Prickle and Ror modulate Dishevelled-Vangl interaction to regulate non-canonical Wnt signaling during convergent extension

Hwa-seon Seo[1*#], Deli Yu[1*], Ivan Popov[1], Jiahui Tao[1], Allyson Angermeier[1], Bingdong Sha[1], Jeffery Axelrod[2], Chenbei Chang[1] and Jianbo Wang[1@]

[1] Department of Cell, Developmental and Integrative Biology, University of Alabama at Birmingham, 1918 University Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35294

[2] Department of Pathology, Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford, CA, 94305

* These authors contributed equally to this work.

[@] Correspondence: j18wang@uab.edu

[#] Current address: iCura Diagnostics, 107 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, PA 19355

Abstract

Convergent extension (CE) is a fundamental morphogenetic process where oriented cell behaviors lead to polarized extension of diverse tissues. In vertebrates, regulation of CE requires both non-canonical Wnt, its co-receptor Ror, and “core members” of the planar cell polarity (PCP) pathway. PCP was originally identified as a mechanism to coordinate the cellular polarity in the plane of static epithelium, where core proteins Frizzled (Fz)/ Dishevelled (Dvl) and Van Gogh-like (Vangl)/ Prickel (Pk) partition to opposing cell cortex. But how core PCP proteins interact with each other to mediate non-canonical Wnt/ Ror signaling during CE is not clear. We found previously that during CE, Vangl cell-autonomously recruits Dvl to the plasma membrane but simultaneously keeps Dvl inactive. In this study, we show that non-canonical Wnt induces Dvl to transition from Vangl to Fz. PK inhibits the transition, and functionally synergize with Vangl to suppress Dvl during CE. Conversely, Ror is required for the transition, and functionally antagonizes Vangl. Biochemically, Vangl interacts directly with both Ror and Dvl. Ror and Dvl do not bind directly, but can be cofractionated with Vangl. We propose that Pk assists Vangl to function as an unconventional adaptor that brings Dvl and Ror into a complex to serves two functions: 1) simultaneously preventing both Dvl and Ror from ectopically activating non-canonical Wnt signaling; and 2) relaying Dvl to Fz for signaling activation upon non-canonical Wnt induced dimerization of Fz and Ror.

39 **Introduction**

40 Throughout the animal kingdom, convergent extension (CE) is a universal morphogenetic
41 engine that reshapes tissues during embryogenesis (Davey and Moens, 2017; Goodrich and
42 Strutt, 2011; Huebner and Wallingford, 2018; Keller, 2002). Through polarized cell intercalation,
43 directional cell migration or oriented cell division, CE generates powerful morphogenetic force to
44 elongate a tissue in one direction while simultaneously narrowing it in the perpendicular
45 direction. Disruption of CE can disturb normal embryogenesis from flies to mammals and
46 causes various congenital disorders, including neural tube defects and skeletal disorders such
47 as Robinow Syndrome and Brachydactyly type B (Butler and Wallingford, 2017; Wang et al.,
48 2012; Yang and Mlodzik, 2015).

49

50 In vertebrates, CE is regulated by genes in the planar cell polarity (PCP) pathway. PCP refers to
51 cell polarity orthogonal to that of apical-basal in epithelial cells. It was initially discovered in
52 *Drosophila* as a signaling mechanism coordinating polarized cellular structures in the plane of
53 the epithelium. The PCP pathway consists of six core proteins in flies, including three
54 transmembrane proteins (the atypical cadherin Flamingo (Fmi), the receptor Frizzled (Fz), and
55 the four-pass transmembrane protein Van gogh (Vang; Vangl in vertebrates)), and three
56 cytoplasmic proteins (Dishevelled (Dsh; Dvl in mammals), Diego (Dgo), and Prickle (Pk)). A key
57 feature of the core PCP proteins is that they assemble into two distinct complexes, those of
58 Fmi/Fz/Dsh/Dgo and Fmi/Vang/Pk, that localize asymmetrically on opposing cell cortexes.
59 Extensive genetic and imaging studies in flies, combined with computational modeling, have led
60 to a model of feedback interaction in establishing core PCP protein distribution. The model
61 proposes that Fmi on neighboring cells can establish homophilic interaction to facilitates cross
62 talk between extracellular Fz and Vang in trans at the cell-cell junctions, with Dsh, Dgo and Pk
63 function to stabilize the interacting complexes across the cell junctions. At the same time, these
64 cytoplasmic proteins destabilize the juxtaposition of Fz and Vang in the same cell to segregate

the complexes. Several mechanisms are used to facilitate both positive and negative feedback regulations, including selective interaction with partner proteins, post-translational modification of different components, stability of core proteins at cell junctions, transport of components along cytoskeleton, and membrane protein recycling and subcellular localization (Cho et al., 2015; Ressurreicao et al., 2018; Shimada et al., 2006; Strutt et al., 2013; Warrington et al., 2017). These feedback mechanisms act together to promote asymmetric clustering of Fz/Dsh/Dgo and Vang/Pk complexes at the distal and proximal cell junctions, respectively, to regulate asymmetric cytoskeletal organization and to coordinate planar polarity across the entire epithelium (Amonlirdviman et al., 2005; Axelrod and Tomlin, 2011; Humphries and Mlodzik, 2018; Strutt et al., 2016).

Though the PCP components are conserved in vertebrates, they modulate cell polarity not only in the plane of epithelial cells, but also in actively migrating cells, including neurons, neural crest, metastatic cancer cells, and cells undergoing CE. These cells share dynamic behaviors with constantly changing cell-cell contacts and interactions. Asymmetric localization of individual PCP proteins has been reported in a number of such cells, but the pattern varies and segregation of PCP complexes has not been consistently observed (reviewed in (Davey and Moens, 2017)). Moreover, as the majority of these studies focus on the activities of individual PCP component in regulating polarized cell behaviors, less is known about how PCP proteins interact with each other to coordinately control the migratory processes (Davey and Moens, 2017).

Potential differences in PCP protein interaction and function in *Drosophila* and vertebrates have emerged from some recent studies. While mutual inhibition between *Vangl* and *Fz/Dvl* is expected based on the *Drosophila* work, a number of reports also reveal a functional synergy between these proteins in mice. For instance, simultaneous decrease in gene dosage of *Vangl2*

91 and *Dvl* enhanced CE defects in neural tube closure and cochlea elongation, and compound
92 mice mutants in *Vangl2* and several *Fz* genes show similar more exacerbated defects than
93 those with mutations in individual genes (Etheridge et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2006; Yu et al.,
94 2010; Yu et al., 2012). Upstream of Fz, the requirement of Wnt ligand in fly PCP signaling was
95 debated initially (Chen et al., 2008; Wu et al., 2013), and disproved more recently (Ewen-
96 Campen et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2020). In contrast, non-canonical Wnts, including Wnt5a and 11,
97 are essential for CE in vertebrates (Grumolato et al., 2010; Heisenberg et al., 2000; Yamaguchi
98 et al., 1999), and a functional synergy between Vangl2 and Wnt5a has been shown in
99 development of multiple tissues in mice (Gao et al., 2011; Qian et al., 2007; Sinha et al., 2012;
100 Wang et al., 2011). These findings, which collectively implicate a positive role of Vangl in
101 Wnt/Fz/Dvl mediated non-canonical Wnt signaling activation, bring up an essential question on
102 how Vangl may both cooperate with and inhibit Wnt/Fz/Dvl.
103
104 A further complication of non-canonical Wnt/ PCP signaling during vertebrate development is
105 the involvement of several co-receptors including Ror1/2, Ptk7 and Ryk, whose functions are
106 not linked to fly PCP ((Ripp et al., 2018); reviewed in (Green et al., 2014)). For instance, Ror2
107 has been shown to bind to Wnt5a together with Fz and is required to mediate Wnt5a-induced
108 phosphorylation of Dvl in mammals (Grumolato et al., 2010; Ho et al., 2012; Nishita et al., 2010).
109 Mouse mutants deficient in Ror1/2 phenocopy many defects of *Wnt5a* mutants (Ho et al., 2012),
110 demonstrating a critical function of this co-receptor family in Wnt5a/ PCP signaling. Intriguingly,
111 reduced gene dosages of both *Ror2* and *Vangl2* can lead to more severe morphogenesis
112 defects than mutants of each individual genes, revealing a functional synergy between Vangl2
113 and Ror2. This is reminiscent of the functional synergy observed between Vangl2 and
114 Wnt/Fz/Dvl. Ror2 was reported to interact with Vangl2 biochemically, and proposed to form a
115 “receptor complex” with Vangl2 in response to Wnt5a (Gao et al., 2011). However, the

biochemical and cell biological activities of the Ror2/ Vangl complex and how this may affect Wnt/Fz/Dvl PCP signaling is not understood in detail.

To understand feedback regulation of core PCP proteins in vertebrate CE, we have used the mouse and the *Xenopus* models to investigate functional and biochemical interactions of these proteins. Our previous work suggested that Vangl2 has dual activity in modulating Dvl function: it binds and recruits Dvl to the plasma membrane cell-autonomously and keeps it inactive, but at the same time enriching Dvl at this subcellular domain for optimal Fz signaling upon stimulation by the Wnt11 ligand which triggers release of Dvl from Vangl2 (Seo et al., 2017). In the current study, we attempted to address two questions raised by this model: 1) how will Vangl's molecular partner Pk modulate Vangl-Dvl interaction during CE; and 2) if Dvl is sequestered by Vangl, how can it gain access to Fz in the response to Wnt?

In flies, Pk clusters with Vang to the proximal cell junction and is required to generate feedback amplification for asymmetric localization of both Vang and Dsh/Fz. Pk is shown to stabilize Fz-clusters on the plasma membrane in neighboring cells, but destabilizes Fz-clusters in a Dsh-dependent manner through endocytosis in the same cell (Warrington et al., 2017). Competitive binding of Pk to Dsh to prevent its plasma membrane recruitment by Fz has been proposed as a mechanism to destabilize Fz/Dsh clustering in the same cell (Tree et al., 2002). But binding between Pk and Dsh was reported to be quite weak (Bastock et al., 2003), and over-expressing Pk in *Xenopus* cannot effectively abolish Fz7-mediated recruitment of Dvl to the plasma membrane (Takeuchi et al., 2003; Veeman et al., 2003). These studies thus do not fully support the notion of competitive binding to Dvl as the underlying mechanism for Pk to destabilize Fz clusters or its action during CE.

In this study, we used gastrulating *Xenopus* embryos as a CE model to carry out functional, biochemical and cell biological studies, and found that Pk helps Vangl2 to sequester both Dvl2 and Ror2, whereas Ror2 is needed for Dvl to transition from Vangl to Fz in response to non-canonical Wnt. We propose a novel model in which Pk assists Vangl to function as an unconventional adaptor that brings Dvl and Ror2 into a complex to serves two functions: 1) simultaneously preventing both Dvl and Ror2 from ectopic activation; and 2) relaying Dvl to Fz via Ror2 upon non-canonical Wnt activation. We propose that these two actions together help to modulate the threshold and dynamics of signaling activation in response to non-canonical Wnt.

Results

Pk synergizes with Vangl2 to suppress Dvl during CE

To probe the functional network of core PCP proteins during CE, we first studied how Pk interacts with Vangl2 and Dvl to regulate *Xenopus* body axis elongation in both gain- and loss-of-function scenarios. To overexpress Pk in *Xenopus* embryos, we used two different mRNAs that encode either a GFP tagged mouse Pk2 (mPk2) or a Flag-tagged *Xenopus* Pk1 (XPk) (Takeuchi et al., 2003; Vladar et al., 2012). Similar to the previous report (Takeuchi et al., 2003), we found that injecting *Xpk* or *mPk2* mRNA into the dorsal marginal zone (DMZ) of 4-cell stage *Xenopus* embryos can block CE in a dose dependent manner (Suppl. Fig. 1a and data not shown). Measurement of the length-to-width ratio (LWR) indicates that 1 and 2 ng *pk* mRNA injection can reproducibly cause moderate and severe CE defects, respectively, but 0.5 ng *Xpk* only results in a slight LWR reduction that is not statistically significant (Suppl. Fig. 1a').

With co-injection of mRNAs, however, even a very small dose of 0.1 ng *Xpk* is sufficient to cause sever CE defects together with 0.1 ng mouse *Vangl2* (*mVangl2*), which produces only a moderate CE defect when injected by itself (Fig. 1a, a'). Similarly, co-injecting 0.25 ng *mPk2*, which causes no CE defects by itself, also significantly enhances the CE defect induced by 0.1 ng *mVangl2* (Fig. 1b, b').

Conversely, we found that knocking down endogenous XPk level using antisense morpholino (*Xpk*MO, Suppl. Fig. 1b-d') can rescue *mVangl2* over-expression induced CE defect (Fig. 1c, c'), whereas over-expressing Pk can dose-dependently rescue *Xvangl2* morpholino (*XV*MO) knockdown-induced CE defect (Fig. 1d, d'). These gain- and loss-of-function results together demonstrate that Pk functionally synergize with Vangl during CE.

180 We then tested how Pk may affect Dvl function during CE. When co-injected, *mPk2* or *Xpk* can
181 dose-dependently rescued the CE defects induced by *Dvl2* over-expression (Fig. 1e-f'),
182 suggesting that Pk functionally antagonizes Dvl during CE. Together with our previous finding
183 that Vangl exerts bimodal regulation of Dvl (Seo et al., 2017), these results suggest that Pk may
184 synergize with Vangl to suppress Dvl function during CE. Consistent with this idea, we found
185 that the severe CE defects induced by *Pk* and *Vangl2* co-injection could be rescued by
186 overexpressing *Dvl2* (Fig. 1g, g').
187
188 **Vangl interaction with and recruitment of Pk to the plasma membrane is essential for**
189 **their functional synergy**
190 To understand how Pk synergizes with Vangl to represses Dvl, we first investigated whether
191 they could modulate each other's protein levels. It was reported that Vang could control Pk
192 stability indirectly through ubiquitination in flies (Cho et al., 2015; Strutt et al., 2013), while in
193 zebrafish Pk could down-regulate Dsh/Dvl protein level (Carreira-Barbosa et al., 2003). In our
194 *Xenopus* experiments, however, morpholino knockdown of *Xvangl2* or over-expression of
195 *mVangl2* did not affect the protein level of co-injected mPk2 or XPk (Suppl. Fig. 2a, b, c). In
196 contrast, co-transfecting XPk with Vangl2 in cultured HEK293T cells did lead to significant
197 reduction of XPk protein level (Suppl. Fig. 2d, also see Pk2 down-regulation by Vangl2 in 293
198 cells in (Nagaoka et al., 2019)) . Therefore, Vang/Vangl2-modulation of Pk stability seems to be
199 context-dependent, and does not account for the observed synergy between Vangl2 and Pk
200 during *Xenopus* CE. Furthermore, over-expression of Pk does not alter the protein level of co-
201 injected Vangl2 or Dvl2 (Suppl. Fig. 2a, b), indicating that during *Xenopus* CE Pk does not
202 synergize with Vangl2 or antagonize Dvl2 by altering their protein stability.
203
204 To explore other mechanisms that may explain how Pk synergizes with Vangl2 to antagonize
205 Dvl during CE, we examined the effect of Vangl2 on PK's sub-cellular localization. When GFP

206 tagged mPk2 is expressed alone in the animal cap in *Xenopus,* it displays general cytoplasmic
207 distribution with slight enrichment at the plasma membrane (Suppl. Fig. 3a). Co-injection of
208 mVangl2 significantly increased plasma membrane enrichment of mPk2 (Suppl. Fig. 3b). On the
209 other hand, morpholino knockdown of endogenous *Xvangl2* eliminated mPk2 plasma
210 membrane enrichment, which could be restored by co-expression of a small amount of mVangl2
211 (Suppl. Fig. 3c, d). Together, these data indicate that Vangl2 is both necessary and sufficient to
212 recruit Pk to the plasma membrane.
213
214 To test whether plasma membrane recruitment of Pk by Vangl is important for their functional
215 synergy, we took advantage of a Vangl2 R177H variant identified in a patient with
216 diastematomyelia (Kibar et al., 2011). This variant changes the highly conserved Arg177 to
217 histidine in the intracellular loop region between TM2 (transmembrane domain) and TM3 (Fig.
218 2a). Importantly, this variant does not perturb plasma membrane trafficking of Vangl2 (Fig. 2b,
219 b'), its stability (Fig. 2g, Suppl. Fig. 4e) or its ability to interact with and recruit Dvl to the plasma
220 membrane (Suppl. Fig. 4a-d). The variant, however, reduced Vangl2 interaction with Pk and
221 recruitment of Pk to the plasma membrane (Fig. 2c-g).
222
223 Functionally, R177H variant significantly reduced the synergy between Vangl2 and Pk during
224 CE (Fig. 2h, i). Moreover, compared to wild-type Vangl2, Vangl2 R177H results in significantly
225 less severe CE defects when over-expressed alone in the DMZ (Suppl. Fig. 5a, a'), and is less
226 capable of suppressing Dvl-Fz mediated signaling activation during CE when co-expressed
227 (Suppl. Fig. 5b, b'). We interpret these data to suggest that: 1) direct binding of Vangl2 to Pk,
228 through which Pk is recruited to the plasma membrane, is crucial for their functional synergy
229 during CE; and 2) direct binding of Vangl to Dvl alone may not be sufficient to suppress Dvl, and
230 simultaneous interaction with Pk may be required for Vangl to efficiently inhibit Dvl during CE.
231

Pk synergizes with Vangl to sequester Dvl from Fz

To investigate how Pk may help Vangl to suppress Dvl during CE, we first tested whether Pk over-expression may disrupt Dvl interaction with Fz. In both animal cap and DMZ cells, Fz7 can recruit mCherry tagged Dvl2 (Dvl2-mCh) to the plasma membrane (Suppl. Fig. 6b, e). Co-expression of GFP-mPk2, however, does not perturb Fz7-mediated plasma membrane recruitment of Dvl2 (Suppl. Fig. 6c, f), suggesting that over-expression of Pk alone cannot effectively disrupt Dvl-Fz interaction in *Xenopus*.

We then investigated the alternative possibility that Pk may help Vangl to sequester Dvl, and thereby preventing Wnt-Fz-Dvl interaction to inhibit non-canonical Wnt signaling activation during CE. Our previous studies provided evidence that Vangl recruits Dvl into an inactive complex at the plasma membrane; and Wnt11 induction can dissociate Dvl from Vangl (Seo et al., 2017). We therefore first tested whether Pk can reinforce Vangl-Dvl interaction to counter the dissociation effect by Wnt11. Pk overexpression can indeed significantly reduce Wnt11-induced dissociation of EGFP-Vangl2 and Flag-Dvl2 in the DMZ (Suppl. Fig. 7). These data argue that Pk may strengthen Vangl-Dvl interaction to inhibit Dvl from responding to non-canonical Wnt ligands.

To further test how Vangl/Pk may regulates Dvl's response to non-canonical Wnt, we performed imaging studies. In *Xenopus* and zebrafish, Wnt11 can induce formation of Fz-Dvl complexes that cluster as patches at the cell-cell contacts (Witzel et al., 2006; Yamanaka and Nishida, 2007). We therefore investigated how Vangl/ Pk may affect formation of Wnt11-induced Fz-Dvl patches. We found that *Xenopus* Wnt11 can induce Dvl2-mCh to form distinct patches along cell-cell contacts in both animal cap (Fig. 3a-c') and DMZ cells (Suppl. Fig. 8). When GFP-tagged *Xenopus* Fz7 is co-injected, it exclusively forms membrane patches that completely overlapped with Dvl2 (Fig. 3d-f'), consistent with clustering of Fz-Dvl complexes. Co-injecting

258 moderate level of GFP-tagged mouse Vangl2 (0.1 ng) does not perturb Wnt11-induced Dvl2
259 patch formation. In contrast to Fz7, Vangl2 is distributed broadly on the plasma membrane, but
260 to our surprise it also displays overlapping enrichment with Dvl2 patches (Fig.3g-l; Suppl. Fig. 8).
261 Close examination revealed that in most cases Vangl2 is enriched at the edges of Dvl2 patches,
262 but diminished at the center (Fig.3g'-l', compare red arrows and arrowheads to green arrows
263 and arrowheads). In 3-D reconstructed confocal images, enriched Vangl2 often forms rings that
264 encircle Dvl2 patches (Suppl. Fig. 8c, white arrows; and enlarged views in a'-c').
265
266 To quantitatively assess their spatial distribution, we measured and plotted the relative intensity
267 of Dvl2 against Fz7, Vangl2 or membrane-GFP control along the length of ten representative
268 patches (Fig. 3p-r). Our analyses revealed that membrane-GFP displayed no enrichment along
269 Wnt11-induced Dvl2 patches (Fig. 3p). Fz7, however, showed enrichment that correlated
270 strongly with Dvl2: their intensities follow a similar pattern of increasing sharply from the edge
271 and peaking coincidentally at the center of the patches. In contrast, Vangl2 enrichment starts to
272 appear slightly outside of Dvl2 patches (Fig. 3g', i', r, green arrowheads), peaks at the edges as
273 Dvl2 intensity begins to rise, and dips at the center where Dvl2 and Fz7 intensities reach the
274 maximum (Fig. 3g', i', r, green arrows). These imaging analyses are consistent with our co-IP
275 data (Suppl. Fig. 7), and further suggest the possibility that Dvl may leave Vangl and transition
276 to Fz upon Wnt11 induction.
277
278 We then tested whether addition of Pk can help Vangl2 to counter the effect of Wnt11. Indeed,
279 co-injecting Pk with 0.1 ng Vangl2 effectively inhibited Wnt11-induced Dvl2 patch formation,
280 making Dvl2 more evenly distributed along the plasma membrane (Fig.3m-o) and overlap with
281 Vangl2 (Fig.3m'-o', t). Similar inhibition of Dvl patch formation can also be achieved, albeit less
282 effectively, by over-expression of high level Vangl2 alone (Fig.3j-l', s).
283

284 To examine how Vangl2 and Pk could affect Fz7 enrichment in the Wnt11-induced Fz/Dvl
285 patches, we co-injected fluorescent protein-tagged Dvl2 and Fz7. Moderate over-expression of
286 Vangl2 or Pk individually does not affect enrichment of Fz7 within Wnt11-induced Dvl2 patches
287 (compare Fig. 4 a-c' with d-i'), but Vangl2 and Pk together not only disrupt Dvl2 patches, but
288 also disperse Fz7 into small puncta (Fig. 4j-l'). Close examination revealed that some of the Fz7
289 puncta are on the plasma membrane and largely co-localize with Dvl2. The rest of Fz7 puncta,
290 however, are located in the cytoplasm near the plasma membrane and appear to be
291 endocytosed vesicles (Fig. 4k', l', arrows). Interestingly, these cytoplasmic puncta contain only
292 Fz7 but not Dvl2 (compare arrows in Fig. 4j' to k').
293
294 To confirm that the cytoplasmic Fz7 puncta are endocytosed vesicles, we performed FM4-64
295 dye uptake experiment (Cho et al., 2015; Classen et al., 2005). FM4-64 is a membrane
296 impermeable fluorescent dye that can only be internalized through endocytosis. When we
297 incubated the explants with FM4-64, we found that many Fz7 puncta induced by Vangl2/Pk co-
298 injection were also positive for FM4-64 (Suppl. Fig. 9d-f'), indicating that they are indeed
299 endocytic vesicles.
300
301 These data imply that Pk may assist Vangl to sequester Dvl, thereby reducing the accessibility
302 of Dvl to attenuate Fz-Dvl complex formation in response to Wnt11, and resulting in Fz
303 destabilization at the plasma membrane. To test this idea, we reduced Dvl availability at the
304 plasma membrane using another strategy. Over-expression of DshMA, a mitochondrial tethered
305 Dvl, can sequester endogenous Dvl to the mitochondria (and away from the plasma membrane)
306 through DIX-domain mediated oligomerization (Park et al., 2005). We found that DshMA
307 injection indeed mimicked the effect of Vangl2/Pk co-injection on Fz, resulting in reduced Fz7
308 clustering upon Wnt11 induction, formation of cytoplasmic puncta near the plasma membrane,
309 and diminished plasma membrane localization (Suppl. Fig. 10).

To further test whether Vangl2 needs direct interaction with PK in order to down-regulate Fz7 stability at the plasma membrane and Fz7 patch formation in response to Wnt11, we analyzed Vangl2 R177H variant that specifically reduces Vangl2-Pk interaction (Fig.2 and Suppl. Fig. 5). We found that unlike wild-type Vangl2, co-injecting Vangl2 R177H with Pk failed to significantly diminish Wnt11-induced Fz7 patch formation or cause cytoplasmic Fz7 puncta (Fig. 5). These data support the notion that direct Pk-Vangl2 interaction seems to be required for efficient sequestration of Dvl from Fz, thereby reducing Fz stability on the plasma membrane.

As a final test for this idea, we examined Dvl phosphorylation known to be inducible by Fz and non-canonical Wnt signaling activation (Axelrod, 2001; Klein et al., 2006; Rothbacher et al., 2000; Shimada et al., 2001; Strutt et al., 2019; Strutt et al., 2006). *Xenopus* extract from embryos injected with *flag-Dvl2* in the DMZ often shows Dvl2 migrating as two bands. The upper, slower migrating band increases in intensity from stage 10 to 12, correlating with the onset and progression of CE (Fig. 6a). The slower migrating form of Dvl2 is increased by Fz7 co-injection, but eliminated by phosphatase treatment (Fig. 6b). Interestingly, high level Vangl2 over-expression can reduce the phosphorylated form of Dvl2, while Fz7 can counter Vangl2's effect to increase Dvl2 phosphorylation when co-injected (Fig. 6c). Importantly, our co-IP experiment demonstrated that only the faster migrating, presumably unphosphorylated form of Dvl2 could be precipitated by Vangl2 in *Xenopus* (Fig. 6d), suggesting that Vangl2-bound Dvl2 may be shielded from Fz-induced phosphorylation. High level Pk (1 ng *Xpk*) is not sufficient to significantly reduce phosphorylated form of Dvl2 when injected alone, but can synergize with moderate level of co-injected Vangl2 to suppress Dvl2 phosphorylation (Fig 6e, f). Together with our previous findings, these data suggest that Pk facilitates Vangl2 to sequester Dvl2 from Fz and, in turn, Fz-induced phosphorylation.

Ror2 facilitates transition of Dvl2 from Vangl2 to Fz complexes in response to non-canonical Wnt

The above results prompted us to ask that if Dvl is sequestered at the plasma membrane by Vangl2/Pk, how it may shuttle to form a complex with Fz in response to non-canonical Wnt? As Ror2 has been shown to act as a non-canonical Wnt co-receptor capable of interacting with both Fz and Vangl2 during CE (Gao et al., 2011; Grumolato et al., 2010; Hikasa et al., 2002; Ho et al., 2012; Wallkamm et al., 2014), we hypothesized that Ror2 may be a key component to shuttle Dvl between Vangl2 and Fz.

To test this idea, we first examined the functional relationship between Ror2 and Vangl2. Injecting moderate amount of *Xenopus ror2* mRNA (*Xror2;* 0.05-0.1 ng) can efficiently rescue the severe CE defects induced by 0.2 ng of *Vangl2* mRNA (Suppl. Fig.11a, b), supporting the idea that like Dvl2, Ror2 antagonizes Vangl2 to activate non-canonical Wnt signaling during CE.

Secondly, we tested that at the cellular level, how Wnt11 may induce Ror2 to cluster into patches and how Ror2 patches may correlate with Dvl2 and/or Vangl2 patches. When Wnt11 is co-injected with EGFP tagged Ror2 and Dvl2-mCh, it indeed induces Ror2 to form patches that show overlap with Dvl2 patches (Fig.7a-d). Close examination of these patches revealed that Ror2, like Fz, accumulates with Dvl2 to high levels in the center of the patches (red arrowhead in Fig.7a', d). But unlike Fz, Ror2 patches are longer and extend slightly outside of Dvl2 patches (green arrowheads in Fig.7a', d), reminiscent of Vangl2 enrichment (Fig.3g'-i'; r) and suggesting that Ror2 and Vangl2 can accumulate together at the border of Dvl2 patches to form a complex devoid of Dvl2. Similar to Vangl2, Ror2 continues to display broad membrane distribution outside of Dvl2 patches (Fig.7a, c) in the presence of Wnt11, differing from Dvl2 and Fz that are localized almost exclusively within patches (Fig.7b,c; Fig.3d-f). These results suggest that at least under the moderate over-expression condition for the imaging experiments, a portion of

362 Ror2 remains bound to Vangl2 on the plasma membrane whereas most Dvl2 dissociates from
363 Vangl2 to form the signaling patches in response to Wnt11.
364
365 To test whether Ror2 is required for Dvl2 patch formation in response to Wnt11, we used a
366 verified morpholino to knock down endogenous XRor2 (Schambony and Wedlich, 2007) and
367 found that Dvl2 patch formation is significantly diminished in Xror2 morphants (Fig.7e, f).
368 Collectively, these data indicate that Ror2, a molecular partner of Vangl2, is an obligatory
369 component of the Fz/Dvl cluster induced by Wnt11.
370
371 To further scrutinize the molecular mechanism, we tested biochemically whether Ror2 is
372 required for Dvl2 to dissociate from Vangl2 in response to Wnt11. Indeed, we found that Wnt11-
373 induced dissociation of Dvl2 from Vangl2 was significantly reduced when endogenous Ror2
374 level was knocked down by *Xror2*-MO (Supplementary Fig. 12a).
375
376 Together, these data support the notion that Ror2 is required for Dvl2 to transition from Vangl2
377 to Fz in response to Wnt11. To test how Ror2 may facilitate this transition, we performed co-IP
378 experiment. Similar to the previous report (Gao et al., 2011), our co-IP experiment detected
379 Ror2 interaction with Vangl2 but not Dvl2 (Suppl. Fig. 12b), suggesting that Ror2 may bind
380 directly to Vangl2 but not Dvl2. As Ror2 and Dvl2 can both bind to Vangl2, we reasoned that
381 they could interact indirectly through their mutual binding with Vangl2. We thus performed
382 fluorescence-detection size exclusion chromatography (FSEC) with protein extract from
383 Xenopus embryos injected with *Xror2-EGFP*, *HA-Vangl2* and *Flag-Dvl2*. The elution of Ror2-
384 EGFP was monitored by a fluorescence detector following size exclusion chromatography. The
385 fractions of different molecular size were collected and analyzed by western blot. We found co-
386 fractionation of Ror2, Vangl2 and Dvl2 in fractions 14, 15 and16 (with the approximate
387 molecular weight of 773-1717, 348-773 and 166-348 kD, respectively; Supplementary Fig. 12c).

388 This result supports our hypothesis that Ror2, Vangl2 and Dvl2 form complexes *in vivo*. We
389 envision a model in which an Ror2/Vangl2/Dvl2 complex serves two purposes during CE: it
390 allows Vangl2 to simultaneously sequester both Ror2 and Dvl2 and keeps them inactive, while
391 in response to non-canonical Wnt it enables Ror2 to shuttle Dvl to Fz (See Fig.9 and Discussion
392 below).
393
394 **Bimodal regulation of Ror2 by Vangl2/Pk during non-canonical Wnt signaling**
395 We used Wnt11-induced patch formation as a functional test for the above model. First, we test
396 whether Vangl2 may synergize with Pk to sequester Ror2 from Fz7 as it does to Dvl2 (Fig. 3
397 and 4). When fluorescent protein-tagged Ror2 and Fz7 are co-expressed with Wnt11, they form
398 clusters that co-localize. Moderate over-expression of Vangl2 or XPk individually does not affect
399 Ror2/Fz7 co-clustering within Wnt11-induced patches (compare Fig.8a-c' with d-i'). Vangl2 and
400 Pk co-injection, however, significantly diminished Ror2/Fz7 patches induced by Wnt11 and
401 caused Fz7 to form intracellular vesicles near the plasma membrane (Fig.8k', l', arrows).
402 Interestingly, like Dvl2 (Fig.4j', k'), Ror2 is not present in these endocytosed Fz7 vesicle
403 (compare arrows in Fig.8j' to k') but remained on the plasma membrane, presumably with Dvl2.
404
405 We then tested whether Vangl2 may also be required for Ror2 to form Wnt11-induced patches
406 with Fz7 since our model predicts that, by bridging Ror2 and Dvl into a complex, Vangl2 helps
407 Ror2 to shuttle Dvl to Fz in response to non-canonical Wnt (Fig. 9). We found that partial
408 knockdown of endogenous *XVangl2* with *XV*MO indeed diminished Ror2/Fz7 patches formed in
409 response to Wnt11 (Fig.8m-o') with simultaneous formation of Fz7 intracellular vesicles around
410 the plasma membrane (Fig.8m', n', arrows), similar to co-overexpression of Vangl2 and XPk
411 (Fig.8k', l'). Collectively, these data support our model and suggest that with Pk, Vangl2 exerts
412 bimodal regulation of Ror2 in non-canonical Wnt signaling.

413 **Discussion**

414 Early fly studies identified six proteins that act as core members to coordinate cellular polarity
415 across the plane of the epithelium. In-depth genetic, biochemical and imaging studies have
416 subsequently elucidated how the six core PCP proteins interact within and between cells to
417 establish feedback loops that partition Vang/Pk and Fz/Dsh/Dgo clusters on opposing cell
418 cortexes (Amonlirdviman et al., 2005; Goodrich and Strutt, 2011). These studies establish a
419 foundation to understand the action of PCP proteins in static epithelial cells. They do not,
420 however, seem to provide direct explanation for how PCP proteins regulate polarized and
421 dynamic cell behavior during CE, where asymmetric partitioning of core PCP proteins has not
422 been consistently observed and non-core PCP proteins, including non-canonical Wnts and co-
423 receptor Ror1/2, are also critically involved. We previously provided evidence that during CE,
424 Vangl exerts bimodal regulation of Dvl by cell-autonomously recruiting Dvl to the plasma
425 membrane in an inactive state, and simultaneously poising Dvl for activation upon binding of Fz
426 to non-canonical Wnt ligands (Seo et al., 2017). In the current study, we further tested this
427 model and demonstrated that Pk functionally synergizes with Vangl2 to inhibit Dvl2 during CE in
428 *Xenopus*. Mechanistically, Pk binding to Vangl2 helps Vangl2 to sequester Dvl and constrain its
429 transition to Fz. Moreover, Pk seems to play a similar role in assisting Vangl2 to sequester Ror2,
430 whereas Ror2 is required for Dvl2 to transition from Vangl to Fz in response to non-canonical
431 Wnt. We propose an updated model for the bimodal regulation in which Vangl2/Pk bring both
432 Dvl2 and Ror2 into an inactive complex that prevents ectopic non-canonical Wnt signaling. On
433 the other hand, this complex can also be coupled with Fz upon non-canonical Wnt mediated
434 interaction between Ror2 and Fz, delivering Dvl to Fz to initiate non-canonical Wnt signaling
435 (Fig. 9). Therefore, Vangl mediated plasma membrane recruitment of Dvl and pre-assembly of
436 Dvl and Ror into a complex can also accelerate non-canonical Wnt signaling activation by
437 facilitating Dvl presentation to activated Fz. Our model provides a new framework to decipher

438 how core PCP proteins are integrated with non-core proteins to tightly control the threshold and
439 dynamics of non-canonical Wnt/ PCP signaling during CE.
440
441 **Regulation of Vangl-Dvl interaction by Pk to suppress non-canonical Wnt signaling**
442 Our previous work proposed that Vangl-Dvl interaction provides a key switch to the central logic
443 of PCP by enriching Dvl around the plasma membrane for effective access to Fz, while at the
444 same time keeping Dvl inactive to prevent ectopic signaling (Seo et al., 2017). In the current
445 study, we found that the Vangl2 R177H variant (Kibar et al., 2011), which can traffick properly
446 and bind to and recruit Dvl2 to the plasma membrane like wild-type Vangl2 does (Fig. 2, Suppl.
447 Fig. 4), no longer efficiently inhibits CE and rescues Fz/Dvl induced CE defect when over-
448 expressed (Suppl. Fig.5). The results suggest that binding to Dvl *per se* is not sufficient for
449 Vangl2 to suppress Dvl during CE. Interestingly, Vangl2 R177H displays significantly reduced
450 binding and functional synergy with Pk. We therefore reason that interaction with Pk is
451 necessary for Vangl2 to efficiently sequester Dvl from Fz or downstream targets like Daam1.
452 Our biochemical and imaging experiments provide supporting evidence to this idea (Fig. 3-5;
453 Suppl. Fig. 7).
454
455 There are at least three possibilities accounting for how Pk can assist Vangl2 to sequester Dvl.
456 First, given that Dvl, Pk and Vang/Vangl can mutually interact with each other (Bastock et al.,
457 2003; Humphries et al., 2023; Jenny et al., 2003; Takeuchi et al., 2003; Tree et al., 2002), Pk
458 may stabilize a ternary Dvl/Pk/Vangl complex by simultaneously interacting with both Vangl and
459 Dvl (Fig. 9a). We, however, do not favor this possibility because 1) the binding between Pk and
460 Dvl was reported to be quite weak (Bastock et al., 2003); 2) our unpublished data show that ΔPL,
461 a Pk mutant lacking the PET/LIM domains necessary for Dvl binding (Takeuchi et al., 2003), can
462 largely mimic wild-type Pk function. Furthermore, a new study in flies showed that the
463 phosphorylation status of a conserved tyrosine in the cytoplasmic tail of Vang provides opposite

binding preference for Pk and Dsh, suggesting that simultaneous binding of both Pk and Dsh to the C-terminus of Vang may not be possible (Humphries et al., 2023).

Secondly, Pk may regulate biochemical modification on Vangl2 to strengthen Vangl2-Dvl interaction. The best known modification on Vang/Vangl is phosphorylation at several N-terminal serine/threonine residues in response to Wnt/Fz (Gao et al., 2011; Kelly et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2017), and a recent study in flies revealed that Pk can prevent Vang phosphorylation at these residues to decrease Vang turnover (Strutt et al., 2019). In our co-IP studies in *Xenopus*, however, we found that Wnt11 can disrupt Vangl2-Dvl2 interaction yet has no significant impact on Vangl2 band shift that was reported to be indicative of its N-terminal phosphorylation (Gao et al., 2011; Kelly et al., 2016; Strutt et al., 2019); Suppl. Fig.7a, lower panel). Conversely, although Pk over-expression can counter Wnt11-induced dissociation of Vangl2 and Dvl2, it does not seem to significantly affect Vangl2 band shift either (Suppl. Fig.7a, lower panel). These results are consistent with a previous report that, in fly S2 cells, Pk over-expression does not alter Vang N-terminal phosphorylation (Kelly et al., 2016). While our current study provides no evidence to support that Pk modulates Vangl N-terminal phosphorylation to regulate Vangl-Dvl interaction, this possibility remains an interesting idea and should be tested in the future using the reported phosphomutant and phosphomimetic Vangl2 (Yang et al., 2017). Finally, phosphorylation of a conserved C-terminal tyrosine residue of Vang was recently reported to decrease its binding with Dsh (Humphries et al., 2023), and could therefore provide a mechanism to control Vangl-Dvl interaction. But the regulatory mechanism of this tyrosine phosphorylation is not clear and does not seem to depend on Fz. Further studies will be needed to elucidate the role of this tyrosine phosphorylation in vertebrate CE.

Thirdly, Pk binding may induce allosteric change or clustering of Vangl to increase the overall avidity for Dvl binding. Vang/Vangl is able to dimerize, and possibly oligomerize into larger

490 cluster through their C-terminal tail and/or transmembrane domains (Belotti et al., 2012; Jenny
491 et al., 2003). Interestingly, quantitative imaging studies in flies have revealed that in stable PCP
492 clusters, the ratio between Vang and Pk is 6:1 (Strutt et al., 2016). In light of our data
493 suggesting that the intracellular loop between TM2 and 3 in Vangl2 may form another Pk
494 binding site in addition to the canonical Pk binding domain at the C-terminal tail (Fig. 2; (Bastock
495 et al., 2003; Jenny et al., 2003), it is tempting to speculate that Pk may nucleate or stabilize
496 Vangl oligomer formation through multimeric interactions with different domains on multiple
497 Vangl proteins. Such oligomeric Vangl cluster may form a “cage” to more effectively sequester
498 Dvl due to increased local concentration and/or higher binding affinity resulted from
499 conformational change upon oligomerization or Pk binding.
500
501 Our above model seemingly contradicts with the fly studies showing that Vang/Pk clusters are
502 partitioned to the opposite cell cortexes from Fz/Dsh clusters and are clearly devoid of Dsh.
503 These segregated clusters, however, seem to form progressively from initial symmetrically
504 distributed PCP proteins along cell-cell junctions at early stages where Vang does co-localize
505 with Dsh (Bastock et al., 2003), and a new study further implicated the functional importance of
506 Vang-Dsh binding in fly PCP establishment (Humphries et al., 2023). Persistent contact and
507 stable junctions between neighboring cells may facilitate feedback interaction to partition
508 Vang/Pk from Dsh/Fz (Stahley et al., 2021). In dynamically moving cells during CE, intercellular
509 feedback interactions are likely limited and transient, therefore posing challenges for stable
510 segregation of distinct PCP clusters. Conversely, non-canonical Wnts play a key role during
511 vertebrate CE but not in fly PCP establishment. These differences may lead to some changes in
512 the molecular actions of PCP proteins (see below).
513
514 **An Ror-dependent relay mechanism to deliver Dvl for non-canonical Wnt signaling**

515 The premise of our model is that during CE, Vangl acts via a relay mechanism to bring Dvl to
516 the plasma membrane, and then releases Dvl to Fz during PCP activation. Pk may tighten up
517 this relay mechanism, via regulating Vangl-Dvl interaction, to increase the efficiency of Dvl
518 plasma membrane recruitment and the threshold at which Dvl can be released to Fz. While the
519 detailed mechanisms for how Dvl can be released from Vangl and transitioned to Fz are yet to
520 be elucidated in further details in the future, our studies identified several factors that contribute
521 to the transition: non-canonical Wnt, the co-receptor Ror2 and Dvl phosphorylation.
522
523 Our co-IP and imaging studies showed that Wnt11 can trigger dissociation of Dvl2 from Vangl2
524 (Fig. 3g-l'; Suppl. Fig.7; (Seo et al., 2017)) and formation of Fz7-Dvl2 clusters at cell-cell contact
525 (Fig. 3d-f'), indicating that non-canonical Wnt can act extracellularly to initiate the transition of
526 Dvl from Vangl to Fz. It is possible that Wnt binding to Fz can directly induce events in favor of
527 Fz-Dvl association. We, however, also consider the alternate possibility that Wnt binding to the
528 co-receptors Ror1/2 to bring Dvl to Fz.
529
530 Like Fz, Ror1/2 also harbor the extracellular cysteine-rich domains known to interact with Wnts
531 and have been shown to heterodimerize with Fz in response to non-canonical Wnt binding
532 (Grumolato et al., 2010). At the same time, like Dvl, Ror2 was reported to bind directly with
533 Vangl2 (Gao et al., 2011). We therefore postulate that Ror2 may shuttle between Vangl and Fz
534 to deliver Dvl in a Wnt dependent manner. We note several intriguing links between Ror2 and
535 Dvl2: 1) they both bind to Vangl2 yet display functional antagonism against Vangl2 during CE in
536 over-expression assays (Fig. 1; Suppl. Fig. 11); 2) they both cluster with Fz in response to
537 Wnt11 (Fig. 3, 7, 8), and importantly Ror2 is required for Dvl2 to dissociate from Vangl2 and
538 cluster with Fz in response to Wnt11 (Fig. 7b; Suppl. Fig. 12). While Ror2 does not seem to bind
539 Dvl directly, they both interact with Vangl2 and our SEC data show that Ror2, Vangl2 and Dvl2
540 co-fractionate (Suppl. Fig. 12), suggesting that they may form complexes together. Therefore,

541 we envision a model where Vangl acting as an adaptor to bring together Dvl and Ror, either
542 through simultaneous binding of both Dvl and Ror to a single Vangl (Fig. 9a) or self-
543 oligomerization of Vangl proteins bound separately to Dvl and Ror (Fig. 9b). When non-
544 canonical Wnt induces Fz-Ror to heterodimerize, the complexes consisting of Ror/Vangl/Dvl can
545 be brought close to Fz to deliver Dvl and initiate non-canonical Wnt signaling (Fig. 9a',b').
546
547 In this model, Vangl acts as an unconventional adaptor to simultaneously serve two critical
548 functions: it pre-assembles Ror and Dvl into complexes at the plasma membrane ready to
549 initiate non-canonical Wnt signaling, but at the same time keeps both inactive to prevent ectopic
550 signaling activation. We previously demonstrated that Vangl2 can prevent Dvl from interacting
551 with its downstream effector Daam1 (Seo et al., 2017), and our data in this study suggest that
552 Vangl/Pk may act together to sequesters both Dvl and Ror from Fz as well (Fig. 4 and 8). Based
553 on this model, Vangl2 over-expression will exert excessive suppression to prevent non-
554 canonical Wnt signaling during CE, which can be overcome by co-overexpressing Dvl2 or Ror2
555 (Fig. 1; Fig.8; Suppl. Fig. 11). Conversely, reducing the dosage of endogenous Vangl2 may
556 decrease the assembly of Ror/Vangl/Dvl complexes, compromising signaling activation in
557 response to non-canonical Wnt (Fig.8). Therefore, our model can explain how partial loss of
558 Vangl2 can synergize with loss of positive non-canonical Wnt signaling regulators, including
559 Ror2, Dvl2 and Wnt5a, to cause various severe CE defects reported in the literature (Gao et al.,
560 2011; Qian et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2006).
561
562 Lastly, our data implicated an intriguing role for Dvl phosphorylation in the transition from Vangl
563 to Fz. We found that flag-Dvl2 phosphorylation is increased as CE progresses in *Xenopus* and
564 can be elevated by Fz7 but suppressed by Vangl2 (Fig. 6b, c). In agreement with our over-
565 expression data in *Xenopus*, loss of both Vangl1 and 2 leads to increased Dvl2 and 3
566 phosphorylation in cell culture (Mentink et al., 2018). Intriguingly, Vangl2 seems to bind only to

567 unphosphorylated form Dvl2 (Fig. 6d). These observations suggest that either Dvl
568 phosphorylation *per se* or another associated modification can be used as a mechanism to
569 decouple Dvl from Vangl. In support of this view, the basic region and PDZ domain of Dsh/Dvl,
570 which mediates Dvl-Vangl interaction (Park and Moon, 2002), is a strong target of CK1 during
571 PCP signaling in flies (Klein et al., 2006; Strutt et al., 2019; Strutt et al., 2006).
572
573 Taken together, we propose the second piece of our model (Fig. 9c, c') that during CE, non-
574 canonical Wnt triggers association of Ror1/2 and Fz to simultaneously accomplish two events: 1)
575 bringing Vangl-sequestered Dvl close to Fz; and 2) activating CK1 to phosphorylate Dvl. The
576 combined effects lead to Dvl dissociation from Vangl and transition to Fz in a spatially and
577 temporally controlled manner. On the other hand, by assisting Vangl to sequester Dvl, Pk can
578 suppress the noise from basal CK1 activity, and allow cells to respond more specifically and
579 dynamically to non-canonical Wnt singling during CE.
580
581

582 **Figure legend:**

583 **Figure 1. PK synergize with Vangl to suppress Dvl during CE**

584 Injecting 0.1 ng mouse *Vangl2* mRNA (*mVangl2*) into the DMZ results in moderate CE defects
585 and reduction of the length-to-width ration (LWR), and the phenotypes are significantly
586 enhanced by co-injecting a small dose of *Xpk* (a, a') or *mPk2* (b, b') mRNA that causes minimal
587 or no CE defect *per se*. On the other hand, higher dose *mVangl2* (0.15 ng) induced more severe
588 CE defects can be rescued by knocking down endogenous Pk using *Xpk*MO (c, c'); whereas
589 knockdown of endogenous *vangl2* (*XV*MO) induced CE defects can be rescued by moderate
590 mPk2 overexpression (d, d'). Conversely, 0.5 ng mouse *Dvl2* injection induced CE defects can
591 be dose-dependently rescued by *mPk2* (e, e') and *Xpk* (f, f') co-overexpression; and mVangl2-
592 mPk2 co-overexpression induced severe CE defect can be rescued by co-injecting Dvl2 (g, g').

593

594 **Figure 2. Vangl2 RH variant diminishes membrane recruitment of Pk and reduces**
595 **functional synergy with Pk**

596 Schematic illustration showing the structure of the tetraspan protein Vangl2 and location of the
597 R177H variant at the intracellular loop region between transmembrane domain 2 and 3 (a).
598 When expressed in *Xenopus* animal cap cells, EGFP-Vangl2 RH displays plasma membrane
599 localization, indistinguishable from wild-type EGFP-Vangl2 (b, b'). Immunostaining shows that
600 flag-XPk displays diffuse cytoplasmic localization with some membrane enrichment when
601 expressed alone (c, c'). The plasma membrane localization of flag-XPk is enhanced significantly
602 by co-expression of wild-type Vangl2 (d, d'), but only modestly by Vangl2 RH variant (e,
603 e'). (f) Quantification of the ratio of plasma membrane vs. cytoplasmic flag-XPk in (c), (d) and
604 (e). Co-IP and western blot show that binding to flag-XPk is reduced by Vangl2 RH variant
605 (g). Functionally, co-injection of 0.05 ng *Vangl2* and 0.5 ng *Xpk* can strongly synergize to
606 disrupt CE, but the synergy is significantly reduced when *Vangl2 RH* variant mRNA is co-
607 injected with *Xpk* (h). The CE phenotype is quantified by the LWR measurement in (i).

608

609 **Figure 3. Pk synergizes with Vangl2 to inhibit Wnt11-induced formation of Dvl patches**

610 0.25 ng *Wnt11* injection with 0.5 ng of mCh-tagged mouse *Dvl2* and membrane-GFP induces
611 formation of distinct Dvl2 patches at the cell-cell contact (a-c'). Co-injection indicates that these
612 Dvl2 patches completely overlap with Fz7 (d-f'). In contrast, Vangl2, when expressed at
613 moderate levels, is distributed more broadly along the plasma membrane (g-i), but also displays
614 enrichment immediately outside and at the edge of Dvl2 patches (g'-l', arrowheads and arrows,
615 respectively). High level of *Vangl2* injection inhibits Wnt11-induced Dvl2 patch formation and
616 makes Dvl2 more evenly distributed with Vangl2 (j-l'). The same effect can also be achieved by
617 co-expressing Pk with moderate level of Vangl2 (m-o'). (p-t) Measurement of the relative
618 intensity of Dvl2 along the patches with either membrane GFP, Fz7, Vangl2 at moderate (0.1 ng)
619 and high (0.5 ng) levels, or Vangl2 (0.1 ng) and XPk (0.5 ng) co-injection.

620

621 **Figure 4. Pk helps Vangl2 to inhibit Wnt11-induced clustering of Fz7-Dvl2 complexes**

622 Wnt11 induces formation of overlapping Fz7 and Dvl2 patches at the cell-cell contact (a-c').
623 These patches are not affected by over-expressing moderate level of Vangl2 (d-f') or Pk (g-i')
624 individually. Vangl2 and Pk co-expression, however, not only disrupt Dvl2 patches but also
625 disperse Fz7 patches into small puncta (j-l). Enlarged views revealed that some of the Fz7
626 puncta are on the plasma membrane and remain co-localized with Dvl2, while the others are
627 located in the cytoplasm near the plasma membrane (k'', l', arrows) and contain only Fz7 but not
628 Dvl2 (compare arrows in j' to k').

629

630 **Figure 5. Vangl2 R177H variant fails to synergize with Pk to inhibit Fz patch formation**
631 **and down-regulate Fz stability at the plasma membrane**

632 Wnt11 induced formation of Fz7-GFP patches on the plasma membrane (a, a') was not affected
633 by moderate expression either wild-type Vangl2 (b, b') or Vangl2 R177H variant (c, c') alone. Pk

co-injection synergized with wild-type Vangl2 to diminish Fz7 patch formation and induce cytoplasmic Fz7 puncta (d, d'), but the synergy was not observed with Vangl2 R177H (e, e').

Figure 6. Pk synergize with Vangl2 to prevent Fz-induced phosphorylation of Dvl. In *Xenopus* extract, DMZ injected Dvl2 migrates as two bands, with the slower migrating band increasing in intensity from stage 10 to 12 as CE starts and progresses during gastrulation (a). The slower migrating form of Dvl2 is increased by Fz7 co-injection, but eliminated by phosphatase treatment (b). High level Vangl2 injection can reduce the phosphorylated form of Dvl2, while Fz7 can counter Vangl2's effect to increase Dvl2 phosphorylation (c). Co-IP experiment indicates that only the faster migrating, unphosphorylated form of Dvl2 can be co-immunoprecipitated by Vangl2 (d). High level *Xpk* (1 ng) or moderate *Vangl2* (0.25 ng) cannot significantly reduce phosphorylated form of Dvl2 when injected individually, but their co-injection can suppress Dvl2 phosphorylation (e). (f) Quantification of the ratio between the fast migrating/ unphosphorylated and the slow migrating/ phosphorylated forms of Dvl2 in (e).

Figure 7. Ror2 is an obligatory component of the Fz/Dvl cluster complex induced by Wnt11. (a-c) Co-injection of *Wnt11* with EGFP-tagged *Xror2* (0.1 ng) and *Dvl2-mCh* shows that Ror2 and Dvl2 both form patches that largely overlap, but unlike Dvl2, Ror2 additionally displays broad distribution along the entire cell cortex. (c'-e') The enlarged views show that both Ror2 and Dvl2 accumulate at the center of the patches (red arrowhead), but Ror2 patches are slightly longer and extend beyond the border of Dvl2 patches (green arrowheads). (d) Measurement of the relative intensity of Dvl2-mCh along the patches with Ror2-EGFP. (e) Injection of *Wnt11* induces co-injected Dvl2-mCh to cluster into patches on the cell cortex. (b) Co-injection of 25 ng *X*ror2 morpholino (*Xror2*-MO) blocks Wnt11-induced Dvl2 clustering.

659 **Figure 8. Vangl2/Pk exert bimodal regulation of Ror2 in non-canonical Wnt signaling.** (a-c)
660 Wnt11 induces injected XRor2-td-Tomanto and Fz7-GFP to co-cluster into patches on the cell
661 cortex. Overexpression of Vangl2 (d-f) or Pk (g-i) individually does not perturb co-clustering of
662 Ror2 with Fz7 in response to Wnt11, but their co-overexpression (j-l) diminishes Ror2-Fz7 co-
663 clustering into patches and cause Fz7 to form cytoplasmic puncta whereas Ror2 remained on
664 the plasma membrane (compare arrows in j'-l'). a'-l' are enlarged view of a-l, respectively.
665 Conversely, partial knockdown of endogenous *XVangl2* with moderate level of *XV*MO (14 ng)
666 also diminished Ror2/Fz7 patches formed in response to Wnt11 (Fig.8m-o') with simultaneous
667 formation of intracellular vesicles around the plasma membrane which contain Fz7 but not Ror2
668 (Fig.8m'-o', arrows).
669
670 **Figure 9. An integrated model for how core PCP proteins mediates non-canonical Wnt**
671 **signaling to regulate CE.** (a, a') In the absence of non-canonical Wnt, Pk helps Vangl to act as
672 an adaptor that brings together Dvl and Ror, through either simultaneous binding of both Dvl
673 and Ror to a single Vangl (a) or oligomerization of Vangl proteins bound separately to Dvl and
674 Ror (a'), and keeps both Dvl and Ror inactive to prevent ectopic non-canonical Wnt signaling. (b,
675 b') Non-canonical Wnt initiates signaling by triggering Fz-Ror heterodimerization, and in turn,
676 the complexes consisting of Ror/Vangl/Dvl are brought close to Fz to deliver Dvl for activation of
677 downstream targets. (c, c') Non-canonical Wnt also induces other events such as Dvl
678 phosphorylation, likely through CK1, that may cause Dvl dissociation from Vangl and transition
679 to Fz in a spatially and temporally controlled manner.
680
681
682
683
684

685 **Materials and Method**

686

687 ***Xenopus* embryo manipulation and animal cap/DMZ explants**

688 Embryos were acquired by superovulation, maintained in 0.1% MMR solution until the stages for
689 microinjection. Morpholinos or *in vitro* synthesized RNAs were injected into either the animal
690 side of two-cell-stage embryos or the DMZ of four-cell-stage embryos. For phenotypic analysis,
691 the DMZ-injected embryos were fixed at tailbud stages, and the dorsal view of embryos was
692 captured using a Leica DFC 490 camera. Phenotypic severity was quantified by calculating the
693 length and width ratio. The length was determined by drawing a line along the long axis to
694 measure the maximal distance from the head to the tail of each embryo. The width was
695 measured as the average of two lines drawn perpendicular to the long axis, at the one third and
696 two thirds length of each embryo. For animal cap elongation assay, ectodermal explants were
697 isolated at stages 9-10 and incubated in 0.5 MMR solution containing 10 ng/ml of Activin B
698 (R&D cat# 659-AB-005). The CE phenotype was quantified by measuring the length of the
699 resulting explants. For fluorescent imaging to determine protein localization, DMZ or animal cap
700 explants from injected embryos were isolated at stage 10-10.5, coversliped and subjected to
701 confocal imaging analysis as described (Seo et al., 2017).

702

703 **Co-immunoprecipitation and westernblot**

704 RNAs or morpholinos injected embryo or explants were lysed as described for biochemistry
705 experiments (Seo et al., 2017; Tien et al., 2015). For co-immunoprecipitation assay, protein
706 lysates were subjected to pull-down with anti-flag antibody (Sigma Anti-FLAG M2 Magnetic
707 Beads (Cat# 8823)). Western blot detection of proteins was carried out with anti-GFP antibody
708 (Santa Cruz Biotechnology GFP (B-2) (Cat# sc-9996)), anti-myc antibody (Santa Cruz
709 Biotechnology myc Antibody(G-4) (Cat# sc-373712)), or flag antibody (Sigma Anti-flag M2
710 antibody (Cat# F1804)).

711

712 **Fluorescence-detection size-exclusion chromatography (FSEC)**

713 2-cell stage *Xenopus* embryos were co-injected with 3 ng Ror2-EGFP, 0.5 ng Flag-Dvl2 and 1
714 ng HA-Vangl2 mRNA to the animal side. Animal caps were dissected around stage 10 and
715 cultured in 0.5 X MMR at 15 ℃ overnight. Next day 35 – 40 animal caps were lysed on ice with
716 the 200 mL lysis buffer (50 mM Tris pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 0.3% Dodecylmaltoside and
717 Protease inhibitor (Pierce™ Protease Inhibitor)). After centrifuged at 4 ℃ 14000g for 15 min, the
718 supernatant was collected and filtered with 0.22 mm syringe filter. 100 mL lysate was loaded
719 onto Superose 6 Increase 10/300 GL column (Cytiva, Marlborough, MA) pre-equilibrated in SEC
720 buffer (Tris 50 mM, pH 7.5, NaCl 150 mM, Dodecylmaltoside 0.03%). The eluted Ror2-GFP was
721 monitored by RF-10AX fluorescence detector (Shimadzu, Japan) following size-exclusion
722 chromatography. Fractions were collected and concentrated (Pierce™ concentrator PES 10K
723 MWCO), and used for Western blot.

724

725

726 **Immunofluorescence staining and quantification**

727 RNA injected animal caps were dissected and fixed in 4% PFA for immunofluorescence staining
728 with an anti-flag antibody. The relative protein level between the plasma membrane and
729 cytoplasm was quantified by comparing the fluorescent intensity. Briefly, the fluorescent area
730 was defined, and the average intensity within the area was measured by Image J to calculate
731 the total fluorescent intensity in the defined area (plasma membrane or cytoplasm).
732 Protein enrichment pattern within clusters was analyzed using Olympus FLOVIEW FV1000
733 software. Briefly, the intensity of fluorescence was measured in each defined fluorescent cluster.
734 Since the clusters contain different number of pixels, each pixel was numbered from one end to
735 the other end to define the location. The largest number was normalized to 100, and each
736 number indicating the location of the pixel was converted to percentile. Likewise, to normalize

737 the fluorescent intensity of each pixel, the highest intensity was normalized to 100, and each
738 pixel intensity was converted to percentile. The regression curve is used to identify the
739 distribution pattern of every pixel intensity. 10 clusters from 5-10 embryos were used for
740 statistical analysis.
741 To analyze Fz7 endocytosis, vitelline membrane of injected embryos was removed at stage
742 10.5, and embryos were incubated in 0.1X MMR containing 5ug/ml FM4-64FX (Thermo Fisher,
743 Cat# F34653) for 30min at room temperature before dissection. Dissected DMZ explants were
744 coversliped, and images were captured without fixation.
745
746 **RNAs and morpholinos**
747 XWnt11, EGFP-Vangl2, HA-Vangl2, GFP-XFz7, flag-XFz7, tdT-tomatoRor2, myc-Vangl2, Dvl2-
748 mCherry, Dvl2-flag, GFP-mPk2, flag-XPk, flag-PL, flag-ΔPL, were transcribed in vitro using
749 mMESSAGE mMACHINE SP6 Transcription Kit (Ambion cat#1340). Xenopus Vangl2-
750 morpholino (XVMO) and Xenopus Pk-morpholino (XPkMO) are the same as previously
751 described (ref). The dosage of each RNA or morpholino is described in each figure.
752
753
754

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
We thank Dr. Naoto Ueno for providing the flag-XPk construct. The anti-XRor2 monoclonal antibody was obtained from the Developmental Studies Hybridoma Bank, created by the NICHD of the NIH and maintained at The University of Iowa, Department of Biology, Iowa City, IA 52242.

COMPETING INTERESTS
The authors declare no competing or financial interests.

FUNDING
This work was supported by grants R35GM131914 (J.D.A.), GM127371 (C.C.), and HL138470 and AR081646 (J.W.) from the National Institutes of Health.

755 **Supplementary Figures:**

756 **Supplementary Figure 1.**

757 In the DMZ, both over-expression (a, a') and morpholino knockdown (b, b') of *Xpk* can dose-
758 dependently block CE, resulting in shorten body axes and reduced LWR. In the animal cap,
759 *Xpk*MO knockdown can also block activin induced CE (c, c'), but the defect can be rescued by
760 co-injecting RNA encoding mouse Pk2 (d, d').

761

762 **Supplementary Figure 2.**

763 *EGFP-Vangl2*, *flag-Dvl*2 and *GFP-mPk2* mRNA were injected into the DMZ, either alone or
764 together, at 4 cell stage, and embryos were harvested at stages 10.5-11 for westernblot. Co-
765 overexpressing Vangl2 with mPk2, or Dvl2 with mPk2, does not significantly alter each other's
766 protein level (a). Similarly, co-overexpressing Flag-XPk with EGFP-Vangl2 in activin treated
767 animal cap explant also does not alter each other's protein level (b). Knocking down
768 endogenous *Xvangl2* does not alter the protein level of injected Flag-XPk either (c). Interestingly,
769 however, co-transfecting Vangl2 with XPk into 293T cells significantly reduced XPk protein level
770 (d).

771

772 **Supplementary Figure 3.**

773 EGFP tagged mPk2 display uniform cytoplasmic distribution with some enrichment at the
774 plasma membrane when expressed alone in animal cap cells (a, c, and enlarged view in c).
775 Plasma membrane enrichment of mPk2 is enhanced by co-injection of mVangl2 (b), but
776 eliminated by morpholino knockdown of endogenous XVangl2 (d). Injecting a small amount of
777 *mVangl2* (50 pg) could restore mPk2 plasma membrane enrichment in *XVangl2* morphants (e).

778

779 **Supplementary Figure 4.**

Dvl2-EGFP display uniform cytoplasmic distribution when expressed alone in *Xenopus* animal cap cells (a, a'), but co-expression with either wild-type Vangl2 (b, b') or Vangl2 R177H variant (c, c') recruits Dvl2-EGFP to the plasma membrane. (d) Quantification of the ratio of plasma membrane vs. cytoplasmic Dvl2-EGFP in (a), (b) and (c). Co-IP and westernblot show that binding to Dvl2 is not affected by Vangl2 RH variant (e).

Supplementary Figure 5.

When injected into the DMZ, 0.2 ng and 0.1 ng wild-type mouse *Vangl2* mRNA causes severe and moderate CE defect, respectively. *Vangl2 R177H* mRNA, however, causes significantly milder CE defect (a). (a') Quantification of the LWR of embryos in (a). *Fz7* and *Dvl2* co-injection caused severe CE defects can be rescued by 0.1 wild-type *Vangl2*, but not by *Vangl2 R177H* (b). (b') Quantification of the LWR of embryos in (b).

Supplementary Figure 6.

In both animal cap and DMZ cells, Fz7 can recruit Dvl2 from the cytoplasm to the plasma membrane (compare b to a, and e to d). Over-expression of Pk2 does not inhibit Fz7-mediated plasma membrane recruitment of Dvl2 (c, f).

Supplementary Figure 7.

(a) In DMZ explant, binding between flag-Dvl2 and EGFP-Vangl2 is reduced by Wnt11. But over-expression of Pk2 can prevent Wnt11-induced dissociation of Dvl2 and Vangl2. (b) Quantification of EGFP-Vangl2 co-IP efficiency from 3 separate experiments.

Supplementary Figure 8.

Moderate level of *EGFP-Vangl2* (0.1 ng) was co-injected with *Wnt11* and mCherry tagged *Dvl2*. 3D reconstruction of confocal images shows that under this condition, all Dvl2 proteins on the

806 plasma membrane formed discrete patches at the apical cell-cell junctions (a), while Vangl2 was
807 distributed more diffusely on the plasma membrane (b) with enrichment overlapping with Dvl2
808 patches (c, white arrows). Enlarged views (a'-c') show that enriched Vangl2 forms rings that
809 encircle Dvl2 patches.
810
811 **Supplementary Figure 9.**
812 *Xenopus* explants were incubated with FM4-64FX, a fluorescent dye that is membrane
813 impermeable and can only be internalized through endocytosis. In explants in which *Fz7-GFP*
814 was co-injected only with *Wnt11*, Fz7 primarily formed patches on the cell cortex. Most of the
815 internalized FM4-64FX puncta were devoid of Fz7, and the few Fz7 puncta were devoid of FM4-
816 64FX (arrowheads in a-c, and enlarged views a'-c'). In contrast, in explants in which *Fz7-GFP*
817 and *Wnt11* were co-injected with *Vangl2/Pk*, majority of the Fz7-GFP puncta are positive for
818 FM4-64FX (arrows in d-f and enlarged views d'-f'), indicating that they were largely formed
819 through endocytosis.
820
821 **Supplementary Figure 10.**
822 Wnt11 induces formation of Fz7 patches along the plasma membrane (a). Over-expression of
823 DshMA, a mitochondria tethered form of Dvl that can sequester endogenous Dvl/Dsh away from
824 the plasma membrane, inhibits Fz7 patch formation, reduces membrane level of Fz7, and
825 results in Fz7 cytoplasmic puncta (b).
826
827 **Supplementary Figure 11.**
828 DMZ injection of 0.2 ng of *Vangl2* mRNA induces severe CE defects, which can be rescued by
829 co-injecting 0.05 or 0.1 ng of *Xror2* mRNA (a). The severity of the CE phenotype is quantified by
830 measuring the length-to-width ratio (b).
831

832 **Supplementary Figure 12.**

833 In *Xenopus* embryo extract, co-IP experiment shows that binding between flag-Dvl2 and HA-
834 Vangl2 is reduced by Wnt11 (compare lane2 and 3). Knocking down endogenous XRor2 with
835 morpholino (xRor2 MO) can prevent Wnt11-induced dissociation of Dvl2 and Vangl2 (compare
836 lane 4 and 5) (a). (b) Co-IP experiment shows that Ror2-Flag can pull down co-injected EGFP-
837 Vangl2 but not Myc-Dvl2. (c) Fluorescence-detection size exclusion chromatography (FSEC)
838 with protein extract from *Xenopus* embryos injected with Ror2-EGFP, HA-Vangl2 and Flag-Dvl2.
839 A peak of EGFP signal is detected around fraction 15 (lower panel). Western blot analyses
840 show co-fractionation of Ror2-EGFP, HA-Vangl2 and Flag-Dvl2 in fractions 14 (approximate
841 molecular weight 773-1717 kD), 15 (~348-773 kD) and 16 (~166-348 kD).

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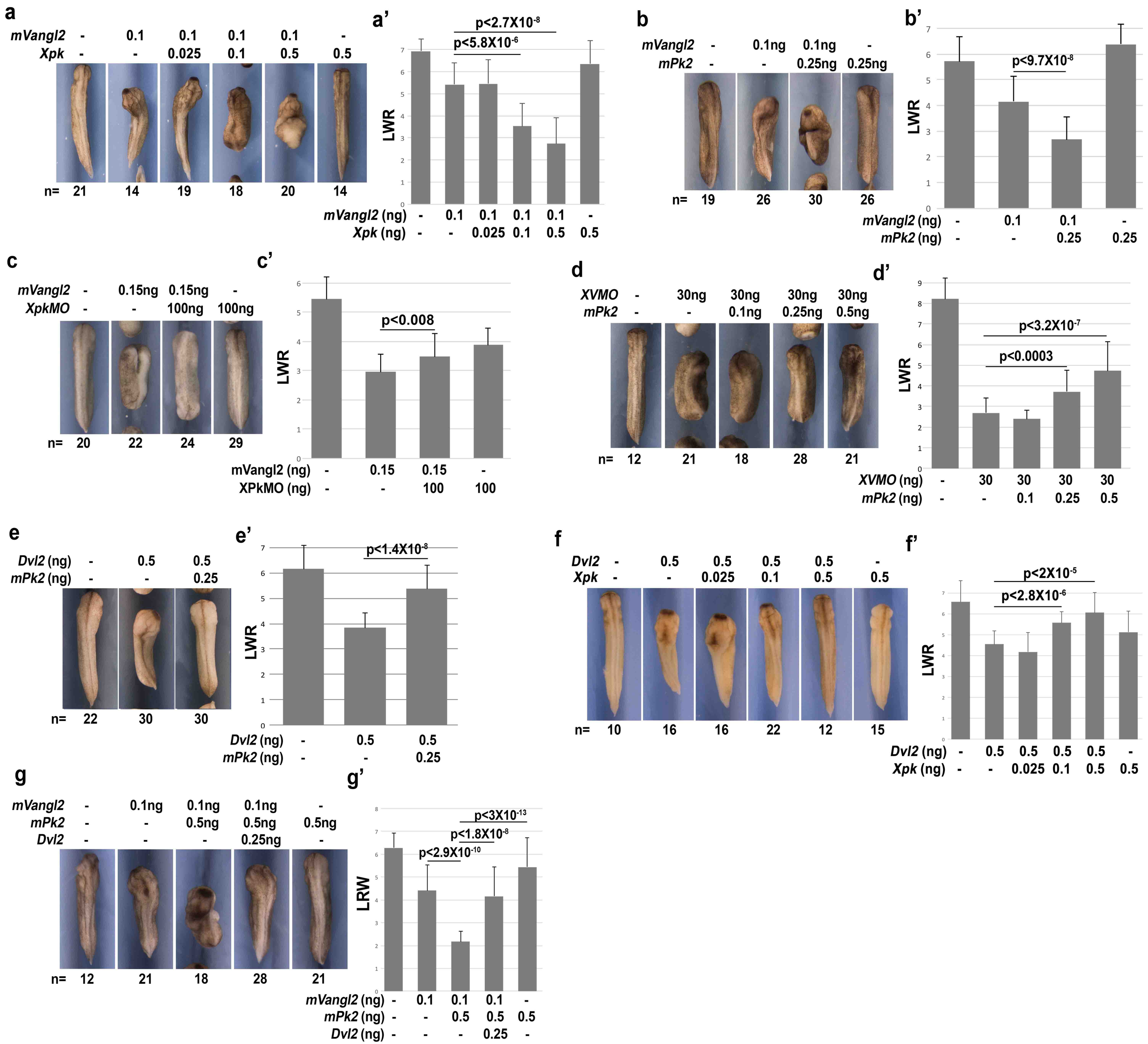


Figure 1. Pk synergize with Vangl to suppress Dvl

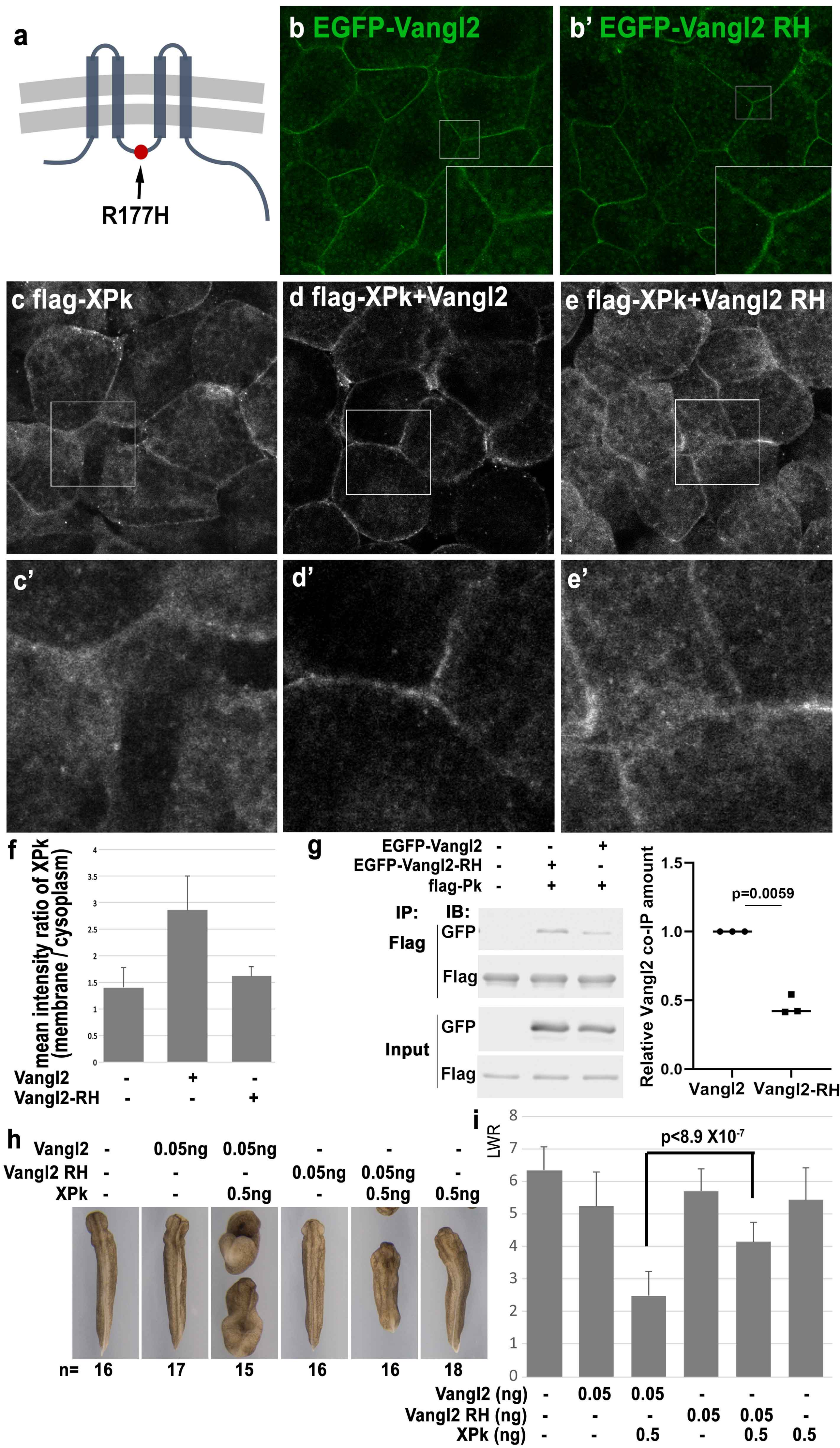


Figure 2. Vangl2 R177H variant diminishes membrane recruitment of Pk and reduces functional synergy with Pk

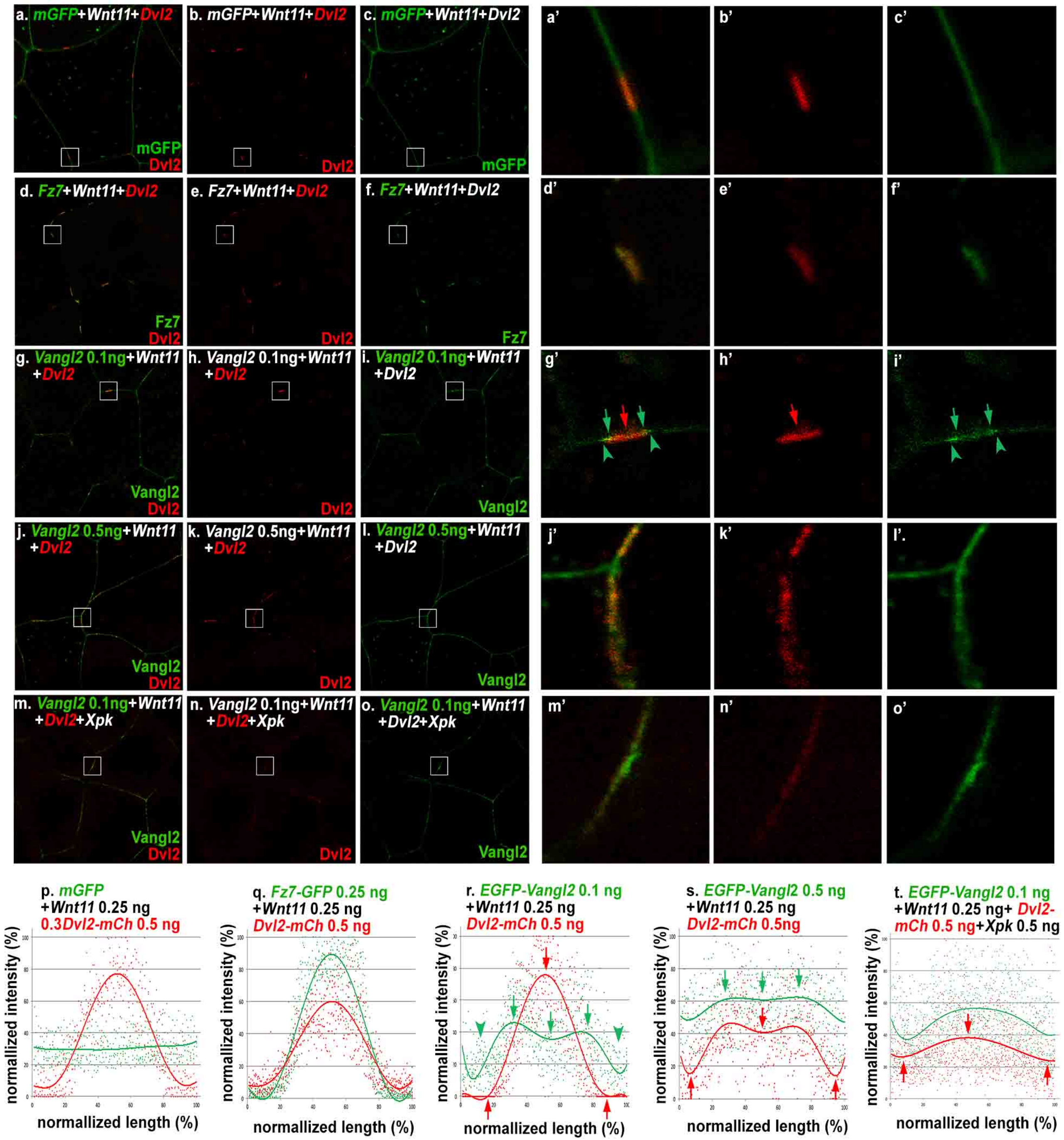


Figure 3. Pk synergizes with Vangl2 to inhibit Wnt11-induced formation of Dvl patches

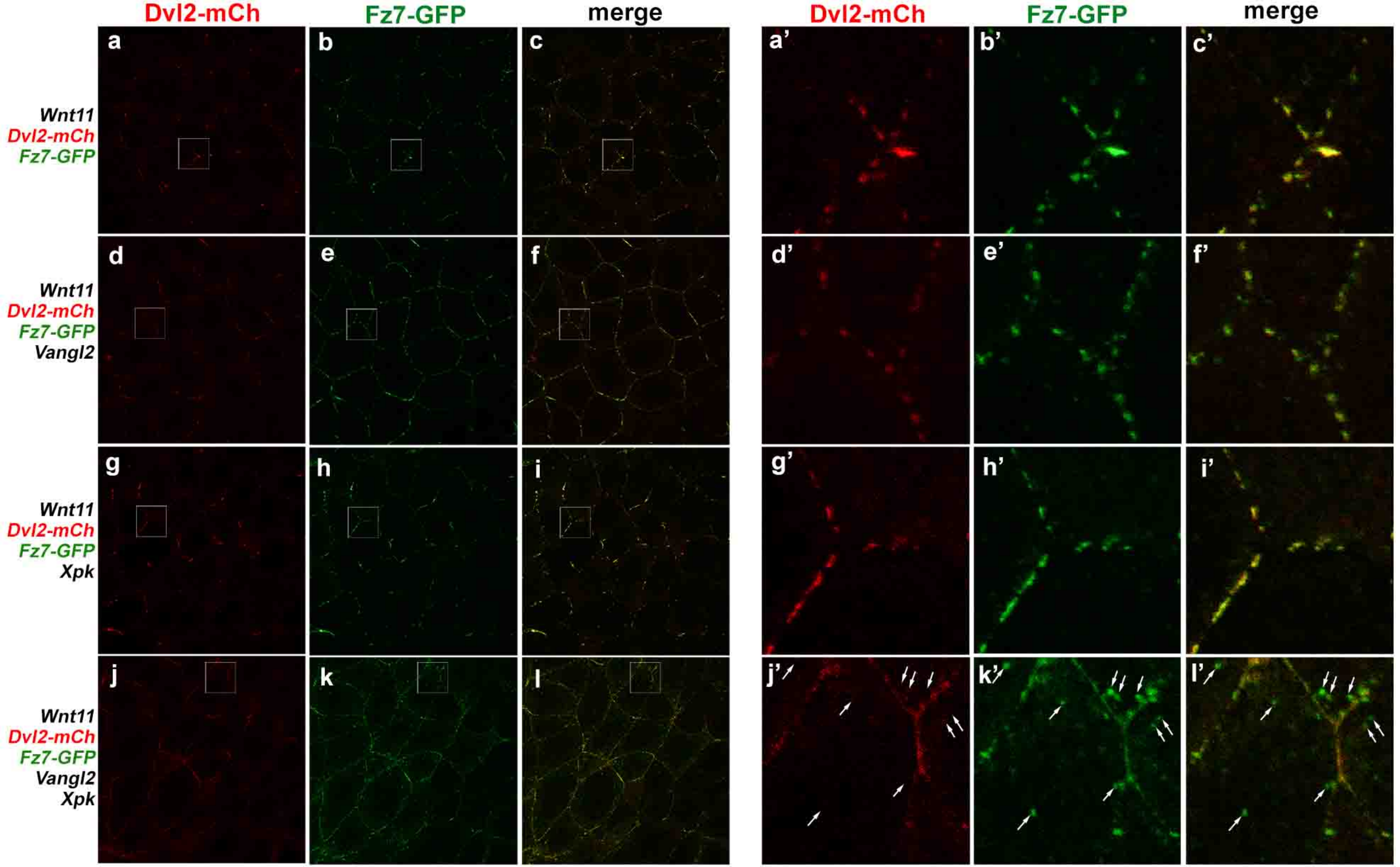


Figure 4. Pk helps Vangl2 to inhibit Wnt11-induced clustering of Fz7-Dvl2 complexes

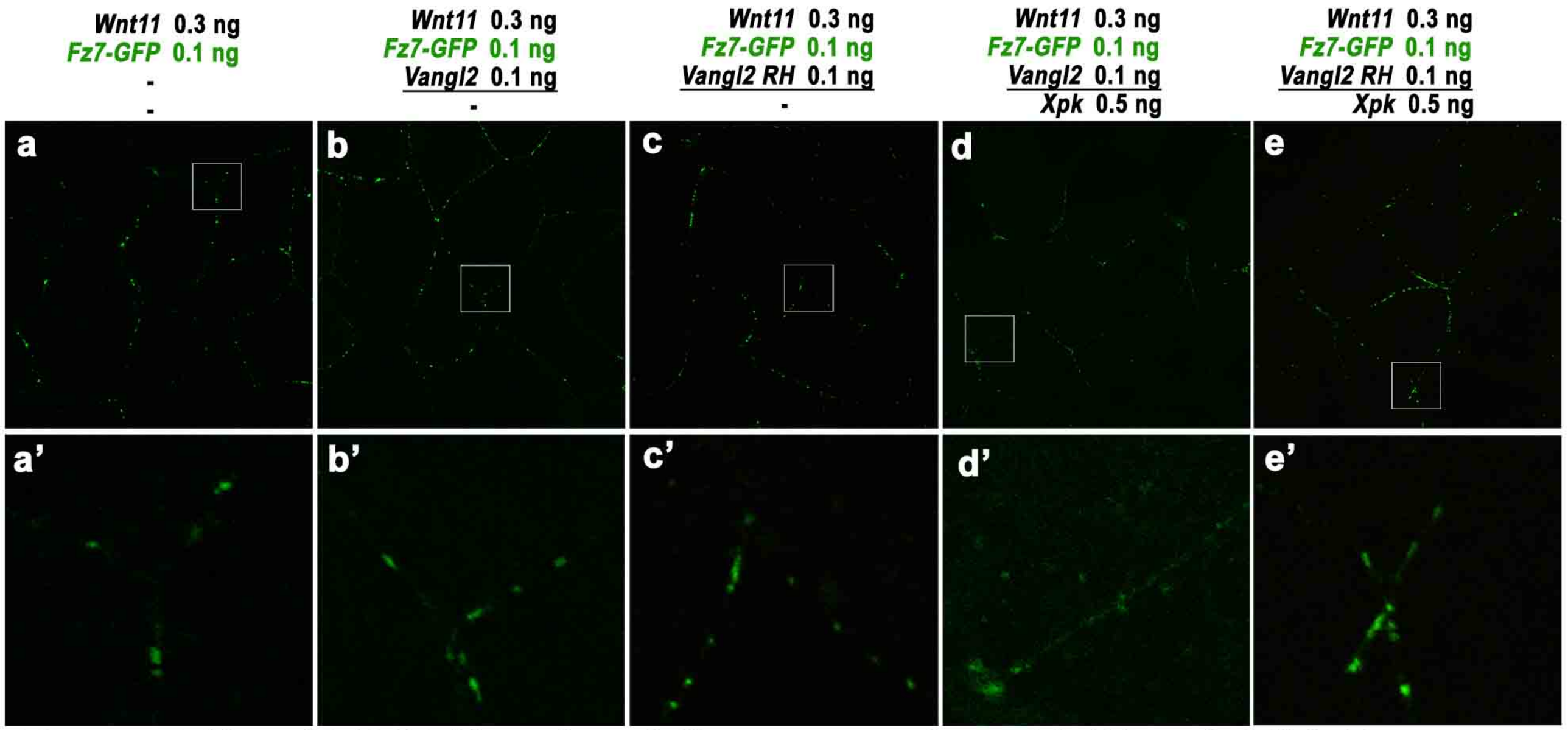


Figure 5. Vangl2 R177H variant fails to synergize with Pk to inhibit Fz patch formation and down-regulate Fz stability at the plasma membrane

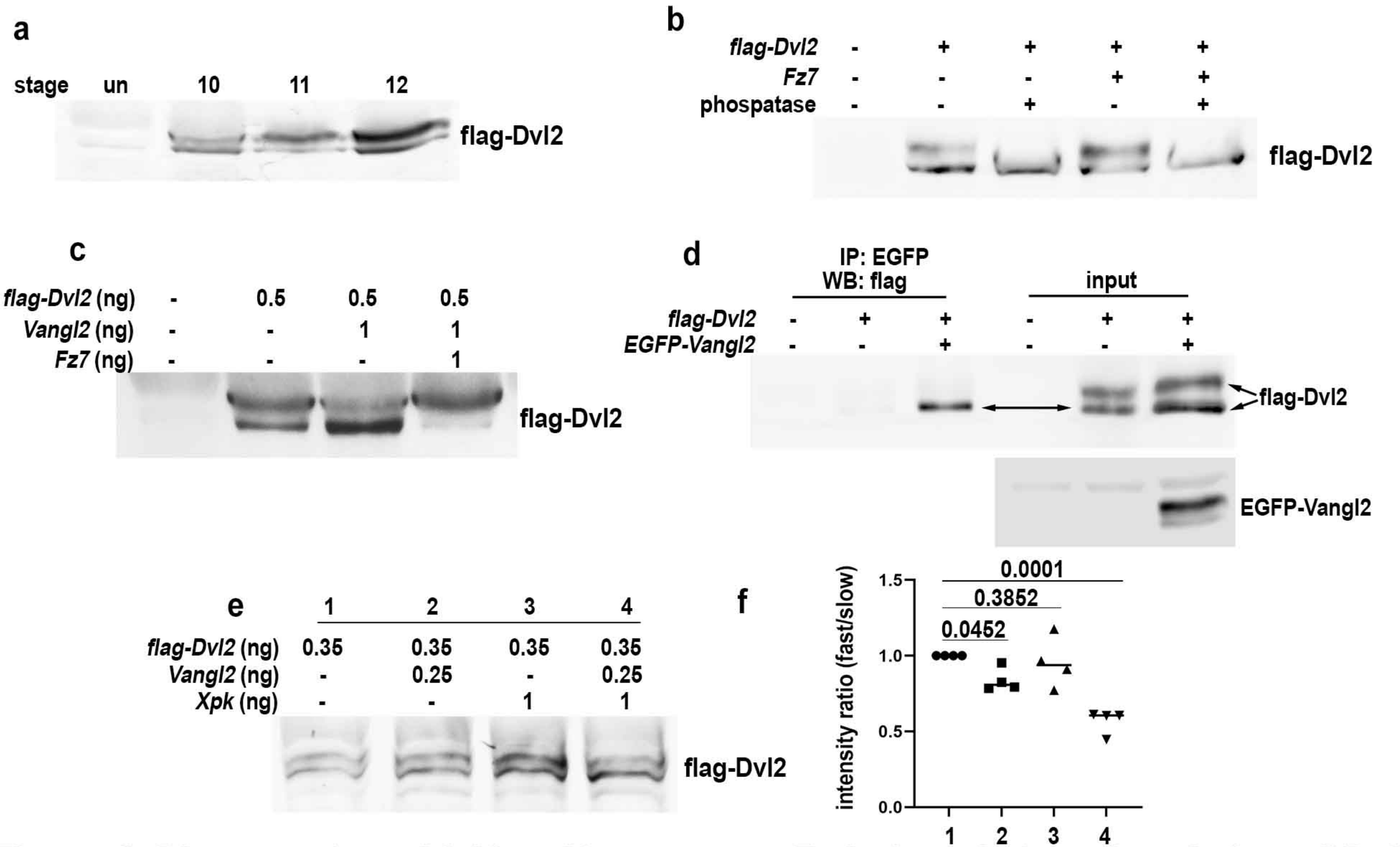


Figure 6. Pk synergize with Vangl2 to prevent Fz-induced phosphorylation of Dvl.

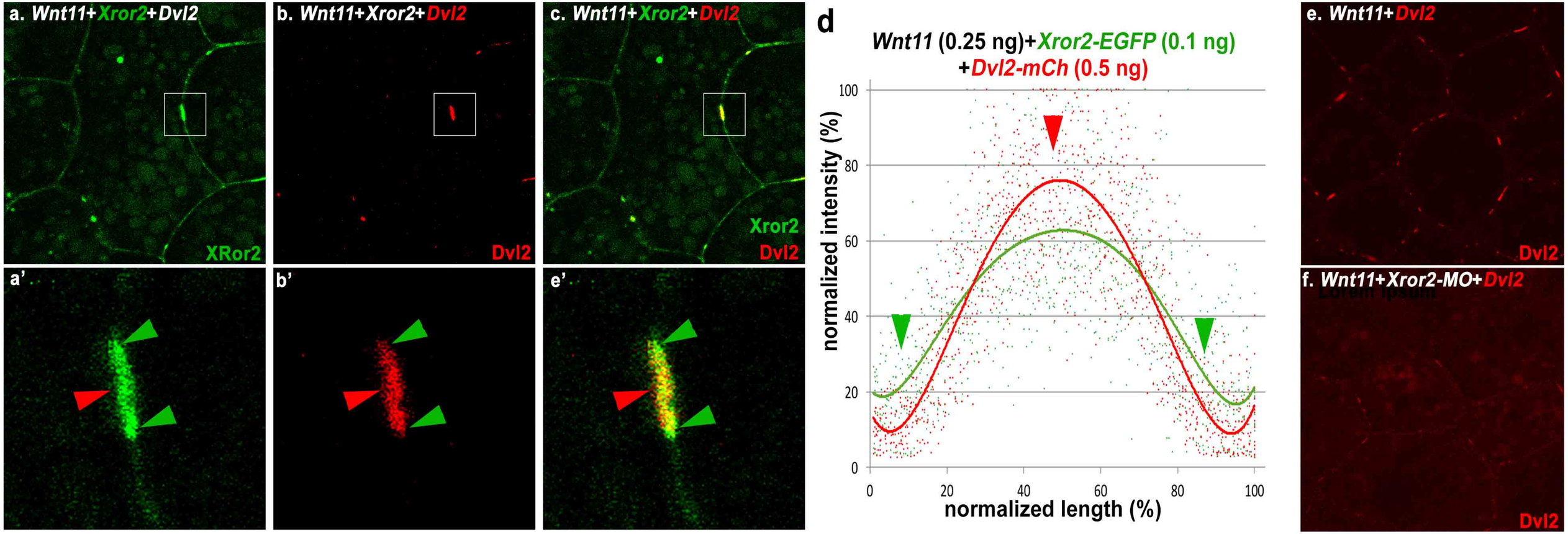


Figure 7. Ror2 is an obligatory component of the Fz/Dvl cluster complex induced by Wnt11

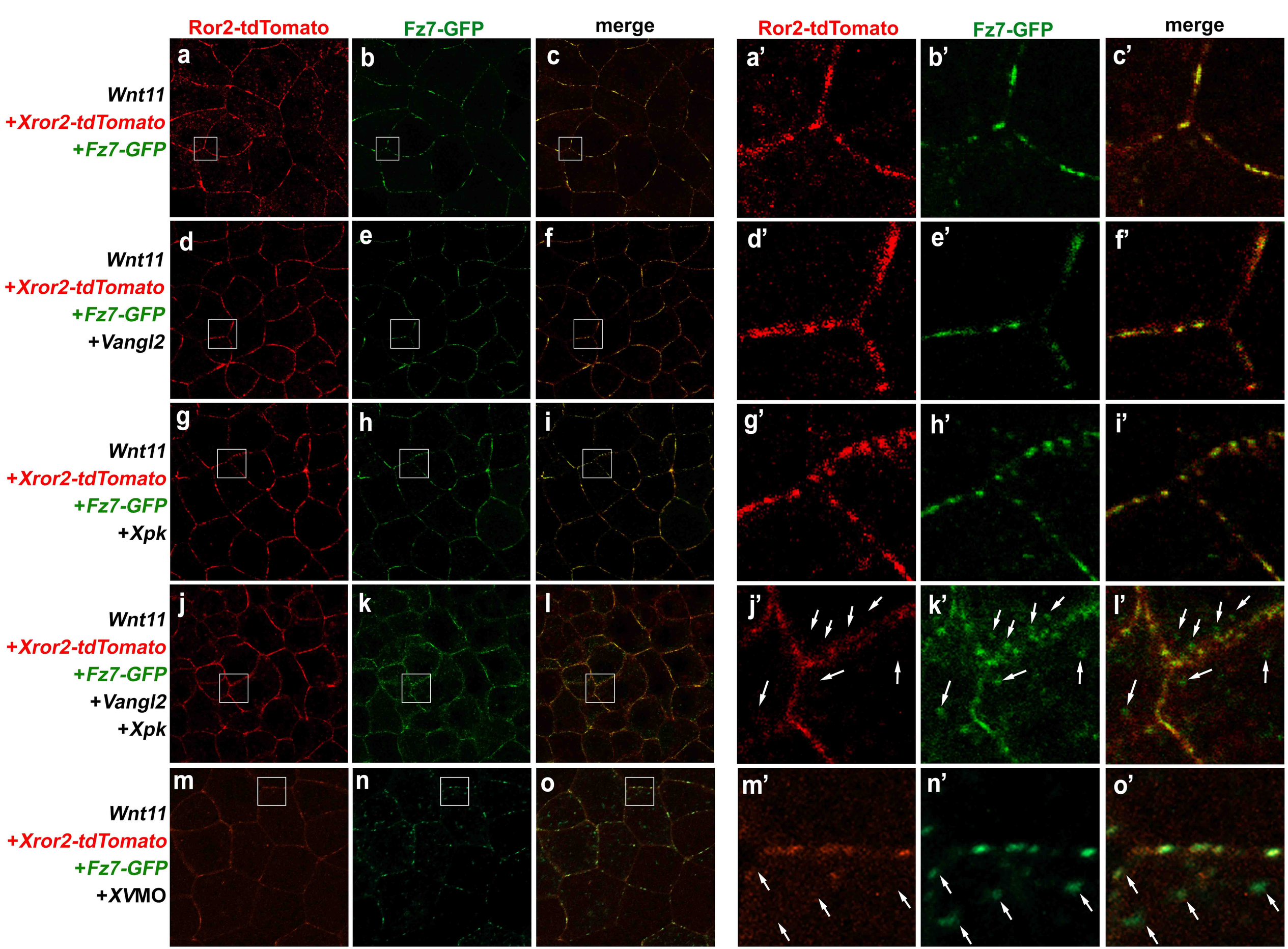


Figure 8. Vangl2/Pk exert bimodal regulation of Ror2 in non-canonical Wnt signaling

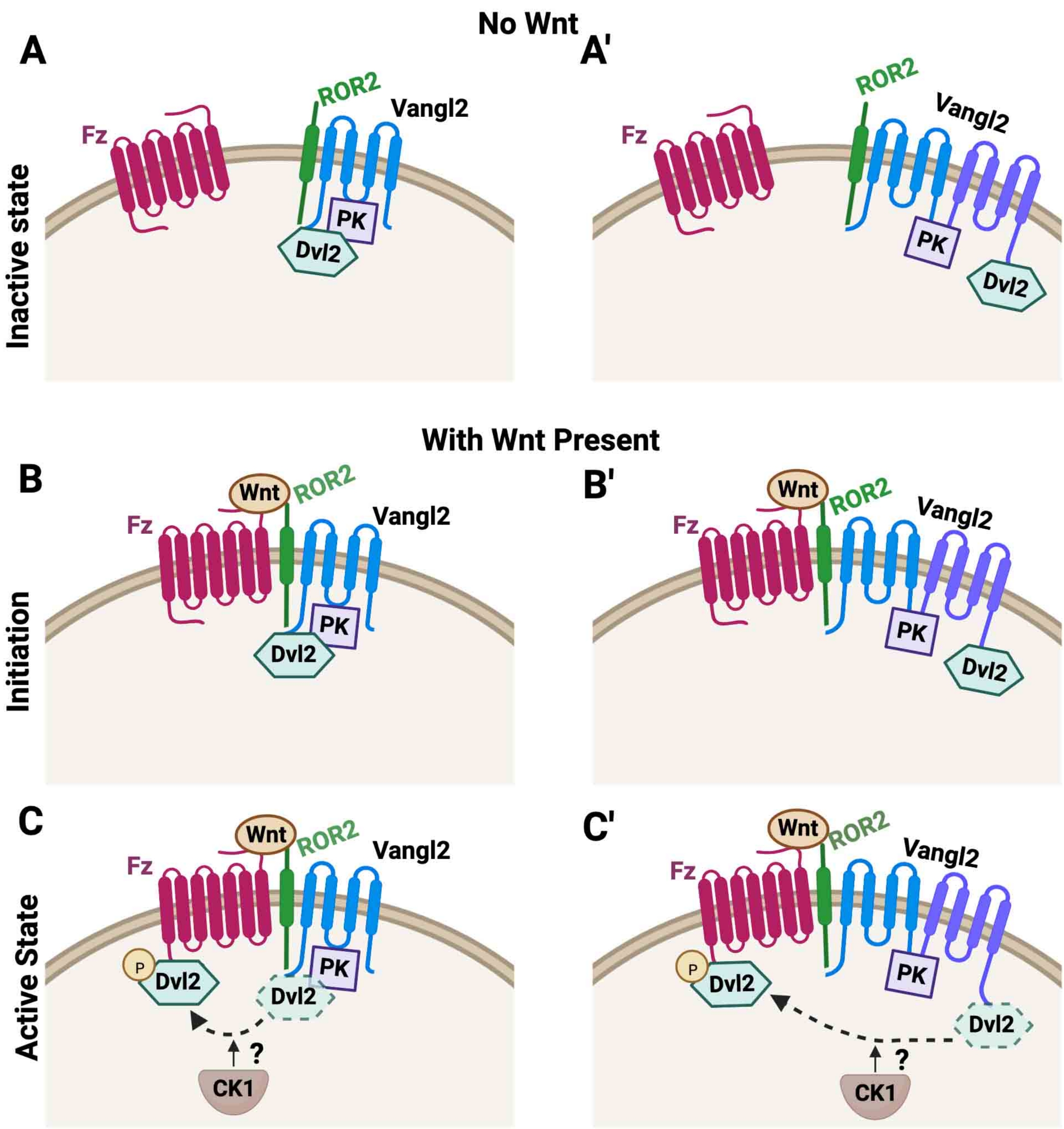
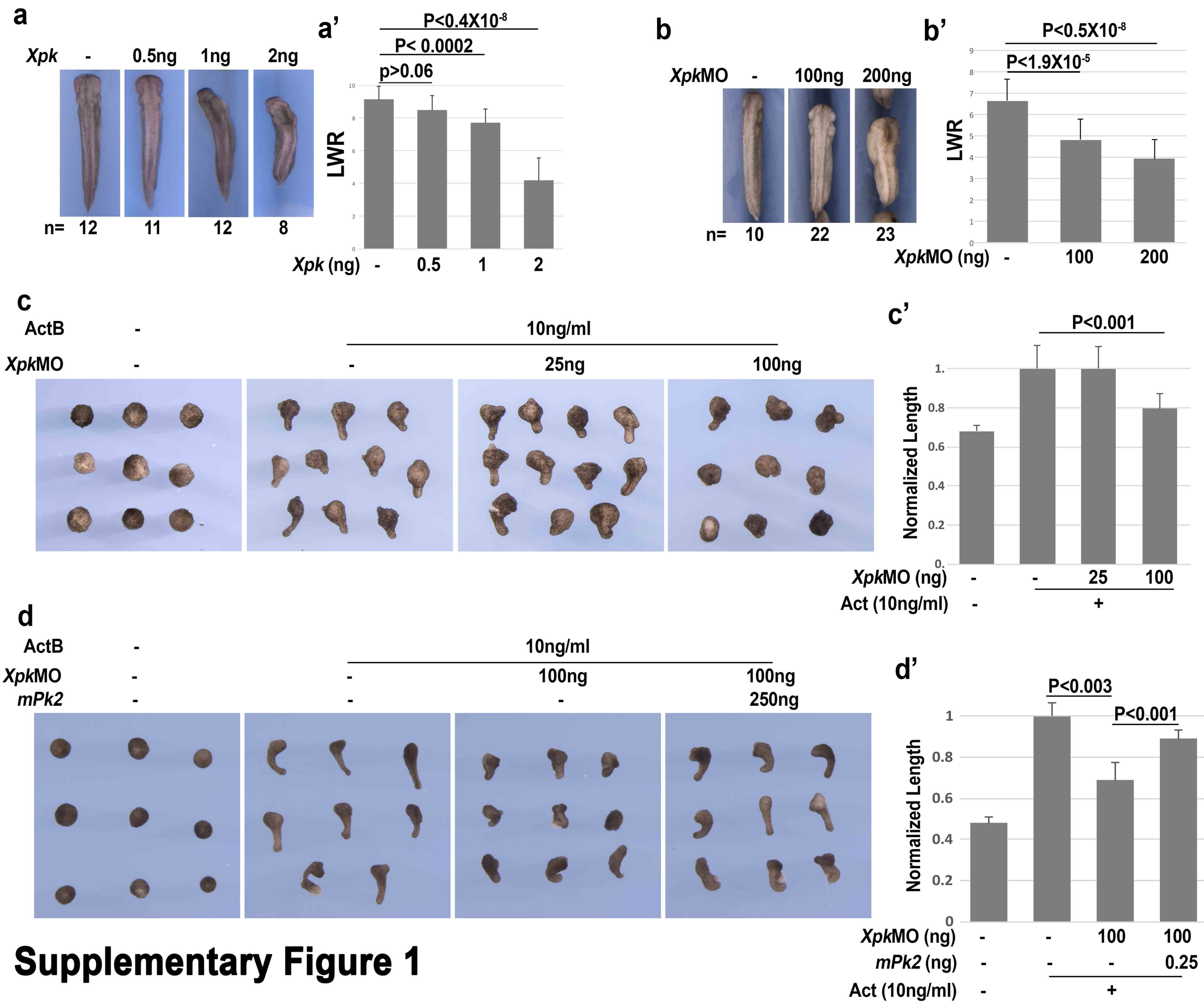
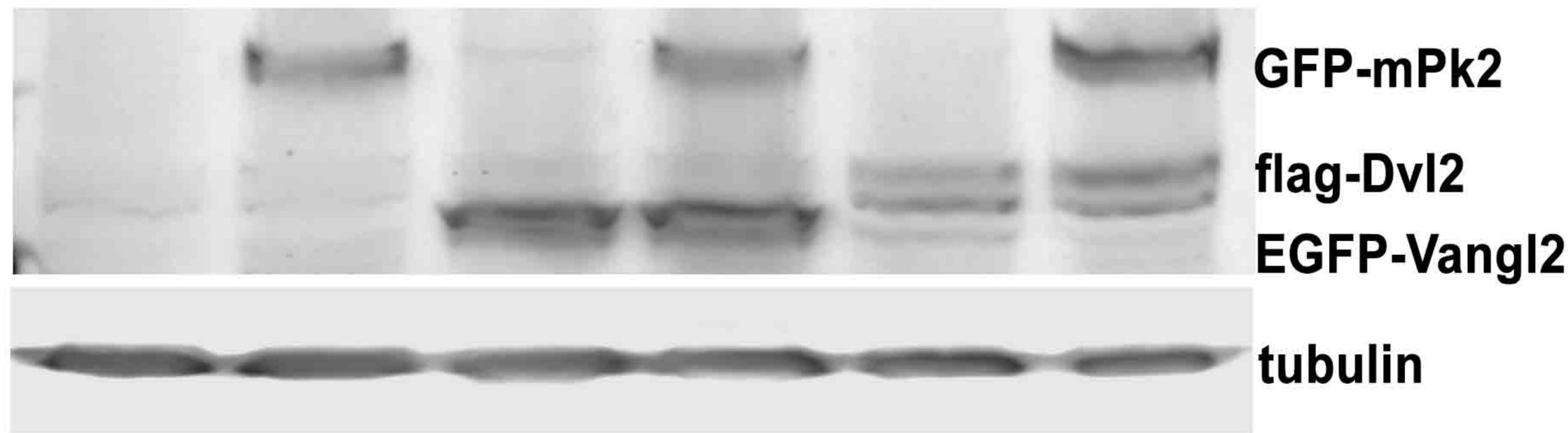


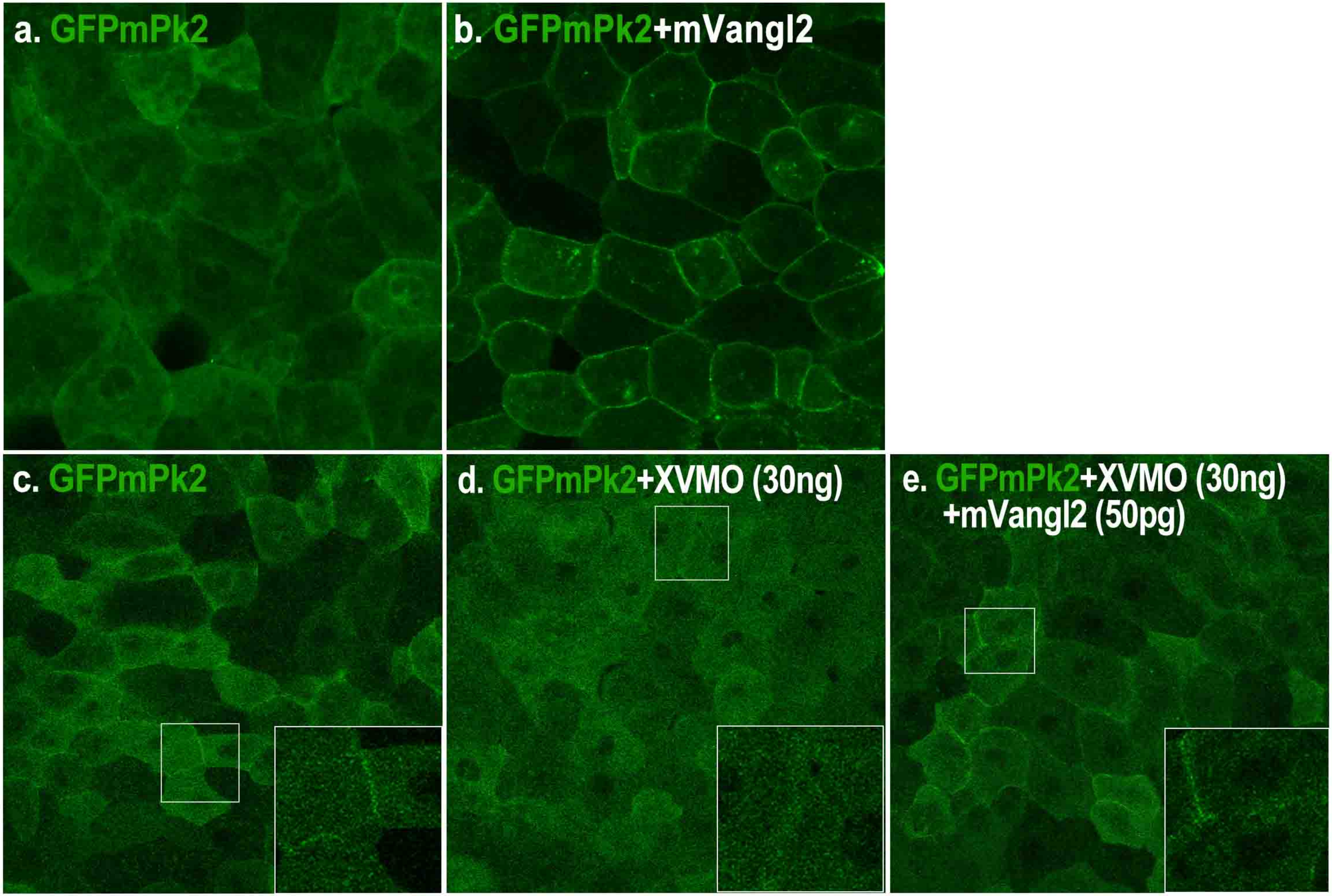
Figure 9. A model for how core PCP proteins integrate with non-canonical Wnt and Ror to regulate CE



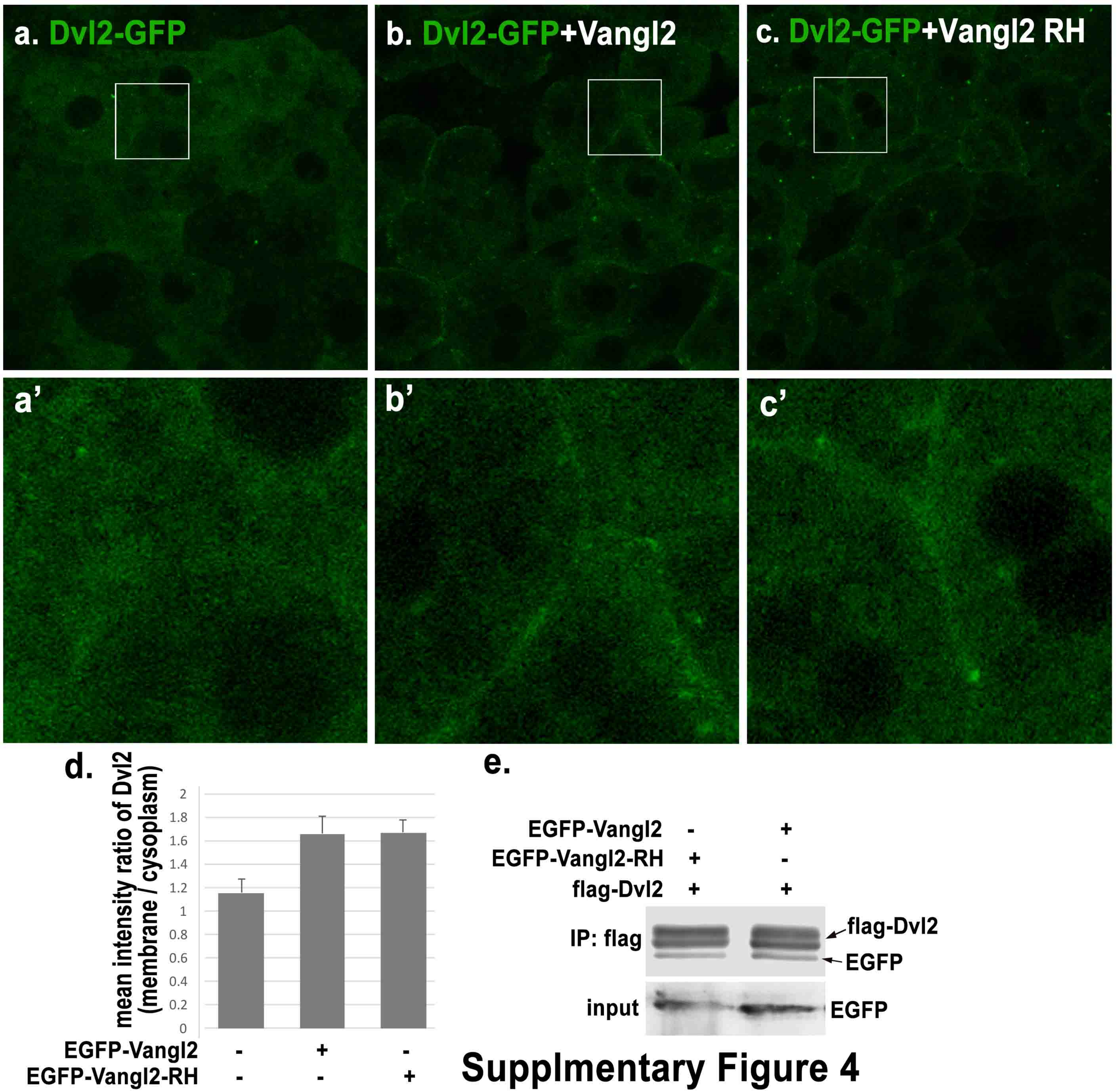
Supplementary Figure 1



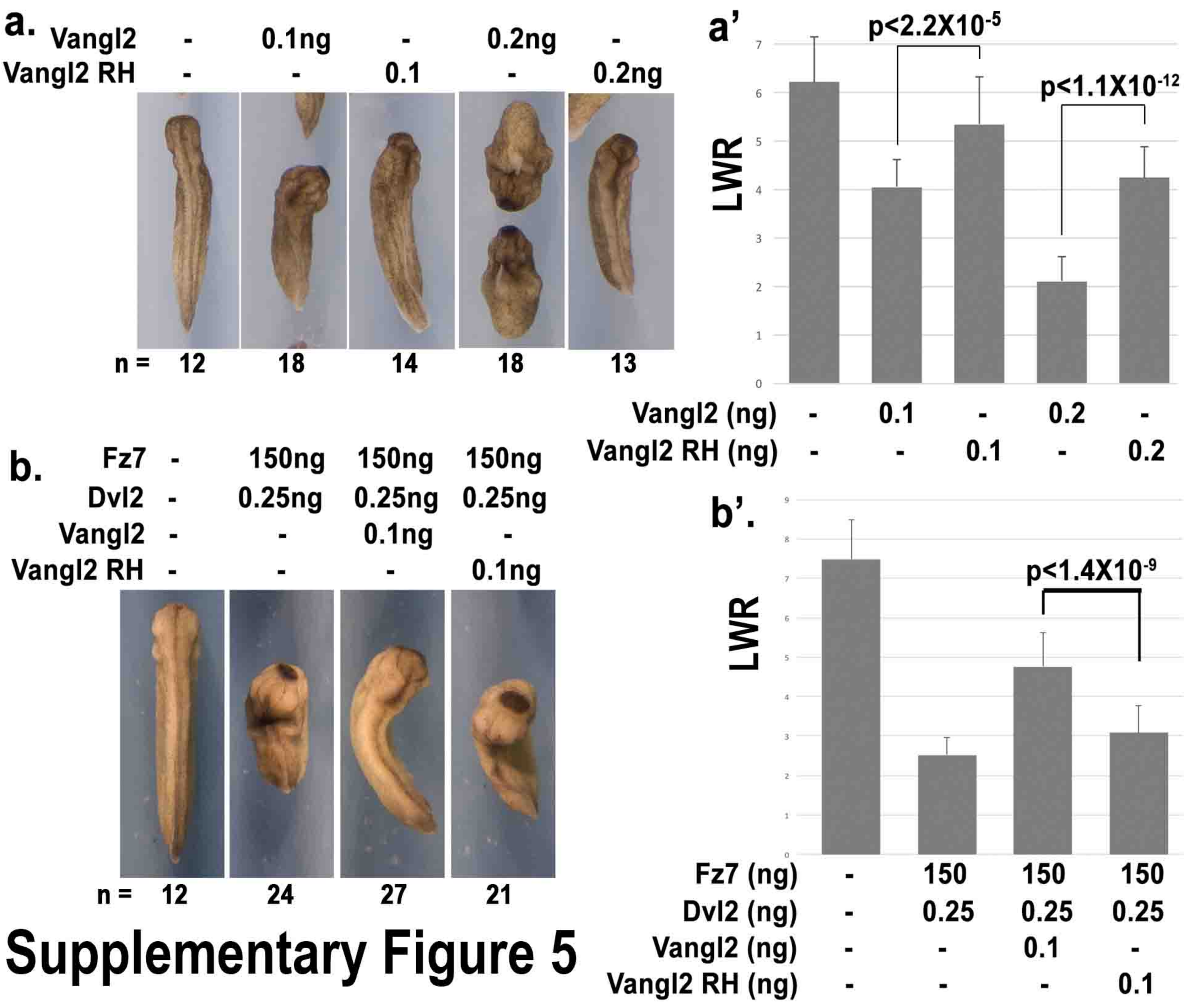
Supplementary Figure 2



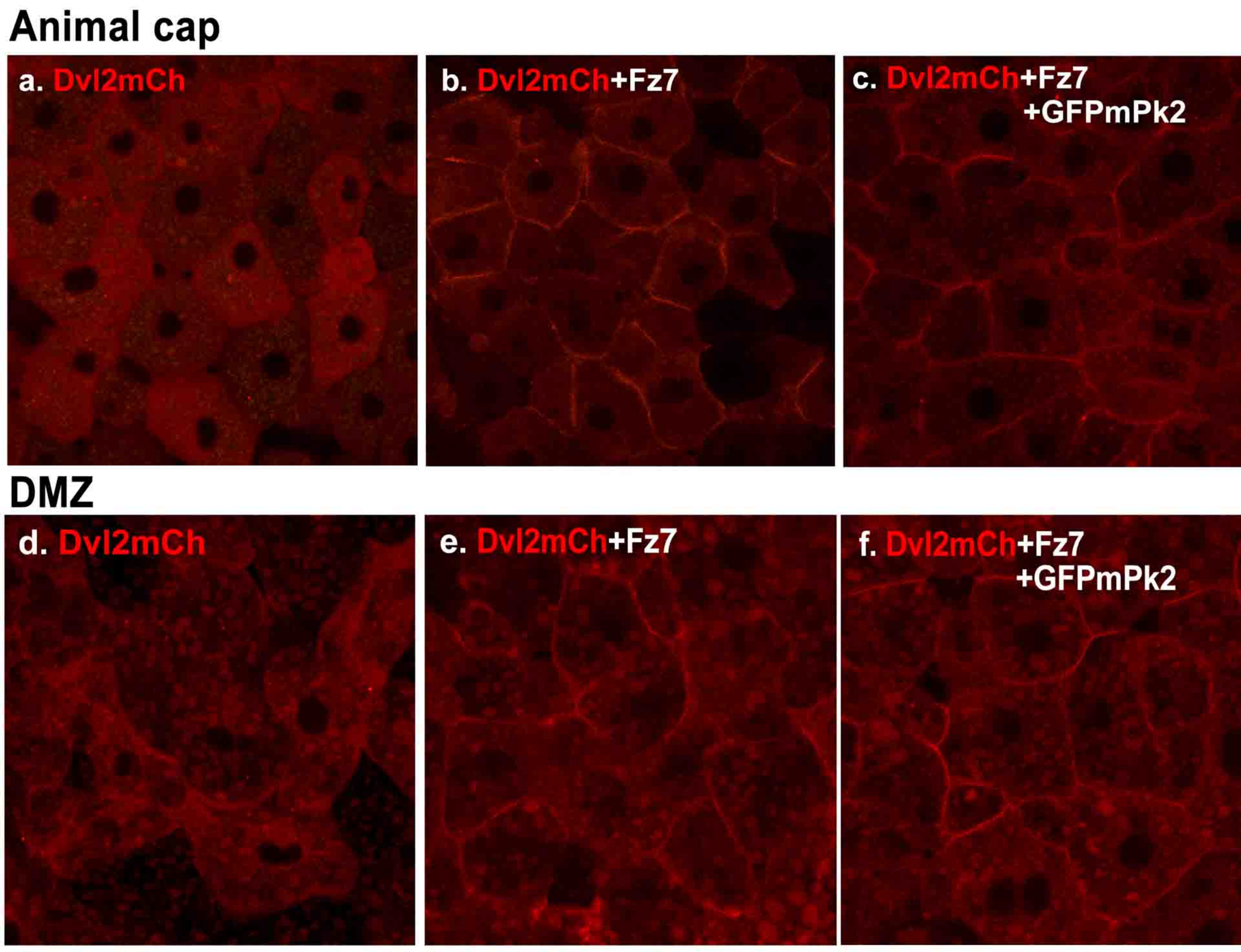
Supplementary Figure 3



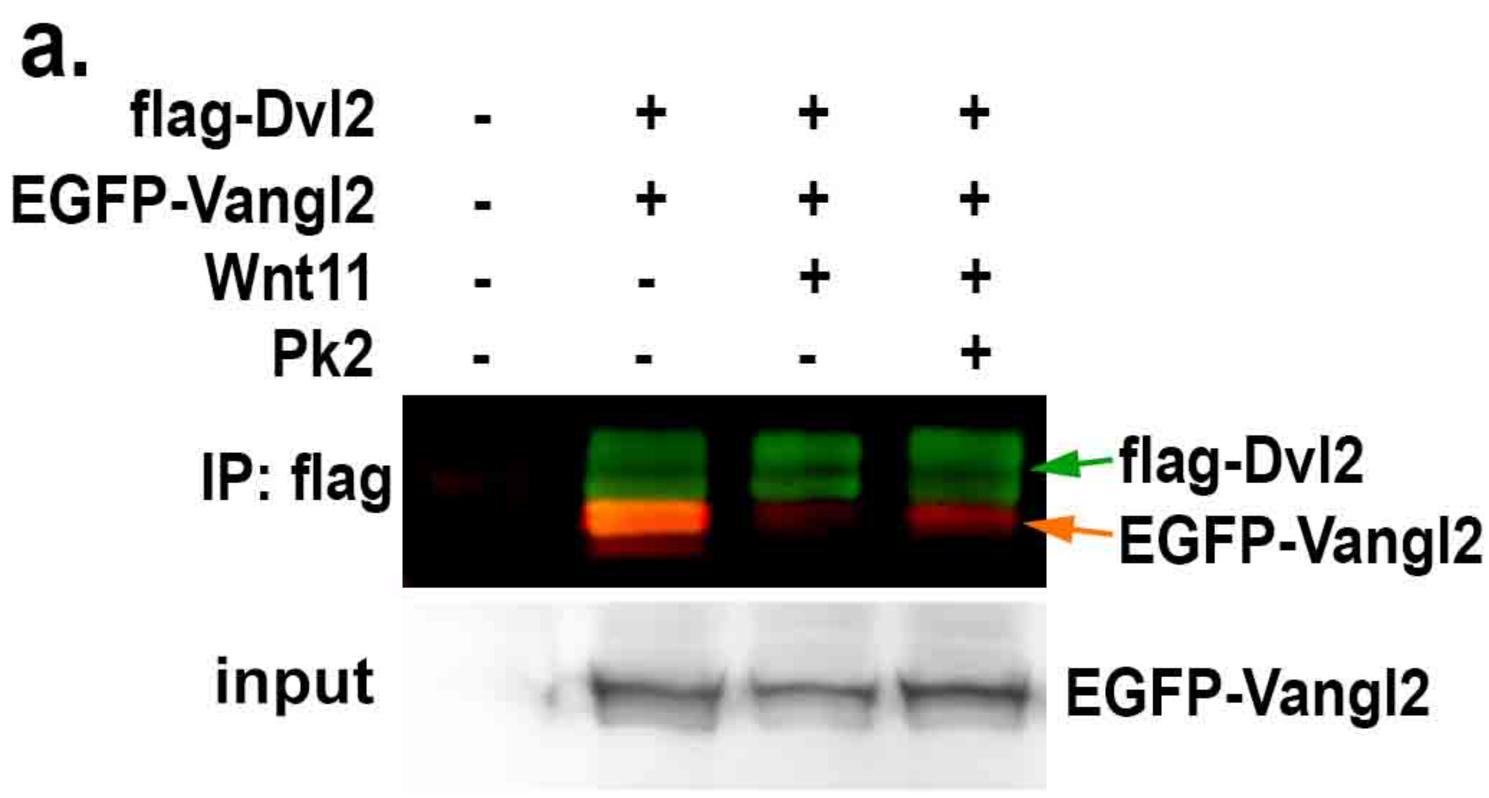
Supplmentary Figure 4

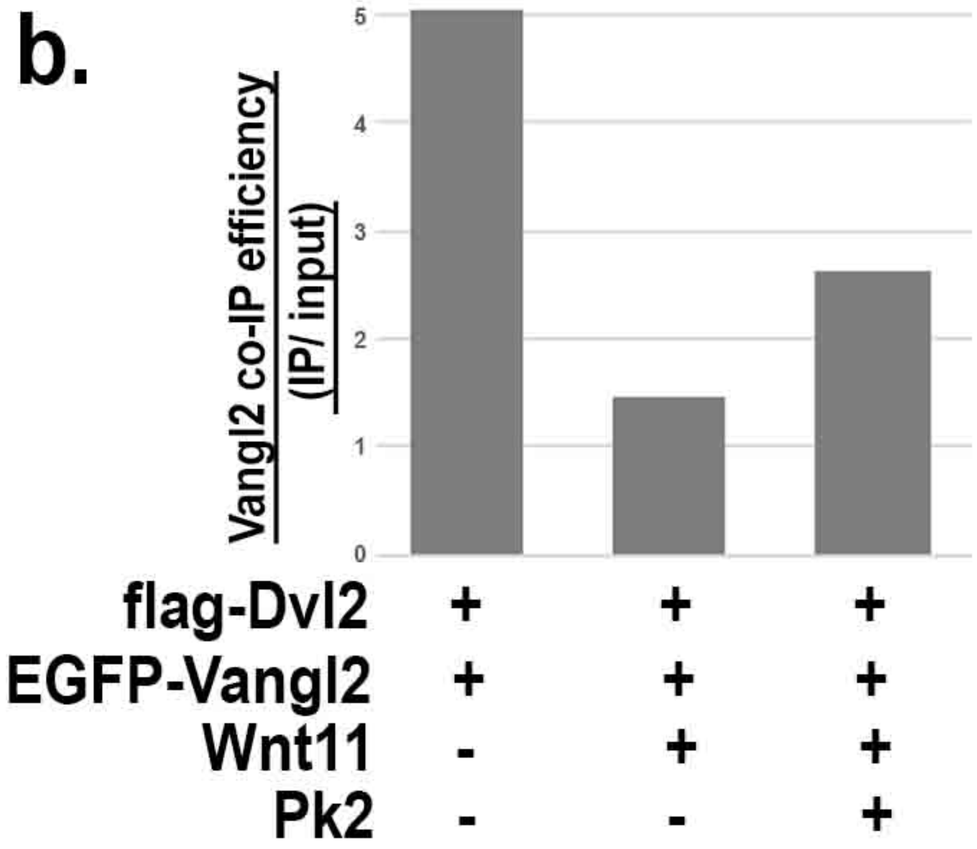


Supplementary Figure 5

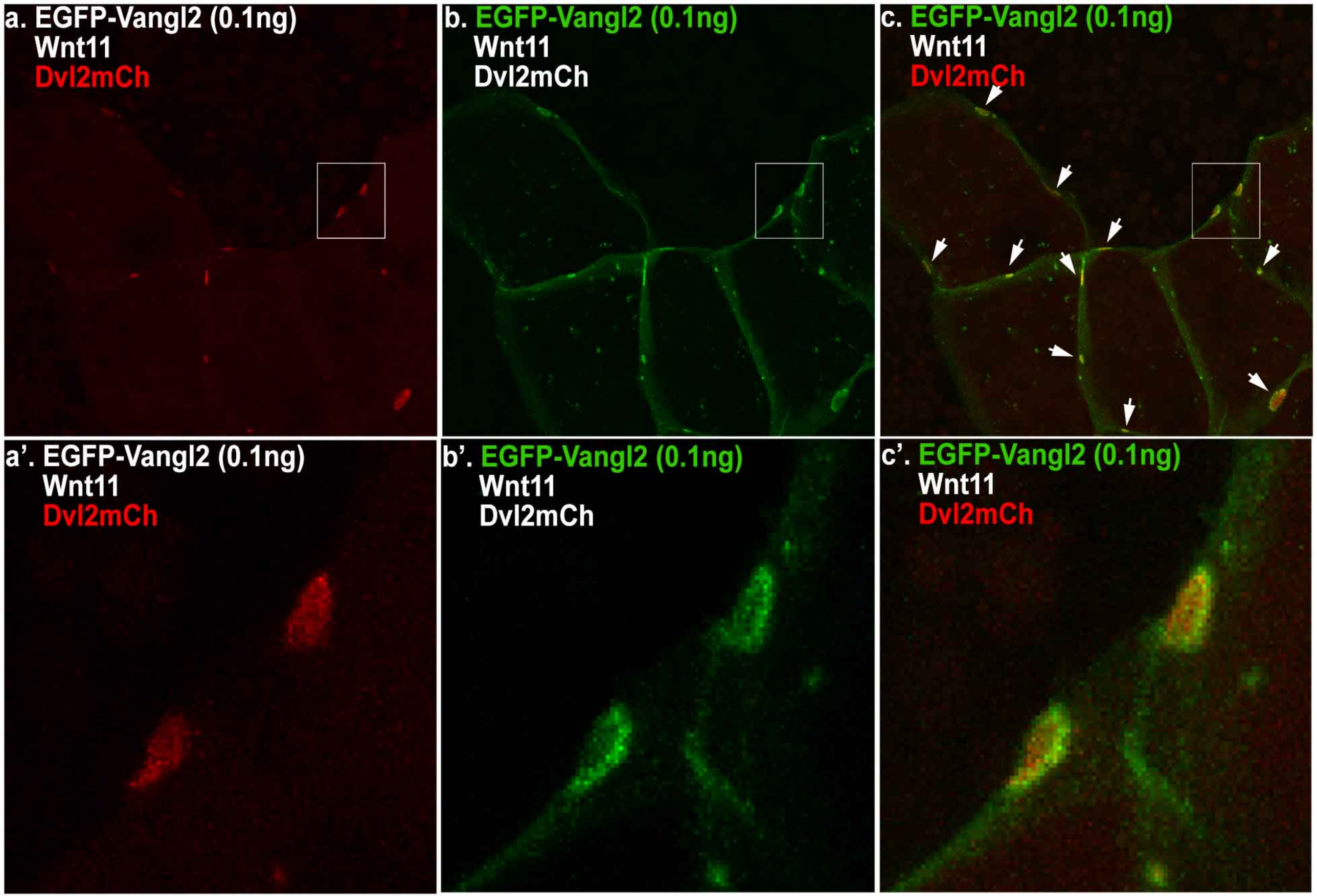


Supplementary Figure 6

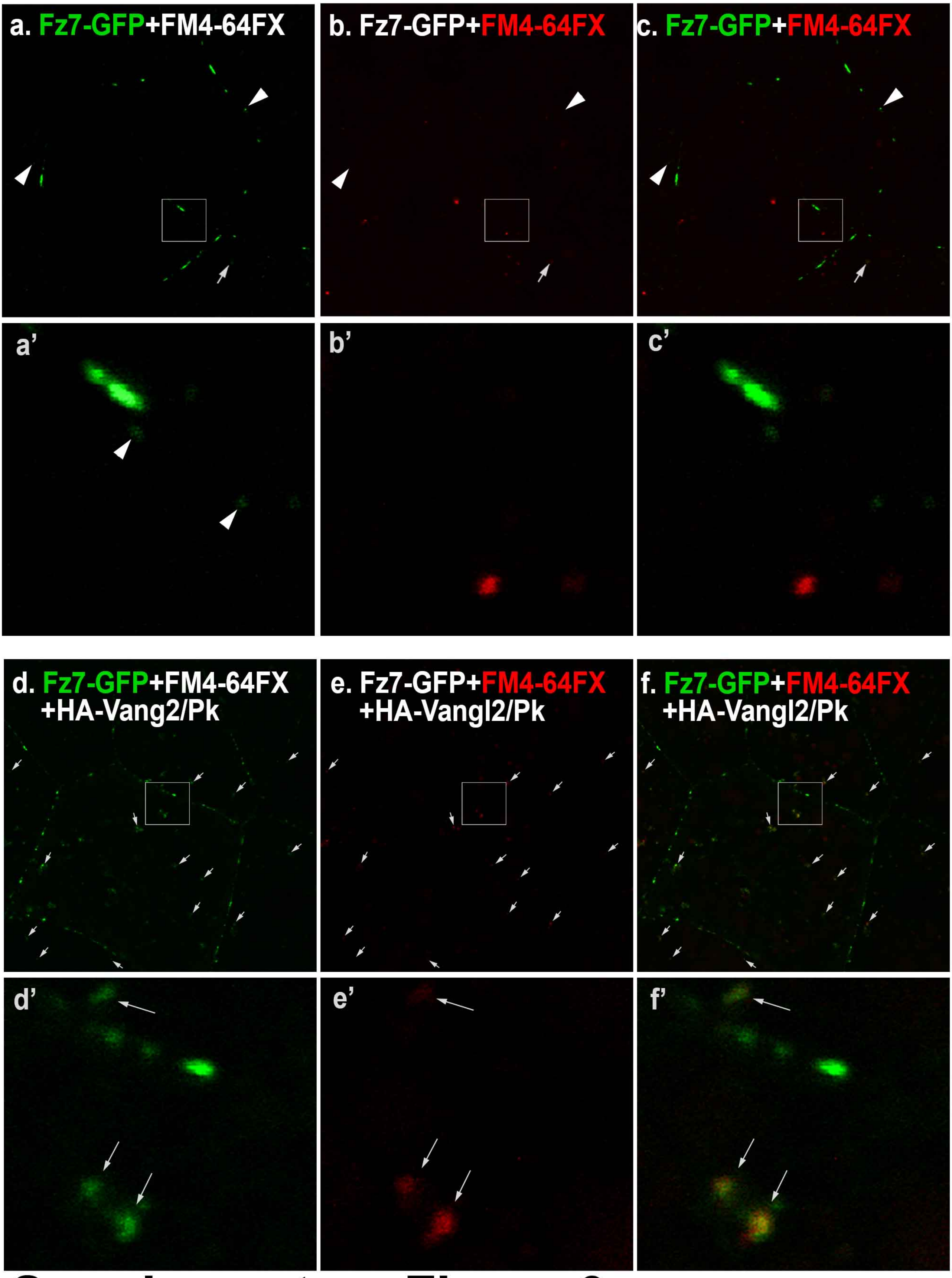




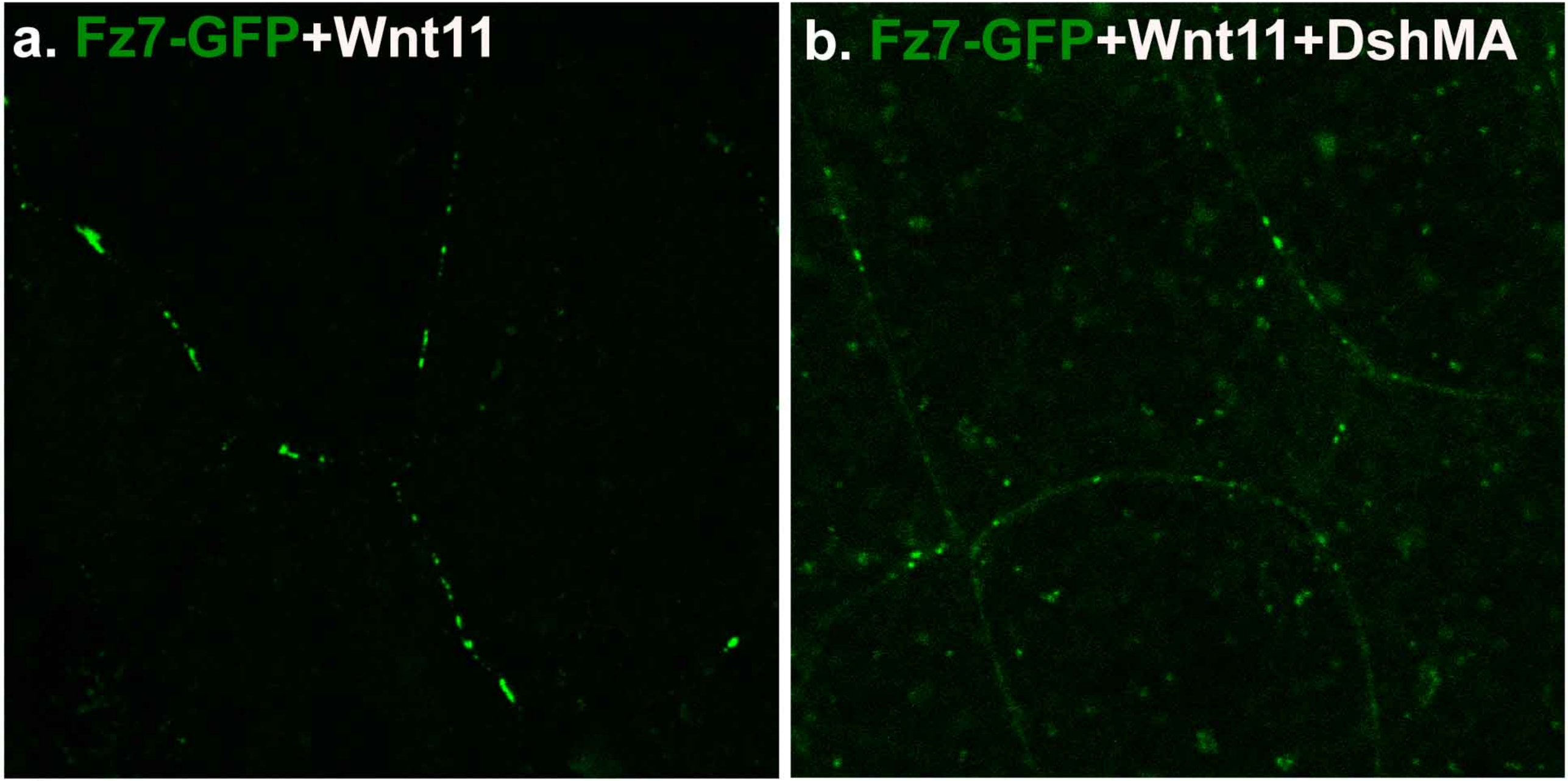
Supplementary Fig. 7



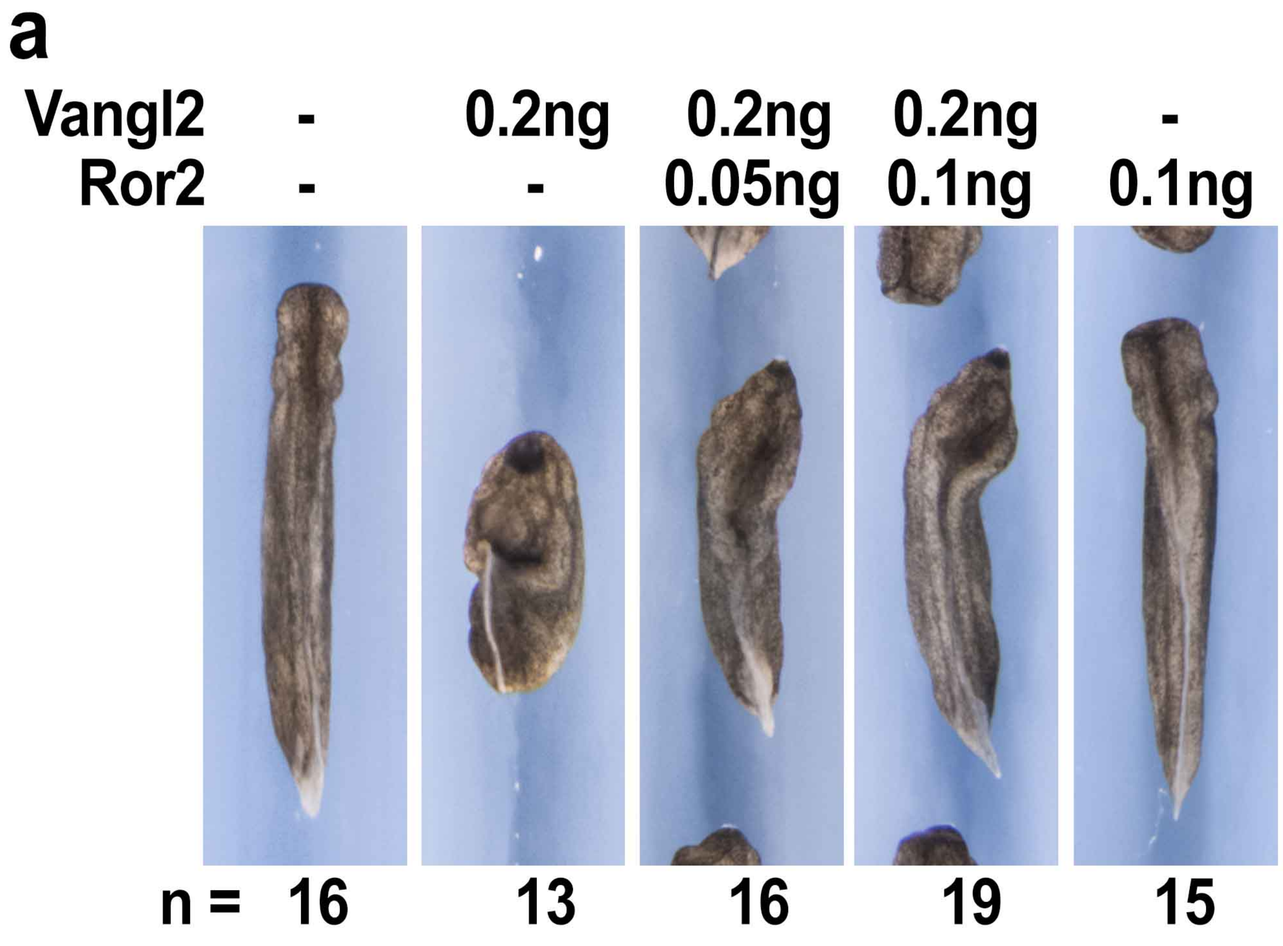
Supplmentary Figure 8

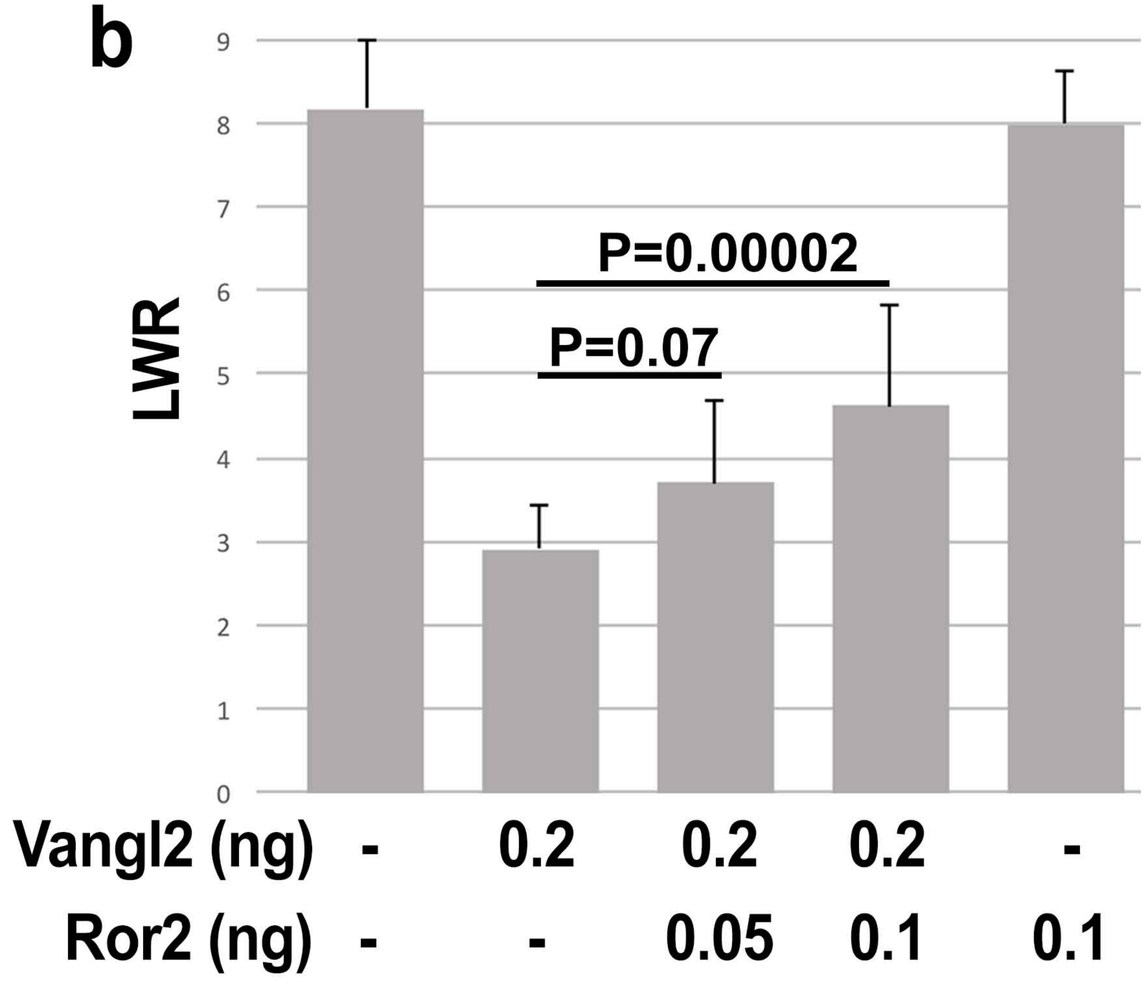


Supplementary Figure 9

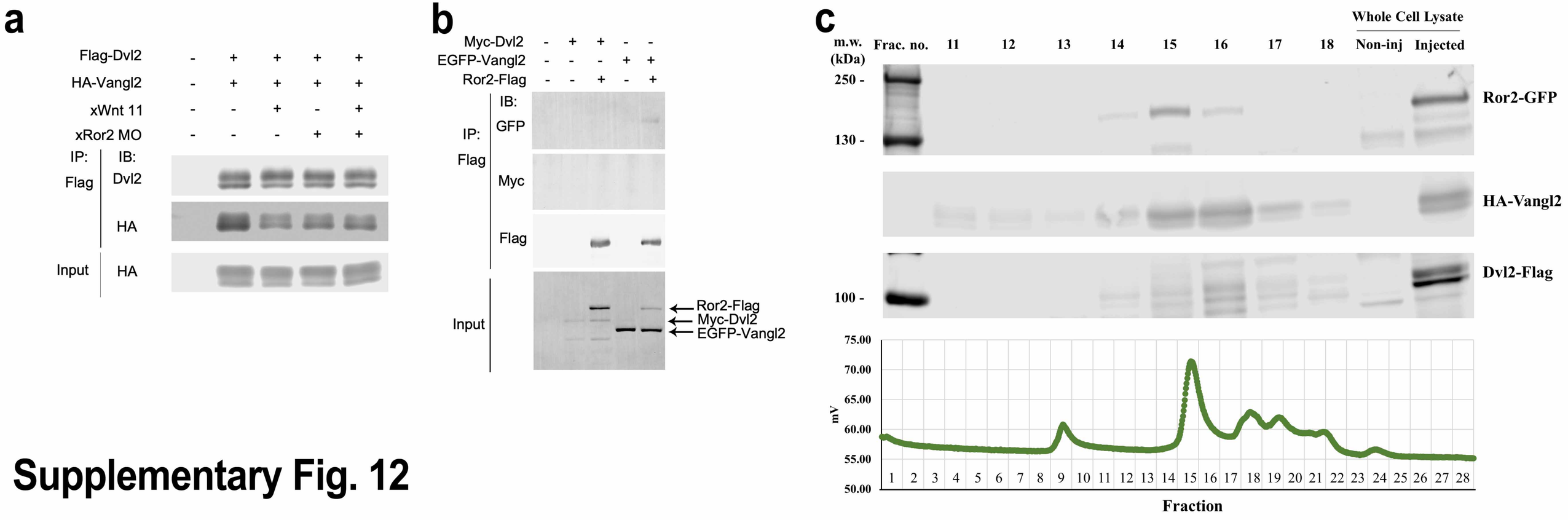


Supplementary Figure 10





Supplementary Figure 11. Ror2 antagonizes Vangl2 during CE



Supplementary Fig. 12