

Supplementary Materials for

Domain-focused CRISPR screen identifies HRI as a fetal hemoglobin regulator in human erythroid cells

Jeremy D. Grevet*, Xianjiang Lan*, Nicole Hamagami, Christopher R. Edwards, Laavanya Sankaranarayanan, Xinjun Ji, Saurabh K. Bhardwaj, Carolyne J. Face, David F. Posocco, Osheiza Abdulmalik, Cheryl A. Keller, Belinda Giardine, Simone Sidoli, Ben A. Garcia, Stella T. Chou, Stephen A. Liebhaber, Ross C. Hardison, Junwei Shi†, Gerd A. Blobel†

*These authors contributed equally to this work. †Corresponding author. Email: jushi@upenn.edu (J.S.); blobel@email.chop.edu (G.A.B.)

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Other Supplementary Material for this manuscript includes the following: (available at www.sciencemag.org/content/361/6399/285/suppl/DC1)

Data S1 to S5

Materials and Methods

Cell culture

HUDEP2 cells were cultured as described (*13*). Cells were maintained in StemSpan™ Serum Free Medium (SFEM, StemCell Technologies, Cat. #09650) supplemented with 50ng/ml human Stem Cell Factor (hSCF, Peprotech, Cat. #300-07), 10µM dexamethasone (Sigma, Cat. #D4902), 1µg/ml doxycycline (Sigma, Cat. #D9891), 3IU/ml erythropoietin (Amgen, Cat. #55513-144-10), 1% penicillin/streptomycin (ThermoFisher, Cat. #15140122). Cells were kept at a density of less than 1.0 million/ml. Differentiation was achieved by growing cells for 7 days (one medium change at day 3 or 4) in IMDM (Mediatech, Cat. #MT10016CV) supplemented with 50ng/ml hSCF, 3IU/ml erythropoietin, 2.5% fetal bovine serum, 250µg/ml holo-transferrin (Sigma, Cat. #T4132), 1% penicillin/streptomycin, 10ng/ml heparin (Sigma, H3149), 10µg/ml insulin (Sigma, Cat. #I9278), 1µg/ml doxycycline.

CD34+ cultures. Peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs) were obtained from the University of Pennsylvania Human Immunology Core. CD34+ cells were purified from using MACS MicroBead kit (Miltenyi, Cat #130-100-453) and cultured in three phases in IMDM supplemented with 3IU/ml erythropoietin, 2.5% human male AB serum (Sigma, Cat. #H4522), 10ng/ml heparin, 10µg/ml insulin. Phase-I medium was supplemented with 100ng/ml hSCF, 5ng/ml IL-3 (Peprotech, Cat. #200-03), 250µg/ml holo-transferrin. Phase-II medium was supplemented with 100ng/ml hSCF and 250µg/ml holo-transferrin. Phase-III medium was supplemented with 1.25mg/ml holo-transferrin. Cells were maintained in Phase-I from the day of collection until day 8. Cells were spin-infected (see virus preparation and infections below for full details) and transitioned to Phase-II media, and finally transitioned to Phase-III media on day 13 of culture. RNA samples for RT-qPCR were harvested on day 13 of culture for optimal RNA yield. Western Blot, HPLC, and HbF FACS samples were harvested on day 15 of culture.

Cell lines for sgRNA-scaffold optimization. A-375 cells were cultured in DMEM, HCT116 and A549 cells were cultured in DMEM/F-12, K562 cells were cultured in RPMI1640. All cell lines used in this study were mycoplasma free.

Plasmids

The Cas9 expression vector was constructed by inserting the 5′-3xFLAG-tagged humancodon optimized Cas9 cDNA from *Streptococcus pyogenes* (Addgene: #49535) into a lentiviral EFS-Cas9-P2A-Puro expression vector (made available at Addgene; #108100) using the In-Fusion cloning system (Clontech: #638909). All sgRNA encoding oligonucleotides were inserted into a lentiviral U6-sgRNA2.1-EFS-GFP expression vector (made available at Addgene: # 108098) using a BsmBI restriction site. Oligonucleotides corresponding to the shRNAs were annealed and cloned into the same vector as were sgRNAs with the sgRNA scaffold removed by a BsmBI-EcoRI double digestion resulting in LRG-U6-shRNA-EFS-GFP. See Table S4 for a list of shRNA sequences used for this study (sequences for shRNAs were obtained from the Broad Insitute Gene Perturbation Platform website [https://portals.broadinstitute.org/gpp/public/\)](https://portals.broadinstitute.org/gpp/public/).

Virus preparation and infections

Virus was produced in HEK293T cells grown in DMEM supplemented with 10% Fetal Bovine Serum, 2% penicillin/streptomycin, 1% L-glutamine, 100µM sodium pyruvate. HEK293Ts were plated in 10cm plates 18-24h prior to transfection such that cells were 90-100% confluent by the time of transfection. Expression vectors were mixed in a 4:3:2 ratio with packaging plasmids, PAX2, and VSVG envelope plasmid, respectively, in 500µl OPTI-MEM (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat #31985070), and added to 500µl of 160µg/ml polyethylenimine (PEI, Polysciences Cat. #23966) in OPTI-MEM for precipitation. Plasmid precipitations were added to HEK293T cells and transfections were incubated at 37° C, 5% CO₂ for 6 hours, after which fresh media was placed on the cells. Viral supernatants were harvested 24 hours and 48 hours post-transfection and pooled.

One million HUDEP2 cells were infected with Cas9- or single sgRNA-containing virus by spin-infection with 1ml of viral supernatant supplemented with 8µg/ml polybrene and 10mM HEPES buffer. Spin-infections were carried out at 2,250 rpm for 1.5 hours at room temperature in 12-well plates. HUDEP2-Cas9 cells were selected starting 48-hours post-infection for 5 days in 1µg/ml puromycin. sgRNAs were transduced consistently above 90% GFP+ levels. See below for full details on transductions for the kinase domain sgRNA-library.

For infection of primary CD34+ derived erythroid cells with shRNA containing virus, viral particles required concentration due to lower infectivity of these cells. Viral supernatants were concentrated with LentiX-concentrator (Clontech, Cat. #631232) per manufacturer specifications. Viral pellets were resuspended in Phase-I media. Cells were spin-infected with concentrated virus from one 10cm plate (24-hour and 48-hour viral supernatants pooled) supplemented with 8µg/ml polybrene and 10mM HEPES per 1 million cells. Spin-infections were carried out at 2,250rpm for 1.5 hours at room temperature in 12-well plates, followed by incubation at 37° C, 5% CO₂ overnight. Cultures were then transitioned to Phase-II media.

TIDE analysis

CRISPR-Cas9 targeted regions were amplified by PCR from genomic DNA (gDNA) from HUDEP2 cells transduced with a sgRNA, as well as from an uninfected HUDEP2 control cell line. Primers were designed to flank targeted regions 250-300bp on either side. Amplifications were done with AccuPrime™ Pfx Supermix (ThermoFisher Scientific Cat. #12344040) per manufacturer specifications. Amplicons were purified with the QIAquick PCR purification kit (Qiagen, Cat. #28106), and Sanger sequenced at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia sequencing core (NAPCore facility). Sequencing chromatograms were analyzed with the TIDE R-package (*22*). See Table S5 for a list of primers used for TIDE.

HbF flow cytometry and FACS

For HbF analysis cells were fixed in 0.05% glutaraldehyde for 10min, washed 3 times with PBS/0.1%BSA (Sigma, Cat. #A7906), and permeabilized with 0.1% Triton X-100 (Life Technologies Cat. #HFH10, prepared in PBS/0.1%BSA) for 5 minutes. Following one wash with PBS/0.1% BSA, cells were stained with HbF-APC conjugate antibody (Invitrogen, Cat. #MHFH05). For HUDEP2 samples, 2 to 5 million cells were incubated with 2µg HbF-APC antibody for 30 minutes in the dark at room temperature.

For primary CD34+ erythroid cells, 2 to 5 million cells were incubated with 0.4µg HbF-APC antibody for 10 minutes in the dark at room temperature. Cells were then washed twice with PBS/0.1%BSA. Flow cytometry was carried out on a BD FACSCanto™ and cell sorting on a BD FACSJazz™ at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia flow cytometry core.

Kinase domain-focused CRISPR sgRNA library construction

A comprehensive human kinase gene list was taken from a previous study (*11*), and catalytic enzymatic domains retrieved from the NCBI database of conserved domain annotations. sgRNAs were designed against 496 kinase domains of 482 kinase genes, with 6 sgRNAs per domain. 26 sgRNAs targeting essential genes and 50 non-targeting sgRNAs were spiked-in as positive and negative controls, respectively. In total, the library contains 3052 sgRNAs. All the sgRNAs were designed using design principles previously reported and were filtered based on predicted off-target effects (*23*). sgRNAs were synthesized in a pooled format on an array platform (Twist Bioscience) and then PCR cloned into the LRG vector with sgRNA2.1 backbone (LRG 2.1 vector, see Supplementary Text for full description). To ensure proper representation of sgRNAs in the pooled lentiviral plasmids, the library was analyzed by deep-sequencing on a MiSeq instrument (Illumina), which confirmed that 100% of the designed sgRNAs were cloned in the LRG2.1 vector with over 95% of sgRNAs being within 5-fold of the mean read count.

CRISPR-Cas9 screen

The kinase domain-focused sgRNA library was packaged in lentivirus as indicated above. Viral titer was determined by serial dilution. HUDEP2-Cas9 cells were transduced with the kinase-domain library at a low multiplicity of infection (MOI 0.3-0.5) such that 30 to 50% of cells were GFP positive (MOI for these studies was of ~0.4, see Fig. S2E). 9 million cells were infected in total to yield 1000x coverage of the sgRNA library in the GFP+ population. GFP+ cells were sorted by FACS on day 2 post-infection.

GFP+ cells were then cultured in HUDEP2 media (as indicated above) for an additional 6 days (total 8 days post-infection). On day 8 post-infection, cells were transitioned to differentiation media (as indicated above), and differentiated for 7 days. On day 15 post-infection, cells were stained for HbF as indicated above, and sorted into HbF high and HbF low populations (see Fig. 1B) as previously described (*14*).

Genomic DNA (gDNA) was harvested from these samples by phenol/chloroform (Fisher Scientific Cat #BP1752I-100) extractions per standard methods. sgRNAs were amplified with Phusion Flash High Fidelity Master Mix Polymerase (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. #F-548L) per manufacturer specifications with the LRG F2/R2 primer pair (see Table S6). Reactions were done with 23 cycles of amplification with 100ng of gDNA, and 50 parallel reactions were performed to maintain sgRNA library representation. PCR reactions were then pooled for each sample and column purified with QIAGEN PCR purification kit. PCR products were subjected to Illumina MiSeq library construction and sequencing. First, PCR products were end repaired with T4 DNA polymerase (New England BioLabs, NEB), DNA polymerase I (NEB), and T4 polynucleotide kinase (NEB). Then, an A-overhang was added to the end-repaired amplicons using Klenow DNA Pol Exo- (NEB). The A-overhang DNA fragment was ligated with diversity-increased barcoded Illumina adaptors followed by seven pre-capture PCR cycles with primer pair PE-5/PE-7 (see Table S6). Samples were then purified with the QIAquick PCR purification kit. sgRNA library concentrations were quantified on a 2100 Bioanalyzer (Agilent). The barcoded libraries were pooled at an equal molar ratio and subjected to massively parallel sequencing through a MiSeq instrument (Illumina) using 75-bp paired-end sequencing (MiSeq Reagent Kit v3; Illumina MS-102-3001).

The sequencing data were de-barcoded and trimmed to contain only the sgRNA sequence, and subsequently mapped to the reference sgRNA library without allowing any mismatches. The read counts were calculated for each individual sgRNA and normalized to total read counts. Normalized read counts of sgRNAs in HbF high and HbF low populations were $log₂$ transformed in R, and graphical representation was done using the R-package ggplot2. To exclude false positives due to off-target effects or inconsistencies in sample preparation, we only focused on kinases for which multiple sgRNAs were enriched.

Western Blot

Western blotting was performed using standard procedures. Primary antibodies: HRI (1:1000, Biosource, Cat. #MBS2526743), eIF2α-Phospho (1:1000, anti-EIF2S1-phospho-S51, Abcam, Cat. #ab32157), total-eIF2α (1:1000, Cell Signaling, Cat. #9722), BCL11A (1:1000, Abcam, Cat. #19489), LRF (1:1000, eBioscience Cat. #), GATA1 (1:1000, Santa Cruz, Cat. #sc-265), γ-globin (1:1000, Santa Cruz, Cat. #sc-21756), B-actin (1:1000, Santa-Cruz, Cat. #sc-47778). Secondary antibodies: anti-rabbit (1:10,000, GE Healthcare, Cat. #NA934V); anti-mouse (1:10,000, GE Healthcare, Cat. #NA931V).

RT-qPCR

RNA samples were harvested in TRIzol™ (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat #15596018), and purified with the RNeasy Mini kit which included an on-column DNAse treatment to remove genomic DNA (Qiagen, Cat. #74106). cDNAs were prepared by reversetranscription using iScript Supermix (Bio-Rad, Cat. #1708841). qPCR reactions were prepared with Power SYBR Green (ThermoFisher Scientific) and run on a ViiA7 Real Time qPCR machine (ThermoFisher Scientific). Quantification was performed with the ΔΔCT method. Data were normalized to LRF as it was unperturbed across conditions and we found it to be more stable during erythroid maturation than housekeeping genes such as B-actin, but results were robust to normalization against such other transcripts as well. Primers used for RT-qPCR are listed in Table S7.

RNA-seq

Total RNA was harvested in TRIzol™, and purified with the RNeasy Mini kit including a DNase treatment step to remove genomic DNA. Sequencing libraries were then constructed from 100 ng of purified total RNA using the ScriptSeq Complete Kit (Illumina cat# BHMR1224) according to manufacturer's specifications. In brief, the RNA was subjected to rRNA depletion using the Ribo-Zero removal reagents and fragmented. First strand cDNA was synthesized using a 5' tagged random hexamer, and reversely transcribed, followed by annealing of a 5' tagged, 3'-end blocked terminal-tagged oligo for second strand synthesis. The Di-tagged cDNA fragments were purified, barcoded, and PCR-amplified for 15 cycles.

The size and quality of each library were then evaluated by Bioanalyzer 2100 (Agilent Techniologies, Santa Clara, CA), and quantified using qPCR. Libraries were sequenced in paired-end mode on a NextSeq 500 instrument to generate 2 x 76 bp reads using Illuminasupplied kits. The sequence reads were processed using the ENCODE3 long RNA-seq pipeline [\(https://www.encodeproject.org/pipelines/ENCPL002LPE/\)](https://www.encodeproject.org/pipelines/ENCPL002LPE/). In brief, reads were mapped to the human genome (hg19 assembly) using STAR, followed by RSEM for gene quantifications. Read counts were further analyzed with the R-package DESeq2.

Proteomics analysis via nLC-MS/MS

Cells were lysed in 100µl of cold lysis buffer (6M urea/2M thiourea, 50 mM ammonium bicarbonate, pH 8.0). Dithiothreitol (DTT) was added to a final concentration of 5 mM for 1 hour at room temperature and alkylated with 20 mM iodoacetamide in the dark for 30 minutes at room temperature. Samples were diluted 5x to reduce urea concentration. Proteins were then digested with trypsin (Promega) at an enzyme-tosubstrate ratio of approximately 1:50 overnight at room temperature. Digestion was interrupted by adding 1% trifluoroacetic acid. Samples were desalted using Sep-Pak tC18 Plus Light Cartridge (Waters). The peptide samples were subsequently lyophilized.

Dried samples were resuspended in buffer A (0.1% formic acid) and loaded onto an Easy-nLC system (Thermo Fisher Scientific, San Jose, CA, USA), coupled online with a Q-Exactive mass spectrometer (Thermo Scientific). Peptides were loaded into a picofrit 18 cm long fused silica capillary column (75 µm inner diameter) packed in-house with reversed-phase Repro-Sil Pur C18-AQ 3 µm resin. A gradient of 105 minutes was set for peptide elution from 2-28% buffer B (100% ACN/0.1% formic acid), followed by a gradient from 28-80% buffer B in 5 min and an isocratic 80% B for 10 min. The flow rate was 300 nl/min. The MS method was set up in a data-dependent acquisition (DDA) mode. The full MS scan was performed at 70,000 resolution (FWHM at 200 *m/z*) in the *m/z* range 360-1200 and an AGC target of 10e6. Tandem MS (MS/MS) was performed at a resolution of 17,500 with an HCD collision energy set to 24, an AGC target of 2x10e4, a maximum injection time to 100 msec, a loop count of 10, an intensity threshold for signal selection at 10e4, including charge states 2-4, and a dynamic exclusion set to 60 sec.

MS raw files were analyzed by MaxQuant software (*24*) version 1.5.5.1. MS/MS spectra were searched by the Andromeda search engine against the Human UniProt FASTA database (version November 2015). All parameters for the search were kept as default. Intensity-based absolute quantification (iBAQ) was enabled for label-free quantification. Match between runs was enabled and set to 1 min window.

For data analysis, iBAQ values were log₂ transformed and normalized by subtracting to each value the average value of the respective sample. Statistics was performed by using a two-tailed homoscedastic t-test.

Hemoglobin HPLC

Cell were lysed in MilliQ H2O. Hemolysates were cleared by centrifugation and analyzed for identity and levels of hemoglobin variants (HbF and HbA) by cation-exchange high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC). We utilized a Hitachi D-7000 Series (Hitachi Instruments, Inc., San Jose, CA), and a weak cation-exchange column (Poly CAT A: 35 mm x 4.6 mm, Poly LC, Inc., Columbia, MD). Hemoglobin isotype peaks were eluted with a linear gradient of phase B from 0% to 80% at *A*410nm (Mobile Phase A: 20 mM Bis-Tris, 2 mM KCN, pH 6.95; Phase B:20 mM Bis-Tris, 2 mM KCN, 0.2 M sodium chloride, pH 6.55). Cleared lysates from normal human cord blood samples (high HbF content), as well as a commercial standard containing approximately equal amounts of HbF, A, S and C (Helena Laboratories, Beaumont, TX), were utilized as reference isotypes.

Sickling assay

Cells were resuspended in 100µL HEMOX buffer supplemented with glucose (10 mM) and BSA (0.2 %) in a 96-well plate. Suspensions were subsequently incubated under Nitrogen gas at 37^oC for 1 hour. 200µL of 2% glutaraldehyde solution was then added to the samples without exposure to air for immediate fixation. Fixed cell suspensions were spread onto glass microslides (Fiber Optic Center) and subjected to microscopic morphological analysis of bright field images (at 40x magnification) of single layer cells on an Olympus BX40 microscope fitted with an Infinity Lite B camera (Olympus), and the coupled Image Capture software. Images were randomized and blinded. The percentage of sickled cells for each condition was obtained by manually counting the number of sickled cells.

Wright-Giemsa stains

Cells were spun onto glass slides with a Cytospin4 (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat#A78300003) at 1,000rpm for 3 min. Slides were allowed to dry for 5 minutes before staining with May Grünwald (Sigma Aldrich, MG1L-1L) for 2 minutes followed by 1:20 diluted Giemsa stain (Sigma Aldrich, GS-500 500ML) for 10 minutes. The stained slides were rinsed in water and allowed to dry for 10 minutes before a coverslip was sealed on the preparation with Cytoseal 60 (Thermo Scientific Cat #8310-4). The images were captured at 10X resolution on Olympus BX60 microscope using Infinity software (Lumenera corporation).

Polysome profiling

Cells were arrested in Phase II media with 100ug/ml cycloheximide (Sigma CC4859) for 15 minutes at 37C. Cells were then washed twice in ice cold 1x PBS with 100ug/ml cycloheximide, and resuspended in 500ul lysis buffer (10mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.4), 5mM MgCl2, 100mM KCl, 1% Triton X-100, 2mM DTT, 500U/mL RnasinPlus (Promega N2615), protease inhibitor cocktail (Sigma 11873580001)). Lysates were then dounced with a 26G needle 5 times, and cellular debris were cleared by centrifugation at 13,000rpm for 10 minutes. 10% of cleared lysates were set aside for input mRNA quantitation, and samples were snap-frozen in liquid nitrogen.

Cleared polysomal lysates were loaded on sucrose gradients and spun at 40,000rpm for 2 hours at 4C (Beckman SW41 rotor). Sixteen fractions of equal volume (~700ul) were collected and gradient profiles were measured by ultraviolet absorbance at 254nm with a UA-5 detector (ISCO). Fractions were incubated with 1% SDS and proteinase K for 30 minutes at 37C, and stored at -80C until further analysis.

RNA was purified from fractions by phenol-chloroform extraction. ERCC spike-in RNA was added to each fraction (1ul of 1:10 dilution of spike-in control per fraction, ERCC-spike in (ThermoFisher, 4456740)). 400ul of phenol (Phenol/Water 3.75:1 Invitrogen Cat. # 15594-047) was added to each fraction. Samples were vortexed for 30 seconds. 350ul of chloroform (ThermoFisher, Cat. #BP1145-1) was added, and samples were vortexed again for 30 seconds. Samples were spun down at 10,000rpm for 10 minutes, and aqueous layers were transferred to fresh tubes. One additional round of phenolchloroform extractions were performed. Aqueous phases were split into two tubes with 350ul of sample each. 1.5ul of glycogen carrier, 30ul of 3M sodium acetate pH 5.5 (ThermoFisher, Cat. #AM9740) and 800ul of ice cold 100% ethanol were added to each final aqueous phases, and place at -80C overnight. RNA was precipitate by spinning samples at 13,000rpm for 30 minutes at 4C. Pellets were washed with 1mL of 75% ethanol, and RNA was resuspended in nuclease-free water. cDNAs were prepared using iScript Supermix (Bio-Rad, Cat. #1708841). qPCR reactions were prepared with Power SYBR Green (ThermoFisher Scientific) and run on a ViiA7 Real Time qPCR machine (ThermoFisher Scientific).

BCL11A cDNA rescue experiments

The BCL11A cDNA was a gift from Jian Xu (UT Southwestern) and subcloned into a lentiviral LRG-EFS-BCL11A-IRES-mCherry vector by In-Fusion cloning. Virus was prepared and transduced in respective cell lines as indicated above. To control for expression levels, the low 50% mCherry+ cells were sorted on a BD FACSJazz™ at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia flow cytometry core. Cells were differentiated and analyzed as indicated above.

Mouse fetal liver cultures

E14.5 mouse fetal livers were obtained from CD1 pregnant females (Charles River strain code 022, req #V00018219:1, IACUC protocol #660). The EasySepTM Mouse Hematopoietic Progenitor Cell Enrichment Kit (Stem Cell Technologies cat. #19756) was used for hematopoietic progenitor isolation. Cells were transduced with shRNAs per spinfection protocol detailed above. Transduced cells were cultured for 48h in StemPro34 with supplement (Thermo Fisher cat #10639011), 1% L-glutamine, 1% P/S, 0.5U/ml erythropoietin, 1µM dexamethasone. Cells were harvested for RT-qPCR and Western Blot as indicated above.

Pomalidomide combination experiments

HUDEP2 cells were incubated with 10 μ M pomalidomide (Sigma, Cat. # P0018) for 2 days. Cells were then transitioned to differentiation media as indicated above for 7 days. During the course of differentiation cells were maintained in 10µM pomalidomide. Media was changed 3 to 4 days within the differentiation phase with fresh drug supplemented. HbF FACS and RT-qPCR were performed as indicated above.

Supplementary Text

sgRNA scaffold optimization

Prior to carrying out this screen we attempted to maximize editing efficiency by modifying the *Streptococcus Pyogenes* sgRNA scaffold. This sequence adopts a welldefined secondary structure, with a repeat-antirepeat duplex linked to a tetraloop and 3 stem loops, all of which facilitate binding to Cas9 and stabilize the sgRNA (Fig. S1A,B) (*25*). Previous work showed that an A-U flip in the repeat-anti-repeat duplex removes a putative premature Pol-III stop codon, and that extending the tetraloop significantly

improved sgRNA stability and Cas9 activity (*26*). By examining the Cas9 crystal structure, we noticed that stem loop 2 forms few contacts with Cas9 residues, similar to the tetraloop (*25*). Mutations in stem loop 2 are also well tolerated and allow for efficient Cas9 activity (*25*). We thus reasoned that extending stem loop 2 could further improve sgRNA stability similar to what had been done for the tetraloop, as this could further increase the doublestranded portion of the scaffold (Fig. S1B). We compared different lengths of such extensions ($sgRNA 2.0 - sgRNA 2.3$).

To do so, we performed negative selection assays using the bicistronic sgRNA/GFP expression vector detailed above (LRG, Addgene: #65656). Cell lines were transduced with sgRNAs targeting essential genes such that selection against the sgRNAs would directly reflect editing efficiency for the different sgRNA scaffold designs. Negative selection was estimated by taking the proportion of GFP+ cells remaining over time (flow cytometry analysis was performed on 96-well plates of cells using a Guava Easycyte HT instrument (Millipore), gating was performed on live cells (using forward and side scatter), before measuring of GFP+ cells) (Fig. S1C,D). We found that an extended hairpin structure in both tetraloop and stem loop regions of the sgRNA backbone (termed sgRNA2.1) significantly improved the magnitude of negative selection in various human cell lines induced by sgRNAs targeting DNA replication proteins RPA3 and PCNA (Fig. S1C,D).

We then tested the modified scaffold design in HUDEP2 cells, a human erythroid cell line with low HbF background levels (See Materials and Methods for full details) (*17*) which we used to perform the kinase domain screen (Fig. S2A). Control sgRNAs targeting the known HbF regulators BCL11A and the chromatin remodeler CHD4 (*27*), were introduced via lentivirus into engineered HUDEP2 derivatives stably expressing Cas9 (HUDEP2-Cas9, see Materials and Methods for full details). Indel distributions were assessed by TIDE (see Materials and Methods for full details) (*22*). In the context of the sgRNA 2.1 template we achieved up to 98% editing efficiency as early as 4 days postinfection (Fig. S2B) with most sequence perturbations being deletions of less than 10 base pairs (Fig. S2C). As expected, targeting BCL11A increased the number of HbF positive cells (*14*). Based on these results, we used the sgRNA 2.1 design for all subsequent CRISPR-based experiments.

Fig. S1. sgRNA scaffold optimization. (See Supplementary Text for full description). (**A**) Cas9 and sgRNA plasmid designs. (**B**) sgRNA scaffolds tested, modifications to WT sgRNA-scaffold are highlighted in red. sgRNA 2.0 was previously described (*26*). (**C**) sgRNA editing efficiency assessed in HCT116 cells. GFP+ populations were measured at day 3 and day 16 post-sgRNA infection with sgRNAs targeting the essential DNA replication gene RPA3, and the ROSA26 locus as a negative control. Fold depletion was used to quantify editing efficiency for each of the sgRNAscaffold designs. (**D**) sgRNA editing efficiency was similarly assessed with sgRNA-scaffold design 2.1 in HCT116, A-375, A549 and K562 cells lines. sgRNAs against the essential DNA replication genes RPA3 and PCNA were used, as well as an sgRNA targeting the ROSA26 locus as a negative control.

Fig. S2. sgRNA 2.1 editing efficiency in HUDEP2 cells. (**A**) Experimental workflow to verify editing efficiency in HUDEP2-Cas9 cells with the sgRNA 2.1 scaffold design. After transducing sgRNAs, we harvested genomic DNA every 2 days over the course of a total of 8 days. We amplified targeted regions by PCR, Sanger sequenced the amplicons, and used TIDE to quantify editing efficiency. (**B**) Summary of targeting efficiencies for time course. The proportion of edited CHD4 (*27*) alleles declined over time, most likely because CHD4 is essential for cell growth or viability. (**C**) Representative TIDE plot. Proportion of WT alleles remaining in population (0 bases deleted or inserted) was taken to determine proportion of alleles that were edited. (**D**) Representative HbF flow cytometry for BCL11A sgRNA control. (**E**) Representative GFP flow cytometry at day 2 of screening protocol.

Fig. S3. HRI's role in regulating protein translation initiation. HRI is one of four kinases known to phosphorylate the protein translation initiation factor eIF2α (*15*). In its unphosphorylated form, eIF2α bound to GTP as part of a ternary complex with eIF2β and eIF2γ recruits the first methionine tRNA to the 40S ribosomal subunit to form a pre-initiation complex (PIC). The PIC then scans along the 5'UTR until it recognizes a start codon, at which point the GTP bound to eIF2α is hydrolyzed to GDP and the eIF2 factors are released from the PIC, allowing for formation of the 80S ribosomal unit. GDP is released from the eIF2 complex by the guanine exchange factor eIF2B, which allows for these factors to participate in further rounds of translational initiation. The phosphorylation of eIF2 α prevents its release from eIF2B, thus blocking the recycling of this factor and further rounds of translation initiation. As such, the family of eIF2α kinases function as general repressors of protein translation.

screen shown in Fig. 1, they were not enriched in the HbF population, suggesting they are not expressed at high **Fig. S4. Tissue expression for HRI.** (**A**) Tissue-wide expression profile for HRI from GTEx. Expression levels for HRI are highest in whole blood. (**B**) Hematopoietic expression profile for HRI from BloodSpot (http://servers.binf.ku.dk/bloodspot/) (*28*). Expression levels for HRI are highest in the erythroid lineage. (**C**) Expression levels of eIF2α kinases in HUDEP2 cells and CD34+ erythroid cells. HRI is the highest expressed eIF2 α kinase in these systems. It is worth noting that while the other eIF2 α kinases were included in the CRISPRenough levels to impact on HbF induction.

Fig. S5. HRI domain architecture. Position of the six "hit" HRI sgRNAs within the kinase domain.

Fig. S6. Replicate concordance for mass spectrometry samples and normalization. (**A**) Replicate experiments in differentiated HUDEP2 cells. (n=3) biological replicates were generated each for HRI sgRNA #3, HRI sgRNA #5, and non-targeting sgRNA HUDEP2-Cas9 cell pools. All 3 pairwise replicate comparisons are shown for each condition. Rvalues denote Pearson correlation coefficients. Plots show log₂ protein abundance for each replicate displayed. (**B**) Replicate experiments in undifferentiated HUDEP2 cells. (n=3) biological replicates were generated each for HRI sgRNA #3, HRI sgRNA #5, and non-targeting sgRNA HUDEP2-Cas9 pools. All 3 pairwise replicate comparisons are shown for each sample. R-values denote Pearson correlation coefficients. Plots show log₂ protein abundance for each replicate displayed. (C) Normalization for mass spectrometry data. Protein abundances were log₂ transformed (left panel), and normalized to their mean (right panel).

 \overline{C}

D

Fig. S8. RNA-seq for HUDEP2 cells. (**A**) MA plots for HRI sgRNA #5 and non-targeting sgRNA HUDEP2-Cas9 pools. 2 RNA seq biological replicates were generated each for differentiated cells. R-values denote Pearson correlation coefficients across the two indicated replicates. (**B**) Volcano plot for differentiated HRI sgRNA #5 and non-targeting sgRNA pools. Statistical significance was determined using the R-package DESeq2, with a negative binomial as a null distribution to determine statistical significance. P-values were FDR corrected for multiple hypothesis testing. Vertical lines denote 2 fold changes, and the horizontal line denotes a significance level of 10^{-20} .

Fig. S9. RT-qPCR for six "hit" HRI depleted HUDEP2 pools. Cells were differentiated for 7 days for all data shown in this figure. (**A**) mRNA levels of indicated genes. (**B**) Primary transcript levels of indicated genes. (**C**) mRNA levels of αglobin, ALAS2, BAND3 and GATA1. In all panels error bars represent Standard deviation; n=2 biological replicates.

19 **Fig. S10. HRI depleted HUDEP2 clones**. Given the heterogeneity of mutations induced by sgRNAs in pools (see Fig. S2), we generated clonal HUDEP2 HRI depleted cell lines from the HRI sgRNA#5 pool by single cell sorting on BD FACSJazz™. Cells were differentiated for 7 days for all data shown in this figure. In all panels error bars represent SEM; n=3 biological replicates. (**A**) Anti-HRI Western blot from lysates of two clonal HRI depleted cell lines and control cells. (**B**) HbF flow cytometry for HRI depleted clonal cell lines (gates were set on negative control as in Fig 2A). (**C**) RT-qPCR for globins for HRI depleted clonal cell lines, mean is shown \pm standard error of the mean (SEM) from (n=3) biological replicates. (**D**) Primary transcripts of β-type globins. (**E**) mRNA levels of indicated genes.

Fig. S11. Cell surface markers and cell morphology for HRI depleted CD34+ cells. (**A**) Representative transduction levels for shRNAs by GFP flow cytometry (Day 11). Uninfected were used as a gating control (blue) and compared to shRNA transduced populations (red). The uninfected control is the same for all panels shown. (**B**) Representative CD71/CD235a staining for SC shRNA and HRI shRNAs infected CD34+ cells at day 15 of culture. (**C**) Giemsa staining for SC shRNA control and HRI shRNAs infected CD34+ cells at day 15 of culture. 2 fields of view are shown for each sample.

Fig. S12. RT-qPCR for HRI depleted sickle CD34+ cells. Results are from one patient with SCD on day 13 of differentiation. (**A**) HRI mRNA levels. (**B**) γ-globin mRNA as fraction of γ - + β-globin. (**C**) mRNA levels of indicated genes. (**D**) mRNA levels of indicated genes.

60-

40

 $20¹$

 $\overline{0}$

HRI 1

HRI 2

shRNA:

Rel. expression to LRF

SC

Fig. S13. HRI and BCL11A expression during erythroid maturation**.** (**A**) RT-qPCR for indicated primer sets for (n=2) technical replicates from one patient donor. Maturation markers α -globin, ALAS2 and BAND3 increase during erythroid maturation. HRI progressively increases during maturations. BCL11A increases early in maturation and then declines. (**B**) Western Blot for HRI, BCL11A and LRF during erythroid maturation. HRI increases in protein levels during maturation. BCL11A protein levels increase and then progressively decrease as shown previously (*29*). LRF remains relatively unchanged during maturation, as shown previously (*10*). These results suggest that BCL11A expression partly precedes HRI expression. The anti-correlated expression levels of HRI and BCL11A might appear in conflict with a requirement of HRI for BCL11A expression. However, please note that while HRI levels increase during erythroid maturation, its activity seems to decline as shown by western blots measuring eIF2 α -P levels (Fig.2C), most likely due to the production of heme as a result of erythroid differentiation (*30*).

Fig. S14. BCL11A Western blots and RT-qPCR in HRI depleted HUDEP2 cells. (**A**) BCL11A Western Blot for HUDEP2 HRI sgRNA pools (from Fig. 2). (**B**) BCL11A Western blot in HUDEP2 HRI depleted clones (from Fig. S10). (**C**) BCL11A total and primary transcript levels for HRI sgRNA pools and HRI depleted clonal HUDEP2 cells. Transcript levels were normalized to LRF and fold changes are shown here relative to non-targeting sgRNA HUDEP2 cells which served as a negative control. (**D**) BCL11A transcript levels in RNA-seq from Fig. 3F.

Fig. S16. Gene expression measurements in the BCL11A rescue experiments. Presence or absence of BCL11A $cDNA$ is indicated by $+$ or $-$, respectively. Cells were differentiated for 7 days for all data shown. Error bars: standard deviation from 2 biological replicates. (**A)** BCL11A transcript levels. While BCL11A transcripts were slightly higher in cells lines expressing exogenous BCL11A cDNA, they remained in a similar range to endogenous levels. (**B)** mRNA levels of indicated genes. BCL11A expression strongly reduced γ- and ε-globin transcript levels. (**C)** Primary-transcript levels of indicated genes. BCL11A expression strongly reduced γ-globin primary transcript levels. (**D)** Transcript levels for maturation markers. We note that expression BCL11A cDNA slightly reduced alpha-globin and BAND3 levels, but were not significantly different to levels from parental HUDEP2 cells.

Table S1. Top differentially expressed proteins from HUDEP2 mass spectrometry.

Table S2. Top differentially expressed transcripts from HUDEP2 RNA-seq.

Table S3. Oligos for sgRNAs.

Table S4. Primers used for TIDE assays shown in Fig. S2.

Table S5. shRNA oligos.

Table S6. sgRNA sequencing library primers.

Name	Sequence
Gamma_globin_F	TGGCAAGAAGGTGCTGACTTC
Gamma globin R	GCAAAGGTGCCCTTGAGATC
Beta_globin_F	TGGGCAACCCTAAGGTGAAG
Beta_globin_R	GTGAGCCAGGCCATCACTAAA
Alpha_globin_F	AAGACCTACTTCCCGCACTTC
Alpha_globin_R	GTTGGGCATGTCGTCCAC
Gamma_globin_PT_F	TTTGTGGCACCTTCTGACTG
Gamma globin PT R	GCCAAAGCTGTCAAAGAA
Beta_globin_PT_F	GCTAGGCCCTTTTGCTAATC
Beta globin PT R	CTGGTGGGGTGAATTCTT
ALAS2 F	CAGCGCAATGTCAAGCAC
ALAS2 R	TAGATGCCATGCTTGGAGAG
BAND3 F	ACCTCTCTCACCTCACCTTCTG
BAND3 R	AACCTGTCTAGCAGTTGGTTGG
GATA1 F	CTGTCCCCAATAGTGCTTATGG
GATA1 R	GAATAGGCTGCTGAATTGAGGG
HRI F	CACCCGAACAGTTGGAAGGA
HRI R	AGAGCTCTAGCAGGACCACA
BCL11A F	ACAAACGGAAACAATGCAATGG
BCL11A R	TTTCATCTCGATTGGTGAAGGG
ZBTB7A F	GCTTGGGCCGGTTGAATGTA
ZBTB7A R	GGCTGTGAAGTTACCGTCGG
Mouse HRI F	CTGCTGCAGAGTGAGCTTTTTC
Mouse HRI R	CTGAGAAAGGAGGCTTAGTTGC
Mouse Bcl11a F	GCCCCAAACAGGAACACATA
Mouse Bcl11a R	GGGGCATATTCTGCACTCAT
Mouse ey-globin F	ACAGCTTTGGGAACTTGTCCTC
Mouse ey-globin R	TCTCCAAAAGCAGTCAGCACC
Mouse bh1-globin F	AGGCAGCTATCACAAGCATCTG
Mouse bh1-globin R	AACTTGTCAAAGAATCTCTGAGTCCA
Bactin F	ACACCCGCCACCAGTTC
Bactin R	TACAGCCCGGGGAGCAT

Table S7. RT-qPCR primers.

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