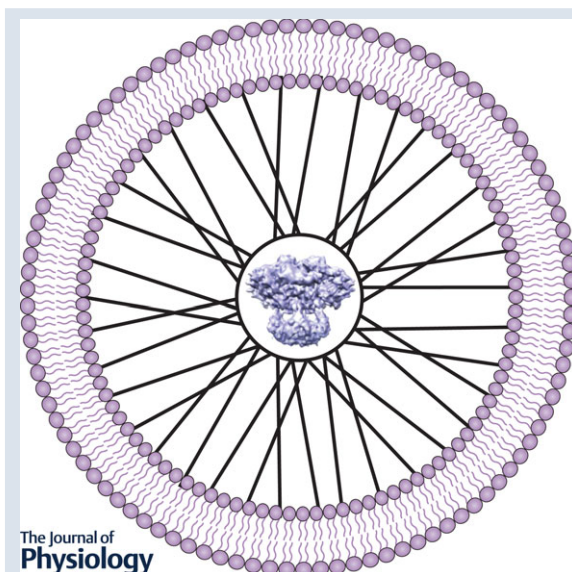


## SYMPOSIUM REVIEW

# Inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptors and their protein partners as signalling hubs

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**Abstract** Inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptors (IP<sub>3</sub>Rs) are expressed in nearly all animal cells, where they mediate the release of Ca<sup>2+</sup> from intracellular stores. The complex spatial and temporal organization of the ensuing intracellular Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals allows selective regulation of diverse physiological responses. Interactions of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs with other proteins contribute to the specificity and speed of Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling pathways, and to their capacity to integrate information from other signalling pathways. In this review, we provide a comprehensive survey of the proteins proposed to interact with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and the functional effects that these interactions produce. Interacting proteins can determine the activity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, facilitate their regulation by multiple signalling pathways and direct the Ca<sup>2+</sup> that they release to specific targets. We suggest that IP<sub>3</sub>Rs function as signalling hubs through which diverse inputs are processed and then emerge as cytosolic Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals.

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**Corresponding author** D. L. Prole: Department of Pharmacology, University of Cambridge, Cambridge CB2 1PD, UK. Email: dp350@cam.ac.uk**Abstract figure legend** IP<sub>3</sub>Rs are hubs around which proteins assemble to orchestrate Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling.

**Abbreviations** AC, adenylyl cyclase; B<sub>2</sub>R, type 2 bradykinin receptor; cAMP, cyclic adenosine monophosphate; CREB, cAMP response element-binding protein; EB3, end-binding protein 3; ER, endoplasmic reticulum; GPCR, G protein-coupled receptor; IBC, IP<sub>3</sub>-binding core; IP<sub>3</sub>, inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate; IP<sub>3</sub>R, IP<sub>3</sub> receptor; IRBIT, IP<sub>3</sub>R-binding protein released with IP<sub>3</sub>; M<sub>1</sub>R, type 1 muscarinic acetylcholine receptor; PKA, protein kinase A; PLC, phospholipase C; SD, suppressor domain; TMD, transmembrane domain.

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## Introduction

Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals within cells are spatially and temporally intricate, allowing them to elicit a multitude of specific downstream effects (Berridge, 2009). Inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptors (IP<sub>3</sub>R), the most widely expressed class of intracellular Ca<sup>2+</sup> channel, release Ca<sup>2+</sup> from intracellular stores in response to binding of IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup> (Foskett *et al.* 2007; Taylor & Tovey, 2010). Dual regulation of IP<sub>3</sub>R by two essential stimuli, IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup>, is important because it endows IP<sub>3</sub>R with a capacity to propagate Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals regeneratively by Ca<sup>2+</sup>-induced Ca<sup>2+</sup> release, as Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by an active IP<sub>3</sub>R ignites the activity of adjacent IP<sub>3</sub>R that have bound IP<sub>3</sub> (Smith & Parker, 2009). This in turn plays a key role in defining the spatial organization of IP<sub>3</sub>-evoked Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals.

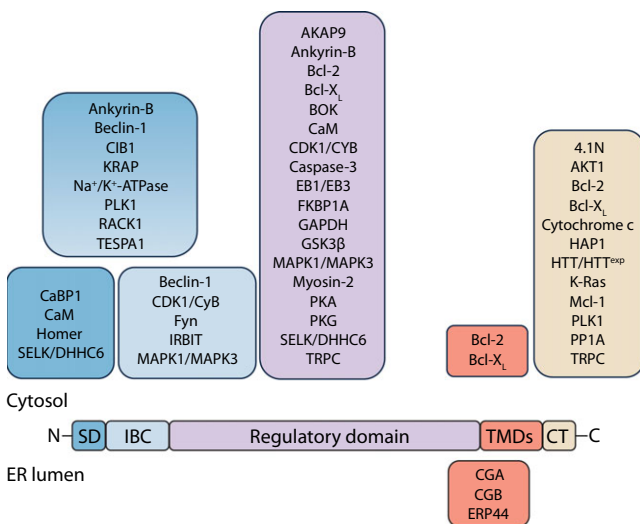
Activation of IP<sub>3</sub>R is initiated by binding of IP<sub>3</sub> within a clam-like structure, the IP<sub>3</sub>-binding core (IBC) (Bosanac *et al.* 2002), located near the N-terminus of each IP<sub>3</sub>R subunit. Binding of IP<sub>3</sub> causes a conformational change that rearranges the association of the IBC with the N-terminal suppressor domain (SD). These changes are proposed to disrupt interactions between the N-terminal regions of the four subunits of the IP<sub>3</sub>R, leading to opening of the channel. The latter is formed by transmembrane domains (TMDs) towards the C-terminus of each IP<sub>3</sub>R subunit (Seo *et al.* 2012) (Fig. 1). It is not yet clear where binding of Ca<sup>2+</sup> to the IP<sub>3</sub>R lies within the sequence of events

linking binding of IP<sub>3</sub> to channel gating. One possibility is that the conformational changes evoked by binding of IP<sub>3</sub> expose a site to which Ca<sup>2+</sup> must bind before the channel can open (Marchant & Taylor, 1997; Foskett *et al.* 2007). However, neither the structural identity of this stimulatory Ca<sup>2+</sup>-binding site, nor that of the inhibitory site through which higher concentrations of Ca<sup>2+</sup> inhibit IP<sub>3</sub>R have been resolved. The inhibitory site may reside on an accessory protein associated with IP<sub>3</sub>R.

IP<sub>3</sub>R are present in almost all animal cells and some protozoa (Prole & Taylor, 2011), but there are no homologous proteins in plants (Wheeler & Brownlee, 2008) or fungi (Prole & Taylor, 2012). The genomes of vertebrates encode three subtypes of IP<sub>3</sub>R subunit (IP<sub>3</sub>R1–3), which can form homo-tetrameric or hetero-tetrameric channels (Joseph *et al.* 1995) with differing properties and distributions (Foskett *et al.* 2007; Mikoshiba, 2007). In mammalian cells, IP<sub>3</sub>R have been reported to release Ca<sup>2+</sup> mainly from the endoplasmic reticulum (ER) (Streb *et al.* 1984; Volpe *et al.* 1985), but the Golgi apparatus (Pinton *et al.* 1998) and secretory vesicles (Yoo, 2011) also respond to IP<sub>3</sub>. Although IP<sub>3</sub> initiates Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals by stimulating Ca<sup>2+</sup> release from intracellular stores, the signals are sustained by Ca<sup>2+</sup> entry across the plasma membrane. That too is indirectly regulated by IP<sub>3</sub>, because store-operated Ca<sup>2+</sup> entry is stimulated by loss of Ca<sup>2+</sup> from the ER (Parekh & Putney, 2005; Lewis, 2012). Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals initiated by IP<sub>3</sub>R evoke a wide variety of cellular events, ranging from embryological development (Kume *et al.* 1997; Uchida *et al.* 2010) to cellular metabolism (Cardenas *et al.* 2010), gluconeogenesis (Wang *et al.* 2012), exocrine secretion (Futatsugi *et al.* 2005) and neuronal function (Matsumoto *et al.* 1996).

Specificity within Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling pathways, or indeed any signalling pathway (Scott & Pawson, 2009; Scott *et al.* 2013), is achieved, in part, by the formation of macromolecular signalling complexes. Within the signalling pathways that involve phospholipase C (PLC), these complexes regulate the activity of IP<sub>3</sub>R, their distribution, and their association with both the plasma membrane receptors that evoke IP<sub>3</sub> formation and the downstream targets of the Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by IP<sub>3</sub>R (Konieczny *et al.* 2012). The interactions of IP<sub>3</sub>R with other proteins have been reviewed previously (Choe & Ehrlich, 2006; Foskett *et al.* 2007; Mikoshiba, 2007; Vanderheyden *et al.* 2009a), but continued progress and the advent of high-throughput proteomics methods (Havugimana *et al.* 2012; Rolland *et al.* 2014) suggest that an update is timely.

Searches of proteomic databases and published literature reveal a large number of proteins that form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>R (Tables 1–4). For some of these proteins, the regions within IP<sub>3</sub>R that are important for the interaction have been mapped (Fig. 1). At the outset, it is worth sounding some notes of caution regarding



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### Figure 1. Association of proteins with IP<sub>3</sub>R

Key functional domains of a single IP<sub>3</sub>R subunit are shown: the suppressor domain (SD), IP<sub>3</sub>-binding core (IBC), cytosolic regulatory domain, transmembrane domains (TMDs) and the cytosolic C-terminus (CT). The sites to which proteins are proposed to bind are shown. Many additional proteins are thought to associate with IP<sub>3</sub>R, but the binding sites have not been identified. Abbreviations and references are provided in Tables 1–4.

**Table 1. Proteins that form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and enhance their activity**

Protein	References
<b>Effective delivery of messengers</b>	
Adenylyl cyclase 6 (AC6)	Tovey <i>et al.</i> 2008
Bradykinin receptor B <sub>2</sub> (B <sub>2</sub> R)	Delmas <i>et al.</i> 2002; Jin <i>et al.</i> 2013
Epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR)	Hur <i>et al.</i> 2005
Erythropoietin receptor (EPO-R)	Tong <i>et al.</i> 2004
Glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH)	Patterson <i>et al.</i> 2005
Metabotropic glutamate receptor 1 (mGluR1;GRM1)	Tu <i>et al.</i> 1998
Phospholipase C-β1 (PLCβ1)	Shin <i>et al.</i> 2000
Phospholipase C-β4 (PLCβ4)	Nakamura <i>et al.</i> 2004
Phospholipase C-γ1 (PLCγ1)	Tong <i>et al.</i> 2004; Yuan <i>et al.</i> 2005
Protease-activated receptor 2 (PAR-2)	Jin <i>et al.</i> 2013
<b>Sensitization to IP<sub>3</sub>/Ca<sup>2+</sup></b>	
Bcl-2 (B-cell lymphoma 2) <sup>a</sup>	Chen <i>et al.</i> 2004; Eckenrode <i>et al.</i> 2010; Monaco <i>et al.</i> 2012; Chang <i>et al.</i> 2014
Bcl-X <sub>L</sub> (B-cell lymphoma extra large)	White <i>et al.</i> 2005; Eckenrode <i>et al.</i> 2010; Monaco <i>et al.</i> 2012
Chromogranin A (CGA)	Yoo & Lewis, 1998; Thrower <i>et al.</i> 2002
Chromogranin B (CGB; secretogranin-1)	Yoo & Lewis, 2000; Thrower <i>et al.</i> 2003
Cyclin-A	Soghoian <i>et al.</i> 2005
Cyclin-B1 (CYB)	Malathi <i>et al.</i> 2003; Malathi <i>et al.</i> 2005
Cyclin-dependent kinase 1 (CDK1)	Malathi <i>et al.</i> 2003; Malathi <i>et al.</i> 2005
Cytochrome c <sub>1</sub>	Boehning <i>et al.</i> 2004
Fyn (tyrosine-protein kinase)	Jayaraman <i>et al.</i> 1996; Cui <i>et al.</i> 2004
Glucosidase 2 subunit β (80K-H)	Kawaai <i>et al.</i> 2009
Glycogen synthase kinase-3β (GSK3β)	Gomez <i>et al.</i> 2016
Huntingtin-associated protein 1 (HAP-1)	Tang <i>et al.</i> 2003b
Huntingtin (HTT) (with poly-Q expansion, HTT <sup>exp</sup> ) <sup>b</sup>	Tang <i>et al.</i> 2003b
Lyn (tyrosine-protein kinase)	Yokoyama <i>et al.</i> 2002
Mcl-1 (myeloid cell leukemia-1)	Eckenrode <i>et al.</i> 2010
mTOR (mammalian target of rapamycin)	Fregeau <i>et al.</i> 2011
Neuronal Ca <sup>2+</sup> sensor 1 (NCS-1)	Schlecker <i>et al.</i> 2006
Polo-like kinase 1 (PLK1)	Ito <i>et al.</i> 2008; Vanderheyden <i>et al.</i> 2009b
Presenilin-1/Presenilin-2 (PS-1/PS-2)	Cheung <i>et al.</i> 2008
Protein kinase A (PKA; cAMP-dependent protein kinase)	Ferris <i>et al.</i> 1991; Bruce <i>et al.</i> 2002
Receptor of activated protein kinase C1 (RACK1)	Patterson <i>et al.</i> 2004
Rho-associated protein kinase (ROCK)	Singleton & Bourguignon, 2002
TRISK 32 (cardiac triadin TRISK 32 isoform)	Olah <i>et al.</i> 2011
<b>Direct activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs</b>	
Ca <sup>2+</sup> -binding protein 1 (CaBP1) <sup>c</sup>	Yang <i>et al.</i> 2002; Li <i>et al.</i> 2013
CIB1 (Ca <sup>2+</sup> and integrin-binding protein 1; calmyrin) <sup>c</sup>	White <i>et al.</i> 2006
Gβγ complex	Shin <i>et al.</i> 2000; Zeng <i>et al.</i> 2003
<b>Other</b>	
DARPP-32 (protein phosphatase 1 regulatory subunit 1B)	Chang <i>et al.</i> 2014
DHHC6	Fredericks <i>et al.</i> 2014
EB3 (end-binding protein 3)	Geyer <i>et al.</i> 2015
GRP-78 (78 kDa glucose-regulated protein; BiP)	Higo <i>et al.</i> 2010
Phosphatidylinositol trisphosphate 3-phosphatase (PTEN)	Bononi <i>et al.</i> 2013
Selenoprotein K (SELK)	Fredericks <i>et al.</i> 2014

Data for Tables 1–4 were derived from manual searches of the literature, reviews (Choe & Ehrlich, 2006; Foskett *et al.* 2007; Mikoshiba, 2007; Vanderheyden *et al.* 2009a) and databases, including BioGRID (Chatr-Aryamontri *et al.* 2015) and IntAct (Orchard *et al.* 2013). The nomenclature of proteins shown is consistent with the human homologues, although some data are derived from interactions of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and proteins from other species. <sup>a</sup>Some studies report sensitization of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs by Bcl-2, while others report inhibition. <sup>b</sup>HTT<sup>exp</sup>, but not wild-type HTT, sensitizes IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to IP<sub>3</sub>/Ca<sup>2+</sup>. <sup>c</sup>CaBP1 and CIB1 are also reported to inhibit IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (see Table 2); direct activation seems to occur only transiently, and is controversial.

**Table 2. Proteins that form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and inhibit their activity**

Protein	References
<b>Proteins that bind reversibly and disrupt activation by IP<sub>3</sub> and/or Ca<sup>2+</sup></b>	
Ankyrin-R (ANK1)	Bourguignon <i>et al.</i> 1993; Joseph & Samanta, 1993
Bcl-2 (B-cell lymphoma 2) <sup>a</sup>	Chen <i>et al.</i> 2004; Monaco <i>et al.</i> 2012; Chang <i>et al.</i> 2014
Ca <sup>2+</sup> -binding protein 1 (CaBP1) <sup>b</sup>	Yang <i>et al.</i> 2002; Li <i>et al.</i> 2013
Calmodulin (CaM)	Maeda <i>et al.</i> 1991; Yamada <i>et al.</i> 1995
Carbonic anhydrase-related protein (CARP; CA8)	Hirota <i>et al.</i> 2003
Caspase-3	Hirota <i>et al.</i> 1999
CIB1 (Ca <sup>2+</sup> and integrin-binding protein 1; calmyrin) <sup>b</sup>	White <i>et al.</i> 2006
DANGER (IP <sub>3</sub> R-interacting protein)	van Rossum <i>et al.</i> 2006
ERp44 (endoplasmic reticulum resident protein 44)	Higo <i>et al.</i> 2005
FKBP1A (FK506-binding protein 1A; FKBP12)	Cameron <i>et al.</i> 1995b
GIT1/GIT2 (ARF GTPase-activating protein 1/2)	Zhang <i>et al.</i> 2009
IRBIT (IP <sub>3</sub> -binding protein released with IP <sub>3</sub> )	Ando <i>et al.</i> 2003
K-Ras	Sung <i>et al.</i> 2013
MRV11 (IRAG; IP <sub>3</sub> R-associated cGMP kinase substrate)	Schlossman <i>et al.</i> 2000
Nuclear protein localization protein 4 homologue (NPL4)	Alzayady <i>et al.</i> 2005
Polycystin-1 (PC1; TRPP1)	Li <i>et al.</i> 2005
<b>Proteins that post-translationally modify IP<sub>3</sub>Rs</b>	
AKT1 (RAC- $\alpha$ serine/threonine protein kinase; PKB)	Khan <i>et al.</i> 2006; Szado <i>et al.</i> 2008
Ca <sup>2+</sup> /calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II (CaMKII)	Ferris <i>et al.</i> 1991; Bare <i>et al.</i> 2005
Calpain	Magnusson <i>et al.</i> 1993; Wojcikiewicz & Oberdorf, 1996
E3 ubiquitin ligase AMFR (GP78) <sup>c</sup>	Pearce <i>et al.</i> 2007
E3 ubiquitin ligase RNF170 <sup>c</sup>	Lu <i>et al.</i> 2011
Erlin-1/Erlin-2 (SPFH domain-containing protein 1/2) <sup>c</sup>	Pearce <i>et al.</i> 2007; Pearce <i>et al.</i> 2009
MAPK1/MAPK3 (mitogen-activated protein kinase 1/3)	Bai <i>et al.</i> 2006
Protein phosphatase 1A (PP1A)	Tang <i>et al.</i> 2003a; Chang <i>et al.</i> 2014
Transglutaminase-2 (TGM2)	Hamada <i>et al.</i> 2014
Transitional endoplasmic reticulum ATPase (p97) <sup>c</sup>	Alzayady <i>et al.</i> 2005
Ubiquitin <sup>c</sup>	Bokkala & Joseph, 1997; Oberdorf <i>et al.</i> 1999
Ubiquitin-conjugating enzyme E2 7 (UBC7) <sup>c</sup>	Webster <i>et al.</i> 2003
Ubiquitin conjugation factor E4A (UFD2) <sup>c</sup>	Alzayady <i>et al.</i> 2005
Ubiquitin fusion degradation 1 protein (UFD1) <sup>c</sup>	Alzayady <i>et al.</i> 2005

<sup>a</sup>Bcl-2 has also been reported to sensitize IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to IP<sub>3</sub>/Ca<sup>2+</sup> (see Table 1). <sup>b</sup>CaBP1 and CIB1 may also cause transient activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, although this is controversial (see Table 1). <sup>c</sup>Components of the proteasomal pathway.

the reported interactions. Firstly, it is often difficult to establish that two proteins interact directly, rather than via intermediate proteins. Many of these complexes may, therefore, be formed by direct or indirect interactions of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs with other proteins. For example, association of protein phosphatase 1 with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs may be mediated in part by IRBIT (IP<sub>3</sub>R-binding protein released with IP<sub>3</sub>), which binds directly to both proteins (Ando *et al.* 2014). Secondly, the interactions and their effects may depend on the cellular context, including such factors as the sub-type of IP<sub>3</sub>R, the physiological status of the IP<sub>3</sub>R (e.g. phosphorylation), the cell type and the expression levels of the interacting proteins and IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. Thirdly, interactions that occur in cellular lysates may be precluded within intact cells. For example, the interaction of two proteins may be prevented by their physical separation within the cell or by mutually exclusive binding of other proteins or ligands. IRBIT, for example, binds to IP<sub>3</sub>R subunits only when they

have no IP<sub>3</sub> bound. Lastly, some forms of experimental evidence are more discriminating than others, and it will be necessary to verify the putative interactions indicated by methods such as yeast two-hybrid screening and mass spectrometry.

Although we focus on the ability of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to release Ca<sup>2+</sup> from intracellular stores, IP<sub>3</sub>Rs have additional roles. For example, binding of IP<sub>3</sub> is proposed to release IRBIT from the IP<sub>3</sub>-binding site, freeing IRBIT to regulate additional targets that include ion channels, transporters and the enzyme ribonucleotide reductase (Ando *et al.* 2014; Arnaoutov & Dasso, 2014). IP<sub>3</sub>Rs may also regulate associated proteins independently of their ability to release Ca<sup>2+</sup>. For example, a direct interaction between IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and TRPC (transient receptor potential canonical) channels is proposed to stimulate opening of the latter (Zhang *et al.* 2001). Hence, when reviewing the effects of proteins associated with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, we should look beyond



**Table 3. Proteins that form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and act as downstream effectors**

Protein	References
Anoctamin-1 (ANO1, Ca <sup>2+</sup> -activated Cl <sup>-</sup> channel)	Jin <i>et al.</i> 2013
Calcineurin (CN; protein phosphatase 2B)	Cameron <i>et al.</i> 1995a; Chang <i>et al.</i> 2014
CASK (Ca <sup>2+</sup> /calmodulin-dependent serine protein kinase)	Maximov <i>et al.</i> 2003
CRTC2 (CREB-regulated transcription coactivator 2)	Wang <i>et al.</i> 2012
IRBIT (IP <sub>3</sub> -binding protein released with IP <sub>3</sub> ) <sup>a</sup>	Ando <i>et al.</i> 2003
KCa1.1 (BK <sub>Ca</sub> ; large conductance Ca <sup>2+</sup> -activated K <sup>+</sup> channel)	Zhao <i>et al.</i> 2010; Mound <i>et al.</i> 2013
Na <sup>+</sup> /Ca <sup>2+</sup> exchanger 1 (NCX1)	Lencesova <i>et al.</i> 2004; Mohler <i>et al.</i> 2005
Orai-1 (Ca <sup>2+</sup> release-activated Ca <sup>2+</sup> channel 1)	Woodard <i>et al.</i> 2010; Lur <i>et al.</i> 2011
Plasma membrane Ca <sup>2+</sup> ATPase (PMCA)	Shin <i>et al.</i> 2000; Huang <i>et al.</i> 2006
Protein kinase C (PKC)	Ferris <i>et al.</i> 1991; Rex <i>et al.</i> 2010
SERCA 2B/3 (sarco/endoplasmic reticulum Ca <sup>2+</sup> -ATPase)	Redondo <i>et al.</i> 2008
STIM1 (stromal interaction molecule 1)	Santoso <i>et al.</i> 2011
TRPC1-7 (transient receptor potential canonical channels)	Boulay <i>et al.</i> 1999; Mery <i>et al.</i> 2001; Tang <i>et al.</i> 2001; Yuan <i>et al.</i> 2003; Tong <i>et al.</i> 2004
VDAC1 (voltage-dependent anion channel 1)	Szabadkai <i>et al.</i> 2006

<sup>a</sup>IRBIT also inhibits IP<sub>3</sub>Rs by occluding the IP<sub>3</sub>-binding site (Table 2).

the effects of IP<sub>3</sub> on cytosolic Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals, to consider also consequences within the ER lumen, effects on Ca<sup>2+</sup> entry, and effects unrelated to Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling. That scope is too ambitious for this short review. Instead we provide a comprehensive summary of proteins suggested to interact with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Tables 1–4, within which we provide most references) and then explore a few selected examples to illustrate some general features.

### Signalling complexes containing IP<sub>3</sub>Rs span entire signalling pathways

The sheer number of proteins reported to form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs is striking and so too is their diversity, in terms of both cellular geography and function (Tables 1–4). IP<sub>3</sub>Rs form complexes with many of the proteins that link extracellular stimuli to formation of IP<sub>3</sub>, including G protein-coupled receptors (GPCRs), the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR), the erythropoietin receptor, the Gβγ complexes of G proteins, and some forms of PLC. IP<sub>3</sub>Rs also associate with other signalling proteins linked to PLC signalling, including protein kinase C (PKC), RACK1 (receptor of activated PKC) and the phosphoinositide phosphatase PTEN. The interactions extend also to proteins from other signalling pathways, including adenylyl cyclase (AC), the small G protein K-Ras, and the protein kinases AKT1 (RAC-α serine/threonine protein kinase), mTOR (mammalian target of rapamycin), c-Src and MAPK1/MAPK3 (mitogen-activated protein kinase 1/3) (Tables 1–4 and Fig. 1). Proteins that respond to the Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by IP<sub>3</sub>Rs also form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. These include ion channels, exchangers and pumps within the plasma membrane. It is clear that IP<sub>3</sub>Rs reside within macromolecular complexes that both span entire

signalling pathways from cell-surface receptors to the effectors that respond to Ca<sup>2+</sup>, and include proteins that integrate signals from other signalling pathways.

The advantages of these signalling complexes are clear. They allow information to be directed selectively from specific extracellular stimuli to specific intracellular targets through conserved signalling pathways. Furthermore, associated proteins can integrate signals from different signalling pathways and so modulate traffic through the complex. Hence, protein complexes confer both specificity and plasticity. A third advantage is speed. Signalling pathways must be able to turn on and off quickly. Fast activation benefits from high concentrations of reactants and fast on-rates ( $k_1$ ) for association of messengers with their targets. Rapid de-activation requires rapid destruction or dissipation of the messenger and a fast dissociation rate ( $k_{-1}$ ). By facilitating delivery of messengers at high local concentrations to their targets (e.g. IP<sub>3</sub> to IP<sub>3</sub>Rs), signalling complexes contribute to both rapid activation and de-activation, the latter because diffusion of messengers away from the site of delivery may be sufficient to allow their concentration to fall below that required for activation as soon as synthesis of the messenger ceases. Secondly, targets can have fast off-rates ( $k_{-1}$ ) with a corresponding loss of affinity (equilibrium association constant,  $K_A = k_1/k_{-1}$ ) that does not compromise their capacity to respond to high local concentrations of messenger. We suggest, then, that assembly of proteins around IP<sub>3</sub>Rs contributes to fast and specific signalling, while providing opportunities for signal integration and plasticity.

For convenience, we consider the proteins that associate with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs under four somewhat arbitrary (and overlapping) headings: proteins that enhance or inhibit the

**Table 4. Other proteins that form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs**

Protein	References
<b>Cytoskeletal, scaffolding and adaptor proteins</b>	
14-3-3 protein zeta/delta (PKC inhibitor protein 1)	Angrand <i>et al.</i> 2006
$\alpha$ -Actin	Sugiyama <i>et al.</i> 2000
Ankyrin-B (ANK2)	Hayashi & Su, 2001; Mohler <i>et al.</i> 2004; Kline <i>et al.</i> 2008
AKAP9 (A-kinase anchor protein 9; Yotiao)	Tu <i>et al.</i> 2004
BANK1 (B-cell scaffold protein with ankyrin repeats)	Yokoyama <i>et al.</i> 2002
Caveolin-1	Murata <i>et al.</i> 2007; Sundivakkam <i>et al.</i> 2009; Jin <i>et al.</i> 2013
Coiled-coil domain-containing protein 8	Hanson <i>et al.</i> 2014
Homer 1/2/3	Tu <i>et al.</i> 1998
EB1 / EB3 (end-binding protein 1/3) <sup>a</sup>	Geyer <i>et al.</i> 2015
KRAP (K-Ras-induced actin-interacting protein)	Fujimoto <i>et al.</i> 2011
LAT (linker of activated T-cells)	deSouza <i>et al.</i> 2007
Myosin-2A	Walker <i>et al.</i> 2002; Hours & Mery, 2010
Obscurin-like protein 1	Hanson <i>et al.</i> 2014
Protein 4.1N (band 4.1-like protein 1)	Maximov <i>et al.</i> 2003
SEC8 (exocyst complex component)	Shin <i>et al.</i> 2000
SNAP-29 (synaptosomal-associated protein 29)	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
$\alpha$ -Spectrin/ $\beta$ -spectrin ( $\alpha/\beta$ -fodrin)	Lencesova <i>et al.</i> 2004
Syntaxin 1B	Tanaka <i>et al.</i> 2011
Talin	Sugiyama <i>et al.</i> 2000
Vimentin	Dingli <i>et al.</i> 2012
Vinculin	Sugiyama <i>et al.</i> 2000
<b>Other proteins</b>	
Anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK)	Crockett <i>et al.</i> 2004
ARHGAP1 (Rho GTPase-activating protein 1)	Nagaraja & Kandpal, 2004
$\gamma$ -BBH ( $\gamma$ -butyrobetaine dioxygenase)	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
Beclin-1	Vicencio <i>et al.</i> 2009
BOK (Bcl-2-related ovarian killer protein)	Schulman <i>et al.</i> 2013
Calnexin	Joseph <i>et al.</i> 1999
CD44 antigen (heparin sulphate proteoglycan)	Singleton & Bourguignon, 2004
CEMIP (cell migration-inducing and hyaluronan-binding protein)	Tiwari <i>et al.</i> 2013
Cyclophilin D (peptidyl-prolyl cis-trans isomerase F)	Paillard <i>et al.</i> 2013
FAM19A4 (chemokine-like protein TFAA-4)	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
F-box and leucine-rich repeat protein 14	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
FGL2 (fibrinogen-like 2)	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
FERM domain-containing 1	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
GluR $\delta$ 2 (ionotropic glutamate receptor $\delta$ 2)	Nakamura <i>et al.</i> 2004
Golgi anti-apoptotic protein (GAAP; Lifeguard 4; TMBIM4)	de Mattia <i>et al.</i> 2009
GRP-75 (glucose-regulated protein 75; stress-70 protein)	Szabadkai <i>et al.</i> 2006
Heat shock protein 90 (HSP90)	Nguyen <i>et al.</i> 2009
Junctate	Treves <i>et al.</i> 2004
Lethal(3)malignant brain tumor-like protein 2	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
Lymphoid-restricted membrane protein (LRMP; JAW1)	Shindo <i>et al.</i> 2010
Na <sup>+</sup> /K <sup>+</sup> -transporting ATPase	Mohler <i>et al.</i> 2005; Yuan <i>et al.</i> 2005
Neuronal acetylcholine receptor $\alpha$ 3	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
PASK (PAS domain-containing protein kinase)	Schlaflfli <i>et al.</i> 2011
Phospholamban	Koller <i>et al.</i> 2003
Polycystin-2 (PC2; TRPP2)	Li <i>et al.</i> 2005
Protein kinase G1 (PKG1; cGMP-dependent protein kinase 1)	Schlossman <i>et al.</i> 2000
PTP $\alpha$ (protein tyrosine phosphatase- $\alpha$ )	Wang <i>et al.</i> 2009
Rab29 (Ras-related protein Rab7L1)	Huttlin <i>et al.</i> 2013
Rac1 (Ras-related C3 botulinum toxin substrate 1; TC25)	Natsvlshvili <i>et al.</i> 2015
RhoA	Mehta <i>et al.</i> 2003

(Continued)

Table 4. Continued

Protein	References
Sigma 1 receptor ( $\sigma$ 1R)	Hayashi & Su, 2001; Natsvlshvili <i>et al.</i> 2015
Sirtuin-7	Tsai <i>et al.</i> 2012
c-Src (proto-oncogene tyrosine-protein kinase Src)	Jayaraman <i>et al.</i> 1996; Wang <i>et al.</i> 2009
STARD13 (StAR-related lipid transfer protein 13; RhoGAP)	Nagaraja & Kandpal, 2004
Syndecan-1 (SYND1; CD138)	Maximov <i>et al.</i> 2003
TESPA1 (thymocyte-expressed positive selection-associated protein 1)	Matsuzaki <i>et al.</i> 2012

<sup>a</sup>Both EB1 and EB3 associate with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, but only EB3 has been shown to be required for effective Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling in endothelial cells (Table 1) (Geyer *et al.* 2015).

activity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Tables 1 and 2); proteins that respond to Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Table 3); and proteins with more general roles, including those associated with movement of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Table 4).

### Proteins that enhance the function of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs

Usually, IP<sub>3</sub>Rs open only when they have bound both IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup> (Foskett *et al.* 2007; Taylor & Tovey, 2010). Unsurprisingly, therefore, most of the proteins that associate with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and enhance their activity do so either by allowing more effective delivery of IP<sub>3</sub> and/or Ca<sup>2+</sup> to IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, or by enhancing the responsiveness of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to IP<sub>3</sub> and/or Ca<sup>2+</sup> (Table 1).

The association of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs with GPCRs, EGFR and erythropoietin receptors, with the  $\beta\gamma$  subunits of G proteins, with some isoforms of PLC, and with scaffold proteins, like Homer 1 that tethers IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to metabotropic glutamate receptors and PLC (Tu *et al.* 1998), suggest mechanisms by which receptors may effectively deliver IP<sub>3</sub> to specific IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. This targeted delivery of IP<sub>3</sub> provides two advantages: it allows rapid responses and it may allow spatially organized Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals to retain an 'imprint' of the stimulus that evoked them. Bradykinin B<sub>2</sub> receptors (B<sub>2</sub>Rs) are a well-defined example. In sympathetic neurons, both muscarinic M<sub>1</sub> receptors (M<sub>1</sub>Rs) and B<sub>2</sub>Rs activate PLC, but only activation of B<sub>2</sub>Rs evokes Ca<sup>2+</sup> release through IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Delmas *et al.* 2002). This selectivity arises because B<sub>2</sub>Rs, but not M<sub>1</sub>Rs, form complexes with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. Rapid generation of IP<sub>3</sub> in response to activation of B<sub>2</sub>Rs thereby generates relatively high concentrations of IP<sub>3</sub> in the vicinity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, which are not achieved by the more distant M<sub>1</sub>Rs. In this case, selective coupling between plasma membrane receptors and IP<sub>3</sub>Rs may allow sympathetic neurons to generate different intracellular responses to pro-inflammatory and cholinergic inputs.

Rather than enhancing the delivery of IP<sub>3</sub> to IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, many other proteins sensitize IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to prevailing concentrations of IP<sub>3</sub> and/or Ca<sup>2+</sup> (Table 1). An example, which may play an important role in human disease, is the sensitization of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs by mutant forms of presenilins

(Cheung *et al.* 2008). Mutations in presenilin-1 (PS1) and presenilin-2 (PS2) are major causes of familial Alzheimer's disease. Although both wild-type and mutant presenilins associate with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, only the disease-causing mutant forms of PS1 and PS2 enhance the activity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs in response to IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup>. The mechanism involved may be a change in the modal gating of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Cheung *et al.* 2010). This increased activity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs results in enhanced release of Ca<sup>2+</sup>, which may lead to aberrant processing of  $\beta$ -amyloid (Cheung *et al.* 2008), constitutive activation of cyclic AMP response element binding protein (CREB)-mediated transcription (Muller *et al.* 2011), synaptic dysfunction and neuronal degeneration (Mattson, 2010).

Although activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs normally requires binding of IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup>, a few proteins have been reported to cause reversible activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs directly, without the coincident presence of IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup> (Table 1). These include G $\beta\gamma$  (Zeng *et al.* 2003), CIB1 (White *et al.* 2006) and, more controversially, CaBP1 (Yang *et al.* 2002). The initial report on the actions of CaBP1 described an activation of *Xenopus* IP<sub>3</sub>Rs in the absence of IP<sub>3</sub> *in vitro*. However, subsequent studies have demonstrated that CaBP1 inhibits Ca<sup>2+</sup> release via mammalian and *Xenopus* IP<sub>3</sub>Rs by stabilizing an inactive state of the IP<sub>3</sub>R (Haynes *et al.* 2004; Nadif Kasri *et al.* 2004; White *et al.* 2006; Li *et al.* 2013). Similarly, CIB1 was reported to activate IP<sub>3</sub>Rs in *Xenopus* oocytes and Sf9 insect cells in the absence of IP<sub>3</sub>, but it too inhibits Ca<sup>2+</sup> release via mammalian IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (White *et al.* 2006). Uniquely, an irreversible activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs appears to occur after proteolytic cleavage by caspase-3 (Assefa *et al.* 2004; Nakayama *et al.* 2004), a process that may play a prominent role in apoptosis.

### Proteins that inhibit the function of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs

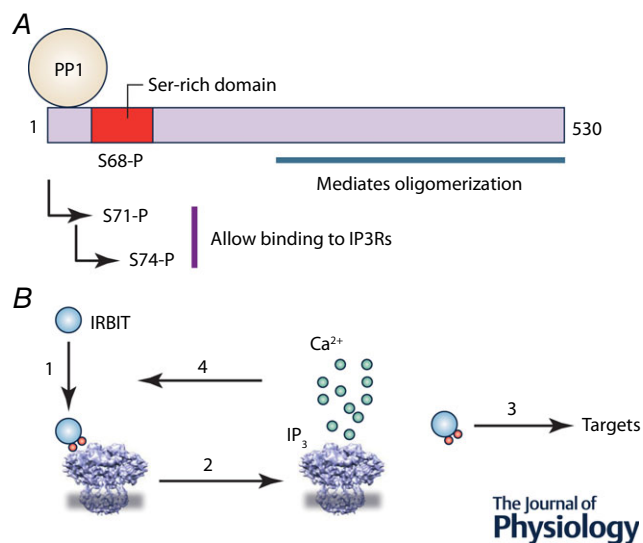
Many proteins that interact with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs inhibit their function (Table 2). These interactions may enable rapid feedback regulation of Ca<sup>2+</sup> release and provide long-term attenuation of IP<sub>3</sub>R activity by promoting degradation or irreversible inhibition of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. These mechanisms

contribute to the tight regulation of IP<sub>3</sub>R activity needed to achieve spatial and temporal organization of Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals (Konieczny *et al.* 2012). They also provide protection from the damaging consequences of excessive increases in cytosolic free Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration (Orrenius *et al.* 2015) and disturbance of the other essential roles of the ER while it fulfils its role in Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling (Berridge, 2002). Proteins that inhibit IP<sub>3</sub>Rs in a Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent manner, like calmodulin, CaBP1, calcineurin, CaMKII and the unidentified protein(s) that may mediate the universal inhibition of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs by Ca<sup>2+</sup>, are prime candidates for mediating this negative feedback. Proteins that inhibit IP<sub>3</sub>Rs fall into two broad categories: those that bind reversibly to interfere with binding of IP<sub>3</sub> and/or Ca<sup>2+</sup> or their links to gating; and those that cause post-translational modifications of the IP<sub>3</sub>R (Table 2).

IRBIT inhibits all three IP<sub>3</sub>R subtypes by competing with IP<sub>3</sub> for binding to the IBC (Ando *et al.* 2003). IRBIT binds only when it is phosphorylated at several sites, probably because the phosphorylated residues mimic the essential phosphate groups of IP<sub>3</sub> (Fig. 2A). Residue S68 is the 'master' phosphorylation site. When it is

phosphorylated by a Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent kinase, perhaps a Ca<sup>2+</sup>/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase (CaMK), it allows casein kinase I-mediated phosphorylation of the two residues (S71 and S74, residue numbering relates to mouse IP<sub>3</sub>R1) that are critical for binding of IRBIT to IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (and its other targets) (Ando *et al.* 2014). Dephosphorylation of S68 is catalysed by protein phosphatase 1 (PP1), which also associates with IRBIT. The competition between phospho-IRBIT and IP<sub>3</sub> for occupancy of the IBC through which IP<sub>3</sub> initiates activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs allows IRBIT to tune the sensitivity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to IP<sub>3</sub>. Hence, inhibiting expression of IRBIT, or expression of a dominant negative form (IRBIT-S68A), allows Ca<sup>2+</sup> release at lower concentrations of IP<sub>3</sub> (Ando *et al.* 2014). This tuning of IP<sub>3</sub>R sensitivity has been demonstrated in sympathetic neurons where, as discussed earlier, M<sub>1</sub>Rs do not associate with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and do not normally generate sufficient IP<sub>3</sub> to activate more distant IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Delmas *et al.* 2002). However, expression of the dominant negative IRBIT allows M<sub>1</sub>Rs to evoke Ca<sup>2+</sup> release through IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Zaika *et al.* 2011). Although the details are not fully resolved, the interplay between Ca<sup>2+</sup> and the activation of IRBIT is intriguing because it suggests potential feedback loops that might control the sensitivity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to IP<sub>3</sub> (Ando *et al.* 2014). The phosphorylation (of S68) that initiates activation of IRBIT is Ca<sup>2+</sup> sensitive, deactivation of IRBIT by proteolytic cleavage within its N-terminal may be mediated by Ca<sup>2+</sup>-sensitive calpain, and IRBIT itself inhibits Ca<sup>2+</sup>/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II $\alpha$  (CaMKII $\alpha$ ) (Kawaa *et al.* 2015) (Fig. 2B).

Post-translational modification of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs by associated proteins may be reversible (e.g. phosphorylation) (Betzenhauser & Yule, 2010) or irreversible (e.g. proteolysis and some covalent modifications). An example of the latter is the Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent enzyme transglutaminase type 2 (TGM2). By covalently modifying a glutamine residue within the C-terminal tail of IP<sub>3</sub>R1, TGM2 causes irreversible cross-linking of adjacent IP<sub>3</sub>R subunits via a lysine residue and the modified glutamine. This prevents the conformational changes required for activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, and so inhibits IP<sub>3</sub>-evoked Ca<sup>2+</sup> release (Hamada *et al.* 2014). The Ca<sup>2+</sup> sensitivity of TGM2 may allow it to contribute to feedback control of Ca<sup>2+</sup> release and to disruption of IP<sub>3</sub>R function when dysregulation of Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling occurs in pathological conditions such as Huntington's disease (Hamada *et al.* 2014). Activation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and the ensuing release of Ca<sup>2+</sup> also trigger ubiquitination and proteasomal degradation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Pearce *et al.* 2009) and their cleavage by calpains (Magnusson *et al.* 1993; Wojcikiewicz & Oberdorf, 1996). Hence, proteins that associate with IP<sub>3</sub>Rs provide mechanisms that allow both acute and long-term feedback regulation of IP<sub>3</sub>R activity.



**Figure 2. IRBIT controls the sensitivity of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs**

A, the N-terminal region of IRBIT includes a serine-rich domain. Phosphorylation of S68, the 'master' phosphorylation site, allows sequential phosphorylation of the two residues, S71 and S74, that must be phosphorylated for IRBIT to bind to IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. Protein phosphatase 1 (PP1) bound to IRBIT dephosphorylates S68. B, phosphorylation of IRBIT (1) allows it to bind to the IBC and so compete with IP<sub>3</sub> for binding to the IP<sub>3</sub>R. Phospho-IRBIT thereby sets the sensitivity of the IP<sub>3</sub>R to IP<sub>3</sub>. IP<sub>3</sub> binding to the IBC (2) prevents IRBIT binding and initiates activation of the IP<sub>3</sub>R. The displaced phospho-IRBIT can regulate many additional targets, including ion channels and transporters (3). The Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by active IP<sub>3</sub>Rs may control the phosphorylation state of IRBIT, and thereby complete a feedback loop that regulates IP<sub>3</sub>R sensitivity (4).

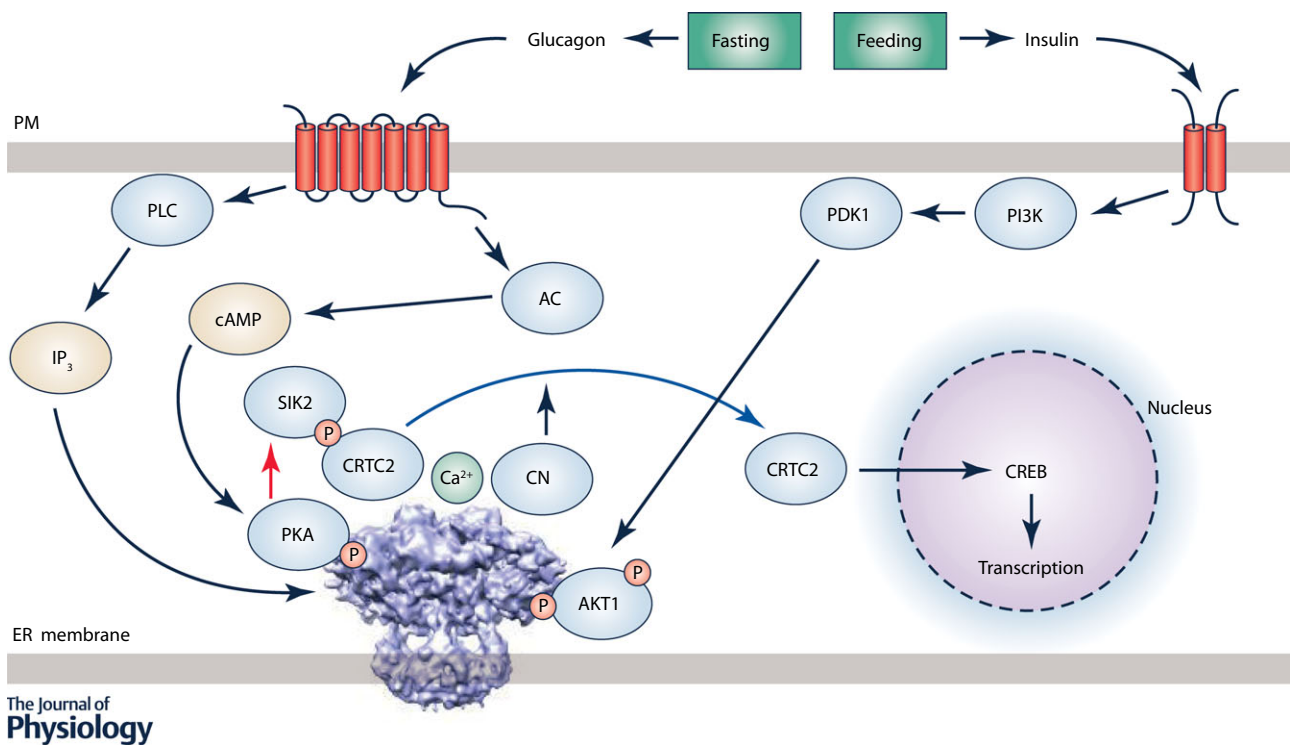


### Downstream effectors

IP<sub>3</sub>Rs also form complexes with proteins that are downstream effectors of IP<sub>3</sub>R activation; most of these respond to the Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Table 3). Many of these proteins are cytosolic, but others reside within membranes that allow IP<sub>3</sub>Rs within the ER to communicate with other intracellular organelles or the plasma membrane. The importance of this communication between organelles, mediated by junctional complexes between them, is increasingly recognized (Lam & Galione, 2013).

Hepatic gluconeogenesis, which is likely to play an important role in diabetes and obesity, is stimulated by glucagon released by the pancreas during fasting, and inhibited by insulin released when the plasma glucose concentration increases. A complex containing IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, the Ca<sup>2+</sup>-regulated protein phosphatase calcineurin, the transcriptional co-activator of CREB-regulated transcription CRTC2 (CREB-coactivator C2), PKA and AKT1 coordinates gluconeogenesis (Wang *et al.*

2012) (Fig. 3). De-phosphorylated CRTC2 binds to nuclear CREB and up-regulates genes that promote gluconeogenesis. This is repressed by SIK2, a kinase that phosphorylates CRTC2. IP<sub>3</sub>-evoked Ca<sup>2+</sup> release activates calcineurin, which de-phosphorylates CRTC2. Glucagon receptors stimulate production of both cAMP and IP<sub>3</sub> (Wakelam *et al.* 1986; Wang *et al.* 2012). The cAMP activates PKA, which phosphorylates, and thereby inhibits, SIK2; and it phosphorylates IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, sensitizing them to activation by IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup>. IP<sub>3</sub>Rs are also directly sensitized by cAMP (Tovey *et al.* 2008). Increased release of Ca<sup>2+</sup> via IP<sub>3</sub>Rs activates calcineurin, which dephosphorylates CRTC2 (Vanderheyden *et al.* 2009a; Wang *et al.* 2012). Hence glucagon both inhibits the kinase (SIK2) and stimulates the phosphatase (calcineurin) that control phosphorylation of CRTC2. Glucagon also reduces binding of CRTC2 to IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Wang *et al.* 2012), further enhancing the nuclear translocation of dephosphorylated CRTC2. The signals evoked by insulin receptors also feed into this IP<sub>3</sub>R complex.



**Figure 3. A signalling complex assembled around IP<sub>3</sub>Rs controls gluconeogenesis**

Glucagon and insulin exert opposing effects on hepatic gluconeogenesis. Their signalling pathways converge to a protein complex assembled around IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, the activity of which controls phosphorylation of the transcription factor CRTC2. Dephosphorylated CRTC2 translocates to the nucleus, where it associates with CREB and stimulates transcription of genes required for gluconeogenesis. SIK2 phosphorylates CRTC2, while calcineurin dephosphorylates it. Glucagon, via a GPCR, stimulates both PLC and AC. The IP<sub>3</sub> produced by PLC stimulates IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. The cAMP generated by AC stimulates PKA and that promotes dephosphorylation of CRTC2 by phosphorylating both SIK2 (inhibiting its activity) and IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, sensitizing the latter to IP<sub>3</sub>. The larger Ca<sup>2+</sup> signal then activates calcineurin. Insulin causes activation of AKT1, which phosphorylates IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and inhibits their activity; it thereby opposes the effects of glucagon and attenuates calcineurin activity. Phosphorylation is indicated by red circles, black arrows denote stimulation and the red arrow denotes inhibition. Abbreviations and further details in the text and tables.

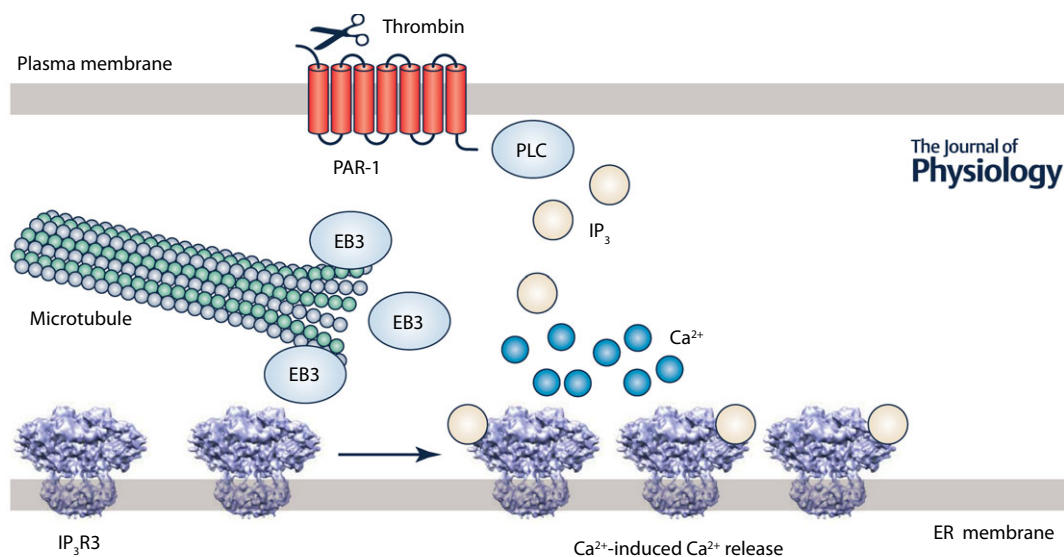
Insulin stimulates phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (PI3K) and thereby AKT1. The latter phosphorylates IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and attenuates their activity. Hence insulin, by inhibiting IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, opposes the actions of glucagon by restraining the activation of calcineurin and so maintains CRTC2 in its inactive phosphorylated state (Wang *et al.* 2012). This example illustrates some of the intricate interactions that the assembly of proteins around IP<sub>3</sub>Rs can allow: signals from a GPCR and a receptor tyrosine kinase converge at IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, which then integrate the inputs and transduce them into a regulation of gene expression (Fig. 3).

### Proteins that determine the distribution of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs

The subcellular distribution of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs is an important influence on their behaviour, not least because it defines the sites at which they will release Ca<sup>2+</sup>, and whether they will be exposed to effective concentrations of the stimuli that activate them, IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup>. Assembly of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs with components of the PLC signalling pathway (see above) can ensure targeted delivery of IP<sub>3</sub>, but Ca<sup>2+</sup> is most often provided by neighbouring IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. An important interaction, therefore, is that between IP<sub>3</sub>Rs themselves, because their proximity to neighbours dictates whether Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by an active IP<sub>3</sub>R can ignite the activity of other IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. Considerable evidence suggests that clustering of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs within the plane of the ER membrane is dynamically regulated by IP<sub>3</sub> and/or Ca<sup>2+</sup> (Tateishi *et al.* 2005; Rahman *et al.* 2009; and see references in Geyer *et al.* 2015), although the role of this process in

shaping Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals remains controversial (Smith *et al.* 2014). We have suggested that IP<sub>3</sub>-evoked clustering of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs may contribute to the coordinated openings of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs that underlie the small Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals ('Ca<sup>2+</sup> puffs') evoked by low stimulus intensities, by both bringing IP<sub>3</sub>Rs together and retuning their Ca<sup>2+</sup> sensitivity (Rahman *et al.* 2009). Head-to-head interactions of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs have also been observed in electron micrographs of purified IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Hamada *et al.* 2003), between opposing ER membranes within cells (Takei *et al.* 1994) and between the isolated N-terminal domains of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Chavda *et al.* 2013). The functional significance of these interactions has not been established.

A recent study of the Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals evoked by thrombin-mediated stimulation of the protease-activated receptor PAR-1 in endothelial cells provides evidence that microtubules may guide IP<sub>3</sub>Rs into the clusters within which Ca<sup>2+</sup> release can most effectively recruit neighbouring IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (Geyer *et al.* 2015). In lung microvascular endothelial cells, thrombin, which activates PAR-1 by cleaving its N-terminal, stimulates PLC and thereby evokes Ca<sup>2+</sup> release through IP<sub>3</sub>Rs. The resulting increase in cytosolic Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration contributes to disassembly of the adherens junctions that maintain the integrity of the endothelium (Komarova & Malik, 2010). These effects are attenuated when the interaction between type 3 IP<sub>3</sub>Rs (IP<sub>3</sub>R3) and end-binding protein 3 (EB3) are disrupted. EB3 belongs to a family of proteins that bind to the plus-end of growing microtubules and recruit other proteins, often via an S/TxIP motif (where x denotes



**Figure 4. EB3 is required for effective signalling by IP<sub>3</sub>Rs in endothelial cells**

In endothelial cells, EB3 binds to a TxIP motif within the regulatory domain of IP<sub>3</sub>R3, allowing IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to associate with the plus-end of microtubules. Disrupting this interaction prevents clustering of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and attenuates the Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals evoked by thrombin, which cleaves within the N-terminus of PAR-1 and allows it to stimulate PLC. The evidence (Geyer *et al.* 2015) suggests that the EB3-mediated interaction of IP<sub>3</sub>R3 with microtubules is essential for the clustering of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs that allows the Ca<sup>2+</sup> released by one IP<sub>3</sub>R to be amplified by recruitment of neighbouring IP<sub>3</sub>Rs.

any residue) (Honnappa *et al.* 2009). Mutation of the TxIP motif within the regulatory domain of IP<sub>3</sub>R3 prevents its binding to EB3, attenuates thrombin-evoked Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals, and reduces both the basal clustering of IP<sub>3</sub>R3 and the enhanced clustering evoked by thrombin. Hence, in endothelial cells, the association of IP<sub>3</sub>R3 with EB3 and microtubules is required for both clustering of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and effective Ca<sup>2+</sup> signalling. This suggests that clustering allows IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to deliver Ca<sup>2+</sup> more effectively to other IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and so allows the amplification provided by Ca<sup>2+</sup>-induced Ca<sup>2+</sup> release (Fig. 4). We conclude that association of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs with other proteins, components of the PLC signalling pathway or EB3, contributes to effective delivery of the two essential regulators of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, IP<sub>3</sub> and Ca<sup>2+</sup>, respectively.

### Conclusions

IP<sub>3</sub>Rs and the Ca<sup>2+</sup> they release are called upon to specifically regulate many physiological processes (Berridge, 2009), while neither perturbing the other essential roles of the ER (Berridge, 2002) nor subjecting the cell to the deleterious consequences of excessive increases in cytosolic Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration (Orrenius *et al.* 2015). These demands impose a need for complex regulation of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs, much of which is achieved by assembling proteins around IP<sub>3</sub>Rs to form signalling complexes (Konieczny *et al.* 2012). These complexes allow signals to be directed through conserved signalling pathways and endow the pathways with speed, integrative capacity and plasticity. The very large size of IP<sub>3</sub>Rs relative to most other ion channels might be viewed as an evolutionary adaptation to meet this need for them to function as signalling hubs.

Advances in genomics, proteomics, antibody technologies and bioinformatics have transformed analyses of protein–protein interactions. It is now possible to interrogate these interactions on a whole-proteome scale (Havugimana *et al.* 2012; Rolland *et al.* 2014). Bioinformatic methods can predict protein–protein interactions (Baughman *et al.* 2011; Kotlyar *et al.* 2015) and even the regions of the proteins that are involved (Gavenonis *et al.* 2014). These powerful technologies, and the opportunities they provide to design new therapies (Wells & McClendon, 2007), cannot displace the need for direct confirmation of the interactions and their functional significance. Together, these approaches pave the way to defining the properties and functional importance of IP<sub>3</sub>R signalling hubs in normal physiology and disease.

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## Additional information

### Competing interests

None declared.

### Author contributions

All authors have approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work. All persons designated as authors qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify for authorship are listed.

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