Nucleosome spike-in controls enable reliable next-generation epigenomic mapping

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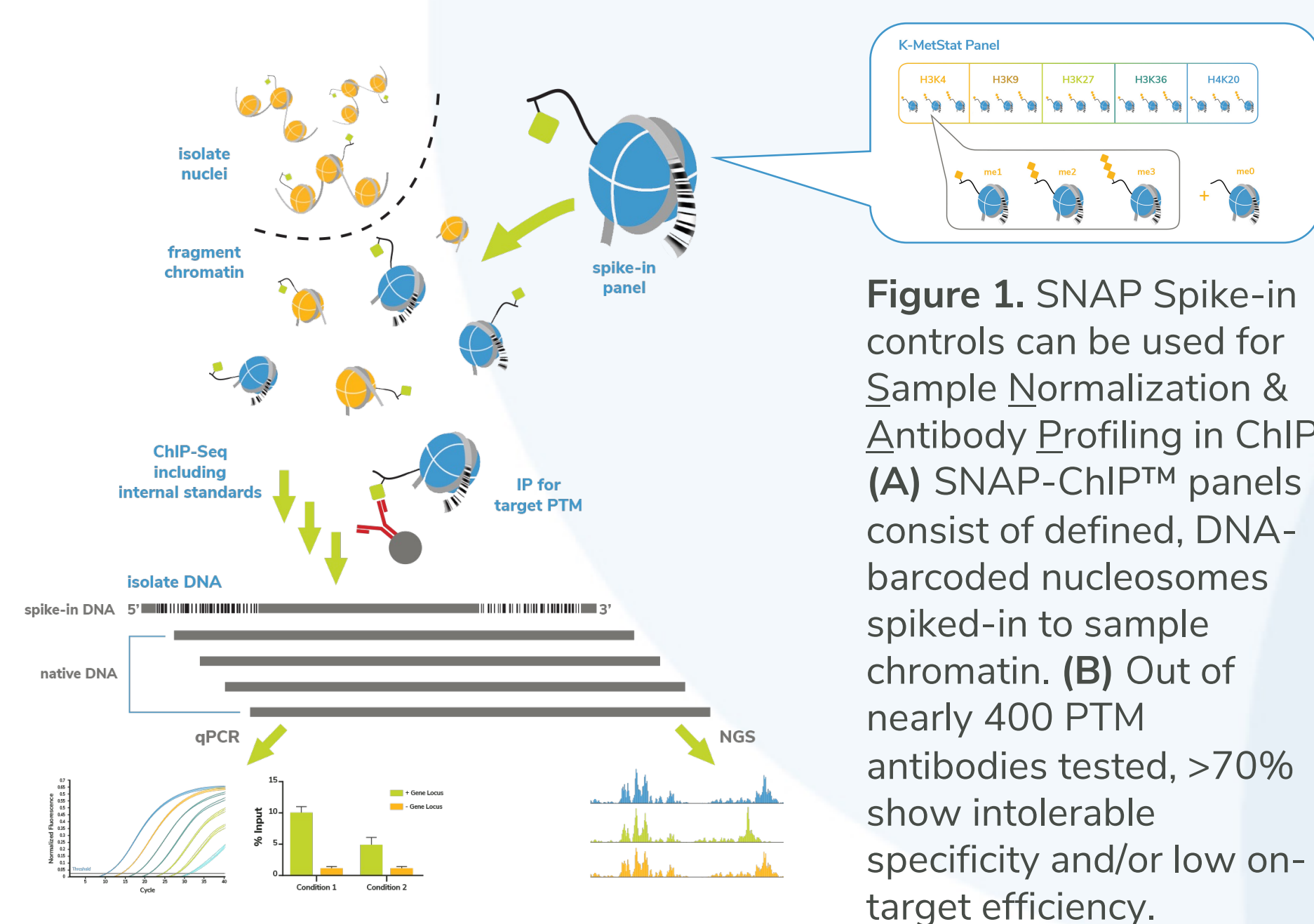
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The Problem: Improved epigenomics assays are needed to advance cancer research

➢ Epigenomic mapping for histone post-translational modifications (PTMs) can be used to discover gene regulatory mechanisms in cancer

➢ ChIP-seq is the most widely used epigenomic mapping assay, but has major limitations:

✗ Depends on PTM antibodies – which are notoriously cross-reactive [1,2]
✗ Requires large cell numbers – unsuitable for clinical or rare cell samples
✗ Poor data quality – low S:N, poor reproducibility
✗ Expensive and laborious – making it difficult to scale
✗ Lacks defined controls – crucial for reliable, quantitative results

➢ Defined controls and improved methods are needed to fully leverage epigenomics in cancer research

Nucleosome spike-in controls show that most histone PTM antibodies fail in ChIP-seq

(A) Fully defined ChIP controls mimic physiological targets

Figure 1. SNAP Spike-in controls can be used for Sample Normalization & Antibody Profiling in ChIP. **(A)** SNAP-ChIP™ panels consist of defined, DNA-barcoded nucleosomes spiked-in to sample chromatin. **(B)** Out of nearly 400 PTM antibodies tested, >70% show intolerable specificity and/or low on-target efficiency.

(B) Most commercial antibodies are unfit for epigenomics

Antibodies Tested by SNAP-ChIP™	Lysine Methylation	Lysine Acylation	Total
Total Tested	263	129	392
Failure Rate	74.5%	64.5%	71.2%
$ Spent	$105,200	$51,600	$156,800
$ Wasted	$78,374	$33,282	$111,656
Top Cited: Citations w/"ChIP"	3,720 (N=18)	1,031 (N=6)	4,751 (N=24)
Top Cited: Failure Rate	74.5%	64.5%	79.2%

Data available at: **www.ChromatinAntibodies.com**[3]

CUTANA™ CUT&RUN has major advantages over ChIP

(A) CUT&RUN Workflow

(B) CUT&RUN vs. ChIP-seq

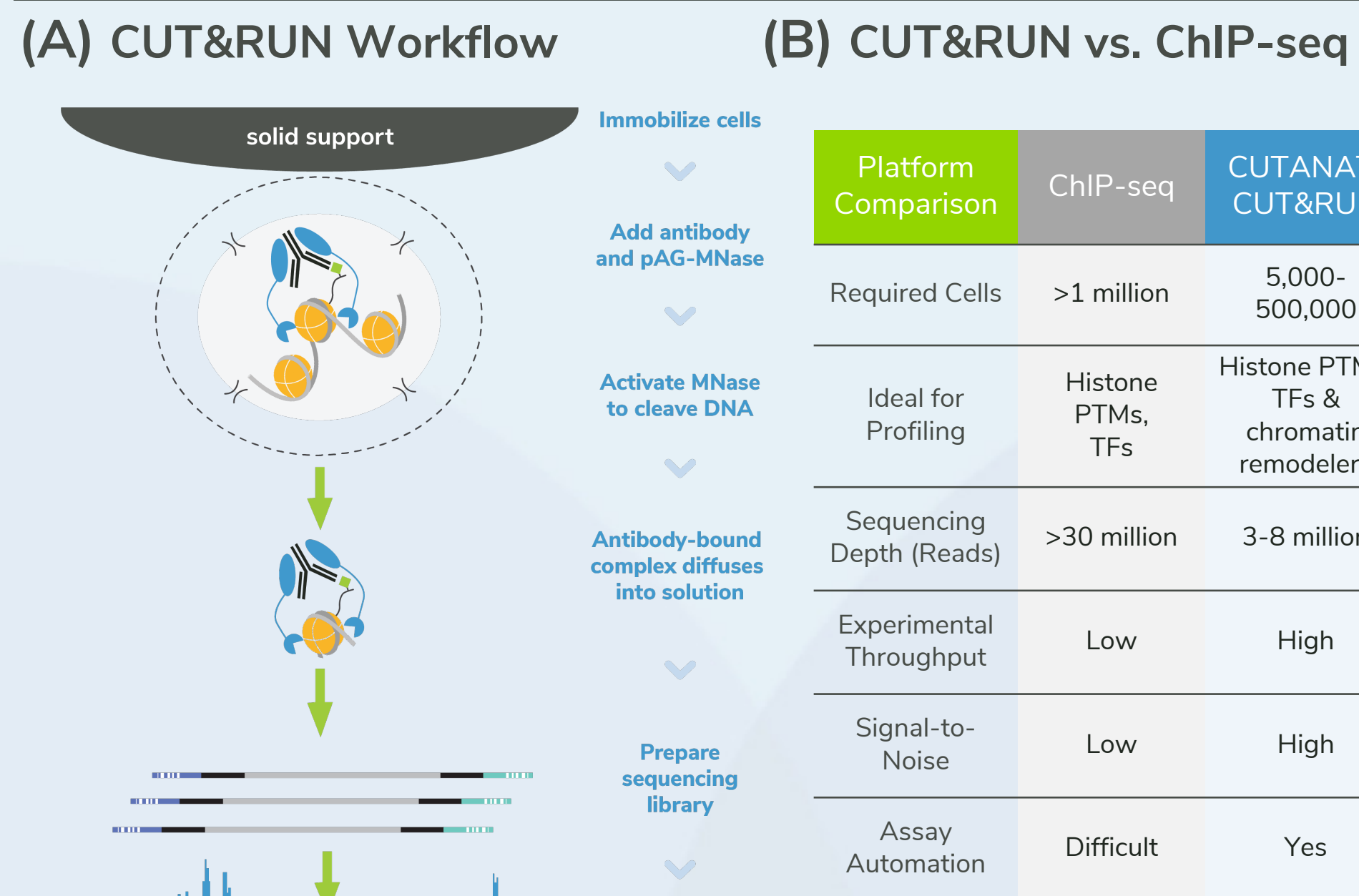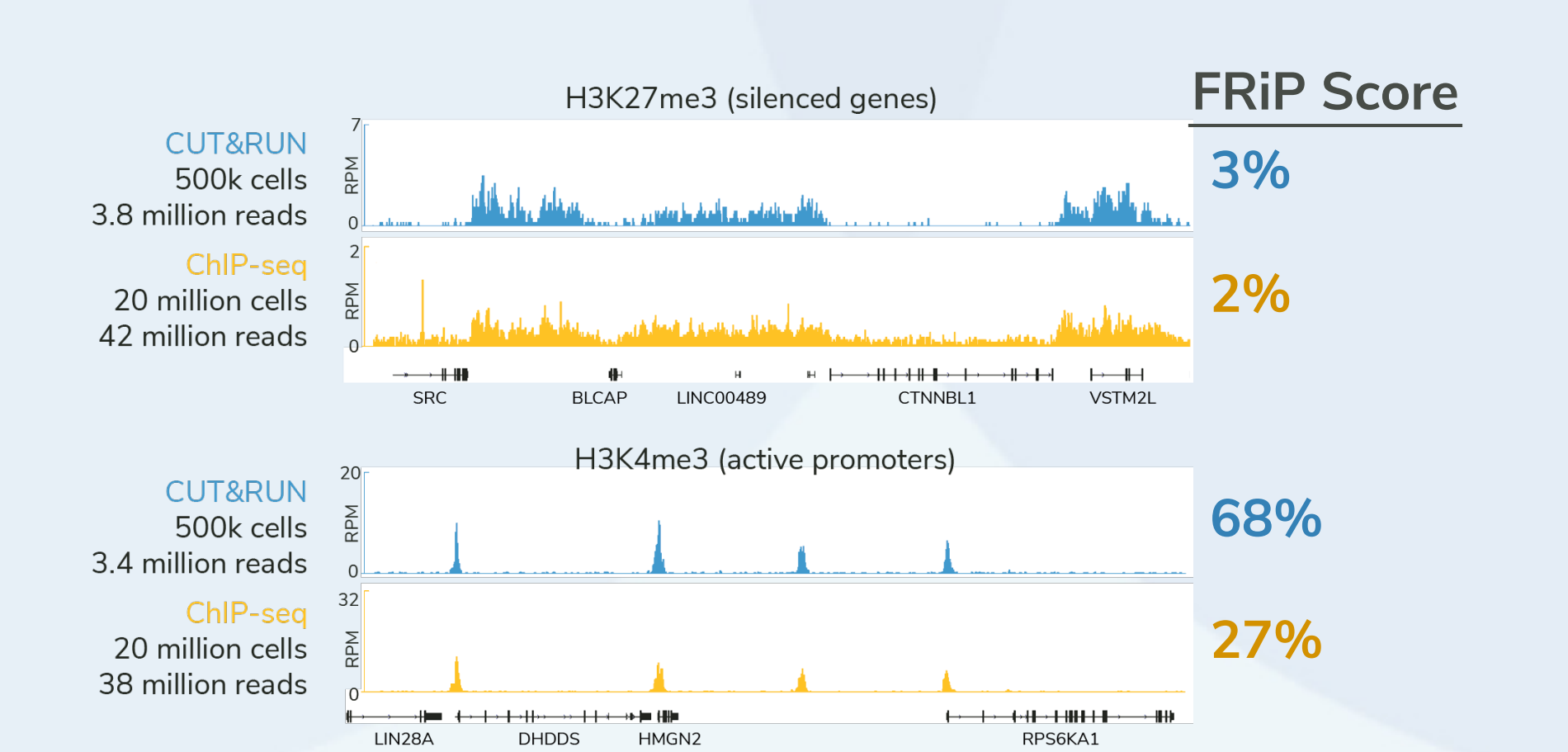| Platform Comparison	ChIP-seq	CUTANA™ CUT&RUN
Required Cells	>1 million	5,000-500,000
Ideal for Profiling	Histone PTMs, TFs	Histone PTMs, TFs & chromatin remodelers
Sequencing Depth (Reads)	>30 million	3-8 million
Experimental Throughput	Low	High
Signal-to-Noise	Low	High
Assay Automation	Difficult	Yes

Figure 2. Overview of the CUTANA™ CUT&RUN workflow and advantages compared to ChIP-seq. Because CUT&RUN releases antibody-bound fragments into solution **(A)**, it has improved signal-to-noise even with significantly reduced cell numbers and sequencing depth **(B)**.

CUT&RUN enables ultra-sensitive epigenomic profiling from low cell numbers

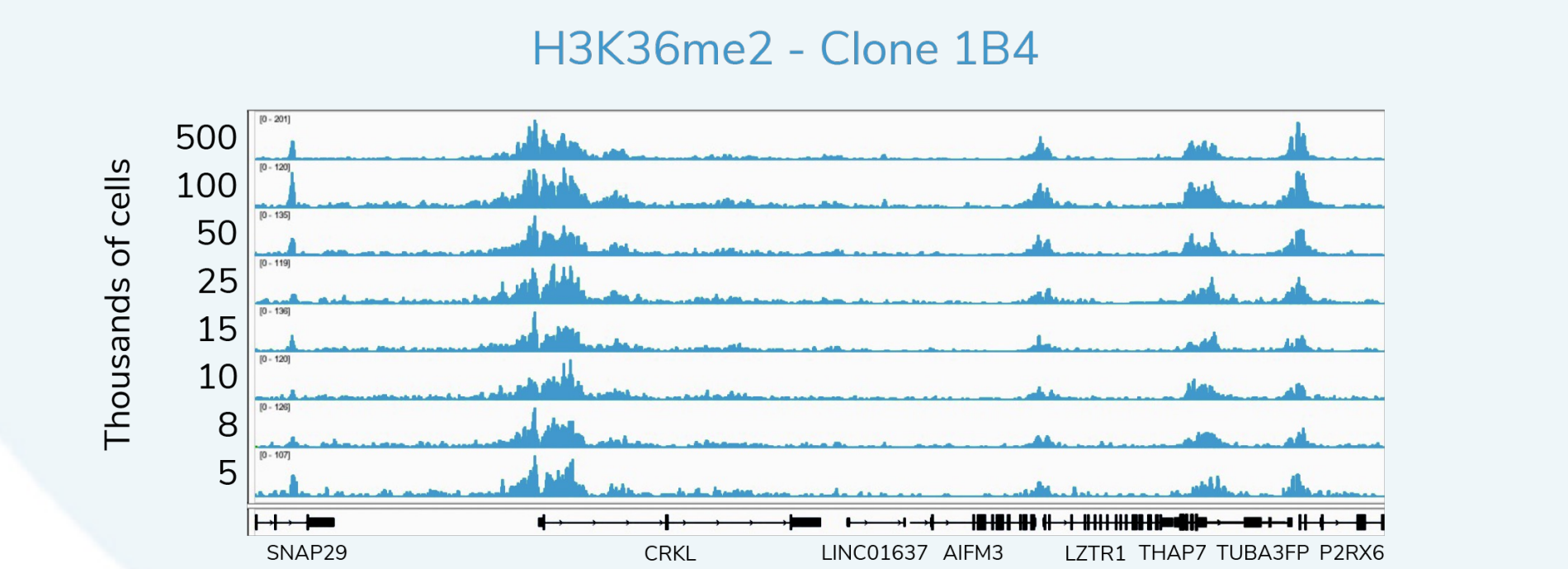**(A)** CUT&RUN vs. ChIP-seq: better data, low sequencing costs

Figure 3. (A) The Fraction of Reads in Peaks (FRiP) score, a measure of signal-to-noise (S:N), is higher in CUT&RUN vs. ChIP-seq, despite using fewer cells and reduced sequencing depths. **(B)** Enrichment profiles are conserved when inputs are titrated from 500k to 5k cells.

(B) CUT&RUN generates reliable profiles down to 5,000 cells

H3K36me2 - Clone 1B4

SNAP-CUTANA™ Spike-ins are critical controls for reliable chromatin mapping

(A) SNAP Spike-ins for CUT&RUN

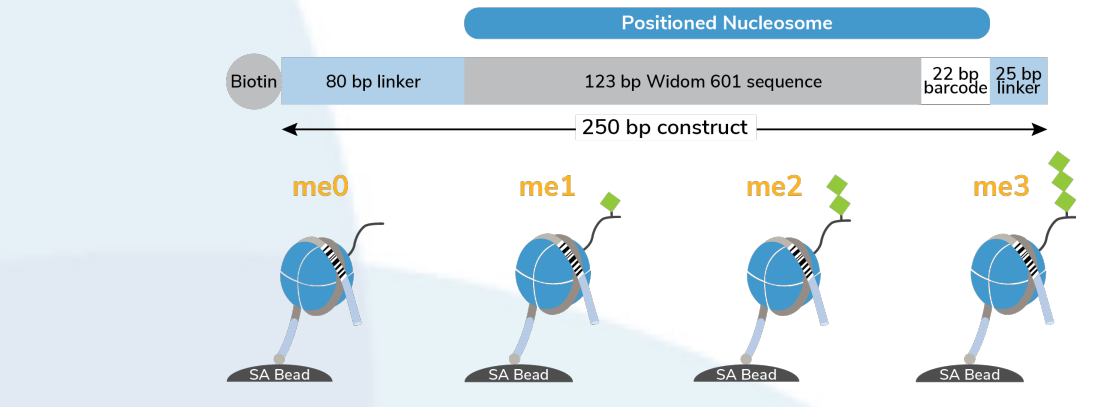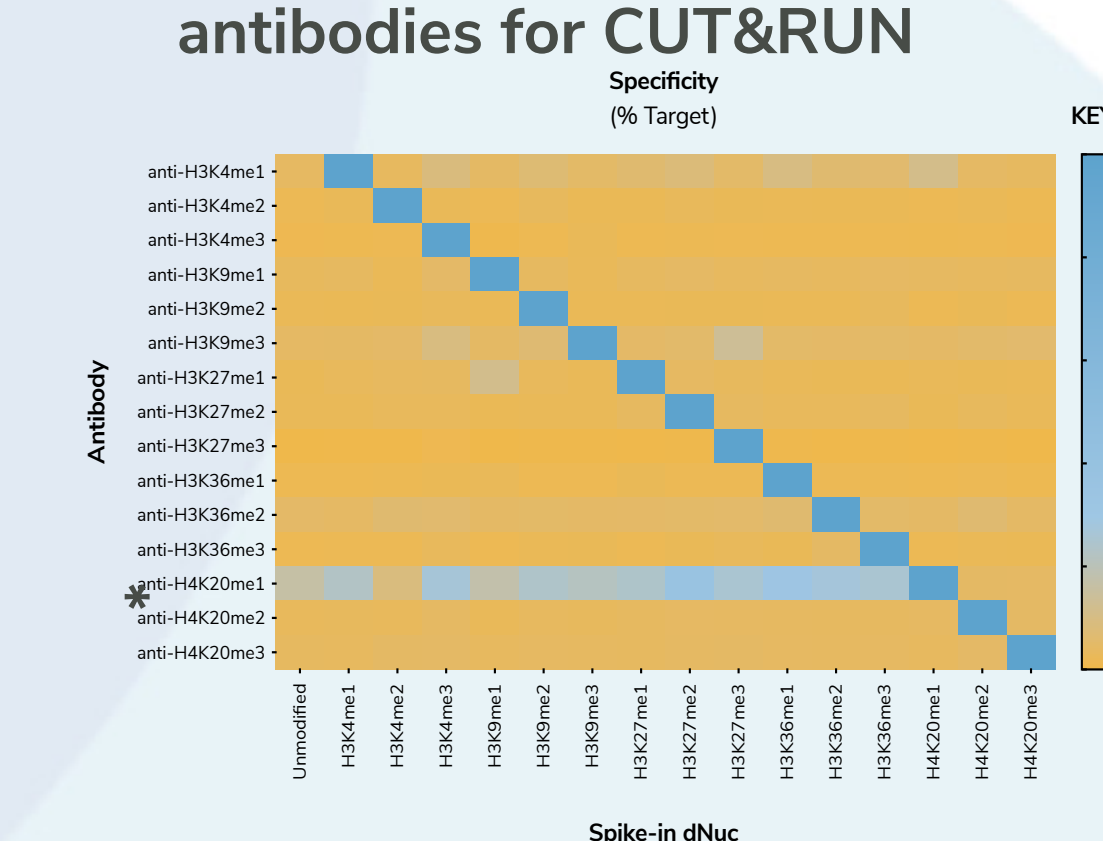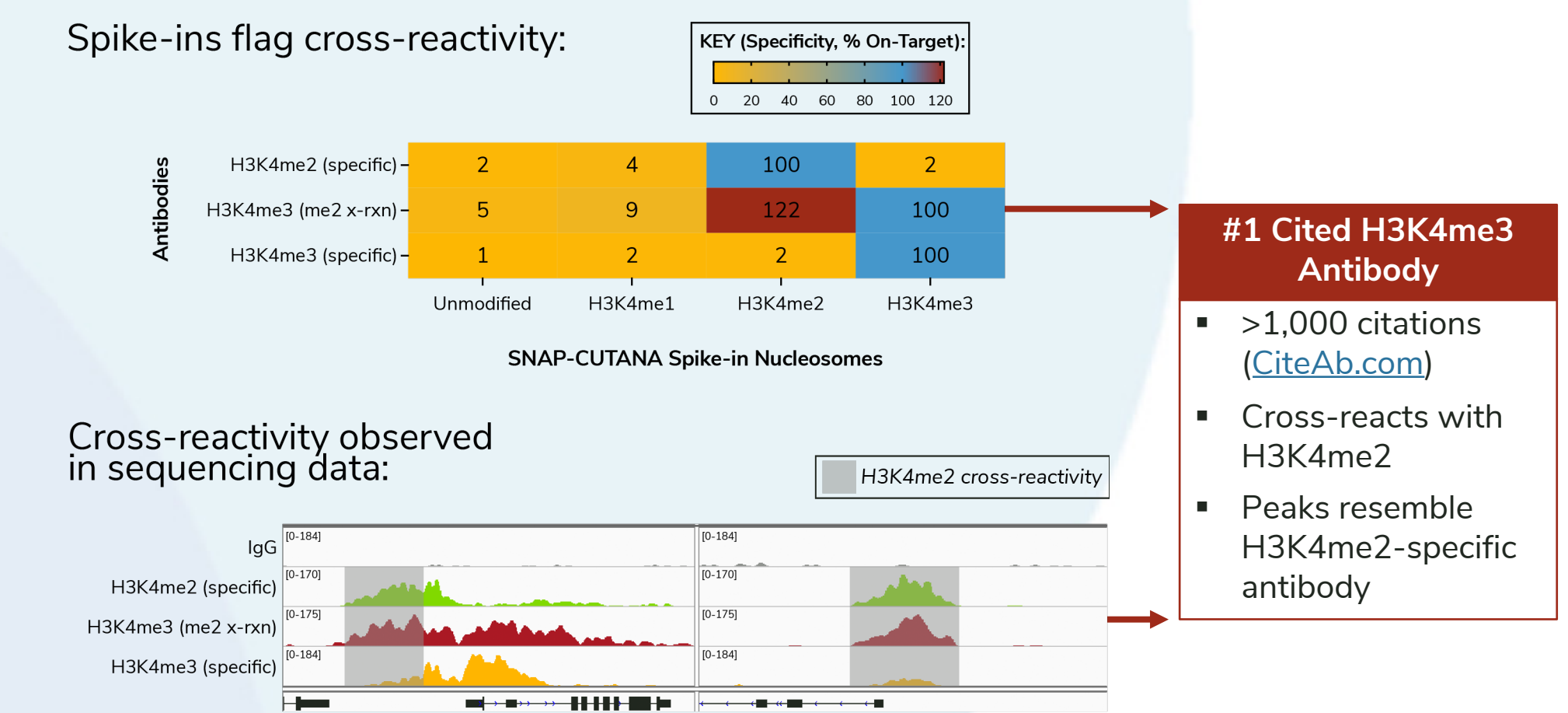**(B)** SNAP testing identifies specific antibodies for CUT&RUN

Figure 4. SNAP-CUTANA spike-in controls optimized for use in CUT&RUN **(A)** can be used to identify highly specific antibodies to widely studied histone PTMs **(B)**. By spiking them into CUT&RUN workflows just prior to antibody addition, they provide a quantitative readout of on- vs. off-target recovery that predicts non-specific peaks in genomic data **(C)**. *Ongoing testing for H4K20me1. Inquire at info@epicypher.com for up-to-date information.

(C) SNAP Spike-ins predict non-specific recovery in CUT&RUN

Spike-ins flag cross-reactivity:

Antibodies	Unmodified	H3K4me1	H3K4me2	H3K4me3
H3K4me2 (specific)	2	4	100	2
H3K4me3 (me2 x-rxn)	5	9	122	100
H3K4me3 (specific)	1	2	2	100

SNAP-CUTANA Spike-in Nucleosomes

#1 Cited H3K4me3 Antibody
- >1,000 citations (CiteAb.com)
- Cross-reacts with H3K4me2
- Peaks resemble H3K4me2-specific antibody

Cross-reactivity observed in sequencing data:

Conclusions

➢ CUTANA™ CUT&RUN is poised to rapidly replace ChIP-seq

➢ Our data illustrate how CUT&RUN could be applied for cancer epigenomics, particularly for low sample inputs and/or high-throughput applications

➢ SNAP Spike-in controls address pervasive antibody specificity problems while enabling a direct readout of assay success and quantitative normalization (see below!)

References

1. Shah et al. Examining the roles of H3K4 methylation states with systematically characterized antibodies. Mol. Cell 72, 162-177 (2018).
2. Small et al. Chromatin Immunoprecipitation (ChIP) to study DNA-Protein Interactions. Methods Mol. Biol. 2261, 323-343 (2021).
3. Maryanski et al. Novel nucleosome-based methods for rapid screening and identification of best-in-class antibodies: a community resource to improve genomic mapping. In preparation. www.ChromatinAntibodies.com

Ultra-sensitive epigenomics advances cancer research

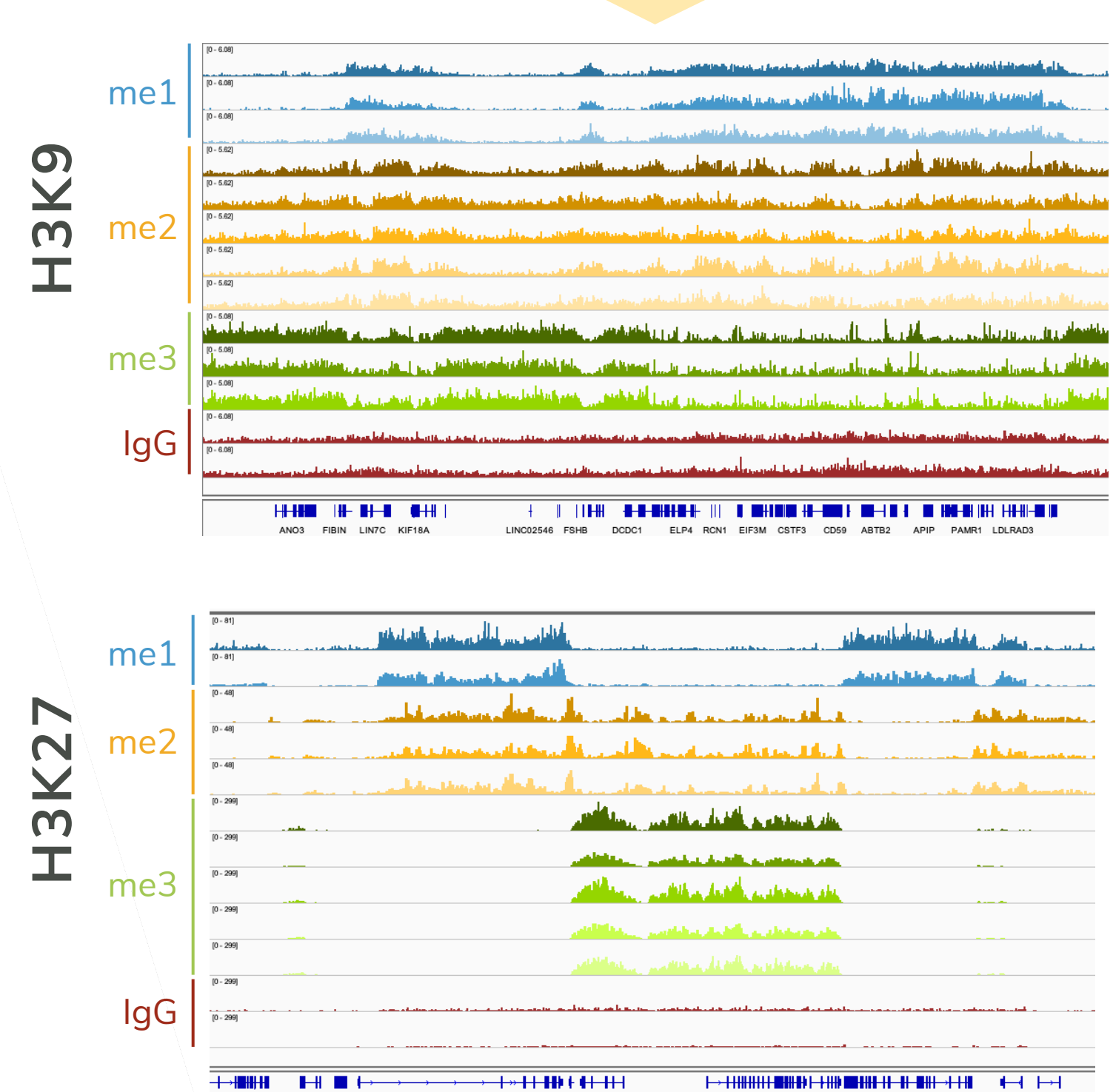## Uncover novel biology with highly specific antibodies

Figure 5. GENOMICALLY DISTINCT = FUNCTIONALLY DISTINCT. The use of highly specific histone PTM antibodies in CUT&RUN **(Figure 4B)** enables novel insights into the histone code. Distinct genomic profiles observed by mono-, di– and tri-methyl states imply distinct biological functions not previously appreciated.
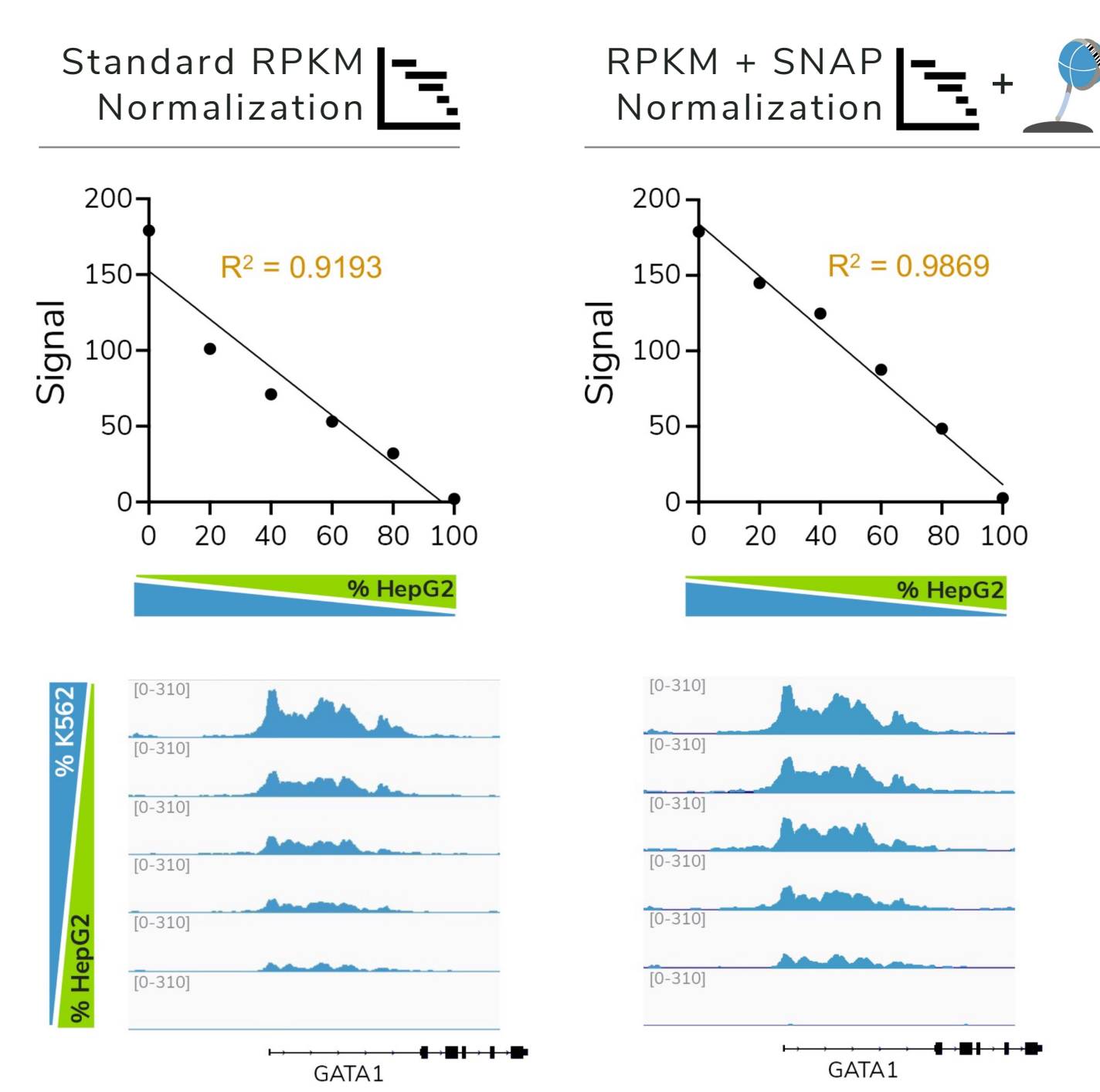
Quantitative readout enables drug & clinical development applications

Standard RPKM Normalization — $R^2 = 0.9193$

RPKM + SNAP Normalization — $R^2 = 0.9869$

Figure 6. CUT&RUN linearity is improved by SNAP normalization. Cells with distinct lineages were mixed at defined intervals. Linear regression analysis of an H3K4me3 peak shows that SNAP normalization **(right)** shows improved linearity of a K562 cell-specific peak over standard RPKM normalization **(left)**.

K562 cells (mesodermal)   HepG2 cells (ectodermal)