 1           | IDT | ttggatgtgtataattacacacaagacattcgggggga            |
| 0-40 Primer 2           | IDT | agctccccgaatgtcttgtgtgaattatacacatc               |
| 17-36 Primer 1          | IDT | atgtgtataattacacaca                               |
| 17-36 Primer 2          | IDT | ttgtgtgaattatacacat                               |
| MS1 Primer 1            | IDT | atgtgtataattagggacaa                              |
| MS1 Primer 2            | IDT | ttgtccctaattatacacat                              |
| MS2 Primer 1            | IDT | atccctataattacacaca                               |
| MS2 Primer 2            | IDT | ttgtgtgaattatagggat                               |
| MS1MS2 Primer 1         | IDT | atccctataattagggacaa                              |
| MS1MS2 Primer 2         | IDT | ttgtccctaattatagggat                              |
| HicB_FL Primer 1        | IDT | aggagatataccatgatggaatttcccatcgcagt               |
| HicB_FL Primer 2        | IDT | gtgatggtgatgttttgcgtgcctaactttgcctc               |
| HicB Primer 1           | IDT | aggagatataccatgatggaatttcccatcgcga                |
| HicB Primer 2           | IDT | gtgatggtgatgttttgccttcattaagtgcctc                |
| HicB-NT Primer 1        | IDT | aggagatataccatggaatttcccatcgcagt                  |
| HicB-NT Primer 2        | IDT | gtgatggtgatgttaagatcaacgctgacgag                  |
| I51M Primer 1           | IDT | catgtagagacattgatggagcttggagaagat                 |
| I51M Primer 2           | IDT | atcttccaagctccatcaatgtctctacatg                   |
| I99M Primer 1           | IDT | cggatcaatgtgagtatgcctcgccttcgtgctg                |
| I99M Primer 2           | IDT | cagcacgaagcggagcactacattgatccg                    |
| Mutant Primer 1         | IDT | aggagatataccatgatggaatttccgattgccgtgcat           |
| Mutant Primer 2         | IDT | gcactggaagcactgaatgaaggtaaaaaacatcaccatcac        |
| R94E Primer 1           | IDT | aaaccggaagaattaatgttagc                           |
| R94E Primer 2           | IDT | gctaacattaatttctccggtt                            |
| S98T Primer 1           | IDT | cgtattaatgttaccattccgcgttt                        |
| S98T Primer 2           | IDT | aaaacgcggaatggaacattaatac                         |

**Table S12. Samples analysed by SEC.**

Elution volumes were used to calculate partition coefficient to indirectly determine the molecular weight based off the calibration curve.

| <b>Sample</b> | <b>Mw (Da)</b> | <b>Calculated Mw (Da)</b> | <b>Log<sub>10</sub>Mw</b> | <b>V<sub>e</sub> (ml)</b> | <b>K<sub>av</sub></b> |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| HicA          | 7,053          | 8,240                     | 0.92                      | 14.5                      | 0.44                  |
| HicB          | 62,952         | 65,610                    | 1.82                      | 9.03                      | 0.11                  |
| HicAB         | 91,164         | 71,870                    | 1.86                      | 8.79                      | 0.10                  |