GPCR-MAPS: high-resolution functional and allosteric mapping of G

protein-coupled receptor activation and bias

Taylor L. Mighell[1] and Ben Lehner[1, 2, 3, 4, *]

[1]Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG), The Barcelona Institute of Science and

Technology, Barcelona, Spain

[2]Wellcome Sanger Institute, Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton, United

Kingdom

[3] Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Barcelona, Spain

[4] Institució Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats (ICREA), Barcelona, Spain

15
16 *e-mail: bl11@sanger.ac.uk
17

Abstract

     G protein-coupled receptors (GPCRs) are the largest family of human receptors and drug targets, but how the signaling properties of receptors are encoded in their sequence is incompletely understood. Most GPCR drugs bind a conserved orthosteric pocket, which can result in non-specificity, toxicity and clinical failure. Precision modalities including biased signaling and allosteric modulation could lead to GPCR therapeutics with improved efficacy and safety profiles. The rational design of precision therapies is, however, limited by the lack of high-resolution functional annotation of GPCR structures. Here we present a fast and general approach to rapidly build complete, high-resolution, multi-modal functional and allosteric maps of receptors. The approach, GPCR-MAPS, quantifies direct recruitment of proteins to a receptor and deconvolves the substantial effects of mutations on receptor expression. Applying GPCR-MAPS to the β2 adrenergic receptor generates >150,000 phenotypic measurements, including the full activation functions for all possible amino acid substitutions (>7,500 unique variants) in a single experiment. The multi-modal maps provide numerous mechanistic insights and reveal a modular receptor architecture, with a core activation network surrounded by residues controlling quantitative parameters and bias. The maps also identify multiple allosteric surface pockets, including pockets bound by serendipitously discovered allosteric ligands and a novel pocket with no known ligands. The application of this approach across the superfamily of GPCRs will provide comparative maps of receptor mechanisms and a functional framework for the rational design of precision GPCR therapeutics.

Introduction

G-protein coupled receptors (GPCRs) are the largest family of transmembrane proteins that receive and transmit signals from the outside to the inside of cells. These signals are very diverse and include neurotransmitters, metabolites, immune system molecules, pH, and photons of light[1]. The topology of GPCRs is highly conserved and consists of seven transmembrane (TM) helices connected by alternating intra- and extracellular loops (ECLs and ICLs). Binding of an agonist to the extracellular portion of the receptor results in an allosteric conformational change to the intracellular portion of the receptor[2], which enables binding and activation of one or more members of the family of heterotrimeric G-proteins, which subsequently activate diverse downstream signaling pathways[3]. Receptor activation also results in phosphorylation of the receptor, including in the C-terminal tail, and recruitment of β-arrestin, which terminates G-protein signaling by internalizing the receptor, and also scaffolds G-protein independent signaling[4]. Because of their role as master signal transducers and their availability on the cell surface, GPCRs are the most important class of drug targets, with one third of current clinical therapeutics targeting GPCRs[5,6].

The vast majority of established GPCR drugs act by binding to the orthosteric site and activating or inactivating the receptor[7]. However, alternative modalities for modulating GPCRs exist, such as biased agonism[8] (also called "functional selectivity") and allosteric modulation[9]. Biased agonists are defined in opposition to balanced agonists; a biased agonist preferentially signals through one downstream pathway over another (e.g. G-protein over β-arrestin), compared to balanced agonists. In cases where signaling through one pathway

leads to an unwanted side effect, biased agonists may achieve improved

therapeutic efficacy. A therapeutic benefit for biased agonism has been

proposed for at least thirty GPCRs[10].

Allosteric drugs are those that bind the receptor at a spatially distinct site

from the orthosteric site. The high structural conservation of orthosteric sites

makes it difficult to target one receptor without also engaging multiple family

members. This non-specificity can result in toxicity and other side-effects that

result in clinical failure[7]. In contrast, allosteric drugs targeting non-conserved

sites can have high specificity and reduced toxicity. Further, since allosteric

drugs modulate responses to physiological ligands, their effects temporally and

spatially match physiological signaling processes[11]. Due to these major

advantages, increasing effort is being put toward development of biased and

allosteric modulators[12]. However, with our current understanding of GPCR

function, these molecules are typically only found by blind screening or iteration

upon previously discovered molecules[13,14].

In order to design better GPCR drugs, an improved understanding of the

rich functional and allosteric architecture linking agonist binding with intracellular

signaling is required. Much work has focused on using the structures of active

and inactive states of receptors to try and understand this allosteric

mechanism[15,16]. This has provided important mechanistic insights, but these

structures are only the starting point for assigning a functional role for the

hundreds of individual amino acids in each highly dynamic receptor.

A powerful complementary approach for understanding how proteins

work is the use of mutagenesis followed by functional characterization[17]. Serial

experiments have measured the effects of hundreds of alanine substitutions on

GPCR signaling through one[18] or two[19,20] pathways, revealing a rich diversity of signaling responses to individual mutations. Pooled approaches have been used to characterize surface expression[21–25], ligand binding[23,26], and single or few dose transcriptional responses downstream of GPCRs[27–30]. However, the limited throughput[18–20] and lack of quantification of signaling parameters limit the insights that can be obtained by these approaches[21–30].

Many of the most basic questions in GPCR signaling remain unanswered. Challenges include describing and understanding how the sequence of a receptor determines signaling properties and the causal mapping from sequence to biophysics to signaling characteristics. Properties to understand include cellular abundance, maximum response, basal signaling, and potency of response of a receptor to ligand binding. Mutating receptor residues to alanine has provided important insights into this, but testing only 1 of 19 alternative amino acids in each position provides a limited view of the functional consequences of sequence change. An additional challenge is to understand how the sequence of a receptor controls bias in the recruitment of different transducer proteins[31].

With respect to drug discovery, a key challenge is to understand how ligands modulate receptor signaling. Are all ligand-contacting sites equally important for a response or just a subset of "hotspot"[32] residues? Are all ligand contacts equally important for different functional responses to a ligand or are some contacts more important for particular responses? Where else in the receptor mediates the response to a ligand? Are residues important for the response to ligand equally important for different functional responses, including signaling bias?

A major goal in GPCR drug discovery is to identify allosteric sites on a

receptor where perturbations can inhibit, activate, or modulate signaling.

GPCRs, like all proteins, have many potential small pockets to therapeutically

target[33]. For each receptor it would be extremely useful to know at which of

these sites perturbations alter receptor activity and how, including quantifying

changes in agonist responses and altered bias.

Here we present a general high-throughput method, GPCR-MAPS

(GPCR multiplexed assays with pathway specificity), to rapidly generate

comprehensive functional maps of GPCRs. As a first application, we apply

GPCR-MAPS to the beta-2 adrenergic receptor (β2AR), one of the most

extensively characterized receptors. β2AR is expressed in the cardiovascular

system where it modulates smooth muscle relaxation and bronchodilation;

β2AR agonists are therefore used for treating asthma as well as chronic

obstructive pulmonary disease[34].

GPCR-MAPS has four components: First, we generate a complete site-

saturation library of a receptor, consisting of all possible amino acid substitutions

in all positions. Second, we quantify the cell surface expression of the library of

variants to quantify defects in fold stability and trafficking. Third, we use pooled

experiments to quantify the recruitment of conformation-specific interaction

partners to every receptor mutant in response to ligand treatment. Using ligand

titrations allows the complete dose-response activation functions of thousands of

receptor variants to be quantified. Measuring the recruitment of different

interaction partners quantifies changes in receptor bias. Fourth, we integrate the

resulting data to generate rich multi-modal functional maps of how the

quantitative function of a receptor is altered by diverse perturbations throughout

its entire sequence.

Applied to β2AR, GPCR-MAPS quantifies the activation functions and

multi-modal characteristics of >7,500 different protein variants in pooled

experiments. The resulting multi-modal maps reveal a modular receptor

architecture, with a core activation network surrounded by residues controlling

quantitative parameters and bias. The multi-modal maps also identify multiple

allosteric surface pockets, including pockets bound by serendipitously

discovered β2AR allosteric ligands and a novel pocket with no known ligands.

We believe application of the GPCR-MAPS approach across the GPCR

superfamily will advance our understanding of the largest family of human

membrane receptors and enable rational, precision drug design.

Results

GPCR-MAPS: <u>m</u>ultiplexed <u>a</u>ssay with <u>p</u>athway <u>s</u>pecificity

To allow quantification of multi-modal receptor phenotypes for thousands

of receptor variants in parallel, including full dose-response curves, we

developed a modular platform that we call GPCR-MAPS. Our goal is to read out

receptor states as directly as possible. In contrast to other approaches[27–30], we

therefore focused on quantifying direct binding interactions with receptors.

Quantifying direct binding has proven powerful for understanding signaling by

soluble proteins[35] and GPCRs[36] and avoids the confounding influence of non-

linearities, feedback, and differential signal amplification when quantifying

activity downstream of endogenous signaling networks.

GPCR-MAPS is compatible with cassette-based[37,38] or SUNi

mutagenesis[39] to generate a single pooled library of receptor variants

containing all possible single amino acid substitutions. The library is barcoded

and rapidly integrated into a single locus in engineered HEK293 "landing pad"

cells[40] so that each cell expresses a single copy of a single variant.

In a first selection experiment, the cell surface expression of each variant

is measured using FACS followed by sequencing[21,22,25] to precisely quantify

changes in receptor fold stability and trafficking (Figure 1a, Materials and

Methods).

Additional selections then quantify direct binding of receptor interaction

partners. To quantify recruitment of receptor interaction partners in response to

ligand treatment we developed a modular protein interaction assay based on a

previously described platform[41] but extensively re-engineered to enable

massively multiplexed experiments (see Materials and Methods). We also

improved the signal to noise of the platform and extended it to allow modular read

out of the recruitment of diverse GPCR protein interaction partners including the

active-state-specific nanobody Nb80[42], β-arrestin and miniG$_s$[43] (Supplementary

Figure 1b).

The assay uses three genetic constructs to report on GPCR activation: 1)

a GPCR of interest with a fusion of the exogenous transcription factor Gal4,

linked by sequence encoding an evolved light, oxygen, and voltage sensitive

(eLOV) domain as well as tobacco etch virus protease cleavage site (TEVcs), 2)

a GPCR binding partner (e.g. β-arrestin) fused to NanoLuciferase (NLuc) and

tobacco etch virus protease (TEV), and 3) the fluorescent protein Citrine under

the control of the UAS promoter (Figure 1b and Supplementary Figure 1e).

When co-expressed in cells, agonist-mediated activation of the GPCR causes

recruitment of the binding partner to the receptor. In the absence of light, the

eLOV domain cages the TEVcs and prevents cleavage; however, co-addition of

the NLuc substrate furimazine results in bioluminescence, and when the

transducer brings NLuc into close proximity with the eLOV domain, the steric

hindrance is relieved and TEVp can cleave at TEVcs. This cleavage results in

liberation of Gal4, which can move to the nucleus and drive transcription of the

UAS-Citrine reporter construct, which is read out by short-read RNA sequencing

(Figure 1b).

The recruitment assay allows the binding of multiple GCPR protein

interaction partners to be quantified in a single condition (for example ligand

concentration). However, because of its highly multiplexed RNA-seq based

readout, it also allows the quantification of protein recruitment across many

different conditions, for example ligand combinations, changes in culture

conditions or, as we demonstrate here, ligand titrations allowing the construction

of full dose-response curves for thousands of different receptors in a single

pooled experiment.

Application to the beta-2 adrenergic receptor (β2AR)

We generated a saturation mutagenesis library of β2AR in a vector also

containing: an N-terminal HA epitope tag and C-terminal fusions of eLOV,

TEVcs, and Gal4, and additionally the UAS-Citrine module (attB-HA-b2AR-

eLOV-TEVcs-Gal4-UAS-Citrine, Supplementary Figure 1e) including all

missense and nonsense substitutions, synonymous mutations where possible

(i.e. the wild-type amino acid can be encoded by alternate codons), and single

residue deletions. We then introduced short degenerate nucleotide barcodes

into the 3' UTR of Citrine and used long read sequencing to make 212,840

β2AR genotype-barcode links (Supplementary Figure 1c, Materials and

Methods). These represented 8,970 out of an intended 9,046 unique genotypes

(99.2%). We introduced this library into HEK293T landing pad cells[40], ensuring

a single variant is expressed per cell.

β2AR surface expression

The first selection experiment of GPCR-MAPS is a FACS-based

multiplexed surface expression experiment. Cells were immunostained with

anti-HA antibody, then sorted into four bins based on fluorescence intensity

(Supplementary Figure 1d, Materials and Methods). DNA from the cells sorted

into each bin was purified and converted into sequencing libraries, and the

barcodes were sequenced with short-read sequencing (Figure 1a, Materials

and Methods).

All counts from barcodes representing the same variant were tallied and

combined with the average fluorescence value of each FACS bin to arrive at

surface expression estimates. Variants with low frequency in the library were

filtered to yield 8,740 high confidence surface expression measurements that

were highly reproducible across three replicates (Pearson r=0.94-0.96, Figure

1c, Materials and Methods, Supplementary Table 1). Scores were normalized

between the median value of premature stop codons, set to 0, and the wild-type

surface expression value, set to 1. A heatmap representation of the data shows

nonsense mutations are uniformly damaging, except those occurring within

intracellular loop 1 (ICL1) and those in the C-terminus, suggesting the receptor

can be stably expressed as either a single-pass transmembrane protein, or as a

C-terminal tail truncation. The transmembrane helices are more mutation

sensitive than extra- or intra-cellular loops, consistent with previous work[21–25,28]

(Figure 1d). Synonymous wild-type and nonsense variants have well separated

expression distributions, with missense variants spanning the full range

between those two classes (Figure 1e). Our surface expression estimates are in

line with previously estimated surface expression levels of alanine

substitutions[18] (Spearman's ρ = 0.43, Supplementary Figure 1i).

β-arrestin and Nb80 recruitment

The second selection experiments of GPCR-MAPS are protein

interaction recruitment assays. For β2AR we quantified recruitment of two

conformation-specific binders: Nb80 (as a surrogate for G-protein, as Nb80

returns higher signal to noise than miniG$_s$ (Supplementary Figure 1b)) as well

as β-arrestin. Namely, we transiently transfected one of the binder constructs

(pUC19-NLuc-[Nb80/βArr]-uTEV1Δ, Supplementary Figure 1e) into cells

bearing the β2AR receptor construct in the landing pad. We also included a

condition where Gal4 was transfected alone (pUC19-CMV-Gal4, Supplementary

Figure 1e); barcode frequencies in this control condition should be related to

relative abundance in the library combined with any barcode-specific effects on

RNA stability. The next day, saturating concentration of isoprenaline (10 µM)

was added to the experimental samples to induce activation, and 24 hours later,

those cells were collected. The Gal4 maximum induction samples were

collected 30 hours after transfection. RNA was collected from all samples,

reverse transcribed, converted to short-read sequencing libraries and

sequenced (Supplementary Figure 1f-g, Materials and Methods).

Recruitment scores were calculated using the variant frequency in the

experimental samples compared to variant frequency in the Gal4 condition and

re-scaled with 0 representing the median of nonsense variants recruitment and

1 representing wild-type recruitment. Low frequency variants were filtered to

yield 7,850 high confidence Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment scores (Materials

and Methods, Supplementary Table 1). Replicates were well correlated

(Pearson's r=0.9-0.91 for Nb80 replicates, r=0.88-0.89 for β-arrestin replicates,

Figure 1c). Heatmap representations of the data reveal similar overall trends

between Nb80 and β-arrestin (as well as with the surface expression data)

defined by transmembrane regions being most sensitive to mutation (Figure 1f-

h). Synonymous wild-type variants are again well separated from nonsense

variants, and missense variants again span the whole distribution from

nonsense to wild-type-like (Figure 1g, i). The Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment

scores are also correlated with each other (Spearman's ρ = 0.87), as well as

with previous multiplexed measurements of β2AR variants signaling through the

G_s pathway[27] (Spearman's ρ = 0.44 and 0.47 for Nb80 and β-arrestin

recruitment, respectively, Supplementary Figure 1j-k).

Deconvolving recruitment and expression

Plotting Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment scores against receptor

expression reveals that changes in expression are an important cause of

changes in recruitment (ρ=0.55, 0.6, for Nb80 and β-arrestin respectively, Figure

2a-b, Supplementary Figure 1h). However, some mutations have much larger

effects on recruitment than can be explained by changes in expression. For

example, missense mutations at the nine positions making up the isoprenaline

binding site[44] have minimal effect on expression (Figure 1j), while these same

mutations are strongly deleterious for recruitment of both binding partners (Figure

1k-l).

Residues contributing to recruitment beyond expression changes

The relationship between recruitment and expression is non-linear (Figure 2a-b). We therefore fit a LOWESS (locally weighted scatterplot smoothing) regression to the data, which acts as a null expectation of recruitment produced by a given surface expression level. This null expectation explains a significant amount of variance (R^2 = 0.37 and 0.42 for Nb80 and β-arrestin, respectively).

We next quantified changes in recruitment not explained by expression changes by calculating recruitment residuals and subsequently z-scores of all variants to the global model (i.e. residual divided by standard error of the mean for each variant, Figure 2c-e). Comparing the group of z-scores at each position with the z-scores from all other positions with a two-sided Mann-Whitney U test allows us to identify residues where mutations have greater or lesser recruitment than would be expected based on their surface expression level (Supplementary Table 2).

Complete functional maps of Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment

For both Nb80 and β-arrestin, more residues confer loss-of-function (LoF) than gain-of-function (GoF) when mutated, and the magnitude of loss is greater than the magnitude of gain (Figure 2f-g). In total, 49 and 73 residues are LoF for Nb80 and β-arrestin, respectively (false discovery rate, FDR = 0.1, Supplementary Table 2). Of these, 47 are shared (Figure 2h, OR=304.6, p=2.2x10^{-40}, two-sided Fisher exact test). An example of a strong LoF residue is D113^{3x32} (Figure 2i, GPCRdb numbering[45] in superscript), which participates directly in isoprenaline binding. There are 31 and 53 GoF residues for Nb80 and β-arrestin (FDR=0.1), respectively, of which 20 are shared (OR=19.2, p=1.3x10^{-12}, two-sided Fisher exact test). E268^{6x30} is the most significant GoF (Figure 2j),

consistent with previous work demonstrating constitutively activating mutations

at this site[46]. Finally, we extended this analysis to highlight residues where

mutations have highly variable effects on recruitment. Namely, after excluding

the LoF and GoF residues, we compared the interquartile range (IQR) of z-

scores at all positions (Supplementary Figure 2a-b). We categorized those

residues with IQR above the 90th percentile as change-of-function (CoF): 34

and 31 residues for Nb80 and β-arrestin, respectively, with 8 shared (Figure 2h,

OR=2.9, p=0.037). An example of a strong CoF residue is L75^{2x46} (Figure 2k),

which is near the allosteric sodium binding site and neighbors LoF residue

A76^{2x47}. At this position, mutations to small, uncharged residues (G, S, T, A, C)

decrease surface expression, but increase Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment

relative to the modeled expectation. On the other hand, positively charged

residues (H, R, K) are well expressed but strongly decrease recruitment of both

proteins.

Average position z-scores and position IQRs are well correlated (r = 0.73

and 0.56, respectively, Supplementary Figure 2c-d), indicating that many

residues contribute similarly to recruitment of both proteins. Plotting the

residues identified for both proteins onto the structure of isoprenaline-stimulated

β2AR (PDB ID: 7DHR) reveals that LoF residues are predominantly within the

core of the receptor (Figure 2l), whereas GoF and CoF residues are dispersed

on the periphery (Figure 2m-n).

Loss-of-function residues define a core activation network

The majority of the shared LoF residues (39 out of 47) form an

interconnected path linking the ligand binding site all the way to the transducer

binding site in the active state receptor structure (Figure 3a, hereafter referred

to as the "core activation network"). All 9 residues of the isoprenaline binding

pocket are identified (D113[3x32], V117[3x36], F193[45x52], S203[5x43], S204[5x44],

S207[5x461], F290[6x52], N293[6x55], and N312[7x38]) along with many residues in the

second shell of the ligand binding pocket (i.e. residues that contact residues of

the isoprenaline binding site, Figure 3b). These residues include W286[6x48] of

the CWxP motif and I121[3x40] of the PIF motif[47,48]. The core activation network

then connects to N322[7x49] of the critical NPxxY motif[47] via two pathways: first,

W286[6x48] contacts N318[7x45] which then connects to N322[7x49]. Second, a

pathway from A119[3x38] goes through A78[2x49] and D79[2x50] of the allosteric

sodium binding pocket which then contacts N322[7x49]. Of the NPxxY motif,

N322[7x49], I325[7x52], Y326[7x53] are identified as LoF. Finally, in the active state

structure, Y326[7x53] of the NPxxY motif then contacts R131[3x50] (of the DRY motif)

and I127[3x46] of helix 3. Y326[7x53] is also thought to make an important water-

mediated hydrogen bond with Y219[5.58],[49] which is also identified as LoF and

makes a direct contact with R131[3x50].

Of the eight LoF residues not connected to the core activation network,

three likely directly disrupt transducer binding[42,50] (P138[34x50], F139[34x51], and

Y141[34x53]), while three more take part in critical disulfide bonds between ECL2

and TM3 (C106[3x25], C190[ECL2], C191[45x50]). F193[45x52] is a disconnected LoF

residue that makes direct contact with bound isoprenaline. Finally, P88[2x58] in

TM2 is the last disconnected residue.

Previous work has used structural analysis to define an activation

network for class A GPCRs[51] and alanine scanning mutagenesis to define an

activation network for β2AR[18]. About half of the residues identified in our

network are present in at least one of the others (19/39, Figure 3c). We identify

more residues near the ligand binding site compared to the other networks

(Supplementary Figure 2e-g). Interestingly, of the six residues shared by the

other two networks that are not part of our core activation network, we identify

four of these as either CoF (S120^{3x39} and F332^{8x50}) or GoF (L124^{3x43} and

D130^{3x43}), emphasizing the value of empirically assaying all 19 substitutions per

position. At S120^{3x39}, which neighbors I121^{3x40} of the PIF motif, positively

charged substitutions (R, K, H) yield stable receptors with significantly reduced

recruitment, while the E and Q also yield stable receptors but significantly

increase recruitment (Figure 3d). At L124^{3x43}, most variants decrease surface

expression but increase relative recruitment, with the exception of the aromatic

amino acids (W, F, and Y) and proline which recruit Nb80 less than expected

given their expression level (Figure 3e).

Gain-of-function sites are located at the ionic lock, near the NpxxY motif,

and in the extracellular vestibule

We next examined the location of the GoF residues (Supplementary

Figure 3a, f). Two of the GoF residues, D130^{3x49} and E268^{6x30}, participate in the

highly conserved ionic lock (with R131^{3x50} of the DRY motif[52]). While R131^{3x50} of

the DRY motif is a LoF residue that contacts Nb80[42] and is predicted to contact

β-arrestin,[50] some mutations at D130^{3x49} of the DRY motif have been shown to

constitutively activate the receptor[53]. The other GoF residues are predominantly

in two clusters: one consisting of TMs 3, 5, and 6, near the NPxxY and DRY

motifs (Supplementary Figure 3b). L124 sits in the center of the receptor, near

the I of PIF motif, DRY motif, and NPxxY. A few mutations at L124^{3x43} have

been shown to cause constitutive activity at this site[54] but we show that most

variants activate more than expected (discussed above). The other cluster is

near the ligand binding site and in the extracellular vestibule (Supplementary

Figure 3c). E187 and T189 are in ECL2, where they may affect ligand binding

or activation[55]. W313^{7x39} and V87^{2x57} form two van der Waals interactions in the

inactive (PDB:2RH1), but only one in the active state (PDB:3SN6,

GetContacts); our data suggest that disrupting this interaction leads to

increased recruitment. Finally, there are 7 GoF residues in the C-terminal tail

(Supplementary Figure 3g).

400 Change-of-function sites are adjacent to the core network

Plotting the CoF residues onto the inactive and active state structures

(Supplementary Figure 3d) reveals that they cluster near important LoF

residues that make structural changes during activation: for instance, S120^{3x39}

and E122^{3x41} are adjacent to I121^{3x40} of the dynamic PIF motif. Likewise,

F321^{7x48} is adjacent to N322^{7x49} of the dynamic NPxxY motif and identified LoF,

while F332^{8x50} is nearby (Supplementary Figure 3e). This proximity to essential

switch residues suggests that CoF residues may specifically stabilize or

destabilize the active or inactive receptor state depending on the amino acid

substitution.

410 Differential contribution of residues in the isoprenaline binding pocket

Next, we examined the effects of substitutions at residues making up the

isoprenaline binding site. While all residues are LoF, the magnitude of effects

differs among the constituents. D113^{3x32}, which forms two hydrogen bonds with

isoprenaline, has strongly damaging effects (median expression-adjusted Nb80

and β-arrestin recruitment = -0.94 and -0.89, Figure 3f-g and Supplementary

Figure 3h-i). N293^{6x55} also forms a hydrogen bond with isoprenaline, but

substitutions here are the least damaging of the binding site (median

expression-adjusted Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment = -0.24 and -0.4). This

tolerance is surprising as N293^{6x55} also forms a hydrogen bond with S204^{5x44},

which doesn't directly contact the ligand but has strongly deleterious effects

(median expression-adjusted Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment = -0.96 and -

0.81). This suggests the role of S204^{5x44} may be more related to receptor

activation than ligand binding.

Genetic control of receptor recruitment bias

Next, we directly compared mutational effects on Nb80 and β-arrestin

recruitment (Figure 4a). Missense mutational effects on recruitment of Nb80

and β-arrestin are well correlated (Pearson's r=0.89, Figure 4b). However,

single mutants previously shown to bias the receptor toward G protein signaling

(F193A[56], Y219A[57], and Y199A[58]) are indeed biased towards Nb80 in our

experiments (Figure 4c). To find residues with stronger effects on one pathway

compared to the other, we again fitted a LOWESS regression curve to the data,

and calculated residuals and subsequently z-scores for all variants in the

dataset. Then, we compared z-scores of mutations at each position with z-

scores of mutations at all other positions. This identifies 19 residues where

mutations have significantly greater effects on β-arrestin recruitment and 7

positions where mutations have significantly greater effects on Nb80

recruitment (FDR=0.1, Figure 4d, Supplementary Table 3). As before, we then

compared the IQR of all remaining residues; here, to more closely match the

number of biased residues, we prioritized the top 5% of residues as recruitment

bias switches (Supplementary Figure 4a).

Examples of strongly biased residues are shown (Figure 4e-f) as well as

a strong bias switching residue (Figure 4g). One expectation is that mutations at

residues making direct contacts with either Nb80 or β-arrestin could result in

biased recruitment. Nb80 and β-arrestin have overlapping but distinct binding

interactions with the intracellular portion of β2AR. Nb80 forms direct contacts

with 16 residues in TMs 3, 5, 6, and 7[42]. Since there is no experimentally

determined structure of β2AR bound by β-arrestin, we defined this interface

from a simulation study[50]. The β-arrestin binding interface is predicted to be

larger, encompassing 28 residues across ICLs 1, 2, 3, and TMs 6 and 7, with 10

residues overlapping the Nb80 interface.

Three out of the seven residues biased toward β-arrestin recruitment

make direct binding interactions with both Nb80 in the solved structure and with

β-arrestin in the simulation (P138^{34x50}, F139^{34x51}, and Y326^{7x53}), suggesting a

more critical role for these residues in binding Nb80. The other four β-arrestin-

biased residues are either in ICL3 (G252 and G255) or the C-terminal tail (E373

and C406, Supplementary Figure 4b). The only residue biased toward Nb80

within either binding interface is P330^{8x48}, which is predicted to interact with

Nb80 but not β-arrestin. There is also one bias switch residue, R328^{7x55}, that is

predicted to only bind β-arrestin. This relative sparsity of bias effects suggests

that few residues at the transducer interface contribute significantly more to

recruitment of each protein (Supplementary Figure 4c).

The extracellular vestibule allosterically controls recruitment bias

In contrast, there are many residues biased toward Nb80 recruitment

located away from the orthosteric site in the extracellular vestibule: W99^{23x50},

F101^{23x52}, G102^{3x21}, W173^{ECL2}, A181^{ECL2}, C184 ^{ECL2}, Y185 ^{ECL2}, N196^{5x36}, and

E306^{7x32} (Figure 4h, k). The most strongly Nb80 biased residue, W99^{23x50}, was

previously identified as particularly mutationally intolerant[27]; however only by

measuring recruitment of both proteins could we uncover its strongly biased

effects (Figure 4f). Considered together, the extracellular loops (ECLs) are

enriched in Nb80 biased residues compared to the whole receptor (OR=6.4,

p=1.0x10^{-3}, one-sided Fisher exact test), and in particular, ECL2 is enriched for

Nb80 biased residues (OR=5.6, p=0.014, one-sided Fisher exact test).

The importance of the extracellular vestibule for G-protein biased

activation revealed in our mutational data is also consistent with structural data.

Salmeterol is a G-protein biased β2AR agonist that binds the orthosteric site in

a similar way as the endogenous ligand (epinephrine) except that it has a long

aryloxyalkyl tail that extends into the extracellular vestibule, where it interacts

extensively with ECL2[59]. Also, comparative structural analyses of other GPCRs

have suggested that the extracellular vestibule adopts a more constricted

conformation in the β-arrestin-bound state compared to the G-protein-bound

state.[60] Taken together, these data point to the extracellular vestibule, and in

particular ECL2, as hotspots for G-protein-biased agonism at the β2AR.

Among the bias switching residues, the second strongest is the vestibule

residue, Y308^{7x34} (Supplementary Figure 4d). This residue has been proposed

to be necessary for G-protein signaling[61], as well as forming a hydrophobic gate

with F193^{45x52} that interacts with and dehydrates ligand molecules as they

traverse the vestibule and approach the orthosteric binding site[62]. In the active

state, these two residues form a "lid" over the ligand, with F193^{45x52} making a

direct contact with isoprenaline (Figure 4i). Based on the alanine mutation,

F193^{45x52} was postulated to coordinate β-arrestin signaling[56]. Interestingly, while

this single variant does have a stronger effect on β-arrestin recruitment, other

variants at the same site have the opposite effect (Supplementary Figure 4e).

We examined the effects of mutations at these two sites and found that

recruitment bias is correlated with mutant hydrophobicity for $Y308^{7x34}$ ($\rho = 0.67$,

$p = 4.3 \times 10^{-3}$, Figure 4j), but not for $F193^{45x52}$ ($\rho = -0.36$, $p = 0.16$,

Supplementary Figure 4f). This suggests that the role of $Y308^{7x34}$ in determining

bias is directly tied to its hydrophobicity, while the relationship of $F193^{45x52}$ to

bias is more nuanced.

Recruitment bias in TM7

Besides the vestibule, there are multiple bias-functional residues (Nb80-

or β-arrestin-biased or bias switches) in or near the NPxxY motif of TM7(Figure

4l). In fact, TM7 is enriched for bias-functional residues compared to the whole

receptor (OR=3.7, p=0.011, one-sided Fisher exact test, Supplementary Figure

4g). $P323^{7x50}$ is not predicted to contact directly β-arrestin[50], suggesting that the

Nb80 bias of the residue cannot be explained simply by disrupting a direct

contact. $N318^{7x45}$, $F332^{8x50}$, and $R328^{7x55}$ are all bias switches in close proximity

to the NPxxY motif (Figure 4k). A role for TM7 in determining bias is consistent

with prior nuclear magnetic resonance experiments demonstrating changes in

TM7 conformation upon binding of biased agonists[63].

Activation functions for >7,500 β2AR variants

The data presented thus far quantifies recruitment to β2AR with

saturating levels of isoprenaline, which convolutes the contribution of different

pharmacological parameters, such as potency (the amount of agonist needed to

elicit a certain response) and efficacy (the maximum recruitment response

elicited by saturating concentrations of agonist). However, because of its pooled

design and RNA-seq based output, GPCR-MAPS can also be used to quantify

the full dose-response curves (activation functions) of all receptor variants in a

library.

519   To demonstrate this capability, we performed the Nb80 GPCR-MAPS

recruitment assay with 12 serially diluted concentrations of isoprenaline, ranging

from 10 pM to 10 uM (Figure 5a). In order to compare the magnitude of

recruitment across experimental conditions, following RNA isolation, we

performed quantitative PCR (qPCR) to estimate the total amount of reporter

transcription (Figure 5b, Supplementary Figure 5a, Materials and Methods).

Then, by deep sequencing the barcodes and normalizing the frequencies by the

estimated total reporter RNA, we arrived at normalized scores across the 12

concentrations (Figure 5c and Supplementary Figure 5b, Materials and

Methods). This allowed us to quantify dose-response relationships for 7,680

different receptor variants.

530   Heatmap and correlation representations of the data reveals induction of

531   Nb80 recruitment across the ~92,000 measurements (Figure 5d and

532   Supplementary Figure 5c-d). Clustering the induction dataset revealed three

533   predominant clusters- these can be assigned as wild-type-like, moderately

534   damaging, and strong loss-of-function (Figure 5e).

535   Next, we fit a four-parameter Hill curve to the wild-type genotype,

normalizing E_{min} and E_{max} to 0 and 1, respectively, and deriving a half maximal

response (EC_{50}) estimate of 26.2 nM and slope (Hill coefficient) of 0.84 (Figure

5f). Then we fit curves to all variants; after quality control (Supplementary

Figure 5e-f, Materials and Methods), this resulted in 5,588 high quality dose-

response curves with well-estimated parameters (Figure 5g-i). We note that

variants with reduced activation level are more poorly fit and therefore likelier to

be filtered (Supplementary Figure 5e). Our EC_{50} measurements correlate well

with the results of individually assayed substitutions[18] (Pearson r=0.74, n=317

variants, Figure 6b).

Surface expression is a major determinant of receptor potency

Changes in potency are often measured by comparing EC_{50} values

(Figure 6a). To investigate determinants of potency, we first quantified the

correlations between the four Hill function parameters, as well as their

dependence upon surface expression. Expression level has been predicted to

be an important influence on signaling parameters by theoretical work[64–66], and

by experimental work on a plant hormone receptor[35]. The strongest

relationships we found were between slope and E_{max} (ρ = -0.46) and between

surface expression and log EC_{50} (ρ = -0.41, Figure 6c-d). Surface expression

level is thus a major influence on potency in the β2AR. To mechanistically

understand changes in potency it is therefore necessary to again quantitatively

deconvolve direct mutational effects from those mediated by changes in

receptor expression.

Potency tuning

To isolate mutational effects on EC_{50} beyond those caused by changes

in expression we again used LOWESS regression to model the relationship

between surface expression and EC_{50} (Supplementary Figure 6a). We

quantified residuals to that model to identify positions where mutations have

consistently higher or lower EC_{50} than expected from their impact on

expression. 29 residues were identified as GoF (i.e. they had EC_{50} lower than

expected) and 59 were identified as LoF (i.e. higher EC_{50} than expected,

FDR=0.1, Figure 6e-f). There is overlap between these sets and the sets

identified from the saturating concentration experiment (23/59 LoF shared, 4/29

GoF shared). Finally, the interquartile range was used again to identify 29 EC_{50}

CoF residues (one shared with saturating concentration experiment,

Supplementary Figure 6b, Supplementary Table 4).

In principle, mutations could affect potency beyond changes in

expression by changing the affinity of isoprenaline binding, or by affecting the

probability of isoprenaline-bound receptor to adopt the active conformation[67].

While mutations at residues making direct contact with isoprenaline would be

expected to reduce affinity, mutations at these sites mostly totally abolish

activation; dose-response curves could only be fit to 32 out of 132 missense

variants at these sites. However, these 32 variants do have over an order of

magnitude reduced potency (median EC_{50}=477 nM, compared to wild-type 26.2

nM).

Interestingly, EC_{50} LoF residues are enriched in the second shell (15/59

LoF sites (25.4%, OR=4.12, p=$1.9x10^{-4}$, Fisher exact test). While not

statistically enriched, a higher fraction of EC_{50} CoF sites (5/24, 20.8%) are in the

second shell compared to only 1 out of 29 GoF residues (3.4%) in the second

shell (Figure 6i). This shows that whereas mutations in residues directly

contacting the ligand have very strong effects on affinity and so completely

inactivate recruitment, mutations in second shell residues frequently can have

more moderate effects and modulate the response. These effects are, by

definition, allosteric, either indirectly altering ligand binding affinity or altering the

consequences of ligand engagement. This also suggests that mutations in the

second shell are likelier to reduce affinity than increase it.

Beyond changes in ligand affinity mutations can also affect recruitment

by altering the likelihood of ligand-bound receptor adopting the active

conformation[67]. One way to disrupt the activation pathway could be for

mutations to interfere with the core activation network identified in the maximum

recruitment experiment. We therefore quantified the distance of EC_{50}-affecting

residues to this network and found that LoF and CoF residues are closer in 3D

space than GoF residues (p=7.4×10^{-4}, 1.3×10^{-3}, respectively, two-sided Mann

Whitney U test, Figure 6j). Taken together, as with the maximum recruitment

analysis, these data suggest that mutations that reduce potency do so by

perturbing the core activation pathway whereas the mechanism-of-action of

GoF mutations is likely distinct.

Three of the four most significant EC_{50} GoF residues are E268^{6x30}

(Figure 6g), D130^{3x49}, and L272^{6x34}. E268^{6x30} and D130^{3x49} were already

identified in the maximum recruitment analysis and make up the conserved

ionic lock while L272^{6x34} is in close proximity to the ionic lock, where mutations

are also thought to destabilize the inactive state[67]. Nearby E268^{6x30} in

intracellular loop 3 (ICL3), there are nine EC_{50} GoF residues, which is enriched

compared to the whole receptor (OR=3.38, p=7.3×10^{-3}, one-sided Fisher exact

test). This loop connects TM5 and TM6, which make dramatic movements upon

receptor activation (Figure 6k). These GoF residues could act in a similar way

as D130^{3x49}, E268^{6x30}, and L272^{6x34}, weakening the interaction between TM3

and TM6 or other helices. Alternatively, previous studies suggest that ICL3 may

have an autoinhibitory role that sterically occludes transducer binding in the

inactive state, and that some mutations can abrogate this autoinhibitory effect[68].

Further experiments would be necessary to determine the exact mechanism of

the EC_{50} GoF phenotypes in ICL3. Additionally, there are two GoF residues in

the N-terminus that coincide with the two N-glycosylation sites[69] (N5 and N15,

Supplementary Figure 6d) suggesting that loss of these glycosylation

modifications increases receptor potency.

$F282^{6x44}$ of the PIF motif is the strongest EC_{50} CoF residue (Figure 6h)

consistent with previous data showing multiple constitutive activating mutations

and at least one attenuating mutation[70]. Likewise, $S120^{3x39}$ and $L212^{5x51}$ are

identified as CoF and are directly adjacent to the other two members of the PIF

motif ($I121^{3x40}$ and $P211^{5x50}$) reinforcing that some perturbations to this key

switch motif can result in gains or loss of recruitment. There are also several

EC_{50} CoF residues in TMs 5 and 6 (4 in each, Supplementary Figure 6c),

reflecting the key role of these helices in activation.

Annotation of surface pockets

Finally, we used our β2AR data to illustrate how GPCR-MAPS can be

used to functionally annotate and prioritize potential pockets in receptors.

AS408 is a negative allosteric modulator (NAM) that binds away from the

orthosteric and transducer binding sites, between TMs 3 and 5[71] (Figure 7a).

Across the three analyses (maximum recruitment, biased recruitment, and

EC_{50}), the 7 residues making up this pocket have 7 total annotations, compared

to 96 annotations for all 220 structurally resolved surface exposed residues

(>10% relative solvent accessible surface area in 2RH1), indicating a

functionally important pocket. In particular, $V129^{3x48}$ is LoF for maximum

recruitment as well as EC_{50}, while $E122^{3x41}$ is CoF for maximum recruitment as

well as EC_{50}. In addition, $C125^{3x44}$ is CoF for EC_{50} and $I214^{5x53}$ is LoF for EC_{50}.

Mutations at P211^{5x50} are biased toward Nb80 recruitment, though AS408 is not

thought to be a biased NAM (Supplementary Figure 7a).

While the AS408 pocket is replete with functional residues, Cmpd-6, a

positive allosteric modulator[72] (PAM), binds in a pocket formed by 9 residues

between TMs 2, 3, 4, and ICL2 (Figure 7b) with only 4 annotations. However,

one of the residues is D130^{3x49}, where mutations cause strong GoF for both

maximum recruitment and EC$_{50}$ (Supplementary Figure 7b), potentially

explaining the PAM activity of Cmpd-6. Additionally, while Cpmd-6 mostly forms

hydrophobic interactions with β2AR, it does form one hydrogen bond with

K149^{4x41}, which is an EC$_{50}$ CoF residue. Taken together, our functional

annotations are consistent with the activities of the two known β2AR allosteric

modulators.

To explore prospective functional annotation, we used Fpocket[73] to

predict pockets in the inactive β2AR (PDB ID:2RH1). One additional pocket,

between TMs 5 and 6 (Figure 7c), has 8 functional annotations among 10

residues, with most being maximum recruitment or EC$_{50}$ LoF or CoF, but also

one GoF residue (Supplementary Figure 7c), suggesting a highly active pocket.

Indeed, an allosteric agonist was recently found to bind and activate another

GPCR, GPR88, at this same site[74]. On the other hand, a nearby and partially

overlapping pocket also between TMs 5 and 6 (Figure 7d) has only two

annotations among 9 residues (Supplementary Figure 7d), suggesting that

perturbation of this pocket is less likely to have functional effects on receptor

activation.

Discussion

We have presented here GPCR-MAPS, a general, modular, and

massively scalable approach that uses pooled experiments to precisely quantify

the effects of mutations on the activity and bias of GPCRs. GPCR-MAPS makes

multiple important technical advancements over existing technologies for

multiplexed receptor assessment[27–30].

First, GPCR-MAPS directly quantifies the recruitment of proteins to

receptors, so minimizing the confounding effects of non-linear and unequal

signal amplification, and feedback by endogenous signaling networks. Second,

GPCR-MAPS is highly modular - we demonstrate here the successful use of a

nanobody, a mini-G protein, and β-arrestin as signal transducers. The receptor-

proximal readout also facilitates comparisons across these signal transducers,

which can otherwise be confounded by differential signal amplification and

crosstalk[75]. This modular design allows direct study of GPCR bias at the level of

recruitment to a receptor. To further demonstrate generalizability, we also show

the vasopressin 2 receptor recruitment of miniGs and β-arrestin in response to

the endogenous ligand arginine vasopressin (Supplementary Figure 6e). Third,

GPCR-MAPS measures and quantitatively deconvolves the strong confounding

influence of receptor expression changes on signaling parameters. Fourth, due

to its highly multiplexed design and straightforward read out, GPCR-MAPS

extends GPCR mutational scanning to the quantification of full dose-response

curve activation functions for all possible mutations in a receptor. Comparing

our data to previous β2AR mutagenesis studies reveals the importance of all

four of these innovations (Supplementary Figure 1i-k, Figure 6b).

Applied to β2AR, GPCR-MAPS generates over >150,000 measurements

and charts a complete amino acid resolution picture of how quantitative multi-

modal receptor phenotypes are encoded and how they can be tuned. The β2AR

maps demonstrate the importance of quantitatively controlling for receptor

expression changes. After deconvolving mutational effects on expression and

recruitment, the residues that disrupt recruitment form a contiguously connected

core activation network linking the ligand binding site to the transducer coupling

site (Figure 8a). The data also identify the extracellular vestibule, particularly

ECL2, as a major allosteric site to control receptor bias, and TM7 near the NPxxY

motif as an internal region that allosterically controls receptor activation bias

(Figure 8b).

Quantifying the full activation functions of >7,500 receptor variants in a

single experiment (Supplementary Figure 8) revealed that expression is also a

major influence on EC_{50}. This has been previously predicted by theoretical[64–66]

models and agrees with recent work on plant hormone receptors[35]. After

correcting for the influence of expression changes, EC_{50}-modulating mutations

are topologically localized, including potency increasing variants in ICL3 and at

both N-glycosylation sites in the unstructured N-terminus (Figure 8c). Mutations

that decrease potency are in close proximity to the core activation network and

so likely modulate it. In contrast, residues increasing potency are far from the

core activation network, likely affecting potency via mechanisms independent of

the core activation network. This distinction in the location and likely mechanism

of LoF and GoF variants parallels observations in the Src kinase, where

mutations that decrease kinase activity are enriched close to the active site but

mutations that increase it are not[76].

GPCRs are the largest family of membrane receptors and the most

successful class of drug targets, with one third of current clinical therapeutics

targeting GPCRs[7]. Precision modalities such as biased signaling and allosteric

modulation could lead to GPCR drugs with improved efficacy and safety, but

these drugs have historically only been found by serendipity. Despite a

revolution in GPCR structural biology, we lack sufficient functional

understanding of GPCR activation and effector recruitment to design biased or

allosteric drugs. We believe that quantifying multi-modal mutational effects will

allow the high-resolution functional annotation of many human receptors and

accelerate the development of new precision drugs.

Residues biased toward Nb80 recruitment are enriched in ECL2, which

forms part of the exosite of salmeterol, a β2AR agonist strongly biased toward G

protein signaling[59], suggesting mutant behavior is related to drug activity binding

at the same sites. Likewise, known allosteric modulators bind in pockets with high

impact mutations that match their activities. AS408, a NAM, binds in a pocket with

loss- and change-of-function residues, while Cmpd-6FA, a PAM, binds in a

pocket with gain- and change-of-function residues. In addition to these known

allosteric sites, GPCR-MAPS prioritizes an additional – and, to our knowledge,

novel – allosteric pocket to target in β2AR and deprioritizes one where mutations

only have limited effects.

The GPCR-MAPS approach is modular and scalable, and its application

across the GPCR superfamily will enable a better understanding of the largest

family of human receptors. To date GPCR drug discovery has proceeded from

an era of blind high-throughput screening to an era of structure-based drug

discovery. We believe we are now entering a third era of GPCR drug discovery,

where high-resolution functional maps empower the rational design of precision

GPCR therapeutics, including highly specific biased and allosteric modulators.

Materials and Methods

Plasmids

Plasmids encoding SPARK2 components were gifts from Christina Kim and Alice Ting and were obtained from Addgene (Addgene plasmid # 125228, 104839, 104840, 104841). From these plasmids we generated new plasmids using Gibson cloning. attB-HA-b2AR-eLOV-TEVcs-Gal4-UAS-Citrine encodes the receptor fusion followed by the bGH poly(A) signal, then the UAS sequence followed by Citrine fluorescent protein. A 26 nucleotide barcode was inserted in the 3' UTR of the Citrine sequence. To make cloning more efficient, we transferred the fusion coding sequence from the NanoLuc-15aa linker-βarrestin2-HA-GS linker-TEVp plasmid from the pAAV vector (which contains GC-rich inverted terminal repeats) to the pUC19 vector. We then used site directed mutagenesis to introduce the S153N variant to TEV, generating uTEV1Δ). We then made versions of this plasmid with Nb80 and miniG$_s$ sequence instead of β-Arrestin. We also modified the miniG$_s$ vector so that uTEV1Δ was fused N-terminally (NanoLuc-15aa linker-GS linker-TEVp-miniG$_s$). pCAG-NLS-HA-Bxb1 was a gift from Kenny Matreyek and Doug Fowler.

Development of GPCR-MAPS recruitment assays

We started with the SPARK2 system[41] and extensively re-engineered the system to enable massively multiplexed experiments. First, we combined the GPCR construct and the reporter construct onto a single plasmid and added a DNA barcode (26 nucleotides) in the 3' untranslated region (UTR) of the Citrine reporter so that the GPCR variant on any given plasmid can be identified (Figure 1a and Supplementary Figure 1e). We also added the attB recombination site to enable integration into HEK293T landing pad cells[40],

which ensures copy number of exactly one in each cell. We used the active-

state-specific nanobody Nb80[42] as the binding partner to optimize the assay.

While the original assay used transient transfection to introduce transgenic

material and took place over the course of minutes, we found that substantially

increased times were necessary to obtain detectable signal, presumably due to

the reduction of copy number of the receptor and reporter constructs (24 hours,

Supplementary Figure 1a). Further, we tested evolved variants of both TEV and

the LOV domain, uTEV1Δ[77] and hLOV1[78]; the combination that yielded the

highest signal to noise ratio was uTEV1Δ and eLOV (Supplementary Figure

1b). Next, we also validated the use of β-arrestin and miniG$_s$[79] as the binding

partner in this system (Supplementary Figure 1b). Finally, in order to account for

differences in barcode abundance in the library, as well as barcode-specific

effects on RNA abundance, we also include a condition in which Gal4 is

expressed alone (Supplementary Figure 1f); this condition should maximally

stimulate all barcodes and provides normalization for the experimental

conditions[27].

Saturation mutagenesis library creation

We designed six pools of mutation-bearing oligonucleotides, each pool

representing mutated coding sequence for 66-70 amino acids of the full-length

(413 amino acids) b2AR with flanking wild-type sequence for amplification from

the pool (using primers dialout_tile[1-6]_[F/R], Supplementary Table 5). For

each pool we designed primers to amplify the whole plasmid except for the

mutated segment (using primers b2AR_satmut_tile[1-6]_[F/R]), then used

Gibson assembly to introduce the mutagenic oligos. Oligos were designed to

encode all possible single amino acid changes (using the human optimized

codon for each alternative amino acid), all premature stop codons, and all

synonymous codons when possible (using the most optimal codon, excluding

the wild-type codon).

Barcode integration and variant-barcode association

10 μg of the attB-HA-b2AR-eLOV-TEVcs-Gal4-UAS-Citrine saturation

mutagenesis plasmid was digested with 40 units PpuMI (New England Biolabs)

overnight at 37°, then in the morning 10 units more PpuMI were added and 30

minutes more incubation at 37°. Then the cut band was gel purified. The

barcode construct (oTLM_257) was made double stranded by PCR amplifying

with oTLM_258 and oTLM_259 (Supplementary Table 5). Double stranded

barcode was incorporated into the cut plasmid backbone by Gibson assembly

and transformed into electrocompetent bacteria. Following recovery in SOC

media, we plated 0.1% of the transformation to estimate the number of clones,

and inoculated the rest into LB media with ampicillin for overnight growth.

Estimated number of clones was 300,000. In the morning the bacteria was

pelleted and plasmid was midi-prepped (Qiagen Plasmid Plus Midi Kit).

We used PacBio long read sequencing to associate each variant with the

barcode. We digested the plasmid pool with BsiWI (New England Biolabs) to

release the coding sequence and barcode and SMRT bell adapters were ligated

according to manufacturer's instructions. The library was sequenced on a

PacBio Sequel IIe. We used alignparse[80] to align reads, quality filter, and call

sequences for each barcode (Supplementary Figure 1).

Landing pad integration

HEK 293T LLP-iCasp9-Blast[40] cells were a gift from Kenny Matreyek.

Cells were grown in DMEM with GlutaMAX (Gibco), with Tetracyline-free fetal

bovine serum. 14 million cells were plated onto a T225 flask. The next day,

transfection was done with Lipofectamine 3000 (Invitrogen) with 17.5 µg of

pCAG-NLS-HA-Bxb1 and 17.5 µg of the mutated and barcoded attB-HA-b2AR-

eLOV-TEVcs-Gal4-UAS-Citrine. The cells were allowed to incubate for two

days. Then, the media was removed and replaced with media containing 2

µg/mL doxycycline and incubated for one day. Then, the media was changed

for media containing 2 µg/mL doxycycline and 10 nM rimiducid

(MedChemExpress) and incubated for one day. Then media was changed to

include just 2 µg/mL doxycycline and outgrowth of cells was allowed for ~one

week, passaging cells when they reached 90% confluency.

GPCR-MAPS recruitment experiment

10 million cells were plated onto each T175 flask and allowed to incubate

overnight. The next day, the cells were transfected with 36 µg of transducer

plasmids (pUC19-NanoLuc-β-arrestin-uTEVp1 or pUC19-NanoLuc-Nb80-

uTEVp1), using Lipofectamine 3000 and allowed to incubate overnight. The

next morning, cells were treated with media containing furimazine and either

drug or DMSO: [13.05 mL DMEM, 126.56 µL furimazine, 270 µL 1M HEPES,

and 13.5 µL isoproterenol or DMSO]. Furimazine was obtained from the Nano-

Glo Live Cell Assay System (Promega). Isoprenaline was obtained from Sigma

(catalog number 15627). Cells were incubated in the dark (covered with

aluminum foil) at 37° for 24 hours. Then, cells were lifted with Trypsin-EDTA,

pelleted and stored in -80 until RNA extraction. For the Gal4 maximum

stimulation condition, after 10 million cells were plated and grown overnight, 36

µg of pUC19-CMV-Gal4 was transfected with Lipofectamine 3000. The cells

were allowed to incubate for 30 hours, then cells were pelleted and stored at -

80°.

RNA isolation and sequencing library preparation

For the first set of experiments (Nb80 and β-arrestin recruitment with 10

μM isoprenaline), cell pellets were thawed and resuspended in buffer RLT with

added beta-mercaptoethanol. Then, they were homogenized by centrifuging

through QIAshredder columns. RNA was then purified from the homogenate

with RNeasy Midi-prep kit (Qiagen) and eluted with 400 μL of water. Between

120 and 160 μg of total RNA was used as input for reverse transcription (RT)

reactions (6-8 μg per reaction, 20 reactions per sample) using SuperScript III

reverse transcriptase (Invitrogen). For the dose response experiment,

Dynabeads mRNA direct purification kit (ThermoFisher Scientific) was used

according to manufacturers instructions and mRNA was eluted in 80 μL of Tris-

HCl. Total mRNA yields were between 11.5 μg and 16 μg. Between 5.75 and 8

μg mRNA was used as input for RT (1.15-1.6 μg per reaction, 10 reactions per

sample). For both sets of reactions, RT was carried out with 2 pmol of primer

(oTLM_266, Supplementary Table 5) and incubated at 55° for one hour then

75° for 15 minutes. Following this, RNase A was added to a final concentration

of 100 μg/mL and reactions incubated at 37° for 30 minutes. Then, reactions

were cleaned up with Nucleospin PCR cleanup columns (Macherey Nagel) and

eluted in 50 μL of elution buffer. 0.5 μL of the cDNA eluate was used in a qPCR

reaction (Q5 High-Fidelity polymerase, New England Biolabs, and EvaGreen

fluorescent dye, Biotium) to determine the number of cycles required to reach

near-plateau phase. Then, 40 μL of cDNA was amplified across 4x 50 μL PCR

reactions with the program 98° for 30s, followed by 13-16 cycles of [98° for 15s,

64° for 30s, 72° for 30s].

Reactions were column purified and 4% of this was used as input for a

second round PCR, which added the rest of the Illumina adapter as well as

unique index sequences. The second round PCR was 98° for 30s, followed by 5

cycles of [98° for 15s, 64° for 30s, 72° for 30s]. Frameshifting primers were

used to introduce variability in the first few cycles of the sequencing reaction

(oTLM_277-282, Supplementary Table 5). Reactions were then gel purified and

analyzed on TapeStation (Agilent Technologies). Sequencing was done with

Illumina NovaSeq with 2x50 paired end reads.

An additional step was taken for the dose response experiment.

Following RT, we performed triplicate qPCR reactions with each cDNA sample,

along with a set of serial dilutions of the original library plasmid, in order to

estimate the relative quantity of Citrine RNA produced from each experiment.

We used primers oTLM_021 and oTLM_024, which amplify the 5' UTR of

Citrine. We chose to amplify this region instead of the barcode (as was done for

the library prep) to avoid idiosyncratic effects of amplification efficiency caused

by diverse and potentially different barcode identities across different samples.

Following qPCR we fit a standard curve (Supplementary Fig. 5b) then used this

to estimate RNA abundance for the dose response samples (Figure 5b).

Surface expression experiment cell culture and FACS

Cells were cultured in 245x245mm cell culture flasks until ~80%

confluent. Then, cells were lifted with Trypsin-EDTA, pelleted, supernatant

removed, and resuspended in blocking buffer (1% bovine serum albumin in

phosphate buffered saline). Cells were counted and 50 M cells were transferred

to a 5 mL conical tube with 3.5 mL of blocking buffer, and incubated on ice,

covered from light, with rocking for 30 minutes. Then, anti-HA antibody (Cell

Signaling HA-Tag 6E2 Alexa Fluor 647 Conjugate) was added at dilution of

1:100 and incubated on ice, covered from light, with rocking for 60 more

minutes. Then, cells were pelleted, supernatant removed, and resuspended in

blocking buffer. Sorting was done on the BD FACSAria instrument. Bins were

drawn so that each represented ~25% of cells. In total, ~20M cells were sorted

for replicate 1, and ~30M cells were sorted for replicates 2 and 3. 30-45M 2x50

basepair reads were collected on an Illumina NovaSeq instrument for each

replicate.

Surface expression sequencing library preparation

Sorted cells were pelleted and DNA extracted using Qiagen DNeasy

Blood & Tissue kit, using 2 columns for each sample. 200 µL elution buffer was

used to elute from each column, then eluates for each sample were combined.

Then, 320 µL of each sample was was used as input for 16x 50 µL PCRs with

primers adjacent to the barcode that include partial Illumina adapters and also

varying lengths of degenerate bases to increase nucleotide complexity in the

first few cycles of the sequencing run (oTLM277-oTLM282, Supplementary

Table 5). Cycling was 98° for 30s, followed by 25 cycles of [98° for 15s, 64° for

30s, 72° for 30s]. Reactions were column purified and 4% of this was used as

input for a second round PCR, which added the rest of the Illumina adapter as

well as unique index sequences. The second round PCR was 98° for 30s,

followed by 5 cycles of [98° for 15s, 64° for 30s, 72° for 30s]. The products of

the second PCR were gel purified and analyzed on TapeStation, then

sequenced on Illumina NovaSeq with 2x50 paired end reads.

Sequencing data processing

Paired-end sequencing reads were first merged with vsearch[81] and then

adapters were trimmed with cutadapt[82]. This leaves each read representing the

barcode sequence, which was then matched with barcodes identified in the

variant-barcode association with a custom script.

Calculation of surface expression scores

Surface expression scores were calculated as previously described[25].

Briefly, the frequency of each variant in each bin is enumerated by combining

counts of all barcodes associated with that variant. The frequency, along with

the total number of cells sorted into each bin, is used to estimate the number of

cells in each bin. Then, the log10 transformed geometric mean fluorescence

value of all cells sorted into each bin is combined with the estimated cell counts

to arrive at the raw surface expression estimate. These estimates were then

normalized between 0 (represented by the median of presumed loss-of-function

variants: e.g. premature stop codons before the 300th amino acid) and 1, the

wild-type score. Surface expression scores were considered high confidence if

the estimated number of cells sorted was >50.

Calculation of recruitment scores

First, barcode read counts for all barcodes representing the same variant

were combined and then the frequency of that variant was calculated by

dividing that number by the total number of barcode counts in the sample.

Then, to arrive at a raw score, we divided the variant frequency in the

experimental sample by the variant frequency in the Gal4 sample, and take the

$\log_2$ of this. The Gal4 sample represents a maximum stimulation condition in

which the barcode frequency in the library, as well as any idiosyncratic effects

of the barcode sequence on RNA stability should be captured. Raw scores are

then scaled between 0 and 1, with the median of nonsense mutations set as 0

and the wild-type score set as 1. Recruitment scores were considered high

confidence if the frequency of that variant in the Gal4 condition was $>2 \times 10^{-5}$.

LOWESS modeling and identifying outlier positions

The python package statsmodels.nonparametric.smoothers_lowess[83]

was used with the following parameter values: frac=0.5, it=3, delta=0.0.

Following curve fitting, residuals were calculated as the distance in the y-axis

between the data point and the line, and z-scores were calculated as the

residual / standard error of the mean. In the case of Nb80 versus β-arrestin, the

average standard error of the mean between the two measurements was used.

Structural analysis

Residue contacts were defined by GetContacts

(https://getcontacts.github.io/index.html). We used the definition of the

isoprenaline binding site as presented in the publication solving and describing

the structure[44]. Specific interactions between residues and isoprenaline atoms

were taken from the publication as well as GetContacts. The binding interface of

β2AR with Nb80 was defined by GetContacts analysis of structure. The

predicted inactive and active structures in Figure 6k were taken from GPCRdb

and were produced with AlphaFold-Multistate[45]. These structures were used to

enable visualization of the entire ICL3, which is not resolved in experimentally

solved structures.

Dose response curve fitting

In the package neutcurve[84], we used the neutcurve.hillcurve.HillCurve

function to fit curves with the following options:

infectivity_or_neutralized='neutralized', fix_slope_first=True, fs_stderr=None,

fixbottom=False, fixtop=False, fixslope=False, fitlogc=False,

use_stderr_for_fit=False, no_curve_fit_first=False. Following the fitting

procedure, we then filtered curves based on heuristics: $R^2 > 0.9$, EC50 within

the measured range (i.e. between 10pM and 10uM), and $E_{max} < 1.5x$ the

maximum measured recruitment value. See Supplementary Figure 5e for the

number of variants filtered.

Fpocket pocket prediction

We used PDB ID 2RH1 as the structural template for pocket prediction

and used the Fpocket web server with default settings to predict pockets. We

chose the two pockets to illustrate simply based on having many or few

annotated residues.

Acknowledgments

We thank Christina Kim for advice regarding the SPARK2 system. We

thank the CRG/UPF Flow Cytometry Unit for technical assistance. We thank

Jana Selent and lab members for helpful discussion. We thank all members of

the Lehner lab for helpful discussion.

Data availability

Files needed to reproduce analyses can be found at zenodo

(https://zenodo.org/records/15363336). Raw sequencing reads can be found at

Sequence Read Archive (accession number PRJNA1260170).

Code availability

Custom code to reproduce analyses can be found at github

(https://github.com/lehner-lab/GPCR-MAPS).

Competing interests

CRG and the Genome Research Ltd have filed a patent application for the

use of the methods described in this study for mapping allostery in GPCRs; T.M.

and B.L. are listed as inventors. B.L. is a founder and shareholder of ALLOX.

Figure 1. GPCR-MAPs

a Schematic of the experimental framework. A mutagenized GPCR (in this case β2AR) is encoded in a plasmid that also includes the attB recombination site, an N-terminal HA epitope tag, C-terminal fusions of a light, oxygen, and voltage sensitive (LOV) domain, the cleavage site of TEV protease (TEVcs), and Gal4 transcription factor. Downstream, on the same plasmid, is the fluorescent protein Citrine, driven by Gal4-responsive UAS promoter, with a degenerate DNA barcode included in the 3' untranslated region. This construct is recombined into HEK 293T LLP-iCasp9-Blast landing pad cells. Then, two assays are performed to measure the surface expression (FACS-based) and recruitment activity (transcriptional reporter) of variants *en masse***.** The outputs of these experiments (DNA for FACS and RNA for transcriptional reporter) are sequenced with short read technology. Estimated surface expression and recruitment scores are then modeled to understand the contribution of each of these to the variant effects. **b** Detailed schematic of the recruitment assay. The receptor construct is expressed from landing pad cells while the transducer construct is transiently transfected. Addition of agonist (isoprenaline in this case) and furimazine results in recruitment of transducer to the receptor fusion and subsequent cleavage of the TEVcs, liberating Gal4 which moves to the nucleus and drives transcription of the UAS-Citrine-barcode construct. **c** Replicate Pearson correlations for the surface expression, Nb80 recruitment, and βArr recruitment. $p < 10^{-100}$ in each case. **d** Heatmap representation of the surface expression data. β2AR positions on the x-axis, mutation on the y-axis. Gray cells indicate expression similar to wild-type while blue and red cells indicate reduced and increased expression, respectively. **e** Histogram of

surface expression variant scores; nonsense variants in red, synonymous wild-

type in green, and missense in grey. **f** Heatmap representation of the Nb80

recruitment data. Axes and color scale as in (d). **g** Histogram of Nb80

recruitment scores; colors as in (e). **h** Heatmap representation of β-Arrestin

recruitment scores. Axes and color scale as in (d). **i** Histogram of β-Arrestin

recruitment scores; colors as in (e). **j** Surface expression scores for residues in

the isoprenaline binding site in the solved structure (PDB ID: 7DHR). **k** Nb80

recruitment scores for residues in the isoprenaline binding site. **l** β-Arrestin

recruitment scores for residues in the isoprenaline binding site.

1030

Figure 2. Deconvolving recruitment and expression

a Surface expression versus Nb80 recruitment scores for missense variants.

$p < 10^{-100}$. **b** Surface expression versus β-Arrestin recruitment scores for

missense variants. $p < 10^{-100}$. **c** Schematic of the method for identifying residues

contributing to recruitment beyond what can be explained by surface

expression. First, the recruitment data is related to surface expression with a

LOWESS regression. Then, for each variant, residuals to this fit are calculated.

Then, residues with significantly biased residuals are identified as loss-of-

function or gain-of-function via Mann Whitney U test. Finally, positions where

variants have a wide range of effects, quantified using the interquartile range of

variant z-scores, are identified as change-of-function. **d** LOWESS fit of surface

expression versus Nb80 recruitment, with variant points colored by residual to

the fit. **d** Same as (e) but for β-Arrestin recruitment. **f** Volcano plot showing the

position-average z-score and the minus log10 transformed p-value of all

residues for Nb80 recruitment. Residues with significantly biased residuals are

colored according to the average z-score. **g** Same as in (f) but for β-Arrestin

recruitment. **h** Venn diagrams showing the number of residues called loss-,

gain-, and chage-of-function for Nb80 and β-Arrestin recruitment. **i** Surface

expression and recruitment effects of variants at D113^{3x32}, plotted over the

population of variant effects, for Nb80 and β-Arrestin recruitment versus surface

expression. Error bars represent standard error of the mean. **j** Same as (i) but

with variants at position E268^{6x30}. **k** Same as (i) and (j) but with variants at

position L75^{2x46}. **l** Loss-of-function residues highlighted in purple on the

isoprenaline-bound β2AR structure (PDB ID: 7DHR, isoprenaline in yellow). **m**

Gain-of-function residues highlighted in green on β2AR. **n** Change-of-function

residues highlighted in red on β2AR

1057

Figure 3. A core activation network links ligands to transducers

a Inactive and active state structures of β2AR with LoF residues colored purple.

Those LoF residues that make a direct contact with other LoF residues are

visualized as pseudobonds connecting them, while disconnected LoF residues

are shown with spheres. **b** Enlarged view of the core activation network with

residues labeled and their participation in different structural motifs. **c** Venn

diagram showing the overlap between network residues identified in this work

and previous work. **d** Variant surface expression and Nb80 recruitment at

S120^{3x39}, a CoF residue, are plotted against the population of all variants. **e**

Same as (d) but with variants at L124^{3x43}, a GoF residue. **f** The isoprenaline

binding pocket, with isoprenaline highlighted in yellow, and the residues making

up the binding site colored according to their median expression adjusted Nb80

recruitment level. **g** Violin plot of expression adjusted Nb80 recruitment at the

isoprenaline binding site residues. Violins are colored according to their median

value, with the same color scale as in (f).

1073

Figure 4. Genetic control of receptor recruitment bias

a Schematic showing β2AR activation through β-Arrestin and Nb80 in response

to isoprenaline. **b** Nb80 versus β-Arrestin recruitment for missense variants.

$p < 10^{-100}$, n=6,791. **c** Nb80 versus β-Arrestin recruitment with a LOWESS fit and

variant scores colored by residual to the fit line. Individual variant scores, with

error bars representing standard error of the mean, shown for three variants

previously reported to cause biased signaling. **d** Volcano plot showing the

position-average z-score and the minus log10 transformed p-value of all

residues for Nb80 versus β-Arrestin recruitment. Residues with significantly

biased residuals are colored according to the average z-score. **e** Nb80 and β-

Arrestin recruitment effects of variants at W99^{23x50}, plotted over the population

of variant effects, error bars represent standard error of the mean. **f** Same as in

(e) but with variants at P138^{34x50}. **g** Same as in (e) but with variants at F332^{8x50}.

h β-Arrestin biased, Nb80 biased, or bias switch residues highlighted on the

solved structure, 7DHR. Isoprenaline shown in yellow. **i** F193^{45x52} and Y318^{7x34}

form a "lid" over isoprenaline in the solved structure (7DHR). **j** Hydrophobicity

(Kyte-Doolittle scale) of the mutant amino acid compared with the Nb80 versus

β-Arrestin recruitment bias. **k** Enlarged view of the extracellular vestibule.

Colored residues are significantly Nb80-biased (orange), β-Arrestin-biased

(blue), or bias switches (magenta). **l** Enlarged view of NPxxY motif and TM7,

colored residues same as in (k).

1095

Figure 5. Quantifying >7,500 dose-response relationships

a Experimental design: serial dilutions of isoprenaline were used to stimulate landing pad cells expressing the β2AR library. Then, the GPCR-MAPS recruitment assay was performed and RNA was collected from the stimulated cells. **b** The RNA abundance from each sample was first quantified with qPCR, then the variant frequencies were estimated with short-read sequencing. **c** Per-variant normalized scores were then calculated by normalizing variant frequencies in each condition by the RNA abundance of each condition. **d** Heatmap representations of the 8 highest concentration drug treatment conditions. β2AR positions on the x-axis, mutation identities on the y-axis. One y-axis is blown up; the rest of the heatmaps follow this same scheme. Grey cells indicate wild-type-like recruitment, blue and red indicate reduced and increased recruitment, respectively. One color bar is blown up; the rest of the heatmaps follow this same scheme. **e** Clustered heatmap of recruitment intensities. Color bar on top. Three main clusters correspond to wild-type-like, moderately damaging, and complete loss-of-function curves. **f** The curve fit to the wild-type data, with E_{max}, E_{min}, EC_{50}, and slope indicated. **g** Fit curves from the wild-type-like cluster in black, wild-type curve in red. **h** Fit curves from the moderately damaging cluster in black, wild-type curve in red. **i** Fit curves from the loss-of-function cluster in black, wild-type curve in red.

Figure 6. Genetic determinants of potency

a Schematic showing example curves for increased and decreased potency. **b** Comparison of variant EC_{50} estimates from this study with previously published estimates[18]. Red dashed line is x=y line. **c** Spearman correlations of curve

fitting parameter estimates and surface expression scores. **d** Surface

expression scores compared with log-transformed EC_{50} estimates. $p < 10^{-100}$. **e**

Volcano plot showing the position-average z-score and the minus log10

transformed p-value of all residues for log EC_{50} versus surface expression. **f**

Log-transformed EC_{50} versus surface expression for variants at $R328^{7x55}$,

plotted over the population of variant effects, error bars represent standard error

of the mean. **g** Same as in (f) but with variants at $E268^{6x30}$. **h** Same as in (f) but

with variants at $F282^{6x44}$. **i** EC_{50} loss-of-function, gain-of-function, or change-of-

function residues highlighted on the solved structure, 7DHR. Isoprenaline show

in yellow. **j** Violin plots showing minimum distance between LoF, GoF, or CoF

residues from the core activation network in AlphaFold-Multistate active state

model. Distances capped at 20Å. **k** Portions of TMs 3, 5, and 6, as predicted by

AlphaFold-Multistate and downloaded from GPCRdb[45]. LoF residues colored

aquamarine, GoF residues colored brown, and CoF residues colored salmon.

1135

Figure 7. Rationalization and prioritization of allosteric pockets

a The binding pocket of known negative allosteric modulator, AS408, shown in

yellow. PDB ID: 6OBA. Residues making direct contact with the NAM are

colored beige. **b** Expression normalized maximum recruitment through Nb80,

recruitment bias, and expression normalized potency of the mutations at sites

making up the binding pocket of AS408. Shown below the heatmaps are the

categorical annotations of significant residues: purple, green, and red indicate

LoF, GoF, and CoF residues for maximum recruitment. Orange, blue, and

magenta indicate Nb80 biased, β-Arrestin, biased, or bias switches.

Aquamarine, brown, and salmon indicate LoF, GoF, and CoF for potency. **c** The

binding pocket of AS408 with annotated residues colored. For residues

annotated in both maximum recruitment and potency analyses, the color from

maximum recruitment was used. **d, e, f** Same as in (a, b, c) but for the positive

allosteric modulator Cmpd-6FA, with structure 6N48. **g, h, i** Same as in (a, b, c)

but for a predicted active pocket in structure 2RH1. **j, k, l** Same as in (a, b, c)

but for a predicted inactive pocket in structure 2RH1.

1152

Figure 8. Summary of findings.

a Selected findings from the maximum recruitment analysis. Core activation

network shown as purple lines, residues or topological domains colored

according to annotation. **b** Selected findings from biased recruitment analysis.

NPxxY motif collectively illustrated as "bias switch" as there are multiple bias

functional residues in and near this motif. **c** Selected findings from the potency

analysis. Ligand binding and second shell residues illustrated as triangle.

References

1. Bockaert, J. & Philippe Pin, J. Molecular tinkering of G protein-coupled receptors: an evolutionary success. *EMBO J.* **18**, 1723–1729 (1999).

2. Farrens, D. L., Altenbach, C., Yang, K., Hubbell, W. L. & Khorana, H. G. Requirement of Rigid-Body Motion of Transmembrane Helices for Light Activation of Rhodopsin. *Science* **274**, 768–770 (1996).

3. Rosenbaum, D. M., Rasmussen, S. G. F. & Kobilka, B. K. The structure and function of G-protein-coupled receptors. *Nature* **459**, 356–363 (2009).

4. Jean-Charles, P.-Y., Kaur, S. & Shenoy, S. K. GPCR signaling via β-arrestin-dependent mechanisms. *J. Cardiovasc. Pharmacol.* **70**, 142–158 (2017).

5. Overington, J. P., Al-Lazikani, B. & Hopkins, A. L. How many drug targets are there? *Nat. Rev. Drug Discov.* **5**, 993–996 (2006).

6. Sriram, K. & Insel, P. A. G Protein-Coupled Receptors as Targets for Approved Drugs: How Many Targets and How Many Drugs? *Mol. Pharmacol.* **93**, 251–258 (2018).

7. Wold, E. A., Chen, J., Cunningham, K. A. & Zhou, J. Allosteric Modulation of Class A GPCRs: Targets, Agents, and Emerging Concepts. *J. Med. Chem.* **62**, 88–127 (2019).

8. Wootten, D., Christopoulos, A., Marti-Solano, M., Babu, M. M. & Sexton, P. M. Mechanisms of signalling and biased agonism in G protein-coupled receptors. *Nat. Rev. Mol. Cell Biol.* **19**, 638–653 (2018).

9. May, L. T., Leach, K., Sexton, P. M. & Christopoulos, A. Allosteric modulation of G protein-coupled receptors. *Annu. Rev. Pharmacol. Toxicol.* **47**, 1–51 (2007).

10. Kenakin, T. Biased Receptor Signaling in Drug Discovery. *Pharmacol. Rev.* **71**, 267–315 (2019).

11.   Wootten, D., Christopoulos, A. & Sexton, P. M. Emerging paradigms in GPCR

allostery: implications for drug discovery. *Nat. Rev. Drug Discov.* **12**, 630–644

(2013).

12.   Lorente, J. S. *et al.* GPCR drug discovery: new agents, targets and indications.

Nat. Rev. Drug Discov. 1–22 (2025) doi:10.1038/s41573-025-01139-y.

13.   Bermudez, M., Nguyen, T. N., Omieczynski, C. & Wolber, G. Strategies for the

discovery of biased GPCR ligands. *Drug Discov. Today* **24**, 1031–1037 (2019).

14.   Allosteric Modulator Discovery: From Serendipity to Structure-Based Design. *J.*

Med. Chem. **62**, 6405–6421 (2019).

15.   Venkatakrishnan, A. J. *et al.* Diverse activation pathways in class A GPCRs

converge near the G-protein-coupling region. *Nature* **536**, 484–487 (2016).

16.   Zhou, Q. *et al.* Common activation mechanism of class A GPCRs. *eLife* **8**, e50279

(2019).

17.   Ward, W. H. J., Timms, D. & Fersht, A. R. Protein engineering and the study of

structure—function relationships in receptors. *Trends Pharmacol. Sci.* **11**, 280–284

(1990).

18.   Heydenreich, F. M. *et al.* Molecular determinants of ligand efficacy and potency

in GPCR signaling. *Science* **382**, eadh1859 (2023).

19.   Morales-Pastor, A. *et al.* Multiple triggers converge to preferential effector

coupling in the CB2R through a complex allosteric communication network.

2024.02.27.582279 Preprint at https://doi.org/10.1101/2024.02.27.582279 (2024).

20.   Cao, Y. *et al.* Unraveling allostery within the angiotensin II type 1 receptor for

Gαq and β-arrestin coupling. *Sci. Signal.* **16**, eadf2173 (2023).

21.   Penn, W. D. *et al.* Probing biophysical sequence constraints within the

transmembrane domains of rhodopsin by deep mutational scanning. *Sci. Adv.* **6**,

eaay7505 (2020).

22.   McKee, A. G. *et al.* Systematic profiling of temperature- and retinal-sensitive

rhodopsin variants by deep mutational scanning. *J. Biol. Chem.* **297**, 101359 (2021).

23.   Heredia, J. D. *et al.* Mapping Interaction Sites on Human Chemokine Receptors

by Deep Mutational Scanning. *J. Immunol.* **200**, 3825–3839 (2018).

24.   Park, J. *et al.* Structural architecture of a dimeric class C GPCR based on co-

trafficking of sweet taste receptor subunits. *J. Biol. Chem.* **294**, 4759–4774 (2019).

25.   Mighell, T. L. & Lehner, B. A small molecule stabilizer rescues the surface

expression of nearly all missense variants in a GPCR. *Nat. Struct. Mol. Biol.* 1–12

(2025) doi:10.1038/s41594-025-01659-6.

26.   Yoo, J. I., Daugherty, P. S. & O'Malley, M. A. Bridging non-overlapping reads

illuminates high-order epistasis between distal protein sites in a GPCR. *Nat.*

Commun. **11**, 690 (2020).

27.   Jones, E. M. *et al.* Structural and functional characterization of G protein–

coupled receptors with deep mutational scanning. *eLife* **9**, e54895 (2020).

28.   Howard, M. K. *et al.* Molecular basis of proton sensing by G protein-coupled

receptors. *Cell* **188**, 671-687.e20 (2025).

29.   Howard, C. J. *et al.* High resolution deep mutational scanning of the

melanocortin-4 receptor enables target characterization for drug discovery. *eLife*

13, (2024).

30.   LaFlam, T. N. *et al.* Phenotypic pleiotropy of missense variants in human B cell

confinement receptor P2RY8. *Cell Genomics* 100981 (2025)

doi:10.1016/j.xgen.2025.100981.

31.   Fallon, B. S., Rondem, K. E., Mumby, E. J. & English, J. G. Biased Signaling in G

Protein-Coupled Receptors: Understanding the Biological Relevance and Tools for

Probing Functionally Selective Ligands. *Biochemistry* **64**, 1425–1436 (2025).

32.   Bogan, A. A. & Thorn, K. S. Anatomy of hot spots in protein interfaces1. *J. Mol.*

Biol. **280**, 1–9 (1998).

33.   Hedderich, J. B. *et al.* The pocketome of G-protein-coupled receptors reveals

previously untargeted allosteric sites. *Nat. Commun.* **13**, 2567 (2022).

34.   Ippolito, M. & Benovic, J. L. Biased agonism at β-adrenergic receptors. *Cell.*

Signal. **80**, 109905 (2021).

35.   Maximilian R Stammnitz & Ben Lehner. The genetic architecture of an allosteric

hormone receptor. *bioRxiv* (2025).

36.   Kroeze, W. K. *et al.* PRESTO-Tango as an open-source resource for interrogation

of the druggable human GPCRome. *Nat. Struct. Mol. Biol.* **22**, 362–369 (2015).

37.   Macdonald, C. B. *et al.* DIMPLE: deep insertion, deletion, and missense

mutation libraries for exploring protein variation in evolution, disease, and biology.

Genome Biol. **24**, 36 (2023).

38.   Weile, J. *et al.* A framework for exhaustively mapping functional missense

variants. *Mol. Syst. Biol.* **13**, 957 (2017).

39.   Mighell, T. L., Toledano, I. & Lehner, B. SUNi mutagenesis: Scalable and uniform

nicking for efficient generation of variant libraries. *PLOS ONE* **18**, e0288158 (2023).

40.   Matreyek, K. A., Stephany, J. J., Chiasson, M. A., Hasle, N. & Fowler, D. M. An

improved platform for functional assessment of large protein libraries in

mammalian cells. *Nucleic Acids Res.* **48**, e1 (2020).

41.   Kim, C. K., Cho, K. F., Kim, M. W. & Ting, A. Y. Luciferase-LOV BRET enables

versatile and specific transcriptional readout of cellular protein-protein interactions.

eLife **8**, e43826 (2019).

42.   Rasmussen, S. G. F. *et al.* Structure of a nanobody-stabilized active state of the

β2 adrenoceptor. *Nature* **469**, 175–180 (2011).

43.   Nehmé, R. *et al.* Mini-G proteins: Novel tools for studying GPCRs in their active

conformation. *PLoS ONE* **12**, e0175642 (2017).

44.   Yang, F. *et al.* Different conformational responses of the β2-adrenergic

receptor-Gs complex upon binding of the partial agonist salbutamol or the full

agonist isoprenaline. *Natl. Sci. Rev.* **8**, nwaa284 (2021).

45.   Pándy-Szekeres, G. *et al.* GPCRdb in 2023: state-specific structure models using

AlphaFold2 and new ligand resources. *Nucleic Acids Res.* **51**, D395–D402 (2023).

46.   Valentin-Hansen, L. *et al.* The Arginine of the DRY Motif in Transmembrane

Segment III Functions as a Balancing Micro-switch in the Activation of the β2-

Adrenergic Receptor. *J. Biol. Chem.* **287**, 31973–31982 (2012).

47.   Nygaard, R., Frimurer, T. M., Holst, B., Rosenkilde, M. M. & Schwartz, T. W.

Ligand binding and micro-switches in 7TM receptor structures. *Trends Pharmacol.*

Sci. **30**, 249–259 (2009).

48.   Yang, D. *et al.* G protein-coupled receptors: structure- and function-based drug

discovery. *Signal Transduct. Target. Ther.* **6**, 1–27 (2021).

49. Ragnarsson, L., Andersson, Å., Thomas, W. G. & Lewis, R. J. Mutations in the

NPxxY motif stabilize pharmacologically distinct conformational states of the α1B-

and β2-adrenoceptors. *Sci. Signal.* **12**, eaas9485 (2019).

50. Zhao, L., He, X., Jiang, H. & Cheng, X. Computational characterization of

transducer recognition of β2 adrenergic receptor. *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.*

592, 67–73 (2022).

51. Zhou, Q. *et al.* Common activation mechanism of class A GPCRs. *eLife* **8**, e50279

(2019).

52. Rovati, G. E., Capra, V. & Neubig, R. R. The highly conserved DRY motif of class

A G protein-coupled receptors: beyond the ground state. *Mol. Pharmacol.* **71**, 959–

964 (2007).

53. Rasmussen, S. G. F. *et al.* Mutation of a Highly Conserved Aspartic Acid in the

*β*2 Adrenergic Receptor: Constitutive Activation, Structural Instability, and

Conformational Rearrangement of Transmembrane Segment 6. *Mol. Pharmacol.* **56**,

175–184 (1999).

54. Tao, Y. X., Abell, A. N., Liu, X., Nakamura, K. & Segaloff, D. L. Constitutive

activation of G protein-coupled receptors as a result of selective substitution of a

conserved leucine residue in transmembrane helix III. *Mol. Endocrinol. Baltim. Md*

14, 1272–1282 (2000).

55. Wheatley, M. *et al.* Lifting the lid on GPCRs: the role of extracellular loops. *Br. J.*

Pharmacol. **165**, 1688–1703 (2012).

56. Ippolito, M., De Pascali, F., Inoue, A. & Benovic, J. L. Phenylalanine 193 in

Extracellular Loop 2 of the β2-Adrenergic Receptor Coordinates β-Arrestin

Interaction. *Mol. Pharmacol.* **101**, 87–94 (2022).

57.   Choi, M. *et al.* G protein–coupled receptor kinases (GRKs) orchestrate biased

1299   agonism at the β2-adrenergic receptor. *Sci. Signal.* **11**, eaar7084 (2018).

1300   58.   Sanchez-Soto, M. *et al.* A structural basis for how ligand binding site changes

1301   can allosterically regulate GPCR signaling and engender functional selectivity. *Sci.*

1302   *Signal.* **13**, eaaw5885 (2020).

1303   59.   Masureel, M. *et al.* Structural insights into binding specificity, efficacy and bias

1304   of a β2AR partial agonist. *Nat. Chem. Biol.* **14**, 1059–1066 (2018).

1305   60.   Bock, A. & Bermudez, M. Allosteric coupling and biased agonism in G protein-

1306   coupled receptors. *FEBS J.* **288**, 2513–2528 (2021).

1307   61.   Woo, A. Y.-H. *et al.* Tyrosine 308 is necessary for ligand-directed Gs protein-

1308   biased signaling of β2-adrenoceptor. *J. Biol. Chem.* **289**, 19351–19363 (2014).

1309   62.   Dror, R. O. *et al.* Pathway and mechanism of drug binding to G-protein-coupled

1310   receptors. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* **108**, 13118–13123 (2011).

1311   63.   Liu, J. J., Horst, R., Katritch, V., Stevens, R. C. & Wüthrich, K. Biased Signaling

1312   Pathways in β2-Adrenergic Receptor Characterized by 19F-NMR. *Science* **335**, 1106–

1313   1110 (2012).

1314   64.   Chure, G. *et al.* Predictive shifts in free energy couple mutations to their

1315   phenotypic consequences. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* **116**, 18275–18284 (2019).

1316   65.   Razo-Mejia, M. *et al.* Tuning Transcriptional Regulation through Signaling: A

1317   Predictive Theory of Allosteric Induction. *Cell Syst.* **6**, 456-469.e10 (2018).

1318   66.   Steiner, P. J. *et al.* A Closed Form Model for Molecular Ratchet-Type Chemically

1319   Induced Dimerization Modules. *Biochemistry* **62**, 281–291 (2023).

1320   67.   Weis, W. I. & Kobilka, B. K. The Molecular Basis of G Protein–Coupled Receptor

1321   Activation. *Annu. Rev. Biochem.* **87**, 897–919 (2018).

68.   Sadler, F. *et al.* Autoregulation of GPCR signalling through the third intracellular

loop. *Nature* **615**, 734–741 (2023).

69.   Li, X., Zhou, M., Huang, W. & Yang, H. N-glycosylation of the β2 adrenergic

receptor regulates receptor function by modulating dimerization. *FEBS J.* **284**, 2004–

2018 (2017).

70.   Chen, S. *et al.* Mutation of a Single TMVI Residue, Phe282, in the β2-Adrenergic

Receptor Results in Structurally Distinct Activated Receptor Conformations.

Biochemistry **41**, 6045–6053 (2002).

71.   Liu, X. *et al.* An allosteric modulator binds to a conformational hub in the β2

adrenergic receptor. *Nat. Chem. Biol.* **16**, 749–755 (2020).

72.   Liu, X. *et al.* Mechanism of β2AR regulation by an intracellular positive allosteric

modulator. *Science* **364**, 1283–1287 (2019).

73.   Le Guilloux, V., Schmidtke, P. & Tuffery, P. Fpocket: An open source platform

for ligand pocket detection. *BMC Bioinformatics* **10**, 168 (2009).

74.   Chen, G. *et al.* Activation and allosteric regulation of the orphan GPR88-Gi1

signaling complex. *Nat. Commun.* **13**, 2375 (2022).

75.   Onaran, H. O. *et al.* Systematic errors in detecting biased agonism: Analysis of

current methods and development of a new model-free approach. *Sci. Rep.* **7**,

44247 (2017).

76.   Beltran, A., Faure, A. J. & Lehner, B. The allosteric landscape of the Src kinase.

2024.04.26.591297 Preprint at https://doi.org/10.1101/2024.04.26.591297 (2024).

77.   Sanchez, M. I. & Ting, A. Y. Directed evolution improves the catalytic efficiency

of TEV protease. *Nat. Methods* **17**, 167–174 (2020).

78.   Kim, M. W. *et al.* Time-gated detection of protein-protein interactions with

transcriptional readout. *eLife* **6**, e30233 (2017).

79.   Carpenter, B. & Tate, C. G. Engineering a minimal G protein to facilitate

crystallisation of G protein-coupled receptors in their active conformation. *Protein*

Eng. Des. Sel. **29**, 583–594 (2016).

80.   Crawford, K. H. d & Bloom, J. D. alignparse: A Python package for parsing

complex features from high-throughput long-read sequencing. *J. Open Source*

Softw. **4**, 1915 (2019).

81.   Rognes, T., Flouri, T., Nichols, B., Quince, C. & Mahé, F. VSEARCH: a versatile

open source tool for metagenomics. *PeerJ* **4**, e2584 (2016).

82.   Martin, M. Cutadapt removes adapter sequences from high-throughput

sequencing reads. *EMBnet.journal* **17**, 10–12 (2011).

83.   Seabold, S. & Perktold, J. Statsmodels: Econometric and Statistical Modeling

with Python. *Proc. 9th Python Sci. Conf.* 92–96 (2010) doi:10.25080/Majora-

92bf1922-011.

84.   Loes, A. N. *et al.* High-throughput sequencing-based neutralization assay

reveals how repeated vaccinations impact titers to recent human H1N1 influenza

strains. *J. Virol.* **98**, e00689-24 (2024).

1363

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

a
Inactive (2RH1)   Active (3SN6)

b
Ligand binding (D113³ˣ³², V114³ˣ³³, V117³ˣ³⁶, T118³ˣ³⁷, A119³ˣ³⁸, I121³ˣ⁴⁰, S165⁴ˣ⁵⁷, Y199⁵ˣ³⁹, F193⁴⁵ˣ⁵², S203⁵ˣ⁴³, S204⁵ˣ⁴⁴, S207⁵ˣ⁴⁶¹, F208⁵ˣ⁴⁷, Y209⁵ˣ⁴⁸, F289⁶ˣ⁵¹, F290⁶ˣ⁵², N293⁶ˣ⁵⁵, I294⁶ˣ⁵⁶, N312⁷ˣ³⁸, G315⁷ˣ⁴¹)

CWxP (W286⁶ˣ⁴⁸)
PIF (I121³ˣ⁴⁰)

N318⁷ˣ⁴⁵
Y219⁵ˣ⁵⁸
V129³ˣ⁴⁸
A128³ˣ⁴⁷
DRY (R131³ˣ⁵⁰)

M82²ˣ⁵³
Sodium binding pocket (A76²ˣ⁴⁷, A78²ˣ⁴⁹, D79²ˣ⁵⁰)
I127³ˣ⁴⁶
NPxxY (N322⁷ˣ⁴⁹, I325⁷ˣ⁵², Y326⁷ˣ⁵³)
Transducer binding
I135³ˣ⁵⁴, T136³ˣ⁵⁵, C327⁷ˣ⁵⁴, S329⁸ˣ⁴⁷, P330⁸ˣ⁴⁸

c
Residues in defined activation networks:

This study
20
7   6
6
16   6
4
Zhou (class A)   Heydenreich (β2AR)

d
S120³ˣ³⁹ (CoF)
Nb80 recruitment
Surface expression

e
L124³ˣ⁴³ (GoF)
Nb80 recruitment
Surface expression

f
N293⁶ˣ⁵⁵   N312⁷ˣ³⁸
S203⁵ˣ⁴³   D113³ˣ³²
S204⁵ˣ⁴⁴
S207⁵ˣ⁴⁶¹
V117³ˣ³⁶   F193⁴⁵ˣ⁵²
F290⁶ˣ⁵²

······· H-bond
—·—· Hydrophobic

-0.2
Exp. adjusted Nb80 recruitment
-0.95

g
Exp. adjusted Nb80 recruitment
Positions
204 113 117 207 203 312 290 193 293

Figure 4

a
Isoprenaline
β2AR
βArr   Nb80

b βArr recruitment vs Nb80 recruitment

c βArr recruitment vs Nb80 recruitment
F193A
Y219A
Y199A

d -log10 p-value vs Nb80 vs. βArr z-score

e P138^{34x50} (βArr biased)

f W99^{23x50} (Nb80 biased)

g F332^{8x50} (bias switch)

i F193^{45x52} Isoprenaline
Y308^{7x34}

h
β-arrestin biased   Nb80 biased   Bias switches

j Y308^{7x34} (bias switch)
Nb80 vs. βArr residual vs Mutant aa hydrophobicity
T L V
S A I
K
G
D H M
Q
P
W
E
ρ = 0.67

k **Extracellular vestibule**
W173^{ECL2}
A181^{ECL2}
I169^{4x61}
N196^{5x36}
Y199^{5x39}
I298^{6x60}
Y308^{7x34}
E306^{7x32}
W313^{7x39}
Y185^{ECL2}
C184^{ECL2}
T189^{ECL2}
F101^{23x52}
W99^{23x50}
S111^{3x30}
M40^{1x39}

l **NPxxY and TM7**
C285^{6x47}
N318^{7x45}
M279^{6x41}
Y326^{7x53}
R328^{7x55}
P330^{8x48}
A46^{1x45}
N51^{1x51}
P323^{7x50}
F332^{8x50}

Figure 5

a 12x serial isoP dilutions

10 μM
2.8 μM
816 nM
233 nM
66 nM
19 nM
5.4 nM
1.5 nM
444 pM
126 pM
36 pM
10 pM

GPCR-MAPS

Collect RNA

b Estimate RNA abundance per condition (qPCR)

Illumina sequence for per-variant frequencies

c Per-variant normalized score: variant freq / condition RNA abun.

Recruitment magnitude

d

A V I L M F Y W S T N Q C G P R H K D E * del Median

10 uM
2.8 uM
816 nM
233 nM
66 nM
19 nM
5.4 nM
1.5 nM

N-term TM1 ICL1 TM2 ECL1 TM3 ICL2 TM4 ECL2 TM5 ICL3 TM6 ECL3 TM7 C-term

e

1. Wild-type-like
2. Mod. damaging
3. Loss-of-function

10 pM → 10 μM

f Wild-type

$E_{max} = 1$
$E_{min} = 0$
$EC_{50} = 26.2$ nM
slope = 0.84

g Wild-type-like

n = 4,886 vars

h Mod. damaging

n = 674 vars

i Loss-of-function

n = 28 vars

Figure 6

Figure 7

a Negative allosteric modulator (AS408)   Functionally annotated pocket

b Positive allosteric modulator (Cmpd-6FA)

c Predicted active pocket (Fpocket)

d Predicted inactive pocket (Fpocket)

Figure 8