Table S1 Characteristics of patients with DR.

| Characteristic                          | DR Patients | Controls |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Patients                               | 10          | 10       |
| **Clinical features**                  |             |          |
| Male/female                            | 5/5         | 6/4      |
| Age (years)                            | 56.8 ± 7.3  | 58.6 ± 8.9|
| Type 1/type 2 diabetes                 | 2/8         | 0        |
| Duration of diabetes (years)           | 4.8 ± 2.7   | 0        |
| Insulin treatment                      | 3           | 0        |
| Hypertension                           | 3           | 4        |
| Dyslipidaemia                           | 3           | 3        |
| **Retinal features**                   |             |          |
| Microaneurysm                          | 7           | 0        |
| Hard exudates                          | 6           | 0        |
| Cotton-wool spots                      | 4           | 0        |
| Retinal haemorrhage                    | 6           | 0        |
| Retinal angiogenesis                   | 5           | 0        |
| Vitreous haemorrhage                   | 3           | 0        |
| Macular oedema                         | 2           | 0        |
| **Therapies**                          |             |          |
| Intravitreal injection of anti-VEGF agents | 9           | 0        |
| Pan-retinal laser photocoagulation     | 2           | 0        |
| Gene name | Orientation | Primer sequence (5’ to 3’) | Species |
|-----------|-------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Il21      | Forward     | GGGGACAGGTGGCCCATAAAATC     | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | GTGCCCTTTACATCTTGTTG        | Mouse   |
| Cxcl13    | Forward     | ATATGTGTGAATCCTCGTGCCA      | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | GGGAGTTGAAGACGACTTTTGC      | Mouse   |
| vegf      | Forward     | CTGCCGTCGATTGAGACC          | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | CCCCTCCTTGTAACCAGTGTC       | Mouse   |
| il-6      | Forward     | TCTATACACTTCACAAGTCGGA      | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | GAATTGCCATTGCACAACCTCTT    | Mouse   |
| tnf-α     | Forward     | CAGGCGGTGCTATGTCTC          | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | CGATCACCACCAGGATGTTAGTA    | Mouse   |
| Cxcr5     | Forward     | TGGCCTTCTACAGTAACAGCA       | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | GCATGAATACCGCTTAAGAGAC     | Mouse   |
| Bcl-6     | Forward     | CCGGACGCTAGTGATGTT          | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | GCACGTGTCTTATGGGCTCTAAAC   | Mouse   |
| gapdh     | Forward     | GCCAAGGCTGTGGGCAAGGT        | Mouse   |
|           | Reverse     | TCTCCAGGCGGCACGTCAGA       | Mouse   |