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In vivo crystallization of protein targets for African Sleeping Sickness (Trypanosoma brucei) Therapeutics

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Spontaneous protein crystallization within living cells has been observed several times in nature, e.g. for storage proteins in seeds. In vivo crystal growth can also occur during gene over-expression, as particularly discovered in baculovirus-infected insect cells [1]. We have recently shown that these in vivo crystals represent valuable targets for structural biology after isolation from the cell. Applying serial crystallography techniques at an X-ray free-electron laser (XFEL) as well as using a highly brilliant synchrotron source, single crystal diffraction pattern were collected and combined to yield high-resolution structural information of the associated fully glycosylated protein

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