



# **NTC7482 and NTC7485**

## **Expression Vectors**

### **Instruction Manual**

#### **Catalog Numbers**

NTC-DV7482  
NTC-DV7485-EGFP  
NTC- DV7482-LV  
NTC- DV7485-LV

**Version 3**  
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# General Information

**Contents:** 20 ug each of plasmid vector shipped in 1x TE buffer.

**Storage:** Plasmids should be stored at -20°C

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# NTC7482 and NTC7485 vector family

## Introduction

Nature Technology Corporations (NTC's) NTC7482 and NTC7485 plasmids were specifically designed as safe minimalized vectors for the expression of recombinant proteins in mammalian cells. This may be for protein production, or induction of neutralizing immune responses by genetic immunization. The vectors combine minimal prokaryotic sequences, kanamycin selectable marker, with vector backbone modifications that direct highest-level bacterial production yields (up to 2.2 g/L; Williams *et al.* 2009b). The vectors also contain a novel chimeric promoter that directs superior mammalian cell expression (Luke *et al.* 2009).

The vectors are available in two versions. NTC7485 expresses encoded protein without additional sequences. NTC7482 targets encoded protein into the secretory pathway using an optimized tissue plasminogen activator (TPA) signal peptide.

The plasmids were designed to be responsive to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulatory guidance's regarding DNA Vaccine vector composition (FDA 1996, FDA 2007; reviewed in Williams *et al.* 2009a). All sequences that were not essential for *Escherichia coli* plasmid replication or mammalian cell expression of the target gene were eliminated. Synthetic eukaryotic mRNA leader and terminators were utilized in the vector design to limit DNA sequence homology with the human genome to reduce the possibility of chromosomal integration.

Target gene expression is driven from an optimized chimeric promoter-intron (SV40-CMV-HTLV-1 R synthetic intron). The vectors encode a consensus Kozak translation initiation sequence and ATG start codon. The chimeric CMV promoter achieves significantly higher expression levels than traditional human cytomegalovirus (CMV) promoter based vectors (Luke *et al.* 2009).

In summary, the NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors offer the following advantages

- Highest level expression in a wide range of mammalian cells using an optimized chimeric CMV promoter-synthetic intron
- Choice of *Escherichia coli* production strain for higher immunogenicity (dcm+ DH5 $\alpha$ ) or higher expression (dcm- NTC48107)
- Superior *Escherichia coli* plasmid production yields using optimized vector backbone
- Optional N-terminal TPA secretion tag (NTC7482) for protein export
- Simultaneous cloning into both vectors through use of compatible precision cloning cassettes
- Small vectors for more efficient transfection
- Compliance with regulatory guidance (*i.e.* Reduced size, elimination of homology to human genomic DNA)

## NTC7482 and NTC7485 vector construction

NTC used Gene Self-Assembly (GENSA) technology to create a series of validated modular elements for vector assembly. Each modular element was assigned a position in a circular array, providing a promoter, 5-leader/splice-site, target gene or high throughput cloning site, terminators, and prokaryotic origin/selection/terminator sites. Individual modules were assigned a position and directionality by means of 4bp unique, non-palindromic address tags. Modules were constructed using a novel cloning process that generates unique, non-palindromic address tags. This allowed precise minimal vector design to eliminate all extraneous sequences.

The pDNAVACCultra vectors (Williams *et al.* 2006) were assembled from GENSA modules consisting of products representing:

- Optimized inducible high copy number pMB1-derived pUC prokaryotic replication origin;
- Prokaryotic selectable marker gene (kanamycin);
- Eukaryotic enhancer-promoter (CMV)
- Optimized synthetic eukaryotic untranslated leader-intron-translational initiation sequence (Kozak sequence) cassette
- Gene leader cassette containing the cloning site;
- Optimized synthetic eukaryotic transcriptional terminator.

The NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors were constructed by incorporation of designed modifications to the base pDNAVACCultra vectors to improve mammalian cell expression (chimeric promoter) and plasmid production yields (vector backbone modification) in the *Escherichia coli* bacterial host.

Chimeric promoter: The chimeric promoter is composed of:

- 1) CMV promoter and start of exon 1;
- 2) A HTLV-I R sequence which contains the 5' splice acceptor site;
- 3) A synthetic 3' acceptor site based on the rabbit  $\beta$  globin intron;
- 4) Exon 2 splicing enhancer comprised of serine-arginine rich (SR) protein binding site (3 copies of GAAGAAGAC) to improve RNA export (Lavigneur *et al.* 1993);
- 5) Exon 2 kozak sequence upstream of the start codon for the gene of interest.

Incorporation of the HTLV-1 R region downstream of the CMV promoter has been demonstrated to improve expression and cellular immune responses to HIV DNA vaccines in mice and nonhuman primates (Barouch *et al.* 2005) and improve humoral responses to an influenza pDNAVACCultra based DNA vaccine in mice (J. Williams, unpublished observations) compared to CMV promoter based vectors. Expression levels of EGFP from plasmids incorporating the NTC7382 promoter are dramatically increased versus CMV promoter containing plasmids (Luke *et al.* 2009).

Vector backbone modification: Modifications to the pDNAVACCUltra encoded kanR-pUC replication origin vector backbone to improve production yield included:

- 1) Extension of the pUC origin to include a primosomal assembly site;
- 2) Inclusion of the SV40 enhancer adjacent to the kanR gene;

These modifications doubled plasmid fermentation production yields compared to standard kanR-pUC replication origin vectors such as gWiz. Plasmid yields as high as 2.6 g/L (5% dry cell weight) have been obtained using this vector backbone (Williams *et al.* 2009b).

### NTC7482 and NTC7485 vector features

| Feature   | Function  |
|---|---|
| Optimized human cytomegalovirus (CMV) immediate-early enhancer promoter | High-level mammalian cell expression <i>in vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i>             |
| HTLV-1 R  | Increase mammalian cell expression  |
| Synthetic Intron  | Increase mRNA nuclear export  |
| SR-protein binding sites (3x)   | Increase mRNA nuclear export  |
| Precision cloning cassette  | Clone target gene into the vector with native or secreted intracellular trafficking |
| Synthetic eukaryotic polyadenylation signal-eukaryotic terminator       | Effective mRNA transcriptional termination and polyadenylation                      |
| <i>trpA</i> prokaryotic terminator                                      | Protection of replication origin from insert initiated transcription                |
| PAS-BH primosomal assembly site   | Improved plasmid production yields  |
| pUC replication origin  | High copy number plasmid production in <i>Escherichia coli</i> cells                |
| Kanamycin resistance gene (kanR)  | Plasmid selection in <i>Escherichia coli</i> cells*                                 |
| SV40 enhancer   | Increased mammalian cell expression<br>Improved plasmid production yields           |

\* The kanR gene is not expressed in mammalian cells

### NTC7482 and NTC7485: Intracellular targeting

| Vector  | Protein Destination | Targeting Tag                            |
|---------|---------------------|--|
| NTC7482 | secreted            | human tissue plasminogen activator (TPA) |
| NTC7485 | native              | ATG*                                     |

\* Native vectors express the target gene from a vector encoded ATG start codon immediately downstream of an optimized kozak sequence (*SalI* site). Protein targeting (*e.g.* cytoplasmic or nuclear) will be determined by protein-intrinsic factors

The TPA targeting peptide has been demonstrated to efficiently target heterologous proteins for secretion (Zhongming *et al.* 1999).

### Plasmid Expression Vectors

| Vector               | Targeting        | Quantity | Catalog Number   | Price    |
|----------------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| <b>NTC7482</b>       | secreted         | 20 µg    | NTC- DV7482      | \$320.00 |
| <b>NTC7485-EGFP*</b> | cytoplasmic EGFP | 20 µg    | NTC- DV7485-EGFP | \$320.00 |

\* The NTC7485-EGFP control plasmid is used as a transfection control for expression in a cell line of interest, and as the NTC7485 backbone for cloning new genes

### Linearized Vectors‡

| Vector         | Targeting | Quantity | Catalog Number | Price    |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------------|----------|
| <b>NTC7482</b> | secreted  | 1 µg     | NTC- DV7482-LV | \$344.00 |
| <b>NTC7485</b> | native    | 1 µg     | NTC- DV7485-LV | \$344.00 |

‡ *Sall* - *Bgl*III linearized vector sufficient for 20 cloning reactions

*RAPID-VACC<sup>tm</sup>* CONTRACT CLONING is an optional service whereby NTC clones investigator-specified genes into the desired expression vectors, providing sequence-validated clones, or purified plasmid DNA ready for animal testing (see [www.natx.com](http://www.natx.com) ).

### *RAPID-VACC<sup>tm</sup>*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Seamless cloning gene of interest into any vector | \$400.00 |
| 1mg endotoxin-free plasmid preparations, each     | \$335.00 |

NTC offers the following products for use cloning with the NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors

### Accessory Products

| Product  | Description               | Quantity              | Catalog Number | Price    |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------|
| <b>pVAC5'</b>                                      | Forward sequencing primer | 500 pmol (10 pmol/µL) | NTC-DVU-SP1    | \$30.00  |
| <b>pVAC3'</b>                                      | Reverse sequencing primer | 500 pmol (10 pmol/µL) | NTC-DVU-SP2    | \$30.00  |
| <b>NTC48107</b><br>DH5α dcm electrocompetent cells | dcm- host strain          | 0.5 mL                | NTC-DVU-CC3    | \$199.00 |

## Cloning into NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors

Overview: An example strategy for cloning into the NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors is outlined below.

GTCGACATG----- Gene of interest----Stop codon -----AGATCT  
*SalI*  *BglIII*

For both vectors, the ATG start codon (double underlined) is immediately preceded by a *SalI* site. In NTC7485, the *SalI* site has been demonstrated to be an effective consensus Kozak sequence for translational initiation. In NTC7482, the *SalI* site is downstream in frame with the optimized TPA secretion sequence.

For precise cloning, genes are copied by PCR amplification from clones or genomic DNA using primers with *SalI* (5' end) and *BglIII* (3' end) sites. Alternatively, genes are synthesized chemically to be compatible with the *SalI* / *BglIII* cloning sites. Design criteria for gene synthesis are reviewed in Williams *et al.* 2009a.

For NTC7485, the start codon ATG must immediately follow the *SalI* site (GTCGACATG). For NTC7482, the ATG is optional but the same reading frame must be retained. For both vectors one or two stop codon (preferably TAA or TGA) must be included prior to the *BglIII* site. A PCR product designed for NTC7485 is compatible with, and can also be cloned into, the NTC7482 vector.

Protocol: Genes are PCR amplified with primers incorporating a *SalI* site into the 5' termini and a *BglIII* site into the 3' termini. Example primers, for cloning a target gene of interest into both vectors are diagramed below.

*SalI*  
GCGCATGTCGACATG-GENE OF INTEREST 5' END  
*BglIII*  
GCAGAAAGATCTTA-GENE OF INTEREST (REVERSE COMPLEMENT) 3' END

Cleavage of the vectors with *SalI* / *BglIII* generates sticky ends compatible with the cleaved PCR product. The insert is thus directionally and precisely cloned into the vector. The majority of recovered colonies are recombinant, since the generated sticky ends in the parental vector are not compatible.

If the gene of interest encodes internal *Bgl*III sites, *Bam*HI or *Bcl*II restriction enzymes can be utilized in the PCR primers since they create *Bgl*III compatible sticky ends. Note that both enzymes sites will be lost in the resulting construct.

*Xho*I is not recommended as an alternative to *Sal*I for cloning into NTC7485, since the ligated hybrid (GTCGAGATG) has not been established as an effective kozak sequence. This is not an issue for cloning downstream of TPA in NTC7482.

Alternatively, when these restriction sites are present in the gene, the PCR primers may be modified to incorporate *Aar*I (Fermentas, Vilnius Lithuania) type IIS enzyme sites. This enzyme cleaves after +4 and +8 bp downstream of the *Aar*I recognition sequence to create any designed 4 bp 3'-recessed sticky end. *Aar*I primer design to amplify a gene for cloning into NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors is shown below.

*Aar*I

5' CTCCAGCACCTGCCTATTCGACATG-GENE OF INTEREST 5' END

5' CGTGAGCACCTGCAACGGATCTTA-GENE OF INTEREST (REVERSE COMPLEMENT)  
3' END

Recombinant clones can be identified by restriction digestion. *Sal*I and *Bgl*III release the gene insert when using *Aar*I or *Sal*I / *Bgl*III containing primers. *Bgl*III / *Bam*HI / *Bcl*II ligated cohesive termini in the resultant clone will not cleave with either parent restriction enzyme.

The sequence of the gene insert can be determined using the following cloning cassette flanking sequencing primers.

pVAC5': GCTTTTCTGCCAGGTGCTGA  
(hybridizes to intron and sequences from 5' end of gene)

pVAC3': GCCAGAAGTCAGATGCTCAA  
(hybridizes to terminator and sequences from 3' end of gene)

### **Transformation and bacterial propagation**

NTC7482 and NTC7485 plasmids are kanamycin resistant, and are selected and propagated on standard *Escherichia coli* media supplemented with kanamycin (50 µg/mL).



## References

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- Williams JA, Luke J, Langtry S, Anderson S, Hodgson CP, and Carnes AE. (2009b) Generic plasmid DNA production platform incorporating low metabolic burden seed-stock and fed-batch fermentation processes. *Biotechnol Bioeng* 103:1129-1143
- Williams JA, Luke J, Johnson L, and Hodgson CP. (2006) pDNAVACCultra vector family: high throughput intracellular targeting DNA vaccine plasmids. *Vaccine* 24:4671-4676
- Zhongming L, Howard A, Kelley C, Delogu G, Collins F, and Morris S. (1999) Immunogenicity of DNA vaccines expressing tuberculosis proteins fused to tissue plasminogen activator signal sequences. *Infect Immun.* 67: 4780-4786

## **Patent and Licensing information**

### **Limited License**

Nature Technology Corporation (NTC) grants the end user (purchaser) of the NTC7482 and NTC7485 expression vectors a nontransferable, non-exclusive license to use the plasmids for non-commercial research purposes only. These vectors are intended for research use only by the purchaser.

The purchaser cannot sell or otherwise transfer (a) this product (b) its components or (c) materials made using this product or its components to a third party or otherwise use this product or its components or materials made using this product or its components for commercial purposes.

Separate licenses are available from NTC for the express purpose of non-research use or applications of the NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors.

### **Product Use Limitations**

The NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors are sold for research use only. They are not to be used for human diagnostic or included/used in any drug intended for human use.

### **Patent Information**

**The CMV promoter is covered under U.S. Patents 5,168,062 and 5,385,839 and its use is permitted for research purposes only. Any other use of the CMV promoter requires a license from the University of Iowa Research Foundation, 214 Technology Innovation Center, Iowa City, IA 52242.**

The polymerase chain reaction (PCR) process is covered by patents owned by Roche and requires a license for use.

NTC makes no representations that the use of the NTC7482 and NTC7485 vectors will not infringe any patent, copyright, trademark, or other proprietary rights.

For more information, please contact:

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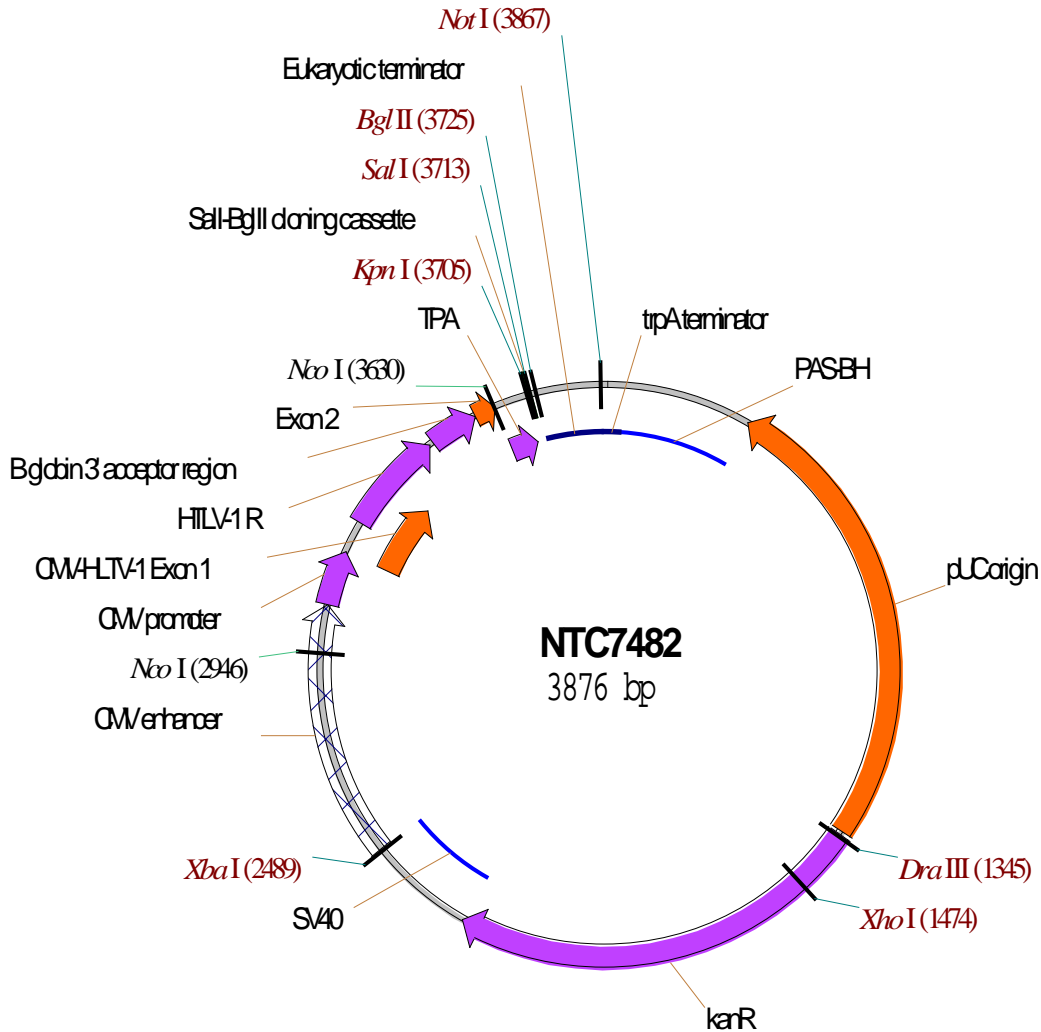
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## NTC7482

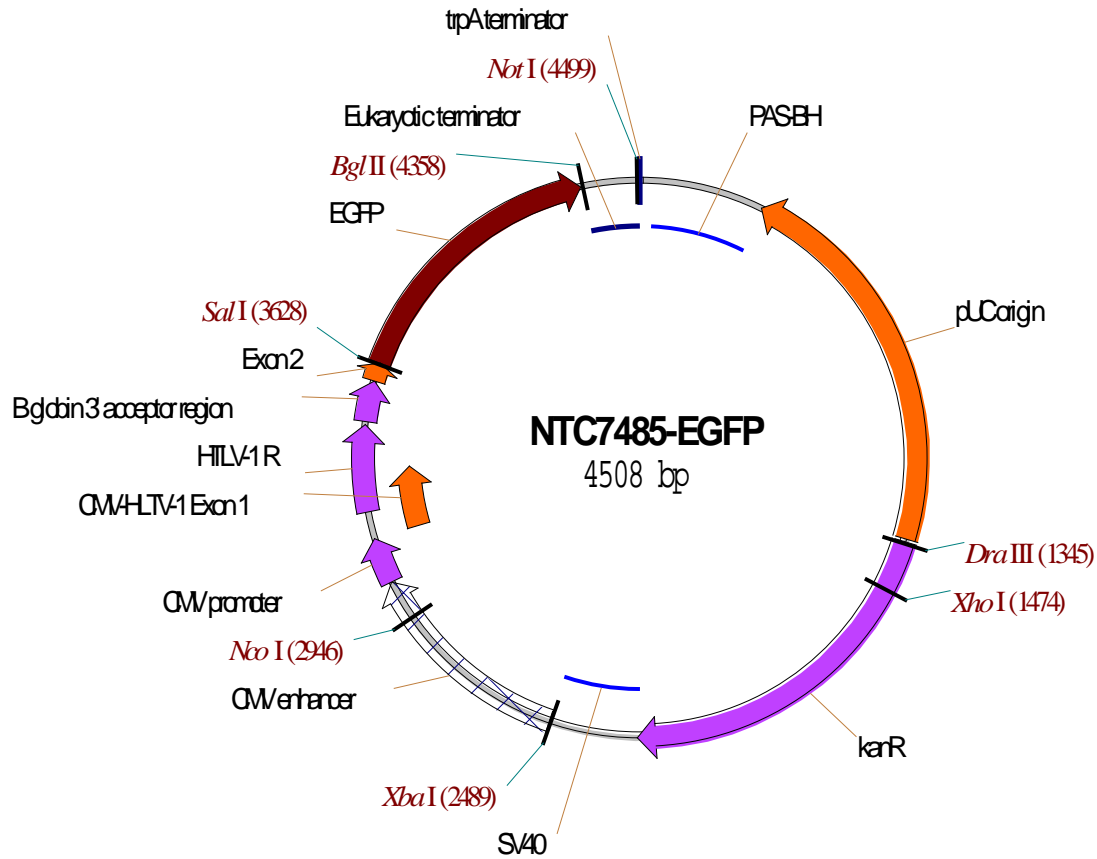


### Vector Features

- trpA* prokaryotic terminator: 3875-28
- Primosomal assembly site (PAS-BH) extended origin: 32-316
- pUC replication origin: 317-1331
- Kanamycin resistance marker: 1339-2259
- SV40 enhancer: 2261-2487
- CMV enhancer: 2494-3051
- CMV promoter: 3052-3171
- Untranslated leader (exon 1): 3172-3358
- HTLV-1 R: 3243-3468
- Synthetic Rabbit  $\beta$ -globin-based 3' intron: 3477-3583
- Intron: 3359-3583
- Exon 2 (SR-protein binding sites-Kozak): 3584-3630
- TPA N-terminal targeting tag: 3631-3699
- SalI-BglII* cloning cassette: 3712-3729
- Eukaryotic terminator: 3730-3864

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## NTC7485-EGFP



### Vector Features

*trpA* prokaryotic terminator: 4507-28  
 Primosomal assembly site (PAS-BH) extended origin: 32-316  
 pUC replication origin: 317-1331  
 Kanamycin resistance marker: 1339-2259  
 SV40 enhancer: 2261-2487  
 CMV enhancer: 2494-3051  
 CMV promoter: 3052-3171  
 Untranslated leader (exon 1): 3172-3358  
 HTLV-1 R: 3243-3468  
 Synthetic Rabbit  $\beta$ -globin-based 3' intron: 3477-3583  
 Intron: 3359-3583  
 Exon 2 (SR-protein binding sites-SalI Kozak): 3584-3632  
 EGFP: 3633-4352  
*SalI*-*BglII* cloning cassette: 3627-4362  
 Eukaryotic terminator: 4363-4497

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