# 1 DciA helicase operators exhibit diversity across bacterial phyla

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#### 10 ABSTRACT

11 A fundamental requirement for life is replication of an organism's DNA. Studies in Escherichia coli 12 and *Bacillus subtilis* have set the paradigm for how DNA replication occurs in bacteria. During 13 replication initiation in E. coli and B. subtilis, the replicative helicase is loaded onto the DNA at the 14 origin of replication by an ATPase helicase loader. However, most bacteria do not encode 15 homologs to the helicase loaders in E. coli and B. subtilis, raising the question of how helicase 16 activity is facilitated in other bacteria during DNA replication initiation. Recent work has identified 17 the DciA protein as a predicted helicase operator that may perform a function analogous to the 18 helicase loaders in E. coli and B. subtilis. DciA proteins are defined by the presence of a DUF721 19 domain and are conserved in most bacteria. However, we find that the sequence conservation 20 between DciA proteins across different phyla is very low. Therefore, to comprehensively define 21 the DciA protein family, we took a computational evolutionary approach. These analyses identified 22 diversity in sequence features and domain architectures amongst DciA homologs that were 23 associated with specific phylogenetic lineages. The diversity of DciA proteins elucidated here 24 represents the evolution of helicase operation in bacterial DNA replication, highlights the need for

phyla-specific analyses of this fundamental biological process, and is an important example of
 how research in bacterial DNA replication is necessary in organisms beyond *E. coli* and *B. subtilis.*

# 28 **IMPORTANCE**

29 Despite the fundamental importance of DNA replication for life, this process remains understudied 30 in bacteria outside of Escherichia coli and Bacillus subtilis. In particular, most bacteria do not 31 encode the helicase loading proteins that are essential in *E. coli* and *B. subtilis* for DNA replication. 32 Instead, most bacteria encode a DciA homolog that likely constitutes the predominant mechanism 33 of helicase operation in bacteria. However, it is still unknown how DciA structure and function 34 compares across diverse phyla that encode DciA proteins. In this study, we perform a 35 computational evolutionary analysis that uncovers tremendous diversity amongst DciA homologs. 36 These studies provide a significant advance in our understanding regarding an essential 37 component of the bacterial DNA replication machinery.

38

### 40 **INTRODUCTION**

41 DNA replication is a process critical to life for all organisms The current paradigm for the process 42 of DNA replication in bacteria has primarily been based on studies in Escherichia coli and Bacillus 43 subtilis. Bacterial DNA replication begins with the binding of the replication initiation protein DnaA 44 to specific sequences referred to as DnaA boxes at the origin of replication (oriC) (1-7). DnaA 45 binding to double-stranded DNA (dsDNA) triggers DNA unwinding at an AT-rich region of DNA 46 called the DNA unwinding element (DUE), leaving a bubble of single-stranded DNA (ssDNA) (2, 3, 6, 8, 9). The ssDNA bubble is coated by single-stranded binding protein (SSB) (10), followed 47 48 by the concerted loading of two hexameric replicative helicases onto the SSB coated replication 49 fork. The two helicases translocate along the two sides of the replication fork, unwinding the 50 dsDNA as they move (1, 3, 6, 11–14).

51 Bacterial replicative helicases (DnaB in E. coli and DnaC in B. subtilis) are Superfamily IV 52 type helicases, which are defined as hexameric RecA ATPases (3, 15, 16) that translocate in the 53 5'-3' direction (11, 12, 17). The bacterial replicative helicase translocates on ssDNA using a 54 "hand-over-hand" mechanism, which is driven by nucleotide hydrolysis (18, 19) (reviewed in 55 (17)). The C-terminus of the bacterial replicative helicase contains the RecA-like fold that is 56 responsible for the ATPase activity, and is connected to an N-terminal scaffolding domain via a 57 linker region (6, 20, 21). The replicative helicase must oligomerize into a double-layered 58 hexameric ring to be active during replication, with one layer made up of the N-termini and the 59 other layer comprised of the C-termini (6, 22, 23). In E. coli and B. subtilis, the loading of the 60 replicative helicase is performed with the help of a helicase loader, termed DnaC in E. coli and 61 Dnal in *B. subtilis* (3, 24–27). *dnaC* and *dnal* were acquired by *E. coli* and *B. subtilis*, respectively, 62 via domestication of related but distinct phage ATPase-containing genes (28). DnaC and Dnal 63 are both in the ATPases Associated with diverse cellular Activities (AAA+) ATPase family, and

the ATPase activity of DnaC is required for its helicase loading function at the origin of replication(29, 30).

66 E. coli and B. subtilis have long represented the paradigm of helicase loading during 67 bacterial replication. However, the majority of bacteria do not encode ATPase helicase loader 68 homologs to DnaC or DnaI. Instead, most bacteria encode the ancestral protein, DciA (DnaC/I 69 Antecedent) (28, 31), which is defined by the presence of a Domain of Unknown Function (DUF) 70 721. Despite the prevalence of DUF721-containing DciA homologs in bacteria (28), DciA has only 71 been studied in actinobacterial (Mycobacterium tuberculosis and Mycobacterium smegmatis) and 72 gammaproteobacterial (Pseudomonas aeruginosa and Vibrio cholerae) species (28, 31-33). DciA 73 homologs interact with the replicative helicase DnaB and are essential for *M. tuberculosis*, *M.* 74 smeamatis, and P. aeruginosa DNA replication and viability (28, 31). Based on DciA's interaction 75 with the replicative helicase and requirement for DNA replication. DciA has been proposed to 76 perform a function analogous to that of the DnaC/I helicase loaders. However, DciA does not 77 have a predicted ATPase domain and, therefore, cannot be considered a helicase loader like 78 DnaC/I. Instead, DciA is referred to as a predicted helicase operator, although the mechanism of 79 DciA helicase operation is still unknown (28, 31).

80 Beyond the presence of the DUF721, DciA domain architecture and the relationship 81 between DciA homologs across diverse bacterial phyla are yet to be investigated. To address 82 these open questions, we took a computational evolutionary approach and analyzed the 83 phylogenic distribution, domain architecture, and sequence conservation for DciA homologs. We 84 have discovered low sequence similarity between DciA homologs from different phyla, lineage-85 specific domain architectures, and divergent evolution of specific DciA homologs, all of which 86 likely have functional consequences. This study provides an evolutionary picture of DciA, reveals 87 key differences between homologs, and generates the framework for mechanistic investigation 88 into different classes of DciA proteins.

#### 89 **RESULTS**

# 90 DciA proteins vary considerably in sequence across bacterial phyla

91 Most bacteria encode a DciA homolog, defined by the presence of the DUF721 domain (28). 92 Based on studies in *M. tuberculosis*, the DUF721 is predicted to contain a region of structural homology to the N-terminus of DnaA, which was thus named the DnaA N-terminal-like (DANL) 93 94 domain (31). The presence of the DANL domain has subsequently been confirmed in V. cholerae 95 DciA (32). Our analysis of other DciA homologs indicates that this predicted structural domain is 96 conserved, suggesting that it is important for DciA function. However, beyond the annotation of 97 the DUF721 (henceforth referred to as the DciA domain), it is unclear how different DciA homologs 98 relate to each other. A protein BLAST search for *M. tuberculosis* DciA homologs based on primary 99 amino acid sequence only identifies closely related homologs, all of which are in actinobacteria 100 (Figure S1). We found a similar pattern when retrieving homologs with *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. 101 all homologs are proteobacterial (Figure S1). This suggests that the DciA homologs in different 102 phyla are diverse with low conservation in their primary amino acid sequence. We, therefore, 103 needed a more extensive method to investigate the relationship between DciA homologs across 104 different phyla. To achieve this, we used the MolEvolvR web application to comprehensively 105 identify and characterize DciA homologs across all bacterial lineages using molecular evolution 106 and phylogeny (34). Since individual DciA proteins from specific lineages were not successful in 107 retrieving homologs from other distant phyla, we selected a much wider range of starting points. 108 We started with 21 DciA proteins from 11 diverse phyla (28), including representatives from 109 actinobacteria, proteobacteria, and cyanobacteria (Table S1; Figure 1A), as query sequences to 110 identify diverse DciA homologs across additional bacterial phyla (Figure 1A). Our homology 111 search resulted in identifying ~9K DciA homologs from 15 bacterial phyla (Figure 1B). In line with

both genome sequencing and publication bias, proteobacteria and actinobacteria were overrepresented in both our queries and recovered sequences (35–37) (**Figure 1A,B**).

114 No single DciA protein identified homologs in all other phyla (Figure 1C), supporting that 115 there is low sequence conservation between DciA homologs. To quantify the sequence 116 conservation across phyla, we analyzed the pairwise similarity for the 21 DciA protein homologs 117 used as our query set (Figure 2). We found a wide range of similarities (~20-60%), with the 118 majority of homologs showing 30-40% similarity. Our guery sequence dataset contained multiple 119 species within each class of proteobacteria, so we were able to compare the conservation 120 between DciA homologs within proteobacteria as well as between proteobacteria and other phyla. 121 Similarity was high between DciA proteins within alphaproteobacteria (62.3% between Brucella 122 abortus and Mesorhizobium australicum) and gammaproteobacteria (52.3% between Proteus 123 mirabilis and Vibrio cholerae). Overall, DciA protein queries within proteobacteria have an 124 average of ~30% similarity, and proteobacterial homologs have an average of 31.12% similarity 125 to homologs outside of their phyla (Figure 2). Actinobacterial and proteobacterial DciA homologs 126 share between 21–34% sequence similarity. For example, the *M. tuberculosis* DciA protein shares 127 28.3% identity with the *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* DciA (Figure 2). DciA shares this trait of low 128 sequence conservation across phyla with its interaction partner, the replicative helicase DnaB. 129 where DnaB proteins in *M. tuberculosis* and *P. aeruginosa* only share 20.4% similarity. Bacterial 130 replication proteins in general have low to moderate sequence conservation across phyla (11-131 49% similarity across replisome proteins between E. coli and B. subtilis) (38). Therefore, our data 132 showing low DciA sequence conservation is consistent with other replication initiation proteins. 133 Given the low-level conservation across divergent DciA proteins, it was unsurprising that 134 individual DciA guery proteins never returned homologs from all other phyla and emphasizes the 135 need for multiple starting points for analysis (Figure 1C).

136 While we identified a diverse set of DciA homologs, including those with moderate to low 137 sequence conservation from most lineages (Figure 1), we were still missing multiple phyla 138 previously reported to contain DciA homologs. Therefore, we expanded our search further by 139 including 66 DciA query proteins from 20 bacterial phyla as query sequences (Figure 3A; Table 140 1). This hugely diversified our results identifying >13K unique DciA homologs from 22 bacterial 141 phyla (Figure 3B,C). Consistent with the previous smaller set of DciA query proteins (Figure 1), 142 we found that most DciA proteins identified homologs within their corresponding phylum as well 143 as ones within actinobacteria and proteobacteria (Figure 3C). However, a few DciA proteins 144 recovered homologs only within their own phylum. Specifically, most actinobacterial (10/12) and 145 a few proteobacterial (10/30) DciA proteins only recovered homologs within their respective 146 phylum (Figure 1C, 3C). In addition, the DciA proteins from nitrospirae, gemmatimonadetes, 147 fibrobacteres, chlorobi, chlamydiae, and bacteroidetes identified homologs from actinobacteria 148 and not proteobacteria, suggesting that these DciA proteins are closer evolutionarily to 149 actinobacterial DciA homologs than proteobacterial DciA. In contrast, acidobacteria, 150 cyanobacteria, and thermodesulfobacteria recovered homologs from proteobacteria and not 151 actinobacteria. The evolution of DciA seems to mirror the phylogenetic distance of these species: 152 gemmatimonadetes, chlamydiae, and bacteroidetes are more closely evolutionary related to 153 actinobacteria than proteobacteria based on the 16S rRNA gene (28, 39). Together these data 154 suggest that the DciA homologs in actinobacteria and proteobacteria likely represent the most 155 evolutionarily divergent repertoire of DciA homologs. This analysis also indicates that DciA 156 proteins from distinct phyla carry lineage-specific signatures, likely co-evolving with other phylum-157 specific protein families involved in DNA replication.

#### 159 DciA domain architecture varies in a lineage-specific manner

160 The evolutionary divergence in DciA proteins prompted us to take a closer look at the sequence-161 structure features of these homologs, including sequence alignment and domain architectures. 162 As a first step, we aligned the 66 DciA starting point protein sequences from 20 phyla (Figure 3; 163 **Table 1)** using the MolEvolvR web application (34) and examined their domain architectures 164 (Figure 4; see Methods). Tracing the phylogenetic tree of DciA sequences confirms that the 165 evolution of DciA proteins roughly corresponds to bacterial phylogeny, where DciA homologs tend 166 to cluster with their own phyla (e.g., proteobacteria and actinobacteria) (Figure 4 center). Only 167 DciA homologs that encoded the signature DUF721 domain were included in our alignment, and 168 could be classified into one of four distinct groups based on where the DUF721 domain occurs 169 within the protein (Figures 4, 5, and S2). We describe the group memberships and descriptions 170 of our 66 DciA guery proteins in the following sections (Table 1).

171 In Group 1 DciA proteins, the DUF721 spans at least 70% of the protein sequence, with 172 <25 amino acids on either side of the DUF721 (Figures 4, 5A, S2; Table 1, See Group 1 example:</p> 173 *R. rickettsii* DciA). Group 1 DciA proteins are present in acidobacteria, bacteroidetes, chlamydiae, 174 chlorobi, gemmatimonadetes, elusimicrobia, fibrobacteres. fusobacteria. thermotogae. 175 planctomycetes, spirochaetes, and proteobacteria (Table 1). The DUF721 domain spanning the 176 entire protein in this group suggests that the DUF721 is likely sufficient for DciA function in these 177 bacteria.

Group 2 DciA homologs have ≤25 amino acids C-terminal to the DUF721 and an Nterminal extension of >25 amino acids and no known domains (**Figures 4, 5A, S2**; **Table 1**, See Group 2 example: *M. tuberculosis* DciA). Group 2 DciA homologs are present in actinobacteria and verrucomicrobia (**Figure 5A**; **Table 1**). Group 2 DciA queries in the mycobacteriales order are predicted to have intrinsically disordered regions by MobiDBLite software (also noted in (40)) in the N-terminal extension (**Figure 4, left**). This predicted intrinsically disordered region is not

184 present in bifidobacteriales, another order within actinobacteria, or in other Group 2 proteins. 185 Expression of the *M. tuberculosis* DciA DUF721 alone is not sufficient to support viability in 186 mycobacteria (31), suggesting that the N-terminal extension is essential for DciA function in 187 mycobacteria, although its function remains unknown. The requirement for the sequence N-188 terminal to the DUF721 in mycobacteria and the absence of this N-terminal sequence in Group 1 189 and 3 DciA proteins demonstrates divergent evolution of DciA homologs in bacteria and the 190 potential for functional variation. In addition to the N-terminal extension in all Group 2 DciA 191 homologs, 4 actinobacterial proteins also encode a short predicted region of disorder C-terminal 192 to the DUF721 (19aa in *M. tuberculosis*; Figure 4, left, Table 1).

193 Group 3 DciA homologs have ≤25 amino acids N-terminal to the DUF721 and a C-terminal 194 extension >25 amino acids long (Figures 4, 5A, S2; Table 1, See Group 3 example: V. cholerae 195 DciA). Group 3 DciA homologs are present in acidobacteria, spirochaetes, deferribacteres, 196 cyanobacteria, dictyoglomi, nitrospirae, thermodesulfobacteria, and proteobacteria. The DciA 197 homologs in T. palladium, Nitrospirae moscoviensis, and V. parahemolyticus are the only Group 198 3 proteins that are predicted to be intrinsically disordered in the region C-terminal to the DUF721 199 domain using the MobiDBLite predictor (Figure 4, left; Table 1). However, the C-terminal 200 sequence of V. cholerae DciA was predicted to be intrinsically disordered in prior studies using 201 PONDR and IUPred2A software, which was further confirmed by small-angle X-ray scattering 202 (32). When we analyzed the V. cholerae sequence using the JRONN disorder prediction track, 203 we were able to identify an intrinsically disordered region C-terminal to the DUF721 (Figure 4). 204 Therefore, it is possible that other Group 3 proteins could have intrinsically disordered domains 205 that are not predicted by the tools we are using. The C-terminal intrinsically disordered sequence 206 of V. cholerae DciA is required for its interaction with DnaB as well as for the enhancement of the 207 association between V. cholerae DnaB and ssDNA in vitro (32). The absence of the C-terminal 208 extension in Groups 1 and 2 DciA proteins further supports evolutionary divergence in DciA 209 protein sequence and structure, which likely impacts specialized lineage-specific protein function 210 or mechanism of interaction with the replicative helicase. The one actinobacterial DciA protein 211 from our query set that falls into Group 3 is encoded by S. seoulensis. This protein encodes a 212 YspA domain (Pfam: YAcAr/PF10686) C-terminal to the DUF721 (Figure 4, 5A, S2; Table 1). 213 YspA domains within proteins typically have fusions to domains that process nucleotide-derived 214 ligands such as ADP-ribose and may function as sensors of these ligands and nucleic acids (41). 215 In Group 4 DciA proteins, the DUF721 domain falls > 25 amino acids away from both 216 termini (Figure 4, 5A, S2; Table 1, See Group 4 example: C. mirabilis DciA). In our query set, 217 Group 4 consists of DciA proteins in proteobacteria, actinobacteria, and synergistetes. The Group 218 4 DciA homologs in F. fastidiosum, S. coelicor, and S. avermitilis have regions of disorder both 219 N-terminal and C-terminal to the DUF721 (Figure 4, left).

220 Analysis of how the DciA groups are distributed in different bacterial phyla for our starting 221 set of DciA homologs (Figure 4) reveals that 75% of homologs we gueried from actinobacteria 222 fall into Group 2, and 66% of proteobacterial DciA proteins from our starting set fall into Group 3. 223 (Figure 5A; Table 1). These two phyla had the most representatives in our set of query proteins, 224 and they form distinct clusters on the phylogenetic tree (Figure 4, right). Further examining the 225 characteristics of each group revealed that 75% of DciA proteins from gram-positive bacteria 226 included in the guery fall into Group 2, and 54% of DciA starting points from gram-negative 227 bacteria fall into Group 3 (Figure 5B). By contrast, no Group 1 DciA proteins are from gram-228 positive bacterial queries, and Group 1 makes up 37% of gram-negative bacterial queries (Figure 229 **5B).** In addition to classifying each DciA protein from our guery set into one of four groups based 230 on the position of the DUF721, we found that the alphaproteobacteria DciA proteins in the 231 Rickettsiales and Hyphomicrobiales orders harbored an insertion within the DUF721 that is not 232 present in any other phyla (Figure 4, right; Figure S2). This could indicate further functional divergence of the DciA homologs in these orders. 233

Overall, these analyses reveal the diversity of domain architectures amongst our selected 66 DciA homologs. A more comprehensive analysis of all DciA homologs would be required to fully understand the distribution of diverse domain architectures in different phyla. Nonetheless, these data demonstrate that DciA homologs have diverged significantly in sequence structure based on the position and sequence of the DUF721, which may impact their function and interaction with the DNA replication machinery.

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#### The DciA domain proximity network

242 To further investigate the possible functions of each of the ~13K putative DciA homologs that we 243 have identified using our diverse query set, we interrogated their domain architectures (see 244 Methods). A striking majority of these homologs showed no variation, carrying a single DciA 245 domain (the Pfam DUF721 domain) (Figure 6). Less than 1% of the proteins exhibited novel 246 fusions with the DciA domain. For example, the DciA protein from S. seoulensis identified other 247 YAcAr/PF10686 Pfam members in Streptomyces, as noted above in Figure 4. These 248 actinobacterial homologs carry the YspA/YAcAr-like domain known to be associated with NAD 249 utilization and ADP-ribosylation domains (41) (Figure 6). We find only a few streptomyces DciA 250 homologs that share this domain architecture (Figure 4, S3), suggesting that DciA in this genus 251 might have evolved this unique function. In addition, some proteobacteria also showed variation 252 in domains associated with the DUF721 domain: i) Reyranella species carry a C-terminal 253 thioredoxin domain, with possible redox function, and ii) the pseudomonas genus has a rare 254 instance of a DciA dyad (two DciA domains) (Figure 6). We also note that there are ABC 255 transporter-like proteins within proteobacteria with ~30% similarity to the query DciA protein in 256 acidobacteria, but none of the other 65 query proteins (Figure 6). Finally, we found that one query 257 DciA from deferribacteres identifies peptidase-like proteins in proteobacteria, again with no 258 similarity to any of the other divergent DciA proteins. The novel fusions and alternate domain

architectures identified within the bacterial DciA homologs have been summarized in the form of a network of domain architectures reconciling all DciA homologs, with domains as nodes and cooccurrence within proteins as edges, and their co-occurrences have been further quantified (**Figure 6**). The association of the DUF721 and DciA proteins with other functional domains could shed light on the activities for DciA in these bacteria.

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### 266 **DISCUSSION**

267 The recent discovery of DciA as a predicted helicase operator in bacteria (28, 31) has begun to 268 shed light on a long-standing open question of how the majority of bacteria facilitate helicase 269 activity during DNA replication in the absence of the ATPase helicase loaders expressed by E. 270 coli and B. subtilis. The wide distribution of DciA in diverse bacterial phyla indicates that these 271 proteins likely represent the predominant paradigm for helicase operation in bacteria, despite not 272 being conserved in *E. coli* and *B. subtilis*, the organisms typically used as a model for bacterial 273 replication. DciA proteins are defined by the presence of the DUF721 domain and prior 274 phylogenetic analysis indicates that *dnaC* and *dnal* homologs were acquired through evolution at 275 the expense of *dciA* (named for *dna[CI]* antecedent) (28), suggesting that DciA and DnaC/DnaI 276 perform a common function. In addition, it has been shown that DciA interacts with the replicative 277 helicase and is required for DNA replication and viability in the limited organisms it has been 278 studied in (28, 31, 33). However, the mechanism by which DciA mediates replication initiation is 279 still unknown. Our study has revealed immense diversity in DciA proteins, where there is low 280 sequence similarity between homologs in different phyla (Figures 1-3), there are at least 4 281 distinct classes based on the positioning of the DUF721 domain in the protein (Figures 4-5), 282 there exist lineage-specific insertion sequences in the DUF721 domain of some proteobacterial 283 species (Figures 4, S2), and some DciA proteins have evolved as fusions to other functional domains (Figure 6). These data suggest that DciA proteins have been divergently evolving and
 the mechanism of helicase operation conferred by DciA may have distinct features dependent on
 the bacteria.

Biochemical and genetic studies have only been performed with M. tuberculosis, P. 287 aeruginosa, and V. cholerae DciA proteins (28, 31-33). Our analyses demonstrate that the DciA 288 289 homologs from these species have a number of distinct features, in addition to low sequence 290 similarity, raising the question of how conserved their mechanisms of action will be. In particular, mycobacterial DciA is a Group 2 DciA protein with sequences predicted to be intrinsically 291 292 disordered both N-terminal and C-terminal to the DUF721 (Figures 4 and 5). In contrast, V. 293 cholerae and P. aeruginosa DciA proteins are classed as Group 3, with a long sequence extension 294 C-terminal of the DUF721 (Figure S2).

295 The one feature conserved in all DciA homologs is the presence of the DUF721, which 296 contains the DANL domain and is predicted to structurally resemble the N-terminus of DnaA (31). 297 The N-terminus of DnaA is critical for the interaction of DnaA with the helicase and other 298 regulators (42, 43), however, the role of the DciA DANL domain in the interaction with DnaB has 299 vet to be established. A tryptophan residue conserved in the DANL domains of many DciA 300 homologs has structural similarity to a phenylalanine residue in the DnaA N-terminus that has 301 been predicted to have a key role in making contacts between DnaA and its interacting partners, 302 including DnaB (31, 44). Mutation of the conserved tryptophan in the DANL domain of M. 303 tuberculosis DciA results in slow growth and decreased DNA replication (31). This supports that 304 the conserved tryptophan within the DANL domain plays a key role for DciA function in vivo. 305 however that precise role has yet to be elucidated. It is also important to note that not all DciA 306 homologs encode this tryptophan residue within their DANL domain (32) (Figure S2). In fact, 307 there is considerable diversity in the DUF721 sequences between DciA homologs from different 308 phyla, including an insertion in the DUF721 of some alphaproteobacteria DciA proteins, which is

not observed in the DciA proteins analyzed here from other classes (Figure 4, Figure S2).
 Therefore, even the defining DUF721 feature of DciA proteins has evolved, likely reflecting either
 lineage-specific adaptation in mechanism of action or mode of interaction with the replicative
 helicase.

313 There are multiple DciA homologs predicted to encode intrinsically disordered regions N-314 terminal and/or C-terminal to the DUF721 (Figure 4). The intrinsically disordered sequence C-315 terminal to the DUF721 in the V. cholerae Group 3 DciA protein enhances the association 316 between DnaB and ssDNA and truncation of this intrinsically disordered sequence results in loss 317 of the interaction between V. cholerae DciA and the DnaB helicase (32). Although it is unknown 318 how much of this mechanism will be conserved in other bacterial species encoding DciA proteins 319 with divergent domain architectures and many DciA proteins do not encode predicted intrinsically 320 disordered regions, there is precedent for roles of intrinsically disordered domains in other 321 bacterial DNA replication proteins. For example, the intrinsically disordered linker (IDL) within the 322 C-terminus of SSB is important for its cooperative ssDNA binding, as well as the displacement of 323 SSB from ssDNA (45, 46) (reviewed in (47)). The IDL has also been proposed to be important for 324 SSB protein-protein interactions, such as the interaction between SSB and the DNA repair protein 325 RecG (48). The intrinsically disordered C-terminus of the replication restart helicase Rep is also 326 important for the interaction between Rep and its regulator PriC, as well as between Rep and the 327 replicative helicase DnaB (49, 50). In addition, the helicase loaders DnaC and DnaI as well as the 328 replication initiation protein DnaA have been predicted to encode intrinsically disordered domains, 329 currently of unknown function (32).

A lot of unknowns still remain regarding DciA proteins and bacterial DNA replication. The computational evolutionary analysis described herein highlights the complexities and diversity that have evolved in the fundamental process of DNA replication, where no single species of bacteria will be able to represent a central dogma that holds true throughout the Kingdom. These

- 334 studies provide a framework for researchers to consider the evolutionary variation while dissecting
- the mechanistic basis for helicase operation in bacteria.
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#### 337 METHODS

#### 338 Query selection

We selected our small and full set of DciA query proteins based on the DUF721 location defined by on Pfam annotation, using a variety of DciA containing phyla with annotated DciA sequences. The DciA domain was annotated using Pfam annotation and subsequently confirmed using a multiple sequence alignment (**Figure S2**). The full list of starting points is listed in **Table 1**. The only DciA-containing phyla excluded from our set of 66 query proteins were Deinococcus-Thermus, Chrysiogenetes, and Firmicutes. Firmicutes and Deinococcus-Thermus were subsequently recovered in our MolEvolvR searches.

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#### 347 Analysis using MolEvolvR

348 We used MolEvolvR (34) to determine and characterize all DciA guery proteins and their 349 homologs across the bacterial kingdom. We first identified all the homologs for each of the guery 350 proteins in RefSeg (51) genomes, and reconciled the comprehensive set of DciA homologous 351 proteins. Next, we characterized each of the query proteins and their homologs in terms of domain 352 architectures (including Pfam (52), Gene3D (53)), localization (using Phobius (54), TMHMM (55)), 353 and disorder (using MobiDB (56)). The domain architectures of these homologs were analyzed 354 by lineage, guantified with Upset plots, and reconciled using domain proximity networks. We then 355 performed phylogenetic analysis including phyletic spreads (sunburst, heatmap), multiple 356 sequence alignment, and tree construction using MolEvolvR and custom R scripts. The MSA for 357 subset of the sequences with representatives from the 4 DciA groups shown in Figure SY was 358 generated using Kalign (57) and Jalview (58). All our data, analyses, and visualizations

359	summarizing	the	DciA	homologs	across	the	bacterial	kingdom	along	with	their	domain
360	architectures	and	phyleti	c spreads a	ire availa	able a	at https://g	github.com	n/JRavil	Lab/d	cia_ev	olution.
361												

#### 362 **Pairwise Similarity Analysis**

The similarity matrix was designed using the MatGat application (59). We compared each DciA query protein of the 21 starting points (**Figure 1**) to each other in order to calculate pairwise percent similarities. DnaB from *M. tuberculosis* and *P. aeruginosa* sequence similarity were compared using the EMBOSS Needle pairwise similarity tool (57).

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# 368 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

369 Figure 1. Query of DciA homologs using 20 DciA protein starting points reveals diversity 370 across bacterial phyla. A. Lineages of guery DciA proteins. Sunburst plot showing the 371 lineages of the 21 guery DciA proteins. In each plot, the inner ring corresponds to the kingdom 372 (bacteria, in this case), and the outer ring represents the distribution of phyla. B. Lineages of 373 **DciA homologs.** Sunburst plot showing the phyletic spread of all the DciA homologs generated 374 using the 21 starting points. C. Phyletic spread of the DciA homologs by guery. The heatmap 375 shows the presence/absence of homologs of DciA across bacterial lineages (columns) for each 376 guery DciA (rows). The color gradient indicates the highest number of homologs in a particular 377 lineage. \*Note: The sunburst plots only display lineages of >0.1% fraction of total proteins. The 378 heatmap gives the full picture.

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Figure 2. Pairwise similarity analysis of DciA proteins. Pairwise percentage similarities for 21
 query DciA proteins across 11 phyla were computed using MatGat (59) and the standard
 BLOSUM62 matrix for similarity metric calculation.

#### Figure 3. Retrieving DciA homologs using the extended query set of 66 DciA proteins. A,

**B. Lineages of query and homologous DciA proteins.** *See Figure 1* for details. The three phyla excluded in the query searches were Deinococcus-Thermus, Chrysiogenetes, and Firmicutes. **C. Phyletic spread of the DciA homologs by query.** *See Figure 1* for details. Deinococcus-Thermus and Firmicutes were both recovered in the resulting set of homologs. Our queries did not recover the DciA homologs in chrysiogenetes, suggesting that the homologs in this phylum are the most divergent in sequence from the query sequences.

391

#### **Figure 4. Characterizing the full list (66) of DciA query proteins.**

393 The domain architectures and disorder predictions (left panel) of the 66 DciA query 394 proteins are overlaid with the multiple sequence alignment (right), and phylogenetic tree 395 (middle). Each DciA protein is marked with the kingdom (B, bacteria), phylum (first 6 letters), 396 Genus, and species (represented as 'Gspecies'). The Pfam and MobiDB annotations for each 397 domain prediction are shown in the legend (top). The colors in the multiple sequence alignment 398 depiction correspond to different amino acids (bottom legend). The data was generated and 399 visualized using the MolEvolvR web application. In addition, JronnWS (60) disorder predictions 400 were performed within Jalview (58) (not shown here), where other DciA proteins such as V. 401 cholerae show disorder regions.

402

# 403 Figure 5. DciA groups and their distribution within our query sequences.

A. Example domain architectures of each of the 4 groups of DciA homologs. Group 1 DciA
homologs have ≤25 aa on either side of the DUF721 (top, blue), Group 2 homologs have ≤25aa
C-terminal to the DUF721 (second, pink), Group 3 DciA homologs have ≤25aa amino acids Nterminal to the DUF721 (third, orange), and Group 4 DciA homologs have >25aa both N- and Cterminal to the DUF721 (bottom, teal). Graphics created using BioRender.com. B. Distribution

of groups within Gram-positive and Gram-negative DciA query proteins. Pie charts comparing the number of gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria that have DciA homologs in one of the 4 groups. Gram-positive (left), gram-negative (right). Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. Details of group and Gram stain assignments of each DciA homolog are found in **Table 1**.

414

415 Figure 6. DciA partners. A. Domain proximity network. The network visualizes co-occurring 416 domains within all bacterial DciA homologs generated with our 66 starting points (Figure 1; Table 417 1). The nodes and edges correspond to domains and co-occurrence of domains within a protein; 418 the size corresponds to the frequency of occurrence with a minimum scaling factor. The full data 419 can be accessed at https://github.com/JRaviLab/dcia evolution. B. Frequencies of co-420 occurring domains in DciA homologs. Upset plot of the DciA homologs are shown. Blue 421 histogram: Distribution of the predominant domains. Dots and connections: Combinations in 422 which these domains come together in DciA domain architectures. Red histogram: Frequency of 423 occurrences of domain architectures. Of these only the DciA containing domain architectures 424 were used for alignments and phylogenetic trees.

425

426

### 427 SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES

428 Figure S1. Mycobacterium tuberculosis and Pseudomonas aeruginosa DciA proteins only

429 identify DciA homologs in their respective phylum. Heatmap description as in Figure 1.

430

Figure S2. Multiple sequence alignment of select DciA proteins. Alignment of the 66 DciA
proteins used in the full query set. Numbering of residues across the top of the alignment is based
on the annotation *M. tuberculosis* DciA. Based on the numbering of *M. tuberculosis* residues, The

DUF721 domain falls between 75–162 amino acids (red box), the conserved tryptophan residue in the DANL domain is at position 133 (red star), and the insertion present in some alphaproteobacterial DciA proteins occurs after position 118 on the alignment. The multiple sequence alignment was generated with Kalign (57, 61) and visualized using Jalview (58); (color scheme: Clustalx).

439

# 440 Figure S3. Full list representative homolog characterization (with DciA)

The domain architectures, multiple sequence alignment, and phylogenetic tree were generated
using representative DciA homologs (one per domain architecture per lineage). See Figure 4 for
details.

#### 444 **TABLES**

# Table 1. DciA query proteins used to identify homologs across the bacterial kingdoms.

446 Protein, domain architecture, group, and lineage-related metadata for each of the 66 diverse 447 starting points of DciA proteins across the bacterial kingdom are shown in this table. The full 448 homolog analyses, figures found here: data, and can be 449 https://github.com/jravilab/dcia\_evolution.

- 450
- 451

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456

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- 462

# 463 DATA AVAILABILITY AND REUSE

464 All the data, analyses, and visualizations are available in our GitHub repository, 465 <u>https://github.com/JRaviLab/dcia\_evolution</u>. Text, figures, and data are licensed under Creative

- 466 Commons Attribution CC BY 4.0.
- 467

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# Phyletic spread of homologs (lineages)



Starting points

Phylum	Species	B. elo	M. tub	P. den	C. tra	G. vio	G. thio	E. min	F. int	G. aur	B. abo	P. aer	N. gon	P. mir	H. inf	R. ric	N. sal	M. aus	V. cho	C. mir	M. xan	T. pal
Acidobacteria	Bryocella elongata																					
Actinobacteria	Mycobacterium tuberculosis	23.0																				
Bacteroidetes	Prevotella denticola	42.3	26.2																			
Chlamydiae	Chlamydia trachomatis	31.9	28.9	41.4																		
Cyanobacteria	Gloeobacter violaceus	26.7	33.2	26.1	28.9																	
Deferribacteres	Geovibrio thiophilus	32.9	28.9	27.4	30.8	34.4																
Elusimicrobia	Elusimicrobium minutum	38.5	21.4	38.8	39.7	26.1	29.5															
Fibrobacteres	Fibrobacter intestinalis	36.3	27.3	41.6	42.2	26.7	30.8	35.4														
Gemmatimonadetes	Gemmatimonas aurantiaca	39.4	28.3	43.7	41.4	28.3	33.6	38.8	34.5													
Proteobacteria	Brucella abortus	25.1	31.0	26.3	29.1	33.3	32.6	20.6	25.7	33.1												
Proteobacteria	Pseudomonas aeruginosa	29.8	28.3	31.3	31.3	30.0	34.2	30.5	31.3	29.8	36.0											
Proteobacteria	Neisseria gonorrhoeae	30.7	29.9	29.3	29.3	32.8	37.0	25.7	28.6	29.3	34.9	39.3										
Proteobacteria	Proteus mirabilis	26.2	29.9	26.7	32.0	38.3	39.0	29.1	32.0	24.4	40.0	44.2	38.4									
Proteobacteria	Haemophilus influenzae	35.6	23.0	40.4	38.8	23.3	29.5	42.3	39.8	36.5	21.1	28.2	26.4	26.7								
Proteobacteria	Rickettsia rickettsii	30.8	25.7	43.9	39.7	26.1	31.5	38.3	39.8	36.4	26.9	30.5	30.0	26.7	32.7							
Proteobacteria	Nitratifractor salsuginis	24.8	26.7	24.8	22.9	30.6	32.7	28.8	29.4	26.1	29.7	27.5	30.7	32.6	27.5	33.3						
Proteobacteria	Mesorhizobium australicum	25.9	32.1	24.7	27.1	37.2	34.3	23.5	27.1	27.7	62.3	37.3	35.5	37.2	29.5	27.1	28.9					
Proteobacteria	Vibrio cholerae	27.4	27.8	26.1	32.5	32.2	29.9	26.1	30.6	36.3	33.1	42.0	38.9	52.3	30.6	32.5	35.7	34.9				
Proteobacteria	Caulobacter mirabilis	28.0	34.8	26.9	27.5	40.7	34.1	22.0	25.3	28.0	47.8	28.6	35.2	34.1	23.1	27.5	33.0	46.2	35.7			
Proteobacteria	Myxococcus xanthus	38.5	28.3	42.6	32.8	26.7	31.5	34.7	40.7	41.7	26.9	31.3	29.3	26.2	27.9	40.2	25.5	30.1	22.9	26.9		
Spirochaetes	Treponema pallidum	31.0	31.0	28.3	29.7	31.1	39.0	28.3	26.2	32.4	29.7	36.6	31.7	38.4	34.5	29.7	35.3	34.3	37.6	31.9	26.9	

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Acidobacteria (2)	
Actinobacteria (12)	
Bacteroidetes (2)	
Chlamydiae (2)	
Chlorobi (1)	
Cyanobactéria (1)	
Deferribacteres (2)	
Dictyoglomi (1)	
Elusimicrobia (1)	
Fibrobacteres (1)	
Fusobacteria (1)	
Gemmatimonadetes (1)	
Nitrospirae (1)	
Planctomycetes (1)	
Proteobacteria (30)	
Spirochaetes (3)	
Synergistetes (1)	
Thermodesulfobacteria (1)	
Thermotogae (1)	
Verrucomicrobiae (1)	

Gram Positive Bacteria (12) G



# Gram Negative Bacteria (54)



Figure 5

Β



# B Domain co-occurrence frequency



**Prominent domains** 

40000

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Riction Generalities AP-0109877873	WP.000METWE1	Scoptorype agenditis	1883 Renetativitation	0.4	danske nejor tikanke sejortskanske sejor.	343 48-215	Grapi	
Ryanti-Schlasse, NP. 01114208.1	WP.01141878.1	Grande for visience	33070 Reneted protectoria	0.4	846 C	182 5-65	Group 3	
Prov. Restations. W. MIMPLE	WP.011087541	Relativity haterianna	403 ReneleProtoitetale	0.44	54	111 14-102	Gmap 3	
Print Bergin AP (111008)	WP.01110048.1	Ramonalia hemalas	14305 ReterioProtestanteia	0.0A	NA .	346 12-130	Gmp3	
Reading Managements and All Phaness 1	WE ALL TREAM 1	March Installer second	1775 Reported statistics	2.4	denotes anti-addression resists	104 47-308	(mm)	
Realizer Millioners (MR AVV704478.)	NR OCCUPANTA 1	Number of States	1878 Reputed statistics	-	denote anticente estes	147. 35-343	(max)	-
			terro de constructiona da la			and the and		
Elberren. Tpatrophia. 309.012362768.1	WP.011M2094.1	Tharmsteps patrophile	1000 BetscheThemotope	0.44	NA .	311 3-60	Group 1	-
Poten-Jacobepres 3P-01201134L1	WP.002075745.1	Arimhailla sa impres	CB54 RetorieProtoitettele	0.44	64	130 12-47	(imp)	
Press, Andered, WP.002051388.1	wP.002051389.1	Robertia columni	283 Batteria/Protestantaria	0.4	84	227 4-98	timp1	
Bluin Inisten W. 0000141871	WP.012414187.1	Easternise minare	42505 Rendelliamenta	0-4	54 St.	64. 0-47	timp1	
ROSen-Chalanian WP-322899963	WP.02249094.1	Oleviherpeter Helevieri	200756 RemeterChieveloi	0.44	54	47 9-96	Gmap 1	
Elsine, Braniferen AP, 612030311	WP.002636363.3	formia coniteat	2020 Renaturfation hadas	0.4	NA.	00 8-00	Grant 1	
Rose December 18 (19/1811)	WE ADDRESS 1	Concernance of the second data	M. ReputerNetworker	2.4		101 8-01	(ma)	
Early Andrea Ar Andreas	WP.002442001	California and task	LINE RESIDENT	una.	-	213 12-99	tumup s	-
Ricker, Developing, WP, 2120200841	WP.0530085841	Cuntroulerie analytika	118000 ReturneOutenhartenn	0.4	ka.	10 644	Group 3	
Print Natagin, W. LOUINI, 1	WP.02353388.1	Nitratifiae for subseptish	2000 RetrieProteitatele	0.4	NA .	203 4-70	Grap 3	
Print Products (P. 01808111)	wP.053816975.1	Heltylomous methanica	455 Banaria/Protostantaria	0.4	84	258 14-96	Group 3	
Press, Spring Web5000000	WP.053834743.1	Triamicrospica cyclica	147068 ReneleProteitantaria	0.4	846 C	143 6-89	Group 3	
Elleren, Solice, W. E. HURSTILL	WP.0138087911	Themple all dates in from	224H. RescieTherminal/Autoria	0.44	hā.	208 3-60	Group 3	
Print Handslow, NP. 55531983	WP.005324748.1	Hearhinitian antalism	6007 ReneleProteitatala	0.44	54	344 12-130	Gmap 3	
Eleven Partition, M. (1999) 1	WP.00555600.0	Postikarterium leotofesum	612822 Renetedoruminates	0.4	daardig assist * Burder tasian	IN 29-113	Grant	
Renter Manham MR 403-80300 1	NE CONSTRUCTS	Main shelper	All Associations	2.4		117 8-84	(max)	
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RANNE GAUTORS AP. CONCERN 1	WP.DIANDIANA 1	Corpolatorium.atgirum	16630 Returnshrömhararia	0.4	durrie upo	206 90-161	Gmp2	
Poter Aparatoriale, WI-DICHCS33	WP.000760753.1	Baritolderia paratomalai	2680 RetorieProtestataria	0.4	NA .	208 22-226	Grap 3	-
RAGAD Prohylolphetopres NP.001702011	WP.042874252.2	Pyrissmenas methylalphatopenas	454246 Renorankolshanaria	0.44	NA .	258.3-60	Gmap 3	
Print, Arichipanis, W. (40%) (11)	WP.040781360.1	Kalsiala mihipmenis	113682 ReneleProteitatele	0.4	54 S	171 8-98	Group 3	
Print Statutes W. (1958) (1	WP.049588004.1	Sentiamenents	425. ReterieProteitatele	0-A	845 C	171 8-00	Gmap 3	-
Print Parison AP (1993) 11	WP.04M820843	Platechables Services and	2088 RetrieProteitatele	0.0A	NA .	112 18-220	Gmp3	
Print, Neck, M. (63111011)	WP.063613685.1	Merupakania	2022 Benelefronetensis	0.0	10	112 53-208	Grant	
Rhotes Columnium IR (1999)(11)	NR COMPOSITION	Complexity of the sectors	1724 Reputed statistics	-		178.46-303	(mage)	-
			to a second distances					
Riction, Phalaevalinia, WP-077080304.1	WP.070585554.1	Hysikastarian taharsainak	1775 Renefacilitishartaria	0-sk	durrie regiorrikanie regiorrikanie regio.	10 76-10	Gmap 2	
Films Palant, W-20814201	WP.008814175.1	Productia dal soli	4842 Banariaritamanantienkia	0.4	10	141 (2-138		-
BPostan Presbucida, NP. 083001000.1	wP.083005379.1	Partocolia mátecida	10 BatelaProteitataia	0.04	54 C	201 8-03	Group 1	
Witness Freezensis, NP. 003140100.1	wP.063545333.1	Filmhater Intestinals	26120 Reterior/Instanton	0.4	54 C	113 20-112	timp1	
Plane.Apirlama.WP.00063009.1	wit.orgonitege.1	Pantonicolian pithena	10038 BeteriePlantomystes	0.4	NA.	134 14-362	Group 1	- (hat arrigan)
Press, Cristella, NP. 000200863	WP.000420084.1	California mitalila	19115 ReneleProteitatela	0.04	NA	142 10-122	Group &	
Reide Reimer all Mathematic	MR STREETWIRE I	Records shows to	MMN Reputations	2-2	10 M	104 1-89	dama 1	
	Australità		Netherlandstation		-		amp a	
RANNA ROBUST NP. 1104441213	wA.110688305.1	anamaterian indican	erro Barterieletimhararia	wok.		am 50-140	Gmap 2	
Harter Phenicia AP. 118000001	wP.11886896.1	Prantalaciationia	26120 ReterioReteriótes	0.9A	88	96.8-95	Group 1	
Blacks. Debtersl. WP. 120613779.1	WP.129413776.1	Dumanialia dutinsi	20805 Resciellaterides	0.4	88	96.8-95	Group 1	
Richer, Grouphin, MP, 126853127.1	wP.126483527.1	Gamileia Mophico	139438 ReterieDeletheteren		54 C	146 2-84		
B <sup>2</sup> man, Maardan, WP, 1408033003	WP.140843300.1	Hyperson setting	16 RetricProteitatela	0-A	845 C	201 8-04	fimp1	-
Press, Salata, MP, (81) (981) 1	WP.181004841.1	Subinauranan aktina	60205 RetrieProtestation	0.4	daardig assist * Burder tasian	101 27-128	(mat)	
Eline Americania W-1870W021	WP.1470H112.1	Nitrative Texasients	(221) Batterieffitzening	0.0	factor axia	28.12-96	(mat)	
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