







Inner nuclear protein Matrin-3 coordinates cell differentiation by stabilizing chromatin architecture

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Precise control of gene expression during differentiation relies on the interplay of chromatin and nuclear structure. Despite an established contribution of nuclear membrane proteins to developmental gene regulation, little is known regarding the role of inner nuclear proteins. Here we demonstrate that loss of the nuclear scaffolding protein Matrin-3 (Matr3) in erythroid cells leads to morphological and gene expression changes characteristic of accelerated maturation, as well as broad alterations in chromatin organization similar to those accompanying differentiation. Matr3 protein interacts with CTCF and the cohesin complex, and its loss perturbs their occupancy at a subset of sites. Destabilization of CTCF and cohesin binding correlates with altered transcription and accelerated differentiation. This association is conserved in embryonic stem cells. Our findings indicate Matr3 negatively affects cell fate transitions and demonstrate that a critical inner nuclear protein impacts occupancy of architectural factors, culminating in broad effects on chromatin organization and cell differentiation.

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The nucleus is spatially organized by chromosome and interchromatin functional components. Recent advances in genome-wide analysis of chromosome conformation have provided molecular information regarding chromosome folding, and partitioned the genome into two compartments. The A and B compartments correspond to the structures and characteristics of known euchromatin and heterochromatin, respectively^{1,2}. Recent biophysical studies suggest that distinct chromatin regions may be pulled together or move away from each other by phase-separated nuclear condensates. For example, droplets of heterochromatin protein 1 (HP1) facilitate sequestration of compacted chromatin, which may result in steric exclusion of regulatory proteins, such as RNA polymerase, from the underlying DNA^{3,4}. In active regions of the genome, transcription factors and co-activators form condensates that compartmentalize the transcription machinery and drive gene activation^{5–7}. Global reorganization of chromatin interactions and compartmentalization occurring during differentiation⁸ requires proper chromosome positioning, but the involvement of nuclear components in this process is unknown.

Architectural proteins play a critical role in chromatin organization and function. Two well-characterized proteins, CCCTC-binding factor (CTCF) and cohesin, organize topological chromatin domains and mediate chromatin interactions of individual genomic loci^{9,10}. At the nuclear periphery, a meshwork of lamina proteins provides anchoring sites for genomic loci, and attachment is often accompanied by gene inactivation¹¹. Conversely, detachment from the nuclear periphery frequently correlates with gene activation, reflecting counterforces generated by intra-nuclear substructures. Nuclear speckles, for example, act as functional centers that organize active gene loci to form euchromatic districts^{12,13}. In addition, abundant nucleoplasmic proteins serve as structural scaffolds spanning the nucleus, and specific inner nuclear proteins have been implicated in maintenance of eu- and heterochromatin architecture^{14,15}.

Coordinated regulation of spatial and temporal chromatin repositioning is important for proper gene expression during development and differentiation. The association of chromatin with the nuclear periphery is cell type-specific, and has been implicated in gene regulation by dynamically modulating gene accessibility during normal development^{11,16}. Nucleoplasmic proteins constitute a large component of the inner nucleus, but their role in chromatin remodeling during transcription and differentiation processes is poorly understood. Among the inner nuclear proteins, Matrin-3 (Matr3) is an abundant component and appears to be involved in multiple processes^{17–19}. Matr3 interacts with other structural and regulatory proteins in the nucleus, controls RNA processing, and coding mutations cause rare genetic disorders^{20–22}. A scaffolding role of Matr3 for regulatory proteins has been suggested in transcriptional control of pituitary cells²³. Moreover, Matr3 expression in neural stem cells has been suggested to maintain the undifferentiated state, albeit limited to morphological observations²⁴. To date, the extent, if any, to which Matr3 contributes to chromatin organization during transcription and differentiation remains unexplored. Very recently, Matr3 was identified as part of a protein complex that participates in X-chromosome silencing²⁵, demonstrating its regulatory potential at the chromatin level.

Here we have addressed whether Matr3 plays a critical role in chromatin structure and function. Our studies reveal unique aspects of the impact of nuclear protein-chromosomal organization on 3D genome structure and the molecular machinery underlying chromatin repositioning during development.

Results

Depletion of Matr3 leads to changes in nuclear architecture and accelerates erythroid maturation. Blood cell development exemplifies a coordinated process that is accompanied by dramatic chromatin reorganization, thereby providing a model in which to interrogate chromatin dynamics during differentiation²⁶. As a first step in assessing how the inner nuclear protein Matrin-3 (Matr3) impacts nuclear structure and gene expression, we deleted the entire gene body by CRISPR/Cas9 in mouse erythroleukemia (MEL) cells (Figs. 1a and S1a). *Matr3* knockout (KO) cells proliferated at the same rate as parental cells (Fig. S1b), but were smaller in size and exhibited distinct cell morphology during DMSO-induced differentiation, suggestive of accelerated cell maturation (Fig. 1b). Consistent with this notion, erythroid-specific genes were expressed at a higher level in MEL *Matr3* KO cells than in parental cells (Fig. 1c, d). To ensure that these findings were due to *Matr3* loss rather than to inadvertent events during isolation of clones, we rescued the phenotype by reintroduction of full-length, expressible *Matr3* cDNA (Figs. 1d and S1c). The consequences of *Matr3* deletion were also determined in G1ER cells, another tractable model in which differentiation is conditional on activation of GATA-1²⁷. Similar to MEL cells, globin gene expression was elevated in G1ER *Matr3* KO clones (Fig. S1d).

To assess the global impact of Matr3 loss on erythroid cell maturation, we measured global RNA expression changes at early and differentiated stages. Erythroid-specific genes were expressed at a much higher level upon differentiation of *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 1e). Similarly, 533 previously reported erythroid genes²⁸ were also expressed at a higher level in KO cells (Fig. S1e). Differentiation is typically accompanied by specific changes in nuclear architecture. Using super-resolution microscopy, we observed that heterochromatin protein 1 α (HP1 α) was more dispersed and irregular in appearance, despite no appreciable change in expression in *Matr3* KO cells (Figs. 1f, g and S1f). These findings suggest that Matr3 loss alters morphological boundaries of heterochromatin. Together, depletion of Matr3 resulted in accelerated erythroid cell maturation and distinct morphological changes in nuclear structure.

Matr3 loss is accompanied by global chromatin reorganization.

Analysis of the interactions between different regions of chromatin identifies topologically associating domains (TADs) and classifies the genome into two compartments (A and B). We next explored global chromatin structure using a high-throughput chromosome conformation capture (Hi-C) assay. Although extensive chromosomal interaction patterns appeared largely unchanged (Fig. 2a, b), compartments and interactions in local regions were visibly altered on comparison of parental and *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 2c–e). To examine the global compartment changes, we measured the interactions between genomic loci aligned by values of the first principal component (PC1) from eigenvector decomposition². In the saddle plots, the strengths of A and B compartments were quantified by calculating the ratio of homotypic (A–A or B–B) to heterotypic (A–B) compartmental interactions (Fig. 2f). Notably, the compartment strengths between the B compartments became stronger, while those between A-type domains were reduced in *Matr3* KO cells, suggesting a requirement for Matr3 in maintenance of proper chromosome compartmentalization (Figs. 2f, g and S2a).

We next investigated the chromosomal domain boundaries that demarcate the dynamic 3D genomic structural unit, TAD. Domain boundaries were determined using the insulation profile of chromosomes²⁹, and we aggregated interaction data at the

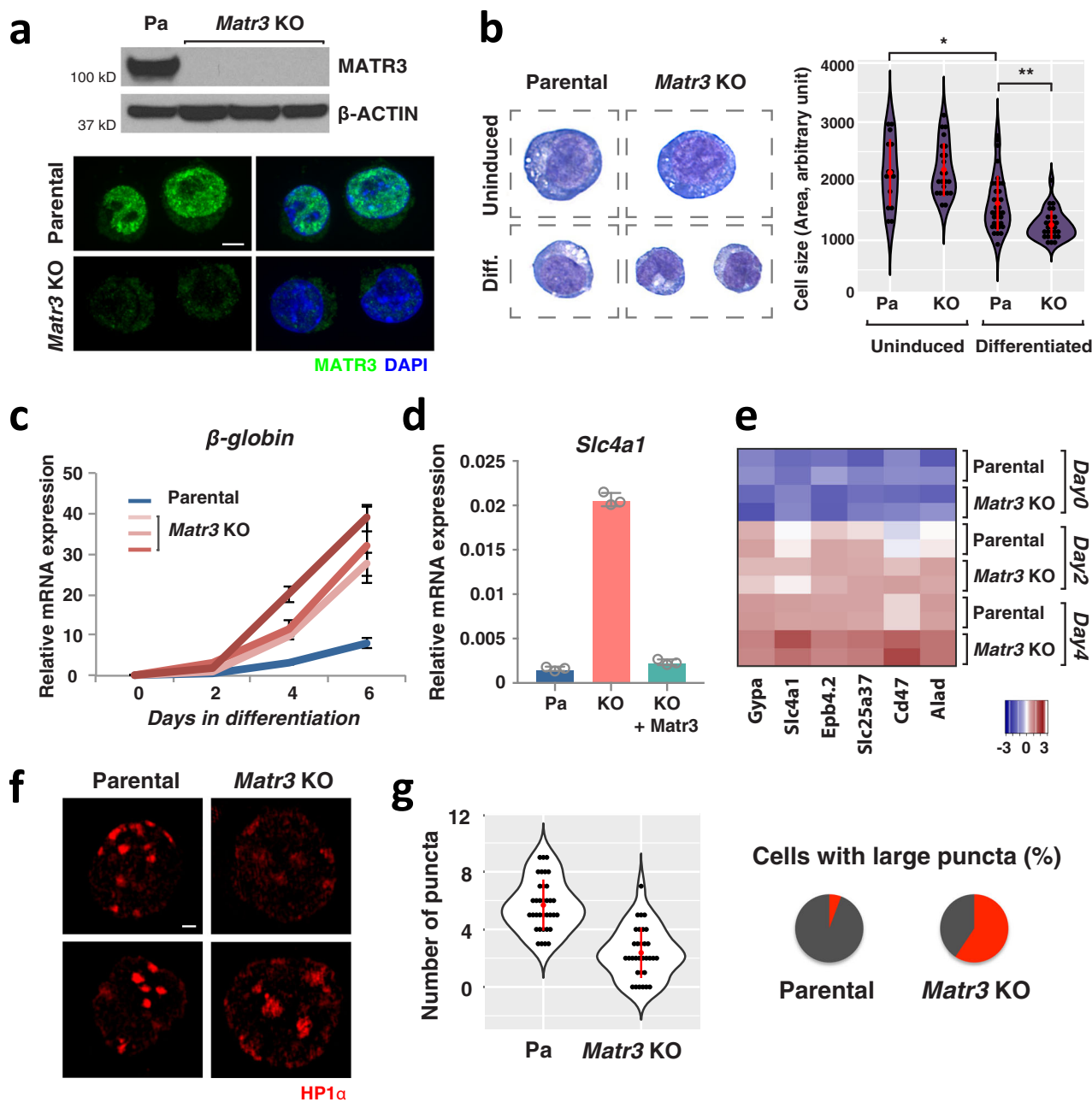
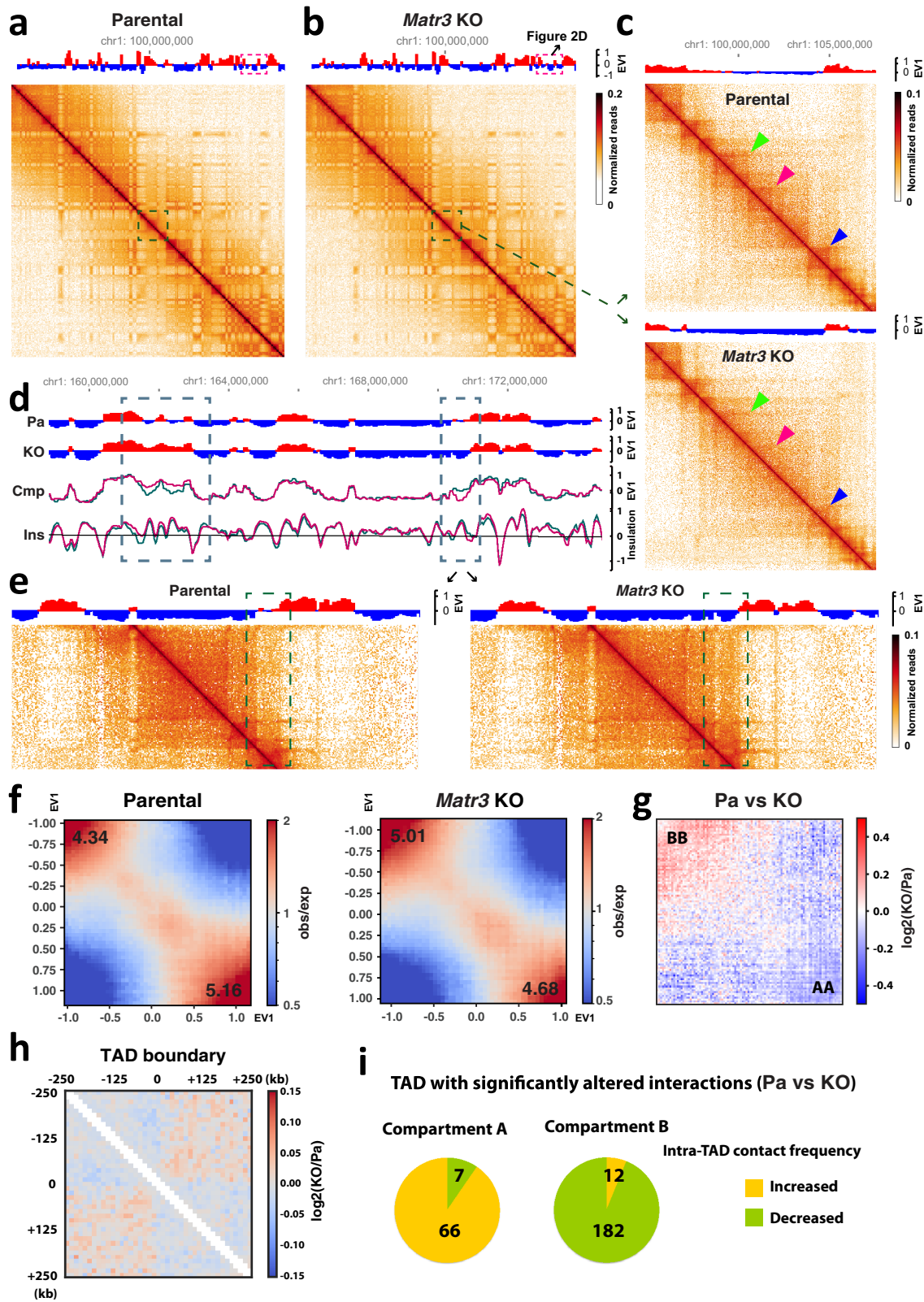


Fig. 1 Altered nuclear structure and differentiation following *Matr3* loss. **a** MATR3 expression was assessed in parental and *Matr3* KO MEL cells by Western blot and immunohistochemistry. β -actin was used as a Western blot control. Scale bar, 5 μ m. **b** May-Grunwald Giemsa staining was performed on uninduced and 5-day differentiated cells. During MEL cell differentiation, cell size is normally reduced ($p = 0.002$, by t test); the effect is more pronounced in *Matr3* KO cells ($p = 0.0004$, by two-sided t test). The number of examined cells was $n = 15$, $n = 23$, $n = 34$, and $n = 28$, respectively. **c** β -globin mRNA expression was greater in *Matr3* KO than normal MEL cells, indicative of enhanced cell differentiation ($n = 3$). Three independent *Matr3* KO clones by CRISPR/Cas9 were examined. **d** mRNA encoding *Slc4a1*, an erythroid-specific gene, was also increased in *Matr3* KO cells; expression of full-length *Matr3* cDNA (Fig. S1c) lowered *Slc4a1* expression to wild-type levels ($n = 3$). **e** Relative RNA levels based on z-score analysis demonstrated that expression of late erythroid genes was significantly higher in *Matr3* KO than wild-type cells upon differentiation. P -values obtained from the two-sided t test between two groups at each day were $1.94e-01$, $1.37e-02$, and $3.65e-07$, respectively. **f** Heterochromatin was visualized by immunohistochemistry using anti-HP1 α antibody and super-resolution microscopy. Scale bar, 1 μ m. **g** The number of distinct puncta per cell ($p < 5.9e-11$; $n = 35$, $n = 32$, respectively) and percentage of cells with at least one large puncta were quantified (5.7% and 59.4%, respectively). A large puncta was defined as having the longest diameter that is more than twice the average. Data were the result of 2–3 independent experiments and error bars represent mean \pm 1 s.d. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

boundaries and compared the changes upon *Matr3* loss. In *Matr3* KO cells, insulation at the boundaries was reduced, resulting in more interactions being observed across TAD boundaries (Fig. 2h). We also examined interactions within TADs to focus on local chromatin compaction by calculating the mean contact

frequency between the bins within a TAD. Curiously, intra-TAD contacts within compartment B were decreased, whereas interactions within compartment A increased, perhaps reflecting altered chromatin structure revealed by HP1 α staining (Figs. S1g and 1f, g). Consistent with this hypothesis, analysis of TADs with



significantly altered interactions revealed that most of the TADs in A compartments, or A-type domains, exhibited increased intra-TAD Interaction frequency, whereas those in B-type domains displayed decreased contact frequency (Fig. 2i). In short, Mat3 loss was accompanied by a global reorganization of chromosomal structure.

Chromatin structural alterations in absence of Mat3 resemble changes during differentiation. Cell differentiation is accompanied by coordinated chromatin remodeling. Remarkably, we found that changes in chromatin contact strength during differentiation resemble those in cells lacking Mat3. During normal erythroid maturation, interaction strengths within B-type

Fig. 2 *Matr3* loss leads to global reorganization of 3D genome architecture. **a, b** The first eigenvector (EV1) indicating the genomic compartment for chromosome (chr) 1 and Hi-C contact matrices at 500 kb resolution. **c** Representative region (green dashed box in Fig. 2a, b) of Hi-C data at 25 kb resolution with the compartment signal. Arrowheads indicate altered interactions. **d** Snapshot of Hi-C data at chr 1 (red dashed box in Fig. 2a, b) showing each compartment, compartment difference, and insulation score of parental (green) and *Matr3* KO (magenta) cells. Compartment switch is apparent in the indicated regions marked with dashed boxes. One of the altered regions is plotted with Hi-C contact matrices at 25 kb resolution in **(e)**. **f** Contact frequency enrichment for compartments A (bottom right) and B (top left). Compartmentalization saddle plots were calculated by normalized interaction strength between loci of 100 kb bins arranged by their eigenvector values (EV1). The numbers of the heatmaps indicate the average compartment strength quantified by calculating the ratio of homotypic (A-A or B-B) to heterotypic (A-B) compartment interactions of the top 20% sorted EV1 values. The difference was calculated as \log_2 ratio of average interaction intensity (obs/exp) in *Matr3* KO and control at 50 kb, and shown as a differential map **g**, and the change was further confirmed in Fig. S2a. **h** Hi-C interaction data binned at 25 kb resolution was aggregated at TAD boundaries and the difference was calculated by \log_2 ratio of *Matr3* KO and parental cells. Results of replicate experiments for **f-h** are shown in Fig. S1h-h'. **i** Analysis of the dynamically altered TADs in *Matr3* KO revealed that most of the TADs in compartment A had increased intra-TAD interaction frequency, whereas those in B had decreased contact frequency. Numbers in the pie chart represent TADs with significantly changed intra-TAD interaction frequency, which was defined as $p < 0.05$ and \log_2 fold change > 0.15 or < -0.15 .

domains increased, whereas contacts within A compartments became weaker (Figs. 2f, 3a–b, and S2b). The frequency of interactions within TADs decreased in compartment B, and the majority of TADs that were significantly altered in compartment B exhibited decreased intra-TAD contact frequency during differentiation, similar to be seen in the absence of *Matr3* (Figs. 3c and S2g). Indeed, TADs with significantly altered interactions in *Matr3* KO tended to have significantly altered contact frequencies during differentiation (Fig. S2c). This pattern was also observed at the domain boundary, reflected by weaker insulation at the boundaries and more interactions across TAD boundaries upon differentiation (Fig. 3d). Consistent with these findings, the average insulation score²⁹ of TAD boundaries increased, indicating weak insulation during differentiation, and similarly in *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 3e). In fact, the global reorganization of chromosomal interactions during differentiation appeared to be accelerated in the absence of *Matr3* (Figs. 3f, g and S2i, j). The size of TADs, identified using two analytical methods^{30,31}, tended to increase in *Matr3* KO cells (Figs. 2c, 3g, and S2j), similar to that observed during differentiation, with a corresponding decrease in the overall number of TADs (Fig. S2i, j).

To access the genomic features of chromatin regions at a higher resolution, we performed the assay for transposase-accessible chromatin with high throughput sequencing (ATAC-seq) that identifies accessible chromatin regions. Notably, the newly opened regions in *Matr3* KO, as compared to parental, cells were enriched for GATA motifs, which provide the binding sites for the master hematopoietic transcription factor GATA-1 (Fig. 3h). These cis elements are generally more accessible in differentiated cells, suggesting that loss of *Matr3* may increase the probability of binding of critical developmental regulators to chromatin. Regulation of gene expression requires coordinated interactions of transcriptional activators with promoters and transcription start site (TSS)-distal regulatory elements. We therefore assessed the relative localization of open chromatin regions to TSS and enhancers in parental and *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 3i, j). The number of ATAC-seq peaks assigned to distal enhancers was greater in the *Matr3* KO cells, whereas the number of peaks was similar in proximal regions. Thus, chromatin of *Matr3* KO cells resembles that of more differentiated cells. More specifically, distal regulatory regions associated with cell maturation become more accessible upon loss of *Matr3*.

Matr3 interacts with architectural proteins (CTCF and cohesin) and affects their chromatin occupancy. Emerging studies of genome structure indicate that architectural proteins function cooperatively to organize chromatin^{32,33}. To identify protein interaction partners of *Matr3*, we employed affinity purification

of biotinylated *Matr3* in MEL cells, followed by mass spectrometry (Fig. 4a). Cells for this analysis were generated by functional rescue of *Matr3* KO cells with a FlagBio-tagged *Matr3* cDNA. As anticipated for an abundant inner nuclear component, mass spectrometry identified numerous proteins, including those involved in RNA processing, chromatin remodeling, and transcription (Fig. S3a). Previous studies of *Matr3* have focused mainly on its RNA binding properties and proposed role in regulating alternative splicing^{21,34}. To investigate the extent to which isoforms differentially regulated by *Matr3* affect gene regulation, we compared alternative splicing events to gene expression changes using RNA-seq data (Fig. S3b). Only a subset of alternative splicing events was associated with the transcriptome shift of *Matr3* KO, suggesting that other factors contribute to altered gene expression. In fact, we found that *Matr3* also interacts with several proteins involved in chromatin remodeling, such as Cbx3 (heterochromatin protein 1 γ), Esco2 (cohesin acetyltransferase), CTCF, and Rcc1 (regulator of chromosome condensation). In particular, CTCF has been reported to interact with *Matr3*³⁵. The role of CTCF and cohesin complexes in chromatin conformation and their contribution to gene regulation has been well characterized in recent studies^{36,37}. Consistent with proteomic data pointing to interactions between *Matr3* and CTCF/cohesin, we observed that *Matr3* coimmunoprecipitates with these proteins (Fig. 4b). In addition, affinity purification of the cohesin complex with Smc1a antibody in human acute myeloid leukemia (AML) cells, followed by mass spectrometry, identified *Matr3* (Fig. 4c left). The abundance of *Matr3* was depleted when the cohesin complex was purified with Smc1a antibody in Stag2-mutant AML cells, supporting our findings on the interaction of the cohesin complex with *Matr3* (Fig. 4c right).

We then asked whether *Matr3* loss alters chromatin occupancy of its interacting partners by performing ChIP-seq for CTCF and the core cohesin component Rad21. Expression levels and genome-wide distribution of CTCF and cohesin remained largely unchanged between parental and *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 4d and S3c). However, quantitative comparison after normalization using rescaling of ChIP-seq signals by common peaks³⁸ indicated that a greater number of chromatin sites were occupied by CTCF and cohesin in parental as compared with *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 4d). Similarly, upon analysis of statistically significant and differentially bound regions measured by the difference in read density of ChIP-seq³⁹, a greater number of differentially bound CTCF and cohesin sites were identified in parental compared to *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 4e). The probability of genome-wide contact calculated from Hi-C data can determine the linear density of cohesin on chromatin^{40,41}. Consistent with the results from ChIP-seq analysis, *Matr3* KO cells tended to have a flatter minimum of

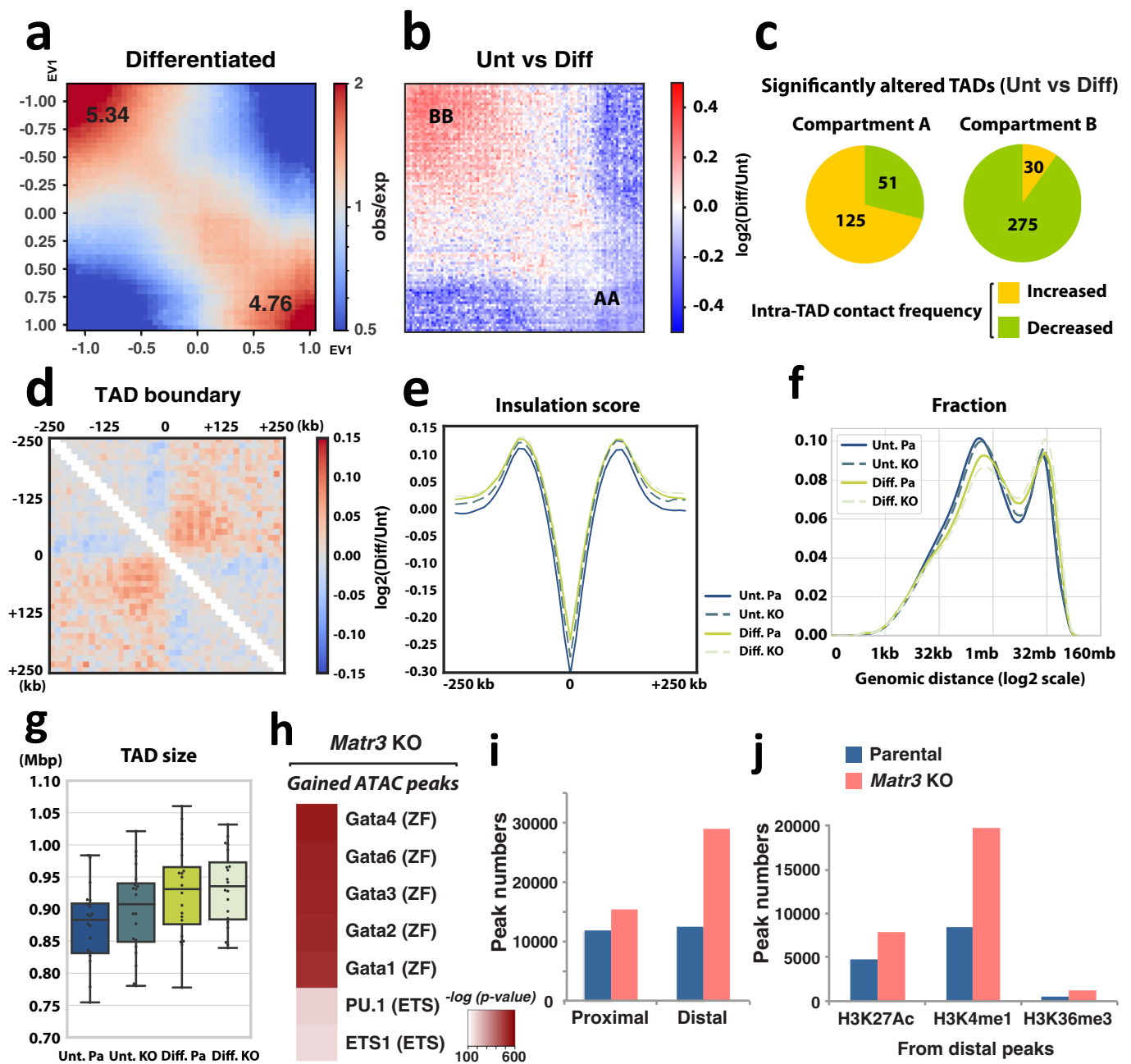


Fig. 3 Alterations of chromatin structure during differentiation resembled that in *Matr3* KO cells, and *Matr3* loss opens regulatory chromatin regions specific to differentiation. **a** Contact frequency enrichment for compartment A (bottom right) and B (top left) in the differentiated parental cell. The difference between uninduced (Unt) and differentiated (Diff) cells was calculated as the \log_2 ratio of average interaction intensity (obs/exp) at 50 kb, and shown as a differential map **b** and the change was further confirmed in Fig. S2b. Results of replicate experiments are shown in Fig. S2d-d'. **c** Analysis of the significantly altered TADs revealed that most of the TADs during differentiation in compartment A had increased intra-TAD interaction frequency, while those in B had decreased contact frequency. Numbers in the pie chart represent TADs with significantly changed intra-TAD interaction frequency. **d** Hi-C interaction data binned at 25 kb resolution was aggregated at TAD boundaries and the difference was calculated by \log_2 ratio of differentiated and uninduced cells. Results of replicate experiments are shown in Fig. S2e-e'. **e** Average insulation score²⁹ across TAD boundaries increased during differentiation and in *Matr3* KO. Results of replicate experiments are shown in Fig. S2f-f'. **f** Genomic length distribution of Hi-C contacts. Results of replicate experiments are shown in Fig. S2h-h'. **g** Average TAD size for each chromosome identified using³⁰ across two independent experiments (Unt.Pa vs. Unt.KO: $p = 0.007$, Unt.Pa vs. Diff.Pa: $p = 0.0004$, Diff.Pa vs. Diff.KO: $p = 0.46$, by two-sided Wilcoxon signed-rank test, respectively; Cohen's $d = 0.44$, Cohen's $d = 0.84$, Cohen's $d = 0.08$, respectively). Center lines, boxes, and whiskers represent the median value, first and third quartiles, and 1.5 interquartile range of the samples, respectively. **h** ATAC-seq peaks unique to *Matr3* KO compared to parental cells (gained peaks) were used for motif analysis. The natural logarithm of the p-values calculated using the binomial distribution are shown in the heatmap and in Table S1. **i** The number of ATAC-seq peaks proximal or distal to TSS was counted. Then, the peaks in the distal region were further analyzed to overlap the ChIP-seq peaks for histones **j**.

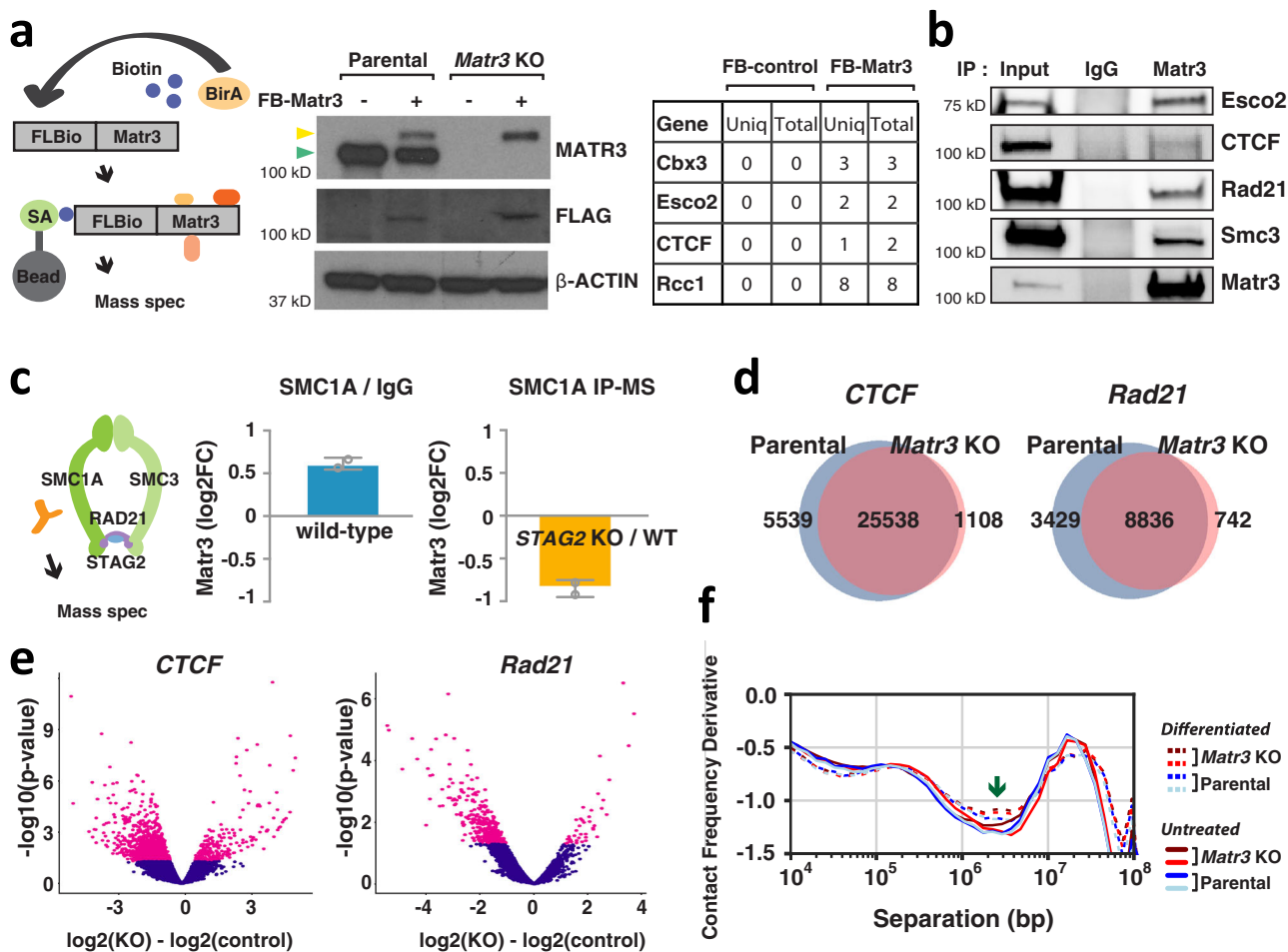


Fig. 4 *Matr3* interacts with architectural proteins including CTCF and cohesin, and *Matr3* loss alters their chromatin occupancy. **a** Parental and *Matr3* KO MEL cells were engineered to express BirA and Flag-Biotin tagged *Matr3*. Western blot discriminated endogenous (green arrow) and/or biotinylated (yellow arrow) forms of *Matr3* protein. Biotinylated form of *Matr3* was recovered using streptavidin magnetic beads. BirA expressing cell was used as a control. From the result of mass-spectroscopy (MS) analysis (Fig. S3a), the number of unique and total peptides of the selected chromatin remodeling factors are shown in the table. Data were the result of 2 independent experiments. **b** Endogenous *Matr3* protein was immunoprecipitated and its interaction with other proteins was examined by Western blot. Data were the result of 2–3 independent experiments. **c** The *Smc1a* subunit of the cohesin complex was pulled down in *Stag2* wild type (WT) and KO U937 cells and subjected to mass-spectroscopy (MS)⁸⁰. (left) *Matr3* interaction to the cohesin complex is revealed by log₂FC of *Smc1a* and IgG immunoprecipitation (IP)-MS in *Stag2* WT cells. (right) The disrupted *Matr3* interaction on the cohesin complex in *Stag2* KO is measured by log₂FC of *Smc1a* IP-MS in *Stag2* KO and WT cells. Error bars represent mean ± 1 s.d. across two independent experiments. **d** ChIP-seq datasets of CTCF and Rad21 in parental and *Matr3* KO cells were quantitatively compared³⁸. The results of at least two independent experiments were combined to generate a more stringent peak list. The numbers of specific and shared peaks in each comparison are shown in the Venn diagram. **e** Differentially bound CTCF and Rad21 sites between parental and *Matr3* KO cells were identified using³⁹. Sites with *p*-values from the Wald test less than or equal to 0.05 are shown in red on the plot. **f** Genome-wide contact probability calculated from Hi-C data (Fig. S2k). Derivative plot of the contact probability curve suggests low cohesin density in *Matr3* KO compared to parental cells. The flatter minimum expected to be seen with a reduced level of cohesin occupancy is indicated by an arrow.

contact frequency derivative, which is expected to be seen with reduced cohesin occupancy (Figs. 4f and S2k).

Matr3 loss alters chromatin contacts to the nuclear structure.

In *Matr3* KO MEL cells, both CTCF and cohesin binding to chromatin was markedly reduced at a subset of genomic regions. Global changes in gene expression, as assessed by RNA-seq analysis, were unremarkable in *Matr3* KO cells; however, changes became more evident upon cell differentiation (Fig. S3d, e). Of the genes displaying reduced CTCF and Rad21 occupancy in their vicinity, *Mbd1* was most significantly down-regulated in expression in the absence of *Matr3*, and therefore was chosen for detailed study (Figs. 5a, b and S3f). We first asked whether *Matr3*

might be directly involved in the regulation of this locus by performing ChIP-seq and CUT&RUN⁴² with available *Matr3* antibodies. We failed to identify a substantial numbers of peaks perhaps due to weak affinity of the antibody or lack of proximity of *Matr3* to DNA. To circumvent this problem and ask whether *Matr3* resides near the *Mbd1* gene at the position occupied by CTCF and cohesin, we adopted a chromatin CAPTURE procedure⁴³. This method employs sequence-specific single guide RNA (sgRNA) to direct biotinylated dCas9 protein to a region of interest for subsequent streptavidin affinity purification that allows isolation of the targeted chromatin and associated protein complexes^{43,44}. We designed sgRNAs that bind to the putative cis-regulatory element bound by CTCF and cohesin near *Mbd1*, and sgRNAs that target a nearby upstream, as a control

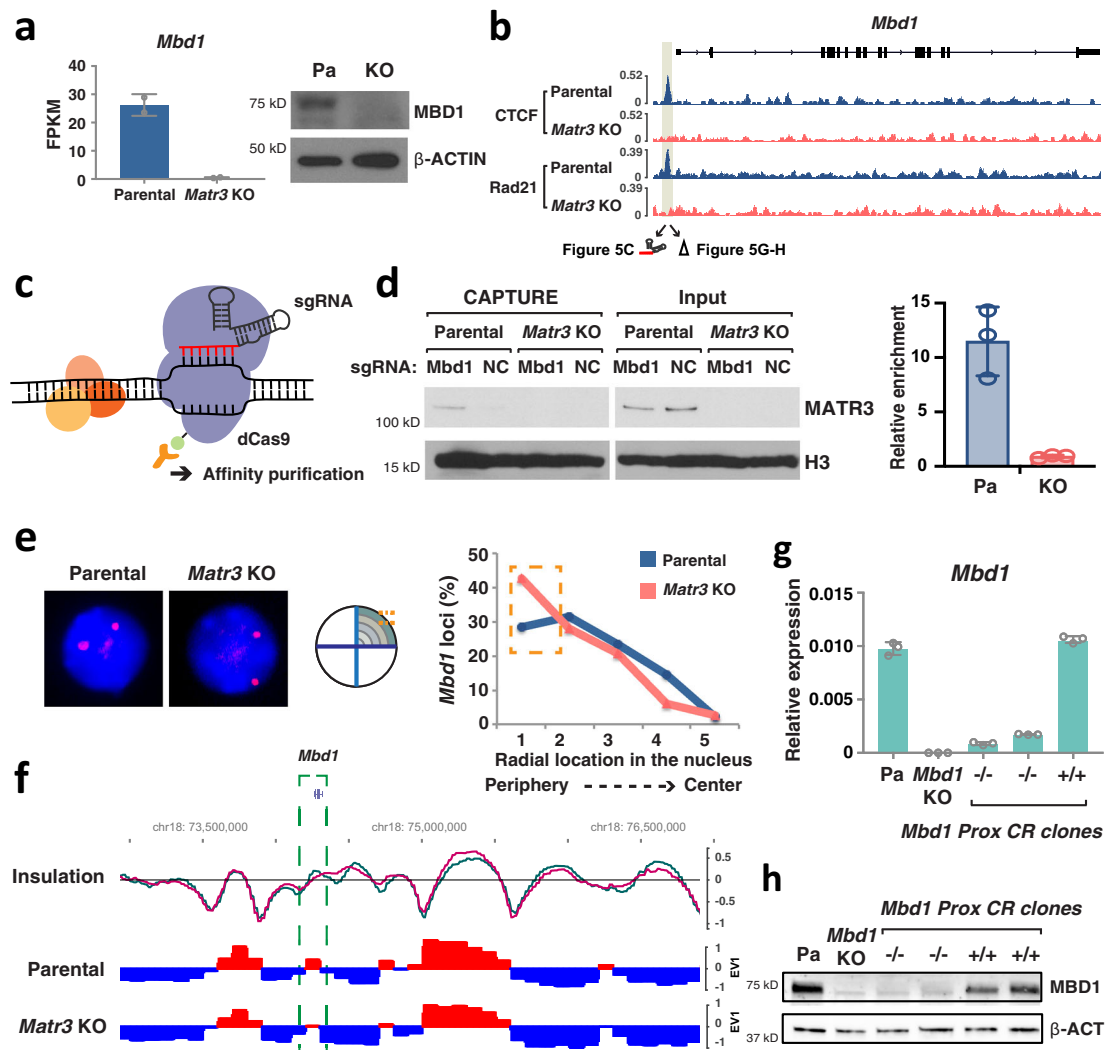


Fig. 5 *Matr3* loss alters chromatin contacts to the nuclear structure. **a** Reduced expression level of *Mbd1* was revealed by RNA-seq from two independent experiments and Western blot. β -actin was used for a Western blotting control. **b** Chromatin occupancy of CTCF and Rad21 in parental and *Matr3* KO cells near *Mbd1* locus is shown. **c** CAPTURE experiment⁴³ was performed using sgRNAs directed to a putative cis-regulatory element near *Mbd1* which is occupied by CTCF and cohesin, and an adjacent upstream, as a negative control (NC) (Figs. 5b and S4b). **d** Purification of biotinylated dCas9 and Western blot indicated that *Matr3* interacted with the putative element (*Mbd1*) but not with the upstream control (NC). Relative enrichment of *Matr3* protein at the putative element to the upstream control was quantified from three independent experiments. **e** Radial location of the *Mbd1* gene was observed by 3D DNA FISH. For quantification, the nuclear radius was divided into five shells and the number of signals in each shell was counted. The graph is the result of 2–3 independent experiments and the change was significant under a two-sided *t* test ($p = 0.006$; Cohen's $d = 0.32$). **f** Snapshot of Hi-C data at the *Mbd1* locus showing compartments in parental and *Matr3* KO cells and the difference in insulation score (parental in green and *Matr3* KO in magenta). **g**, **h** Deletion of CTCF/cohesin binding region (shaded box in Fig. 5b) by CRISPR/Cas9 reduced *Mbd1* expression. RNA (**g**) and protein (**h**) levels were examined by RT-PCR ($n = 3$) and Western blotting, and compared to *Mbd1* KO cells. β -actin was used for a Western blot control. Data were the result of 2–3 independent experiments and error bars represent mean \pm s.d. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

(Figs. 5c and S4b–d). Affinity purification of biotinylated dCas9 targeted to the CTCF/Rad21-bound regulatory element, but not the control region, revealed significant enrichment of *Matr3* protein (Fig. 5d). This finding, together with the absence of CTCF/cohesin occupancy and diminished expression of *Mbd1* in *Matr3* KO cells, strongly suggests that the presence of *Matr3* at this region is required for the chromatin association of CTCF and cohesin to coordinate *Mbd1* transcription.

To detect the relative position of the *Mbd1* gene locus inside the nucleus, we employed fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH) (Fig. 5e). In *Matr3* KO cells, *Mbd1* loci appeared to be more frequently situated closer to the nuclear periphery, which is

typical for genes within inactive chromatin. Consistent with this, the active A compartment containing the *Mbd1* gene body was weakened in the global interaction analysis by Hi-C (Fig. 5f). CTCF/cohesin-mediated chromatin organization is required for proper regulation of gene expression^{9,10}. In fact, CTCF/cohesin-occupied region upstream of *Mbd1* was located near a loop anchor, and the insulation became weaker in *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. S4a). Therefore, we examined the region where CTCF/cohesin occupancy was perturbed in *Matr3* KO cells (Fig. 5b). Using CRISPR/Cas9-mediated deletion, we generated cells with deletion of the entire *Mbd1* gene and cells in which the CTCF/cohesin binding region near *Mbd1* was specifically removed.

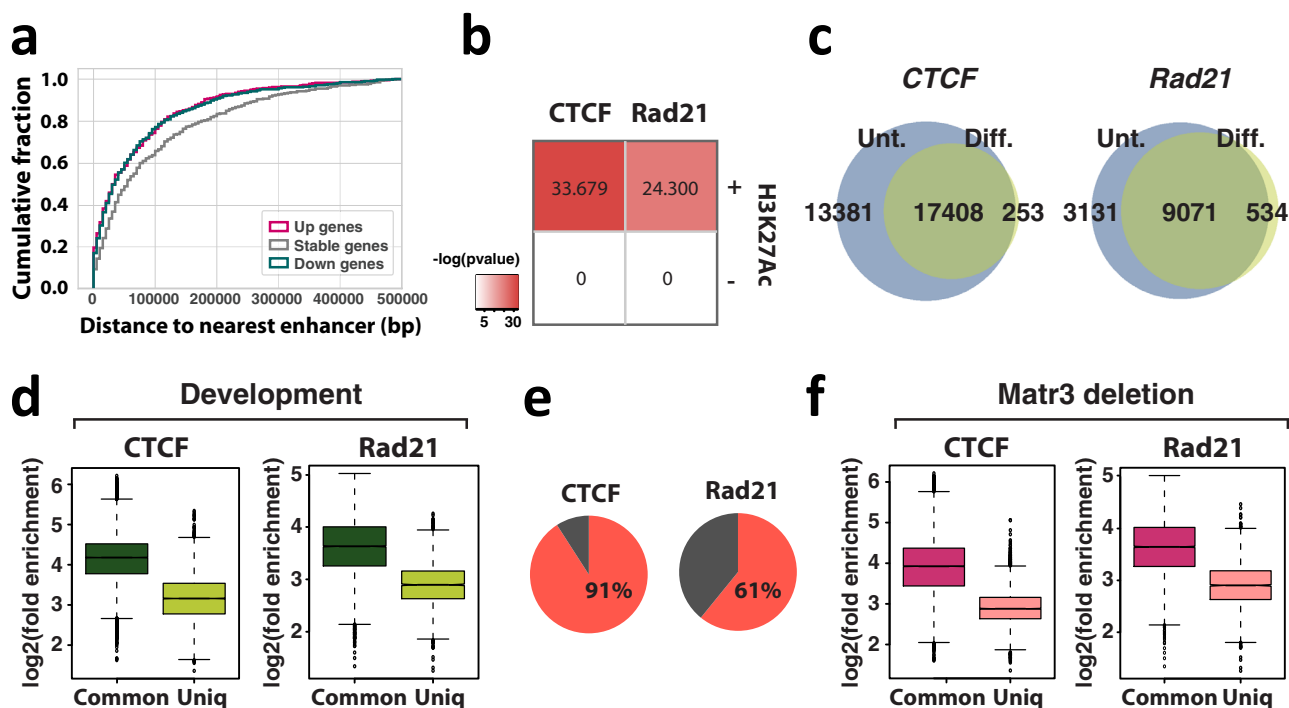


Fig. 6 Low occupancy sites of CTCF and cohesin are susceptible to developmental regulation and Matr3 loss. **a** Cumulative probability distribution of the distance to the nearest enhancer for up- and down-regulated genes versus stable genes in *Matr3* KO compared to parental cells. Genes whose expression was altered upon *Matr3* deletion resided at shorter genomic distances under a two-sided Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test (up vs. stable: $p = 3.62e-06$, down vs. stable: $p = 1.93e-09$, up vs. down: $p = 0.495$, respectively). **b** Differently occupied regions of CTCF and Rad21 in *Matr3* KO compared to parental cells nearby H3K27Ac marked chromatin associate with genes whose expression was altered upon *Matr3* loss during differentiation. Significance of enrichment was calculated using the one-sided Fisher’s exact test. The odds ratios for significant enrichment for CTCF and Rad21 were 2.01 (95% confidence interval (c.i.) = 1.7–2.4) and 2.03 (95% c.i. = 1.7–2.5), respectively. **c** ChIP-seq data sets of CTCF and Rad21 from uninduced (unt) and differentiated (diff) cells were quantitatively compared³⁸, and the results of at least two independent experiments were combined to generate a more stringent peak list. **d** After classification of regions into altered (uniqu) and maintained (common) during differentiation (Fig. 6c), the enrichment of the peaks in each experiment was investigated using⁸⁶ ($p < 2.2e-16$, $p < 2.2e-16$, respectively, by two-sided t test; Cohen’s $d = 1.48$, Cohen’s $d = 1.24$, respectively). The results were confirmed in 2–3 independent experiments (Fig. S5a–c). **e** Percentage of sites with reduced CTCF and Rad21 binding during differentiation in the binding regions lost in *Matr3* KO compared to parental cells. **f** After classification of binding regions into maintained (common) and altered (uniqu) upon *Matr3* loss (Fig. 4d), the enrichment of the peaks in each experiment was measured ($p < 2.2e-16$, $p < 2.2e-16$, respectively, by two-sided t test; Cohen’s $d = 1.22$, Cohen’s $d = 1.26$, respectively). The results were confirmed in 2–3 independent experiments (Fig. S5d–f). In box plots, the centre line represents the median, box limits show upper and lower quartiles, and whiskers extend to $1.5 \times$ interquartile range.

Notably, removal of this binding site reduced *Mbd1* expression to a level similar to that in *Mbd1* KO cells, providing functional validation of the relevance of the CTCF-cohesin-*Matr3*-associated regulatory element (Fig. 5g, h). We cannot exclude, however, that the cis element we have removed binds other factors critical for *Mbd1* expression. Taken together, these findings indicate that binding of CTCF and cohesin to select chromatin regions is dependent on *Matr3* and necessary for proper chromatin interactions and gene expression.

Sites of low CTCF and cohesin occupancy correlate with developmental regulation and sensitivity to Matr3 loss. Despite significant changes in chromatin architecture, the consequences of *Matr3* loss on gene expression were remarkably limited in undifferentiated cells, but enhanced upon differentiation (Figs. 1e, 2, and S3d–e). Thus, chromatin changes associated with *Matr3* loss may facilitate transcriptional responses to developmental cues. Indeed, recent studies have shown that many signal-response enhancers, such as development-specific elements, are in contact with target promoters prior to signal transduction^{45–47}. These pre-existing enhancer-promoter loops presumably facilitate rapid transcriptional activation. Moreover, we found that

expression of genes close to enhancers was affected by *Matr3* loss (Fig. 6a), suggesting that the local looping was perturbed.

Architectural proteins, such as CTCF and cohesin, establish the boundaries between TADs and mediate interactions between regulatory elements within chromatin domains. Changes in their chromatin occupancy occur during differentiation, and also appear to be associated with dynamic chromatin contacts that regulate inducible gene expression^{46,48,49}. For example, lineage-specific loops in epidermal precursor cells that provide a framework for enhancer contacts to the differentiation-related genes prior to terminal differentiation are established by cohesin occupancy that is not present in pluripotent cells⁴⁶. Therefore, we investigated those regions that displayed changes in CTCF and cohesin occupancy upon *Matr3* loss in relation to differentiation (Fig. 4d). Notably, CTCF and Rad21 sites with altered occupancy near enhancers were strongly associated with altered gene expression during differentiation (Fig. 6b), suggesting that they perturb chromatin contacts that provide a regulatory infrastructure for the transcription of erythroid specific genes.

ChIP-seq experiments revealed that CTCF and Rad21 maintain occupancy at many chromatin regions during differentiation (Fig. 6c). However, quantitative comparison of ChIP-seq data and the probability of genome-wide contacts calculated from Hi-C

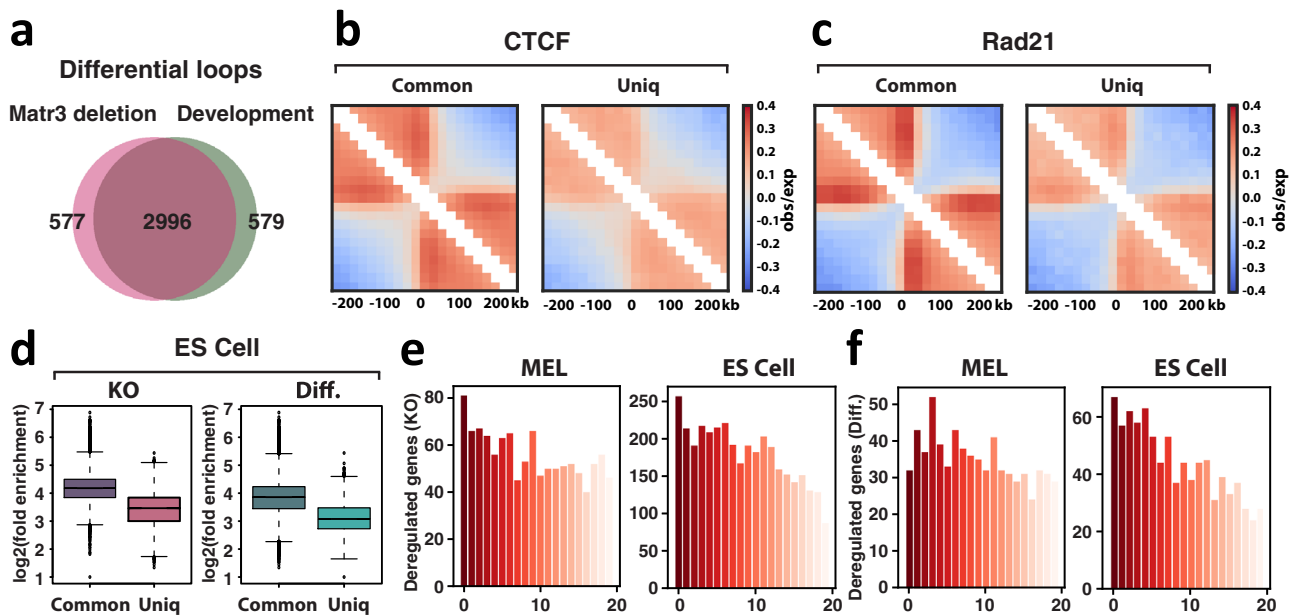


Fig. 7 Impact of *Mat3* loss on chromosomal architecture extends to embryonic stem (ES) cells. **a** 3573 and 3575 differential loops lost in *Mat3* KO and during differentiation, respectively, were identified and significantly overlapped (2996, 84%). Random overlap for lost differential loops: 212 (out of 3650), 6%, $p = 1e-5$ from the permutation test. **b, c** Interaction pile-up maps of Hi-C data at the boundaries defined by each set of CTCF **b** and Rad21 **c** ChIP-seq peaks. The normalized pile-up interaction frequency observed over expected values indicates stronger insulation at regions of parental cells that are maintained (common) than at altered sites (uniq) in *Mat3* KO cells. The results were confirmed in 2-3 independent experiments (Fig. S5i-j). Hi-C data of *Mat3* KO compared to parental cells at altered sites are shown in Fig. S6a-b'. **d** ChIP-seq data sets of CTCF in mouse ES cells were quantitatively compared, and the results of independent experiments were combined to generate a more stringent peak list as described above (Fig. S6g). Then, the enrichment of the peaks in each experiment was investigated and confirmed (Fig. S6i). CTCF enriched less strongly at altered sites (uniq) than sites maintained (common) in *Mat3* KO cells and during differentiation (diff) ($p < 2.2e-16$, $p < 2.2e-16$, respectively, by two-sided t test; Cohen's $d = 1.31$, Cohen's $d = 0.97$, respectively). In box plots, the centre line represents the median, box limits show upper and lower quartiles, and whiskers extend to $1.5 \times$ interquartile range. The CTCF peak-mapped genes were placed into ventiles (x-axis) from highest to lowest gene scores corresponding to genes with the most significant peak changes. The genes within each ventile were then overlapped with genes whose expression was altered (y-axis) in *Mat3* KO compared to parental cells **e** and during differentiation **f**. Analysis was performed on both MEL and mouse ES cells and the significance of the association was assessed using the one-sided hypergeometric test ($p = 9.5e-08$, $p = 2.3e-26$, respectively in **e** and $p = 6.6e-04$, $p = 4.4e-14$, respectively in **f**). Fold overlap over random: 1.4503, 1.428, 1.4857, 1.514, respectively.

data suggested that CTCF/cohesin occupancy tends to decrease upon MEL cell differentiation (Figs. 6c and 4f). Moreover, we found that CTCF and cohesin in parental cells were already weakly bound to regions at which occupancy was reduced on differentiation (Figs. 6d and S5a-c). Recent reports indicate that variable binding regions for CTCF and cohesin between cell types tend to be weak binding sites⁵⁰⁻⁵². Hence, we reasoned that sites of low CTCF and cohesin occupancy might be more sensitive to changes in the local cellular environment, such as interacting scaffold proteins like *Mat3*. To test this model, we compared the variable chromatin regions in the absence of *Mat3* to the sites that change during differentiation. Indeed, the majority of sites with reduced CTCF and Rad21 binding during differentiation were lost in the absence of *Mat3* (Fig. 6e). We confirmed that CTCF and Rad21 in parental cells were also weakly bound to sites that were lost upon *Mat3* loss (Figs. 6f and S5d-f). Consistent with the correlated changes in CTCF and Rad21 upon *Mat3* loss and during differentiation, chromatin loops altered by loss of *Mat3* correlate significantly with loops changed during differentiation (Figs. 7a and S5g). In fact, Hi-C interaction data at the boundaries defined by ChIP-seq peaks indicated that the occupancy of CTCF and Rad21 correlated with the level of insulation between neighboring topological domains. Chromatin insulation was reduced at the boundaries containing weak CTCF and Rad21 sites that were lost in the absence of *Mat3*, and more interactions were observed across the domain boundaries (Figs. 7b, c and S5i, j). A high proportion of sites with reduced

CTCF/cohesin occupancy resided within compartment B, suggesting that reduced chromatin binding of architectural proteins plays a role in reducing chromatin interaction frequency between B domains within TADs (Fig. S5h).

Impact of *Mat3* loss on chromosomal architecture extends to embryonic stem (ES) cells. Our findings regarding the relationship between chromatin architectural proteins CTCF/cohesin and *Mat3* emanate from analysis of a convenient model of red cell differentiation, and therefore raise the question of whether they are unique to this cell context or of more general relevance. To address this critical issue directly, we assessed chromatin occupancy of CTCF and cohesin (Rad21) in mouse embryonic stem (ES) cells of both parental and *Mat3* KO genotypes, and specifically interrogated changes in occupancy and gene expression upon differentiation accompanying removal of LIF. Similar to MEL cells, *Mat3* KO ES cells proliferated at the same rate as parental cells, and changes in gene expression were more evident upon differentiation (Fig. S6c-e). We observed that genes whose expression increased in *Mat3* KO ES cells during differentiation were enriched in gene sets implicated in cell differentiation and development (Fig. S6f). As in MEL cells, *Mat3* KO ES cells displayed a reduced number of high confidence CTCF and Rad21 binding sites (Fig. S6g). Moreover, regions with reduced occupancy of CTCF and Rad21 upon *Mat3* KO or differentiation contained weaker peaks in parental cells (Figs. 7d and S6h, i). Furthermore, as in MEL cells, reduced binding of CTCF was

strongly associated with gene expression changes in *Matr3* KO cells, as assessed from global RNA-seq (Fig. 7e). Most notable was the strong positive correlation between the most variable CTCF binding sites upon *Matr3* KO and differential gene expression during differentiation in both MEL and ES cell contexts (Fig. 7f). We conclude, therefore, that the impact of *Matr3* on chromosomal architecture and developmental gene expression is not limited to a single cell type, but instead reflects a conserved feature of the interaction of an inner nuclear protein and chromatin.

Discussion

Nuclear architecture contributes to chromosome compartmentalization and organization and influences cell differentiation. Active and inactive regions of chromatin, corresponding to the A and B compartments, respectively, are organized and separated spatially in the nucleus. Though much remains to be understood regarding how these features are formed and maintained, recent studies implicate phase separation of intrinsically disordered regions of proteins as a contributor to the compartmentalization of euchromatin and heterochromatin^{3–7,53}. For example, HP1 α droplets induce the formation of heterochromatic microphases, whereas clusters of transcriptional regulators form euchromatic condensates. Here, we identified increased interaction strength within the B compartments and decreased strength between the A-type compartments following loss of *Matr3*, a finding that resembles changes seen upon disruption of scaffolding nuclear speckles⁵⁴. Thus, nuclear structural proteins appear to play a role in the organization of chromatin compartmentalization. By super-resolution microscopic examination of HP1 α , we found that *Matr3* loss affects chromatin boundaries. As *Matr3* has intrinsically disordered regions⁵⁵, we speculate that it may also contribute to spatial separation of the genome through formation of liquid condensates.

Chromosomal organization is critical for proper gene expression and differentiation. Extensive changes in chromatin interactions and compartmentalization were observed during neural development with decreased TAD numbers, as well as reduced interaction strength between the A compartments and increased strength between the B-type domains⁸; yet whether the nuclear structure had an effect remained unexplored. Following *Matr3* loss, chromatin architecture was perturbed and resembled that evident in a more differentiated state at both compartment and TAD levels. Similarly, chromatin reorganization during differentiation was accelerated in *Matr3* KO cells, demonstrating its role in maintaining chromatin structure in dynamic conditions. Perhaps due to cell type-specific 3D chromatin architecture^{56,57}, the set of altered genes varies between cell types. For example, expression of *Mbd1* was markedly affected by *Matr3* loss in MEL cells, but not changed in ES cells. Unlike pronounced chromatin remodeling, gene expression changes were less remarkable in *Matr3* KO cells, but became more evident during differentiation in both cell types. Local interactions between cis regulatory elements are extensively reorganized during differentiation, and mediated by the combinatorial binding of transcription factors and architectural proteins, such as CTCF and cohesin^{32,33,46}. The binding landscape of CTCF and cohesin was dynamic between cell types, and their density in occupied regions presumably contributed to changes in chromatin interactions and gene expression^{48,50–52,58}. Of special note, we infer that *Matr3* stabilizes the binding of CTCF and Rad21 to genomic regions. In the absence of *Matr3* chromatin undergoes structural changes that promote differentiation.

***Matr3*'s role in maintaining genome structure provides an alternative perspective for ALS.** *Matr3* is a nuclear scaffold

protein to which multiple functions have been ascribed. Prior proteomic studies have revealed apparent association with proteins involved in RNA metabolism, nuclear structure, and chromatin. A yeast two-hybrid screen using a fetal brain cDNA library identified 33 unique nuclear proteins that interact with *Matr3*, the majority of which are involved in RNA processing and chromatin remodeling¹⁹. Similarly, we found that *Matr3* was associated with many chromatin remodeling factors, including CTCF, cohesin, and heterochromatin proteins, as well as RNA binding proteins, in MEL cells.

Attention in the literature has focused on RNA binding properties of *Matr3*, which have been implicated in RNA processing^{21,34}. The potential role of *Matr3* in RNA metabolism has received support from studies of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a neurodegenerative disorder with diverse underlying genetics^{22,55,59}. Rare ALS associated *Matr3* mutations have been reported to alter subcellular localization of the protein and affect interactions with other proteins thought to function in mRNA biogenesis and export^{60,61}. Although the significance of these findings is uncertain, the deletion of RNA recognition motifs (RRMs) in *Matr3* led to its redistribution into nuclear granules, yet an effect on dose-dependent toxicity of *Matr3* in primary neurons was not striking⁵⁵. The lack of a persuasive link between disease causality and RNA-binding properties of *Matr3* raises the possibility of other potential mechanisms. In addition, physical association of RNA binding proteins with cohesin has been observed and thus the possibility of a mechanism other than aberrant splicing of the cohesin subunit gene was proposed to explain the loss of sister chromatid cohesion following depletion of RNA processing factors⁶². In this study, we uncovered a distinct chromatin-associated role for *Matr3* in regulating 3D genome organization, which suggests that ALS-associated *Matr3* mutations may perturb chromatin and gene expression in a more direct manner, as distinguished from the conventional view of its involvement in RNA processing. Additionally, chromatin structure and RNA-processing may be more interconnected than generally appreciated.

***Matr3* is involved in the maintenance of chromatin structure and regulation of gene expression during development.** Due to its spatial proximity to other proteins involved in controlling gene expression, *Matr3* has also been implicated in gene regulatory functions, such as DNA replication and transcription^{20,23}. Despite its association with these processes, it has remained unclear whether *Matr3* influences global gene regulation. Our findings demonstrate that depletion of *Matr3* has a broad effect on chromatin organization, and provide unique insights into the impact of a critical inner nuclear protein on the spatial separation of the genome (Fig. 8a).

Proper gene expression and development require the combinatorial activities of transcriptional regulatory factors and coordinated chromatin repositioning. Recent studies have shown that nuclear membrane proteins, such as nuclear lamina, play a critical role in developmental gene expression by regulating spatial positioning of genomic loci^{11,16}, but much less have been revealed regarding the role of inner nuclear proteins. Chromatin occupancy of CTCF/cohesin changes during differentiation, ultimately affecting dynamic chromatin contacts that regulate gene expression. Our data demonstrate that the nucleoplasmic protein *Matr3* stabilizes the binding of the architectural proteins (CTCF and cohesin) to chromatin and serves to maintain chromatin structure (Fig. 8b). We speculate that *Matr3* negatively regulates cell fate transitions by maintaining cellular state through fine-tuning the binding of CTCF/cohesin to chromatin and associated 3D interactions. Our work reveals a previously

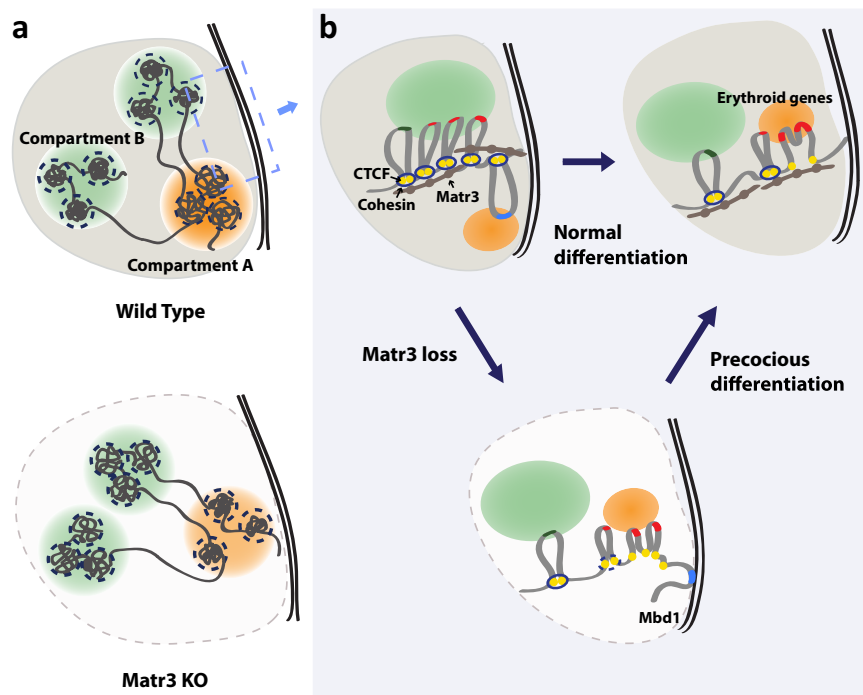


Fig. 8 *Matr3* maintains chromatin structure and coordinates regulation of gene expression and differentiation. **a** *Matr3* is required to organize chromosomal structure and maintain compartmentalization. The strength of interactions between the B compartments (green) became stronger whereas the contacts between the A-type domains (orange) were reduced in *Matr3* KO cells. In the local chromatin compaction within the TADs indicated by the dashed circles, the intra-TAD contact frequency between compartment B were decreased while the interaction frequency between compartment A increased. **b** The region of the left dashed box is shown on the right. *Matr3* interacts with CTCF and cohesin, and *Matr3* loss destabilizes their binding to a subset of chromatin regions, which is necessary for proper gene regulation (e.g. *Mbd1*, marked in blue). The resulting altered chromatin structure resembles that of more differentiated cells and appears to accelerate cell maturation by modulating regulatory regions more accessible. Differentiation-specific erythroid genes are shown in red.

unrecognized role of *Matr3* in chromatin organization and responses to developmental cues.

Methods

Cell culture. Mouse erythroleukemia (MEL) cells were cultured in Dulbecco's Modified Eagle's Medium (DMEM) with 10% fetal calf serum, 1% L-glutamine, and 2% penicillin/streptomycin at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 5% CO₂⁶³. A total of 2% DMSO was used to induce cells differentiation. MEL subclones carrying the BirA enzyme and the tagged version of *Matr3* were generated as described⁶⁴. G1ER cells were cultured in Iscove's Modified Dulbecco's Medium (IMDM) with 2% penicillin/streptomycin, 124 × 10⁻⁴ monothioglycerol, 15% FCS, 2 U/ml recombinant human erythropoietin (EPO), and 50 ng/mL recombinant SCF or SCF-containing media. Cell differentiation was induced by treatment with 10⁻⁷ M β-estradiol to activate estrogen-inducible Gata1/ER fusion protein. Mouse embryonic stem (ES) cells (CJ7) were maintained on mouse embryonic fibroblasts (Gibco MEFs) feeders in standard ES medium (DMEM; Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium, Thermo Fisher Scientific) supplemented with 15% heat-inactivated fetal calf serum (FCS) (Omega Scientific), 0.1 mM 2-mercaptoethanol (Sigma), 2 mM L-glutamine (Thermo Fisher Scientific), 0.1 mM non-essential amino acid (Thermo Fisher Scientific), 1% of nucleoside mix (Merck Millipore), 50 U/ml Penicillin/Streptomycin (Thermo Fisher Scientific), 1000U/ml leukemia inhibitory factor (LIF/ESGRO) (Merck Millipore). For all the analysis including RNA-seq and CHIP-seq, ES cells were passed two times on 0.1% gelatin coated plates without feeders. To differentiate mouse ES cells into embryoid bodies (EB), mESCs were passed two times on 0.1% gelatin coated plates without feeders, and a single-cell suspension containing the 50,000 cells/ml to be plated was prepared. Cells were differentiated in Iscove's Modified Dulbecco Media (IMDM) supplemented with 10% heat-inactivated fetal calf serum, 2 mmol L-glutamine, 4.5 × 10⁻⁴ mol/L monothioglycerol, 0.5 mmol/L ascorbic acid, 200 μg/mL transferrin (Roche), 5% protein free hybridoma media (PFHM-II; Invitrogen) and 50 U/ml Penicillin/Streptomycin. Media was changed at day2 before the EB collection on Day4.

Immunohistochemistry. The endogenous expression of *Matr3* and HP1α proteins was detected as described⁶⁵. Briefly, cells were fixed using 4% paraformaldehyde in PBS. Cell membranes were permeabilized with 0.5% Triton X-100 in PBS, and nonspecific immunobinding sites were blocked with 4% IgG-free BSA for 1 h at room temperature. Cells were incubated with primary antibodies to *Matr3* (Abcam,

ab84422, 1:100), or HP1α (Abcam, ab203432, 1:100). 4',6-Diamidino-2-phenylindole (Sigma) were added as needed.

Imaging and image analysis. Immunohistochemistry experiments of *Matr3* and HP1α were imaged on a spinning disk confocal microscope (Nikon) and super-resolution structured illumination (SR-SIM) combined with Zeiss LSM710 microscope. Puncta size was measured with Fiji software. Confocal images were cropped and enhanced in Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop for compilation of figures.

Histology. Cytocentrifuge preparations of parental and *Matr3* KO cells at various stages of differentiation were stained with May-Grunwald Giemsa for general morphology. Cell size was measured with Fiji software.

Fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH). Slides were aged in a 2xSSC solution, dehydrated through a series of alcohols, and air dried. BAC probe RP23-7J22 for *Mbd1* located at 18qE2 was added to the slide and co-denatured at 72 °C for 2 min. They were left to hybridize at 37 °C for 48 h in a humidified chamber. The slides were then washed in 50% formamide, 2xSSC for 10 min at 45 °C. DAPI was applied under a glass coverslip and hybridization signals were viewed on an Olympus AX-70 fluorescent microscope system.

RNA Isolation and qRT-PCR. RNA was extracted using TRIzol reagent (Thermo Fisher) and the RNeasy Plus Mini Kit (Qiagen). RNA was reverse-transcribed using iScript cDNA Synthesis Kit (Bio-Rad) and quantitative PCR was performed using the iQ SYBR Green Supermix (Bio-Rad) and CFX Real-Time PCR Detection System (Bio-Rad). Following primer sequences were used for qRT-PCR: *Hbb-b1*, TTTAACGATGGCCTGAATCACTT and CAGCACAATCACGATCATATTGC; *Sle4a1*, ATGGCCTCAAAGTGTC AAC and TCAGCGTGGTGATCTGAGAC; *Mbd1*, AACTGAGCTCTCCCTTAAAGG and TGACTGCTGCCACTCTCTCTG; *Gapdh*, AAATTCAACGGCACAGTCAAG and CACCCATTGTGATGTTAGTGG.

Immunoprecipitation and Western Blotting. Nuclei were isolated from MEL cells and lysed to make nuclear extracts. Nuclear extracts were then incubated with the indicated antibodies overnight at 4 °C. Protein G/A magnetic beads (Thermo Scientific) equilibrated with IP buffer (20 mM HEPES pH 7.9, 25% glycerol,

Dynabeads were washed twice with 500 μ L of 2% SDS, twice with 500 μ L of RIPA buffer with 0.5 M NaCl (10 mM Tris-HCl, 1 mM EDTA, 0.1% sodium deoxycholate, 0.1% SDS, 1% Triton X-100, pH 8.0), twice with 500 μ L of LiCl buffer (250 mM LiCl, 0.5% NP-40, 0.5% sodium deoxycholate, 1 mM EDTA, 10 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0), and twice with 500 μ L of TE buffer (10 mM Tris-HCl, 1 mM EDTA, 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0) and reverse cross-linked at 65 $^{\circ}$ C with shaking at 1050 rpm overnight. ChIP DNA was incubated with RNase A 5 μ g/mL (Thermo Scientific) and 0.2 mg/mL proteinase K (Ambion) at 37 $^{\circ}$ C for 30 min and 2 hours, respectively, and purified using QIAquick Spin columns (Qiagen). Quantitative RT-PCR (qPCR) was performed using the iQ SYBR Green Supermix (Bio-Rad). Primers are listed as follows: *Mbd1*_prox_forward: 5'-CGGTTACCAATCCTGAAGAA-3'; *Mbd1*_prox_reverse: 5'-AGTGCCTCCGGACACAAG-3'; *Mbd1*_upstream_control_forward: 5'-CAGGTGGCCAGCTTAATAAAA-3'; *Mbd1*_upstream_control_reverse: 5'-CAAGTGAGAGCTTGCCCAT-3'; Negative_control_forward: 5'-CCTCTGATTGATCCCAGCA-3'; Negative_control_reverse: 5'-ACACCGACTGACTGCATGAG-3'.

CAPTURE Western Blot assay. In total 1 to 2×10^8 WT and KO MEL cells transduced with *Mbd1* proximal region-targeting and negative control sgRNAs were used. Cells were cross-linked with 2% formaldehyde for 10 min and quenched with 0.125 M of glycine for 5 min. After washing with PBS, cells were lysed in 1 mL cell lysis buffer (25 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.4, 85 mM KCl, 0.25% Triton X-100, freshly added 1 mM DTT and 1:200 protease inhibitor cocktail (Sigma)) and rotated for 30 min at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. Cell nuclei were collected by centrifugation at $2,500 \times g$ for 5 min at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. Nuclei were resuspended in 500 μ L cell lysis buffer with 1 μ L 0.5 μ g/mL RNase A and rotated at 37 $^{\circ}$ C for 30 min to degrade chromatin associated-RNAs. Nuclei were centrifuged at $2,500 \times g$ for 5 min at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. Nuclear pellets were resuspended in 400 μ L 4% SDS nuclear lysis buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.4, 10 mM EDTA, 4% SDS, freshly added 1 mM DTT and 1:200 protease inhibitor cocktail) and incubated at room temperature for 10 min. Nuclei suspension was mixed with 1.2 mL freshly prepared 8 M urea buffer (10 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.4, 1 mM EDTA, 8 M Urea) and centrifuged at $16,100 \times g$ for 25 min at 22 $^{\circ}$ C. The samples were washed twice more in 0.4 mL nuclear lysis buffer and mixed with 1.2 mL 8 M urea buffer, followed by centrifugation at $16,100 \times g$ for 25 min at 22 $^{\circ}$ C. Pelleted chromatin was then washed twice with nuclear lysis buffer followed by two washes with modified cell lysis buffer (25 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.4, 10 mM KCl, 0.25% Triton X-100) to remove residual urea and SDS, respectively. Chromatin pellet was resuspended in 800 μ L IP binding buffer without NaCl (20 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.5, 1 mM EDTA, 0.1% NP-40, 10% glycerol, freshly added proteinase inhibitor). Chromatin suspension was then subjected to sonication to an average size of ~ 500 bp on the Branson Sonifier 450 ultrasonic processor (10% amplitude, 0.5 s ON, 1 s OFF, for 20 s). Fragmented chromatin was centrifuged at $16,100 \times g$ for 10 min at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. Supernatant was combined and final concentration of 150 mM NaCl was added to the sheared chromatin. To prepare the streptavidin beads for affinity purification, 50 μ L of streptavidin agarose slurry (Life Technologies) was washed 3 times in 1 mL of IP binding buffer and added to soluble chromatin. After overnight rotation at 4 $^{\circ}$ C, streptavidin beads were collected by centrifugation at $800 \times g$ for 3 min at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. The beads were washed twice with 1 mL of 2% SDS, twice with 1 mL of RIPA buffer with 0.5 M NaCl, twice with 1 mL of LiCl buffer, and twice with 1 mL of TE buffer. The chromatin was resuspended in 15 μ L of RIPA buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl, 1% NP-40, 0.25% sodium deoxycholate, 150 mM NaCl, 0.1% SDS, 2 mM EDTA) and incubated with 1 μ L of Benzonase nuclease (Sigma) overnight at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. The following morning, 5 μ L 4 \times XT sample loading buffer containing 1.25% 2-mercaptoethanol was added to the sample followed by incubation at 95 $^{\circ}$ C for 20 min followed by 5 min incubation on ice. Protein sample was centrifuged at $12,000 \times g$ for 10 min at 4 $^{\circ}$ C. The protein sample was loaded onto NuPAGE[™] 4–12% Bis-Tris gels (Invitrogen) and run with 1 \times MOPS running buffer (Invitrogen) and transferred to Amersham Hybond P 0.45 PVDF blots (GE Healthcare #1060023). The blots were incubated with primary antibodies against Matrin-3 (Santa Cruz Biotechnology, sc-81318) and Histone H3 (Abcam, ab1791) with 1:100 and 1:3000 dilutions, respectively, in 5% non-fat milk in TBS/T (20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 0.1% Tween-20) at 4 $^{\circ}$ C overnight. After washing 3 times with TBS/T, the blots were incubated with secondary antibodies (Cell Signaling Technologies, anti-Mouse-HRP CST 7076, anti-Rabbit-HRP CST 7074) with 5% non-fat milk in TBS/T at 1:3000 dilutions for 1 h at room temperature. The blots were then washed 3 times with TBS/T and developed using Plus-ECL (PerkinElmer). Densitometry quantification was performed using ImageJ software.

Reporting summary. Further information on research design is available in the Nature Research Reporting Summary linked to this article.

Data availability

The data that support this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Hi-C, ChIP-seq, ATAC-seq, and RNA-seq data sets generated this study have been deposited in the GEO database, under accession code [GSE181234](https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.03.09.979369). Proteomic data are available via ProteomeXchange with identifier [PXD028867](https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.03.09.979369). Source data are provided with this paper.

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H.J.C. and S.H.O. conceptualized and designed research. H.J.C., O.U., T.L., Z.T. and G.B. performed the experiments. H.J.C., O.U., Y.K., Q.Z., Z.T. and G.B. analyzed the data. H.J.C., O.U., Y.K., T.L., Q.Z., Z.T., G.B., J.X., G.-C.Y., J.D. and S.H.O. interpreted the data. H.J.C. and S.H.O. wrote the manuscript with input from all authors.

Competing interests

The authors have no competing interests.

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