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The mission of the *Journal of General Physiology* is to publish articles that elucidate important biological, chemical, or physical mechanisms of broad physiological significance.

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Cover picture: Some ion channels, including KCNQ channels shown here, are sensitive to cytoplasmic Mg^{2+} ions. The current decreases reversibly when cytoplasmic Mg^{2+} is raised and increases when it is lowered (left). The changes can be explained by a model in which Mg^{2+} and polycationic amines bind to plasma membrane PIP_2 , decreasing the pool of free PIP_2 needed to keep KCNQ channels active (see article by Suh and Hille, 241–256).