

**C&E Version  
ExpressArt mRNA amplification  
Pico kit**

**Catalogue No. 7399-A15**

**(45 amplification reactions, 3 rounds for 15 samples)**

The **C&E version (more convenience and higher efficiency)** of the ExpressArt<sup>®</sup> mRNA amplification Pico kit is suitable for extremely low amounts of less than 1 ng of input total RNA. According to the amount of input total RNA and the required yields of aRNA, it can be used for 2-rounds (input  $\geq 1$  ng total RNA) or 3-rounds (input  $< 1$  ng total RNA), with aRNA yields in the range of  $> 10 \mu\text{g}$ .

**This protocol provides the required laboratory procedures**

**For additional information about ExpressArt  
Standard mRNA Amplification Kits**

**see**

**<http://www.amp-tec.com/products>**

**» more information**

## Content Kit box I (C+E Pico kit)

Tube 1: Primer A	24 µl
Tube 2: dNTP-Mix	160.0 µl
Tube 3: DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	1500 µl
Tube 4: 5x RT Buffer	350.0 µl
Tube 5: RNase Inhibitor	36.0 µl
Tube 6: RT Enzyme	36.0 µl
Tube 7: RNase	30.0 µl
Tube 8: Primer B	38.0 µl
Tube 9: 5x Extender Buffer	380.0 µl
Tube 10: Polymerase buffer	360.0 µl
Tube 11: Primer Erase	15.0 µl
Tube 12: Primer C	370.0 µl
Tube 13: Extender Enzyme B	30.0 µl
Tube 14: Carrier DNA	90.0 µl
Tube 15: Primer D	75 µl
Tube 16: Reaction Additive	75 µl
Tube 17: Positive Control RNA	15.0 µl
Tube 18: NTP-Mix	297.0 µl
Tube 19: 10x Transcription Buffer	77.0 µl
Tube 20: RNA Polymerase	77.0 µl
Tube 21: DNase I	30.0 µl
Tube 22: Polymerase A	48.0 µl
Tube 23: Polymerase B	12.0 µl
Tube 24: Polymerase C	12.0 µl

## Content Kit box II

cDNA Purification Spin Columns	45 pcs
Collection Tubes	45 pcs
Binding Buffer	11 ml
Washing Buffer (salt concentrate)	4 ml
Elution Buffer	10 ml

## Content Kit box III *new*

RNA Purification Spin Columns	45 pcs
Collection Tubes	45 pcs
RNA LB Buffer	20 ml
RNA DeS Buffer	5 ml
RNA Washing Buffer WB1 (salt concentrate)	18 ml
RNA Washing Buffer WB2 (salt concentrate)	6 ml
RNase-free water	5 ml

## Storage

Immediately upon arrival:

Store Kit box I at -20°C. Avoid repeated freeze thawing.

Kit box II and box III are stored at room temperature.

Reagents are stable for a minimum of 6 months.

## Additionally required materials

- Thermocycler. All reactions, apart from the overnight *in vitro* transcription (see below) can be performed in a standard thermocycler (with the lid temperature adjusted to 110°C).
- **Optional:** Hybridisation oven. We strongly recommend using an air incubator for performing overnight *in vitro* transcription reactions at 37°C. Alternatively, a thermocycler with adjustable heating lid can be used (lid temperature adjusted to 45°C).
- RNase-free pipette-tips (filter-tips recommended)
- RNase-free PCR and reaction tubes (0.2 / 0.5 / 1.5 ml)
- 100% Ethanol
- Microcentrifuge

## Positive control

The ExpressArt® *TRinucleotide* mRNA amplification Kit contains total RNA as positive control (100 ng/μl) (**Tube 17**).

## Chemical hazards

The Binding Buffer (**box II**) contains guanidine thiocyanate, which is harmful in contact with skin, when inhaled or swallowed. Guanidine thiocyanate also liberates toxic gas, when mixed with strong acids. Always store and use the Binding Buffer away from food. Always wear gloves, and follow standard safety precautions during handling and make sure to comply with the safety rules of your laboratory.

## Quality control

All components of the kit are tested in an amplification using the Positive Control RNA (**Tube 17**, provided with the kit). All reagents are tested for the absence of nuclease activity.

# DETAILED PROTOCOL

## A: First Amplification Round

### Notes:

- RNA should be purified with a spin column kit (e.g. RNeasy from Qiagen, or equivalent) to remove small RNAs (tRNAs and 5S rRNAs) that interfere by acting as primers and possibly as templates.
- RNA must be free of any genomic DNA. A DNase treatment should be combined with a spin column purification to remove all fragments of digested DNA.
- Program a thermocycler with the temperatures and times, given in this protocol. See "Thermocycler profiles".
- Range of input total RNA for the **Pico kit** with 3 amplification rounds: appr. 0.1 to 1 ng.
- Also available: **Micro kit** (Cat.-No. 7199-A30) with 1 amplification round for higher amounts in the range of 300 ng to 3 µg.
- Also available: **Nano kit** (Cat.-No. 7299-A15) with 2 amplification rounds for amounts in the range of 1 ng to 700 ng.
- If running more than one reaction at a time, prepare **Master Mixes**.
- **Positive Control.** To check the amplification performance, a reaction tube containing Positive Control RNA (provided at 100 ng/µl, **Tube 17**) should be processed in parallel.

## **A1. First strand cDNA synthesis**

***Use the first thermocycler program for step A1.***

Prepare First Strand cDNA Synthesis **Mix 1**. Use an appropriate Master mix volume for processing multiple samples.

<b>First Strand cDNA Synthesis Mix 1</b>		
H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	2.4 µl
dNTP-Mix	Tube 2	0.8 µl
Primer A	Tube 1	0.8 µl

Add 4 µl **Mix 1** to 4 µl of each RNA (and to the optional negative control).

Incubate 4 minutes at 65°C in a thermocycler **(with heating lid! use standard setting, e.g. 110°C)**

Cool samples to 37°C.

In the meantime, prepare the First Strand cDNA Synthesis **Mix 2** at room temperature.

<b>First Strand cDNA Synthesis Mix 2</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	3.2 µl
5x RT Buffer	Tube 4	3.2 µl
RNase Inhibitor	Tube 5	0.8 µl
RT Enzyme	Tube 6	0.8 µl

Add the First Strand cDNA Synthesis **Mix 2** (8 µl) to each sample and mix well.

Incubate the samples in a thermocycler:

37°C / 45 min

45°C / 15 min

50°C / 5 min

70°C / 10 min

4°C / HOLD

Remove samples from the thermocycler, centrifuge the tubes briefly and put the tubes on ice. **Proceed immediately to step A2.**

## **A2. Template DNA synthesis**

**Use the second thermocycler program for step A2.**

**On ice** prepare the second strand DNA synthesis mix (**Mix 3**) in the given order in a 1.5 ml reaction tube.

<b>Second Strand DNA Synthesis <u>Mix 3</u></b>		
H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	73.0 µl
Polymerase-Buffer	Tube 10	24.0 µl
dNTP-Mix	Tube 2	2.4 µl
Polymerase A	Tube 22	3.2 µl
Polymerase B	Tube 23	0.8 µl
Polymerase C	Tube 24	0.8 µl

**On ice**, add 104 µl of **Mix 3** to the first strand reaction. Mix gently by pipetting.

**Continue incubations: 16°C / 2 h**

**(NOTE:** with heating lid switched off! If your thermocycler does not have this option, do not close the heating lid).

**Remove samples from thermocycler, put on ice.**

Spin to collect liquid and immediately continue with purification of the Template DNA (step A3).

## **A3. Purification of Template DNA**

**Before starting**, add 16 ml of 100% ethanol to the 4 ml **Washing Buffer concentrate (Kit box II)** and mix well.

<b>Purification <u>Mix 4</u></b>		
Binding Buffer	(box II)	244 µl
Carrier DNA	Tube 14	2 µl

- Add 246 µl of **Mix 4** to each **Template DNA Reaction** (120 µl from step A2). Mix gently by pipetting.
- Insert DNA Purification Spin Columns in Collection Tubes.
- Pipette the **entire sample** onto each column and centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm in a table top centrifuge. (**Note:** guanidine thiocyanate in the **Binding Buffer** is an irritant. Always wear gloves and follow standard safety precautions to minimise contact when handling).
- Discard the flow-through and re-insert the columns in the same Collection Tubes. Add 200 µl **Washing Buffer** (with

- Ethanol added) to the columns and centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm.
- Discard the flow-through, re-insert the columns in the same Collection Tubes and wash again with 200  $\mu$ l **Washing Buffer**. Centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm. Discard the flow-through and the Collection Tubes.
  - Insert the columns in fresh 1.5 ml reaction tubes and add 10  $\mu$ l of **Elution Buffer** to the columns (make sure to pipette the Elution Buffer exactly in the middle of the column, directly on top of the matrix, without disturbing the matrix with the pipette tip). Incubate the column for at least 2 min, then centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm.
  - The purified template DNA (approximately 8  $\mu$ l) is now ready for in vitro transcription (step A4).
  - Alternatively, store the samples at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  for later use.

#### **A4. Amplification via *in vitro* Transcription**

<b>In vitro-Transcription <u>Mix 5</u></b>		
NTP-Mix	Tube 18	6.6 $\mu$ l
10x Buffer	Tube 19	1.7 $\mu$ l
RNA-Polymerase	Tube 20	1.7 $\mu$ l

- Prepare the *in vitro*-Transcription **Mix 5** by adding the components in the given order. **Work at room temperature**, never on ice, because spermidine in the buffer can cause precipitation of the template DNA.
- Add 10  $\mu$ l in vitro-Transcription **Mix 5** to template DNA (from A3).
- Incubate the transcription overnight at  $37^{\circ}\text{C}$  in a thermocycler with heating lid adjusted to  $45^{\circ}\text{C}$ ; or preferentially in a hybridisation oven. **Do not use a thermocycler WITHOUT adjustable heating lid, because high lid temperature (usually  $>100^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) will negatively affect the efficiency of the transcription reaction!**
- Add 1  $\mu$ l DNase (**Tube 21**) to each reaction, mix thoroughly and incubate further at  $37^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 15 min.
- Continue with purification of amplified RNA (step A5).

## **A5. aRNA-Purification using RNA spin columns**

**Note:** Add **9 ml of 100% ethanol to WB1 (18 ml)**, and **24 ml of 100% ethanol to WB2 (6 ml)**, as indicated on the bottles.

**At the start:** Put **RNase-free water** in thermoblock at 95°C.

<b>aRNA Purification Mix 6</b>	
RNA LB Buffer (box III)	340 µl
RNA DeS Buffer (box III)	87 µl
100% Ethanol (at room temperature; not supplied)	560 µl

- Add 987 µl of **Mix 6** to each in **vitro Transcription Reaction**. Mix thoroughly.
- Transfer an aliquot of **700 µl of this mixture** on the RNA spin column, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Transfer the **remaining mixture** on column, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Add 500 µl **Wash Buffer 1 (WB 1)**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Add 500 µl **Wash Buffer 2 (WB 2)**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Re-insert the column in the same collection tube. Add 500 µl **80% EtOH**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Re-insert the column in the same collection tube, and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed to get rid of residual salt on the spin column matrix.
- **Elution:** Transfer column in fresh 1.5 ml reaction tube and add 30 µl **RNase-free water** (preheated at 95°C)
- Incubate: 2 min and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed
- Reapply the eluate on the column
- Incubate: 2 min and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed  
RNA is in ~ 30 µl. Use RNA immediately or store at -80°C.

## **A6. Control aRNA product quantity and quality**

For input amounts of  $\leq 1$  ng total RNA, quality control measurements are not recommended after the first amplification round.



## B: Second Amplification Round

Amplified RNA is again reverse transcribed into cDNA to produce higher yields of aRNA via a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of amplification.

### **B1. First strand cDNA synthesis**

Use all of the amplified RNA obtained after the first amplification round.

**Use Third thermocycler program for step B1-B2.**

First Strand cDNA Synthesis <b>Mix 2-1</b>		
dNTP-Mix	Tube 2	2.5 µl
Primer B	Tube 8	2.5 µl

Add 5 µl **Mix 2-1** to 25 µl of each RNA (for smaller volumes, adjust to with water to a reaction volume of 30 µl).

Incubate 4 minutes at 65°C in a thermocycler (**with heating lid! use standard setting, e.g. 110°C**)

Cool samples to 37°C.

In the meantime, prepare the First Strand cDNA Synthesis **Mix 2-2** at room temperature.

First Strand cDNA Synthesis <b>Mix 2-2</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	8.4 µl
5x RT Buffer	Tube 4	10.0 µl
RNase Inhibitor	Tube 5	0.8 µl
RT Enzyme	Tube 6	0.8 µl

Add the First Strand cDNA Synthesis **Mix 2-2** (20 µl) to each sample and mix well by gently flicking the tube.

Incubate the samples in a thermocycler:

37°C / 45 min

45°C / 15 min

50°C / 5 min

37°C / HOLD

Primer Erase <b>Mix 2-3</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	3 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	1 µl
Primer Erase	Tube 11	1 µl

Then add 5 µl Primer Erase **Mix 2-3**, and continue incubations:

37°C / 5 min

80°C / 15 min

37°C / HOLD

RNase <b>Mix 2-4</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	3 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	1 µl
RNase	Tube 7	1 µl

Add 5 µl of RNase **Mix 2-4** to First Strand cDNA Reaction.

Incubate 20 minutes at 37°C.

## **B2. Template DNA synthesis**

Second Strand cDNA Synthesis <b>Mix 2-5</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	25,0 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	10,0 µl
Primer C	Tube 12	12.5 µl
dNTP-Mix	Tube 2	2.5 µl

Add 50 µl of **Mix 2-5** to each First Strand cDNA Synthesis Reaction and incubate as follows in a thermocycler:

96°C / 1 min

37°C / 1 min

Extender Enzyme B <b>Mix 2-6</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	3 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	1 µl
Extender Enzyme B	Tube 13	1 µl

Add 5 µl of Extender Enzyme B **Mix 2-6** to each sample and mix well by gently flicking the tube. Continue the incubation:

37°C / 30 min

65°C / 15 min

4°C / HOLD

After incubation, place tubes on ice. **Proceed to step B3.**

### **B3. Purification of Template DNA with Spin Columns**

<b>Purification Mix 2-7</b>		
Binding Buffer	(box II)	234 µl
Carrier DNA	Tube 14	2 µl

- Add 236 µl of **Mix 2-7** to each **Template DNA Reaction** (115 µl from step B2). Mix gently by pipetting.
- Insert DNA Purification Spin Columns in Collection Tubes.
- Pipette the **entire sample** onto each column and centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm in a table top centrifuge. (**Note:** guanidine thiocyanate in the **Binding Buffer** is an irritant. Always wear gloves and follow standard safety precautions to minimise contact when handling).
- Discard the flow-through and re-insert the columns in the same Collection Tubes. Add 200 µl **Washing Buffer** (with Ethanol added) to the columns and centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm.
- Discard the flow-through, re-insert the columns in the same Collection Tubes and wash again with 200 µl **Washing Buffer**. Centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm. Discard the flow-through and the Collection Tubes.
- Insert the columns in fresh 1.5 ml reaction tubes and add 10 µl of **Elution Buffer** to the columns (make sure to pipette the Elution Buffer exactly in the middle of the column, directly on top of the matrix, without disturbing the matrix with the pipette tip). Incubate the column for at least 2 min, then centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm.
- The purified template DNA (approximately 8 µl) is now ready for in vitro transcription (see step B4).
- **Optional:** Use 10% of the template DNA for an in vitro transcription "test reaction" for determining expected yields and size distribution (see step B6).
- Alternatively, store the samples at –20°C for later use.

## **B4. Three Options for in vitro Transcriptions & Labelled RNAs**

At this stage, there are **3 options** for proceeding with in vitro transcription reactions.

**Option 1)** If you have used the **AT-Micro Add-On Module (Cat.-No. 2010-A15)** for the generation of **Archival Templates**, use the template DNA obtained in **step B3** (see **step AT-1** in the AT Module for necessary changes in the Core kit protocol) to generate immobilised template DNA (**step AT-2**) for solid phase in vitro transcription (**step AT-3**). This allows you to determine yields and qualities of amplified RNAs. If the RNA yields are not sufficient, a third amplification round (see section C) can be performed with the unmodified RNA. If sufficient, the recovered template can be used for a second in vitro transcription that includes the appropriate NTP-mixes for labelled RNA (see options in step AT-3).

**Additional suggestion:** If you did not use the **AT-Module**, you may use 10% of the template DNA for an in vitro transcription "test reaction" for determining expected yields and size distribution (see steps A5-A7).

**Additional use of unlabelled RNA:** it can be converted to cDNAs for performing multiple qPCR assays (see protocol at [www.amp-tec.com](http://www.amp-tec.com)).

**Note:** Reagents for in vitro transcriptions with unmodified NTPs are included in the kit.

**Option 2)** For **Affymetrix microarrays**, use the template DNA (from **step B3**) as template for in vitro transcription with the ENZO Bioarray High Yield RNA Transcript Labelling Kit (or equivalent), according to the instructions of the manufacturer.

**Option 3)** **Dye-labelled amplified RNAs:** Use the template DNA (**step B3**) with the **Amino-Allyl Module (Cat.-No. 2000-A15** for 15 samples). It contains all required supplementary reagents for obtaining amino-allyl-labelled amplified RNAs and their conversion to purified, dye-coupled and fragmented RNAs, ready for microarray hybridisations (this Module does **not include** the required NHS-activated Dye-derivatives).

## **B5. Amplification via *in vitro* Transcription**

<b>In vitro-Transcription Mix 5</b>		
NTP-Mix	Tube 18	6.6 µl
10x Buffer	Tube 19	1.7 µl
T7 RNA Polymerase	Tube 20	1.7 µl

- Prepare the *in vitro*-Transcription Mix by adding the components in the given order. **Work at room temperature**, never on ice, because spermidine in the buffer can cause precipitation of DNA template.
- Add 10 µl *in vitro*-Transcription **Mix 5** to template DNA (from B3).
- Incubate the transcription overnight at 37°C in a thermocycler with heating lid adjusted to 45°C; or preferentially in a hybridisation oven.
- **Do not use a thermocycler WITHOUT adjustable heating lid, because high lid temperature (usually >100°C) will negatively affect the efficiency of the transcription reaction!**
- Continue with purification of amplified RNA (step B6).

## **B6. aRNA-Purification using RNA spin columns**

**Note:** Add **9 ml of 100% ethanol to WB1 (18 ml)**, and **24 ml of 100% ethanol to WB2 (6 ml)**, as indicated on the bottles.

**At the start:** Put **RNase-free water** in thermoblock at 95°C.

<b>aRNA Purification Mix 6</b>	
RNA LB Buffer (box III)	340 µl
RNA DeS Buffer (box III)	87 µl
100% Ethanol (at room temperature; not supplied)	560 µl

- Add 987 µl of **Mix 6** to each **in vitro Transcription Reaction**. Mix thoroughly.
- Transfer an aliquot of **700 µl of this mixture** on the RNA spin column, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Transfer the **remaining mixture** on column, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Add 500 µl **Wash Buffer 1 (WB 1)**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Add 500 µl **Wash Buffer 2 (WB 2)**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Re-insert the column in the same collection tube. Add 500 µl **80% EtOH**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Re-insert the column in the same collection tube, and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed to get rid of residual salt on the spin column matrix.
- **Elution:** Transfer column in fresh 1.5 ml reaction tube and add 30 µl **RNase-free water** (preheated at 95°C)
- Incubate: 2 min and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed
- Reapply the eluate on the column
- Incubate: 2 min and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed  
RNA is in ~ 30 µl. Use RNA immediately or store at -80°C.

## **B7. Control of aRNA product quantity and quality**

### **Photometric quantification:**

**Note:** The in vitro transcription reactions are performed with very high NTP concentrations (30 mM total) and these NTP's are not removed 100% by RNA clean-up with spin columns.

In consequence: measurements with negative control reactions may indicate - erroneous - values of up to approximately 1.5 µg. The presence of RNA strongly competes and prevents this "background binding" of NTP's, and this means, calculated yields of  $\geq 2$  µg are a reliable indication of RNA amounts. A correlation with electrophoretic results (bioanalyzer or agarose gel) is recommended.

If an **additional third amplification round** (see section C) is required, a maximum 0.8 µg of amplified RNA can be used – RNA yields should be confirmed by electrophoresis.

### **Quality Control with Agilent 2100 bioanalyzer:**

**Note:** All ionic compounds interfere with capillary electrophoresis. The RNA size distribution can be monitored with the bioanalyzer, but quantitation may indicate too low RNA amounts, because the signal may be significantly compressed by residual and variable buffer/salt concentrations in the eluted RNAs. For maximum sensitivity and more consistent quantifications, removal of buffer/salt by ethanol precipitation is recommended.

For amplified RNA, a broad size distribution is expected and an RNA concentration  $>50$  ng/µl is recommended for the Agilent RNA 6000 Nano kit (lower concentrations are possible for total RNA, due to the prominent rRNA peaks).

## C: Third Amplification Round

Amplified RNA is again reverse transcribed into cDNA to produce higher yields of aRNA via a 3<sup>rd</sup> amplification round.

For generation of **labelled antisense RNA**, use the template DNA (see below, steps C3, C4) for *in vitro* transcription with an RNA labelling kit (see options in step C5).

### **C1. First strand cDNA synthesis**

RNA yields should be determined by photometric **and** electrophoretic measurements (see step B6).

We recommend to use approximately 200 ng amplified RNA from the second amplification round (a maximum volume of 15 µl of amplified RNA from step B5). Please do not use more than 800 ng of amplified RNA.

<b>First Strand <u>Mix 3-1</u></b>		
dNTP-Mix	Tube 2	2.5 µl
Primer D	Tube 15	5.0 µl
Reaction Additive	Tube 16	5.0 µl

Add 12.5 µl of **Mix 3-1** to 17.5 µl RNA (for smaller volumes, adjust with water to a reaction volume of 30 µl).

Incubate 4 min at 65°C in a thermocycler (with heating lid! use standard temperature setting, e.g. 110°C), then immediately cool the samples to 45°C.

In the meantime, prepare the First Strand cDNA Synthesis **Mix 3-2**, at room temperature.

<b>cDNA Synthesis <u>Mix 3-2</u></b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	8.4 µl
5x RT Buffer	Tube 4	10.0 µl
RNase Inhibitor	Tube 5	0.8 µl
RT Enzyme	Tube 6	0.8 µl

Add 20 µl of **Mix 3-2** to each sample. **Remove one sample at a time** with continued incubation of the other samples in the 45°C hot thermocycler.

Continue incubation in a thermocycler:

45°C / 30 min

70°C / 15 min



## **C2. RNA removal**

<b>RNase Mix 3-3</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	3 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	1 µl
RNase	Tube 7	1 µl

Add 5 µl of RNase **Mix 3-3** to 50 µl of First Strand cDNA Reaction (from C1).

Incubate 20 minutes at 37°C.

## **C3. Second strand cDNA synthesis**

<b>Second Strand cDNA Synthesis Mix 3-4</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	25.5 µl
Primer C	Tube 12	12.0 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	10.0 µl
dNTP-Mix	Tube 2	2.5 µl

Add 50 µl of **Mix 3-4** to each sample (from C2), then incubate:

96°C / 1 min

37°C / 1 min

<b>Extender Enzyme B Mix 3-5</b>		
DEPC-H <sub>2</sub> O	Tube 3	3 µl
5x Extender Buffer	Tube 9	1 µl
Extender Enzyme B	Tube 13	1 µl

Add 5 µl of Extender Enzyme B **Mix 3-5** to each sample and mix well by gently flicking the tube. Continue the incubation:

37°C / 30 min

65°C / 15 min

Place the samples on ice. Spin briefly to collect liquid. Continue immediately with purification of template DNA (step C4).

## **C4. Purification of Template DNA with Spin Columns**

<b>DNA Purification Mix 3-6</b>		
Binding Buffer	(box II)	224 µl
Carrier DNA	Tube 14	2 µl

- Add 226 µl of **Mix 3-6** to each **Template DNA Reaction** (110 µl from step C3). Mix gently by pipetting.
- Insert DNA Purification Spin Columns in Collection Tubes.
- Pipette the **entire sample** onto each column and centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm in a table top centrifuge. (**Note:** guanidine thiocyanate in the **Binding Buffer** is an irritant. Always wear gloves and follow standard safety precautions to minimise contact when handling).
- Discard the flow-through and re-insert the columns in the same Collection Tubes. Add 200 µl **Washing Buffer** (with Ethanol added) to the columns and centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm.
- Discard the flow-through, re-insert the columns in the same Collection Tubes and wash again with 200 µl **Washing Buffer**. Centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm. Discard the flow-through and the Collection Tubes.
- Insert the columns in fresh 1.5 ml reaction tubes and add 10 µl of **Elution Buffer** to the columns (make sure to pipette the Elution Buffer exactly in the middle of the column, directly on top of the matrix, without disturbing the matrix with the pipette tip). Incubate the column for at least 2 min, then centrifuge for 1 min at 10,000 rpm.
- The purified template DNA (approximately 8 µl) is now ready for in vitro transcription (see step B4).
- **Optional:** Use 10% of the template DNA for an in vitro transcription "test reaction" for determining expected yields and size distribution (see step A6).
- Or store the samples at -20°C for later use.

## **C5. Three Options for in vitro Transcriptions & Labelled RNAs**

At this stage, there are **3 options** for subsequent in vitro transcription reactions.

See **step B4** for the fully outlined options.

## **C6. Amplification via *in vitro* Transcription**

In vitro-Transcription <b>Mix 5</b>		
NTP-Mix	Tube 18	6.6 µl
10x Buffer	Tube 19	1.7 µl
T7 RNA Polymerase	Tube 20	1.7 µl

- Prepare the in vitro-Transcription Mix by adding the components in the given order. **Work at room temperature**, never on ice, because spermidine in the buffer can cause precipitation of DNA template.
- Add 10 µl *in vitro*-Transcription **Mix 5** to template DNA (from C4).
- Incubate the transcription overnight at 37°C in a thermocycler with heating lid adjusted to 45°C; or preferentially in a hybridisation oven.
- **Do not use a thermocycler WITHOUT adjustable heating lid, because high lid temperature (usually >100°C) will negatively affect the efficiency of the transcription reaction!**
- Continue with purification of amplified RNA (step C7).

## **C7. aRNA-Purification using RNA spin columns**

**Note:** Add **9 ml of 100% ethanol to WB1 (18 ml)**, and **24 ml of 100% ethanol to WB2 (6 ml)**, as indicated on the bottles.

**At the start:** Put **RNase-free water** in thermoblock at 95°C.

<b>aRNA Purification Mix 6</b>	
RNA LB Buffer (box III)	340 µl
RNA DeS Buffer (box III)	87 µl
100% Ethanol (at room temperature; not supplied)	560 µl

- Add 987 µl of **Mix 6** to each **in vitro Transcription Reaction**. Mix thoroughly.
- Transfer an aliquot of **700 µl of this mixture** on the RNA spin column, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Transfer the **remaining mixture** on column, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Add 500 µl **Wash Buffer 1 (WB 1)**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Add 500 µl **Wash Buffer 2 (WB 2)**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Re-insert the column in the same collection tube. Add 500 µl **80% EtOH**, centrifuge for 30 sec@10'000 rpm & discard flow-through
- Re-insert the column in the same collection tube, and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed to get rid of residual salt on the spin column matrix.
- **Elution:** Transfer column in fresh 1.5 ml reaction tube and add 30 µl **RNase-free water** (preheated at 95°C)
- Incubate: 2 min and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed
- Reapply the eluate on the column
- Incubate: 2 min and centrifuge for 1 min@maximum speed  
RNA is in ~ 30 µl. Use RNA immediately or store at -80°C.

## Expected yields of amplified RNA

Input total RNA	RNA-a1 1 <sup>st</sup> round	RNA-a2 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	RNA-a3 3 <sup>rd</sup> round
200 ng	4 ± 2 µg	with <u>200 ng*</u> RNA-a1: <b>50 ± 20 µg</b>	n/a
100 ng	2 ± 1 µg	with <u>200 ng*</u> RNA-a1: <b>50 ± 20 µg</b>	n/a
50 ng	1 ± 0.3 µg	with <u>200 ng*</u> RNA-a1: <b>50 ± 20 µg</b>	n/a
10 ng	200 ± 50 ng*	using <u>all of</u> RNA-a1: <b>50 ± 20 µg</b>	n/a
≤ 1 ng	20 ± 10 ng*	using <u>all of</u> RNA-a1: <b>10 ± 5 µg</b>	with <u>200 ng*</u> RNA-a2: <b>50 ± 20 µg</b>
~ 100 pg	n/a	using <u>all of</u> RNA-a1: <b>2 - 10 µg</b>	with <u>200 ng*</u> RNA-a2: <b>50 ± 20 µg</b>

\* **Note:** Please see step B6 for combined photometric and electrophoretic measurements.

## **Thermocycler profiles**

Before starting the ExpressArt<sup>®</sup> Bacterial mRNA amplification kit protocol, program a thermocycler with the following temperatures and times. HOLD steps are included to provide time for thermal ramping or for adding reagents.

### **First Amplification round**

<b>First thermocycler program for step A1 for 1<sup>st</sup> Amplification round</b>			
<b>Step</b>	<b>Temperature</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	65°C	HOLD	Start of first cDNA synthesis Add 4µl RNA to 4µl Mix 1
2	65°C	4 min	
3	37°C	1 min	
4	37°C	HOLD	add 8µl Mix 2
5	37°C	45 min	
6	45°C	15 min	
7	50°C	5 min	
8	70°C	10 min	
9	4°C	HOLD	Put samples on ice and continue with second thermocycler program for step A2.

<b>Second thermocycler program for step A2 for 1<sup>st</sup> Amplification round</b>			
<b>NOTE: heating lid is switched off.</b>			
<b>Step</b>	<b>Temperature</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	16°C	HOLD	Add 104µl Mix 3
2	16°C	2 h	
3	4°C	HOLD	
End of Template DNA synthesis Spin to collect liquid Continue with DNA purification			

**Required time: appr. 3.5 h**

## **Second Amplification round**

Third thermocycler program for steps B1-B2 <i>For 2<sup>nd</sup> Amplification Round</i>			
Step	Temperature	Time	Action
1	65°C	HOLD	Start of first cDNA synthesis Add 25µl RNA-a1 to 5µl <u>Mix 2-1</u>
2	65°C	4 min	
3	37°C	1 min	
4	37°C	HOLD	add 20µl <u>Mix 2-2</u>
5	37°C	45 min	
6	45°C	15 min	
7	50°C	5 min	
8	37°C	1 min	
9	37°C	HOLD	add 5µl <u>Mix 2-3</u>
10	37°C	5 min	
11	80°C	15 min	
12	37°C	1 min	
13	37°C	HOLD	add 5µl <u>Mix 2-4</u>
14	37°C	20 min	
15	37°C	HOLD	add 50µl <u>Mix 2-5</u>
16	96°C	1 min	
17	37°C	1 min	
18	37°C	HOLD	add 5µl <u>Mix 2-6</u>
19	37°C	30 min	
20	65°C	15 min	
21	4°C	HOLD	
<b>End</b> of Template DNA synthesis <b>Spin</b> to collect liquid <b>Continue</b> with DNA purification			

**Required time: appr. 2.8 h**

## Third Amplification round

Fourth thermocycler program for steps C1-C3 <i>For 3<sup>rd</sup> Amplification Round</i>			
Step	Temperature	Time	Action
1	65°C	HOLD	Start of first cDNA synthesis Add 17.5µl RNA-a1 to 12.5µl <u>Mix 3-1</u>
2	65°C	4 min	
3	45°C	1 min	
4	45°C	HOLD	add 20µl <u>Mix 3-2</u>
5	45°C	30 min	
6	70°C	15 min	
7	37°C	1 min	
8	37°C	HOLD	add 5µl <u>Mix 3-3</u>
9	37°C	20 min	
10	37°C	HOLD	add 50µl <u>Mix 3-4</u>
11	96°C	1 min	
12	37°C	1 min	
13	37°C	HOLD	add 5µl <u>Mix 3-5</u>
14	37°C	30 min	
15	65°C	15 min	
16	4°C	HOLD	
End of Template DNA synthesis <b>Spin</b> to collect liquid <b>Continue</b> with DNA purification			

Required time: appr. 2.2 h

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