

User Manual For plon

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1. Requirements

1) Computing system

pChem search requires a computer with recommended configuration as follows:

- Microsoft Windows 64-bit
- Intel Core i7/i9/Xeon Processor
- 32GB of RAM or more

Note: plon v1.0 is NOT supported by non-Windows operating systems (incl. MacOS, Linux and so on).

2) MS Data

- Data dependent acquisition (DDA) with BOTH MS1 and MS/MS spectra recorded in the High-Resolution mode

Note: 1) For automatic performance assessment of chemoproteomic probes, it is recommended to acquire MS data from probe-labeled samples with DMP-tag.

2. Download

1) plon can be freely downloaded from the website:

<http://pfind.org/software/pChem/index.html>

pFind Studio: a computational solution for mass spectrometry-based proteomics

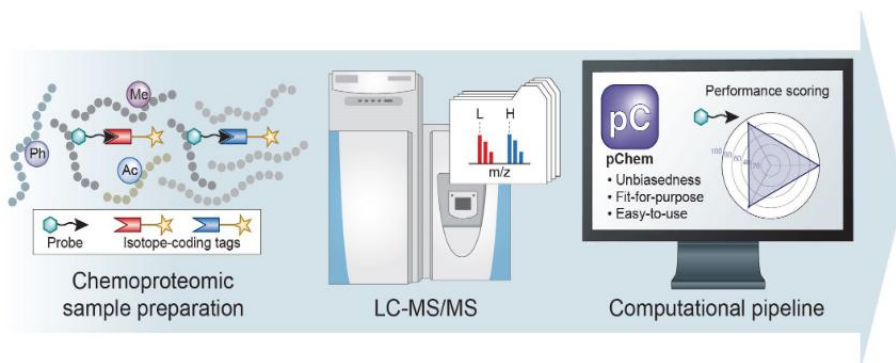
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pChem

[Introduction](#) - [Cite us](#) - [Downloads](#)

Introduction

Chemical probe coupled with mass spectrometry (MS)-based proteomics, herein termed chemoproteomics, offers versatile tools to globally profile protein features and to systematically interrogate the mode of action of small molecules in a native biological system. Nonetheless, development of an efficient and selective probe for chemoproteomics can still be challenging. Besides, it is also difficult to unbiasedly assess its chemoselectivity at a proteome-wide scale. Here we present pChem, a modification-centric blind search and summarization tool to provide a pipeline for rapid and unbiased assessing of the performance of ABPP and metabolic labeling probes. This pipeline starts experimentally by isotopic coding of PDMs, which can be automatically recognized, paired, and accurately reported by pChem, further allowing users to score the profiling efficiency, modification-homogeneity and proteome-wide residue selectivity of a chemoproteomic probe.



Cite us

pChem: a modification-centric assessment tool for performance of chemoproteomic probes.
Ji-Xiang He*, Zheng-Cong Fei*, Ling Fu, Cai-Ping Tian, Fu-Chu He, Hao Chi, Jing Yang.
Nat Chem Biol (2022).

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41589-022-01074-8>

Downloads

pIon is currently available for free use.

Notice: Sep. 29, 2024 - The functionality of pChem 1.1 is also fully supported in this version. [Click to download](#).

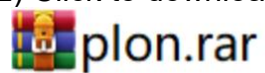
For source code, please refer to [github](#).

For detailed usage, please refer to [user guide](#).

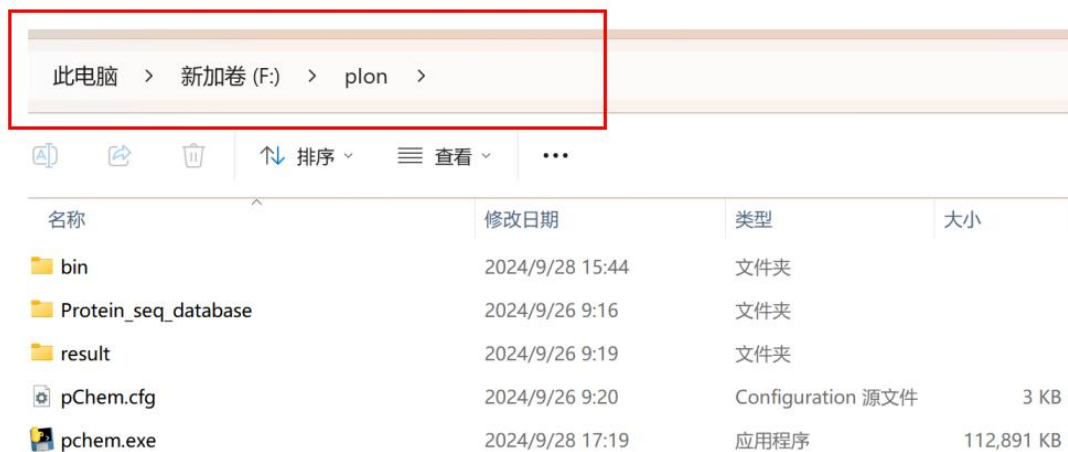
pChem version 1.1 is currently free to use.

Notice: Jan. 10, 2023 - If you are using a version prior to this date, please re-download the pChem software in time. The expiration date is set on Jan. 10, 2026.

2) Click to download, download the RAR compressed file.

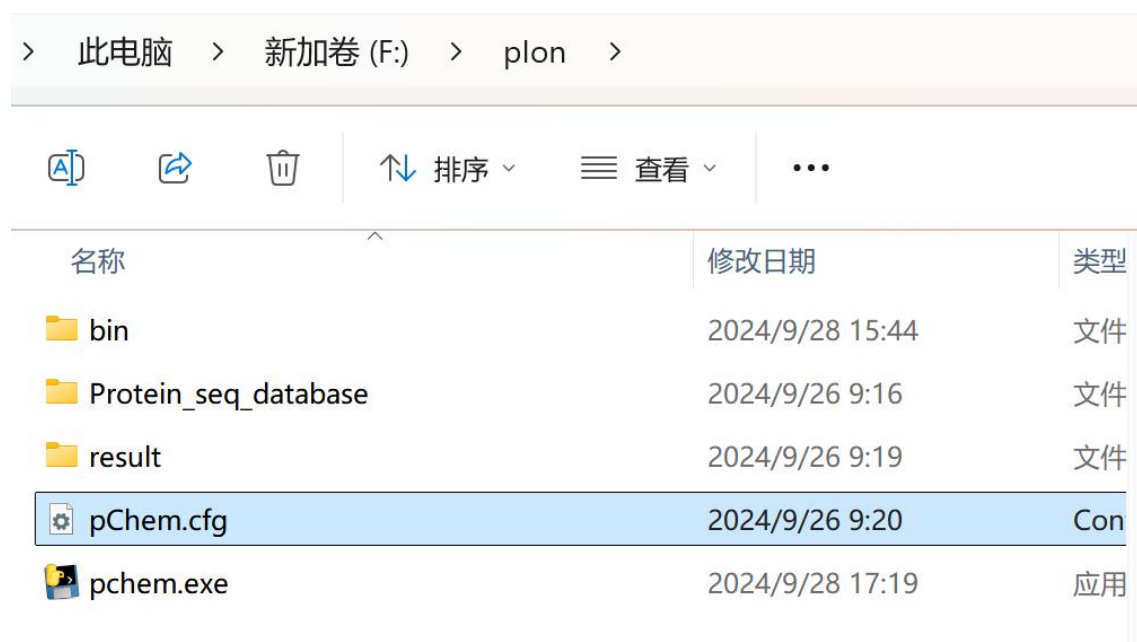


3) Un-zip the “plon.rar” package into a specified file folder (e.g., Local disk F).



3. Configuration

1) Double click *plon* to open the main folder.



2) Open configuration file “*pChem.cfg*” using a text editor, e.g., Microsoft Notepad or Notepad++ (<https://notepad-plus.en.softonic.com/>).

3) Setting “pChem.cfg”.

```

pChem.cfg
1 #####
2 # PChem general parameter settings
3 # Path to the output file
4 output_path=F:\pIon\result
5
6 # Path to the protein sequence database
7 fasta_path=F:\pIon\Protein_seq_database\Homo_sapiens_uniprot_canonical_20395_entries_20210516.fasta
8
9 # Format of MS data, RAW or MZML
10 msmstype=RAW
11
12 # The number and path of MS data
13 msmsnum=1
14 msmspath1=G:\pChem_ion-2023-4\pChem-main\20230720\HFX_YangJing_HeJiXiang_IPM_20230701_F1_R1.raw
15
16
17 # Type of MS dissociation method
18 activation_type=HCD-FTMS
19
20 # Usage of open search (True/ False), against Unimod, the common modification can be set if not
21 open_flag=False
22 common_modification_number=2
23 common_modification_list=Carbamidomethyl[C];Oxidation[M];
24
25 # Mass range of unknown modification (Da)
26 min_mass_modification=200
27 max_mass_modification=1000
28
29 # Isotopic pairs of mass shifts with PSMs less than X% of that of overall PDMS were neglected
30 filter_frequency=5
31
32 # If consider the N-side or C-side for amino acid localization (True or False)
33 side_position=True
34
35 # P-value threshold enabling confident amino acid localization
36 p_value_threshold=0.001
37
38 # If report the statistical information (True or False)
39 report_statistics=True
40
41 #####
42 # If isotope coding is adopted to facilitate the discovery of unknown modifications (True or False)
43 isotope_labeling=False
44
45
46 # Mass tolerance of the mass shift between light isotope and heavy isotope
47 mass_of_diff_diff=6.020132
48
49
50 # Isotopic mass difference within empirically defined tolerance(Da)
51 mass_diff_diff_range=0.005
52
53
54 #####
55 # If ion labeling is adopted to facilitate the discovery of unknown modifications (True or False)
56 ion_labeling=True
57
58 # One charge mass of ion, it is recommended to keep at least three decimal places
59 ion_mass=126.128
60
61 # In the 0-1 range, the higher the score, the stricter the filtering, and the recommended value is 0.7
62 ion_filter_ratio=0.7
63
64 ion_close_search=False

```

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General Note 1:

For the first-time users, custom settings are required for ①-⑤, ⑧ default settings can be adopted for ⑥, ⑦, ⑨-⑭.

General Note 2:

All parameters (shown in red below) are case sensitive.

General Note 3:

The blank space should be avoided.

1. General Parameters Setting

① # Path to the output file

`output_path=F:\plon\result`

Note: If the output file folder does not exist, an error will be reported.

② # Path to the protein sequence database

`fasta_path=F:\plon\Protein_seq_database\Homo_sapiens_uniprot_canonical_20395_entries_20210516.fasta`

Note: The protein *.fasta database databases of several commonly used species (*e.g.*, *homo sapiens*) are included in the subfolder (named as Protein_seq_database) of pChem. Note that the databases of other species can be downloaded from Uniprot as described in **Supporting Protocol 1**.

PC > Local Disk (C:) > pChem > Protein_seq_database

<input type="checkbox"/> Name	Date modified	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabidopsis_thaliana_uniprot_canonical_16043_entries_20210516.fasta	5/17/2021 12:07 PM	FASTA File
<input type="checkbox"/> Caenorhabditis_elegans_uniprot_canonical_4226_entries_20210516.fasta	5/17/2021 12:23 PM	FASTA File
<input type="checkbox"/> Drosophila_melanogaster_uniprot_canonical_3632_entries_20210516.fasta	5/16/2021 11:44 PM	FASTA File
<input type="checkbox"/> Escherichia_coli_uniprot_canonical_4518_entries_20210516.fasta	5/17/2021 12:15 PM	FASTA File
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Homo_sapiens_uniprot_canonical_20395_entries_20210516.fasta	6/4/2021 9:23 PM	FASTA File
<input type="checkbox"/> Mus_musculus_uniprot_canonical_17073_entries_20210516.fasta	5/17/2021 12:18 PM	FASTA File
<input type="checkbox"/> Pseudomonas_syringae_uniprot_canonical_5431_entries_20210516.fasta	7/27/2021 9:56 PM	FASTA File
<input type="checkbox"/> Rattus_norvegicus_uniprot_canonical_8126_entries_20210516.fasta	5/17/2021 12:22 PM	FASTA File

③ # Format of MS data (RAW or MZML)

`msmstype=RAW`

Note: Non-Thermo MS data need to be converted into mzML files before pChem search. The users can refer to **Supporting Protocol 2**.

④ # The number and path of MS data

msmsnum=N
msmspath1=X:\XXX\XXX.raw
msmspath2=X:\XXX\XXX.raw

.....
msmspathN=X:\XXX\XXX.raw

Note: The suffix of MS data files MUST be input.

Example:

msmsnum=1
msmspath1=G:\data\HFX_YangJing_HeJiXiang_IPM_20230701_F1_R1.raw

⑤ # Type of MS dissociation method

activation_type=HCD-FTMS

illustration: default

Note: 1) plon and pChem v1.0 can NOT support MS data generated under electron-transfer dissociation ETD, electron-transfer/higher-energy collision dissociation EThcD, and the likes.

⑥ # Usage of open search (True/ False) against Unimod, the common

modification can be set if not

open_flag=False

common_modification_number=2

common_modification_list=Carbamidomethyl[C];Oxidation[M];

illustration: default

Note: The names of common modifications should be the same as those appeared in [Unimod](#) database. Specifically, you can refer to the modification.ini file in the bin directory.

⑦ # Mass range of unknown modification (Da)

min_mass_modification=200

max_mass_modification=1000

illustration: default

Note: The PDMs generated from the use of bioorthogonal cleavable linkers typically possess masses higher than 200 Da and less than 1000Da.

⑧ # Mass shifts with PSMs less than X% of that of overall PDMs were neglected

filter_frequency=5

illustration: default

Note: This parameter can be set as 0 if one wants to retrieve all PDMs including those with just a few PSMs.

⑨ # If consider the N- or C-termini for amino acid localization (True or False)

side_position=True

illustration: default

⑩ # P-value threshold enabling confident amino acid localization

p_value_threshold=0.001

illustration: default

⑪ # if report the statistical information (True or False)

report_statistics=False

illustration: default

2. The parameter settings for pChem v1.0: if it is not in isotope mode, you can set *isotope_labeling* to False, and the remaining parameters are the same as in the previous version

⑫-1 # If isotope coding is adopted to facilitate the discovery of unknown modifications (True or False)

Isotope_labeling=False

illustration: default

Note: Choose 'False', if pChem is adopted to search endogenous modifications from probe-free and/or label-free protein samples, else, isotope coding is adopted to facilitate the discovery of unknown Modifications.

⑫-2 # Mass tolerance of the mass shift between light isotope and heavy isotope

mass_of_diff_diff=6.020132

Troubleshooting: One needs to confirm this value being correctly input.

⑫-3 # Isotopic mass difference within empirically defined tolerance (Da)

mass_diff_diff_range=0.005

illustration: default

Troubleshooting: If the pChem/plon search mis-identified the targeted PDMs or even report nothing, one might want to loose the defined mass tolerance (e.g., 0.01Da).

3. The parameter settings for plon: If ion labeling is adopted to facilitate the discovery of unknown modifications

⑬-1 # If ion labeling is adopted to facilitate the discovery of unknown modifications (True or False)

ion_labeling=True

⑬-2 # One charge mass of ion, it is recommended to keep at least three decimal places


ion_mass=126.128

⑬-3 # In the 0-1 range, a higher score indicates stricter filtering, with a recommended value of 0.7.

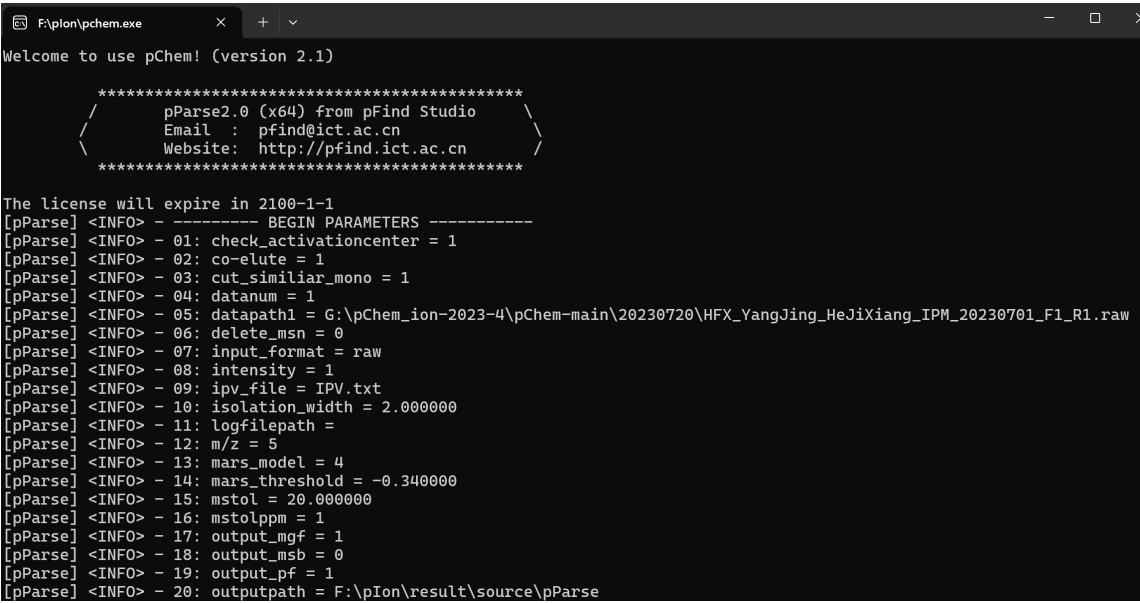
ion_filter_ratio=0.7

illustration: default

4. Run

Once all parameters have been set, double click “*pChem.exe*”  *pchem.exe* to execute the programming. The message “**Please press any key to continue**” means that program runs to completion.

Note: pChem search will generate several intermediate files in the main folder. do NOT open those files during program running.



```
F:\pion\pchem.exe
Welcome to use pChem! (version 2.1)

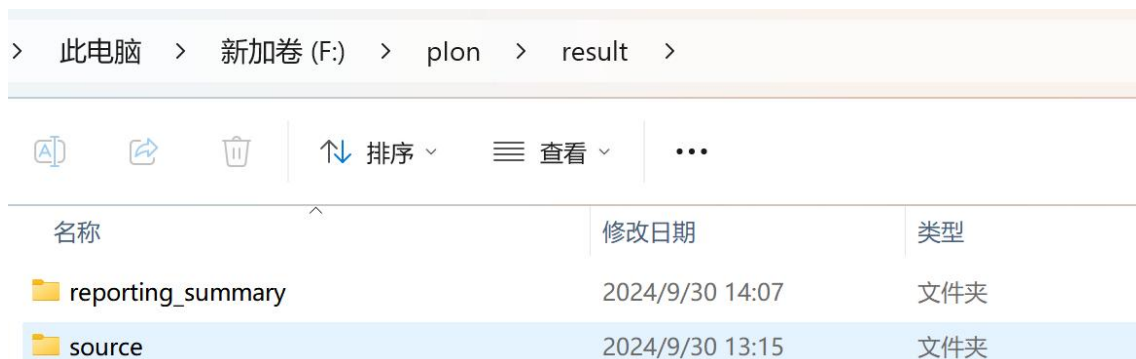
*****
      pParse2.0 (x64) from pFind Studio
      Email  : pfind@ict.ac.cn
      Website: http://pfind.ict.ac.cn
*****

The license will expire in 2100-1-1
[pParse] <INFO> - ----- BEGIN PARAMETERS -----
[pParse] <INFO> - 01: check_activationcenter = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 02: co-elute = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 03: cut_similiar_mono = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 04: datanum = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 05: datapath1 = G:\pChem_ion-2023-4\pChem-main\20230720\HFX_YangJing_HeJiXiang_IPM_20230701_F1_R1.raw
[pParse] <INFO> - 06: delete_msn = 0
[pParse] <INFO> - 07: input_format = raw
[pParse] <INFO> - 08: intensity = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 09: ipv_file = IPV.txt
[pParse] <INFO> - 10: isolation_width = 2.000000
[pParse] <INFO> - 11: logfilepath =
[pParse] <INFO> - 12: m/z = 5
[pParse] <INFO> - 13: mars_model = 4
[pParse] <INFO> - 14: mars_threshold = -0.340000
[pParse] <INFO> - 15: mstol = 20.000000
[pParse] <INFO> - 16: mstolppm = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 17: output_mgf = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 18: output_msb = 0
[pParse] <INFO> - 19: output_pf = 1
[pParse] <INFO> - 20: outputpath = F:\pIon\result\source\pParse
```

5. Output

1) Double click “*result*” file for searching results.

2) Double click “*reporting summary*”.



3) There are six major output documents.

distribution	2024/9/30 14:14	文件夹	
heat_map.pdf	2024/9/30 14:15	WPS PDF 文档	18 KB
pChem.summary	2024/9/30 14:07	SUMMARY 文件	2 KB
pChem_ion_filter.summary	2024/9/30 14:15	SUMMARY 文件	1 KB
pChem_mod_ion_result.summary	2024/9/30 14:14	SUMMARY 文件	195 KB
pChem_modification_score.txt	2024/9/30 14:14	文本文档	1 KB
pChem_without_mod_ion_result.summary	2024/9/30 14:11	SUMMARY 文件	12 KB

Note: Users are recommended to copy these output documents and paste into another file. Otherwise, they can be covered by those generated from the next search event.

① pChem.summary

pChem.summary is a tab-delimited text file contains the details of every candidate mass shifts identified by blind search.

Rank	Modification	Accurate Mass (std, r-squared)	Top1 Site Probability p-value	Others	#PSM ↓
1	PFIND_DELTA_334	334.211936 (0.001863, 0.861375)	C 0.873 0.0000	N-SIDE(0.087, 0.0000);	4049 ↓
2	PFIND_DELTA_348	348.227660 (0.001815, 0.858382)	C 0.753 0.0000	N-SIDE(0.137, 0.0000);	M(0.064, 0.0000); 299 ↓
3	PFIND_DELTA_350	350.206903 (0.002114, 0.857968)	C 0.475 0.0000	M(0.25, 0.0000);	160 ↓
4	PFIND_DELTA_668	668.424422 (0.00255, 0.80155)	C 0.849 0.0000		106 ↓
5	PFIND_DELTA_429	429.249373 (0.002699, 0.85648)	C 0.782 0.0000		78 ↓
6	PFIND_DELTA_332	332.196307 (0.002333, 0.861815)	N-SIDE 0.333 0.0001		33 ↓
7	PFIND_DELTA_366	366.203270 (0.003142, 0.854716)	C 0.633 0.0000		30 ↓
8	PFIND_DELTA_376	376.221914 (0.00201, 0.852762)	C 0.538 0.0000	N-SIDE(0.5, 0.0000);	26 ↓
9	PFIND_DELTA_335	335.214659 (0.002066, 0.861158)	C 0.684 0.0000		19 ↓
10	PFIND_DELTA_481	481.280325 (0.001364, 0.863835)	C 0.875 0.0000		16 ↓
11	PFIND_DELTA_286	286.211184 (0.000441, 0.872325)	M 0.727 0.0000		11 ↓
12	PFIND_DELTA_349	349.232975 (0.003745, 0.858172)	C 0.444 0.0001		9 ↓
13	PFIND_DELTA_239	239.129133 (0.00394, 0.83333)	N-SIDE 0.778 0.0000		9 ↓
14	PFIND_DELTA_333	333.194963 (0.002314, 0.861597)	C 0.625 0.0000		8 ↓
15	PFIND_DELTA_317	317.185354 (0.002377, 0.865154)	C 0.714 0.0000		7 ↓
16	PFIND_DELTA_362	362.243399 (0.00028, 0.855506)	M 0.667 0.0001		6 ↓
17	PFIND_DELTA_351	351.155199 (1.0, 0.848137)	C 0.833 0.0000	N-SIDE(0.667, 0.0002);	6 ↓
18	PFIND_DELTA_201	201.083955 (0.004766, 0.912972)	M 0.6 0.0007		5 ↓
19	PFIND_DELTA_990	990.504416 (0.001566, 0.910115)	N-SIDE 1.0 0.0007		5 ↓
20	PFIND_DELTA_247	247.117956 (0.000734, 0.81509)	C 1.0 0.0003		3 ↓

#PSM: The number of PSMs corresponding to modified peptides identified by search engine.

Top1 site | Top1 Probability: The amino acid most likely to be modified with the corresponding localization probability.

Others: Other amino acid sites that may also be labeled by probes and their corresponding localization probability values.

② pChem_ion_filter.summary

pChem_ion_filter.summary is a tab-delimited text file contains the details of every PDM.

Rank	Modification	Accurate Mass (std, r-squared)	Top1 Site Probability p-value	Others	#PSM ↓
1	PFIND_DELTA_334	334.211936 (0.001863, 0.861375)	C 0.873 0.0000	N-SIDE(0.087, 0.0000);	4049 ↓

PDM: Probe-derived modifications

#PSM: The number of PSMs corresponding to modified peptides identified by search engine.

Top1 site | Top1 Probability: The amino acid most likely to be modified with the corresponding localization probability.

Others: Other amino acid sites that may also be labeled by probes and their corresponding localization probability values.

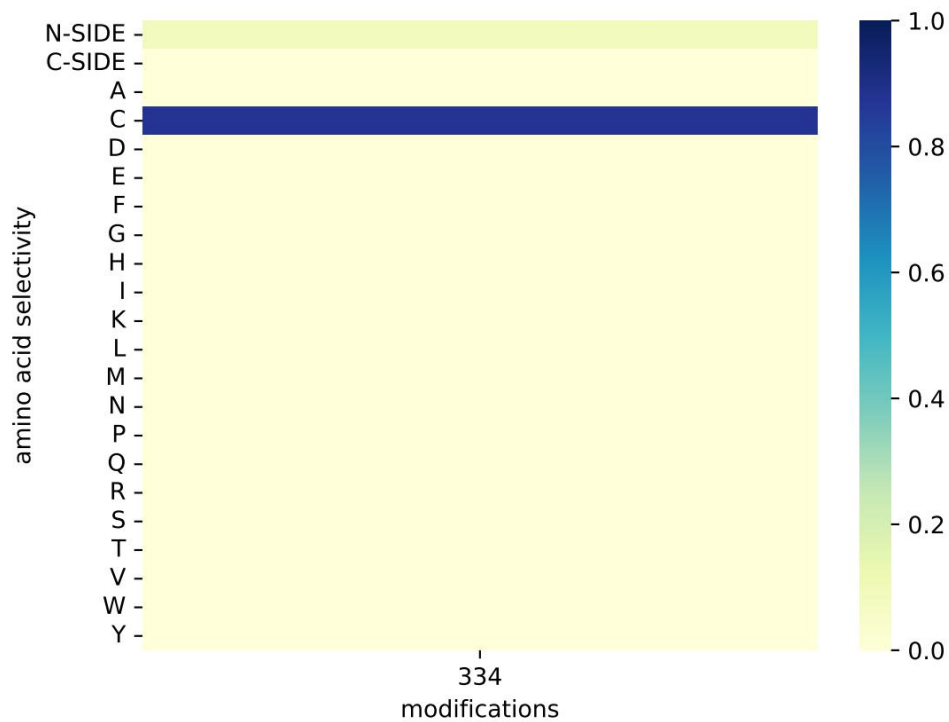
③ pChem_mod_ion_result.summary & pChem_without_mod_ion_result.summary

Stores detailed information about all diagnostic ions in both modified and unmodified spectrum categories

pChem_mod_ion_result.summary				
Modification info for PFIND_DELTA_334:(PSM = 4049) (filtered PSM = 3603)(neighbor filtered PSM = 2742)				
Top 300 characteristic ions in the PFIND_DELTA_334 spectra:				
Rank	ion type	ion count	ion accuracy	ion relative peak
1	126.128	3601	126.128188	0.310392
2	120.082	3066	120.081296	0.224466
3	129.102	3434	129.102656	0.203585
4	369.208	2315	369.207955	0.158162
5	136.076	3332	136.076015	0.15778
6	110.072	3359	110.071808	0.106872
7	130.086	3125	130.086604	0.072734
8	201.124	2680	201.123842	0.06852
9	393.208	1322	393.20782	0.063615
10	197.166	2496	197.165395	0.056649
11	159.092	2107	159.091927	0.054452
12	175.12	1675	175.119505	0.052852
13	215.14	2025	215.139708	0.043908
14	143.118	2175	143.118128	0.039902
15	199.18	1354	199.180539	0.039817
16	157.134	1857	157.133865	0.039126
17	173.128	1600	173.128606	0.038781
18	185.166	1585	185.165482	0.036889
19	147.114	1089	147.113209	0.035626

pChem_without_mod_ion_result.summary				
Top 300 characteristic ions in the unmodified spectra: (PSM: 76778)				
Rank	ion type	ion count	ion accuracy	ion relative peak
1	120.082	70120	120.081292	0.314783
2	129.102	73115	129.10266	0.260202
3	136.076	72398	136.07603	0.200106
4	126.128	73949	126.128164	0.177484
5	110.072	72595	110.071824	0.138366
6	130.086	66916	130.08664	0.091424
7	201.124	60042	201.123831	0.086589
8	175.12	36117	175.119487	0.079598
9	159.092	50733	159.091952	0.062682
10	199.18	33608	199.1806	0.060605
11	185.166	40054	185.16547	0.060537
12	215.14	47334	215.139678	0.058668
13	173.128	37689	173.12864	0.054464
14	143.118	52514	143.118142	0.053285
15	147.114	26163	147.113201	0.052687
16	157.134	45676	157.133858	0.05072
17	183.15	47858	183.149721	0.049035
18	187.144	37573	187.144401	0.04799
19	169.134	49242	169.133869	0.043881
20	233.166	27740	233.165639	0.037374

④ heat_map.pdf



Horizontal coordinate: The Δ mass of each PDM

Longitudinal coordinate: The types of amino acids

Color gradient: The localization probability that the modification occurs at each potential site.

Note: Those amino acids with p-value higher than p_value_threshold (0.001 by default) are considered mis-localized sites. As such, their localization probability values are defined to be null. 2) For data generated from non-isotope-labeled or non-ion-labeled samples, heatmap will NOT be provided.

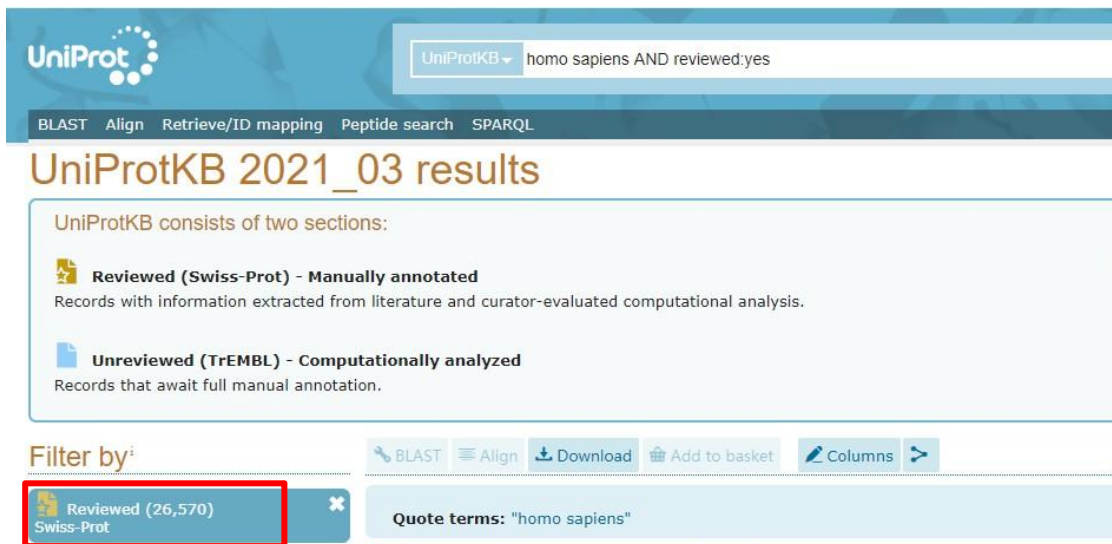
6. Supporting protocol 1: Protein sequence database

This protocol is used to download protein *.fasta files for database search.

- 1) Open <https://www.uniprot.org/>, enter the Latin name of the species (e.g., *homo sapiens*), then click search.



- 2) Click “Reviewed” (Swiss-Prot).



- 3) Select “Uncompressed”, then Click “Download” and “Go”.



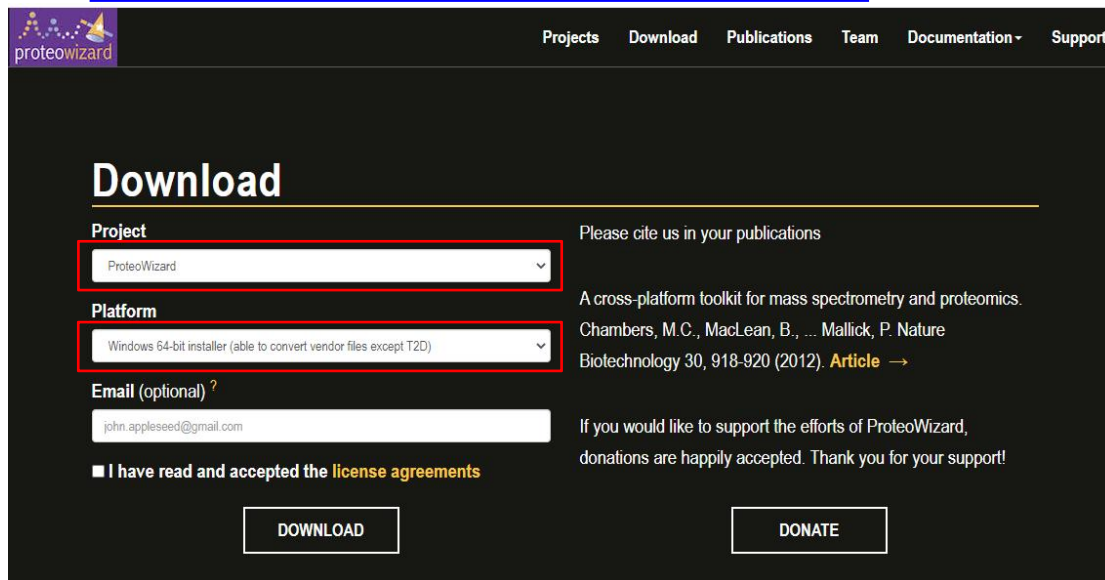
- 4) Get the *.fasta file.



7. Supporting protocol 2: MSconvert

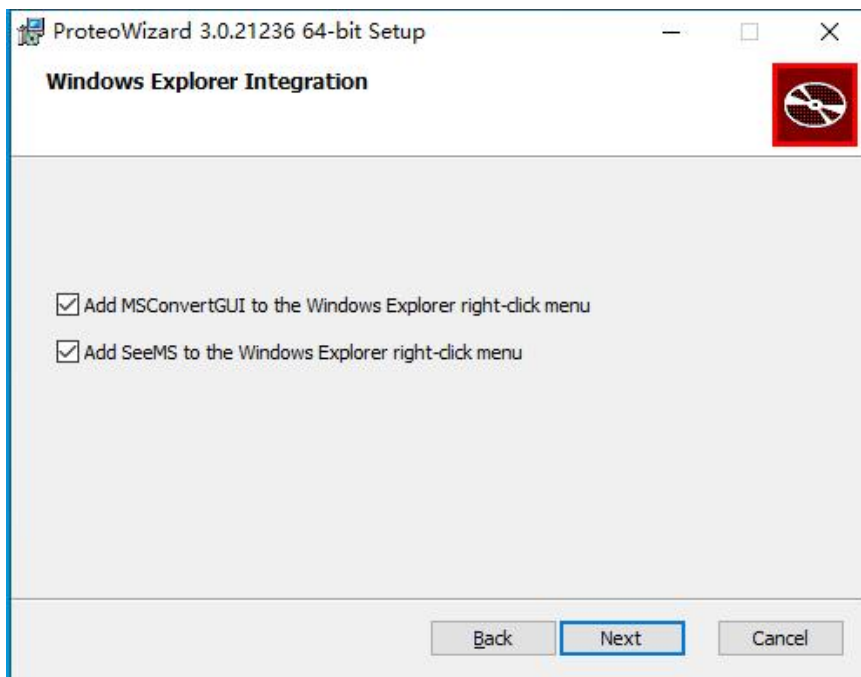
This protocol is used to convert non-Thermo MS data into mzML format files for pChem search.

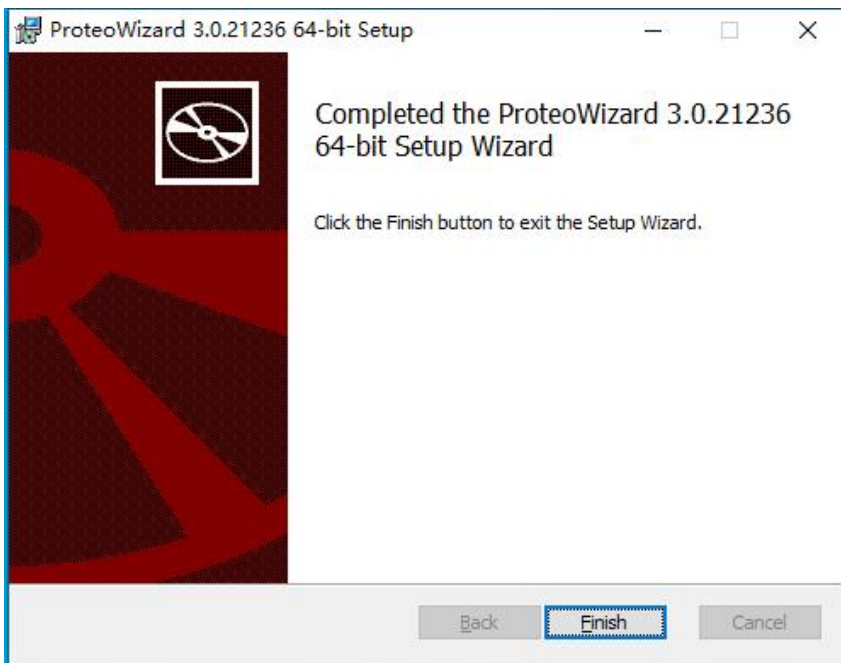
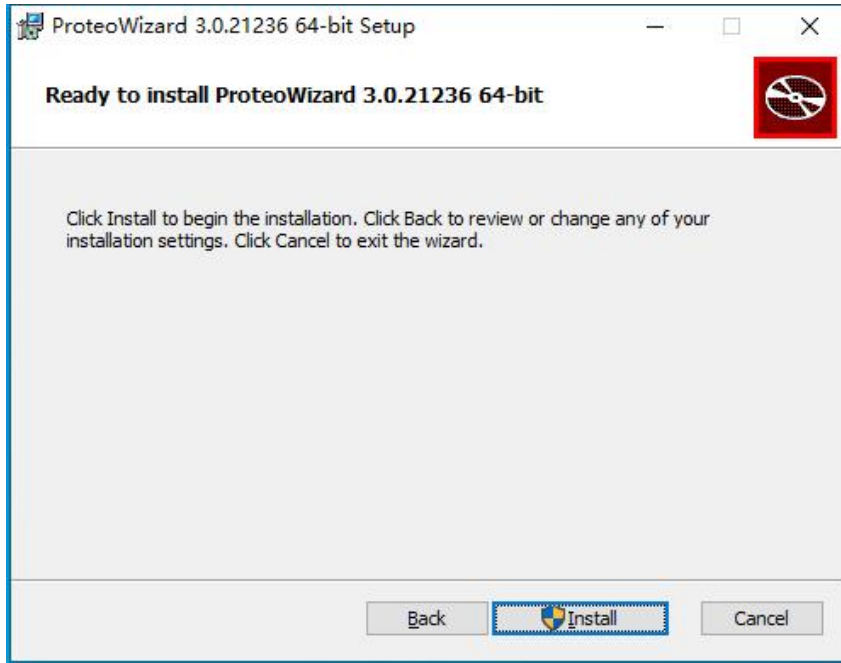
1) Download MSConvertGUI that is embedded in the ProteoWizard platform from: <https://proteowizard.sourceforge.io/download.html>.



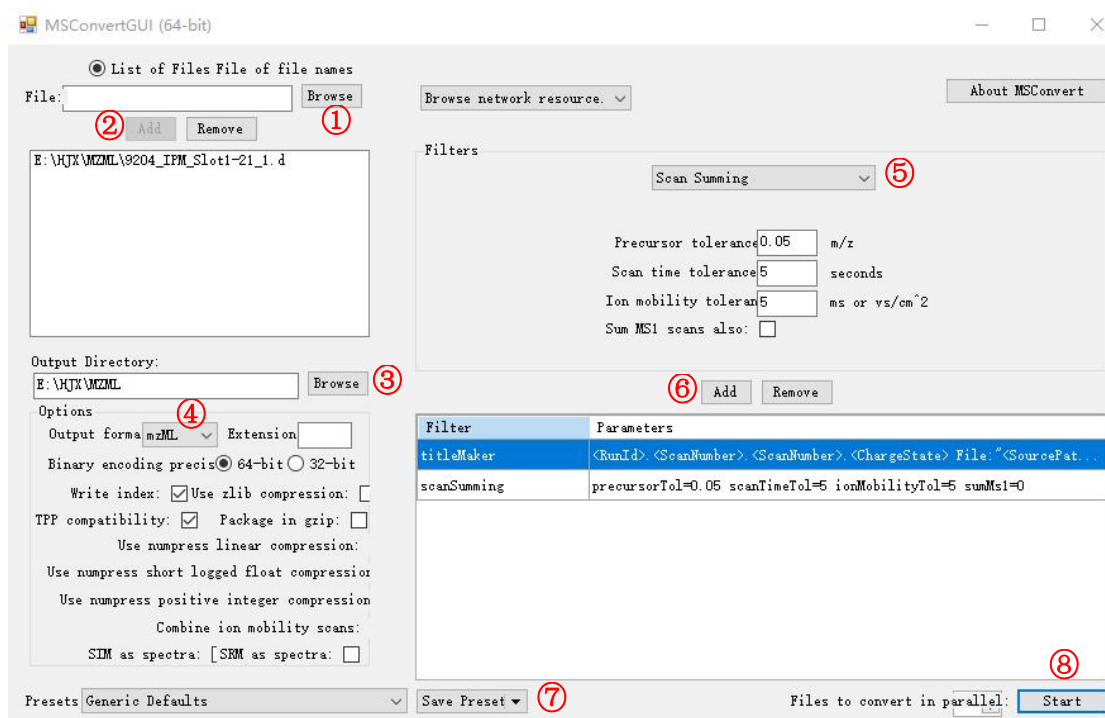
The screenshot shows the ProteoWizard website's download page. The page has a dark background with white text. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Projects, Download, Publications, Team, Documentation, and Support. The main heading is "Download". Below the heading, there are two dropdown menus: "Project" (set to "ProteoWizard") and "Platform" (set to "Windows 64-bit installer (able to convert vendor files except T2D)"). Below these is an "Email (optional)" field with the address "john.appleseed@gmail.com". A checkbox labeled "I have read and accepted the license agreements" is checked. To the right of the form, there is a "Please cite us in your publications" section with a citation: "A cross-platform toolkit for mass spectrometry and proteomics. Chambers, M.C., MacLean, B., ... Mallick, P. Nature Biotechnology 30, 918-920 (2012). Article →". Below the citation is a note: "If you would like to support the efforts of ProteoWizard, donations are happily accepted. Thank you for your support!". At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "DOWNLOAD" and "DONATE".

2) Install ProteoWizard according to the following instruction.





3) Open MSConvertGUI



①-② Browse and add MS data (e.g., *.d, *.WIFF files)

③ Define output route

④ Choose *.mzML as the output data format

⑤ -⑥ Define parameters for Scan Summing


⑥ -⑧ Save and run

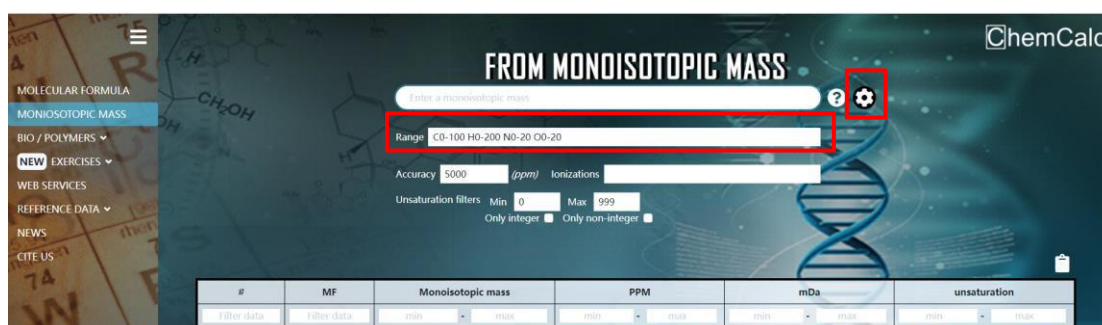
8. Supporting protocol 3: ChemCalc

This protocol is used to estimate candidate molecular formulas from the pChem-determined accurate masses.

1) Open <https://www.chemcalc.org/mf-finder>.



2) Click , check the element composition.



3) Input the monoisotopic mass of each PDM shown in *pChem.summary* or *pChem_ion_filter.summary* file. The candidate molecular formulas will immediately appear below.

Rank	PDM	Accurate Mass	Top1 Site Probability	Others	#PSM	#PSM L H	DFLs
1	PFIND_DELTA_252	252.122339	C 0.988		13876	7368 6508	

#	MF	Monoisotopic mass	PPM	mDa	unsaturation
1	C ₁₁ H ₁₆ N ₄ O ₃	252.1222	0.39	0.10	6
2	C ₁₂ H ₁₈ N ₄ O ₄	252.1236	-4.93	-1.24	5.5
3	C ₁₀ H ₁₂ O ₇	252.1209	5.70	1.44	1
4	C ₉ H ₁₄ N ₂ O ₂	252.1209	5.72	1.44	6.5
5	C ₁₄ H ₁₆ N ₂	252.1249	-10.24	-2.58	10.5
6	C ₉ H ₁₀ N ₂ O ₆	252.1196	11.02	2.78	1.5
7	C ₇ H ₁₂ N ₂ O	252.1196	11.04	2.78	7
8	C ₁₀ H ₁₄ N ₂ O	252.1263	-15.56	-3.92	10
9	C ₉ H ₁₀ N ₂ O ₅	252.1182	16.35	4.12	2
10	C ₉ H ₁₀ N ₃	252.1182	16.37	4.13	7.5