

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

**Supplementary Figure 1: RNA-binding properties of fibrillar Hfq.** Higher-order Hfq polymers (presumably fibrillar) exhibit an RNA gel-shift activity and are apparently capable of RNA-binding, as indicated by electrophoretic mobility shift assays (EMSA) and shown in the gel strip below. EMSAs were performed by incubating a labelled RNA fragment (at a final concentration of 2.5 pM) with purified Hfq for 20 min at 37°C in 50 µl of a solution consisting of 10 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0, 80 mM NaCl, 1.0% v/v glycerol, and 0.01% w/v dodecyl-β-D-maltoside, as described in further detail by Arluison *et al.* (*Eur. J. Biochem.* 2004, 271, 1258-1265). The RNA fragment used was *rpsO* mRNA augmented by an 18-nucleotide poly(A) tail. As discussed in the text, this RNA-binding activity suggests the *in vivo* relevance of Hfq fibers, even though the exact biological nature of such functionality remains unclear.

