

Reporting Summary

Nature Research wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Research policies, see [Authors & Referees](#) and the [Editorial Policy Checklist](#).

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| n/a | Confirmed |
| ☐ | ☒ The exact sample size (n) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement |
| ☒ | ☐ A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly |
| ☐ | ☒ The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided
<i>Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.</i> |
| ☐ | ☒ A description of all covariates tested |
| ☐ | ☒ A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons |
| ☐ | ☒ A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals) |
| ☐ | ☒ For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. F , t , r) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and P value noted
<i>Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.</i> |
| ☒ | ☐ For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings |
| ☒ | ☐ For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes |
| ☐ | ☒ Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's d , Pearson's r), indicating how they were calculated |

Our web collection on [statistics for biologists](#) contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about [availability of computer code](#)

Data collection TCGA data has been collected using the freely available GDC data transfer tools provided by the TCGA network: <https://gdc.cancer.gov/access-data/gdc-data-transfer-tool>.

Data analysis Data has been analyzed using freely available software packages, that we provide on GitHub and GitLab:
DecompPipeline: <https://github.com/CompEpigen/DecompPipeline>
MeDeCom: <https://github.com/lutsik/MeDeCom>
FactorViz: <https://github.com/CompEpigen/FactorViz>
consensusICA: <https://gitlab.com/biomodli/consica>.
The scripts to reproduce the figures in the manuscript are freely available from our supplementary website:
<http://epigenomics.dkfz.de/DecompProtocol/>

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors/reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Research [guidelines for submitting code & software](#) for further information.

Data

Policy information about [availability of data](#)

All manuscripts must include a [data availability statement](#). This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A list of figures that have associated raw data
- A description of any restrictions on data availability

The results shown here are wholly or partially based upon data generated by the TCGA (TCGA-LUAD dataset) Research Network: <https://www.cancer.gov/tcga>. The Ewing sarcoma dataset is available from the Gene Expression Omnibus GEO, accession number GSE88826.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

☒ Life sciences ☐ Behavioural & social sciences ☐ Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see [nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf](https://www.nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf)

Life sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Sample size	461 samples have been assayed within this study. As TCGA is one of the most comprehensive resources of epigenomic data available, we claim that we reach sufficient sample number to conduct the statistical analysis in this manuscript.
Data exclusions	No data was excluded from the analysis.
Replication	We did not replicate the presented results, since there is no dataset of similar size freely available.
Randomization	We used age, sex, race, and ethnicity as potential confounding factors that we addressed for using Independent Component Analysis (ICA)
Blinding	Blinding was not necessary for this study, since labeled data is not relevant for the overall study findings. The analyses have been conducted in a unsupervised way, and only after analysis results were linked to available sample annotations.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ Antibodies
☒	☐ Eukaryotic cell lines
☒	☐ Palaeontology
☒	☐ Animals and other organisms
☒	☐ Human research participants
☒	☐ Clinical data

Methods

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ ChIP-seq
☒	☐ Flow cytometry
☒	☐ MRI-based neuroimaging