

Dynamic control of the high-affinity iron uptake complex in root epidermal cells

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- **Short title:** *Arabidopsis* iron uptake complex 1 2 Dynamic control of the high-affinity iron uptake complex in root epidermal 3 cells 4 5 Amanda Martín-Barranco¹, Julien Spielmann², Guillaume Dubeaux³, Grégory Vert^{2*}, and 6 Enric Zelazny^{1,4*} 7 8 ¹Institute for Integrative Biology of the Cell (I2BC), UMR9198 CNRS/CEA/Univ. Paris Sud, 9 Université Paris-Saclay, 91198 Gif-sur-Yvette, France. 10 11 ²Plant Science Research Laboratory (LRSV), UMR5546 CNRS/University of Toulouse 3, 31320 Auzeville Tolosane, France. 12 ³Division of Biological Sciences, Cell and Developmental Biology Section, University of 13 California San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093, USA. 14 ⁴Current address: BPMP, CNRS, INRAE, Montpellier SupAgro, Univ Montpellier, 2 Place 15 16 Viala, 34060 Montpellier Cedex 2, France. 17 *Corresponding authors: Enric.Zelazny@supagro.fr; Gregory.Vert@lrsv.ups-tlse.fr 18 19 20 21 The authors responsible for distribution of materials integral to the findings presented in this article in accordance with the policy described in the Instructions for Authors 22 (www.plantphysiol.org) are: Enric Zelazny (Enric.Zelazny@supagro.fr) and Grégory Vert 23 (Gregory.Vert@lrsv.ups-tlse.fr). 24 25 Author contributions: A.M.B., G.V. and E.Z. designed the research; A.M.B. J.S. and E.Z. 26 performed the experiments; G.D. performed the quantification of co-localization and 27
- 29 wrote the manuscript.

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40	One-sentence summary: The three main actors of iron acquisition in Arabidopsis root,				
41	namely IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2, assemble into a dedicated protein complex.				
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56 ABSTRACT

57 In plants, iron uptake from the soil is tightly regulated to ensure optimal growth and development. Iron absorption in Arabidopsis root epidermal cells requires the IRT1 58 transporter that also allows the entry of certain non-iron metals, such as Zn, Mn, and Co. 59 60 Recent work demonstrated that IRT1 endocytosis and degradation are controlled by IRT1 non-iron metal substrates in an ubiquitin-dependent manner. To better understand how metal 61 uptake is regulated, we identified IRT1-interacting proteins in Arabidopsis roots by mass 62 spectrometry and established an interactome of IRT1. Interestingly, the AHA2 proton pump 63 and the FRO2 reductase, both of which work in concert with IRT1 in the acidification-64 reduction-transport strategy of iron uptake, were part of this interactome. We confirmed that 65 IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 associate through co-immunopurification and split-ubiquitin 66 analyses, and uncovered that they form tripartite direct interactions. We characterized the 67 dynamics of the iron uptake complex and showed that FRO2 and AHA2 ubiquitination is 68 independent of the non-iron metal substrates transported by IRT1. In addition, FRO2 and 69 70 AHA2 are not largely endocytosed in response to non-iron metal excess, unlike IRT1. Indeed, we provide evidence that the phosphorylation of IRT1 in response to high levels of non-iron 71 metals likely triggers dissociation of the complex. Overall, we propose that a dedicated iron-72 acquisition protein complex exists at the cell surface of Arabidopsis root epidermal cells to 73 optimize iron uptake. 74

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76 Keywords: IRT1, iron, Arabidopsis, transport, endocytosis, phosphorylation

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86 INTRODUCTION

Iron is essential for plant growth and development as it plays fundamental roles in 87 many cellular processes, including photosynthetic and respiratory electron transfer reactions. 88 However, iron is also toxic when present in excess because it induces oxidative stress. Iron 89 bioavailability to plants is often limited, such as in calcareous soils in which iron is present in 90 the form of insoluble complexes (Briat et al., 2015). Iron is a limiting factor for plant biomass 91 92 production and hence is required as an important component of agriculture productivity. To 93 maintain iron homeostasis, plants must tightly regulate iron absorption from the soil. In nongraminaceous plants, including the model plant Arabidopsis thaliana, iron absorption by root 94 95 epidermal cells is achieved through the so-called strategy I, which requires three successive steps. Firstly, soil ferric chelates are solubilized by local rhizosphere acidification via the 96 release of protons by the proton pump H⁺-ATPase2 (AHA2). Solubilized Fe³⁺ ions are then 97 reduced to Fe²⁺ by the Ferric Reduction Oxydase2 (FRO2) reductase and finally transported 98 into the cell by the iron transporter Iron Regulated Transporter1 (IRT1) (Palmer and Guerinot, 99 2009; Thomine and Vert, 2013; Jeong et al., 2017). During this acidification-reduction-100 transport mechanism, reduction of Fe³⁺ ions by FRO2 has been proposed to be the rate-101 limiting step in iron acquisition (Robinson et al., 1999; Connolly et al., 2003). In Arabidopsis, 102 103 the expression of IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 genes is activated under iron-limited conditions through the direct action of the basic Helix-Loop-Helix (bHLH) transcription factor FER-like 104 Iron Deficiency-Induced Transcription Factor (FIT) that can form heterodimers with other 105 bHLH proteins (Colangelo and Guerinot, 2004; Jakoby et al., 2004; Yuan et al., 2008). Apart 106 from the predominant role of IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2, another membrane protein called 107 108 ATP-Binding Cassette G37 (ABCG37/PDR9) was demonstrated to be involved in Arabidopsis iron acquisition by exporting coumarins in the rhizosphere under iron deficiency 109 (Fourcroy et al., 2014). These excreted phenolic compounds chelate Fe³⁺ and facilitate iron 110 availability for reduction by FRO2 (Fourcroy et al., 2016). Similar to the other components of 111 the Arabidopsis iron-acquisition machinery, the ABCG37/PDR9 gene is transcriptionally 112 induced in response to iron deficiency in a FIT-dependent manner (Rodriguez-Celma et al., 113 2013). 114

IRT1 is a major player in the regulation of plant iron homeostasis, as attested by the
severe chlorosis and the lethality of the *irt1-1* knock-out mutant (Vert et al., 2002).
Interestingly IRT1 is a broad-spectrum transporter, which also allows the absorption of metals

such as zinc, manganese, cobalt, and cadmium, in addition to iron (Rogers et al., 2000; Vert et 118 al., 2001; Vert et al., 2002). The dynamics of IRT1 protein and its role in the maintenance of 119 metal homeostasis in Arabidopsis have been widely investigated. IRT1 localizes to early 120 endosomes in root epidermal cells and rapidly cycles between this compartment and the cell 121 surface to perform iron absorption (Barberon et al., 2011). Importantly, IRT1 dynamics 122 requires clathrin-mediated endocytosis and is controlled by ubiquitination on two cytosol-123 exposed lysine residues (Barberon et al., 2011), a process mediated by the E3 ubiquitin ligase 124 IRT1 DEGRADATION FACTOR1 (IDF1) (Shin et al., 2013; Dubeaux et al., 2018). 125 126 Surprisingly, IRT1 ubiquitination and endocytosis are not regulated by iron, the primary substrate of the IRT1 transporter, but rather by its secondary metal substrates (Zn, Mn, and 127 Co, herein called non-iron metal substrates). These non-iron metal substrates, which are 128 highly reactive and toxic when present in excess in plant cells, were recently demonstrated to 129 130 regulate IRT1 endocytosis (Barberon et al., 2014). In the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates, a functional IRT1-mCitrine fusion protein is 131 localized in early endosomes and to some extent at the plasma membrane of root epidermal 132 cells. Interestingly, in the presence of an excess of non-iron metal substrates, IRT1-mCitrine 133 is targeted to late endosomes and then reaches the vacuole for degradation, whereas it is 134 exclusively localized to the plasma membrane in the absence of such metals. The sensing of 135 the excess of non-iron metal substrates is directly mediated by IRT1 through the binding of 136 metals on a histidine-rich stretch located in IRT1 large cytosolic loop (Dubeaux et al., 2018). 137 Hence, IRT1 was proposed to act as a transceptor, combining transporter and receptor 138 properties (Cointry and Vert, 2019). Non-iron metal binding to IRT1 allows the recruitment 139 of Calcineurin B-like (CBL)-interacting serine/threonine-protein kinase 23 (CIPK23) and 140 subsequent phosphorylation of IRT1. This in turn allows the lysine-63 polyubiquitination of 141 IRT1 by IDF1, triggering IRT1 endocytosis and targeting to the vacuole (Dubeaux et al., 142 2018). The control of IRT1 degradation by its secondary substrates certainly constitutes a 143 protective mechanism allowing limitation of the absorption of readily available Zn²⁺, Mn²⁺, 144 and Co²⁺ ions that, contrary to Fe³⁺, do not need prior reduction by FRO2 to be transported 145 (Zelazny et al., 2011). Interestingly, the plasma membrane pool of IRT1 is present at the outer 146 147 polar domain of root epidermal cells, which is necessary for proper radial transport of metals 148 in the root (Barberon et al., 2014). IRT1 physically interacts with FYVE1, a protein recruited to the Endosomal Sorting Complexes Required for Transport (ESCRT) in late endosomes 149 (Barberon et al., 2014; Gao et al., 2014). FYVE1 drives the maintenance of IRT1 lateral 150 151 polarity, through a mechanism that is not fully understood. Interference with FYVE1

expression induces apolar localization of IRT1 at the plasma membrane and disturbs metal uptake in *Arabidopsis* (Barberon et al., 2014). IRT1 recycling from endosomes to the plasma membrane was shown to require Sorting Nexin 1 (SNX1) (Ivanov et al., 2014). Recently, the peripheral membrane protein ENHANCED BENDING1 (EHB1) was demonstrated to interact with IRT1 in a calcium-dependent manner and was proposed to act as an inhibitor of IRT1mediated iron transport (Khan et al., 2019).

Since IRT1 is an essential determinant of root metal uptake in low-iron conditions, we 158 sought to identify additional proteins involved in IRT1 dynamics/activity or working in 159 160 concert with IRT1 to better characterize how plant metal homeostasis is controlled. Using coimmunopurification (co-IP) of IRT1 and identification of IRT1-interacting proteins by mass 161 162 spectrometry, we shed light on the existence of a dedicated protein complex composed of IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 that likely optimizes iron uptake in root epidermal cells. We also 163 164 uncovered that IRT1 is selectively removed from the complex in response to non-iron metal excess, in a process involving its phosphorylation. 165

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167 **RESULTS**

168 IRT1 interactome in Arabidopsis root epidermal cells

To better understand how the non-iron metal-mediated internalization of IRT1 is 169 controlled in root epidermal cells, we searched for proteins interacting with IRT1 upon non-170 iron metal excess. To this purpose, a functional IRT1-mCitrine fusion protein expressed under 171 the control of the *IRT1* promoter in *Arabidopsis irt1-1* null mutant (Dubeaux et al., 2018) was 172 immunopurified, and co-purified proteins were identified by mass spectrometry. irtl-173 1/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine transgenic line and Ws wild-type (WT) plants, used as a negative 174 control, were initially grown for nine days on MS/2 medium containing iron, transferred for 175 five days onto a medium lacking iron and containing physiological concentrations of non-iron 176 metals to induce IRT1-mCitrine expression, and finally transferred to a medium without iron 177 178 and containing an excess of non-iron metal substrate for two days. To purify the transmembrane IRT1-mCitrine protein, root protein extracts from IRT1-mCitrine-expressing 179 plants were solubilized with a soft non-ionic detergent, n-Dodecyl β-D-maltoside (DDM), to 180 preserve the interactions between IRT1 and its partners. Then, IRT1-mCitrine and the 181 associated proteins were immunopurified with anti-GFP antibodies coupled to magnetic 182 microbeads, the same procedure was performed on DDM-solubilized proteins from WT plant 183

roots. Immunopurified proteins from IRT1-mCitrine and WT plants were separated by SDS-184 PAGE (Supplemental Fig. 1) and analyzed by mass spectrometry. Proteins were considered as 185 interacting with IRT1 when specifically identified in IRT1-mCitrine immunopurified fraction 186 with at least two different peptides. This approach allowed the identification of 142 putative 187 IRT1 interactants (Supplemental Dataset 1). Among these, 31 were found in the two 188 independent experiments whereas 111 were detected in only one of the two replicates. Since 189 the control of IRT1 trafficking is of the utmost importance for the regulation of this 190 transporter, we specifically looked for IRT1-interacting proteins that are linked to the 191 192 secretory or endocytic pathways (Table1). Clathrin was found as putatively interacting with IRT1, which is in accordance with our previous results showing that IRT1 undergoes clathrin-193 194 mediated endocytosis (Barberon et al., 2011; Barberon et al., 2014). Interestingly SEC13a and SEC31b proteins were identified as IRT1 putative interactants, suggesting a role of coat 195 196 protein complex II (COPII) machinery in the export of IRT1 from the endoplasmic reticulum (ER) to the Golgi apparatus (Chung et al., 2016). Conversely, IRT1 probably also undergoes 197 retrograde transport from the Golgi to the ER since it interacts with components of COPI 198 vesicles (Table 1) (Yorimitsu et al., 2014). Another interesting group of IRT1 interactants are 199 200 proteins linked to Arabidopsis metal homeostasis such as the Pleiotropic drug resistance 8 / 201 Penetration 3 protein that was proposed to act as a cadmium extrusion pump (Kim et al., 2007) (Table 1). IRT1 also associates with two iron transporters from the VIT family; 202 however, the relevance of this interaction remains unclear since these proteins were described 203 as localizing to the ER body membrane (Yamada et al., 2013). Recently, rhizosphere-excreted 204 coumarins were shown to be important for iron acquisition in an IRT1-dependent manner 205 (Fourcroy et al., 2016). Interestingly, the Feruloyl-Coenzyme A 6'-Hydroxylase 1 (F6'H1) 206 207 (Schmid et al., 2014) and the Cytochrome P450/CYP82C4 (Rajniak et al., 2018), which are both involved in coumarin biosynthesis, were identified as putative IRT1-interacting proteins 208 (Table 1). In addition, FRO2 and AHA2, which are known to both act in concert with IRT1 in 209 the acidification-reduction-transport strategy for iron uptake in Arabidopsis thaliana, were 210 211 also identified (Table 1). Mass spectrometry analyses performed on IRT1 co-immunopurified fractions indeed identified peptides specific to the AHA2 isoform, but also identified peptides 212 213 common to AHA2 and other AHA proteins, mostly AHA1. However, since no peptide 214 specific to other AHA proteins than AHA2 were found, and because rhizosphere acidification 215 is chiefly mediated by AHA2 in lack of iron (Santi and Schmidt, 2009), we decided to focus our attention on AHA2. These observations indicate that IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 likely 216 217 associate to drive iron uptake. To gain further insight into the regulation of the iron uptake 218 machinery, we characterized in more detail the interaction and the spatial organization of the 219 three major actors of iron acquisition, namely FRO2, AHA2, and IRT1.

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221 IRT1 directly interacts with FRO2 and AHA2

To validate the observations obtained from mass spectrometry analyses, the 222 interactions between IRT1 and AHA2/FRO2 were first investigated in Arabidopsis roots by 223 performing co-IP combined with immunodetections. We analyzed the interaction between 224 IRT1-mCitrine, expressed under the control of IRT1 promoter, and endogenous AHA2 protein 225 226 by using a previously described antibody raised against Plasma Membrane H+-ATPase 2 227 (PMA2) from Nicotiana plumbaginifolia that recognizes AHA2 and also other Arabidopsis AHA proteins. When IRT1-mCitrine IP fraction was probed with anti-PMA2 antibodies, a 228 229 strong signal corresponding to the expected size of AHA2 (104 kDa) was detected, whereas no signal was observed in the IP fraction from WT plant roots used as a negative control (Fig. 230 231 1A). Although this signal may correspond in part to other AHA isoforms than AHA2 due to a lack of specificity of the anti-PMA2 antibodies, this result suggests that endogenous AHA2 232 233 likely associates with IRT1 in root epidermal cells. The existence of an IRT1-AHA2 complex is substantiated by other protein-protein interaction assays described hereafter. Since no 234 235 antibody raised against FRO2 was available, we generated a translational fusion of FRO2 236 expressed under control of the FRO2 promoter in the previously described fro2 mutant named frd1-1 (Robinson et al., 1999). Expression of FRO2 fused at its N-terminal end to the 237 mCherry fluorescent protein (mCherry-FRO2) complemented the hypersensitivity of *frd1-1* to 238 low iron, even for transgenic lines expressing low levels of mCherry-FRO2 (Supplemental 239 Fig. 2A and B). This clearly shows that mCherry-FRO2 fusion protein is fully functional. 240 Consistently, mCherry-FRO2 protein was only detected in root epidermal cells (Supplemental 241 Fig. 2C), highlighting the specificity of FRO2 promoter, as previously reported (Connolly et 242 al., 2003). To analyze the interaction between FRO2 and IRT1 in Arabidopsis roots by co-IP, 243 we generated transgenic lines co-expressing mCherry-FRO2 and IRT1-mCitrine under control 244 of the FRO2 and IRT1 promoters, respectively. Transgenic lines co-expressing IRT1-mCitrine 245 246 and RabD1-mCherry, the latter co-localizing with IRT1 in endosomes (Supplemental Fig. 3), were used as a negative control. mCherry-FRO2 was co-immunopurified with IRT1-mCitrine 247 whereas RAbD1-mCherry was not, proving that FRO2 and IRT1 form a protein complex in 248 root epidermal cells (Fig. 1B and Supplemental Fig. 4). 249

The interaction between IRT1 and AHA2/FRO2 was also confirmed by a split-250 ubiquitin assay, which allows the detection of direct interactions between membrane proteins 251 in yeast. Such an approach has been successfully implemented with IRT1 and IDF1 (Shin et 252 al., 2013; Dubeaux et al., 2018). IRT1 fused to the mutated N-terminal half of ubiquitin 253 (NubG), which is unable to spontaneously reassemble with the C-terminal part of ubiquitin 254 (Cub), was co-expressed in yeast with AHA2 or FRO2 fused to Cub linked to the chimeric 255 transcription factor ProteinA-LexA-VP16 (PLV) (Fig. 1C). Physical interactions between 256 257 IRT1 and AHA2/FRO2 were tested through the ability to rescue yeast growth on a selective 258 medium. Yeast co-expressing NubG-IRT1 with AHA2-Cub or FRO2-Cub grew on a selective medium, similarly to the respective positive controls expressing NubWT with AHA2-259 260 Cub/FRO2-Cub. However, no growth was observed for the respective negative controls expressing NubG with AHA2-Cub/FRO2-Cub. As an additional negative control for split-261 262 ubiquitin, NubG-IRT1 was co-expressed with an unrelated transmembrane protein, specifically the brassinosteroid receptor BRI1, fused to Cub. Whereas yeast co-expressing 263 264 NubWT with BRI1-Cub (positive control of interaction) grew on a selective medium, no growth was observed when BRI1 and IRT1 were co-expressed, indicating that these two 265 proteins do not interact. Interestingly, our split-ubiquitin assay also revealed that AHA2 and 266 FRO2 could physically associate with each other (Fig. 1C). This result was confirmed in 267 plants by co-IP approaches showing that endogenous AHA2 is co-immunopurified with 268 mCherry-FRO2 from Arabidopsis root protein extracts (Supplemental Fig. 5). Altogether, 269 these observations validate the existence of a protein complex in root epidermal cells that 270 gathers the different actors of the high-affinity iron uptake machinery in close proximity. 271

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273 Differential regulation of the iron uptake system by ubiquitination

We recently demonstrated that IRT1 endocytosis is controlled by the non-iron metal 274 substrates of IRT1 (Dubeaux et al., 2018). Upon an excess of these metals, IRT1 275 276 ubiquitination strongly increases leading to the endocytosis and the degradation of IRT1 in 277 the vacuole. Interestingly, proteomic analyses allowed the identification of AHA2 and FRO2 278 as part of the Arabidopsis ubiquitinome (Kim et al., 2013; Johnson and Vert, 2016; Walton et al., 2016). Since AHA2 and FRO2 belong to an IRT1-containing protein complex, we 279 wondered whether ubiquitination of these proteins could be co-regulated by non-iron metal 280 availability. First, we analyzed the ubiquitination profile of AHA2 and FRO2 by performing 281

IP of AHA2-GFP and mCherry-FRO2 expressed in Arabidopsis roots, followed by the 282 immunodetection of ubiquitination with the P4D1 general anti-ubiquitin antibodies. In the 283 presence of physiological concentrations of non-iron metal substrates, AHA2-GFP and 284 mCherry-FRO2 IP fractions probed with P4D1 antibodies exhibited high-molecular-weight 285 smears that are typical of ubiquitinated proteins as observed for IRT1-mCitrine used as a 286 control (Fig. 2). To quantify the effect of non-iron metal regime on the ubiquitination of the 287 investigated proteins, the signal intensity observed for the anti-ubiquitin immunoblots 288 performed on IRT1-mCitrine, AHA2-GFP, or mCherry-FRO2 immunopurified proteins was 289 290 measured and normalized to the corresponding immunopurified proteins (Fig. 2C). As previously observed (Dubeaux et al., 2018), a short treatment with an excess of non-iron 291 292 metals led to a strong increase in IRT1-mCitrine ubiquitination (Fig. 2A and C). By contrast, the pool of ubiquitinated AHA2-GFP and mCherry-FRO2 remained unchanged in both metal 293 294 regimes (Fig. 2A, B and C, and Supplemental Fig. 6). Hence, although AHA2, FRO2, and IRT1 belong to the same complex involved in a common mechanism i.e. iron acquisition, 295 296 ubiquitination of these proteins is differentially regulated by metal availability.

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298 Selective endocytosis of IRT1 in response to non-iron metal excess

Although the intracellular dynamics of IRT1 and AHA2 were previously 299 300 independently investigated (Barberon et al., 2011; Dubeaux et al., 2018; Haruta et al., 2018), the subcellular distribution of FRO2 has not previously been determined. Thus, the respective 301 localization of IRT1-mCitrine and FRO2/AHA2 expressed as mCherry fusion proteins was 302 investigated. We used root-tip epidermal cells as i) these cells are well suited to analyze the 303 precise localization of endocytosed plasma membrane proteins and ii) the metal-triggered 304 endocytosis of IRT1 was already characterized in such cells (Dubeaux et al., 2018). 305 Interestingly, in the absence of iron and in the presence of physiologically relevant amounts 306 of non-iron metal substrates, mCherry-FRO2 was present at the plasma membrane in the outer 307 polar domain facing the rhizosphere, as observed for IRT1-mCitrine (Fig. 3A, left panel) 308 309 (Barberon et al., 2014; Dubeaux et al., 2018). FRO2 also co-localized with IRT1 in 310 intracellular vesicles (Mander's coefficient, M2 = 0.48) (Fig. 3A, left panel and 3C), which correspond to early endosomes since IRT1 constitutes a marker of these compartments in 311 such metal conditions (Barberon et al., 2011; Dubeaux et al., 2018). In contrast to IRT1 and 312 FRO2, AHA2-mCherry displayed an apolar plasma membrane localization in epidermal cells 313

in the same metal conditions and although AHA2-mCherry was observed in a limited number of endosomes, these were mostly co-labeled with IRT1-mCitrine (M2 = 0.39) (Fig. 3B, left panel and 3D).

The intracellular dynamics of FRO2 and AHA2 were then investigated after a short-317 318 term treatment with an excess of non-iron metal substrates that triggers IRT1 endocytosis and its subsequent degradation (Dubeaux et al., 2018). Upon non-iron metal excess, IRT1-319 mCitrine was depleted from the cell surface and accumulated in late endosomes (Fig. 3A and 320 3B, left panels). mCherry-FRO2 and AHA2-mCherry were, however, mostly detected at the 321 plasma membrane, even though they were also found to co-localize with IRT1-mCitrine in 322 323 late endosomes (Fig. 3A and 3B, left panels). To quantify the response to metals, the ratio of plasma membrane to intracellular fluorescence signal intensities was measured for the three 324 fusion proteins under physiological non-iron metal provision or in the presence of an excess 325 of these metals (Fig. 3A and 3B, right panels). As previously reported, the plasma 326 membrane/intracellular ratio highly decreased for IRT1-mCitrine in response to non-iron 327 328 metal excess (Dubeaux et al., 2018). For mCherry-FRO2 and AHA2-mCherry, however, no significant difference was observed, indicating that FRO2 and AHA2 are not largely 329 endocytosed in response to non-iron metal excess. However, the level of co-localization of 330 FRO2 and IRT1 in endosomes significantly increased with non-iron metal excess (M2 = 0.69) 331 compared to control conditions (M2 = 0.48) (Fig. 3C), suggesting a minor effect of non-iron 332 metal status on FRO2 endocytosis. On the other hand, the co-localization level between 333 334 AHA2 and IRT1 in endosomes was not significantly modified by non-iron metal substrates (Fig. 3D). 335

The absence of a massive internalization of FRO2 and AHA2 in response to non-iron 336 metal excess suggests that the IRT1/FRO2/AHA2 complex dissociates prior to IRT1 337 endocytosis. Since the phosphorylation of residues in the large cytosolic loop of IRT1 was 338 shown to be the trigger of IRT1 ubiquitin-dependent endocytosis upon non-iron metal 339 substrate excess (Dubeaux et al., 2018), we investigated whether phosphomimic (IRT1_{S/TxD}) 340 or non-phosphorylatable (IRT1_{S/TxA}) variants of IRT1 would display modified association 341 342 with AHA2 and FRO2. Using split-ubiquitin approaches, we observed that yeast coexpressing NubG-IRT1_{S/TxD} and AHA2- or FRO2-Cub grew slower on the selective medium 343 than yeast co-expressing NubG-IRT1 or NubG-IRT1_{S/TxA} together with AHA2- or FRO2-Cub 344 (Fig. 4A, B). To better quantify the effect of the respective IRT1 variants, we measured yeast 345 growth in liquid cultures. We consistently observed reduced growth for yeast co-expressing 346

FRO2 or AHA2 with $IRT1_{S/TxD}$ compared to their wild-type or $IRT1_{S/TxA}$ counterparts (Fig. 4C, D), although NubG- $IRT1_{S/TxD}$ protein accumulated to the same extent as wild-type or IRT1_{S/TxA} when expressed in yeast cells (Supplemental Fig. 7). These results show that the phosphomimic variant of IRT1 displays a reduced interaction with AHA2 and FRO2. Altogether, these observations clearly indicate a role for IRT1 phosphorylation in dissociation of the high-affinity iron uptake complex upon non-iron metal excess.

353 **DISCUSSION**

354 IRT1 interactome: new insight into IRT1 dynamics and metal uptake

355 IRT1 mediates the absorption of iron but also non-iron metal substrates such as Zn, 356 Mn, and Co in root epidermal cells and is a major actor of metal nutrition in Arabidopsis. Previous studies revealed that the tight control of IRT1 intracellular dynamics by IDF1, 357 358 CIPK23, FYVE1, or SNX1 is essential to maintain metal homeostasis and to ensure optimal 359 plant growth and development (Shin et al., 2013; Barberon et al., 2014; Ivanov et al., 2014; 360 Dubeaux et al., 2018). To better understand how IRT1 is controlled in the cell, we searched for further IRT1-interacting proteins by performing IP of the functional IRT1-mCitrine fusion 361 362 protein expressed under the control of *IRT1* promoter coupled to mass spectrometry analyses. Co-IP has the great advantage to reveal physiologically relevant protein-protein interactions 363 364 in plant cells and regarding false positives, co-IP does not generate more than the yeast two-365 hybrid or the split-ubiquitin techniques and results in less than using bimolecular fluorescence complementation (BiFC) (Xing et al., 2016). Besides, co-IP was successfully used in the past 366 to identify interactants of channels and receptors (Karlova et al., 2006; Bellati et al., 2016). 367 One must consider that an interactome provides an overview of proteins putatively interacting 368 with a bait, but that each candidate protein has to be validated by an independent protein-369 protein interaction technic before further investigation to avoid putative artifacts. Here, we 370 decided to (i) use the IRT1 endogenous promoter to maximize the detection of interactions 371 between IRT1 and its interactants in relevant cell types, i.e. root epidermal cells, and (ii) 372 validate each candidate of interest using the split-ubiquitin technic. Two independent co-373 374 IP/mass spectrometry experiments were performed, which provides qualitative data on 375 proteins interacting with IRT1. Using another replicate would have certainly allowed us to obtain more quantitative data. Besides, since several very interesting candidates such as FRO2 376 were identified in one of the two experiments, we decided to include the proteins that were 377 378 identified in only one replicate in the IRT1 interactome. Among 142 proteins putatively

interacting with IRT1, a group of proteins related to intracellular trafficking emerged, which 379 included clathrin, tubulin, and actin (Table 1). An association between clathrin and IRT1 is in 380 agreement with the previously reported clathrin-mediated internalization of IRT1 from the 381 plasma membrane (Barberon et al., 2014). The co-IP approach does not allow the 382 determination of whether two proteins directly interact or not; however, according to what is 383 known for other cargo proteins, it is likely that the interaction between IRT1 and clathrin is 384 385 mediated by an unknown adaptor protein. So far the role of actin and tubulin in IRT1 386 dynamics is poorly understood; however, since these proteins are known to be involved in plant endocytosis (Fan et al., 2015), their presence in the IRT1-interactome also opens 387 interesting perspectives. Two small G proteins from the Rab class, namely RAB GTPase 388 389 homolog A1D and RAB GTPase homolog 1C, were also identified as putative interactants of IRT1 (Table 1). Although the role of these two proteins in intracellular trafficking is still 390 391 elusive, similar Rab proteins were described to act in plant endocytic pathways (Qi and Zheng, 2013). Intriguingly, the IDF1 E3 ubiquitin ligase and the CIPK23 kinase that are 392 393 important for IRT1 endocytosis and were demonstrated to interact with IRT1 in split-ubiquitin and yeast-two hybrid candidate approaches, respectively (Shin et al., 2013; Dubeaux et al., 394 2018), were not co-purified with IRT1 in the present study. Given the functions of IDF1 and 395 CIPK23, their interactions with IRT1 are probably very transient and may be lost during the 396 co-IP procedure contrary to other systems such as split-ubiquitin and yeast-two hybrid where 397 these associations would be stabilized (Xing et al., 2016). Until now, studies of IRT1 398 trafficking in plant cells mainly described endocytic mechanisms including IRT1 399 internalization from the plasma membrane in an ubiquitin-dependent process or IRT1 400 recycling from endosomes to the plasma membrane. How IRT1 traffics along the secretory 401 pathway to reach the plasma membrane remains largely unknown, even though Malus 402 xiaojinesis IRT1 was proposed to exit the ER in COPII vesicles (Tan et al., 2018). The 403 Arabidopsis IRT1 interactome provides interesting clues on these aspects since IRT1 was 404 found to putatively interact with several components of the COPII machinery that is 405 406 sequentially recruited to the surface of the ER membrane to induce the formation of transport vesicles and ensure the delivery of cargo proteins to the Golgi apparatus (Chung et al., 2016) 407 408 (Table 1). Membrane proteins exit the ER via the recognition of specific cytoplasmic export 409 motifs by the COPII machinery; these signals include diacidic motifs corresponding to 410 (D/E)x(D/E), with x representing any amino acid residue (Zelazny et al., 2009). A diacidic motif (EDD) located in the large cytosolic loop of IRT1 at the position 180 may be involved 411

in the packaging of IRT1 in COPII vesicles and its export from the ER, although this remainsto be experimentally determined.

Besides the IRT1 interactants linked to intracellular trafficking, proteins involved in 414 metal homeostasis represent a very interesting group of candidates (Table 1). Recently, 415 416 coumarins, which are excreted in the rhizosphere by PDR9, were demonstrated to be important for Arabidopsis iron acquisition by chelating Fe³⁺ and as a result facilitating iron 417 availability for FRO2 (Fourcroy et al., 2014; Fourcroy et al., 2016). Intriguingly, IRT1 418 potentially interacts with F6'H1 and Cytochrome P450/CYP82C4 that are both involved in 419 coumarin biosynthesis (Schmid et al., 2014; Rajniak et al., 2018), but the meaning of these 420 interactions remains unclear, notably because PDR9 was not identified as interacting with 421 422 IRT1. However, solubilization of this large transmembrane protein may not be optimal in the conditions we used for the co-IP and other approaches will be necessary to determine whether 423 424 PDR9 and IRT1 could work in concert among a common protein complex. Interestingly, FRO2 and AHA2, which act with IRT1 in the acidification-reduction-transport strategy for 425 426 iron acquisition, were found to interact with IRT1.

IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 form an iron-acquisition complex to optimize iron uptake in Arabidopsis roots

429 By combining co-IP analyses and split-ubiquitin assays, we showed that IRT1 associates with FRO2 and AHA2 proteins, but also that FRO2 and AHA2 interact together 430 (Fig. 1). Importantly, the tripartite physical interactions between IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 are 431 direct, suggesting the existence of a dedicated protein complex at the cell surface for iron 432 uptake. Interaction between IRT1 and FRO2/AHA2 is probably not required for the intrinsic 433 activity of IRT1, since heterologous expression of IRT1 alone allows phenotypic 434 complementation of the *fet3 fet4* yeast mutant defective in iron uptake (Eide et al., 1996). 435 Similar to IRT1, FRO2 was also observed at the outer polar domain of the plasma membrane 436 in epidermal cells from the root tip (Fig. 3) and from the differentiated zone of the root 437 (Supplemental Fig. 8A). The co-polarity between FRO2 and IRT1 proteins in this domain of 438 439 the plasma membrane highlights the specificity of their functions achieved at the interface 440 between the root surface and the rhizosphere. On the other hand, AHA2 distribution in the plasma membrane of root epidermal cells was homogenous (Fig. 3 and Supplemental Fig. 441 8B), suggesting that AHA2 does not obligatory associate with FRO2 and IRT1. This result is 442 in accordance with AHA2 function not being restricted to iron acquisition (Yuan et al., 2017; 443

Hoffmann et al., 2018; Pacifici et al., 2018). Even though the performed interaction tests do 444 not provide any information on the localization of the IRT1/FRO2/AHA2 complex, co-445 localization analyses suggest that IRT1 may interact with FRO2 and AHA2 in the plasma 446 membrane and in endosomes (Fig. 3 and Supplemental Fig. 8). In the future, Förster 447 resonance energy transfer-fluorescence lifetime imaging microscopy (FRET-FLIM), which 448 allows the detection of protein-protein interactions in living plant cells with a high spatial and 449 temporal resolution (Zelazny et al., 2007), may reveal where IRT1 interact with FRO2 and 450 451 AHA2 in the cell.

IRT1 intracellular dynamics is regulated by ubiquitination notably in response to an 452 excess of non-iron metal substrates, following which IRT1 ubiquitination is enhanced, thus 453 454 triggering its endocytosis and degradation in the vacuole (Dubeaux et al., 2018). Our biochemical analyses revealed that FRO2 and AHA2 are also ubiquitinated; however, their 455 ubiquitination is not modulated by the non-iron metal provision (Fig. 2 and Supplemental 456 Fig.6). This is consistent with the endocytosis of both proteins being rather constitutive and 457 458 not regulated by non-iron metals (Fig. 3). In this context, the ubiquitination of FRO2 and AHA2 appears to be involved in a non-degradative process. First, FRO2 and AHA2 may 459 undergo mono-ubiquitination that is known to promote internalization from the cell surface 460 but to be insufficient for vacuolar targeting (Lauwers et al., 2010). Second, the internalized 461 pool of AHA2 and FRO2 may be rapidly de-ubiquitinated in endosomes allowing their 462 recycling to the plasma membrane. Third, since ubiquitination is not only involved in 463 endocytosis and degradation but is also implicated in other processes such as the allosteric 464 regulation of proteins (Komander, 2009), we may speculate that FRO2 and AHA2 465 ubiquitination may convey this type of regulation. Although the identity of the E3 ubiquitin 466 467 ligase at stake is unknown, IDF1 represents a possible candidate for constitutive ubiquitination of AHA2 and FRO2 that will have to be tested in the future. The fact that 468 469 AHA2 and FRO2 likely carry out other functions independent of iron nutrition may provide an explanation for their not being degraded upon non-iron metal excess. Indeed, AHA2 was 470 471 previously reported to contribute to acidic growth or phosphorus uptake (Yuan et al., 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2018; Pacifici et al., 2018). FRO2 may play a role in copper reduction since 472 473 frd1-1 mutants lack low iron-inducible copper chelate reductase activity and 35S::FRO2 plants display elevated copper reduction (Yi and Guerinot, 1996; Robinson et al., 1999; 474 475 Connolly et al., 2003). The absence of internalization of FRO2 and AHA2 from the plasma membrane in root epidermal cells in response to non-iron metal excess indicates that the 476

IRT1/FRO2/AHA2 complex must disassemble prior to IRT1 endocytosis to release AHA2 477 and FRO2 pools that may engage in other processes. In response to non-iron metal excess, 478 IRT1 is phosphorylated by CIPK23 in its large cytosolic loop, boosting the interaction with 479 the E3 ubiquitin ligase IDF1 and yielding polyubiquitinated IRT1 (Dubeaux et al., 2018). We 480 demonstrated in the present study that phosphorylation of IRT1 at the same residues also 481 controls the disassembly of the root high-affinity iron uptake complex (Fig. 4). 482 Phosphorylation of IRT1 therefore has two opposite effects: dissociation of the 483 IRT1/AHA2/FRO2 complex and recruitment of IDF1. Although phosphorylation is often 484 485 considered as a post-translational modification allowing the recruitment of downstream factors, there is mounting evidence that it also controls the disassembly of protein complexes 486 487 (Zhang et al., 2010; Couto et al., 2016). The fact that AHA2 and FRO2 were identified in our co-IP/mass spectrometry analysis as interacting with IRT1 in non-iron metal excess is rather 488 489 surprising, since IRT1 phosphorylation in response to non-iron metal excess induces the dissociation of the IRT1/FRO2/AHA2 complex. However, this may not induce total 490 491 dissociation of the complex, as evidenced by the residual interaction observed between the phosphomimic IRT1 and AHA2/FRO2. This is also supported by the partial co-localization of 492 493 FRO2 and AHA2 with IRT1 in late endosomes under non-iron metal excess. In addition, we showed that the level of co-localization between FRO2 and IRT1 in late endosomes slightly 494 increased with non-iron metal excess, suggesting that a small proportion of FRO2 is still able 495 to associate with IRT1 in these conditions. Therefore, our co-IP/mass spectrometry analysis 496 carried out when plants experience non-iron metal excess likely allowed us to identify the 497 small pool of FRO2 and AHA2 still interacting with IRT1 in endosomes. This may explain 498 why a limited number of FRO2 peptides were identified by proteomics. 499

500 The biological significance of iron uptake using a specific platform at the cell surface is unclear but likely relies in the chemistry of iron. Although iron is abundant in most soils, its 501 502 bioavailability to plants is often limited. This is especially true for calcareous soils, which represent one third of cultivated lands, where iron is present under the form of insoluble 503 504 complexes (Briat et al., 2015). During the iron-acquisition process, rhizosphere acidification by the root is essential to increase iron availability, indeed the solubility of iron increases 505 506 1000-fold for every one unit drop in pH (Olsen et al., 1981). However, this acidification process, mainly mediated by AHA2 under iron deficiency (Santi and Schmidt, 2009), is very 507 508 local, which likely impacts on the efficiency of iron uptake. Moreover, the presence of oxygen in most soils likely provokes the rapid reoxidation of Fe^{2+} produced by FRO2 into 509

Fe³⁺ that is not transported by IRT1. Thus, we propose that the tripartite protein complex 510 gathering IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 together creates a local environment of pH and Fe²⁺ 511 concentration in the rhizosphere that favors an optimal acquisition of iron (Fig. 4E). To 512 experimentally validate this model, mutated versions of these proteins that do not interact 513 with each other but that conserve their activities need to be generated to evaluate the 514 functional outcome on iron uptake. However, this requires deep knowledge about the 515 structure or interaction domains between these highly hydrophobic membrane proteins, which 516 517 is currently missing. Alternatively to the local environment theory, we can also speculate that 518 reduced iron is directly transferred from FRO2 to IRT1 by a channeling mechanism, similar to what has been described for metabolic pathways. Channeling consists in the transfer of the 519 520 product of a proximal activity as substrate to a distal activity without equilibration with bulk solvent, which increases the efficiency of the kinetic process (Kwok et al., 2006). Such 521 522 mechanism requires the close proximity of the donor and acceptor sites. Interestingly, channeling of iron was described in yeast between the multicopper oxidase Fet3p, which 523 oxidizes Fe^{2+} to Fe^{3+} , and the iron permease Ftr1p that transports Fe^{3+} into the cells, with both 524 proteins forming a hetero-oligomeric complex (Kwok et al., 2006; Singh et al., 2006). Further 525 526 work will elucidate whether FRO2 and IRT1 use a similar mechanism. Whether the formation of an iron-acquisition complex comprising IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 is conserved in plants 527 other than Arabidopsis remains to be determined. This complex is probably not present in rice 528 (Oryza sativa) that combines two strategies to take up iron from the soil: a phytosiderophore-529 based system allowing the acquisition of Fe^{3+} (Inoue et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2009) and the use 530 of Fe²⁺ transporters such as OsIRT1 (Ishimaru et al., 2006). Indeed, Fe³⁺ chelate reductase 531 activity has been shown to not be required for Fe²⁺ uptake under iron deficiency in rice, 532 suggesting that OsIRT1 works independently of OsFRO2-like proteins (Ishimaru et al., 2006). 533 In paddy fields, where rice plants are grown, Fe^{2+} is abundant due to the low redox potential 534 and therefore rice plants do not need to reduce Fe^{3+} to Fe^{2+} (Ishimaru et al., 2007). So far, the 535 description of protein complexes aimed at optimizing nutrient uptake in plant remains scarce. 536 537 To our knowledge, only the interaction between glutamine synthase, the principal ammonia assimilatory enzyme, and the aquaglyceroporin Nodulin 26, a transporter of NH3, was 538 539 proposed to promote efficient assimilation of nitrogen in soybean (Masalkar et al., 2010). 540 Although experimental evidence is still needed, the co-localization between FRO2/AHA2 and 541 IRT1 in early endosomes in the presence of physiologically relevant levels of non-iron metals suggests that the iron-acquisition complex may exist in this compartment in addition to the 542 543 plasma membrane (Fig.4E). This complex may help plant metal uptake by translocating iron from endocytic vesicles to the cytosol. Alternatively, the AHA2/FRO2/IRT1 complex may simply cycle between early endosomes and the plasma membrane in a constitutive manner or in response to some undetermined stimulus. Finally, since early endosomes/trans-Golgi network constitute a crossroad between endocytic and secretory pathways in plants (Dettmer et al., 2006), the presence of the IRT1/FRO2/AHA2 complex in early endosomes may also reflect a step in the delivery of a pre-formed complex to the plasma membrane. Future work will be needed to discriminate between these different scenarios.

551

552 MATERIAL AND METHODS

553 **Plant material and growth conditions**

Arabidopsis thaliana wild-type (WT) plants (Col-0, Col-gl1, and Ws), the fro2 loss-of-554 function mutant named frd1-1 (Robinson et al., 1999), the previously described irt1-555 1/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine line (Dubeaux et al., 2018), and the various transgenic plants 556 generated in this study were vertically grown in sterile conditions at 21°C with 16 h light/8 h 557 dark cycles with a light intensity of 90 μ mol m⁻² s⁻¹ using Philips 17W F17T8/TL741 bulbs. 558 559 The plant growth medium used was half-strength Murashige and Skoog (MS/2) medium containing 1% sucrose (w/v), 1% (w/v) agar, and various concentrations of metals. Hence, 560 depending on the experiment (see below), plants were grown in the absence of iron and in the 561 presence of physiological concentrations of IRT1 secondary substrates Zn (15 μ M), Mn (50 562 μM), and Co (0.05 μM) (-Fe +Metals) or in the presence of 10-fold more Zn, Mn, and Co (-Fe 563 +++Metals) corresponding to an excess of non-iron metal substrates, as previously described 564 (Dubeaux et al., 2018). Plants have also been grown in iron-replete conditions using MS/2 565 medium containing 50 µM or 100 µM Fe-EDTA (+Fe). 566

For immunopurifications followed by mass spectrometry analyses, *irt1-1/IRT1::IRT1-*567 mCitrine transgenic lines and Ws WT plants were initially grown for 9 days on MS/2 medium 568 containing 50 µM Fe-EDTA, transferred for 5 days onto a -Fe +Metals medium to induce 569 570 IRT1-mCitrine expression, and finally subjected to a -Fe +++Metals treatment for 48 h. To confirm the interactions between IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 by co-immunopurifications, the 571 various genotypes were grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium containing 50 µM Fe-EDTA, 572 and then transferred for 4 days on a -Fe +Metals medium supplemented with 300 μ M of the 573 574 iron chelator Ferrozine [3-(2-pyridyl)-5,6-diphenyl-1,2,4-triazine sulfonate] to ensure a rapid and strong expression of genes under the control of IRT1 and FRO2 promoters. 575

To analyze mCherry-FRO2, AHA2-GFP, and IRT1-mCitrine ubiquitination profiles, the appropriate transgenic lines as well as WT plants used as negative controls were grown for 11 days on -Fe +Metals MS/2 solid medium. Then, plants were transferred for 2 h in -Fe +Metals (control) or -Fe +++Metals MS/2 liquid medium as previously described (Dubeaux et al., 2018).

For microscopy analyses, transgenic lines expressing IRT1/AHA2/FRO2 fusion proteins under the control of *IRT1* promoter, were first grown for 11 days on a -Fe +Metals MS/2 medium to ensure protein expression. Then, before observation, plants were transferred for 2 h in -Fe +Metals (control) or -Fe +++Metals MS/2 liquid medium. The localization of mCherry-FRO2 protein in *frd1-1*/FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 transgenic lines was performed on plants grown for 11 days in -Fe +Metals condition.

For mCherry-FRO2 functionality test, frd1-1/FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 transgenic lines, frd1-1 mutant, and Col-gl1 WT plants were grown for 11 days on MS/2 lacking iron (-Fe +Metals) or on MS/2 supplemented with 100 μ M Fe-EDTA (control conditions). Roots from ironstarved transgenic lines and frd1-1 (negative control) were collected to analyze mCherry-FRO2 protein accumulation by Western blot analysis as detailed below.

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593 Constructions and generation of Arabidopsis transgenic lines

All the constructions described in this section were obtained using the MultiSite Gateway® 594 Three-Fragment Vector Construction system. The FRO2 promoter corresponding to a 595 sequence of 1,845 bp upstream of the FRO2 start codon was amplified from Arabidopsis 596 thaliana genomic DNA using the attB4.promoFRO2 forward and attB1r.promoFRO2 reverse 597 598 primers (supplemental Table 1) and subsequently cloned into the pDONR.P4P1R entry vector. The FRO2 open reading frame (ORF) was amplified from Arabidopsis cDNAs with 599 600 the attB2r.FRO2 forward and attB3.FRO2 reverse primers (supplemental Table 1) and cloned into the pDONR.P2RP3 entry vector. The AHA2 ORF without the stop codon was amplified 601 602 from Arabidopsis cDNA with the AHA2.F forward and AHA2.R reverse primers and was cloned into the pDONR.221 entry vector. The mCherry sequence without stop codon was 603 amplified with attB1.mCherry forward and attB2.mCherry reverse primers and also cloned 604 into the pDONR.221 entry vector (supplemental Table 1). Entry vectors carrying the IRT1 605 606 and 35S promoters (pDONR.P4P1R-IRT1 and pDONR.P4P1R-35S) or the GFP and the mCherry coding sequence allowing C-terminal fusions (pDONR.P2RP3-GFP 607 and pDONR.P2RP3-mCherry) were previously described (Marques-Bueno et al., 2016; Dubeaux
et al., 2018). Final destination vectors for expression in plants were obtained by multisite
Gateway® recombination using the entry vectors described above and the pH7m34GW and
pK7 m34GW destinations vectors used for mCherry and GFP fusions, respectively. The
following constructs were generated: FRO2::mCherry-FRO2, IRT1::mCherry-FRO2,
IRT1::AHA2-mCherry, and 35S::AHA2-GFP.

The previously described *irt1-1/*IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine line (Dubeaux et al., 2018) was transformed with FRO2::mCherry-FRO2, IRT1::mCherry-FRO2, and IRT1::AHA2-mCherry constructions by the floral-dipping technique using *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*. The *frd1-1* mutant and Col-0 plants were transformed with the FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 and 35S::AHA2-GFP constructs, respectively. The *irt1-1/*IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine transgenic line was crossed with the Wave marker line number 25 expressing RabD1-mCherry fusion protein under the control of UBQ10 promoter (Geldner et al., 2009).

621 Immunopurifications

Immunopurifications (IP) were performed on approximatively 500 mg of Arabidopsis roots, 622 623 mostly as previously described (Dubeaux et al., 2018). Briefly, for IRT1-mCitrine IP followed by mass spectrometry, for co-IP analyses between IRT1-mCitrine and mCherry-FRO2, as 624 625 well as for co-IP analyses between mCherry-FRO2 and endogenous AHA2, roots were 626 ground in liquid nitrogen and resuspended in IRT1 solubilization buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.4), 150 mM NaCl, 5 mM EDTA, 1% (w/v) n-Dodecyl β-D-maltoside (DDM), and 627 plant-specific protease inhibitors (Sigma-Aldrich)). For co-IP analyses between IRT1-628 mCitrine and endogenous AHA2, roots were ground and resuspended in RIPA buffer (50 mM 629 Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 0.5% (w/v) sodium deoxycholate, 1% (v/v) IGEPAL®CA-630 630, 0.1% (w/v) SDS, and plant-specific protease inhibitors (Sigma-Aldrich)). After two 631 successive centrifugations at $3,800 \times g$ for 10 min at 4°C, the resultant supernatants were 632 collected and solubilization of membrane proteins was continued for 1 h 30 min at 4°C on a 633 rotating wheel. Samples were then centrifuged at $100,000 \times g$ for 1 h at 4°C to remove 634 unsolubilized material and supernatants containing solubilized proteins were recovered for 635 IPs. This ultracentrifugation step avoids the immuno-capture of proteins present in patches of 636 residual non-solubilized membranes, allowing the IP to be carried out on solubilized protein 637 complexes only. IPs of GFP and mCitrine fusion proteins were performed using µMACS GFP 638 isolation kit (Miltenyi Biotec) whereas IP of mCherry fusion proteins was performed using 639

640 RFP-Trap®_MA magnetic beads (Chromotek), following the instructions of the 641 manufacturers. Before elution, extensive washes were performed with IRT1 solubilization 642 buffer or RIPA buffer depending on the IP type. Co-IP analyses followed by mass 643 spectrometry were performed twice. Co-IP combined with immunodetections were performed 644 thrice with similar results.

To analyze the ubiquitination profile of AHA2-GFP and IRT1-mCitrine, the solubilization of fusion proteins as well as the IP procedure were performed exactly as previously described (Dubeaux et al., 2018). The same protocol was used for mCherry-FRO2 except that the protein was immunopurified with RFP-Trap®_MA magnetic beads (Chromotek). Three independent analyses of ubiquitination profiles were performed.

650 Mass spectrometry analysis

651 For sample preparation, proteins from each eluate were separated by SDS-PAGE in order to 652 fractionate the protein samples into two fractions, including proteins 10–63 kDa and above 63 653 kDa, respectively, to exclude abundant contaminating IRT1-mCitrine protein at 63 kDa. After Coomassie-Blue staining, each gel fraction was cut into bands and subjected to in-gel trypsin 654 655 digestion with the Progest robot (Genomic Solutions) using standard conditions including reduction and alkylation as described previously (Blanchet et al., 2014). Tryptic peptides 656 657 extracted from the different bands of each gel fraction were pooled, vacuum dried, and 658 resuspended in 0.1% (v/v) formic acid prior to nanoLC-MS/MS mass spectrometry analyzes. The same cutting pattern of the SDS-PAGE lane was performed for each eluate. 659

Tryptic peptides from the two or three SDS-PAGE fractions from each eluate were analyzed 660 separately by nanoLC-MS/MS with the Triple-TOF 4600 mass spectrometer (ABSciex) 661 coupled to the nanoRSLC ultra performance liquid chromatography (UPLC) system (Thermo 662 Scientific) equipped with a trap column (Acclaim PepMap100C18, 75 μ mi.d.× 2 cm, 3 μ m) 663 and an analytical column (Acclaim PepMapRSLCC18, 75 µmi.d.× 50 cm, 2 µm, 100 Å). 664 Peptides were loaded at 5 µl/min with 0.05% (v/v) TFA in 5% (v/v) acetonitrile and peptide 665 666 separation was performed at a flow rate of 300 nl/min with a 5–35% (v/v) solvent B gradient in 40 min. Solvent A was 0.1% (v/v) formic acid in water, and solvent B was 0.1% (v/v) 667 668 formic acid in 100% acetonitrile. NanoLC-MS/MS experiments were conducted in a Data Dependent acquisition method by selecting the 20 most intense precursors for CID 669 670 fragmentation with Q1 quadrupole set at low resolution for better sensitivity.

Protein identification was performed by processing raw data with MS Data Converter 671 software (AB Sciex) for generating .mgf data files and protein identification were performed 672 using the MASCOT search engine (Matrix science, London, UK) against the Swissprot and 673 TAIR10 databases with carbamidomethylation of cysteines set as fixed modification and 674 oxidation of methionines as variable modifications. Peptide and fragment tolerance were set 675 at 20 ppm and 0.05 Da, respectively. Results were analyzed with Scaffold 3.6.5 software 676 (Proteome Software). Proteins were validated when identified with at least two unique 677 678 peptides and 95% probability levels for both peptides and proteins.

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680 Extraction of total proteins and immunoblots

Total proteins were extracted from around 100 mg of *Arabidopsis* roots ground in liquid nitrogen and directly resuspended in 2X SDS sample buffer. Samples were heated at 65°C for 10 min, centrifuged 10 min at 20,000 \times g and finally supernatants were collected and directly used for SDS-PAGE. Protein extraction from yeast was carried out as previously described (von der Haar, 2007).

686 Immunoblot analyses were performed as previously described (Barberon et al., 2011). Immunodetection of GFP and mCitrine fusion proteins was performed using an anti-GFP 687 antibody conjugated to horseradish peroxidase (HRP) (Miltenyi Biotec 130-091-833, 688 1/5,000). mCherry fusion proteins were monitored with a rabbit anti-DsRed antibody 689 (Clontech 632496, 1/5,000). Endogenous AHA2 protein was immunodetected using a rabbit 690 antibody initially raised against the Plasma Membrane H+-ATPase 2 (PMA2) from Nicotiana 691 plumbaginifolia (W1C) diluted 1/15,000 (Morsomme et al., 1998). Ubiquitin modifications 692 were detected with the P4D1 mouse anti-ubiquitin antibody (Millipore 05-944, 1/4,000). The 693 detection of NubG-IRT1 protein from yeast used anti-HA antibodies (Miltenyi Biotec 130-694 091-972, 1/7,000). Anti-tubulin antibodies were used as loading control (Agrisera AS10 681, 695 1/5,000). The anti-rabbit IgG or anti-mouse IgG secondary antibodies coupled to HRP were 696 697 both diluted 1/20,000. Detection of HRP chemiluminescence was performed using SuperSignal West Dura Extended Duration Substrate (Thermo Scientific) in a Chemidoc 698 699 Touch Imaging system (Bio-Rad). Stain-Free protein staining (Bio-Rad) was used as a loading control as previously described (Dubeaux et al., 2018). To quantify IRT1-mCitrine, 700 701 AHA2-GFP, and mCherry-FRO2 ubiquitination levels under different metal regimes, signal 702 intensity observed with anti-ubiquitin immunoblots performed on IRT1-mCitrine, AHA2GFP, or mCherry-FRO2 immunopurified proteins was measured using Image Lab 6.0.1 and
 normalized to the quantity of immunopurified proteins detected in IP with anti-GFP or anti DsRed antibodies. To facilitate comparisons, the ubiquitination level measured in the
 presence of physiological concentrations of non-iron metal substrates was arbitrary fixed to 1.

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708 Constructions and split-ubiquitin assay

Split-ubiquitin vectors were generated using the Gateway® technology. First, the FRO2 ORF 709 without the stop codon and the AHA2 ORF with the stop codon were amplified with 710 711 FRO2.F/FRO2.R and AHA2.F/AHA2stop.R primers, respectively (supplemental Table 1), 712 and were both cloned into the pDONR.221 entry vector. pDONR.221-BRI1 without stop was previously generated (Martins et al., 2015) and pDONR.221-AHA2 without stop was created 713 714 in this study as mentioned above. Then, FRO2, AHA2, and BRI1 ORFs without the stop codon 715 were inserted into pMetYC-DEST destination vector (Hachez et al., 2014) to produce 716 methionine-repressible constructs FRO2-Cub-PLV, AHA2-Cub-PLV, and BRI1-Cub-PLV, respectively, where Cub corresponds to the C-terminal part of ubiquitin and PLV to a 717 718 chimeric transcription factor. AHA2 ORF with the stop codon was cloned into the pNX35-DEST destination vector to generate the NubG-AHA2 fusion wherein NubG corresponds to 719 720 the mutated N-terminal part of ubiquitin. The NubG-IRT1, NubG-IRT1_{S/TxD}, and NubG-IRT1_{S/TxA} constructs were previously described (Dubeaux et al., 2018). It is important to note 721 that NubG and Cub were fused to a cytosolic part of IRT1, FRO2, AHA2, and BRI1, 722 according to the known or predicted topology of these proteins. The wild-type ubiquitin N-723 terminal fragment (NubWT) expressed by the pNubWT-Xgate vector and the NubG fragment 724 expressed by the non-recombined pNX35-DEST vector were used as a positive and negative 725 control, respectively (Hachez et al., 2014). 726

727 Split-ubiquitin assay was performed as previously described (Dubeaux et al., 2018). Briefly, THY.AP4 yeast strain was co-transformed with the Nub and Cub constructs of interest and 728 729 co-transformed cells were selected on SD medium lacking Leu and Trp. Then, yeast coexpressing Cub-PLV fusion proteins with NubG fusion proteins or NubG (negative control of 730 731 interaction) or NubWT (positive control of interaction) were dropped in serial dilutions (O.D. 732 1, 0.1, 0.01) onto SD medium without Leu and Trp (control medium) or onto SD medium 733 lacking Leu, Trp, His, Ade (selective medium) supplemented with 500 µM methionine (250 µM methionine for IRT1/BRI1 interaction test) to limit the expression of the Cub-PLV fusion 734

proteins. Yeast growth on control and selective medium was recorded after 24 h and 48 h at
30°C, respectively. Besides internal negative interaction tests performed by co-expressing
Cub-PLV fusion proteins with NubG, co-expression of NubG-IRT1 and BRI1-Cub-PLV was
used as an additional negative control. Quantification of interactions were carried out using
liquid yeast cultures and by measuring O.D. over time. Three independent split-ubiquitin
interaction tests were performed with similar results.

741 Confocal microscopy

Microscopy was performed with a Leica SP8 upright confocal laser scanning microscope. For 742 mCitrine and mCherry imaging, the 514-nm and 561-nm lasers were used, respectively. 743 Before observation, plants were mounted in MS/2 liquid medium containing the proper metal 744 composition (-Fe +Metals or -Fe +++ Metals). Representative images are shown. For 745 quantifications, z-stacks encompassing the whole cell volume were imaged and then subjected 746 to maximum projection. The Mander's coefficient (M2) of mCherry-FRO2 and AHA2-747 mCherry endosomal structures showing overlap with IRT1-mCitrine labeled endosomes were 748 determined using the ImageJ plugin Coloc2. 27 cells (3 independent cells from 3 different 749 750 plants among 3 independent experiments) were analyzed for each condition and genotype. The M2 coefficient is the ratio of the summed intensities of pixels from the red image, for 751 752 which the intensity in the green channel is above zero, to the total intensity in the red channel. 753 M2 coefficients vary from 0 to 1, the former value corresponding to non-overlapping endosomes and the latter reflecting 100% co-localization between both channels. A ratio of 754 0.5 indicates a 50% overlap between the two channels. Here, we used M2 to reflect the co-755 localization between mCherry-FRO2 and IRT1-mCitrine, or AHA2-mCherry and IRT1-756 mCitrine. An unpaired *t*-test was used to determine whether the overlapping was different in 757 response to metal excess (-Fe +++Metals). The ratios of plasma membrane over intracellular 758 signal content were obtained by selecting whole-cell and intracellular content mean 759 fluorescence with ImageJ. 760

761

762 Statistical analyses

For confocal microscopy experiments, a representative image is shown. Statistical analyses
were performed using the software GraphPad Prism 7. The sample size and statistical tests
used are mentioned in the figure legends.

767	Accession numbers
768	Sequence data from this article can be found in the GenBank/EMBL data libraries under
769	accession numbers: IRT1 (AT4G19690), FRO2 (AT1G01580), AHA2 (AT4G30190), and
770	<i>BRI1</i> (AT4G39400).
771	Supplemental Data
772	Supplemental Figure S1. Immunopurification of IRT1-mCitrine and the associated proteins.
773	
774	Supplemental Figure S2. Expression of mCherry-FRO2 complements the <i>frd1-1</i> mutant
775	phenotype in iron-deficient conditions.
776	
777	Supplemental Figure S3. IRT1-mCitrine and RabD1-mCherry co-localize in early
778	endosomes in Arabidopsis root epidermal cells.
779	
780	Supplemental Figure S4. mCherry-FRO2 protein is not cross-immunopurified with anti-GFP
781	antibody.
782	
783	Supplemental Figure S5. FRO2 and AHA2 interact in Arabidopsis root cells.
784	
785	Supplemental Figure S6. FRO2 and AHA2 are ubiquitinated in Arabidopsis root cells in a
786	metal-independent manner, replicate.
787	
788	Supplemental Figure S7. Phosphomimic and non-phosphorylatable mutations in IRT1 do
789	not influence IRT1 protein accumulation in yeast.
790	
791	Supplemental Figure S8. Co-localization of IRT1 and FRO2/AHA2 in differentiated root
792	cells.
793	
794	Supplemental Table S1. List of primers used in this study.
795	
796	Supplemental Dataset S1. IRT1 interactome determined by co-immunopurification of IRT1-
797	mCitrine combined with mass spectrometry analyses.

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809 Tables

Table 1. IRT1 interactants involved in intracellular trafficking or metal homeostasis.

Among the 142 putative IRT1 interacting-proteins identified by co-IP combined with mass spectrometry, we present in this table proteins that are associated to intracellular trafficking or metal homeostasis according to Gene Ontogeny (GO) annotations from The Arabidopsis Information resource (TAIR) (https://www.arabidopsis.org). The maximum number of unique peptides identified for each protein from the two independent experiments (see Supplemental Dataset S1) is indicated.

	Accession	Protein name	Maximum number of unique peptides
	AT3G11130	Clathrin heavy chain	24
	AT1G04820	Tubulin alpha-4 chain	6
	AT1G29310	SecY protein transport family protein	2
50	AT5G09810	Actin 7	4
trafficking	AT4G33650	Dynamin-related protein 3A	2
ffic	AT3G63460	SEC31b, COPII component	6
tra	AT4G18800	RAB GTPase homolog A1D	3
	AT1G62020	Coatomer alpha subunit, COPI component	2
Iul	AT4G31480	Coatomer beta subunit, COPI component	2
Intracellular	AT4G17530	RAB GTPase homolog 1C	2
Itra	AT1G49240	Actin 8	2
-	AT5G05010	Clathrin adaptor complexes medium subunit family protein	2
	AT2G21390	Coatomer, alpha subunit, COPI component	2
	AT5G44340	Tubulin beta chain 4	2
	AT2G30050	SEC13a, COPII component	2
Σ	AT4G30190	H(+)-ATPase 2	13

AT4G31940	Cytochrome P450 / CYP82C4	3
AT3G13610	Feruloyl-Coenzyme A 6'-Hydroxylase 1 (F6'H1)	2
AT4G27860	Vacuolar iron transporter (VIT) family protein	11
AT5G24290	Vacuolar iron transporter (VIT) family protein	8
AT2G01530	MLP-like protein 329	5
AT1G59870	Pleiotropic drug resistance 8 / Penetration 3	4
AT1G01580	Ferric Reduction Oxidase 2	3
AT1G07890	Ascorbate peroxidase 1	2

818

819 Figure Legends

Figure 1. FRO2 and AHA2 are part of an IRT1-protein complex.

(A) Endogenous AHA2 is co-immunopurified with IRT1-mCitrine in *Arabidopsis* root cells.
Immunopurifications (IP) were performed using anti-GFP antibodies on solubilized root
protein extracts from *irt1-1/*IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine and wild-type plants (negative control).
Inputs and IP fractions were subjected to immunoblotting (IB) with anti-GFP (top) and antiAHA/PMA2 antibodies (bottom).

826 (B) mCherry-FRO2 is co-immunopurified with IRT1-mCitrine in Arabidopsis root cells. IP were performed using anti-GFP antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from *irt1*-827 1/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine plants co-expressing FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 or UBQ10::RabD1-828 mCherry, this protein co-localizing with IRT1 in endosomes (negative control). Inputs and IP 829 fractions were subjected to IB with anti-GFP (top) and anti- mCherry antibodies (bottom). 830 Note that mCherry-FRO2 migrates at the expected size (top band) but also at a lower 831 molecular weight (bottom band). For the co-IP experiments in (A) and (B), roots were 832 harvested from plants grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium containing 50 µM Fe-EDTA, and 833 then transferred for 4 days on MS/2 medium lacking iron and supplemented with 300 μ M of 834 the iron chelator Ferrozine, in the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-835 iron metal substrates. Representative immunoblots are shown. 836

(C) IRT1 directly interacts with FRO2 and AHA2 in a split-ubiquitin assay. Yeasts coexpressing Cub-PLV fusion proteins with NubG fusion proteins or NubG (negative control of
interaction) or NubWT (positive control of interaction) were dropped in serial dilutions on a
synthetic medium without Leu and Trp (control medium) or without Leu, Trp, His, Ade
(selective medium). For the interaction tests between IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2, yeast growth
on control and selective media was recorded after 24h and 48h, respectively. Besides internal

negative interaction tests performed by co-expressing Cub fusion proteins with NubG, an
additional negative control was introduced in this assay by co-expressing NubG-IRT1 and
BRI1-Cub. For this IRT1-BRI1 interaction test, yeast growth on control and selective media
was recorded after 48h and 72h, respectively. OD: optical density. A representative assay is
shown.

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849

Figure 2. FRO2 and AHA2 are ubiquitinated in *Arabidopsis* root cells in a metalindependent manner.

852 Immunopurifications (IP) were performed using anti-GFP antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from wild-type, *irt1-1*/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine and Col0/35S::AHA2-GFP plants 853 854 (A) or using anti-mCherry antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from wild-type and frd1/FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 plants (B). Inputs and IP fractions were subjected to 855 immunoblotting (IB) with anti-Ub antibody (P4D1) (A and B, top), anti-GFP (A, bottom), or 856 anti-mCherry antibodies (B, bottom). Non-ubiquitinated and ubiquitinated forms of the 857 858 studied proteins are indicated by an arrow and a bar (-Ub_n), respectively. Roots were harvested from plants grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium lacking iron (-), in the presence of 859 physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates (+), and then transferred 860 for 2 hours to the same medium (control) or to a medium lacking iron and containing an 861 862 excess of non-iron metals (+++). Wild-type plants were used as negative controls for IP. In (A), due to very low expression level, AHA2-GFP is not detected in inputs but solely in IP 863 864 fractions after enrichment.

(C) Quantification of IRT1-mCitrine, AHA2-GFP, and mCherry-FRO2 ubiquitination in the
presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates (+) or an
excess of these metals (+++). The intensity of the ubiquitin signal from IRT1-mCitrine,
AHA2-GFP, and mCherry-FRO2 IP shown in (A) and (B) was measured using Image Lab
and normalized to the quantity of immunopurified proteins. Results are shown as ratio relative
to the (+) condition for each protein to reveal the influence of metal treatment.

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Figure 3. The endocytosis of IRT1 and FRO2/AHA2 is differentially regulated by noniron metal substrates in root tip epidermal cells.

Confocal microscopy analyses of root epidermal cells from *irt1-1*/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine plants 874 co-expressing IRT1::mCherry-FRO2 (A, left panel) or IRT1::AHA2-mCherry (B, left panel). 875 Plants were grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium lacking iron, in the presence of 876 physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates, and then transferred for 877 2 hours to the same medium (-Fe +Metals, control) or to a medium lacking iron and 878 containing an excess of non-iron metals (-Fe +++Metals). To standardize microscopy analysis 879 at the root tip, the same cells located just above the lateral root cap were systematically 880 analyzed. Scale bars, 10 µm. Representative images are shown. Right panels in (A) and (B) 881 882 show the ratio of plasma membrane to intracellular signal intensities for IRT1-mCitrine, mCherry-FRO2, and AHA2-mCherry from experiments performed as in the left panels of (A) 883 884 and **(B)**.

Mander's coefficients (M2) of mCherry-FRO2 (C) and AHA2-mCherry (D) endosomal structures showing overlap with IRT1-mCitrine labeled endosomes were calculated from experiments performed as in (A) and (B), left panels. All the quantifications shown in this figure were carried out in triplicates on stacks encompassing epidermal cells. In total, 27 cells were analyzed for each condition and genotype. Error bars represent SD (n = 27) for each genotype. The asterisks indicate significant differences to -Fe +Metals (unpaired t-test, p < 0.0001).

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Figure 4. Phosphorylation of IRT1 decreases its interaction with AHA2 and FRO2. Tentative model for the functioning of the iron-acquisition complex.

(A-D) Effect of IRT1 phospho-status on its interaction with AHA2 and FRO2. Split-ubiquitin 895 interaction tests were performed between wild-type IRT1, IRT1 variants for phosphorylation 896 sites (phosphomimic S/TxD and non-phosphorylatable S/TxA) and AHA2 (A), or FRO2 (B). 897 Yeasts were dropped in serial dilutions on a synthetic medium without Leu and Trp (control 898 medium) or without Leu, Trp, His, Ade (selective medium). NubG and NubWT were used as 899 negative and positive controls of interaction, respectively. Yeast growth on control and 900 selective medium was monitored after 48h and 72h, respectively. O.D: optical density. 901 Representative assays are shown. To quantify interactions, the same tests were performed in 902 liquid cultures as shown in (C) and (D). The O.D measured for transformed yeast grown in 903 the selective medium for 24h was normalized to the O.D measured for the same yeast grown 904

in the control medium for 16h (relative growth). Error bars represent SEM, n = 8 in (C) and n
= 12 in (D).

(E) Putative functioning of the iron-acquisition complex. IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 proteins 907 interact at the outer polar plasma membrane (PM) domain of root epidermal cells to form a 908 909 specialized complex that likely optimizes iron acquisition by creating a local environment with low pH and high Fe²⁺ concentration. Outside this optimal zone for iron acquisition, we 910 propose that Fe^{2+} is constantly re-oxidized to Fe^{3+} , which in turn forms insoluble iron 911 complexes. In addition to be plasma membrane localized, the iron-acquisition complex is also 912 probably present in early endosomes, reflecting endocytic events of the complex. Note that 913 contrary to IRT1 and FRO2, AHA2 is distributed at both plasma membrane polar domains. 914 FRO2 might be not exclusively associated with IRT1. This model depicts the localization of 915 IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 in the absence of iron and in the presence of physiologically relevant 916 concentrations of non-iron metal substrates (-Fe +Metals). Although IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 917 interact all together, this feature is not represented to simplify the scheme. 918

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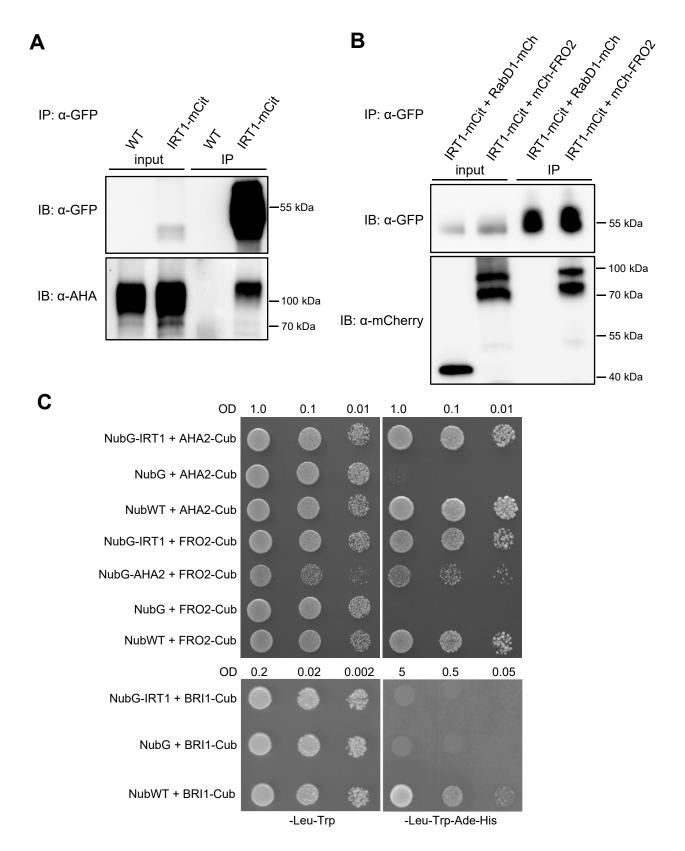


Figure 1. FRO2 and AHA2 are part of an IRT1-protein complex.

(A) Endogenous AHA2 is co-immunopurified with IRT1-mCitrine in *Arabidopsis* root cells. Immunopurifications (IP) were performed using anti-GFP antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from *irt1-1*/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine and wild-type plants (negative control). Inputs and IP fractions were subjected to immunoblotting (IB) with anti-GFP (top) and anti-AHA/PMA2 antibodies (bottom).

Figure 1. (continued)

(B) mCherry-FRO2 is co-immunopurified with IRT1-mCitrine in Arabidopsis root cells. IP were performed using anti-GFP antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from *irt1-1*/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine plants coexpressing FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 or UBQ10::RabD1-mCherry, this protein co-localizing with IRT1 in endosomes (negative control). Inputs and IP fractions were subjected to IB with anti-GFP (top) and antimCherry antibodies (bottom). Note that mCherry-FRO2 migrates at the expected size (top band) but also at a lower molecular weight (bottom band). For the co-IP experiments in (A) and (B), roots were harvested from plants grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium containing 50 µM Fe-EDTA, and then transferred for 4 days on MS/2 medium lacking iron and supplemented with 300 μ M of the iron chelator Ferrozine, in the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates. Representative immunoblots are shown. (C) IRT1 directly interacts with FRO2 and AHA2 in a split-ubiquitin assay. Yeasts co-expressing Cub-PLV fusion proteins with NubG fusion proteins or NubG (negative control of interaction) or NubWT (positive control of interaction) were dropped in serial dilutions on a synthetic medium without Leu and Trp (control medium) or without Leu, Trp, His, Ade (selective medium). For the interaction tests between IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2, yeast growth on control and selective media was recorded after 24h and 48h, respectively. Besides internal negative interaction tests performed by co-expressing Cub fusion proteins with NubG, an additional negative control was introduced in this assay by co-expressing NubG-IRT1 and BRI1-Cub. For this IRT1-BRI1 interaction test, yeast growth on control and selective media was recorded after 48h and 72h, respectively. OD: optical density. A representative assay is shown.

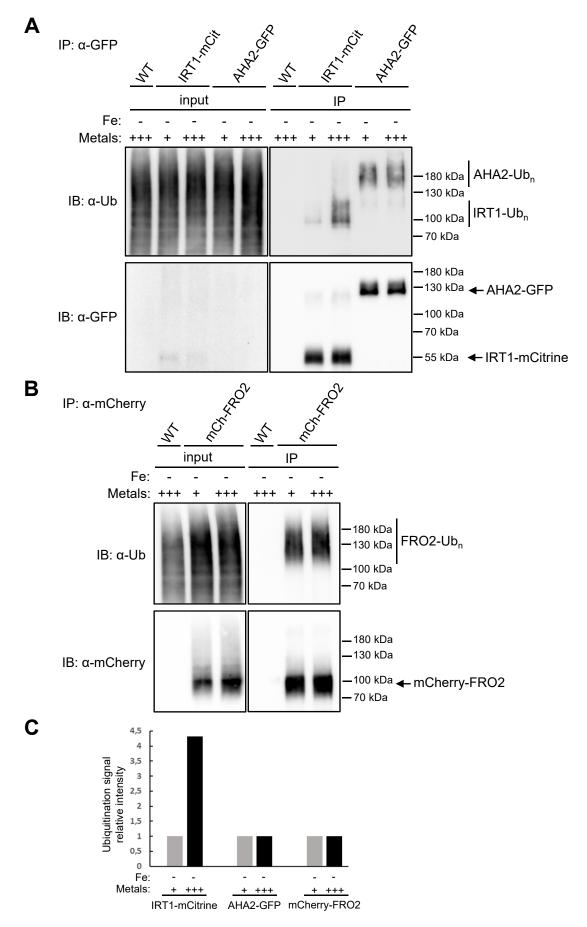


Figure 2. FRO2 and AHA2 are ubiquitinated in *Arabidopsis* root cells in a metal-independent manner.

Immunopurifications (IP) were performed using anti-GFP antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from wild-type, *irt1-1/*IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine and Col0/35S::AHA2-GFP plants (A) or using anti-mCherry antibodies on solubilized root protein extracts from wild-type and *frd1*/FRO2::mCherry-FRO2 plants (B).

Figure 2 (continued).

Inputs and IP fractions were subjected to immunoblotting (IB) with anti-Ub antibody (P4D1) (A and B, top), anti-GFP (A, bottom), or anti-mCherry antibodies (B, bottom). Non-ubiquitinated and ubiquitinated forms of the studied proteins are indicated by an arrow and a bar (-Ub_n), respectively. Roots were harvested from plants grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium lacking iron (-), in the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates (+), and then transferred for 2 hours to the same medium (control) or to a medium lacking iron and containing an excess of non-iron metals (+++). Wild-type plants were used as negative controls for IP. In (A), due to very low expression level, AHA2-GFP is not detected in inputs but solely in IP fractions after enrichment. (C) Quantification of IRT1-mCitrine, AHA2-GFP, and mCherry-FRO2 ubiquitination in the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates (+) or an excess of these metals (+++). The intensity of the ubiquitin signal from IRT1-mCitrine, AHA2-GFP, and mCherry-FRO2 IP shown in (A) and (B) was measured using Image Lab and normalized to the quantity of immunopurified proteins. Results are shown as ratio relative to the (+) condition for each protein to reveal the influence of metal treatment.

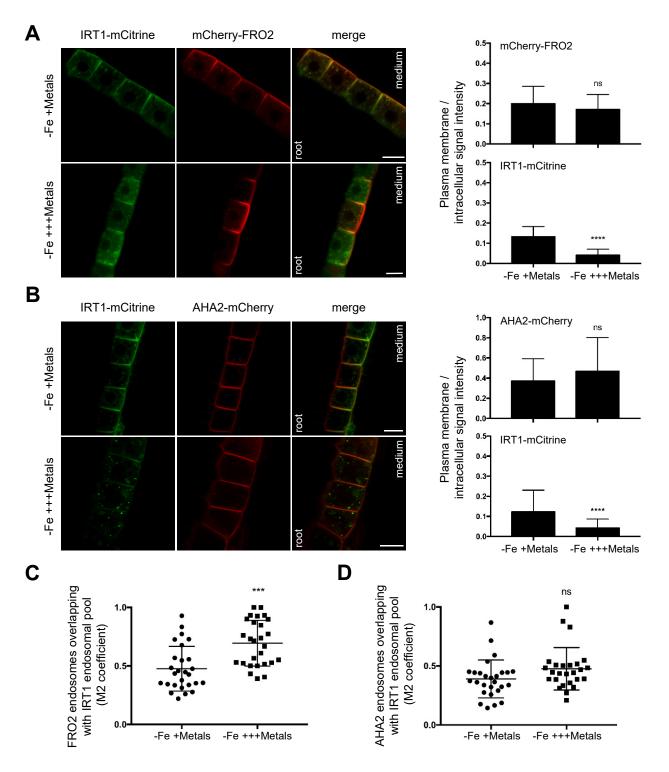


Figure 3. The endocytosis of IRT1 and FRO2/AHA2 is differentially regulated by non-iron metal substrates in root tip epidermal cells.

Confocal microscopy analyses of root epidermal cells from *irt1-1*/IRT1::IRT1-mCitrine plants co-expressing IRT1::mCherry-FRO2 (**A**, **left panel**) or IRT1::AHA2-mCherry (**B**, **left panel**). Plants were grown for 11 days on MS/2 medium lacking iron, in the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates, and then transferred for 2 hours to the same medium (-Fe +Metals, control) or to a medium lacking iron and containing an excess of non-iron metals (-Fe +++Metals). To standardize microscopy analysis at the root tip, the same cells located just above the lateral root cap were systematically analyzed. Scale bars, 10 μ m. Representative images are shown. Right panels in (**A**) and (**B**) show the ratio of plasma membrane to intracellular signal intensities for IRT1-mCitrine, mCherry-FRO2, and AHA2-mCherry from experiments performed as in the left panels of (**A**) and (**B**). Mander's coefficients (M2) of mCherry-FRO2 (**C**) and AHA2-mCherry (**D**) endosomal structures showing overlap with IRT1-mCitrine labeled endosomes were calculated from experiments performed as in the just show in this figure were carried out in triplicates on stacks encompassing epidermal cells. In total, 27 cells were analyzed for each condition and genotype. Error bars represent SD (n = 27) for each genotype. The asterisks indicate significant differences to -Fe +Metals (unpaired t-test, p < 0.0001).

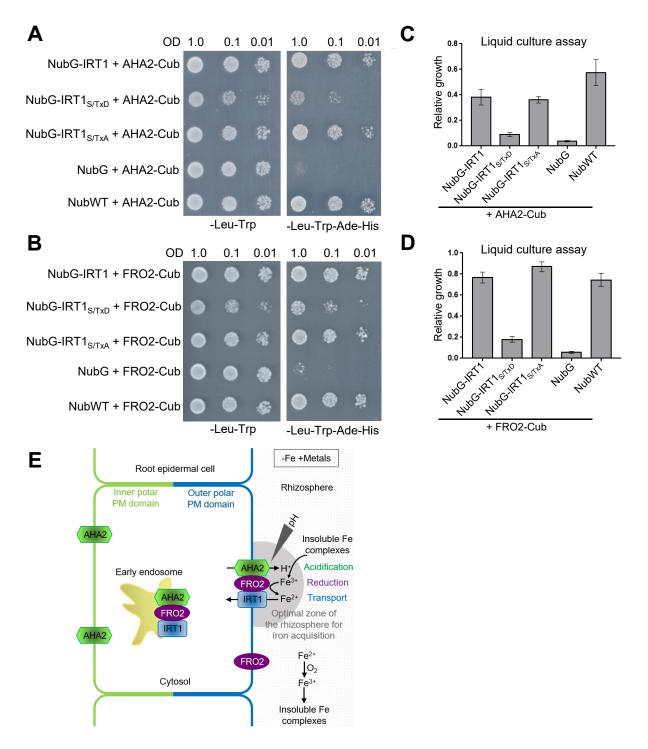


Figure 4. Phosphorylation of IRT1 decreases its interaction with AHA2 and FRO2. Tentative model for the functioning of the iron-acquisition complex.

(A-D) Effect of IRT1 phospho-status on its interaction with AHA2 and FRO2. Split-ubiquitin interaction tests were performed between wild-type IRT1, IRT1 variants for phosphorylation sites (phosphomimic S/TxD and non-phosphorylatable S/TxA) and AHA2 (A), or FRO2 (B). Yeasts were dropped in serial dilutions on a synthetic medium without Leu and Trp (control medium) or without Leu, Trp, His, Ade (selective medium). NubG and NubWT were used as negative and positive controls of interaction, respectively. Yeast growth on control and selective medium was monitored after 48h and 72h, respectively. O.D: optical density. Representative assays are shown. To quantify interactions, the same tests were performed in liquid cultures as shown in (C) and (D). The O.D measured for transformed yeast grown in the selective medium for 24h was normalized to the O.D measured for the same yeast grown in the control medium for 16h (relative growth). Error bars represent SEM, n = 8 in (C) and n = 12 in (D).

Figure 4 (continued)

(E) Putative functioning of the iron-acquisition complex. IRT1, FRO2 and AHA2 proteins interact at the outer polar plasma membrane (PM) domain of root epidermal cells to form a specialized complex that likely optimizes iron acquisition by creating a local environment with low pH and high Fe²⁺ concentration. Outside this optimal zone for iron acquisition, we propose that Fe²⁺ is constantly re-oxidized to Fe³⁺, which in turn forms insoluble iron complexes. In addition to be plasma membrane localized, the iron-acquisition complex is also probably present in early endosomes, reflecting endocytic events of the complex. Note that contrary to IRT1 and FRO2, AHA2 is distributed at both plasma membrane polar domains. FRO2 might be not exclusively associated with IRT1. This model depicts the localization of IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 in the absence of iron and in the presence of physiologically relevant concentrations of non-iron metal substrates (–Fe +Metals). Although IRT1, FRO2, and AHA2 interact all together, this feature is not represented to simplify the scheme.

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