

**P014** The La autoantigen and its interaction with cognate RNAs  
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La protein is a conserved and highly abundant nuclear phosphoprotein, that binds to the 3' poly(U) ends of nascent RNA polymerase III (Pol III) transcripts, contributing to the processing and maturation of these precursor. La is also reported to directly facilitate translation of specific viral and cellular mRNA. One of the most prominent and intriguing examples involves La binding to the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) IRES in the vicinity of the initiator AUG, apparently contributing to start site selection. Human La binds to UUU-OH via the highly conserved N-terminal half of the protein, whereas the C-terminal domain varies greatly in length between different eukaryotes and its role remains thus far uncertain. Our laboratories have provided the first structural characterisation of this multifaceted protein and provided fresh insights into its structure, RNA binding activity and oligomerisation state. Molecular basis for the interaction between La and its cognate RNAs will be discussed.