

Supplementary Methods

Landscape of immune-related signatures induced by targeting of different epigenetic regulators in melanoma: implications for immunotherapy.

Andrea Anichini¹, Alessandra Molla¹, Gabriella Nicolini¹, Valentina E. Perotti¹, Francesco Sgambelluri¹, Alessia Covre^{2,3}, Carolina Fazio², Maria Fortunata Lofiego², Anna Maria di Giacomo^{2,3}, Sandra Coral², Antonella Manca⁴, Maria Cristina Sini⁴, Marina Pisano⁴, Teresa Noviello^{5,6}, Francesca Caruso^{5,6}, Silvia Brich⁷, Giancarlo Pruner^{7,8}, Andrea Maurichi⁹, Mario Santinami⁹, Michele Ceccarelli^{5,6}, Giuseppe Palmieri^{4,10}, Michele Maio^{2,3*}, Roberta Mortarini^{1*}

On behalf of the **EPigenetic Immune-oncology Consortium AIRC (EPICA)** investigators.

¹Human Tumors Immunobiology Unit, Dept. of Research, ⁷Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, ⁹Melanoma and Sarcoma Unit, Department of Surgery, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, Milan, Italy. ²Center for Immuno-Oncology, University Hospital of Siena, Siena, Italy. ³University of Siena, Siena, Italy. ⁴Unit of Cancer Genetics, National Research Council (CNR), Sassari, Italy. ¹⁰University of Sassari, Sassari, Italy. ⁵Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology (DIETI), University of Naples "Federico II", Naples, Italy. ⁶BIOGEM Institute of Molecular Biology and Genetics, Ariano Irpino, Italy. ⁸University of Milan, School of Medicine, Italy.

*These authors contributed equally.

Correspondence: Andrea Anichini, PhD, Human Tumors Immunobiology Unit, Dept. of Research, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, Via Venezian 1, 20133 Milan, Italy. Phone+390223902817. e-mail: andrea.anichini@istitutotumori.mi.it.

Supplementary Methods.

NGS analysis. DNA was extracted from 0.5-1x10⁶ melanoma cell lines using the Purelink Genomic DNA Mini Kit (Invitrogen). RNase treatment was performed using RNase cocktail (Invitrogen). Quantitative assessment of DNA was performed using a Nanodrop 2000 spectrophotometer and DNA integrity was confirmed by gel electrophoresis. NGS assays on melanoma cell lines DNA were performed using Ion GeneStudio S5 System and carried out on Ion AmpliSeq™ Comprehensive Cancer Panel, which provides highly multiplexed target selection of 409 genes implicated in cancer pathogenesis. Starting DNA and libraries were accurately quantified using a fluorescence-based method, such as Qubit dsDNA HS. Data analysis workflow was performed by automated data

transfer, from the Ion Torrent™ Server to the Ion Reporter Server for variant analysis; it includes result filtering, annotation, and data analysis results. To get a total amount of at least 10 mutated alleles for each candidate amplicon, the following mutation selection criteria were adopted: coverage of >200 reads and frequency of mutated alleles >5% for gene amplicon. The copy number variation (CNV) determination was obtained by adding a custom control copy number baseline to the comprehensive cancer profile analysis workflow. Results of NGS analysis of 14 melanoma cell lines used in this study are shown in Supplementary Table S1D.

Gene expression analysis. The total RNA (20 ng to 50 ng) was reverse transcribed using GeneChip® WT Pico Reagent Kit (Affymetrix; Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc.). The resulting cDNA was used as a template for in vitro transcription using the same kit. The obtained antisense cRNA was purified using Nucleic Acid Binding Beads (GeneChip® WT Pico Reagent Kit, Affymetrix) and used as a template for reverse transcription to produce single-stranded DNA in the sense orientation. During this step, dUTP was incorporated. The DNA was then fragmented using uracyl DNA glycosylase (UDG) and apurinic/apyrimidinic endonuclease 1 (APE 1) and labeled with DNA reagent covalently linked to biotin using terminal deoxynucleotidyl transferase (TdT, GeneChip® WT Pico Reagent Kit, Affymetrix). Hybridization of each fragmented and labeled target was performed using the GeneChip® Hybridization, Wash and Stain Kit (Affymetrix; Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc). A single GeneChip® Human Clariom S was then hybridized with each biotin-labeled sense target. GeneChip arrays were scanned using an Affymetrix GeneChip® Scanner 3000 7G using default parameters. Affymetrix GeneChip® Command Console software (AGCC) was used to acquire GeneChip® images and generate .DAT and .CEL files. Gene expression data were analyzed by Transcriptomic Analysis Console (TAC) software (Applied Biosystems, Thermo Fisher Scientific). Modulation of immune-related genes by epigenetic drugs in ten melanoma cells was assessed by the NanoString nCounter PanCancer Immune profiling panel enabling determination of 731 genes

61 (NanoString Technologies, Seattle, USA). The manufacturer's gene classification associated with
62 the PanCancer Immune profiling panel was revised by retrieving information on gene function at
63 <http://genecards.org> and then by grouping genes into 21 functional classes. For NanoString
64 experiments panel probes (capture and report) and 200 ng of RNA were hybridized overnight at 65
65 °C for 16 h. Samples were scanned at maximum scan resolution capabilities (555 FOV) using the
66 nCounter Digital Analyzer. Quality control of samples, data normalization and data analysis were
67 performed using nSolver software 4.0 (NanoString Technologies).

68 Whole gene expression profile of treated and untreated mesothelioma cell lines was
69 performed by Agilent whole human genome oligo microarray kits. The quantity and the quality of
70 RNA, extracted as previous described, was assessed with NanoDrop® ND-1000 UV-Vis
71 Spectrophotometer (NanoDrop Technologies, Wilmington, DE, USA) and the Agilent 2100
72 Bioanalyzer (Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA, USA). *In vitro* transcription, labeling and
73 purification of dye-labeled cRNA were performed using the Quick Amp Labeling Kit, one-color
74 (Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA, USA) following manufacturer's guidelines. Gene expression
75 profiling was performed by a One-Color strategy using Cy3-labeled aRNA from guadecitabine-
76 treated and untreated cells (Quick Amp Labeling, Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA, USA). A
77 mixture of 1650 ng of Cy3-labeled reference cRNA, Blocking Agent and Fragmentation Agent was
78 hybridized to Whole Human Genome (1x44K) oligo microarray platform (Agilent Technologies,
79 Santa Clara, CA, USA). Hybridization was performed for 17 hours at 65°C in 2x GEx Hybridation
80 Buffer HI-RPM (Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA, USA), using Agilent's Hybridization Oven at
81 10 rpm. Following washing, slides were analyzed by Agilent Microarray Scanner. Feature
82 Extraction Software provided by Agilent (version 9.5.3) was used to quantify the intensity of
83 fluorescence images and to normalize results by subtracting local background fluorescence

84 according to the manufacturer's instruction. Genes modulated with a $FC \geq 2$ or ≤ -2 in treated vs
85 untreated cells were used for upstream regulator analyses.

86 **Quantitative western blot analysis.** Primary antibodies were diluted in milk 5% or BSA 5%
87 in TBST and incubated overnight. Development was performed with the ECL normal western blot
88 detection system by the chemiluminescence method. Images were acquired with the Alliance
89 Imaging System (Uvitec). Densitometric analysis was carried out by Quantity One software (Bio-
90 Rad Laboratories Inc.). Normalized treated/control ratios were computed on the basis of
91 background-adjusted density values and then visualized by a color code.

92 **Data Analysis.** The Transcriptomics Analysis Console (TAC) software (Applied Biosystems)
93 was used to identify significantly modulated genes by treatment of two melanoma cell lines
94 (VRG100 and CST30) with guadecitabine, givinostat, JQ1, OTX-015, GSK126 or abemaciclib, and of
95 melanoma nodules removed from immunodeficient mice treated with Guadecitabine. Analysis
96 settings were as follows: gene level fold change $>|1.2|$, gene-level p value: <0.05 ; gene-level FDR:
97 <0.05 . Ingenuity Pathway Analysis (IPA 8.5, www.ingenuity.com) was used to carry out Upstream
98 Regulator (UR) analysis on: a) significantly modulated genes by different treatments; b)
99 differentially expressed genes in pre-therapy and on-treatment lesions from responding vs non
100 responding patients from the NIBIT-M4 trial (ref. 24 in the manuscript). Upstream regulator
101 analysis allows to identify upstream transcriptional regulators that can explain the observed gene
102 expression changes in the dataset. This computational tool returns results based on p-values and Z
103 score statistics. P values indicate the likelihood of the association between a set of genes and
104 related function, or the likelihood of the overlap between the genes in the dataset and those that
105 are regulated by a predicted upstream regulator. The meaning of the Z score statistics is to infer
106 the activation states ("increased" or "decreased") of the identified biological functions and of the
107 predicted transcription factors. Only Z scores greater than 2 or smaller than -2 were considered

108 significant. IPA was also used for canonical pathway analysis. Canonical pathway analysis is a
109 computational tool allowing to determine if canonical pathways are activated or inhibited on the
110 basis of gene expression in the dataset. Activation or inhibition states of canonical pathways are
111 predicted based on the Z-score algorithm. The significance values (p-value of overlap)
112 are calculated by the right-tailed Fisher's Exact Test and indicate the probability of association of
113 molecules in the dataset with the canonical pathway by random chance alone.