

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

# All-atom knowledge-based potential for RNA structure prediction and assessment

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### 1.1 Calculation of knowledge-based RNA potentials

Four different knowledge-based potentials were calculated. The main difference between them was the number and type of atoms used to represent a RNA nucleotide (Sup. Table 1). Pairwise distance-dependent energy score functions were calculated as previously described (Melo and Feytmans, 1997; Melo, et al., 2002), using the following equation:

$$\Delta E_k^{ij}(d) = RT \ln \left[ 1 + M_k^{ij} \cdot \sigma \right] - RT \ln \left[ 1 + M_k^{ij} \cdot \sigma \frac{f_k^{ij}(d)}{f_k^{xx}(d)} \right] \quad (1)$$

where  $R$  is the gas constant,  $T$  is the absolute temperature, which value was set to 298 K so that  $RT$  is equivalent to 0.582 kcal/mol.  $M_k^{ij}$  is the total number of interactions observed between atom types  $i$  and  $j$  below the maximum distance range threshold (20 Å) at a given value of topological factor or sequence separation ( $k$ ) and it was calculated as follows:

$$M_k^{ij} = \sum_{d=1}^N F_k^{ij}(d) \quad (2)$$

$F_k^{ij}(d)$  is the absolute frequency of observations between atom types  $i$  and  $j$  at the distance class  $d$ , and  $N$  is the total number of distance classes defined. The topological factor or sequence separation  $k$  between nucleotides  $n$  and  $m$  is defined by  $k = |m-n| - 1$ , where  $n$  and  $m$  correspond to the observed residue indexes in the RNA chain. The potentials were calculated using a maximum distance threshold of 20 Å and distance bins of 1 Å each in the range of 0 to 20 Å. The constant weight factor  $\sigma$  given to each pairwise energy score function was set to 0.02, as previously described (Sippl, 1990).  $f_k^{ij}(d)$  is the relative frequency of interactions between atom types  $i$  and  $j$  at the distance class  $d$  and sequence separation  $k$ , and it was defined as follows:

$$f_k^{ij} = \frac{F_k^{ij}(d)}{M_k^{ij}} \quad (3)$$

$f_k^{xx}(d)$  is the reference system and corresponds to the relative frequency of observations between any two atom types in the distance class  $d$  with sequence separation  $k$ . This quantity was calculated by using the following equation:

$$f_k^{xx} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^C \sum_{j=1}^C F_k^{ij}(d)}{\sum_{i=1}^C \sum_{j=1}^C \sum_{d=1}^N F_k^{ij}(d)} \quad (4)$$

where  $C$  is the number of different atom types and  $N$  is the number of distance classes.

All potentials were derived asymmetrically, which means that the interaction between atoms  $x$  and  $y$  is not necessarily equivalent to that between  $y$  and  $x$ . The  $x$  atom in this case is defined as the one located

topologically closer to the 5' end of the RNA molecule. All potentials calculated here are available as supplementary data at: <http://melolab.org/sup-mat.html>.

## 1.2 Optimization of knowledge-based RNA potentials

The RASP variants have been calculated with different values of sequence separation ( $k$ ) and also considering as non-local interactions all those with a sequence separation larger or equal than a given threshold ( $K$ ). The optimal value for the separation between local and non-local interactions (*ie.* the sequence separation threshold  $K$ ) has been optimized by calculating the information product ( $IP$ ) at different thresholds spanning from 1 to 19 and selecting as optimal the one that resulted in an increment of  $IP$  smaller than 5%. The  $IP$  of a potential was calculated as previously described (Ferrada and Melo, 2009), by using the following equation:

$$IP = \sqrt{\bar{n}} \cdot \Delta \bar{E}_{NL}^{ij} \quad (5)$$

where  $\bar{n}$  is the mean number of interactions that will be observed in a typical RNA structure when using the potential and corresponds to:

$$\bar{n} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N n_i \quad (6)$$

where  $n_i$  is the number of score events (*ie.* those interactions that will be considered by a potential according to its utilization parameters) in the native RNA structure  $i$  and  $N$  is the total number of native RNA structures used to derive the potential.  $\Delta \bar{E}_{NL}^{ij}$  is the average energy score value per interaction observed in those native RNA molecules used to derive the potential:

$$\Delta \bar{E}_{NL}^{ij} = \frac{1}{X} \sum_{x=1}^X \Delta E_{NL}^{ij}(d) \quad (7)$$

where  $X$  corresponds to the total number of interactions scored in the native RNA structures when the potential was used to calculate their total score. Therefore,  $X$  corresponds to:

$$X = N \times \bar{n} = \sum_{i=1}^N n_i \quad (8)$$

In the case of the distance-dependent potentials calculated here,  $\Delta \bar{E}_{NL}^{ij}$  constitutes the best estimate of mutual information because it naturally takes into account the sensible issue of sparse data in the calculation of informatics quantities and accordingly adjusts the estimate of the energy score (Solis and Rackovsky, 2006; Solis and Rackovsky, 2008).

## 1.3 Performance assessment measures

The structural divergence between native and decoy RNA structures was calculated by the root mean square deviation (RMSD) and by the GDT-TS measures. They were both computed for C3' atoms after the optimal superposition of the decoy and native structures. The RMSD was calculated as follows:

$$RMSD = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \delta_i^2} \quad (9)$$

where  $N$  is the total number of atoms and  $\delta_i$  is the distance between the atoms  $i$  after the rotation that minimized the distances. The GDT-TS was the mean value of GDT at 1, 2, 4, and 8 Å distance cutoffs.

$$GDT-TS = \frac{GDT1 + GDT2 + GDT4 + GDT8}{4} \quad (10)$$

We calculated the GDT-TS as the fraction of corresponding C3' atoms that were superimposed under a selected distance threshold  $x$  after the rotation that minimized the distances. GDT-TS scores ranged from 0 to 1, with decoy structures very similar to native conformations resulting in GDT-TS close to 1. The Pearson correlation coefficient between the energy scores and the structure diversity measures (*ie.* RMSD and GDT-TS) was calculated as follows:

$$r = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^N x_i y_i - \sum_{i=1}^N x_i \sum_{i=1}^N y_i}{\sqrt{n \sum_{i=1}^N x_i^2 - \left(\sum_{i=1}^N x_i\right)^2} \sqrt{n \sum_{i=1}^N y_i^2 - \left(\sum_{i=1}^N y_i\right)^2}} \quad (11)$$

where  $x_i$  are the values of RMSD or GDT-TS and  $y_i$  values correspond to the normalized scores.

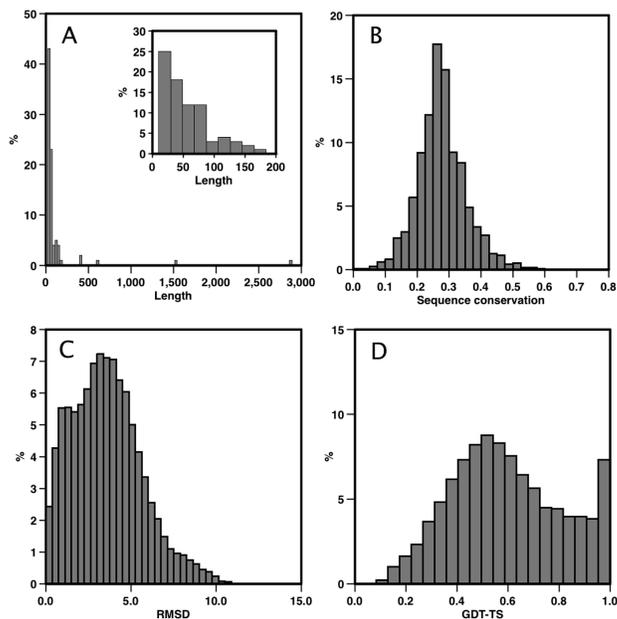
#### 1.4 Computer software that uses RASP potentials to assess RNA structures

The computer software developed here was written in C++ computer language and it is freely available to academic and non-academic users at <http://melolab.org/sup-mat.html>.

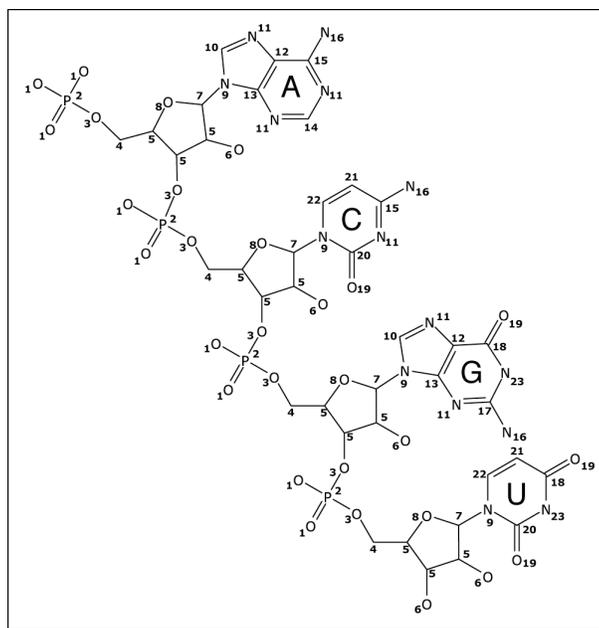
## References

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- Melo, F. and Feytmans, E. (1997) Novel knowledge-based mean force potential at atomic level, *J. Mol. Biol.* 267, 207-222.
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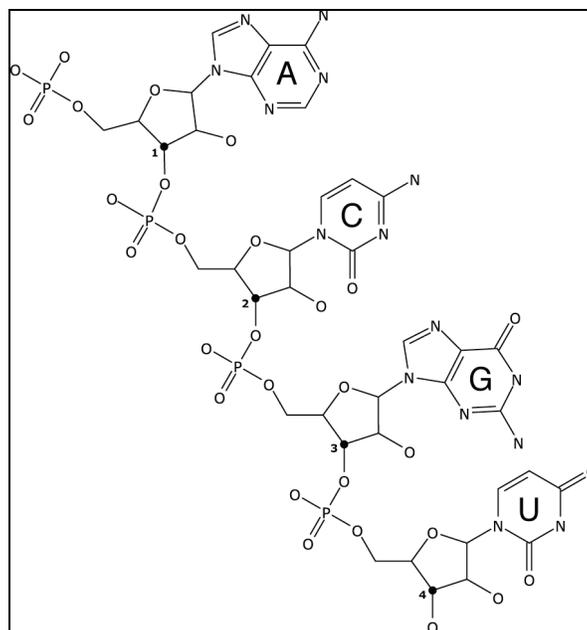
## Supplementary Figures



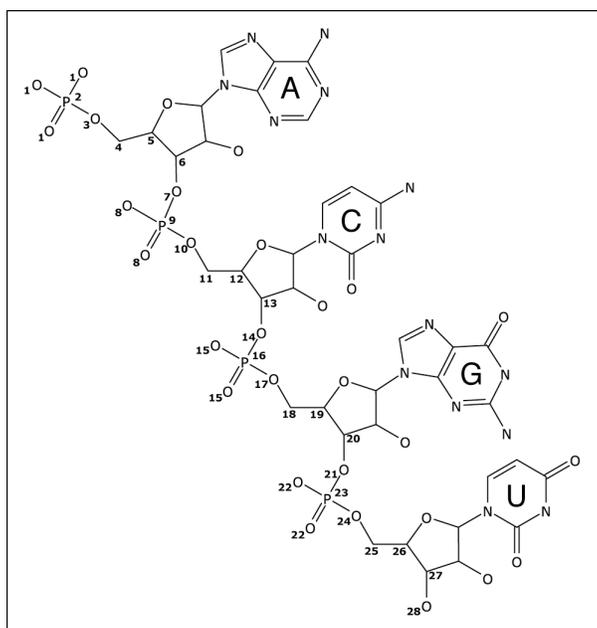
**Supplementary Figure 1.** Features of the benchmark datasets. A) Sequence length distribution for the non-redundant RNA dataset. B) Percentage sequence identity distribution for the randseq decoy set. C) Root mean square deviation (RMSD) distribution of C3' atoms for the randstr decoy set. D) GTD-TS distribution of C3' atoms for the randstr decoy set.



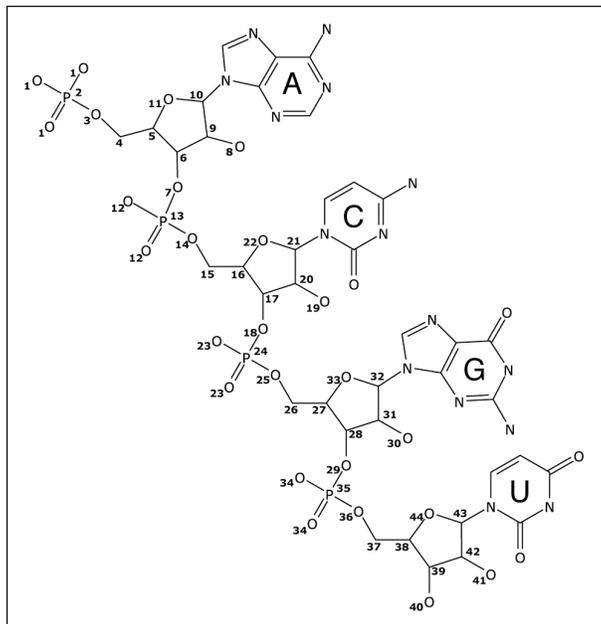
**Supplementary Fig 2.** Atom type definition in RASP-ALL potential. The definition of atom types is based on chemical nature, atom connectivity and chemical group location (backbone, ring and nitrogenated base). Note that this definition of atom types does not differentiate between common backbone and ring atoms belonging to different nucleotide groups.



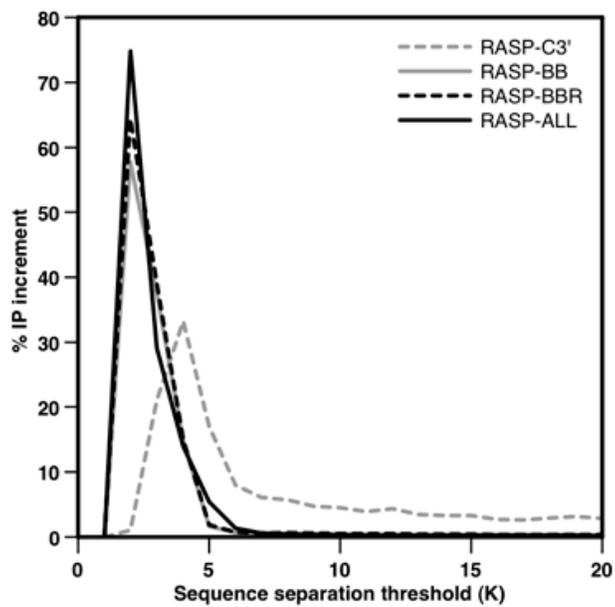
**Supplementary Figure 3.** Atom types of RASP-C3 potential



**Supplementary Figure 4.** Atom types of RASP-BB potential



**Supplementary Figure 5.** Atom types of RASP-BBR potential



**Supplementary Figure 6.** Information product (IP) variation as a function of the topological factor threshold (K) for the four statistical potentials

## Supplementary Tables

**Supplementary Table 1.** Features of RASP potentials

Potential	Atoms <sup>†</sup>	N	K
RASP-C3	C3' atoms	4*	8
RASP-BB	Backbone atoms	28*	4
RASP-BBR	Backbone and ribose atoms	44*	4
RASP-ALL	All atoms	23**	5

K is the optimal topological factor threshold. N is the number of atom types. † Only non-hydrogen atoms are considered. \*The detailed description of the atom type definition is provided as Sup. Tables 2 and 3. \*\*See Sup. Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

**Supplementary Table 2.** Atom type definition in RASP-ALL potential

Type	Atom Names and Chemical Groups <sup>†</sup>	Atom Connectivity Features
1	OP1, OP2, OP3 (all nucleotides)	O-sp <sup>3</sup> or O-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to P
2	P (all nucleotides)	P-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to O
3	O5' (all nucleotides)	O-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to P-sp <sup>3</sup> and C-sp <sup>3</sup>
4	C5' (all nucleotides)	C-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to O-sp <sup>3</sup> and C-sp <sup>3</sup>
5	C4', C3', C2' (all nucleotides)	C-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to two C-sp <sup>3</sup> and to an O-sp <sup>3</sup>
6	O2', O3'-terminal (all nucleotides)	O-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to a C-sp <sup>3</sup>
7	C1' (all nucleotides)	C-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to a C-sp <sup>3</sup> , an O-sp <sup>3</sup> and an N-sp <sup>2</sup>
8	O4' (all nucleotides)	O-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to two C-sp <sup>3</sup>
9	N1 (Pyrimidines); N9 (Purines)	N-sp <sup>2</sup> (pyrrolic)
10	C8 (Purines)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to a N-sp <sup>2</sup> and to a pyrrolic N-sp <sup>2</sup>
11	N3, N7 (Purines); N1 (ADE); N3 (CYT)	N-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to two C-sp <sup>2</sup> and not to an H
12	C5 (Purines)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to a C-sp <sup>2</sup> and to an N-sp <sup>2</sup>
13	C4 (Purines)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to a C-sp <sup>2</sup> , to an N-sp <sup>2</sup> and to a pyrrolic N-sp <sup>2</sup>
14	C2 (ADE)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to two N-sp <sup>2</sup>
15	C6 (ADE); C4 (CYT)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to an N-sp <sup>3</sup> , to an N-sp <sup>2</sup> and to a C-sp <sup>2</sup>
16	N6 (ADE); N4 (CYT); N2 (GUA)	N-sp <sup>3</sup> bonded to C-sp <sup>2</sup>
17	C2 (GUA)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to two N-sp <sup>2</sup> and to an N-sp <sup>3</sup>
18	C6 (GUA); C4 (URI)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to C-sp <sup>2</sup> , N-sp <sup>2</sup> and O-sp <sup>2</sup>
19	O2 (Pyrimidines); O6 (GUA); O4 (URI)	O-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to a C-sp <sup>2</sup>
20	C2 (Pyrimidines)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to a pyrrolic N-sp <sup>2</sup> , to an N-sp <sup>2</sup> and to an O-sp <sup>2</sup>
21	C5 (Pyrimidines)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to two C-sp <sup>2</sup>
22	C6 (Pyrimidines)	C-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to a C-sp <sup>2</sup> and to a pyrrolic N-sp <sup>2</sup>
23	N1 (GUA); N3 (URI)	N-sp <sup>2</sup> bonded to two C-sp <sup>2</sup> and to an H

<sup>†</sup>Atom names in IUPAC format as found in PDB files were used. Atom types defined are graphically illustrated in Sup. Fig. 2.

**Supplementary Table 3.** Atom type definition in RASP potentials (C3, BB and BBR)

ATOM TYPES DEFINITION			DESCRIPTION OF ATOMS AND NUCLEOTIDES
C3	BB	BBR	
---	1	1	OP1, OP2, OP3 (ADE)
---	2	2	P (ADE)
---	3	3	O5' (ADE)
---	4	4	C5' (ADE)
---	5	5	C4' (ADE)
1	6	6	C3' (ADE)
---	7	7	O3' (ADE)
---	---	8	O2' (ADE)
---	---	9	C2' (ADE)
---	---	10	C1' (ADE)
---	---	11	O4' (ADE)
---	8	12	OP1, OP2, OP3 (CYT)
---	9	13	P (CYT)
---	10	14	O5' (CYT)
---	11	15	C5' (CYT)
---	12	16	C4' (CYT)
2	13	17	C3' (CYT)
---	14	18	O3' (CYT)
---	---	19	O2' (CYT)
---	---	20	C2' (CYT)
---	---	21	C1' (CYT)
---	---	22	O4' (CYT)
---	15	23	OP1, OP2, OP3 (GUA)
---	16	24	P (GUA)
---	17	25	O5' (GUA)
---	18	26	C5' (GUA)
---	19	27	C4' (GUA)
3	20	28	C3' (GUA)
---	21	29	O3' (GUA)
---	---	30	O2' (GUA)
---	---	31	C2' (GUA)
---	---	32	C1' (GUA)
---	---	33	O4' (GUA)
---	22	34	OP1, OP2, OP3 (URI)
---	23	35	P (URI)
---	24	36	O5' (URI)
---	25	37	C5' (URI)
---	26	38	C4' (URI)
4	27	39	C3' (URI)
---	28	40	O3' (URI)
---	---	41	O2' (URI)
---	---	42	C2' (URI)
---	---	43	C1' (URI)
---	---	44	O4' (URI)

**Supplementary Table 4.** Ranking test

	<i>randseq</i>		<i>randstr</i>	
	Top 1	Top 10	Top 1	Top 10
C3	0.52	0.72	0.08	0.32
BB	0.54	0.71	0.35	0.78
BBR	0.62	0.80	0.89	0.93
FULL	---	---	0.93	0.95
NAST	---	---	0.22	0.65
ROSETTA	---	---	0.62	0.75
ROSETTAmin	---	---	0.85	1.00
AMBER99	---	---	0.73	0.88

Fraction of native RNA structures correctly ranked by each scoring function in the *randseq* and *randstr* datasets. Top 1 ranking represents the fraction of cases where the native RNA structure had the lowest score. Top 10 ranking represents the fraction of cases where the native structure had a score within the lowest ten scores out of the 500 decoys.

**Supplementary Table 5.** Statistical significance analysis of correlation tests between energy scores and RMSD

	C3	BB	BBR	ALL	NAST	R	Rmin	AMB
C3	N.A.	0.694	0.753	0.859	0.329	0.287	0.301	0.153
BB	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	N.A.	0.141	0.412	0.729	0.800	0.679	0.729
BBR	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<b>0.340</b>	N.A.	0.341	0.800	0.882	0.751	0.800
FULL	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	N.A.	0.894	0.929	0.869	0.882
NAST	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	N.A.	0.120	0.505	0.235
R	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<b>0.550</b>	N.A.	0.506	0.244
Rmin	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	N.A.	0.305					
AMB	<b>0.251</b>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	<10 <sup>-3</sup>	0.015	0.011	0.001	N.A.

The statistical significance of the observed differences between two distributions of Pearson correlation coefficients using RASP (C3, BB, BBR and ALL), NAST, ROSETTA (R), ROSETTAmin (with energy minimization, labeled as Rmin) and AMBER (labeled as AMB) energy scores and the RMSD of all atoms in the *randstr* dataset was evaluated with the non-parametric and distribution free Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test. The cells below the diagonal of the table show the p-value for the comparison of two potentials using the KS test. The cases where the difference is not statistically significant, at the confidence level of 95%, are shown in bold. The cells above the diagonal of the table show the D statistic for all pairs of potentials. N.A. stands for "Not Applicable".

**Supplementary Table 6.** Statistical significance analysis of correlation tests between energy scores and GDT-TS

	C3	BB	BBR	ALL	NAST	R	Rmin	AMB
C3	N.A.	0.788	0.835	0.894	0.400	0.252	0.363	0.153
BB	$<10^{-3}$	N.A.	0.235	0.518	0.777	0.835	0.750	0.788
BBR	$<10^{-3}$	0.015	N.A.	0.426	0.859	0.905	0.797	0.835
FULL	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	N.A.	0.918	0.941	0.882	0.906
NAST	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	N.A.	0.183	0.622	0.294
R	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	<b>0.105</b>	N.A.	0.558	0.244
Rmin	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	N.A.	0.375
AMB	<b>0.251</b>	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	$<10^{-3}$	0.001	0.010	$<10^{-3}$	N.A.

The statistical significance of the observed differences between any two distributions of Pearson correlation coefficients using RASP (C3, BB, BBR and ALL), NAST, ROSETTA (R), ROSETTamin (with energy minimization, labeled as Rmin) and AMBER (labeled as AMB) energy scores and the GDT-TS of all atoms in the randstr dataset was evaluated with the non-parametric and distribution free KS test. See legend of Sup. Table 5 for more details.

**Supplementary Table 7.** Model ranking results in ROSETTA benchmark set

Seq Num	MOTIF NAME	Number of Residues	Number of Chains	RMSD of Lowest Energy Model†		RMSD of nearest-native Model
				ROSETTamin	RASP-ALL	
1	G-A base pair	6	2	3.106	<b>1.190</b>	<b>1.190</b>
2	Fragment with G/G and G/A pairs, SRP helix VI	8	2	2.620	<b>1.832</b>	<b>1.832</b>
3	Helix with A/C base pairs	12	2	<b>1.814</b>	2.451	<b>1.814</b>
4	Four-way junction, HCV IRES	13	4	11.351	11.351	10.031
5	Loop 8, A-type Ribonuclease P	7	1	4.501	<b>3.440</b>	1.384
6	Helix with U/C base pairs	8	2	3.006	<b>2.095</b>	<b>2.095</b>
7	Curved helix with G/A and A/A base pairs	12	2	<b>1.062</b>	1.743	0.998
8	Pre-catalytic conformation, hammerhead ribozyme	19	3	12.287	<b>7.659</b>	<b>7.659</b>
9	Loop E motif, 5S RNA	18	2	<b>2.163</b>	2.269	1.641
10	UUCG tetraloop	6	1	1.148	<b>1.143</b>	1.122
11	Rev response element high affinity site	9	2	4.112	<b>4.078</b>	3.859
12	Fragment with A/C pairs, SRP helix VI	12	2	5.456	<b>3.270</b>	<b>3.270</b>
13	Signal recognition particle Domain IV	12	2	3.227	<b>2.346</b>	1.217
14	Bulged G motif, sarcin/ricin loop	13	2	<b>1.659</b>	5.160	1.460
15	Tertiary interaction, hammerhead ribozyme	16	3	<b>7.942</b>	9.863	7.565
16	GAGA tetraloop from sarcin/ricin loop	6	1	0.921	<b>0.819</b>	0.819
17	Pentaloop from conserved region of SARS genome	7	1	3.110	<b>3.109</b>	0.999
18	L2/L3 tertiary interaction, purine riboswitch	18	2	<b>9.461</b>	9.590	8.081
19	L3, thiamine pyrophosphate riboswitch	7	1	3.750	<b>1.995</b>	<b>1.995</b>
20	Kink-turn motif from SAM-I riboswitch	13	2	<b>1.365</b>	8.447	1.220
21	Active site, hammerhead ribozyme	17	3	<b>10.210</b>	11.721	8.643
22	P1/L3, SAM-II riboswitch	23	2	<b>9.762</b>	12.289	7.397
23	J4/5 from P4-P6 domain, Tetrahymena ribozyme	9	2	<b>2.125</b>	2.352	1.759
24	Stem C internal loop, L1 ligase	12	2	2.416	2.416	2.240
25	J5/5a hinge, P4-P6 domain, Tetr. ribozyme	17	2	<b>10.897</b>	10.973	9.941
26	Three-way junction, purine riboswitch	13	3	<b>6.578</b>	7.126	6.099
27	J4a/4b region, metal-sensing riboswitch	14	2	4.479	<b>3.523</b>	3.428
28	Kink-turn motif	15	2	10.049	<b>9.724</b>	8.580
29	Tetraloop/helix interaction, L1 ligase crystal	10	3	1.214	<b>0.857</b>	<b>0.857</b>
30	Hook-turn motif	11	3	<b>4.569</b>	5.495	1.718
31	Tetraloop/receptor, P4-P6 domain, Tetr. ribozyme	15	3	8.232	<b>6.770</b>	2.891
32	Pseudoknot, domain III, CPV IRES	18	2	5.835	<b>3.808</b>	3.380

Benchmark set of 407 structure models built with ROSETTA and the FARFAR potential for 32 RNA motifs with non-canonical base pairs (Das et al., 2010). † The RMSD of the lowest energy model of ROSETTamin and RASP-ALL is shown in bold face when it is the lowest value between the two methods. The RMSD value of the nearest-native model in each set is shown in bold type when either ROSETTamin or RASP-ALL potentials were able to select it with the lowest energy score.