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► **To cite this version:**

Clément Ricard, Erica D Arroyo, Cynthia X He, Carlos Portera-Cailliau, Gabriel Lepousez, et al.. Two-photon probes for in vivo multicolor microscopy of the structure and signals of brain cells. *Brain Structure and Function*, 2018, 223 (7), pp.3011 - 3043. 10.1007/s00429-018-1678-1 . hal-01872748

**HAL Id: hal-01872748**

**<https://hal.science/hal-01872748>**

Submitted on 12 Sep 2018

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1 **Two-photon probes for *in vivo* multicolor**  
2 **microscopy of the structure and signals of brain**  
3 **cells.**

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36 **[Keywords]**

37 Two-photon cross section, calcium imaging, functional imaging, electroporation, intravital,  
38 multicolor microscopy.

39

## 40 **Abstract**

41 Imaging the brain of living laboratory animals at a microscopic scale can be achieved by two-  
42 photon microscopy thanks to the high penetrability and low phototoxicity of the excitation  
43 wavelengths used. However, knowledge of the two-photon spectral properties of the myriad  
44 fluorescent probes is generally scarce and, for many, non-existent. Additionally, the use of  
45 different measurement units in published reports further hinders the design of a  
46 comprehensive imaging experiment.

47 In this review, we compile and homogenize the two-photon spectral properties of more than  
48 280 fluorescent probes. We provide practical data, including the wavelengths for optimal two-  
49 photon excitation, the peak values of two-photon action cross-section or molecular brightness,  
50 and the emission ranges. Beyond the spectroscopic description of these fluorophores, we  
51 discuss their binding to biological targets. This specificity allows *in vivo* imaging of cells,  
52 their processes, and even organelles and other subcellular structures in the brain. In addition  
53 to probes that monitor endogenous cell metabolism, studies of healthy and diseased brain  
54 benefit from the specific binding of certain probes to pathology-specific features, ranging  
55 from amyloid- $\beta$  plaques to the autofluorescence of certain antibiotics. A special focus is  
56 placed on functional *in vivo* imaging using two-photon probes that sense specific ions or  
57 membrane potential, and that may be combined with optogenetic actuators. Being closely  
58 linked to their use, we examine the different routes of intravital delivery of these fluorescent  
59 probes according to the target. Finally, we discuss different approaches, strategies, and  
60 prerequisites for two-photon multicolor experiments in the brains of living laboratory animals.

## 61 **Introduction**

62 Two-photon excitation fluorescence microscopy, or two-photon microscopy (TPM), became a  
63 standard and powerful method of investigation in biology due to its excellent penetrability in  
64 living tissues and high spatiotemporal resolution, while inducing low phototoxicity and  
65 photobleaching compared to other optical techniques (Denk et al. 1990; So et al. 2000; Zipfel  
66 et al. 2003b; Helmchen and Denk 2005). In this review, we focus on neuroscience because the  
67 functional and physiological properties of the brain makes it a particularly fecund field for the  
68 application of TPM (Svoboda and Yasuda 2006; Mostany et al. 2015).

69 The sophistication of intravital TPM is currently expanding through three axes: 1. Hardware;  
70 2. Sample preparation and new genetic tools; 3. Fluorescent probes (Crowe and Ellis-Davies  
71 2014). First, as far as hardware there have been improvements and new developments in  
72 excitation sources, scanning, and detection. The popularization of optical parametric  
73 oscillators (OPO), which allow excitation far beyond the traditional Titanium:Sapphire lasers,  
74 helps improve the depth of imaging up to 1.6 mm (Kobat et al. 2011). Deep scattering tissues  
75 can be efficiently observed by wavefront optimization thanks to adaptive optics (Ji et al. 2010;  
76 Wang et al. 2015). New kinds of detectors like GaAsP photomultipliers or hybrid avalanche  
77 photodiodes allow detection of dimmer signals. Also, promising advances in the  
78 miniaturization of two-photon microscopes are enabling simultaneous recordings of neural  
79 circuit activity in freely moving animals (Yu et al. 2015; Zong et al. 2017) while avoiding the  
80 side effects associated with the use of anesthetics (Tran and Gordon 2015; Santisakultarm et  
81 al. 2016).

82 Second, refinements in sample preparation beyond the original glass-covered cranial windows  
83 (Holtmaat et al. 2009) and skull thinning (Yang et al. 2010) now permit chronic live imaging  
84 below the superficial layers of neocortex. For example, a substantial increase in resolution can  
85 be achieved by replacing the single coverslip with a pair of coverslips separated by a thin

86 layer of air, which minimizes the effects of spherical aberration (Estrada et al. 2015). Also,  
87 surgical GRIN lens implantation can be combined with head-mounted miniscopes (Resendez  
88 et al. 2016) or standard two-photon microscopes for imaging of deep brain structures such as  
89 hippocampus (Crowe and Ellis-Davies 2014).

90 *In vivo* TPM imaging also benefits from the use of genetic tools that can target fluorochrome  
91 expression to different brain cells, including promoters for specific cell types (*e.g.*, Thy1 mice  
92 for Layer 5B neurons (Feng et al. 2000), CX3CR1 mice for microglia (Jung et al. 2000)). Cre-  
93 Lox recombination can be fruitfully used to target any fluorescent protein in spatially  
94 restricted patterns, such as different cell types, cortical layers, or brain regions, thanks to the  
95 existence of a number of Cre driver lines. Other genetic strategies (*e.g.*, Cre-ER<sup>T2</sup>) can  
96 temporally restrict expression (Kristianto et al. 2017). Different fluorochromes can be  
97 simultaneously expressed on different cells of the same lineage thus (*e.g.*, the Brainbow  
98 construct (Livet et al. 2007)) or on different cell types by breeding together mice of different  
99 phenotypes (*e.g.*, Thy1-**CFP**/LysM-**GFP**/CD11c-**EYFP** (Fenrich et al. 2013)).

100 Designing new transgenic animal models has been recently made less arduous than previously  
101 by CRISPR/Cas9 (Wang and Qi 2016) and PiggyBac (Woodard and Wilson 2015)  
102 technologies, but remains a time-consuming task that can be overcome by the administration  
103 of exogenous fluorescent probes. Depending on the target and on physical and chemical  
104 properties of the probe, methods of administration can range from intravenous dye injection to  
105 *in utero* electroporation and viral protein transduction.

106 Third, the availability of increasing numbers of two-photon-suitable synthetic dyes or  
107 genetically encoded probes with extended properties has brought new perspectives to the use  
108 of TPM in neuroscience. One of these perspectives consists of two-photon functional  
109 imaging, which makes possible to witness brain cells ‘at work’ thanks to voltage-sensitive

110 dyes, probes that monitor levels of various ions (*e.g.*, Cl<sup>-</sup>, Ca<sup>2+</sup>) (Helmchen 2009), or caged  
111 neurotransmitters that can be photoreleased with TPM (Hess et al. 2014).  
112 Beyond the prolific engineering of new fluorescent proteins that unquestionably and fruitfully  
113 expands the biological applications of TPM (Pak et al. 2015), its routine use is hindered by  
114 the need for a more extensive characterization of spectral properties of existing fluorescent  
115 probes. Recent developments in far-red two-photon excitation make the need for an update of  
116 the spectral characteristics of fluorescent probes even more acute (Herz et al. 2010; Mojzisova  
117 and Vermot 2011). While commercial and academic databases of one-photon absorption  
118 spectra are well documented, the two-photon specifications of most probes are only scarcely  
119 documented, despite a small number of helpful initiatives (Bestvater et al. 2002; Cahalan et al.  
120 2002; Drobizhev et al. 2011; Mütze et al. 2012; Romanelli et al. 2013; Lim and Cho 2013).  
121 In this review, we provide a comprehensive list of two-photon–related spectral and biological  
122 properties of more than 280 fluorescent probes, and discuss different routes of delivery of  
123 such probes into laboratory animals, as well as their actual or prospective relevance to *in vivo*  
124 multicolor TPM of cells, structures, and functions, in the healthy and diseased brain.

125

126

127

## 128 1) Reaching the target

### 129 1.1 Intravenous route

130 Blood vessels transport oxygen and nutrients in the whole organism and can be used to  
131 deliver fluorescent dyes into the tiniest parts of an organ (*cf.* Table 1).

132 Blood vessel labeling requires only the intravenous delivery of a fluorescent dye to efficiently  
133 stain an entire organ's vascular tree, which can then be observed *in vivo* with TPM by a z-

134 stack acquisition (Tozer et al. 2005; Ricard et al. 2013b). Common dyes such as **fluorescein**  
135 or **rhodamine** (*cf.* Table 2) can be used; these are harmless to the animal and cleared from the  
136 circulation after a few hours. As capillaries can be permeable to small molecules, these dyes  
137 are usually conjugated with a large molecular weight dextran that is too large to leak into the  
138 tissue. The molecular weight of the resulting dye can thus be chosen depending on the  
139 permeability of the targeted type of vessel. Neocortical arteries and arterioles can be  
140 specifically labeled using **Alexa Fluor 633** (*cf.* Table 3), which binds to elastin fibres (Shen et  
141 al. 2012). However, when multicolor labeling is required, green or red channels are frequently  
142 chosen through the use of other fluorophores or fluorescent proteins (*e.g.*, **EGFP** or **DsRed**).  
143 Blue-emitting dyes such as **Cascade Blue** have been successfully used in intravital studies  
144 and can efficiently be excited by TPM (Ricard and Debarbieux 2014; Ricard et al. 2016b). It  
145 must be considered, however, that in living tissues the maximum imaging depth is a function  
146 of the wavelengths of both the excitation and fluorescence beam. In the TPM range, high-  
147 energy photons are quickly absorbed by the tissue, resulting in a reduced imaging depth  
148 (König 2000). Such a parameter has to be taken into account in the design of the experiment.  
149 Moreover, fluorescent dyes conjugated to dextrans can be captured by phagocytes resulting in  
150 a long-lasting labeling of these cells (Fenrich et al. 2012; Fiole et al. 2014). Such labeling is  
151 observed in the brain and spinal cord dura mater for several days after a single intravenous  
152 injection and can impede the correct segmentation of blood vessels during image processing.  
153 **Quantum dots** were introduced as an alternative to classic fluorescent dyes. They present low  
154 toxicity, are not engulfed by macrophages, have reduced photobleaching, and can fluoresce in  
155 the red and deep-red range, making them particularly suitable for multicolor imaging  
156 (Mashinchian et al. 2014). It was also demonstrated that excitation of quantum dots using an  
157 optical parametric oscillator can improve imaging depth of vasculature in the brain and the  
158 spinal cord (Kobat et al. 2009, 2011; Ricard et al. 2016a). The fluorescence intermittency of



159 quantum dots (Frantsuzov et al. 2013) should however be taken into consideration especially  
160 for single-particle tracking, unless their nonblinking properties are established (Marchuk et al.  
161 2012; Lane et al. 2014).

162 Intravenous injections of fluorescent dyes have also been used to label other structures.  
163 **Sulforhodamine 101** and **Sulforhodamine B** were reported to leak out of the vasculature and  
164 to stain specifically astrocytes (*cf.* Table 1 and Table 3) without showing adverse reactions on  
165 astrocytic calcium signals or electroencephalographic recording *in vivo* (Appaix et al. 2012;  
166 Vérant et al. 2013). **Sulforhodamine B** was also demonstrated to stain elastic fibers in blood  
167 vessel walls, as well as in muscles after a single intravenous injection (Ricard et al. 2007).

168 Intravenous injection of fluorescent probes can also be used to determine the acidity of tissues  
169 using pH indicators (*cf.* Table 4), or to measure physiological parameters such as cerebral  
170 blood flow (Chaigneau et al. 2003) and blood-brain-barrier permeability (Ricard et al. 2009)  
171 in different pathologies, including vascular occlusion (Schaffer et al. 2006) and brain tumors  
172 (Ricard et al. 2013b, 2016b). Investigating the properties of the blood vessel tree enables the  
173 assessment of side effects of treatments in preclinical trials (Ricard et al. 2013a). For instance,  
174 the blood vessel density of glioblastoma-animals injected with **Rhodamine B** dextran was  
175 recorded over time. Experiments conducted in untreated conditions and after the  
176 administration of bevacizumab, an anti-angiogenic compound, revealed a lack of correlation  
177 between tumor growth and blood vessel density (Ricard et al. 2013b).

178 As an alternative but comparable route to intravenous delivery, intraperitoneal administration  
179 (*cf.* Table 1) of fluorochromes can also be performed to stain structures in the diseased brain  
180 (*cf.* Table 5). For example, in Alzheimer's disease research, amyloid- $\beta$  plaques can be  
181 specifically stained by intraperitoneal administration of **SAD1** (Heo et al. 2013) or **Methoxy-**  
182 **X04** (Klunk et al. 2002), revealing the kinetics of amyloid- $\beta$  plaques growing over months  
183 (Burgold et al. 2011).

184

## 185 1.2 Whole-cell and bulk loading

186 A large population of neurons can be bulk-loaded with a cell membrane-permeable  
187 acetoxymethyl (AM) ester-conjugated indicator form (*e.g.*, **Fura-2-AM** or **Fluo-4-AM**)  
188 (Garaschuk et al. 2006; Brenowitz and Regehr 2014) or dextran-conjugated form, enabling  
189 readout of activity across a network (Yuste et al. 2011; Reeves et al. 2011). Bulk-loading of  
190 ion indicators may be spatially restricted to the soma and most proximal processes of neural  
191 cells. However, Reeves *et al.* have shown that performing morphological reconstructions after  
192 bulk-loading of astrocytes in the CA1 region of the hippocampus from rats can help detecting  
193 calcium transients in distal astrocyte processes (Reeves et al. 2011).

194 Alternatively, chemical ion indicators can be typically delivered into single cells via  
195 micropipettes (enabling electrophysiology) or electroporation (Liu and Haas 2011;  
196 Grienberger and Konnerth 2012). While the chemical indicators have high sensitivity and fast  
197 on-off kinetics allowing for precise temporal resolution of action potentials, they are typically  
198 used in acute experimental preparations (a few hours at most), and they are not amenable for  
199 labeling of specific cell populations (Grienberger and Konnerth 2012).

200

## 201 1.3 Viral transduction

202 In order to allow expression of new genes coding for fluorescent proteins in spatially-  
203 restricted and genetically-defined neurons, researchers have developed a versatile toolbox of  
204 replication-incompetent recombinant viral vectors (*cf.* Table 1) that are devoid of most of  
205 their natural genetic material and loaded with engineered constructs (Nassi et al. 2015). The

206 diversity of available vectors reflects the different specifications of each viral vectors in terms  
207 of:

- 208 1) tropism for cell type, compartment (axonal vs. somato-dendritic), and animal species. This  
209 tropism is directly influenced by the nature of the glycoprotein of the envelope (which defines  
210 the serotype) and the expression of receptors for envelope glycoprotein on targeted cells  
211 leading to vector internalization;
- 212 2) transduction and expression efficiency, speed of expression after infection, and stability for  
213 long term expression;
- 214 3) vector genome size and maximum insert size, ease of manipulating the genome and  
215 producing high-titer solutions, and integration into the host genome;
- 216 4) and immunogenicity, cell toxicity and safety.

217 Here we list the main viral vectors used in the neuroscience field and their general features:

- 218 - retroviruses are integrative vectors with an insert size up to 8-9 kB, providing a stable  
219 long-term expression. They exclusively transduce dividing cells and show moderate  
220 immunogeneticity.
- 221 - lentiviruses are integrative vectors with an insert size up to 8-9 kb, good for stable  
222 long-term expression. They have a large tropism and can transduce most CNS cells  
223 (astrocytes, neurons, and oligodendrocytes) and show moderate immunogeneticity.
- 224 - adeno-associated viruses (AAV) are currently the most commonly used vector for  
225 gene delivery. They are non-integrative vectors with an insert size up to 4-5 kb.  
226 Because of their small size and high titer production, a single injection can infect a  
227 large volume of tissue. They are also favored over other vectors for their mild  
228 immunogenicity and a dominant neuronal tropism. To enlarge their tropism, envelope  
229 proteins have been engineered using directed evolution to target specific cell types  
230 (*e.g.*, oligodendrocytes (Büning et al. 2015; Powell et al. 2016)) or to target specific

231 neuronal compartments (*e.g.*, axonal domain for retrograde labeling of neurons (Tervo  
232 et al. 2016)).

233 - Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV-1) is a non-integrative vector with an insert size up to  
234 100 kb. Although its complex genome is not easy to manipulate, HSV-1s transduce  
235 mainly neurons with a dominant axonal tropism, making them an interesting tool for  
236 retrograde labeling of neurons. Importantly, they show significant immunogenicity  
237 and cell toxicity.

238 - Canine Adenovirus (CAV-2) is a non-integrative vector with a smaller insert size up to  
239 30 kb (Junyent and Kremer 2015). CAV-2s transduce mainly neurons with a dominant  
240 axonal tropism, making them an interesting tool for retrograde labeling of neurons.  
241 The main receptor for the internalization of the virus is the coxsackievirus and  
242 adenovirus receptor (CAR). They also show a significant immunogenicity and cell  
243 toxicity.

244 - Rabies virus (RABV) is a non-integrative vector with an insert size of 4-5 kb. RABVs  
245 are neurotropic and are classically used as replication-conditional pseudotyped viruses  
246 for retrograde tracing of mono-synaptic inputs onto genetically-defined cell  
247 populations (Wickersham et al. 2007). Rabies virus is pseudotyped with the EnvA  
248 glycoprotein to ensure that the virus exclusively infects cells expressing the EnvA  
249 receptor (TVA). The virus also lacks the envelope glycoprotein and expresses the gene  
250 of interest. Complementation of the modified rabies virus with the envelope  
251 glycoprotein in the TVA-expressing cells allows the generation of infectious particles,  
252 which trans-synaptically infect presynaptic neurons. Importantly, rabies virus shows  
253 strong neurotoxicity with longer-term infection (>15 days).

254



## 256 1.4 *In utero* electroporation

257 *In utero* electroporation (IUE) is a technique that enables researchers to express genes of  
258 interest within specific neuronal populations (*cf.* Table 1) by targeting plasmid DNA  
259 constructs directly to the embryonic brain of rodents (Fukuchi-Shimogori and Grove 2001;  
260 Saito and Nakatsuji 2001; Takahashi et al. 2002; Wang and Mei 2013). Although this section  
261 focuses on cerebral cortex, IUE can be used for gene transfer in other brain regions  
262 (Takiguchi-Hayashi et al. 2004; Borrell et al. 2005; Nakahira et al. 2006; Navarro-Quiroga et  
263 al. 2007; Bonnin et al. 2007). For cortical labeling, IUE takes advantage of one of the most  
264 reliable and tightly regulated processes that occurs during brain development: the sequential  
265 inside-out laminar organization of the cortex, whereby neurons in deeper layers are generated  
266 before those in more superficial layers (Angevine and Sidman 1961; Rakic 1974). IUE is  
267 performed at the gestational age that coincides with the generation of pyramidal precursor  
268 cells at the subventricular zone along the lateral ventricles. These newborn neurons eventually  
269 migrate to and incorporate into their appropriate cortical layer (Caviness and Takahashi 1995;  
270 Tabata and Nakajima 2001). For instance, to label layer 2/3 excitatory pyramidal neurons,  
271 IUE is performed at embryonic day (E)15-16 (Saito and Nakatsuji 2001).

272 Although IUE can be used to over-express essentially any protein of interest, it is perhaps  
273 most often used to express fluorescent proteins that make it possible to image neuronal  
274 structure with confocal or two-photon microscopy. Because IUE can provide sparse labeling  
275 in neurons, it is particularly well-suited for high-resolution imaging of the finest detail of  
276 neuronal structure, such as dendritic spines. Another major advantage of IUE over traditional  
277 fluorescence labeling techniques such as transgenic mouse lines, is that it enables researchers  
278 to conduct early postnatal imaging. This is due to the fact that expression of fluorescent  
279 proteins (*e.g.*, **GFP**, **YFP**) in transgenic mouse lines is often driven by promoters that initiate

280 transcription after synaptogenesis has already been completed in neocortex; for example,  
281 cortical expression of **YFP** in Thy1-eYFP-H mice occurs around postnatal day (P) 21 (Feng et  
282 al. 2000; Porrero et al. 2010)). IUE can also achieve potent transduction of fluorescent  
283 proteins through the use of constitutively active promoters such as pCAG or other CMV  
284 variations (Saito and Nakatsuji 2001); this is particularly useful for deep tissue imaging with  
285 *in vivo* TPM. Following IUE, mice can be imaged from perinatal development through  
286 adulthood (Cruz-Martin et al. 2010). Another problem with transgenic lines is that layer  
287 specificity is limited by the fidelity of the promoter itself and specific Cre lines are not yet  
288 available for desired cell types or brain regions, or they may have off target expression. In  
289 contrast, IUE at different embryonic stages can be used to target different cortical layers in  
290 different locations. Furthermore, tailoring DNA plasmid constructs to a particular  
291 experimental design is less expensive and less time-consuming than generating new mouse  
292 lines. Additionally, co-labeling cells with multiple fluorophores using IUE can easily be  
293 achieved by co-injecting multiple plasmids or by using bi-cistronic promoters (*e.g.*, P2A (Kim  
294 et al. 2011)). It is also possible to design plasmids to express opsins or DREADD constructs,  
295 to genetically manipulate subpopulations of neurons both constitutively and conditionally  
296 (Takahashi et al. 2002; Matsuda and Cepko 2004, 2007; Yasuda et al. 2006; Huber et al.  
297 2008; Manent et al. 2009). IUE also affords significant flexibility because the level of  
298 expression can be controlled by varying the voltage delivery, concentration of the plasmid,  
299 and the volume injected. Of note, IUE may not be compatible with the expression of  
300 fluorescent calcium indicators (**GCaMP6**) as anecdotal reports suggest that few if any  
301 neurons survive postnatally, presumably due to some toxicity from calcium buffering.  
302 In conclusion, IUE is a powerful method for the expression of proteins in the early postnatal  
303 brain and into adulthood, especially for layer-specific cortical neurons.

304

## 305 2) Interrogating neural signals

### 306 2.1 Calcium imaging

307 The ability to measure changes in ion levels in living tissues with fluorescent microscopy  
308 offers many possibilities for scientific investigations (*cf.* Table 6). Across cell types and  
309 within multiple intracellular compartments, calcium ions ( $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ) play a variety of important  
310 roles, including cell cycle regulation, gene transcription modulation, intracellular signaling,  
311 muscle contraction and neurotransmission (Grienberger and Konnerth 2012). Action  
312 potentials in neurons result in massive influxes of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  through voltage-gated channels, as  
313 well as the release of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  from intracellular stores (Kandel et al. 2000), and fluctuations in  
314 free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  in the presynaptic and postsynaptic compartments contribute to activity-dependent  
315 plasticity (Grienberger and Konnerth 2012). Because changes in the level of intracellular  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$   
316 are a robust indicator of action potential firing in neurons, fluorescent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  indicators have  
317 become powerful tools for recording neural activity with excellent spatial and temporal  
318 resolution. Additionally, different types of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  signaling events have been studied in  
319 astrocytes (Srinivasan et al. 2015) and in cardiomyocytes (Herron et al. 2012).

320 In general,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  imaging relies on a fluorescent sensor compound that is introduced into  
321 neurons (or other cells) and that, when bound to  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ , changes its fluorescent properties. The  
322 two primary classes of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  indicators are the synthetic chemical indicators and the  
323 genetically encoded indicators. The chemical calcium indicators (*e.g.*, **Fura-2**, **Indo-1**, **Fluo-**  
324 **4**, **Oregon Green BAPTA-1**) were pioneered by Roger Tsien's group and utilize a synthetic  
325  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  chelator combined with a fluorophore (Grynkiewicz et al. 1985; Tsien et al. 1985; Brain  
326 and Bennett 1997; Gee et al. 2000). When  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  binds to the chelator site, the molecule  
327 undergoes a conformational change that alters the spectrum of emitted fluorescence



328 (Grienberger and Konnerth 2012). **Fura-2** is excited by ultraviolet wavelengths, produces  
329 peak fluorescence at 505-520 nm, and has relatively fast kinetics (Tsien et al. 1985). Under  
330 two-photon excitation, **Fura-2** fluorescence decreases as  $[Ca^{2+}]$  increases, producing  
331 decreases in fluorescence intensity during neuronal activity. In contrast, the fluorescence  
332 emitted by **Fluo-4** and **Oregon Green BAPTA-1** increases above its baseline as  $[Ca^{2+}]$   
333 increases during action potential firing.

334 The genetically encoded  $Ca^{2+}$  indicators (GECIs) use a  $Ca^{2+}$  binding protein, such as  
335 calmodulin or troponin, instead of a chelator like BAPTA. Since the discovery of the green  
336 fluorescent protein, scientists have generated an array of sensors combining **GFP** variants  
337 with  $Ca^{2+}$ -binding proteins. The GECI subcategory of cameleons (Miyawaki et al. 1997), is  
338 perhaps the most popular amongst GECIs, but other varieties exist based on troponin-C as the  
339  $Ca^{2+}$ -binding protein (Mank et al. 2008). Yellow Cameleon (Nagai et al. 2004) utilizes Förster  
340 resonance energy transfer (FRET) between two different fluorescent proteins, linked by  
341 calmodulin and calmodulin binding peptide M13. Upon calmodulin binding to  $Ca^{2+}$ , the  
342 conformational change brings the two fluorophores – one **ECFP** and one **Venus-YFP** – close  
343 enough to result in activation of the yellow, resulting in a measurable change in the  
344 cyan:yellow fluorescence ratio (Nagai et al. 2004; Grienberger et al. 2014).

345 For *in vivo* two-photon  $Ca^{2+}$  imaging, the most frequently used GECI is the cameleon-based  
346 **GCaMP** variety, which utilizes a single circularly permuted green fluorophore (**GFP**)  
347 attached to calmodulin and the M13 peptide, and is maintained in a low fluorescence state  
348 when  $Ca^{2+}$  is not bound (Nakai et al. 2001).  $Ca^{2+}$  binding to calmodulin causes a  
349 conformational shift that changes the solvent exposure of the **GFP** and allows a fluorescence  
350 increase (Chen et al. 2013). Earlier versions of **GCaMP** indicators had relatively low slow  
351 on-off kinetics and signal-to-noise ratio, which could however be improved by 3D Block-  
352 Matching filtering (Danielyan et al. 2014). More recently, the development of the

353 “ultrasensitive” **GCaMP6** has improved neuronal event detection capability to single-spike  
354 resolution, though the off-kinetics remain somewhat slow (Chen et al. 2013). Typical  
355 expression methods for GECIs include viral transduction (Chen et al. 2013), with the  
356 associated limitation of eventual cytotoxicity caused by long-term calcium sequestration; and  
357 transgenic mice expressing **GCaMP** (Zariwala et al. 2012; Chen et al. 2012; Dana et al.  
358 2014). Finally, it is important to note that continual improvements have also been made in  
359 red-shifted GECIs (Looger and Griesbeck 2011), with the most recent iterations being  
360 **jRCaMP1a**, **jRCaMP1b**, and **jRGECO1a** (Dana et al. 2016). Further developments in these  
361 latter GECIs will allow neuroscientists to record from even deeper brain structures, due to the  
362 reduced scattering of longer-wavelength excitation light.

363

## 364 2.2 Sodium imaging

365 Another important ion that can be measured intracellularly is  $\text{Na}^+$ . In contrast to  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$   
366 indicators,  $\text{Na}^+$  indicators are designed to measure  $\text{Na}^+$  concentration in millimolar ranges and  
367 therefore these dyes have significantly lower affinity. A commonly used indicator is **SBFI**  
368 that is excitable in the UV range and has ratiometric properties similar to **Fura** indicators.  
369 This indicator has been used to measure  $\text{Na}^+$  in neurons (Myoga et al. 2009) and astrocytes  
370 (Langer and Rose 2009). An alternative indicator excitable with blue light is **Sodium Green**  
371 that was also used to measure  $\text{Na}^+$  in neurons (Senatorov et al. 2000). More recently, a greater  
372 sensitivity for fast  $\text{Na}^+$  changes in neuronal axons was found for the green excitable indicator  
373 **ANG-2** (Miyazaki and Ross 2015).

374

## 375 2.3 Voltage-sensitive dyes

376 One problem with  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  imaging is that the kinetics of the dyes, on the order of hundreds of  
377 milliseconds or seconds, are orders of magnitude slower than the duration of typical action  
378 potentials. As a result, one cannot record neural activity with precise temporal resolution,  
379 which is critical for phenomena like spike timing dependent plasticity. Ideally, one would  
380 want to record changes in membrane potential ( $V_m$ ), using either organic (*cf.* Table 6) or  
381 genetically encoded voltage sensors (GEVS), which have exquisite temporal resolution. *In*  
382 *vivo* voltage-sensitive dye (VSD) imaging from large cell populations in the anesthetized  
383 mammalian brain was developed in the nineties (Shoham et al. 1999; Petersen et al. 2003;  
384 Grinvald and Hildesheim 2004). This approach is sometimes coupled with intracortical  
385 microstimulation and electrode recordings, and requires either injection or topical application  
386 (Murphy et al. 2008) of oxonol VSDs, such as **RH-1692**. These have been designed to absorb  
387 light in the red region and are therefore outside the absorption band of haemoglobin (which  
388 causes pulsation and hemodynamic noise in brain recordings). More recently, styryl VSDs  
389 with similar spectral properties were developed (Zhou et al. 2007). The techniques of *in vivo*  
390 VSD imaging from large cell populations, using oxonol dyes, further progressed until  
391 enabling recordings from the barrel cortex of awake head-fixed mice (Poulet and Petersen  
392 2008) or from freely moving animals (Ferezou et al. 2006).

393 Among the other *in vivo* applications of VSD imaging, it is important to mention the studies  
394 on embryonic developing nervous systems (Kamino et al. 1989). For this application,  
395 absorption VSDs such as NK2429 (Fujii et al. 1981) are typically used, since the high  
396 translucency of embryonic tissue allows high-sensitivity absorption measurements (Momose-  
397 Sato et al. 2001). To achieve *in vivo*  $V_m$  imaging with cellular or subcellular resolution, two-  
398 photon excitation can be used. To this purpose, the two-photon cross-sections of several styryl  
399 VSDs were measured (Fisher et al. 2005). Action potentials from mammalian nerve terminals  
400 were then recorded in an *ex vivo* preparation, the neurohypophysis (*pars nervosa*), using the

401 VSD **di-3-ANEPPDHQ** (Fisher et al. 2008). More recently, some novel fluorinated VSDs  
402 (Yan et al. 2012) that appear to be more photostable when excited by two photon were  
403 developed, and have been used to resolve action potentials from dendritic spines in brain  
404 slices (Acker et al. 2011).

405 In many cases, *in vivo* two-photon  $V_m$  imaging requires the topical application of two-photon  
406 suitable VSD (*cf.* Table 1) after either craniotomy (Murphy et al. 2008). This challenging  
407 approach is highly rewarding as it allows  $V_m$  imaging during wakefulness after topical  
408 administration of **ANNINE-6** (Kuhn et al. 2008), opening the door for simultaneous  $V_m$   
409 imaging and behavioral tests.

410 In summary, *in vivo*  $V_m$  imaging using organic indicators has several practical limitations  
411 associated with dye loading, access to small structures, and stability of recordings. In terms of  
412 future prospective, most of these limitations can be overcome by replacing organic indicators  
413 with GEVS that can be expressed *in vivo* by viral transduction (Marshall et al. 2016). The first  
414 generation of GEVS was developed by mutating the *Drosophila* Shaker potassium channel  
415 and fusing it to a **GFP** protein (Siegel and Isacoff 1997). While good optical responses to  $V_m$   
416 changes could be obtained by expressing the sensor in oocytes, the protein could not be  
417 expressed in the plasma membrane of mammalian neurons and therefore a second generation  
418 of GEVS was developed (Dimitrov et al. 2007). These GEVSs, now expressed in neuronal  
419 outer membranes, were based on the voltage-sensitive phosphatase from the sea squirt, *Ciona*  
420 *intestinalis*, fused to a **CFP** and **YFP** FRET pair (Lundby et al. 2008). From these pioneering  
421 works, new GEVS based either on single FRET pairs (Jin et al. 2012) or on **GFP** probes (St-  
422 Pierre et al. 2014) have been more recently developed with faster responses and enhanced  
423 sensitivity, opening the gate to future explorations of activity in the living brain.

424

425

426

427

## 428           2.4 Optogenetics actuators

429   Optogenetic technology has become an essential tool to study the structure and the function of  
430   the neural circuits underlying behavior and cognition. Using photosensitive microbial opsin  
431   genes expressed into genetically defined neurons, optogenetics provides millisecond-precision  
432   control —activation or inhibition — of defined circuit elements in intact organisms with light  
433   (reviewed by Deisseroth (Deisseroth 2015)). Recent developments have provided a large  
434   diversity of excitatory and inhibitory opsins that are sensitive to different wavelengths. For  
435   instance, red-light-activated opsins (such as C1V1, ChRimson) allow simultaneous activation  
436   of neurons and imaging of neuronal activity with the green genetic probe **GCaMP**.  
437   Optogenetic tools have been upgraded to achieve two-photon manipulation of neuronal  
438   populations at the single-cell resolution. The red-light-activated C1V1 opsin allows the robust  
439   generation of precise and fast spike trains using 1,040-nm light and standard raster-scanning  
440   light delivery (Prakash et al. 2012). This tool can also be used in combination with two-  
441   photon imaging of **GCaMP** probe using 920-nm light (Rickgauer et al. 2014; Packer et al.  
442   2015). Inhibitory opsins such as eNpHR3.0 have also proven to be efficient for neuronal  
443   inhibition using 1,040 nm light (Prakash et al. 2012). New illumination methods now exist to  
444   improve opsin activation, such as spiral scanning, temporal focusing and holography-based  
445   patterned light illumination (Papagiakoumou et al. 2013). Thus, combining optogenetics with  
446   imaging technologies opens new avenues to all-optical interrogation of neuronal circuits with  
447   closed-loop manipulation of neurons in real time (Emiliani et al. 2015).

448

449

## 2.5 Spectral properties of endogenous molecules

450 Utilizing the intrinsic spectral properties of the target tissue, when possible, places the  
451 experimenter in a very favorable situation by avoiding the complicated, invasive, and/or  
452 possibly bias-inducing administration and binding of exogenous fluorescent probes.

453 Many, if not all endogenous molecules display a certain capacity of two-photon excitation,  
454 though this excitation is generally rather inefficient. What appears in most cases to produce an  
455 annoying background noise does carry some meaningful information. The two-photon action  
456 cross-section spectra of several intrinsic molecules (among which **NADH**, **riboflavin**, **folic**  
457 **acid**, **cholecalciferol**, **pyridoxine**, and **retinol**) has been assessed in the early 2000s by the  
458 laboratory of Watt W. Webb at Cornell (Zipfel et al. 2003a), facilitating the two-photon–  
459 based analysis of metabolism (*cf.* Table 7). Investigating cell dysfunction in a number of  
460 pathologies is made possible through the measurement of the fluorescence decay using  
461 fluorescence lifetime imaging (FLIM) of metabolites. For instance, **NADH** FLIM-  
462 experiments allowed a better characterization of tumor-associated microglia phenotypes  
463 (Bayerl et al. 2016), unveiled the role of astrocytes in chronic neuroinflammation-related  
464 neuronal death (Mossakowski et al. 2015; Radbruch et al. 2016), and provided a label-free  
465 and non-invasive mean to identify neuron- or glial- biased progenitors (Stringari et al. 2012).  
466 Moreover, simultaneous FLIM-based detection of several metabolites like **NADH** and **FAD**  
467 with SHG can be achieved through wavelength mixing (Stringari et al. 2017) (for more  
468 details, see section *Designing a microscopy setup for intravital multicolor TPM*).

469 Although not endogenous, it is worth mentioning the very few instances of therapeutic agents  
470 whose two-photon spectral characteristics are known: the fluoroquinolone antibiotics  
471 **gatifloxacin** and **moxifloxacin** (Lee et al. 2016) (*cf.* Table 5), and **quinacrine** (Bestvater et  
472 al. 2002) which stains nucleic acids (*cf.* Table 8) while having several therapeutic indications  
473 (Wallace 1989; Eriksson et al. 2015; Lippes 2015).

## 474 3) Combining fluorescent probes for multicolor TPM

### 475 3.1 Designing a multicolor animal model

476 The first point to consider when designing an intravital multicolor TPM experiment is the co-  
477 labeling of multiple targets in the biological sample. Such labeling can result from crossing  
478 transgenic mice that express fluorescent proteins in different cells or structures of interest. For  
479 instance, triple transgenic fluorescent mice were described and successfully involved in  
480 intravital multicolor TPM experiments (Fenrich et al. 2013; Ricard and Debarbieux 2014).  
481 However, producing such animals requires many crossings that considerably delay their use  
482 and increase the cost of the experiment. Another approach to multicolor imaging is the  
483 Brainbow transgenic mouse, which takes advantage of Cre/lox recombination to stochastically  
484 express different fluorescent proteins in a cell population. As a consequence, each cell  
485 randomly express a combination of fluorescent proteins and thus can be followed individually  
486 (Livet et al. 2007; Weissman and Pan 2015). Different probes can be used to highlight  
487 structures and/or functions (*e.g.*, VSD or calcium-sensitive dyes) (Akemann et al. 2013;  
488 Shigetomi et al. 2013, 2016; Xu et al. 2017).

489 Taking advantage of the intrinsic properties of endogenous molecules is an elegant way to  
490 investigate biological tissues without the drawbacks associated with the administration,  
491 binding and possibly metabolize of exogenous molecules. Second-harmonic generation  
492 (SHG) can be used to visualize not only the meninges via type-I or -III collagen imaging  
493 (Williams et al. 2005; Ricard et al. 2007; Keikhosravi et al. 2014; Ricard and Debarbieux  
494 2014), but also membrane potential (Rama et al. 2010; Loew and Lewis 2015). Third-  
495 harmonic generation (THG) highlights water-lipids and water-proteins interfaces (Débarre et  
496 al. 2006; Weigelin et al. 2016) and was successfully tested *in vivo* to image neurons, white-  
497 matter structures, and blood vessels simultaneously (Witte et al. 2011). Both SHG and THG



498 require no staining at all and are observed at half or one-third of the excitation wavelength  
499 respectively. Beside the respective specificity of SHG and THG, they have been fruitfully  
500 used to record morphological landmarks and help data registration during longitudinal *in vivo*  
501 imaging of neural zebrafish stem cells (Dray et al. 2015). Autofluorescence does arise from  
502 molecules and structures under specific excitation wavelengths (Zipfel et al. 2003a; Ricard et  
503 al. 2012). At best autofluorescence may carry relevant information, and at worst, being aware  
504 of it may help achieve higher contrast between the background and structures of interest by  
505 choosing fluorophores accordingly. It must be noted that autofluorescence signals are not very  
506 bright in intravital conditions (*cf.* Table 7) and were mainly described in explants or tissue  
507 slices. Due to the low intensity of endogenous signals, one could be tempted to increase the  
508 laser power. However, this usually causes artifacts to appear, whose monitoring can help in  
509 evaluating photodamage induced during the experiment (Galli et al. 2014).

510 The preparation of a biological sample for intravital multicolor TPM often requires combining  
511 different approaches to label a maximal number of structures of interest involved in a  
512 complex process. For example, using Thy1-**CFP**/LysM-**GFP**/CD11c-**EYFP** triple transgenic  
513 mice intravenously injected with **Rhodamine B** dextran or Quantum-dots 655, Fenrich *et al.*  
514 have revealed a differential spatiotemporal recruitment of myelomonocytic cells after a spinal  
515 cord injury (Fenrich et al. 2013). Recently, Ricard *et al.* have described the combination of a  
516 LysM-**EGFP**/CD11c-**EYFP** mouse implanted with **DsRed**-expressing glioblastoma cells and  
517 intravenously injected with **Cascade Blue** dextran in order to study the recruitment of  
518 immune cells during glioblastoma progression (Ricard et al. 2016b).

519 The development of the co-staining protocol of a biological sample to be used for intravital  
520 multicolor TPM must follow some guidelines:

521 1) Spectral overlap of the emission spectra of all of the utilized fluorophores must be minimal,

522 2) Utilized fluorophores must not bias physiological and biological properties of the sample  
523 nor the pathological condition that is observed,

524 3) As multiple-fluorophore-expressing animals are difficult to produce, the experimental  
525 design should take into account the risk of a downsized animal cohort.

526

527

## 528 3.2 Designing a microscopy setup for intravital multicolor TPM

529 The next point to consider, when multicolor TPM is required for an experiment, is the  
530 microscopy setup (*cf.* Figure 1). Excitation spectra of the fluorophores are the first elements to  
531 take into account. The majority of blue-, green- and red-emitting fluorophores can be excited  
532 with a Ti:Sapphire femtosecond laser, as its emission wavelength is generally tunable in  
533 between 700 and 1,040 nm. When possible, it is advisable to use a single excitation  
534 wavelength and tune precisely the gain of detectors associated with each fluorophore. The  
535 laser power should be kept as low as possible and the experiment duration as short as  
536 possible, to limit photobleaching and phototoxicity. This is essential for multicolor timelapse  
537 experiments (Fenrich et al. 2013; Ricard et al. 2016b), in which the same region is scanned  
538 over and over, at the risk of exposing the tissue to an energy that would threaten its health  
539 and/or integrity. When different excitation wavelengths are required (for example, when both  
540 **Cascade Blue** with  $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 800$  nm and **eGFP** with  $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 940$  nm are present in the same  
541 biological sample), a sequential acquisition or the simultaneous use of two Ti:Sapphire  
542 femtosecond lasers is required. Continuous sequential acquisition (for example, for calcium  
543 imaging recordings) increases the total acquisition time of the images, which is of concern as  
544 far as preventing photodamage and prolonged exposure of the animal to anesthetics (if  
545 applicable), or depending on the characteristic time of the studied phenomenon.

546 Deep-red fluorophores require higher excitation wavelengths that cannot be delivered by  
547 Ti:Sapphire femtosecond lasers alone. Typically, they are excited by Ytterbium lasers (1,040  
548 nm) but the addition of an OPO (Herz et al. 2010) pumped by a Ti:Sapphire femtosecond  
549 laser can enable excitation wavelengths ranging from 1,050 to 1,300 nm when pumped at 800  
550 nm. Simultaneous utilization of both a Ti:Sapphire femtosecond laser and an OPO is  
551 achievable. Interestingly, it enables the simultaneous two-photon excitation of three  
552 fluorophores with distinct absorption spectra insofar as the pulses of the laser and OPO are

553 synchronized. The excitation of the three fluorophores is done by the femtosecond laser, the  
554 OPO and by their spatiotemporal overlap that produces a third two-photon excitation. With  
555 such a wavelength mixing, **CFP**, **YFP** and **tdTomato** – having distinct two-photon absorption  
556 spectra – can be simultaneously excited. Biological phenomena such as cell movements in  
557 embryonic tissues were thereby monitored over time using Brainbow constructs (Mahou et al.  
558 2012). Endogenous metabolites such as **NADH** and **FAD** can also be detected by FLIM,  
559 simultaneously with the SHG of surrounding tissues, using a wavelength mixing approach  
560 (Stringari et al. 2017). In this case, two-photon excitations are produced by the  
561 synchronization of two excitation beams at 760 nm (**NADH** and **FAD**) and 1041 nm that  
562 creates a third (virtual) wavelength at 879 nm (**FAD**) (*cf.* Figure 2).

563 More recently, the efficient detection of up to 7 tissue compartments (five fluorophores, SHG  
564 from collagen, and autofluorescence) has been reported using wavelength mixing combined  
565 with both a broad set of fluorophores (*cf.* Figure 3) and a dedicated spectral unmixing  
566 algorithm (Rakhymzhan et al. 2017) (for more details, see section *Image processing*).

567 The next element to consider is the fluorescence collection. Fluorescence photons are nearly  
568 always collected in non-descanned mode in intravital TPM, *i.e.*, without passing back through  
569 the scanning mirrors. They are instead reflected on a dichroic mirror situated between the  
570 objective and scanning mirrors, and are directed towards photomultiplier tubes (PMT), also  
571 known as non-descanned detectors (NDDs). In multicolor TPM, a number of NDDs is used.  
572 Fluorescence photons are discriminated according to their wavelengths using dichroic mirrors  
573 and filters. With such a setup, fluorescence arising from different fluorophores can be  
574 simultaneously collected on distinct detectors. Fluorescence intensity varies between the  
575 different used fluorophores according to parameters such as their quantity, their two-photon  
576 absorption cross-section ( $\sigma_2$ ) and quantum yield ( $\phi$ ), the product of which defining the two-  
577 photon action cross-section ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) listed in Tables 2-8. The emission wavelength of a

578 fluorophore is another parameter influencing the collected intensity when put into perspective  
579 with the NDD response curve, high-energy blue photons being more absorbed than low-  
580 energy red photons in biological tissues (König 2000). When a single excitation is used, the  
581 laser intensity delivered to each of the fluorophores at the same observation depth will be  
582 identical. NDD gain should be adjusted accordingly for each of the fluorophores in order to  
583 enhance the signal over noise ratio, while avoiding saturating the detectors. When one expects  
584 a specific fluorescence signal to be low, more efficient PMTs such as Gallium Arsenide  
585 Phosphide (GaAsP) detectors should be considered (Becker et al. 2011).

586 Multicolor intravital TPM can benefit from the use of spectral chips, composed of an array of  
587 PMTs and a prism or diffraction grating to separate the fluorescence photons (Im et al. 2010;  
588 Shi et al. 2012, 2015; Zimmermann et al. 2014). Spectral segmentation of the wavelengths  
589 arising for the different fluorophores will be thereby both more accurate and easier to achieve.  
590 Although such chips are already available on commercial confocal microscopes, they are  
591 positioned on the descanned path that is less suitable for intravital applications. Spectral chips  
592 in a non-descanned mode are required, and recent advances in non-descanned collection of  
593 fluorescence photons by optical fibers may help develop this approach (Ducros et al. 2011).

594

595

### 596 3.3 Image processing

597 Multicolor intravital timelapse TPM generates large amounts of data. The aim of the post-  
598 processing steps is to extract quantitative data and relevant characterization of the  
599 phenomenon of interest from multicolor acquisition.

600 When required, the first step is to perform spectral unmixing (Zimmermann et al. 2002; Neher  
601 and Neher 2004; Ducros et al. 2009). Even though the emission spectra of all of the  
602 fluorophores used in the experiment do not peak at the same wavelengths, there is generally a  
603 certain overlap of the spectra. As a consequence, the signal collected on one NDD contains a  
604 major contribution from one fluorophore and minor contributions from the others. It is  
605 possible to overcome this problem and to clean the image to retain only the contribution of the  
606 major fluorophore. To perform this spectral unmixing (*a.k.a.*, spectral deconvolution), the  
607 contribution of each of the fluorophores used in the experiment in each of the NDD must be  
608 measured. Then, using dedicated algorithms based on maximum-likelihood unmixing (Davis  
609 and Shen 2007), each image from each NDD can be spectrally unmixed and then analyzed  
610 (Thaler and Vogel 2006; Brenner et al. 2013; Zimmermann et al. 2014). As an example of the  
611 crucial importance of spectral unmixing, Ducros *et al.* have used it to detect small spectral  
612 variations of odor-evoked FRET transients up to 250  $\mu\text{m}$  in the olfactory bulb of living mice  
613 (Ducros et al. 2009).

614 In another instance of multicolor intravital TPM experiment, Ricard *et al.* have recently  
615 proposed the 6-color intravital TPM of brain tumors (Ricard and Debarbieux 2014). They  
616 designed a triple transgenic Connexin43-**CFP**/Thy1-**GFP**/CD11c-**YFP** mouse model enabling  
617 the simultaneous observation of astrocytes, neurons, and microglia/dendritic cells,  
618 respectively. Mice were grafted under a chronic cranial window with glioblastoma cells  
619 expressing **DsRed**. Blood vessels were highlighted by an intravenous delivery of **Cascade**  
620 **Blue** dextran. Meninges were observed using SHG. Images were acquired on a microscope

621 equipped with 5 NDDs under a sequential excitation at 800 and 940 nm. This sequential  
622 acquisition allows a discrimination of **CFP** and **Cascade Blue** signals as their two-photon  
623 excitation spectra are different, even though their emission spectra strongly overlap. After  
624 spectral unmixing, analysis revealed in particular significant alterations of cell motility in the  
625 peritumoral area.

626 The usefulness of spectral unmixing algorithms has become even clearer with the successful  
627 attempt to simultaneously detect up to 7 tissue compartments using two two-photon excitation  
628 sources and 6 NDDs (Rakhymzhan et al. 2017). In order to do this, the authors of this work  
629 developed a dedicated pixel-based algorithm based both on similarity measurements between  
630 overlapping fluorophores and on the spectral fingerprints of the individual fluorophores. As a  
631 result, the ‘SIMI’ algorithm enables the separation of more fluorophores than available  
632 channels (*cf.* Figure 4). This protocol has been used in murine lymph nodes to simultaneously  
633 detect *in vivo* lymphocytes labelled with **Hoechst**, **CFP**, hrGFP, **YFP**, or **DsRed**, plus SHG  
634 and autofluorescence from macrophages.

## 635 **Conclusion**

636 Intravital TPM is a powerful tool to visualize biological phenomena with a subcellular  
637 resolution in a physiological environment. Multicolor TPM experiments make the most of the  
638 presence of all the actors – known or yet unknown – exhaustively involved in the complex  
639 processes that characterize brain functions. The design of intravital multicolor TPM  
640 experiments is, however, hindered at different stages following the identification of the  
641 biological targets of interest: choice of suitable fluorophores, choice of appropriate routes of  
642 delivery of these fluorophores, and design of the setup allowing simultaneous detection of  
643 various fluorophores.

644 This review was intended to reduce these hurdles by providing a comprehensive list of two-  
645 photon-suitable probes along with their spectral properties and biological specificities (*cf.*  
646 Tables 2 to 8), a description of different routes of *in vivo* delivery of these fluorophores (*cf.*  
647 Table 1), recommendations for the design of intravital multicolor TPM microscope setups,  
648 and a discussion about strategies of data post-processing. Taken together, this database and set  
649 of recommendations will help scientists design intravital TPM experiments focusing  
650 simultaneously on biological targets of diverse natures, ranging from cells (*e.g.*, neurons,  
651 astrocytes) and sub-cellular structures (*e.g.*, DNA, organelles) to functional processes – whose  
652 exploration greatly benefits from the optogenetics technology – (*e.g.*, ion transport, membrane  
653 potential), and through chemical or environmental parameters (*e.g.*, mechanical strains, pH)  
654 or even potentially connectomics (Nemoto et al. 2015).

655 Extending beyond the current trends in neuroscience, this comprehensive two-photon probe  
656 database, as well as the resources related to intravital multicolor TPM, is intended to broaden  
657 the use of TPM not only in neuroscience, but also to other fields of biology in which the full  
658 extent of this technology's capabilities has not yet been revealed.



## 659 **Figures**

660

661 **Fig. 1** Optical setup for multicolor two-photon microscopy

662 DC: dichroic mirror; NDD: non-descanned detector; OPO: optical parametric oscillator.

663 <sup>1</sup>: Dichroic mirror used to collect fluorescent photons on five non-descanned detectors.

664 Excitatory infrared photons pass through the mirror whereas fluorescence photons are

665 reflected. This mirror must be removed to collect photons in descanned mode.

666 <sup>2</sup>: Dichroic mirror used to collect fluorescent photons on a spectral chip in descanned mode.

667 Modified from (Ricard and Debarbieux 2014).

668

669 **Fig. 2** Wavelength mixing–fluorescence lifetime imaging of endogenous fluorophores

670 When the excitation beams  $\lambda_1 = 760$  nm and  $\lambda_2 = 1041$  nm are synchronized ( $\Delta t = 0$ ), a third

671 virtual wavelength for two-photon excitation  $\lambda_v = 879$  nm is created by wavelength mixing. A

672 time-correlated single photon counting system (TCSPC) is used to perform FLIM.

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675

676 **Fig. 3** Wavelength-mixing optimal combination of two sets of fluorophores

677 Two-photon excitation and emission spectra of two sets of fluorophores that can be efficiently

678 excited by wavelength mixing with  $\lambda_1 = 850$  nm and  $\lambda_2 = 1230$  nm (full arrows), resulting in

679  $\lambda_v = 1005$  nm (dashed arrow). (a) **CFP, eGFP, mOrange2, mKate2, eqFP670**. (b) **Hoechst,**

680 **eGFP, Kusabira Orange, CMTPX Red, Alexa 647, Atto 680**.

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683

684 **Fig. 4** Example of similarity unmixing of more fluorochromes than available channels

685 (a) Images of cells labelled with several fluorophores, showing crosstalk in two detection

686 channel. (b) Extraction of a relative signal distribution in the two channels pixels by pixel,

687 corresponding to . (c) The algorithm calculates similarities between the known fingerprints of

688 each fluorophore and the signature of undefined fluorophores extracted during step (b). (d)

689 Color separation based on the ratios between the fluorophore fingerprints.

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692

693 **Tables**

694 **Table 1** Routes of administration of fluorochromes for intravital two-photon microscopy of  
 695 brain cells, structures, and functions.

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Probe</b>
Single-cell electroporation	<i>Diverse (e.g. neurons (Liu and Haas 2011))</i>	<i>Diverse</i>
<i>In utero</i> electroporation (Wang and Mei 2013)	<i>e.g. layer 2/3 cortical neurons (Saito and Nakatsuji 2001)</i>	<i>e.g. eGFP</i>
Intraperitoneal administration	Amyloid- $\beta$ plaques	<i>e.g. SAD1 (Heo et al. 2013)</i>
Intravenous administration	Astrocytes	<b>Sulforhodamine 101</b> (Nimmerjahn et al. 2004), <b>sulforhodamine B</b> (Vérant et al. 2013)
	Blood vessels	<i>e.g. Rhodamine B dextran, quantum-dots (Ricard et al. 2016a)</i>
	Arteries	<b>Alexa Fluor 633</b> (Shen et al. 2012)
	Amyloid- $\beta$ plaques	<i>e.g. DCIP-1 (Zhu et al. 2017)</i>
Viral transduction (Nassi et al. 2015)	Spatially-restricted ( <i>e.g. axonal domain of neurons (Tervo et al. 2016) and genetically-defined cells (e.g. oligodendrocytes (Powell et al. 2016))</i> )	<i>Diverse</i>
	Calcium activity	Genetically encoded Ca <sup>2+</sup> indicators (GECIs)
	Membrane potential (V <sub>m</sub> )	Genetically encoded voltage sensors (GEVs)
Whole-cell and bulk loading	Ion activity (neurons, astrocytes (Reeves et al. 2011))	Ion indicators ( <i>e.g. Fura-2-AM, Fluo-4-AM, Oregon Green BAPTA-1 (Garaschuk et al. 2006)</i> )
	Membrane potential (V <sub>m</sub> )	Voltage-sensitive dyes ( <i>e.g. ANNINE-6 (Kuhn et al. 2008), RH-1692 (Murphy et al. 2008)</i> )

696  
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698 **Table 2** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable non-specific probes : peak wavelength  
699 of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon action cross-section ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; peak  
700 wavelength of molecular brightness ( $\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ ) ; peak molecular brightness ( $\epsilon_{max}$ ) ; fluorescence  
701 wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.  
702 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values  
703 (2) : data from commercial provider  
704 \* : data from [http://www.drbio.cornell.edu/cross\\_sections.html](http://www.drbio.cornell.edu/cross_sections.html) (accessed 10/24/2017)

Probe	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ [nm]	$\epsilon_{max}$ [kcpm]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	Comment	Reference
— Pond 2002 Derivative 1	830	1207 (1)			536	Hydrophobic	Figure 3(1) in (Pond et al. 2002)
— Pond 2002 Derivative 2	830	1427 (1)			528	Hydrophobic	Figure 3(2) in (Pond et al. 2002)
— Pond 2002 Derivative 3	790	2.67 (1)			504	Hydrophobic	Figure 3(3) in (Pond et al. 2002)
— Pond 2002 Derivative 4	825	11 (1)			510	Hydrophobic	Figure 3(4) in (Pond et al. 2002)
— Sadowski 2017 Derivative 4a	740	112			671		Figure 3 in (Sadowski et al. 2017)
— Sadowski 2017 Derivative 4b	820	83			699		Figure 3 in (Sadowski et al. 2017)
— Sadowski 2017 Derivative 4c	740	70			662		Figure 3 in (Sadowski et al. 2017)
— Sadowski 2017 Derivative 5a (7a)	720	1450			633		Figure 3 in (Sadowski et al. 2017)
— Sadowski 2017 Derivative 5b (7c)	720	500			643		Figure 3 in (Sadowski et al. 2017)
— Sadowski 2017 Derivative 5c (7d)	860	340			736		Figure 3 in (Sadowski et al. 2017)
5C-TMR	830	135	850	31.5	580 (2)		Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
7-amino-4-	703 <				439 (2)		Figure 3 in

methylcoumarin	722 >> 863						(Bestvater et al. 2002)
Alexa Fluor 350	~715				442 (2)		Figure 5C in (Trägårdh et al. 2015)
Alexa Fluor 430	870	11.6	910	16	541 (2)		Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Alexa Fluor 488	940	~30			519 (2)		Figure 2 in (Anderson and Webb 2011)
Alexa Fluor 514			790, 960	~32, ~25	542 (2)		Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Alexa Fluor 546			820	58	573 (2)		Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Alexa Fluor 568			780	~25	603 (2)		Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Alexa Fluor 594			800	~32	617 (2)		Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Alexa Fluor 610			820	~28	628 (2)		Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
<b>Alexa Fluor 633</b>			820	~24	647 (2)	Arteries (Shen et al. 2012)	Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Alexa Fluor 647	1240	~45			665 (2)	OPO-friendly	Figure 7 in (Kobat et al. 2009)
Alexa Fluor 680	1280	~75			702 (2)	OPO-friendly	Figure 7 in (Kobat et al. 2009)
Alexa Fluor 700	1300	~52			723 (2)	OPO-friendly	Figure 7 in (Kobat et al. 2009)
Aminomethyl coumarin acetate	700				445 (2)		– (Bok et al. 2015)
Ant-PHEA (in water)	800	2480			575 (2)		Figure 6 in (Mettra et al. 2016)
ATTO 590	790	~250 (NHS ester)			624 (2)	STED-compatible	Figure 2E in (Velasco et al. 2015)
ATTO 594	800	~220 (NHS ester), ~140 (antibodies)			627 (2)	STED-compatible	Figure 2D in (Velasco et al. 2015)
ATTO 647N	840	~270			669 (2)	STED-	Figure 2A in

		(NHS ester), ~120 (streptavidin)				compatible	(Velasco et al. 2015)
ATTO 680	~1260				695 (2)	OPO-friendly	Figure 2D in (Rakhymzhan et al. 2017)
BODIPY (in water)	920	17.12			Variable		*
BODIPY 492/515 (in water)	920	14.3	920	47.4	515		Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
BODIPY-FL (in DMSO)	920 << 972				512 (2)		Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
BODIPY-TR	1080	242	1060	15.2	618 (2)		Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Brilliant Violet 421	710-1000				421		– (Figure 6) (Chattopadhyay et al. 2012)
<b>Cascade Blue</b>	740, 800	2.1 (at 750 nm)			420 (2)		Figure 7 in (Xu and Webb 1996)
CellTracker Blue	780				466 (2)		– (Zinselmeyer et al. 2009)
CellTracker Orange	820				565 (2)		– (Miller et al. 2002)
<b>CellTracker Red</b>	~1080				602 (2)		Figure 2D in (Rakhymzhan et al. 2017)
<b>CFP</b>	840	~180			485 (2)		Figure 3B in (Zipfel et al. 2003b)
CFSE	780				521 (2)		– (Miller et al. 2002)
Citrine	968	6.7			529 (Griesbeck et al. 2001)		Figure 1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Coumarin 307	800	15.3			490 (in ethanol) (2)		*
Cy2-IgG	837 < 905 > 981				505 (2)		Figure 4 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
Cy3-IgG	1032				565 (2)		Figure 4 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)

Cy5.5	1280	~60			702 (2)	OPO-friendly	Figure 7 in (Kobat et al. 2009)
Dronpa-3	920				515	Reversibly switchable	– (Ando et al. 2007; Kao et al. 2012)
<b>dsRed</b>	> 990	108			583 (Shaner et al. 2008)		*
dsRed2	1050	73			587		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
E2-Crimson	1138	1.8			643		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
EBFP2.0	750	9.2			446		Figure 1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
<b>eCFP</b>	857	12			476		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
<b>eGFP (pH 8)</b>	927	30			510		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
eqFP650	1112	8.5			646		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
<b>eqFP670</b>	1120	1.3			661		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Evans Blue	850				680 (Saria and Lundberg 1983)		– (Bennewitz et al. 2014)
<b>eYFP</b>	960	25			527 (Merzlyak et al. 2007)		– (Table 2) (Blab et al. 2001)
<b>Fluorescein</b> (in water, pH = 11)	770	39	800	18.4	520 (Zhu et al. 2005)		Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Fluorescein isothiocyanate (FITC)	800				525 (2)		Figure 3B in (Wang and Yeh 2012)
<b>GFP</b>	800	6.5			504 (Chattoraj et al. 1996)		*
Hilyte Fluor 488	~815, 960	~55, ~30			525 (2)		Figure 2 in (Anderson and Webb 2011)
Katushka	1080	23			635		Figure S1 in

					(Shcherbo et al. 2007)		(Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Katushka2	1140	27			633 (2)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Kusabira Orange	~1110				561 (Karasawa et al. 2004)		Figure 2D in (Rakhymzhan et al. 2017)
Lissamine rhodamine	837 >> 1116				~580 (2)		Figure 4 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
LSS-mKate1	920	~40			624		Figure 1E in (Piatkevich et al. 2010)
LSS-mKate2	920	~90			605		Figure 1E in (Piatkevich et al. 2010)
Lucifer Yellow	840	1.4			540 (2)		*
mAmetrine	809	40			526 (Ai et al. 2008)		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mBanana	1070	44			553 (Shaner et al. 2004)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mCardinal	>1080				659	OPO-friendly	Figure S3 in (Chu et al. 2014)
mCerulean	840	~75			475-503 (Ai et al. 2006)		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mCFP	840	187			475 (Shaner et al. 2005)		*
mCherry	1080 (Drobizhev et al. 2011), 1160 (Vadakkan et al. 2009)	6.4 (at 1080 nm)			610 (Shaner et al. 2008)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011) and Figure 8 in (Vadakkan et al. 2009)
mCitrene	960	~320					Figure 3C in (Rizzo et al. 2006)
mCitrine (pH 8)	950	7.6			527		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mEGFP	960	~300			507 (Shaner et al. 2005)		Figure 3B in (Rizzo et al. 2006)
mGrape3	1140	1.6			645		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev



							et al. 2011)
mKate (pH 8)	1118	14			635 (Shcherbo et al. 2007)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
<b>mKate2</b>	1140	30			633 (Shcherbo et al. 2009)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mKeima	~880	~70			620		Figure 1E in (Piatkevich et al. 2010)
mNeptune	1104	12			651 (Chu et al. 2014)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mOrange	1080	47			565	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
<b>mOrange2</b>	~1080				565 (Shaner et al. 2008)		Figure 2B in (Rakhymzhan et al. 2017)
mPlum	1105	2.9			644		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mRaspberry	1118	5.8			625 (Shcherbo et al. 2007)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mRFP	1080	13			611		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mStrawberry	1070	6.8			596 (Shaner et al. 2004)		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
mTangerine	1055	3.3			584		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2009, 2011)
mVenus	960	~200			525 (Sarkar et al. 2009)		Figure 3C in (Rizzo et al. 2006)
mWasabi	927	7.3			508		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Near-iRFP	1260				713	OPO-friendly	Figure S5 in (Filonov et al. 2011)
Neptune	1120	16			647		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Pacific Blue	780				455 (2)		– (Lukomska et al. 2006)

Peridinin chlorophyll	850				678		– (Bok et al. 2015)
Phycoerythrin	1064	322			576 (2)		– (Chen et al. 1997; So et al. 2000)
QD550 (organic)	700-1000	~2000			550	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1A in (Larson et al. 2003)
QD550 (water-soluble)	700-1000	~2000			550	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1A in (Larson et al. 2003)
QD567 (water-soluble)	700-1000	~10000			567	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1A in (Larson et al. 2003)
QD605 (water-soluble)	700-1000	47000			605	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1A in (Larson et al. 2003)
QD630 (organic)	700-1000	~2000			630	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1A in (Larson et al. 2003)
Resorufin	1040	9	1060	33.9	585 (2)		Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Rhodamine 110	790	48	800	30.9	521 (2)		Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Rhodamine 6G	700, ~820	~150, ~40			~570 (Zehentbauer et al. 2014)		Figure 1C in (Albota et al. 1998)
<b>Rhodamine B</b>	830	204			590 (2)		*
Rhodamine Green	850				527 (2)		Figure 3 in (Heinze et al. 2000)
Sapphire	810	40			511 (Zapata-Hommer and Griesbeck 2003)		*
SeTa-632	820	200			641 (2)	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1B in (Podgorski et al. 2012)
SeTa-646	840	500			656 (2)	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1B in (Podgorski et al. 2012)
SeTa-660	840	1500			672 (2)	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1B in (Podgorski et al. 2012)
SeTa-670	840	2000			688 (2)	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1B in (Podgorski et al. 2012)
SeTa-700	900	200			703 (2)	Broad absorption	Figure 1B in (Podgorski et al. 2012)

						spectrum	et al. 2012)
SeTau-647	920	3000			694 (2)	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 2A in (Podgorski et al. 2012)
SeTau-665	900	9000			712 (2)	Broad absorption spectrum	Figure 1B in (Podgorski et al. 2012)
Silicon Rhodamine	830	~140 (antibodies)			~670	STED-compatible	Figure 2B in (Velasco et al. 2015)
STAR 635P	820	~110 (NHS carbonate)			651 (2)	STED-compatible	Figure 2C in (Velasco et al. 2015)
TagGFP2	896	27			506 (2)		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
TagRFP	1050	42			584 (Shaner et al. 2008)		Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
tdKatushka2	1100	63			633 (Shcherbo et al. 2009)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
tdRFP	1110	13.7 (1)			579	OPO-friendly	Figure 2B in (Herz et al. 2010)
<b>tdTomato</b>	1050	200			581 (Shaner et al. 2008)	OPO-friendly	Figure S1 in (Drobizhev et al. 2011)
Tetramethylrhodamine (TRITC)	840				576 (2)		Figure 3C in (Wang and Yeh 2012)
Texas Red	780				615 (Cahalan et al. 2002)		Figure 3 in (Heinze et al. 2000)
<b>Venus</b>	~965, ~1015	~19, ~15			528 (Nagai et al. 2002)		Figure 7B in (Hashimoto et al. 2010)
VivoTag 680	820				688		– (Swirski et al. 2007)
<b>YFP</b>	960	228			527		*

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707 **Table 3** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable probes specific of brain cells and  
708 structures: peak wavelength of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon  
709 action cross-section ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; peak wavelength of molecular brightness ( $\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ ) ; peak molecular  
710 brightness ( $\epsilon_{max}$ ) ; fluorescence wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.  
711 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values  
712 (2) : data from commercial provider

Probe	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ [nm]	$\epsilon_{max}$ [kcpsm]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	Comment	Reference
<b>Alexa Fluor 633</b>			820	~24	647 (2)	Arteries (Shen et al. 2012)	Figure 2 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Ant2-PHEA (in water)	800	490			654	Endothelium	Figure 6 in (Mettra et al. 2016)
<b>Sulforhodamine 101</b>	910	118	900	38.4	~605 (2)	Astroglia (Nimmerjahn et al. 2004)	Figure 5 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
<b>Sulforhodamine B</b>	810				~586 (2)	Astroglia	Figure 2A in (Appaix et al. 2012)

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715 **Table 4** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable environment sensing probes: peak  
716 wavelength of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon action cross-section  
717 ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; fluorescence wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.  
718 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values  
719 (2) : data from commercial provider

Probe	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	Comment	Reference
— Chen 2017 Probe L1 (pH 6.73 / pH 4.33)	710	135 / 68 (1)	460 / 580	Ratiometric pH indicator	Figure 6A in (Chen et al. 2017)
— Chen 2017 Probe L2 (pH 5.53 / pH 2.99)	700	67 / 110 (1)	465 / 540	Ratiometric pH indicator	Figure 6B in (Chen et al. 2017)
C-Laurdan (in EtOH)	780 (820)	64.5 (1)	487	Mechanical strain in the cell membrane	Figure S7 in (Kim et al. 2007)
Laurdan (in EtOH)	780	60 (1)	494	Mechanical strain in the cell membrane	Figure S7 in (Kim et al. 2007)
NP1 (in DMF)	740	155	400-500 / 600-750	Ratiometric pH indicator	Figure S4 in (Park et al. 2012)
SNARF-1	< 837		580-640 (2)	pH indicator between pH 7 and pH 8	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
Thiophene DiHemiCyanine	740	~1.4 (with high-viscosity)	~590	Viscosity-sensitive dye	Figure 5A in (Baek et al. 2016)

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722 **Table 5** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable probes in the diseased brain: peak  
723 wavelength of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon action cross-section  
724 ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; fluorescence wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.  
725 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values  
726 (2) : data from commercial provider

Probe	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	Comment	Reference
Calcofluor White	590		430 (2)	Cellulose and chitin binding (identification of fungi and yeast)	Figure 5B in (Trägårdh et al. 2015)
DCIP-1 (in PBS / bound to amyloid- $\beta$ aggregates)	900	118	675 / 635	Amyloid- $\beta$ plaques, penetrates BBB	Figure S7 in (Zhu et al. 2017)
<b>Gatifloxacin</b>	700		~510	Fluoroquinolone antibiotics	Figure 1A in (Lee et al. 2016)
MeO-X04 (in PBS / EtOH)	720	10 / 75	452 / 444	Amyloid- $\beta$ plaques (Klunk et al. 2002)	– (Table S1) (Heo et al. 2013)
MNAH	820		536	Imaging of mitochondrial singlet oxygen	– (Liu et al. 2016)
<b>Moxifloxacin</b>	700		~530	Fluoroquinolone antibiotics	Figure 1A in (Lee et al. 2016)
PIB (in PBS / EtOH)	740	45 / 40	431 / 417	Amyloid- $\beta$ plaques	– (Table S1) (Heo et al. 2013)
<b>SAD1</b> (in PBS / EtOH)	750	10 / 170	497 / 465	Amyloid- $\beta$ plaques	– (Table S1) (Heo et al. 2013)

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729 **Table 6** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable functional probes : peak wavelength  
730 of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon action cross-section ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; peak  
731 wavelength of molecular brightness ( $\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ ) ; peak molecular brightness ( $\epsilon_{max}$ ) ; fluorescence  
732 wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.  
733 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values  
734 (2) : data from commercial provider  
735 \* : data from [http://www.drbio.cornell.edu/cross\\_sections.html](http://www.drbio.cornell.edu/cross_sections.html) (accessed 10/24/2017)  
736 # : data from [https://www.janelia.org/lab/harris-lab-apig/research/photophysics/two-photon-](https://www.janelia.org/lab/harris-lab-apig/research/photophysics/two-photon-fluorescent-probes)  
737 [fluorescent-probes](https://www.janelia.org/lab/harris-lab-apig/research/photophysics/two-photon-fluorescent-probes) (accessed 10/24/2017)

Probe	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ [nm]	$\epsilon_{max}$ [kcpsm]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	Comment	Reference
<b>Calcium indicators</b>							
ACa1 (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	– / 780	– / 110			498 / 498		Figure 2A in (Kim et al. 2008a)
ACa2 (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	– / 780	– / 90			495 / 495		Figure 2A in (Kim et al. 2008a)
ACa3 (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	– / 780	– / 95			500 / 517		Figure 2A in (Kim et al. 2008a)
ACaL (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	– / 780	– / 90			500 / 502		Figure 1B in (Mohan et al. 2009)
ACaLN (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	– / 750	– / 20			494 / 497		– (Table 1) (Lim et al. 2011a)
BCaM (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	– / 780	– / 150			470 / 470		Figure 1C in (Kim et al. 2010a)
Cal-590	1050				590		Figure 1B in (Tischbirek et al. 2015)
Calcium Crimson (+Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	870	95			615 (2)		*
Calcium Green (+Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	820, 960	46, 57			531 (2)		*
Calcium Orange (+Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	820	60			576 (2)		*

CaRuby-Cl	912				604		Figure 5 in (Collot et al. 2012)
CaRuby-F	917				604		Figure 5 in (Collot et al. 2012)
CaRuby-Me	917				604		Figure 5 in (Collot et al. 2012)
Fluo-3	810	13			520-530 (Svoboda and Yasuda 2006)		*
<b>Fluo-4</b>	810		800, 930	~6, ~6	520-530 (Yasuda et al. 2004)		Figure 4 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
Fluo-4FF	810				516 (2)		– (Yasuda et al. 2004)
Fluo-5F	810				516 (2)		– (Sabatini et al. 2002)
Fluo-8			930, 1000	~4	514 (2)		Figure 4 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
<b>Fura-2</b> +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	780	~35			505 (Cahalan et al. 2002)		Figure 1B in (Mohan et al. 2009)
GCaMP2			950	~6	511 (Tallini et al. 2006)		Figure 4 in (Mütze et al. 2012)
GCaMP3 (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	980	0.126 / 0.33 *			515 (Chen et al. 2013)		Figure 4I in (Helassa et al. 2015)
GCaMP3bright (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	950	0.02 / 0.7 *			~515	high fluorescence dynamic range	Figure 4I in (Helassa et al. 2015)
GCaMP3fast (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	990	0.014 / 0.2 *			~515	fast Ca <sup>2+</sup> response times	Figure 4H in (Helassa et al. 2015)
GCaMP5A (pH 9.5)	~940			9.9	~515		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2012)
GCaMP5D (pH 9.5)	~940			9.0	~515		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2012)
GCaMP5G (pH 9.5)	~940			9.3	515 (Chen et al. 2013)		Figure 1D in (Akerboom et al. 2012)
GCaMP6f	~940	~35			515 (Chen et al. 2013)		#
GCaMP6s	940	20			515		Figure 5A in



					(Chen et al. 2013)		(Dana et al. 2016)
iGluSnFR	~940				~515	Glutamate release	Figure S13 in (Marvin et al. 2013)
<b>Indo-1</b>	730				490 / 405 (Cahalan et al. 2002)		* and Figure 3A in (Wang and Yeh 2012)
<b>jRCaMP1a</b>	~1070	~8			~593	OPO-friendly	Figure 2S1B in (Dana et al. 2016)
<b>jRCaMP1b</b>	~1080	~11			~593	OPO-friendly	Figure 2S1B in (Dana et al. 2016)
<b>jRGECO1a</b>	~1070	~7			~593	OPO-friendly	Figure 2S1B in (Dana et al. 2016)
K-GECO1 (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	~1100	~10			594 / 590		Figure 2C in (Shen et al. 2018)
mApple	1070			7.0	592		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2013)
mRuby	1060			4.0	590		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2013)
<b>Oregon Green BAPTA-1</b>	800	24			523		Figure 2A in (Kim et al. 2008a)
<b>RCaMP1a</b> (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	1070 / 1070			– / 5.9	594 / 595		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2013)
RCaMP1c (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	1070 / 1070			– / 7.3	597 / 595		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2013)
RCaMP1d (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	1070 / 1070			– / 7.7	597.5 / 592.5		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2013)
RCaMP1f (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	1070 / 1070			– / 8.2	597 / 591.5		Figure 2F in (Akerboom et al. 2013)
RCaMP1h	~1070	~27			595		#
R-GECO1 (-Ca <sup>2+</sup> / +Ca <sup>2+</sup> )	1065 / 1065			– / 3.8	598 / 588		– (Table 3) (Akerboom et al. 2013)
<b>Other ions</b>							
6-CO2H-ZAP4 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	<700, >1000	– / 86			527 / 523	Zinc	Figure 2B in (Khan et al. 2014)
ANa1 (+Na <sup>+</sup> )	780	95			500	Sodium	Figure 1C in (Kim et al.

							2010b)
<b>Asante NaTRIUM Green-2 (ANG-2) (-Na<sup>+</sup> / +Na<sup>+</sup>)</b>	780	0.84 / 5.7			542	Sodium	Figure 2 in (Roder and Hille 2014)
AZn1 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 95			496 / 498	Zinc	Figure 1B in (Kim et al. 2008b)
AZn2 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 110			494 / 499	Zinc	Figure 1B in (Kim et al. 2008b)
AZnE1 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 86			502 / 503	Zinc	Figure 2A in (Danish et al. 2011)
AZnE2 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 86			503 / 504	Zinc	Figure 2A in (Danish et al. 2011)
AZnM1 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 88			501 / 504	Zinc	Figure 2A in (Danish et al. 2011)
AZnM2 (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 86			504 / 504	Zinc	Figure 2A in (Danish et al. 2011)
AZnN (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 780	- / 89			500 / 502	Zinc	Figure 2A in (Danish et al. 2011)
FMg1 (-Mg <sup>2+</sup> / +Mg <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 740	- / 87			540 / 540	Magnesium	Figure 1C in (Dong et al. 2012)
FMg2 (-Mg <sup>2+</sup> / +Mg <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 740	- / 76			555 / 555	Magnesium	Figure 1C in (Dong et al. 2012)
NC7	860	77 (1)			520	Magnesium	Figure 4 in (Yin et al. 2015)
OC7	740	71 (1)			500	Magnesium	Figure 4 in (Yin et al. 2015)
PhenGreen-FL	1074				517 (Petrat et al. 1999)	Heavy metals	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
P-Zn (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	700 / 700	304 / 565 (1)			465 / 550	Zinc	Figure 1A in (Li et al. 2017)
SBFI (+Na <sup>+</sup> )	780	20			539	Sodium	Figure 1C in (Kim et al. 2010b)
Sodium Green(+Na <sup>+</sup> )	800	30			532	Sodium	Figure 1C in (Kim et al. 2010b)
SZn-Mito (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	- / 760	- / 75			500 / 493	Zinc	Figure 1B in (Masanta et al. 2011)
SZn2-Mito (-	- /	- /			536 / 536	Zinc	Figure 1B in

Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	750	155					(Baek et al. 2012)
SZnC (-Zn <sup>2+</sup> / +Zn <sup>2+</sup> )	750 / 750	16 / 92			499 / 499	Zinc (Golgi-localized)	Figure 2D in (Singh et al. 2015)
— Schwarze 2015 Probe 1 (DMSO / K <sup>+</sup> / Na <sup>+</sup> )	860	3.1 / 9.4 / 3.4			511	Potassium / Sodium	Figure 2B in (Schwarze et al. 2015)
— Schwarze 2015 Probe 2 (DMSO / K <sup>+</sup> )	840	5.7 / 16.1			493	Potassium	– (Table 1) (Schwarze et al. 2015)
<b>Voltage-sensitive dyes</b>							
<b>ANNINE-6</b>	1020				560-660 (Frey et al. 2006)		– (Kuhn et al. 2008)
ANNINE-6plus	1060				560-660		– (Kuhn et al. 2004)
ArcLight A242	950				<775		– (Table 1) (Brinks et al. 2015)
ASAP1	950				<775		– (Table 1) (Brinks et al. 2015)
BP6	740	100			545	Mitochondrial membrane potential	Figure 7 in (Moritomo et al. 2014)
CAESR	968				<775		– (Table 1) (Brinks et al. 2015)
di-2-ANEP(F)PTEA	1060				632 (bound to lipids)		– (Yan et al. 2012)
<b>di-3-ANEPDPHQ</b>	850				>560		Figure 5A in (Fisher et al. 2008)
Di-4-ANEPPS	940	5			635 (in ethanol) (2)		*
Di-8-ANEPDPHQ	~900-950	~20			620 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
Di-8-ANEPPS	940	10			625 (in octanol)		* and Figure 5 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
FlicR1	1120				597	OPO-friendly	– (Abdelfattah et al. 2016)
Merocyanine 540	>950	4.4 (at 960 nm)			615 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)

Nile Blue A	<800	0.6 (at 800 nm)			660 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
QuasAr1	1200				660-775		– (Table 1) (Brinks et al. 2015)
QuasAr2	1200				660-775		Figure S3 in (Brinks et al. 2015)
<b>RH-1692</b>	~800- 850	1.5 (at 800 nm)			680 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
RH-237	<800, >960	8.9 (at 800 nm)			676 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
RH-414	~950	12 (at 960 nm)			636 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
RH-421	~950	16 (at 960 nm)			648 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)
RH-795	~950	10 (at 960 nm)			640 (in octanol)		Figure 3 in (Fisher et al. 2005)

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740 **Table 7** Biophysical two-photon properties of intrinsic fluorophores : peak wavelength of  
741 two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon action cross-section ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; peak  
742 wavelength of molecular brightness ( $\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ ) ; peak molecular brightness ( $\epsilon_{max}$ ) ; fluorescence  
743 wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.

<b>Probe</b>	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Cholecalciferol</b>	<700, 820, 980	0.0006 (at 700 nm)	460	Vitamin D3	Figure 1A in (Zipfel et al. 2003a)
<b>FAD</b>	~880	<1	~530		Figure 1B in (Stringari et al. 2017)
<b>Folic acid</b>	<700	0.007 (at 700 nm)	~445	Vitamin B9	Figure 1A in (Zipfel et al. 2003a)
<b>NADH</b>	700	0.09 (at 700 nm)	~470		Figure 1A in (Zipfel et al. 2003a)
<b>Pyridoxine</b>	<700	0.008 (at 700 nm)	~390		Figure 1A in (Zipfel et al. 2003a)
<b>Retinol</b>	<700	0.07 (at 700 nm)	~490		Figure 1A in (Zipfel et al. 2003a)
<b>Riboflavin</b>	<700	0.8 (at 700 nm)	~530		Figure 1A in (Zipfel et al. 2003a)

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746 **Table 8** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable probes specific of sub-cellular  
747 structures : peak wavelength of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon  
748 action cross-section ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; peak wavelength of molecular brightness ( $\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ ) ; peak molecular  
749 brightness ( $\epsilon_{max}$ ) ; fluorescence wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ). Probes discussed in the text are in bold.  
750 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values  
751 (2) : data from commercial provider  
752 \* : data from [http://www.drbio.cornell.edu/cross\\_sections.html](http://www.drbio.cornell.edu/cross_sections.html) (accessed 10/24/2017)

Probe	$\lambda_{2PA}$ [nm]	$\sigma_2\phi$ [GM]	$\lambda_{fluo}$ [nm]	Comment	Reference
Acridine Orange	837 > 882 >> 981		526 (DNA), 650 (RNA) (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
ANO1	750	170	502	Nitric oxide	Figure 3 in (Seo et al. 2012)
AS1	780	85	498	Glucose	Figure S6A in (Lim et al. 2012)
ASiR1 (in CH <sub>3</sub> CN)	750	258	593	Lysosomes	Figure S2 in (Zhang et al. 2018)
ASiR2 (in CH <sub>3</sub> CN)	760	237	601	Lysosomes	Figure S2 in (Zhang et al. 2018)
ASiR3 (in CH <sub>3</sub> CN)	760	160	606	Lysosomes	Figure S2 in (Zhang et al. 2018)
ASiR4 (in CH <sub>3</sub> CN)	760	179	608	Lysosomes	Figure S2 in (Zhang et al. 2018)
ASiR5 (in CH <sub>3</sub> CN)	750	189	609	Lysosomes	Figure S2 in (Zhang et al. 2018)
ASiR6 (in CH <sub>3</sub> CN)	750	193	601	Lysosomes	Figure S2 in (Zhang et al. 2018)
ASS (H <sub>2</sub> O / 2-AET)	780	11 / 113	457 / ~505	Thiols	Figure 1D in (Lee et al. 2010)
BLT-blue	750	160	451	Lysosomes	Figure 1B in (Han et al. 2012)
CAEI	850	152	550	Mitochondria	Figure 1B in (Miao et al. 2014)

CAI	860	328	562	Mitochondria	Figure 1B in (Miao et al. 2014)
CLT-blue	750	50	471	Lysosomes	Figure 1B in (Son et al. 2011)
CLT-yellow	850	47	549	Lysosomes	Figure 1B in (Son et al. 2011)
C-Laurdan (in EtOH)	780	64.5 (1)	487	Lipid rafts	Figure S7 in (Kim et al. 2007)
DAPI	580 >> 685		461 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 2A in (Trägårdh et al. 2015)
DCF2 (H <sub>2</sub> DCFDA) (in DMSO)	1065		538 (Yi et al. 2009)	Organelle tracker	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
DiA	880 (study limited to [830-920 nm])		590	Lipophilic Tracer	– (Table 1) (Ruthazer and Cline 2002)
DiD	830		665	Lipophilic Tracer	– (Table 1) (Ruthazer and Cline 2002)
DiI	<700, 1020	96, 10	565 (Cahalan et al. 2002)	Lipophilic Tracer, organelles	*
DiO	880 (study limited to [830-920 nm])		501	Lipophilic Tracer	– (Table 1) (Ruthazer and Cline 2002)
ER-Tracker white/blue	728		430-640 (2)	Endoplasmic Reticulum (environmentally-sensitive)	Figure 5 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
FMT-green	750	175	523	Mitochondria	Figure 1B in (Han et al. 2012)
Hoechst 33258	560 >> 717		461 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 5A in (Trägårdh et al. 2015)
Hoechst 33342	660 > 715		461 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 3A in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
Laurdan (in EtOH)	780	60 (1)	494	Lipid rafts	Figure S7 in (Kim et al. 2007)
LysoTracker Red	1010 < 1100		590 (2)	Organelle tracker	Figure 5 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
LysoTracker Yellow	972		535 (2)	Organelle tracker	Figure 5 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)

MitoTracker Red	860, 1133	3.12 (at 860 nm)	599 (2)	Organelle tracker	Figure 5 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
PKH26	950		567 (2)	Membrane labelling	– (Takaki et al. 2015)
PKH67	870, 850		502 (2)	Membrane labelling	– (Morelli et al. 2003; Kuwashima et al. 2005)
Propidium iodide	989 > 1015 >> 1099		617 (2)	Nucleic acids (dead cells)	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
<b>Quinacrine</b>	678 > 697		525 (2)	Nucleic acids, therapeutic effect	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
SL2 (in EtOH / THF)	800	40 / 185	576 / 495	Lipid rafts, turn-on	Figure 1B in (Lim et al. 2011b)
Rhodamine 123	913 > 1090		527 (2)	Mitochondria	Figure 3 in (Bestvater et al. 2002)
SYBR Gold	~820		~537 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 3 in (Neu et al. 2002)
SYBR Green	~820		520 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 3 in (Neu et al. 2002)
Syto 13	~780-800		509 (DNA), 514 (RNA) (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 2 in (Neu et al. 2002)
Syto 40	900		441 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 2 in (Neu et al. 2002)
Syto 9	<800		503 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 2 in (Neu et al. 2002)
Sytox Blue	<800		480 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 3 in (Neu et al. 2002)
Sytox Green	~715		523 (2)	Nucleic acids	Figure 5C in (Trägårdh et al. 2015)
TO-PRO-3	1110		661 (2)	Nucleic acids, OPO-friendly	– (Smith et al. 2012)



754 **Table S1** Biophysical properties of two-photon–suitable probes in alphabetical order: peak  
755 wavelength of two-photon action cross-section ( $\lambda_{2PA}$ ) ; peak two-photon action cross-section  
756 ( $\sigma_2\phi$ ) ; peak wavelength of molecular brightness ( $\lambda_{\epsilon_{max}}$ ) ; peak molecular brightness ( $\epsilon_{max}$ ) ;  
757 fluorescence wavelength ( $\lambda_{fluo}$ ).

758 (1) : calculated from the  $\sigma_2$  and  $\phi$  values

759 (2) : data from commercial provider

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## 762 **Compliance with Ethical Standards**

763 **Funding:** CH is supported by a F30 Fellowship (NS093719 from NIH NINDS), as well as the  
764 UCLA Medical Scientist Training Program (NIH NIGMS training grant GM08042). CP-C is  
765 supported by W81XWH-14-1-0433 (USAMRMC, DOD), a Developmental Disabilities  
766 Translational Research Program grant (#20160969 from John Merck), SFARI Awards 295438  
767 and 513155CP (Simons Foundation) and 5R01HD054453 (NICHD/NIH). GL is supported by  
768 the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR-15-CE37-0004 “SmellBrain” & ANR-15-  
769 NEUC-0004 “Circuit\_OPL”).

770 **Conflict of Interest:** GL is supported by the life insurance company AG2R-La-Mondiale  
771 (“Vivons vélo pour l’Institut Pasteur”).

772 **Ethical approval:** All procedures performed in studies involving animals were in accordance  
773 with the ethical standards of the institution at which the studies were conducted. This article  
774 does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors.

775

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