

# Protein Microarray Data Analysis using the *PAA* Package

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 General information

Protein Array Analyzer (*PAA*) is a package for protein microarray data analysis (esp., *ProtoArray* data). It imports single color (protein) microarray data that has been saved in 'gpr' file format. After pre- processing (background correction, batch filtering, normalization) univariate feature pre-selection is performed (e.g., using the "minimum M statistic" approach - hereinafter referred to as "mMs", [1]). Subsequently, a multivariate feature selection is conducted to discover biomarker candidates. Therefore, either a frequency-based backwards elimination approach or ensemble feature selection can be used. *PAA* provides a complete toolbox of analysis tools including several different plots for results examination and evaluation.

In this vignette the general workflow of *PAA* will be outlined by analyzing an exemplary data set that accompanies this package.

## 1.2 Installation

The recommended way to install *PAA* is to type the commands described below in the *R* console (note: an active internet connection is needed):

```
> # only if you install a Bioconductor package for the first time
> source("http://www.bioconductor.org/biocLite.R")
> # else
> library("BiocInstaller")
> biocLite("PAA", dependencies=TRUE)
```

This will install *PAA* including all dependencies.

Furthermore, *PAA* has an external dependency that is needed to provide full functionality. This external dependency is the free *C++* software package "*Random Jungle*" that can be downloaded from <http://www.randomjungle.de/>. Note: *PAA* will be usable without *Random Jungle*. However, it needs this package for random jungle recursive feature elimination (*RJ-RFE*) provided by the function `selectFeatures()`. Please follow the instructions for your OS in the README file to install *Random Jungle* properly on your machine.

## 2 Loading PAA and importing data

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After launching *R*, the first step of the exemplary analysis is to load *PAA*.

```
> library(PAA)
```

New microarray data should be imported using the function `loadGPR()` which is mainly a wrapper to *limma*'s function `read.maimages()` featuring optional duplicate aggregation for *ProtoArray* data. *PAA* supports the import of files in 'gpr' file format. The imported data is stored in an expression list object (*EList*, respectively, *EListRaw*, see Bioconductor package *limma*). Paths to a targets file and to a folder containing 'gpr' files (all 'gpr' files in this folder that are listed in the targets file will be read) are mandatory arguments. The folder that can be obtained by the command `system.file("extdata", package = "PAA")` contains an exemplary targets file that can be used as a template. Below, the first 3 rows of this targets file are shown.

```
> targets <- read.table(file=list.files(system.file("extdata", package="PAA"),
+ pattern = "~targets", full.names = TRUE), header=TRUE)
> print(targets[1:3,])
```

|   | ArrayID | FileName                    | Group | Batch  | Date       | Array | SerumID |
|---|---------|-----------------------------|-------|--------|------------|-------|---------|
| 1 | AD1     | GSM734833_PA41992_-_AD1.gpr | AD    | Batch1 | 10.11.2010 | 41992 | AD1     |
| 2 | AD2     | GSM734834_PA41994_-_AD2.gpr | AD    | Batch2 | 10.11.2010 | 41994 | AD2     |
| 3 | AD3     | GSM734835_PA42006_-_AD3.gpr | AD    | Batch1 | 12.11.2010 | 42006 | AD3     |

The columns "ArrayID", "FileName", and "Group" are mandatory. "Batch" is mandatory for microarray data that has been processed in batches. The remaining three columns as well as custom columns containing further information (e.g., clinical data) are optional.

If `array.type` is set to "ProtoArray" (default) duplicate spots will be aggregated. After importing, the object can be saved in a '.RData' file for further sessions. In the following code chunk, `loadGPR()` is demonstrated using a exemplary dummy data set that comes with *PAA* and has been created from the real data described below.

```
> gpr <- system.file("extdata", package="PAA")
> targets <- list.files(system.file("extdata", package="PAA"),
+ pattern = "dummy_targets", full.names=TRUE)
> dummy.elist <- loadGPR(gpr.path=gpr, targets.path=targets)
> save(dummy.elist, file=paste(gpr, "/DummyData.RData",
+ sep=""), compress="xz")
```

*PAA* comes with an exemplary protein microarray data set. This 20 Alzheimer's disease serum samples vs. 20 controls data is a subset of a publicly available *ProtoArray* data set. It can be downloaded from the repository "*Gene Expression Omnibus*" (GEO, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/geo/>, record "GSE29676"). It has been contributed by *Nagele E et al.* [2] (note: Because a data set stored in 'gpr' files would be too large to accompany this package the exemplary data is stored as an '.RData' file).

In the following code chunk, the *PAA* installation path (where exemplary data is located) is localized, the new folder 'demo\_output' (where all output of the following analysis will be saved) is created, and the exemplary data set is loaded (note: exceptionally not via `loadGPR()`).

```
> cwd <- system.file(package="PAA")
> dir.create(paste(cwd, "/demo/demo_output", sep=""))
> output.path <- paste(cwd, "/demo/demo_output", sep="")
> load(paste(cwd, "/extdata/Alzheimer.RData", sep=""))
```

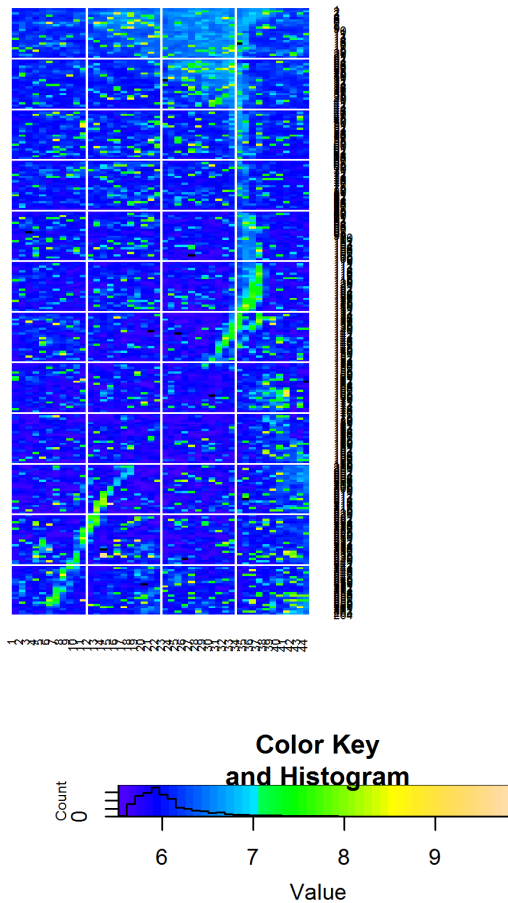
### 3 Pre-processing

Before pre-processing the microarrays should be inspected visually for any strong spatial biases. In *PAA* this can be done for *ProtoArrays* using the function `plotArray()` which plots the imported *ProtoArray* data in the original arrangement mimicing the original scan image. Thus, `plotArray()` is a visualization tool that can be used to visualize *ProtoArrays* for which the original scan image is not available. Visual inspection of the spatial expression pattern can then identify possible local tendencies and strong spatial biases. Moreover, the array can be inspected at all stages of the pre-processing workflow in order to check the impact of the particular methods that have been applied.

Consequently, as a first step, always the plots of the foreground signals (`data.type="fg"`) should be compared with the plots of the background signals (`data.type="bg"`).

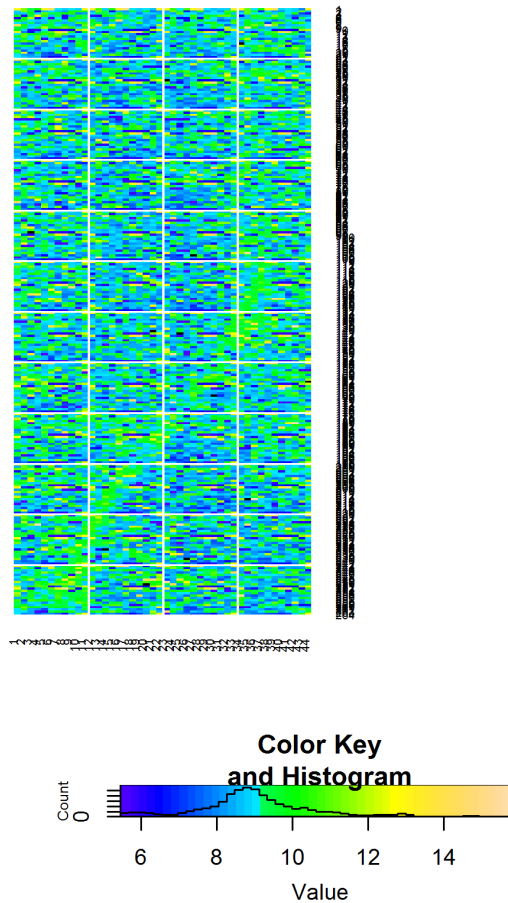
```
> plotArray(elist=elist, idx=3, data.type="bg", log=FALSE, normalized=FALSE,
+   protoarray.aggregation="min", colpal="topo.colors")
```

**AD3 Array Plot**



```
> plotArray(elist=elist, idx=3, data.type="fg", log=FALSE, normalized=FALSE,
+   protoarray.aggregation="min", colpal="topo.colors")
```

### AD3 Array Plot



In the exemplary plots shown above there is a relatively strong artifact in the background signal that has a slight impact on the foreground signal. In both figures an irregular stripe runs from the upper right part of the array to the bottom left corner. Although in the background plot this artifact is more visible than in the foreground plot the corresponding spatial bias is obvious.

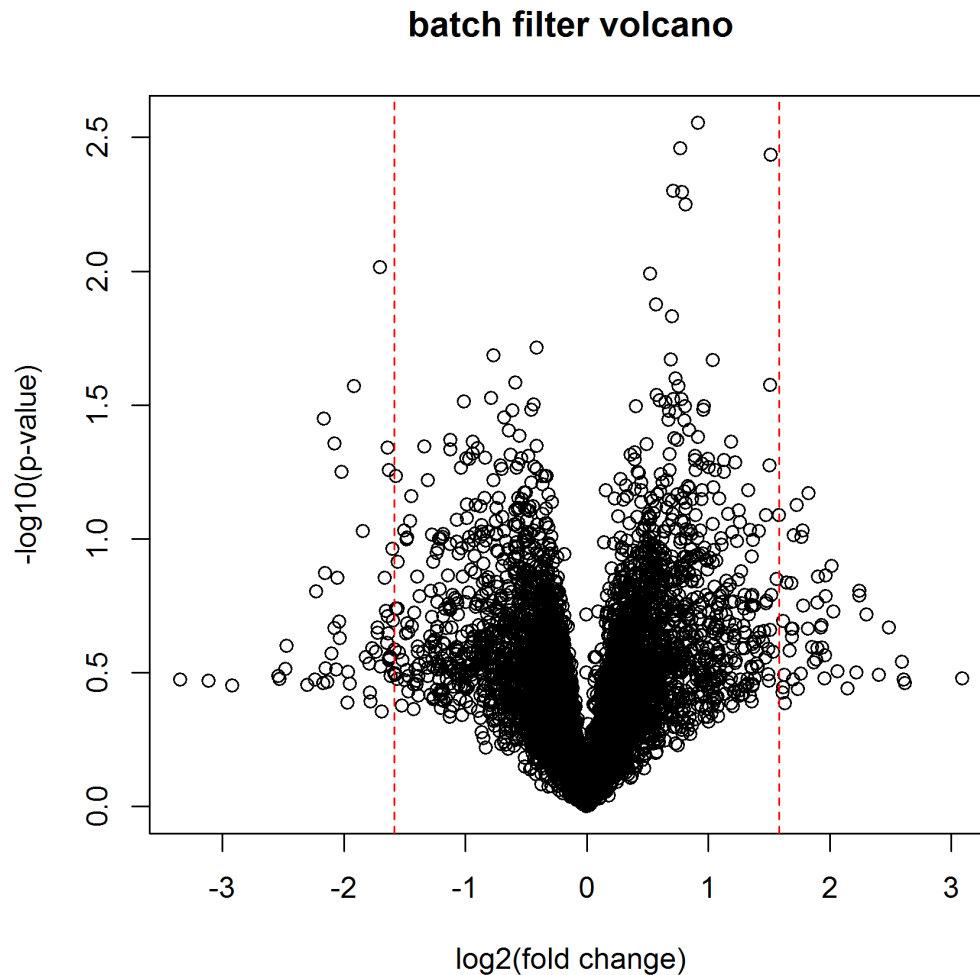
For background correction *limma*'s function `backgroundCorrect()` can be used:

```
> library(limma)
> elist <- backgroundCorrect(elist, method="normexp",
+ normexp.method="saddle")
```

If the microarrays were manufactured or processed in lots/batches, data analysis will suffer from batch effects resulting in wrong results. Hence, the elimination of batch effects is a crucial step of data pre-processing. A simple method to remove the most obvious batch effects is to find features that are extremely differential in different batches. In *PAA* this can be done for two batches using the function `batchFilter()`. This function takes an *EList* or *EListRaw* object and the batch-specific column name vectors `lot1` and `lot2` to find differential features regarding batches/lots. For this purpose, thresholds for p-values (Student's t-test) and fold changes can be defined. To visualize the differential features a volcano plot is drawn. Finally, the differential features are removed and the remaining data is returned.

```
> lot1 <- elist$targets[elist$targets$Batch=='Batch1', 'ArrayID']
> lot2 <- elist$targets[elist$targets$Batch=='Batch2', 'ArrayID']
> elist <- batchFilter(elist=elist, lot1=lot1, lot2=lot2, p.thresh=0.001,
```

```
+ fold.thresh=3)
```

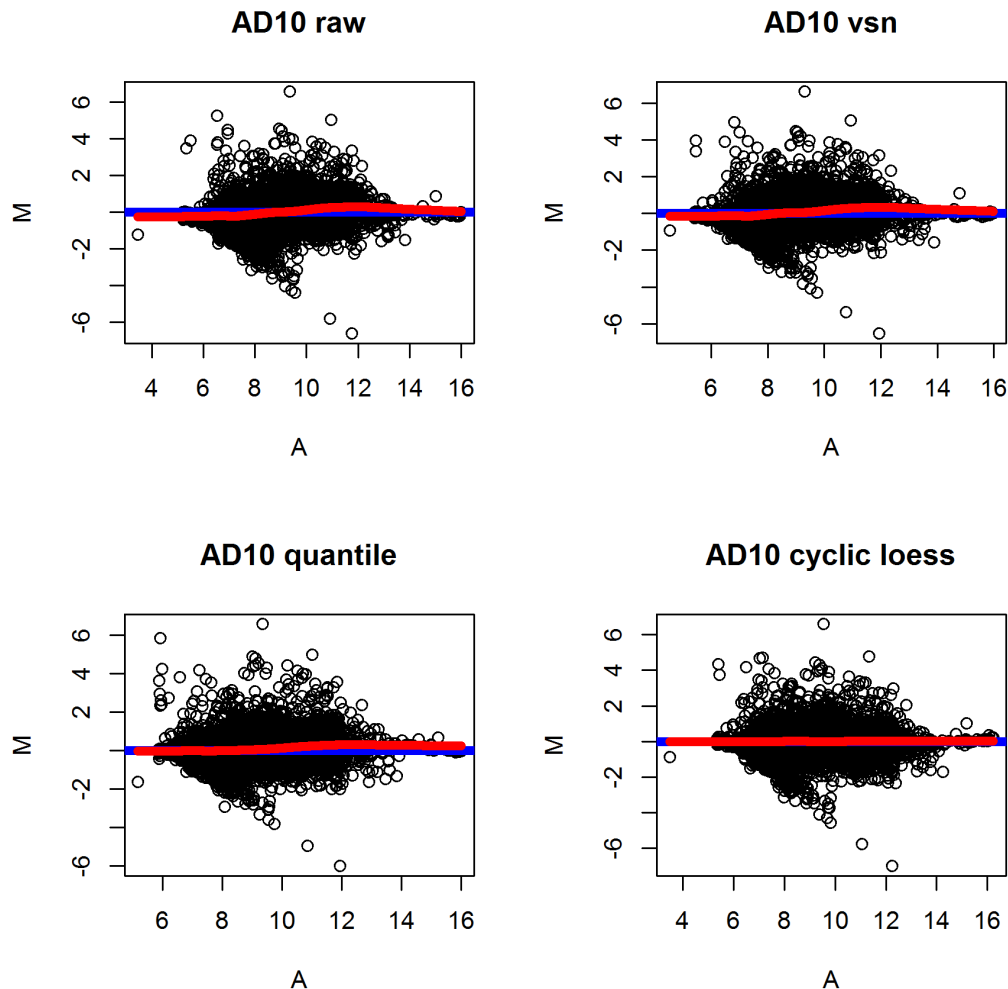


Another important step in pre-processing is normalization. To assist in choosing an appropriate normalization method for a given data set, [PAA](#) provides two functions: `plotNormMethods()` and `plotMAPlots()`. `plotNormMethods()` draws boxplots (one boxplot per sample) of raw data and data after all kinds of normalization provided by [PAA](#). For each normalization approach sample-wise boxplots are created. All boxplots will be saved as a high-quality 'tiff' file, if an output path is specified.

```
> plotNormMethods(elist=elist)
```

`plotMAPlots()` draws MA plots of raw data and data after applying all kinds of normalization methods provided by [PAA](#). If `idx="all"` and an output path is defined (default), for each microarray one 'tiff' file containing MA plots will be created. If `idx` is an integer indicating the column index of a particular sample, MA plots only for this sample will be created.

```
> plotMAPlots(elist=elist, idx=10)
```



After choosing a normalization method, the function `normalizeArrays()` can be used in order to normalize the data. `normalizeArrays()` takes an *EListRaw* object, normalizes the data, and returns an *EList* object containing normalized data in log2 scale. As normalization methods "cyclicloess", "quantile" or "vsn" can be chosen. Furthermore, for *ProtoArrays* robust linear normalization ("rlm", see *Sboner A. et al.* [3]) is provided.

```
> elist <- normalizeArrays(elist=elist, method="cyclicloess",
+ cyclicloess.method="fast")
```

In addition to `batchFilter()`, the function `batchAdjust()` can be used after normalization via `normalizeArrays()` to adjust the data for batch effects. This is a wrapper to [sva](#)'s function `ComBat()` for batch adjustment using the empirical Bayes approach [4]. To use `batchAdjust()` the targets file information of the *EList* object must contain the columns "Batch" and "Group".

```
> elist <- batchAdjust(elist=elist, log=TRUE)
```

Found 2 batches

Adjusting for 1 covariate(s) or covariate level(s)

Standardizing Data across genes

Fitting L/S model and finding priors

Finding parametric adjustments

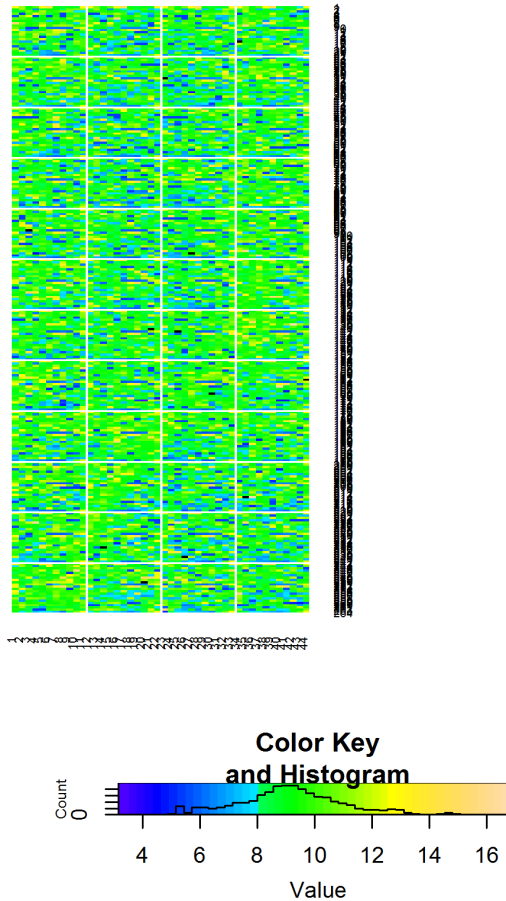
Adjusting the Data

After pre-processing, the corrected data can be inspected via `plotArray()` again. E.g., now the plot of the *ProtoArray*

plotted above shows that the revealed spatial bias is less obvious after pre-processing.

```
> plotArray(elist=elist, idx=3, data.type="fg", log=TRUE, normalized=TRUE,
+   protoarray.aggregation="min", colpal="topo.colors")
```

### AD3 Array Plot



Since for further analysis also data in original scale will be needed, a copy of the *EList* object containing unlogged data should be created.

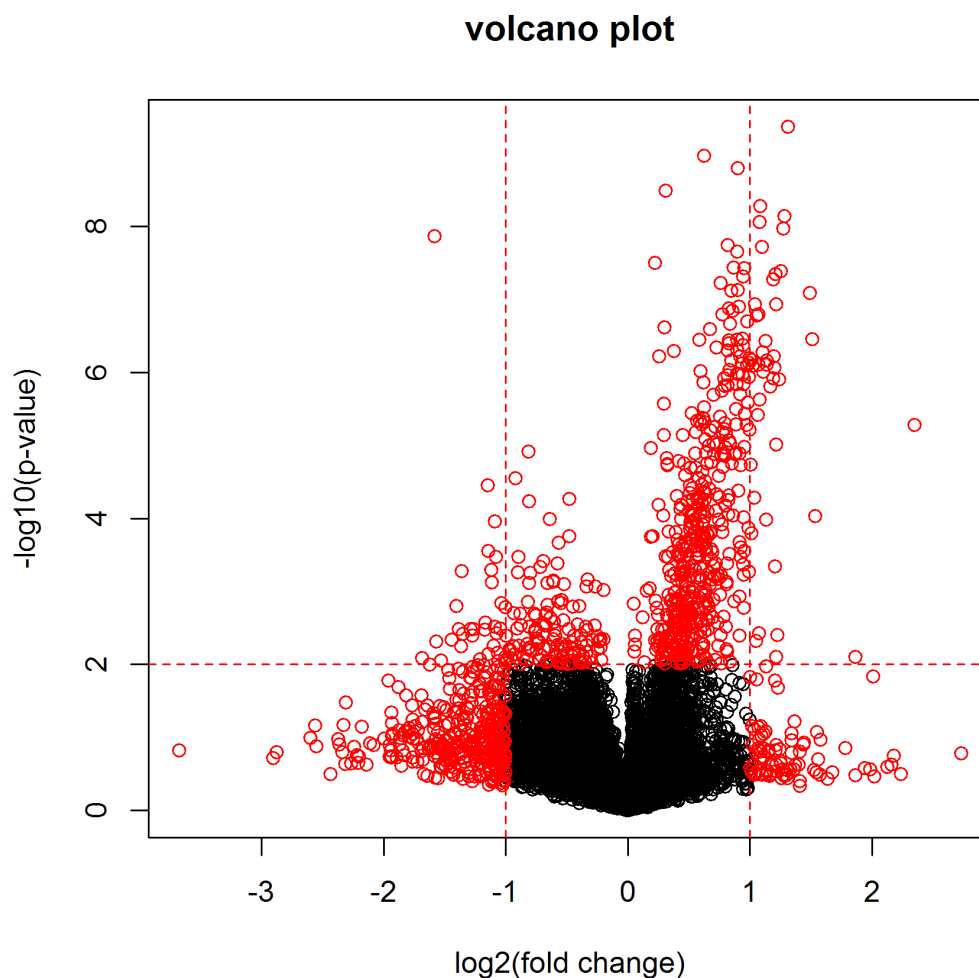
```
> elist.unlog <- elist
> elist.unlog$E <- 2^(elist$E)
```



## 4 Differential analysis

The goal of univariate differential analysis is to detect relevant differential features. Therefore, statistical measures such as t-test p-values or mMs as well as fold changes are considered. *PAA* provides plotting functions in order to depict the number and the quality of the differential features in the data set. Accordingly, the function `volcanoPlot()` draws a volcano plot to visualize differential features. Therefore, thresholds for p-values and fold changes can be defined. Furthermore, the p-value computation method ("`mMs`" or "`tTest`") can be set. When an output path is defined (via `output.path`) the plot will be saved as a 'tiff' file. In the next code chunk, an example with `method="tTest"` is given.

```
> c1 <- paste(rep("AD",20), 1:20, sep="")
> c2 <- paste(rep("NDC",20), 1:20, sep="")
> volcanoPlot(elist=elist.unlog, group1=c1, group2=c2, method="tTest",
+ p.thresh=0.01, fold.thresh=2)
```

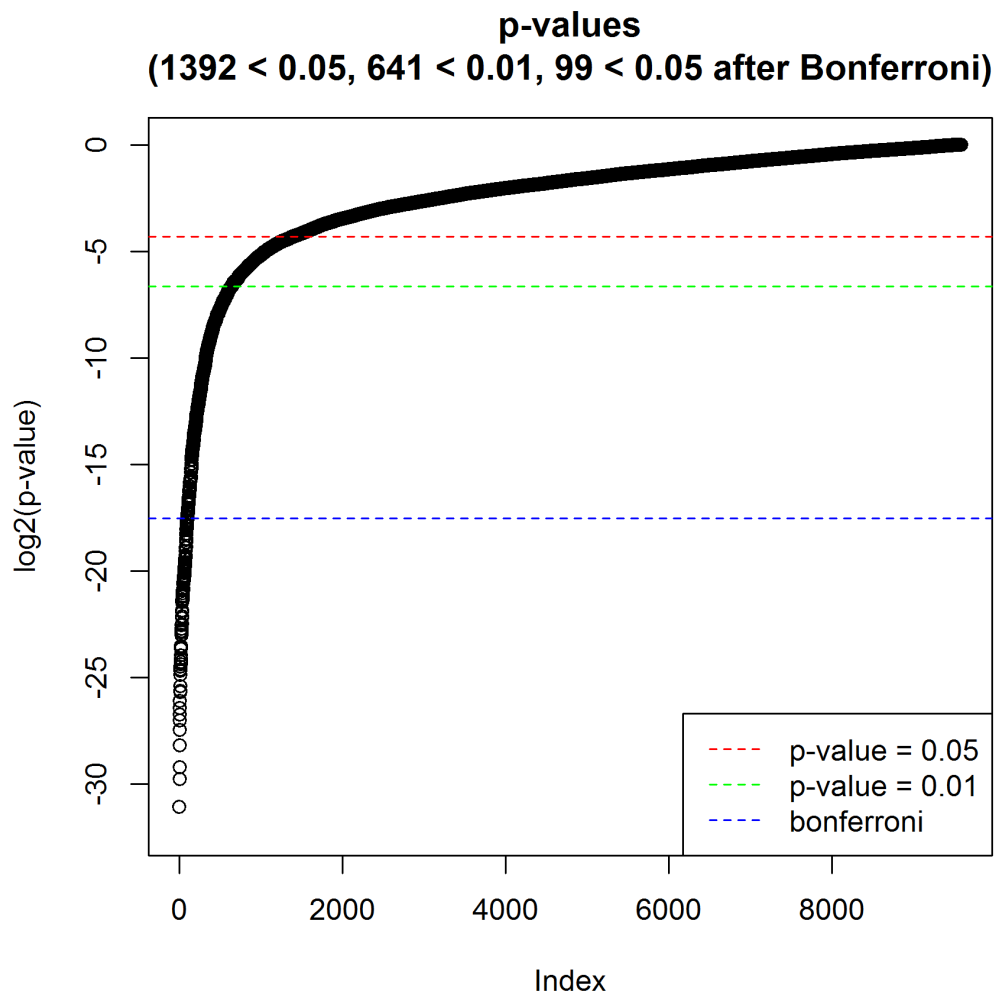


Here, an example with `method="mMs"` is given:

```
> mMs.matrix1 <- mMs.matrix2 <- mMsMatrix(x=20, y=20)
> volcanoPlot(elist=elist.unlog, group1=c1, group2=c2, method="mMs",
+ p.thresh=0.01, fold.thresh=2, mMs.matrix1=mMs.matrix1,
+ mMs.matrix2=mMs.matrix2, above=1500, between=400)
```

Another plotting function is `pvaluePlot()` which draws a plot of p-values for all features in the data set (sorted in increasing order and in log2 scale). The p-value computation method ("tTest" or "mMs") can be set via the argument `method`. Furthermore, when `adjust=TRUE` adjusted p-values (method: Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995, computed via `p.adjust()`) will be used. For a better orientation, horizontal dashed lines indicate which p-values are smaller than 0.05 and 0.01. If `adjust=FALSE`, additionally, the respective Bonferroni significance threshold (to show p-values that would be smaller than 0.05 after a possible Bonferroni correction) for the given data is indicated by a third dashed line. Note: Bonferroni is not used for the adjustment. The dashed line is for better orientation only. When an output path is defined (via `output.path`) the plot will be saved as a 'tiff' file. In the next code chunk, an example with `method="tTest"` is given.

```
> pvaluePlot(elist=elist.unlog, group1=c1, group2=c2, method="tTest")
```

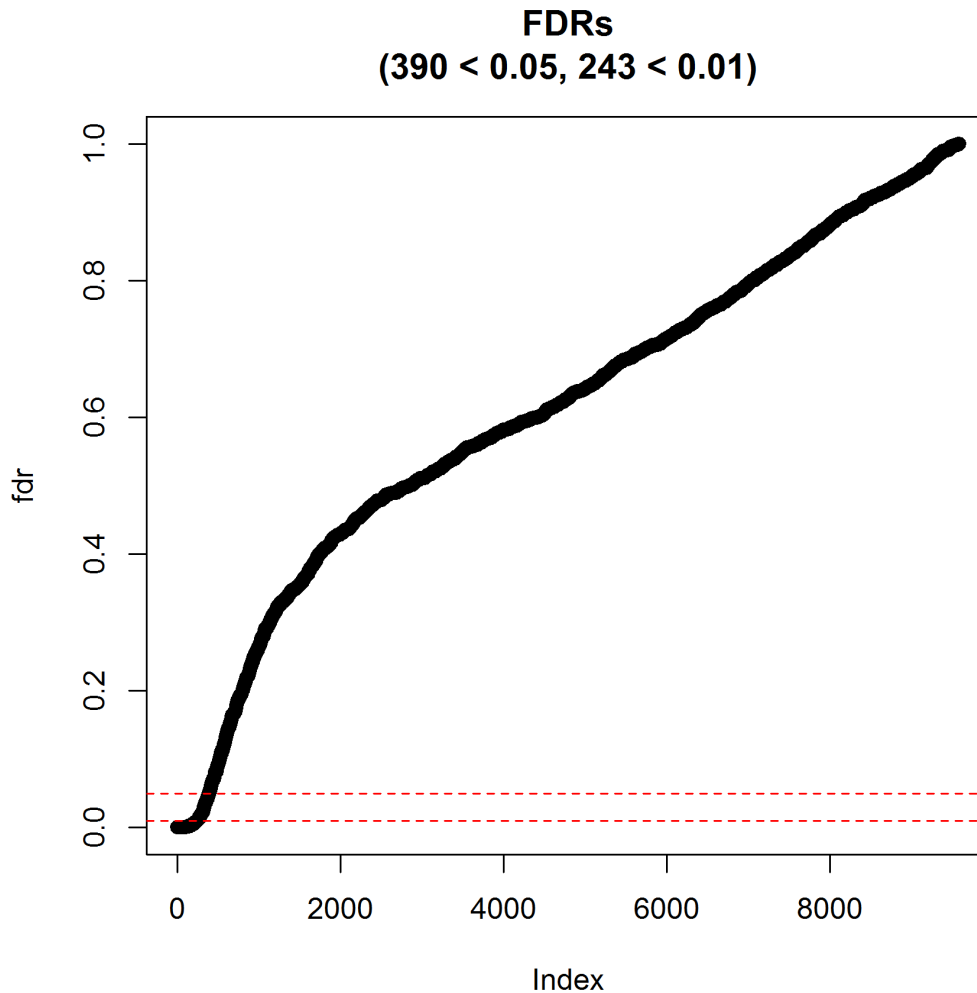


Here, an example with `method="mMs"` is given:

```
> mMs.matrix1 <- mMs.matrix2 <- mMsMatrix(x=20, y=20)
> pvaluePlot(elist=elist.unlog, group1=c1, group2=c2, method="mMs",
+ mMs.matrix1=mMs.matrix1, mMs.matrix2=mMs.matrix2, above=1500,
+ between=400)
```

Here, an example with `method="tTest"` and `adjust=TRUE` is given:

```
> pvaluePlot(elist=elist.unlog, group1=c1, group2=c2, method="tTest", adjust=TRUE)
```



Here, an example with `method="mMs"` and `adjust=TRUE` is given:

```
> mMs.matrix1 <- mMs.matrix2 <- mMsMatrix(x=20, y=20)
> pvaluePlot(elist=elist.unlog, group1=c1, group2=c2, method="mMs",
+ mMs.matrix1=mMs.matrix1, mMs.matrix2=mMs.matrix2, above=1500,
+ between=400, adjust=TRUE)
```

Finally, `diffAnalysis()` performs a detailed univariate differential analysis. This function takes an `EList$E`- or `EListRaw$E`- matrix (e.g., `temp <- elist$E`) extended by row names comprising "BRC"-IDs of the corresponding features. The BRC-IDs can be created via:

```
brc <- paste(elist$genes[,1], elist$genes[,3], elist$genes[,2]).
```

Next, the row names can be assigned as follows: `rownames(temp) <- brc`. Furthermore, the corresponding column name vectors, group labels and `mMs`- parameters are needed to perform the univariate differential analysis. This analysis covers inter alia p-value computation, p-value adjustment (method: Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995), and fold change computation. Since the results table is usually large, a path for saving the results should be defined via `output.path`. Optionally, a vector of row indices (features) and additionally (not mandatory for subset analysis) a vector of corresponding feature names (`feature.names`) can be forwarded to perform the analysis for a feature subset.

```
> E <- elist.unlog$E
> rownames(E) <- paste(elist.unlog$genes[,1], elist.unlog$genes[,3],
+ elist.unlog$genes[,2])
> write.table(x=cbind(rownames(E),E), file=paste(cwd,"/demo/demo_output/data.txt",
```

```

+     sep=""), sep="\t", eol="\n", row.names=FALSE, quote=FALSE)
> mMs.matrix1 <- mMs.matrix2 <- mMsMatrix(x=20, y=20)
> diff.analysis.results <- diffAnalysis(input=E, label1=c1, label2=c2,
+   class1="AD", class2="NDC", output.path=output.path,
+   mMs.matrix1=mMs.matrix1, mMs.matrix2=mMs.matrix2, above=1500,
+   between=400)
> print(diff.analysis.results[1:10,])

```

|    | BRC               | t.test              | FDR.t.            | min..M.stat...     | mMs.              | FDR.mMs.          |
|----|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | 1 2 11            | 0.352751286646465   | 0.65394032025644  | 0.243589743589744  | 0.835015538626552 |                   |
| 2  | 1 2 13            | 0.15129653649193    | 0.501988087542919 | 0.0241860325286354 | 0.330335726331277 |                   |
| 3  | 1 2 15            | 0.32087558901485    | 0.634210502468436 |                    | 1                 | 1                 |
| 4  | 1 2 17            | 0.178493270666023   | 0.52723150928707  | 0.150422391245528  | 0.835015538626552 |                   |
| 5  | 1 2 19            | 0.271589613948769   | 0.597932135616531 | 0.243589743589744  | 0.835015538626552 |                   |
| 6  | 1 2 21            | 0.0707666042203724  | 0.39497036996504  | 0.0457380457380457 | 0.484098604098604 |                   |
| 7  | 1 3 1             | 0.0284911744794211  | 0.268607060873834 |                    | 1                 | 1                 |
| 8  | 1 3 3             | 0.0092196889487916  | 0.142280968989526 |                    | 0.5               | 0.910368401063426 |
| 9  | 1 3 5             | 0.00592168460061225 | 0.106226964810385 | 0.053014553014553  | 0.484098604098604 |                   |
| 10 | 1 3 7             | 0.806173147194642   | 0.916805614435088 | 0.302494802494803  | 0.910368401063426 |                   |
|    | fold.change       | mean.AD             | mean.NDC          | median.AD          | median.NDC        |                   |
| 1  | 1.36257910953312  | 1384.85432520349    | 1016.34783295481  | 839.980702981773   | 857.735001801978  |                   |
| 2  | 0.260784177611613 | 2189.55822304562    | 8396.05471121233  | 1305.46661974481   | 2548.69868040327  |                   |
| 3  | 1.10224097047813  | 450.550786587285    | 408.758881818594  | 413.716205403229   | 417.428604869083  |                   |
| 4  | 0.595491172830503 | 1518.91515397688    | 2550.69297964089  | 1215.20762270891   | 1689.1444916955   |                   |
| 5  | 0.454051309774646 | 2530.1344545838     | 5572.35360875746  | 1824.40003073848   | 1864.76465290004  |                   |
| 6  | 0.759043204421859 | 2636.25422481143    | 3473.12802414112  | 2248.99036532219   | 2924.27002197574  |                   |
| 7  | 1.26294406395723  | 484.784697258339    | 383.852864979108  | 446.558759285452   | 349.263285007632  |                   |
| 8  | 1.48059072464481  | 692.098536568906    | 467.447570114244  | 556.156389770551   | 455.411881000121  |                   |
| 9  | 1.3602309262767   | 1991.44021666422    | 1464.045683857    | 1873.36646648453   | 1436.18751389589  |                   |
| 10 | 0.908397966805546 | 818.482441505167    | 901.017474074085  | 730.232223314622   | 469.463840773123  |                   |
|    | sd.AD             | sd.NDC              |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 1  | 1643.99677640782  | 564.4302706304      |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 2  | 2970.84080119717  | 18364.0058765935    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 3  | 165.734824607582  | 82.0150145643134    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 4  | 1062.44868297829  | 3151.76500089472    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 5  | 2444.44412207378  | 11793.108729466     |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 6  | 1276.31835442119  | 1553.96096388882    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 7  | 154.993619177929  | 122.909766431917    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 8  | 339.123207021637  | 93.5019966245782    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 9  | 718.441427077343  | 323.488045744025    |                   |                    |                   |                   |
| 10 | 433.002023903253  | 1422.22599366313    |                   |                    |                   |                   |

Subsequently, the most relevant differential features (i.e., features having low p-values and high absolute fold changes) can be extracted as a univariate feature selection. Nevertheless, it is recommended to perform also multivariate feature selection and to consider feature panels obtained from both approaches.

## 5 Feature pre-selection

---

Before multivariate feature selection will be performed, it is recommended to discard features that are obviously not differential. Discarding them will accelerate runtimes without any negative impact on results. In [PAA](#), this task is called “*feature pre-selection*” and it is performed by the function `preselect()`. This function iterates all features of the data set to score them via *mMs*, *Student’s t-test*, or *mRMR*. If `discard.features` is `TRUE` (default), all features that are considered as obviously not differential will be collected and returned for discarding. Which features are considered as not differential depends on the parameters `method`, `discard.threshold`, and `fold.thresh`.

- If `method = "mMs"`, features having an *mMs* value larger than `discard.threshold` (here: numeric between 0.0 and 1.0) or do not satisfy the minimal absolute fold change `fold.thresh` will be considered as not differential.
- If `method = "tTest"`, features having a p-value larger than `discard.threshold` (here: numeric between 0.0 and 1.0) or do not satisfy the minimal absolute fold change `fold.thresh` will be considered as not differential.
- If `method = "mrmmr"`, *mRMR* scores for all features will be computed as scoring method (using the function `mrmmr.classic()` of the *R* package [mRMRe](#)). Subsequently, features that are not the `discard.threshold` (here: integer indicating a number of features) features having the best *mRMR* scores are considered as not differential.

```
> mMs.matrix1 <- mMs.matrix2 <- mMsMatrix(x=20, y=20)
> pre.sel.results <- preselect(elist=elist.unlog, columns1=c1, columns2=c2,
+   label1="AD", label2="NDC", discard.threshold=0.5, fold.thresh=1.5,
+   discard.features=TRUE, mMs.above=1500, mMs.between=400,
+   mMs.matrix1=mMs.matrix1, mMs.matrix2=mMs.matrix2,
+   method="mMs")
> elist <- elist[-pre.sel.results$discard,]
```

## 6 Feature selection

---

For multivariate feature selection *PAA* provides the function `selectFeatures()`. It performs a multivariate feature selection using “frequency-based” feature selection (based on *RF-RFE*, *RJ-RFE* or *SVM-RFE*) or “ensemble” feature selection (based on *SVM-RFE*).

**Frequency-based feature selection** (`method="frequency"`): The whole data is splitted in *k* cross validation training and test set pairs. For each training set a multivariate feature selection procedure is performed. The resulting *k* feature subsets are tested using the corresponding test sets (via classification). As a result, `selectFeatures()` returns the average *k*-fold cross validation classification accuracy as well as the selected feature panel (i.e., the union set of the *k* particular feature subsets). As multivariate feature selection methods random forest recursive feature elimination (*RF-RFE*), random jungle recursive feature elimination (*RJ-RFE*) and support vector machine recursive feature elimination (*SVM-RFE*) are supported. To reduce running times, optionally, an additional univariate feature pre-selection can be performed (usage via `preselection.method`). As univariate pre-selection methods *mMs* (“*mMs*”), Student’s *t*-test (“*tTest*”) and *mRMR* (“*mrmr*”) are supported. Alternatively, no pre-selection can be chosen (“*none*”). This approach is similar to the method proposed in *Baek et al.* [5].

**Ensemble feature selection** (`method="ensemble"`): From the whole data a previously defined number of subsamples is drawn defining pairs of training and test sets. Moreover, for each training set a previously defined number of bootstrap samples is drawn. Then, for each bootstrap sample *SVM-RFE* is performed and a feature ranking is obtained. To obtain a final ranking for a particular training set, all associated bootstrap rankings are aggregated to a single ranking. To score the cutoff best features, for each subsample a classification of the test set is performed (using a *svm* trained with the cutoff best features from the training set) and the classification accuracy is determined. Finally, the stability of the subsample-specific panels is assessed (via Kuncheva index, *Kuncheva LI, 2007* [6]), all subsample-specific rankings are aggregated, the top *n* features (defined by cutoff) are selected, the average classification accuracy is computed, and all these results are returned in a list. This approach has been proposed and is described in *Abeel et al.* [7].

`selectFeatures()` takes an *EListRaw* or *EList* object, group-specific sample numbers, group labels and parameters choosing and setting up a univariate feature pre-selection method as well as a multivariate feature selection method (frequency-based or ensemble feature selection) to select a panel of differential features. When an output path is defined (via `output.path`) results will be saved on the hard disk and when `verbose` is *TRUE* additional information will be printed to the console. Depending on the selection method, one of two different results lists will be returned:

1. If `method` is “frequency”, the results list contains the following elements:
  - accuracy: average *k*-fold cross validation accuracy.
  - sensitivity: average *k*-fold cross validation sensitivity.
  - specificity: average *k*-fold cross validation specificity.
  - features: selected feature panel.
  - all.results: complete cross validation results.
2. If `method` is “ensemble”, the results list contains the following elements:
  - accuracy: average accuracy regarding all subsamples.
  - sensitivity: average sensitivity regarding all subsamples.
  - specificity: average specificity regarding all subsamples.
  - features: selected feature panel.
  - all.results: all feature ranking results.
  - stability: stability of the feature panel (i.e., Kuncheva index for the subrun-specific panels).

In the following two code chunks first “*frequency-based*” feature selection and then “*ensemble*” feature selection is demonstrated.

```
> selectFeatures.results <- selectFeatures(elist,n1=20,n2=20,label1="AD",
+   label2="NDC",selection.method="rf.rfe",subruns=2,candidate.number=1000,
+   method="frequency")

> selectFeatures.results <- selectFeatures(elist,n1=20,n2=20,label1="AD",
+   label2="NDC",selection.method="rf.rfe",subsamples=10,bootstraps=10,
+   method="ensemble")
```

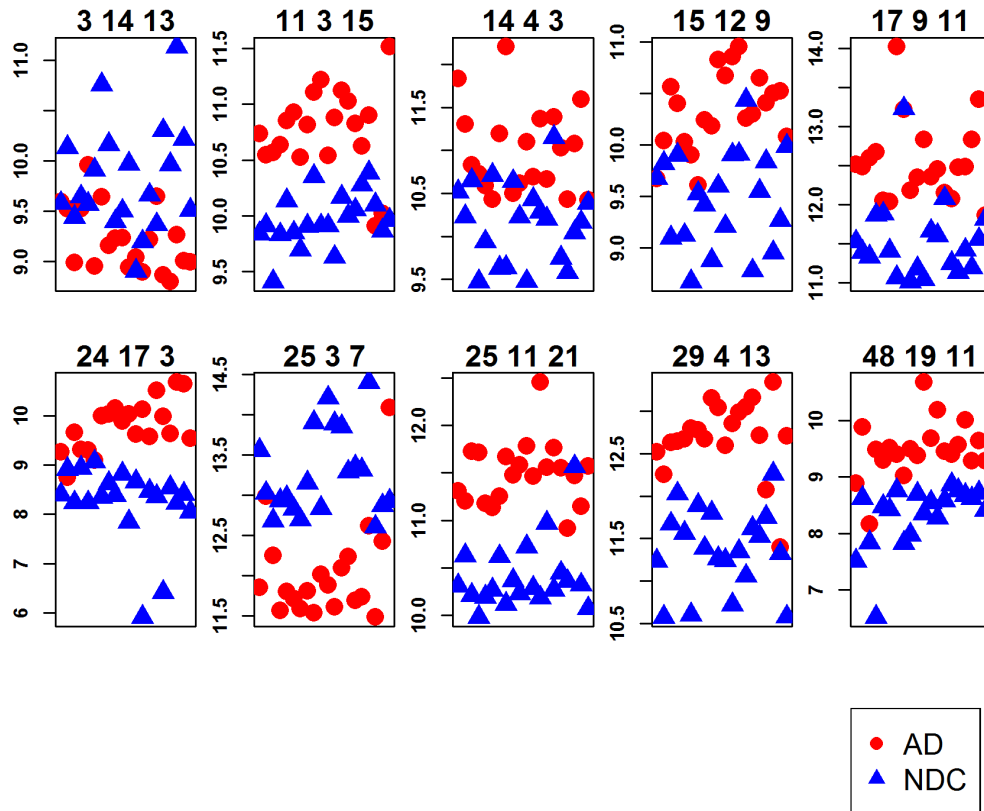
Because runtimes would take too long for this vignette [PAA](#) comes with pre-computed `selectFeatures.results` objects stored in '.RData' files. These objects can be loaded as follows:

```
> # results of frequency-based feature selection:
> load(paste(cwd, "/extdata/selectFeaturesResultsFreq.RData", sep=""))
> # or results of ensemble feature selection:
> load(paste(cwd, "/extdata/selectFeaturesResultsEns.RData", sep=""))
```

## 7 Results inspection

After the selection of a feature panel, these features should be validated by manual inspection and evaluation for further research. To aid results inspection, *PAA* provides several functions. The function `plotFeatures()` plots the intensities of all features (represented by BRC-IDs) that have been selected by `selectFeatures()` (one sub-plot per feature) in group-specific colors. All sub-plots are aggregated in one figure. If `output.path` is not NULL, this figure will be saved in a 'tiff' file in `output.path`.

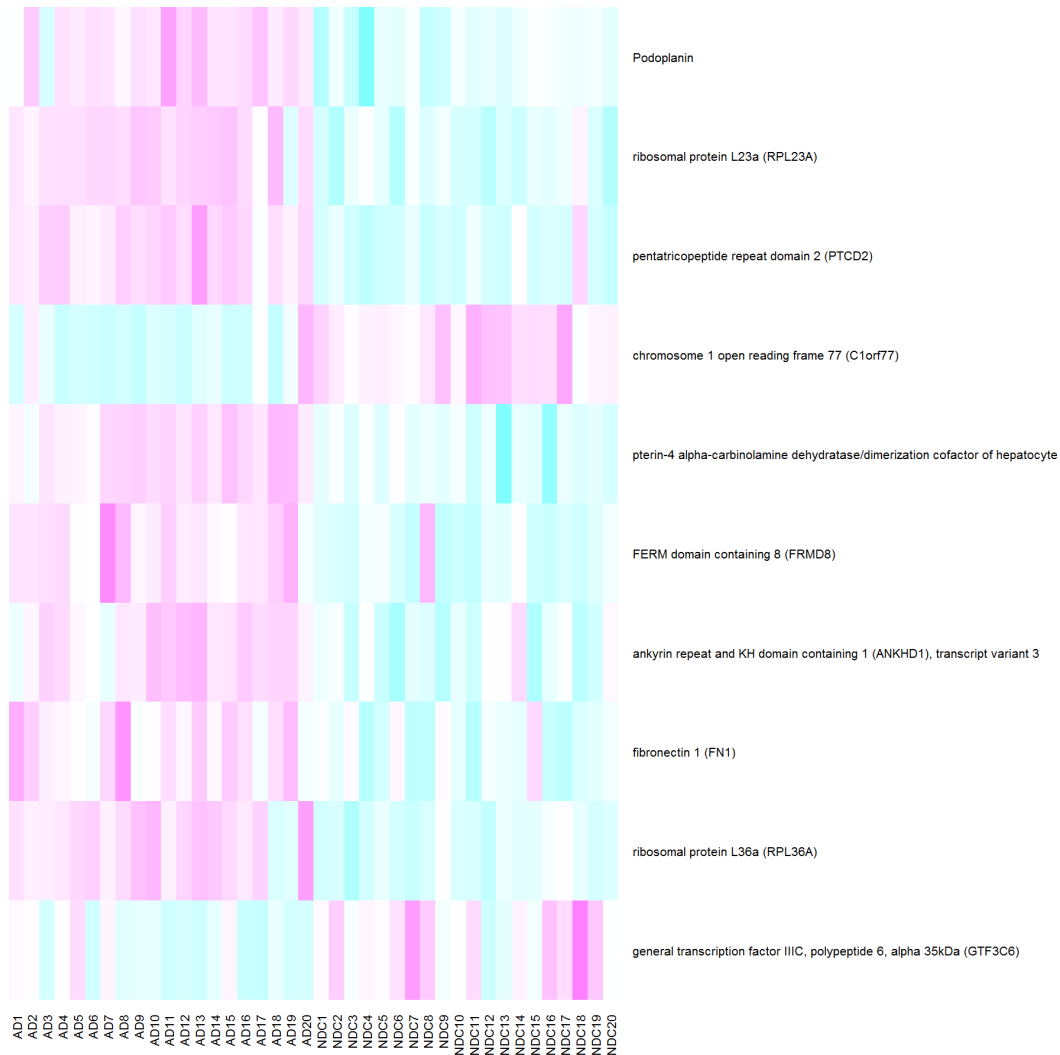
```
> plotFeatures(features=selectFeatures.results$features, elist=elist, n1=20,
+             n2=20, group1="AD", group2="NDC")
```



Alternatively, the function `plotFeaturesHeatmap()` plots intensities of all features given in the vector `features` (represented by BRC-IDs) as a heatmap. If `description` is TRUE (default: FALSE), features will be described via protein names instead of uniprot accessions. Again, if `output.path` is not NULL, the heatmap will be saved as a 'tiff' file in `output.path`.

```
> plotFeaturesHeatmap(features=selectFeatures.results$features, elist=elist,
+                    n1=20, n2=20, description=TRUE)
```





Finally, the function `printFeatures()` creates a table containing the selected biomarker candidate panel as well as additional information for results inspection. If `output.path` is defined, this table will be saved in a 'txt' file ('candidates.txt').

```
> printFeatures(features=selectFeatures.results$features, elist=elist.unlog)[-2]
```

|    | BRC         |        |             | AD1         |             |             | AD2         |             |             | AD3         |             |       | AD4 |  |  |
|----|-------------|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------|-----|--|--|
| 1  | 3           | 14     | 13          | 771.433440  | 157476      | 737.068543  | 182099      | 506.509024  | 617035      | 736.588851  | 1000495     |       |     |  |  |
| 2  | 11          | 3      | 15          | 1704.114882 | 24753       | 1496.655281 | 183651      | 1517.255514 | 32498       | 1593.070997 | 27861       |       |     |  |  |
| 3  |             | 14     | 4           | 3           | 3645.54841  | 24084       | 2526.616862 | 13419       | 1821.665500 | 63235       | 1691.675575 | 16902 |     |  |  |
| 4  | 15          | 12     | 9           | 818.461533  | 980502      | 1052.000017 | 05278       | 1515.413038 | 56353       | 1355.187547 | 82923       |       |     |  |  |
| 5  | 17          | 9      | 11          | 5853.329613 | 2514        | 5749.397077 | 13477       | 6201.690999 | 08049       | 6547.800932 | 73269       |       |     |  |  |
| 6  | 24          | 17     | 3           | 614.427688  | 242766      | 428.773390  | 294605      | 808.178343  | 313086      | 638.692844  | 649007      |       |     |  |  |
| 7  |             | 25     | 3           | 7           | 3692.001811 | 19614       | 8107.282948 | 08858       | 4863.229809 | 46712       | 3034.559944 | 15583 |     |  |  |
| 8  | 25          | 11     | 21          | 2540.907415 | 558513      | 2356.044797 | 6407        | 3388.297296 | 02303       | 3353.900341 | 149111      |       |     |  |  |
| 9  | 29          | 4      | 13          | 5886.536213 | 952         | 4897.271460 | 44234       | 6338.326498 | 5501        | 6423.356619 | 51507       |       |     |  |  |
| 10 | 48          | 19     | 11          | 474.498937  | 861052      | 943.550167  | 460081      | 287.274259  | 101609      | 718.066645  | 073773      |       |     |  |  |
|    | AD5         |        |             | AD6         |             |             | AD7         |             |             | AD8         |             |       | AD9 |  |  |
| 1  | 995.953196  | 816828 | 495.556187  | 999054      | 797.291831  | 84591       | 570.270979  | 906642      | 599.658424  | 542806      |             |       |     |  |  |
| 2  | 1845.740023 | 33541  | 1948.747257 | 04858       | 1474.826594 | 93596       | 1799.928122 | 279791      | 2200.583796 | 9357        |             |       |     |  |  |
| 3  | 1541.498080 | 7955   | 1378.193030 | 71998       | 2344.282332 | 12591       | 4718.525733 | 14617       | 1451.165409 | 51054       |             |       |     |  |  |

|    |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|----|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 4  | 1045.65878862808 | 956.618003092471 | 783.051188927562 | 1209.45324357601 | 1165.6702531658  |
| 5  | 4253.92007266518 | 4199.33245714912 | 16615.5838810269 | 9552.1022536634  | 4661.14941806544 |
| 6  | 630.13111737942  | 547.404006663499 | 1022.31269475795 | 1052.05465948835 | 1139.01947331139 |
| 7  | 3562.14387572131 | 3359.25151114483 | 3081.26920034006 | 3584.23934006449 | 2965.24403870638 |
| 8  | 2313.50890173121 | 2249.69441173038 | 2443.60003229658 | 3256.44772793452 | 2856.18931199357 |
| 9  | 6527.46112288469 | 7123.30942029013 | 7041.87220218448 | 6531.57635614537 | 9109.59734324717 |
| 10 | 627.005778580237 | 734.727681606909 | 675.962981565188 | 522.117958417139 | 721.783383669615 |
|    | AD10             | AD11             | AD12             | AD13             | AD14             |
| 1  | 601.613744905391 | 490.646297749198 | 526.562459230264 | 476.202714282601 | 595.908446740426 |
| 2  | 2382.32674141506 | 1488.04707151358 | 1882.53426964658 | 2226.14085257105 | 2087.15591730029 |
| 3  | 1573.14801575871 | 2193.52319524127 | 1656.90216562732 | 2639.45630906393 | 1620.43972141502 |
| 4  | 1815.24244144851 | 1631.98834508922 | 1851.07522460675 | 1980.93948465889 | 1223.80001459399 |
| 5  | 5220.99275618886 | 7308.29349932007 | 5244.26858654111 | 5628.40229135568 | 4556.03527897316 |
| 6  | 946.230248346506 | 1045.08920541636 | 792.019550730672 | 1126.04229910868 | 767.655166998841 |
| 7  | 4129.50138698449 | 3774.02043662051 | 3121.82055142515 | 4367.46882822357 | 4820.89532950346 |
| 8  | 3072.06801981498 | 3522.70624866099 | 2830.61009823552 | 5613.49707855304 | 3017.52725160791 |
| 9  | 8466.97464288743 | 6207.32953054158 | 7413.92324894751 | 8127.03826735893 | 8479.48909101353 |
| 10 | 666.072166782071 | 1637.70381756675 | 823.561959466415 | 1168.77896600105 | 700.50055956162  |
|    | AD15             | AD16             | AD17             | AD18             | AD19             |
| 1  | 800.762961411124 | 465.094844578007 | 445.207793478522 | 615.269196751757 | 513.794174455715 |
| 2  | 1812.47348962819 | 1579.9897938486  | 1910.13596078838 | 963.20446414562  | 1039.56722703483 |
| 3  | 2675.70767816961 | 2086.54165587401 | 1383.74794708655 | 2161.70859900922 | 3097.43992992443 |
| 4  | 1261.86846682952 | 1604.6507431494  | 1361.71947755349 | 1449.23812040172 | 1470.13378995336 |
| 5  | 4316.70678856553 | 5720.89472533375 | 5728.10060944016 | 7317.28485835264 | 10456.0759202355 |
| 6  | 1458.02539474764 | 1012.2816060924  | 795.484757992508 | 1639.86772626606 | 1598.9827428381  |
| 7  | 3308.27621209007 | 3408.31206669195 | 6301.11500033229 | 2867.16665878206 | 5514.46894147622 |
| 8  | 3479.37457669235 | 3004.3988795354  | 1932.60122159644 | 2843.65026626265 | 2270.98257648292 |
| 9  | 9189.19488788393 | 6725.36483581995 | 4312.8026934387  | 10383.248560208  | 2694.38987693426 |
| 10 | 677.177187392845 | 761.373267213567 | 1034.75090307669 | 626.423425652315 | 798.246305693239 |
|    | AD20             | NDC1             | NDC2             | NDC3             | NDC4             |
| 1  | 509.465336985822 | 764.039630651962 | 1123.96058976115 | 693.528823039919 | 799.441404968982 |
| 2  | 2920.18462185127 | 915.637590277118 | 963.775473473381 | 681.261552556144 | 910.853761517289 |
| 3  | 1373.00177127862 | 1466.6185534305  | 1201.5093150502  | 1605.86142777358 | 711.236591520914 |
| 4  | 1081.85231306212 | 817.470628339065 | 904.872626137078 | 548.137800902124 | 956.146494368586 |
| 5  | 3725.32360318959 | 2951.07948417372 | 2692.77844181849 | 2581.13450084882 | 3733.2264317801  |
| 6  | 743.221771652252 | 337.7186683345   | 483.322546000382 | 301.125669591757 | 490.183249560808 |
| 7  | 17403.0639517425 | 12052.8374235594 | 8328.71569741784 | 6565.68128186055 | 7820.3253232589  |
| 8  | 3036.79006143744 | 1269.47160954924 | 1583.1849779023  | 1183.43892640827 | 1010.0646849764  |
| 9  | 6712.43148200039 | 2413.12605828541 | 1525.9785311137  | 3263.39959267822 | 4172.84362566436 |
| 10 | 624.782210065881 | 182.295560156436 | 395.06436525082  | 228.18649659473  | 91.5705107087876 |
|    | NDC5             | NDC6             | NDC7             | NDC8             | NDC9             |
| 1  | 759.776623181679 | 962.916214573149 | 1733.86920351672 | 1147.94060838566 | 672.77280895326  |
| 2  | 1126.15524889113 | 921.019121382185 | 828.259446105578 | 959.876577904813 | 1307.39432533322 |
| 3  | 980.725384642246 | 1677.75573543924 | 793.808207526626 | 797.219622725496 | 1594.94839974005 |
| 4  | 558.147474737822 | 408.867897234498 | 738.299108244184 | 685.261863738144 | 471.432884591677 |
| 5  | 3776.90201491392 | 2715.13778750748 | 2150.20825861469 | 9602.21392427571 | 2072.68509413821 |
| 6  | 301.947434088494 | 534.917476299248 | 325.670250527034 | 395.694498724042 | 333.421597010831 |
| 7  | 8010.06949392925 | 7263.97429482263 | 6623.14680993597 | 9103.45485471743 | 15346.1426689506 |
| 8  | 1170.24785888503 | 1231.86541332021 | 1571.13913180881 | 1109.19382331244 | 1320.66832709391 |
| 9  | 3025.53385619706 | 1552.31727701722 | 3797.72742810444 | 2675.01132406589 | 3567.42918673872 |
| 10 | 356.082351062428 | 342.419012324196 | 433.833805230495 | 226.463945020404 | 250.973191093232 |
|    | NDC10            | NDC11            | NDC12            | NDC13            | NDC14            |
| 1  | 724.162647196422 | 1001.28705686367 | 478.929948819404 | 585.835579721395 | 809.352736702493 |
| 2  | 962.915795437026 | 962.755624324433 | 792.830629136658 | 1150.43186525266 | 1022.8620310595  |

```

3 1198.12849426954 711.651604930736 1378.43688330881 1244.47760101974 1178.98996424869
4 776.550195469829 592.116823353941 958.769969338747 962.825344005407 1385.80583194318
5 2321.60381731547 2110.06898430524 3245.11139833741 3121.50585469772 4328.19955684068
6 451.007734997018 229.958238114366 405.347056390551 60.3389420405943 353.903428438435
7 7321.80836561546 18936.6907846861 15152.3315873422 14764.4527060412 10013.2907378493
8 1198.03636977277 1688.16655748439 1246.92040081615 1161.51333026481 2006.71616640873
9 2458.90563107895 2423.92198962609 1685.40686957678 2604.02295069194 2131.81994710554
10 415.262894883498 326.707237188373 374.407955183011 310.738299976302 382.7139538853
      NDC15      NDC16      NDC17      NDC18      NDC19
1 659.263177504851 1261.79825082435 997.809726651285 2249.49020487926 1191.21535312782
2 1062.35911151592 1239.7749569386 1337.00488957594 1095.93306259692 933.945959870114
3 2272.33646592075 860.911959012865 764.552316277617 1056.43031305259 1146.79872232844
4 439.862622783571 750.310216501294 916.813965922586 496.485083095298 618.368266966116
5 2438.8619602911 2254.96149654014 2740.74372189604 2343.23103478012 3013.41709592446
6 328.846237238927 85.6032474266259 373.602655575968 298.889309887519 340.279297203394
7 10459.2377467132 10185.6344502934 21662.2153856729 6234.67987741104 7484.5925757424
8 1230.74191006279 1392.05483748243 1311.21516047789 3032.16037497358 1276.96111522988
9 3149.45015415533 2947.81436316396 3446.34834802619 4908.87673098922 2563.74502597501
10 465.668088868462 432.798190503329 409.59884397569 393.06675426887 420.218891517836
      NDC20
1 729.347137099924
2 996.619534817372
3 1337.30346375448
4 1014.5286162758
5 3612.07550934688
6 264.345154327535
7 7765.6353086002
8 1074.54696516573
9 1527.93431315706
10 339.414030657282

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