# **Electronic Supplementary Information for**

# Synthesis of polycyclic spiroindolines by highly diastereo-selective interrupted Ugi cascade reactions of 3-(2-isocyano-ethyl)indoles

# Jordy M. Saya,<sup>†</sup> Barry Oppelaar,<sup>†</sup> Râzvan C. Cioc,<sup>†</sup> Gydo van der Heijden,<sup>†</sup> Christophe M. L. Vande Velde,<sup>‡</sup> Romano V. A. Orru,<sup>†</sup> Eelco Ruijter<sup>\*,†</sup>

<sup>†</sup> Department of Chemistry & Pharmaceutical Sciences and Amsterdam Institute for Molecules, Medicines & Systems (AIMMS), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, De Boelelaan 1108, 1081 HZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands <sup>‡</sup> Faculty of Applied Engineering, Advanced Reactor Technology, University of Antwerp, Groenenborgerlaan 171, 2020 Antwerpen, Belgium

E-mail: e.ruijter@vu.nl

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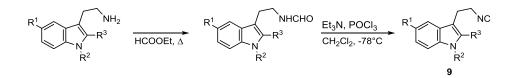
# **General information**

Unless stated otherwise, all solvents and commercially available reagents were used as purchased. Dry dichloromethane was obtained by an Inert Solvent Purification System. All other solvents were used as purchased. 1-methyltryptamine<sup>1</sup>, 2-methyltryptamine<sup>2</sup> and 1-methylcyclohexane-1-carboxaldehyde<sup>3</sup> were synthesized according to literature procedures.

Nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectra were recorded on a Bruker Avance 500 (125.78 MHz for <sup>13</sup>C) or Bruker Avance 300 (83.85 MHz for  $^{13}$ C) using the residual solvent as internal standard ( $^{1}$ H:  $\delta$  7.26 ppm, <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H}: δ 77.16 ppm for CDCl<sub>3</sub>, <sup>1</sup>H: δ 2.50 ppm, <sup>13</sup>C{1H}: δ 39.52 ppm for DMSO- $d_6$ ). Chemical shifts (δ) are given in ppm and coupling constants (J) are quoted in hertz (Hz). Resonances are described as s (singlet), d (doublet), t (triplet), q (quartet), quint (quintet), sex (sextet), sep (septet), br (broad singlet) and m (multiplet) or combinations thereof. Infrared (IR) spectra were recorded neat using a Shimadzu FTIR-8400s spectrophotometer and wavelengths are reported in cm<sup>-1</sup>. Electrospray Ionization (ESI) highresolution mass spectrometry (HRMS) was carried out using a Bruker microTOF-Q instrument in positive ion mode (capillary potential of 4500 V). Flash chromatography was performed on Silicycle Silia-P Flash Silica Gel (particle size 40-63 µm, pore diameter 60Å) using the indicated eluent. Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) was performed using TLC plates from Merck (SiO<sub>2</sub>, Kieselgel 60 F254 neutral, on aluminium with fluorescence indicator) and compounds were visualized by UV detection (254 nm) and KMnO<sub>4</sub> stain. X-ray analysis was performed on an Agilent SuperNova diffractometer with Cu K( $\alpha$ ) microsource, mirror monochromator and Atlas CCD detector. The data were reduced and corrected for absorption with CrysAlisPro, Agilent Technologies, Version 1.171.38.41r (Rigaku OD, 2015). The structure was solved with SHELXS-2014/7<sup>3</sup> and refined with SHELXL-2014/7<sup>4</sup> and the ShelxLE graphical interface<sup>5</sup>.

# Synthetic procedures

# General procedure A: Synthesis of the tryptamine derived isocyanides.



Prepared according to a modified procedure by Zhao and coworkers. Tryptamine was mixed with ethyl formate (1.25 M) and heated to reflux for 16 h. The excess ethyl formate was concentrated *in vacuo*. Without further purification, the crude formamide was dissolved in anhydrous dichloromethane (0.5 M). Subsequently triethylamine (5 equiv) and phosphoryl chloride (1.5 equiv) were respectively dropwise added at –78°C. After mixing for 3 h at this temperature, the reaction was quenched by addition of the crude mixture in ice-cold water. The product was extracted three times with dichloromethane, washed with water and brine, dried over sodium sulfate and concentrated *in vacuo*. Pure isocyanide could be obtained by flash column chromatography using dichloromethane as eluent.

#### 3-(2-isocyanoethyl)-1H-indole (9a)



According to procedure A the formamide was prepared using tryptamine (10 g, 62.4 mmol) and ethyl formate (50 ml). Subsequently, the isocyanide could be obtained using crude formamide, triethylamine (43.5 ml, 312 mmol) and phosphoryl chloride (8.7 mL,

96.6 mmol) in dichloromethane (120 ml). The title compound was isolated as a brownish solid (6.1 g, 36 mmol, 57%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  8.19 (s, 1H), 7.60 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.40 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.28 (td, *J* = 9.0, 8.1, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.21 (td, *J* = 7.5, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (t, *J* = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 3.67 (tt, *J* = 7.0, 1.9 Hz, 2H), 3.18 (tt, *J* = 7.0, 2.0 Hz, 2H).

### 3-(2-isocyanoethyl)-5-methoxy-1H-indole (9b)

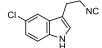


5-methoxytryptamine hydrochloric acid (4.5 g, 20 mmol) was mixed with ethyl formate (20 ml) and potassium carbonate (2.76 g, 20 mmol) and heated to reflux for 16 h. Water was added to the mixture and the product was extracted with ethyl

acetate. After washing with brine, drying over sodium sulfate and concentrating *in vacuo*, the crude formamide was directly used without additional purification in the isocyanide synthesis. Following procedure A the isocyanide could be obtained using crude formamide, triethylamine (13.9 mL, 100 mmol) and phosphoryl chloride (2.79 mL, 30 mmol) in dichloromethane (40 ml). The title compound was isolated as a brownish solid (1.21 g, 6.0 mmol, 30%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.99 (s, 1H), 7.13 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.98 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 6.89 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 3.87 (s, 2H), 3.66 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.14 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H).

#### 5-chloro-3-(2-isocyanoethyl)-1H-indole (9c)



5-chlorotryptamine hydrochloric acid (2.8 g, 12.1 mmol) was mixed with ethyl formate (15 ml) and potassium carbonate (1.67 g, 12.1 mmol) and heated to reflux for 16 h. Water was added to the mixture and the product was extracted with ethyl

acetate. After washing with brine, drying over sodium sulfate and concentrating *in vacuo*, the crude formamide was directly used without additional purification in the isocyanide synthesis. Following procedure A the isocyanide could be obtained using crude formamide, triethylamine (8.43 mL, 60.5 mmol) and phosphoryl chloride (1.69 mL, 18.2 mmol) in dichloromethane (24 ml). The title compound was isolated as a brownish solid (0.52 g, 2.54 mmol, 21%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  8.14 (s, 1H), 7.51 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.31 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.23 – 7.13 (m, 2H), 3.66 (tt, *J* = 6.9, 1.8 Hz, 2H), 3.12 (td, *J* = 6.9, 3.7 Hz, 2H).

#### 3-(2-isocyanoethyl)-1-methyl-1H-indole (9d)

According to procedure A the formamide was prepared using 1-methyltryptamine (1.23 g, 7 mmol) and ethyl formate (10 ml). Subsequently, the isocyanide could be obtained using crude formamide, triethylamine (4.9 ml, 35 mmol) and phosphoryl chloride (0.98

mL, 10.5 mmol) in dichloromethane (14 ml). The title compound was isolated as a colorless oil (0.38 g, 2.06 mmol, 29%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.54 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.33 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.14 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.01 (s, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.65 (tt, *J* = 7.1, 1.8 Hz, 2H), 3.16 (tt, *J* = 7.0, 3.8, 1.5 Hz, 2H).

#### 3-(2-isocyanoethyl)-2-methyl-1H-indole (9e)

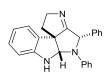
According to procedure A the formamide was prepared using 2-methyltryptamine (1.66 g, 9.5 mmol) and ethyl formate (13 ml). Subsequently, the isocyanide could be obtained using crude formamide, triethylamine (6.63 ml, 47.6 mmol) and phosphoryl chloride (1.33 mL, 14.3 mmol) in dichloromethane (14 ml). The title compound was isolated as a colorless oil (1.26 g, 6.84 mmol, 72%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.87 (s, 1H), 7.44 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.17 – 7.13 (m, 1H), 7.12 – 7.08 (m, 1H), 3.59 (tt, *J* = 7.2, 1.8 Hz, 2H), 3.13 (tt, *J* = 7.1, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 2.45 (s, 3H).

### General procedure B: interrupted Ugi reaction to form spiroindolines.

To a solution of isocyanide **1** (1.0 equiv) in TFE (0.1M) was added amine (1.1 equiv) and aldehyde (1.1 equiv). The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 16 - 48 h (isocyanide consumption monitored with TLC). Afterwards the reaction was concentrated *in vacuo*. Purification by silica gel chromatography afforded the desired product with an eluent system of either mixtures of MeOH/CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> or cyclohexane/EtOAc.

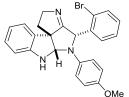
#### 4,5-diphenyl-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8aa)



Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), aniline (100  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and benzaldehyde (112  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 48 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.31 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as yellow foamy solids (155 mg, 0.44 mmol, 44%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.24 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.02 (dd, *J* = 12.5, 5.4 Hz, 6H), 6.81 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.69 – 6.61 (m, 4H), 6.51 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 5.35 (s, 1H), 5.25 (s, 1H), 5.10 (s, 1H), 4.42 – 4.29 (m, 2H), 2.49 – 2.41 (m, 1H), 2.33 (dd, *J* = 12.3, 5.0 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  182.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 148.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 145.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 137.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 130.4 (CH), 129.9 (CH), 129.0 (CH), 128.3 (CH), 127.2 (CH), 125.4 (CH), 123.4 (CH), 120.3 (CH), 118.3 (CH), 112.3 (CH), 110.6 (CH), 79.9 (CH), 67.6 (C<sub>q</sub>), 65.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 64.3 (CH), 38.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2923 (s), 2354 (s), 1678 (s), 1593 (m), 1500 (m), 1483 (m), 1468 (m), 1313 (s), 740 (I), 725 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>22</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 352.1808, found: 352.1798.

### 4-(2-bromophenyl)-5-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole

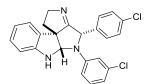


(8ab)

Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), *p*-anisidine (135  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and 2-bromobenzaldehyde (148  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 48 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.28 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a brown oil (170 mg, 0.37 mmol, 37%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.51 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 6.92 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 6.76 – 6.72 (m, 2H), 6.67 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.65 – 6.56 (m, 1H), 6.48 (t, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 3H), 5.68 (s, 1H), 5.29 (s, 1H), 5.10 (s, 1H), 4.40 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 2.51 – 2.39 (m, 1H), 2.31 (dd, *J* = 12.8, 5.4 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  181.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 152.6 (C<sub>q</sub>), 148.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 139.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 136.6 (C<sub>q</sub>), 133.2 (CH), 130.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 129.2 (CH), 128.9 (CH), 127.9 (CH), 127.2 (CH), 123.7 (CH), 122.4 (CH), 120.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 115.4 (CH), 113.0 (CH), 110.7 (CH), 80.0 (CH), 68.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 65.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 64.3 (CH), 55.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 38.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2923 (s), 2354 (s), 1678 (s), 1593 (m), 1500 (m), 1483 (m), 1468 (m), 1313 (s), 740 (l), 725 (l); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>23</sub>BrN<sub>3</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 460.1019, found: 460.0937.

# 5-(3-chlorophenyl)-4-(4-chlorophenyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo [2,3-b]indole (8ac)



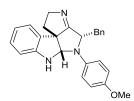
Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), 3-chloroaniline (116  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and 4-chlorobenzaldehyde (155 mg, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B in HFIP instead of TFE (reaction was finished within 1.5 h). Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.61 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as yellow foamy solids (105 mg, 0.25

mmol, 25%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.11 (t, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.98 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.78 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.70 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.66 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.63 (s, 1H), 6.56 (t,

 $J = 7.4 \text{ Hz}, 1\text{H}, 6.40 \text{ (d, } J = 8.3 \text{ Hz}, 1\text{H}, 5.31 \text{ (s, 1H)}, 5.18 \text{ (s, 1H)}, 5.14 \text{ (s, 1H)}, 4.42 - 4.29 \text{ (m, 2H)}, 2.49 - 2.40 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 2.33 \text{ (dd, } J = 12.6, 5.4 \text{ Hz}, 1\text{ H}); {}^{13}\text{C} \text{ NMR} (126 \text{ MHz}, \text{CDCl}_3) \delta 182.0 \text{ (C}_q), 148.4 \text{ (C}_q), 146.2 \text{ (C}_q), 135.8 \text{ (C}_q), 135.6 \text{ (C}_q), 133.1 \text{ (CH)}, 130.9 \text{ (C}_q), 130.1 \text{ (CH)}, 129.2 \text{ (CH)}, 128.6 \text{ (CH)}, 126.8 \text{ (CH)}, 123.3 \text{ (CH)}, 120.7 \text{ (CH)}, 118.5 \text{ (CH)}, 112.1 \text{ (CH)}, 110.9 \text{ (CH)}, 110.7 \text{ (CH)}, 80.0 \text{ (CH)}, 67.7 \text{ (C}_q), 65.7 \text{ (CH}_2), 63.6 \text{ (CH)}, 38.7 \text{ (CH}_2); \text{ IR (neat): } v_{max} \text{ (cm}^{-1}) = 2930 \text{ (s)}, 2341 \text{ (s)}, 1593 \text{ (l)}, 1485 \text{ (l)}, 1406 \text{ (m)}, 1265 \text{ (s)}, 1092 \text{ (s)}, 1026 \text{ (s)}, 908 \text{ (s)}, 729 \text{ (l)}; \text{HRMS (ESI): } m/z \text{ calculated for } C_{24}H_{20}\text{Cl}_2N_3 \text{ [M+H]}^+ 420.1029, \text{ found: } 420.1011.$ 

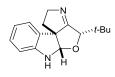
#### 4-benzyl-5-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8ad)



Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), *p*-anisidine (135  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and phenylacetaldehyde (128  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 24 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.35 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a brown oil (249 mg, 0.63 mmol, 63%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.28 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.23 – 7.14 (m, 3H), 7.07 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 6.88 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 6.67 (d, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 2H), 5.18 (s, 1H), 4.88 (s, 1H), 4.44 – 4.32 (m, 2H), 4.26 (dd, *J* = 14.6, 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.02 (dd, *J* = 13.7, 3.9 Hz, 1H), 2.43 – 2.33 (m, 2H), 2.10 – 1.98 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  181.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 152.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 148.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 138.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 137.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.1 (C<sub>q</sub>), 129.3 (CH), 129.2 (CH), 128.6 (CH), 126.8 (CH), 123.1 (CH), 120.3 (CH), 115.7 (CH), 111.9 (CH), 111.1 (CH), 79.9 (CH), 67.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 65.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 60.7 (CH), 56.0 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 39.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 38.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 1678 (m), 1605 (s), 1508 (l), 1483 (m), 1466 (m), 1236 (m), 1036 (m), 812 (m), 740 (l), 698 (m); HRMS (ESI<sup>+</sup>) calculated C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>26</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 396.2070, found 396.2068.

#### 4-(tert-butyl)-2,4,5a,6-tetrahydro-1H-pyrrolo[3',2':3,4]furo[2,3-b]indole (11ae)

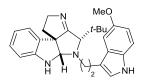


Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol) and pivaldehyde (119  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and 6-amino-2-picoline (119 mg, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 24 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 6:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.65 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (95 mg, 0.37 mmol,

37%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.14 (t, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.08 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.70 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 5.25 (s, 1H), 4.93 (s, 1H), 4.57 – 4.43 (m, 2H), 3.88 (d, *J* = 3.3 Hz, 1H), 2.31 – 2.24 (m, 1H), 2.20 (dd, *J* = 12.6, 5.8 Hz, 1H), 1.03 (s, 9H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  185.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 148.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 130.1 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.9 (CH), 123.0 (CH), 119.7 (CH), 109.7 (CH), 93.2 (CH), 80.9 (CH), 70.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 67.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 36.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 34.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 25.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 3340 (m), 2955 (s), 1670 (m), 1608 (m), 1470 (m), 1254 (s), 1178 (s), 970 (m), 945 (m), 864 (m), 742 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 257.1648, found 257.1636.

# 4-(tert-butyl)-5-(2-(5-methoxy-1H-indol-3-yl)ethyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo [2,3-b]indole (8af)

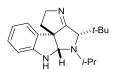


Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), 5-methoxytryptamine (209 mg, 1.1 mmol) and pivaldehyde (119  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.20 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a light

brown oil (304 mg, 0.71 mmol, 71%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  8.19 (s, 1H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.20 – 7.12 (m, 2H), 7.10 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.96 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 6.81 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.67 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.59 – 4.45 (m, 1H), 4.43 – 4.34 (m, 2H), 3.93 (s, 3H), 3.30 – 3.24 (m, 2H), 3.16 – 3.07 (m, 2H), 2.46 – 2.35 (m, 1H), 2.31 (dd, *J* = 12.3, 5.4 Hz, 1H), 0.81 (s, 9H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  187.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 154.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 149.1 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.5 (CH), 127.6 (C<sub>q</sub>), 123.6 (CH), 122.6 (CH), 119.4 (CH), 113.3 (CH), 112.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 112.0 (CH), 110.4 (CH), 100.2 (CH), 86.6 (CH), 74.0 (CH), 69.1 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 58.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 55.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 41.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 29.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 27.1 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 25.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>); IR (neat): *v*<sub>max</sub> (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2926 (m), 1655 (m), 1605 (m), 1483 (m), 1464 (m), 1213 (m), 1103 (s), 1094 (s), 1026 (m), 740 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>33</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 429.2649, found 429.2643.

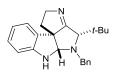
#### 4-(tert-butyl)-5-isopropyl-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8ag)



Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), isopropylamine (95  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and pivaldehyde (119  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Evaporation of the solvent and excess starting materials afforded the compound as an orange solid (294 mg, 0.99 mmol, 99%). No further purification was required.

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.06 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.70 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.61 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 4.53 (s, 1H), 4.45 – 4.34 (m, 1H), 4.26 (dd, *J* = 14.5, 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.24 (s, 1H), 3.17 – 3.04 (m, 1H), 2.29 (d, *J* = 5.2 Hz, 2H), 1.24 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 1.00 (d, *J* = 6.3 Hz, 3H), 0.63 (s, 9H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  188.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 149.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.8 (CH), 123.5 (CH), 119.4 (CH), 110.2 (CH), 77.6 (CH), 72.2 (CH), 68.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 53.2 (CH), 41.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 27.0 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 23.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 15.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 3275 (s), 2962 (s), 1653 (m), 1605 (m), 1460 (m), 1263 (s), 1164 (m), 1045 (s), 966 (m), 854 (s), 737 (l); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 298.2278, found: 298.2267

#### 5-benzyl-4-(tert-butyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8ah)

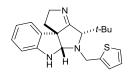


Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), benzylamine (120  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and pivaldehyde (119  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.43 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow solid (307 mg, 0.89 mmol, 89%).

m.p.: 140-144 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.46 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.40 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.03 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.69 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.44 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.47 - 4.38 (m, 1H), 4.32 (dd, *J* = 14.8, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.26 - 4.18 (m, 2H), 3.85 (d, *J* = 13.4 Hz, 1H), 3.27 (s, 1H), 2.37 - 2.29 (m, 1H), 2.16 (dd, *J* = 12.3, 5.3 Hz, 1H), 0.80 (s, 9H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  187.6

(C<sub>a</sub>), 148.8 (C<sub>a</sub>), 139.7 (C<sub>a</sub>), 130.8 (C<sub>a</sub>), 128.8 (CH), 128.8 (CH), 128.4 (CH), 127.7 (CH), 123.7 (CH), 119.0 (CH), 110.0 (CH), 87.7 (CH), 73.5 (CH), 69.1 (C<sub>a</sub>), 65.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 62.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 41.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.7 (C<sub>a</sub>), 27.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2951 (s), 2866 (s), 1657 (m), 1605 (m), 1479 (s), 1464 (m), 1086 (s), 1049 (s), 926 (s), 752, (I), 743 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m*/*z* calculated for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 346.2278, found: 346.2266.

# (4S,5aS,10bS)-4-(tert-butyl)-5-(thiophen-2-ylmethyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo [2,3-b]indole (8ai)

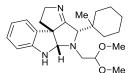


Prepared from isocyanide 1a (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), 2-thiophenemethylamine (112  $\mu\text{L},$  1.1 mmol) and pivaldehyde (120  $\mu\text{L},$  1.1 mmol) according to general procedure within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.13 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 5:1). Isolated as a yellow

oil (246 mg, 0.70 mmol, 70%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.30 (d, J = 5.0 Hz, 1H), 7.07 – 7.01 (m, 2H), 7.01 – 6.97 (m, 2H), 6.70 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.51 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.46 – 4.36 (m, 1H), 4.35 – 4.27 (m, 2H), 4.25 – 4.14 (m, 2H), 3.94 (s, 1H), 3.28 (s, 1H), 2.38 – 2.26 (m, 1H), 2.18 (dd, J = 12.3, 5.4 Hz, 1H), 0.78 (s, 9H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 187.35 (C<sub>q</sub>), 149.02 (C<sub>q</sub>), 143.13 (C<sub>q</sub>), 130.90 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.57 (CH), 126.91 (CH), 126.13 (CH), 125.65 (CH), 123.67 (CH), 119.24 (CH), 110.27 (CH), 87.40 (CH), 73.14 (CH), 69.17 (C<sub>a</sub>), 66.09 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 56.23 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 41.18 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.65 (C<sub>a</sub>), 27.17 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2951 (m), 2868 (s), 1736 (m), 1655 (m), 1605 (m), 1481 (m), 1464 (l), 1393 (s), 1310 (s), 1240 (m), 1090 (m), 1047 (m), 1026 (m), 1007 (m), 852 (m), 802 (I), 740 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m*/z calculated for C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>26</sub>N<sub>3</sub>S [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 352.1842, found: 352.1845

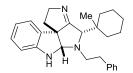
# (4S,5aS,10bS)-5-(2,2-dimethoxyethyl)-4-(1-methylcyclohexyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4] pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8aj)



Prepared from isocyanide 1a (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), aminoacetaldehyde dimethyl acetal (120 µL, 1.1 mmol) and 1-methylcyclohexane-1-carboxaldehyde (139 mg, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 3:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.44 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 2:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (281 mg, 0.73 mmol, 73%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.02 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.93 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.64 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.58 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 5.15 (s, 1H), 4.50 (d, J = 5.2 Hz, 1H), 4.44 – 4.30 (m, 1H), 4.26 (dd, J = 14.7, 8.3 Hz, 1H), 4.14 (s, 1H), 3.44 (s, 3H), 3.34 (s, 3H), 3.18 (s, 1H), 3.12 (dd, J = 14.2, 7.3 Hz, 1H), 2.89 (d, J = 14.0 Hz, 1H), 2.29 (q, J = 10.8, 10.2 Hz, 1H), 2.18 (dd, J = 12.1, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 1.51 - 1.36 (m, 2H), 1.36 - 1.29 (m, 1H), 1.28 – 0.97 (m, 7H), 0.45 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  187.48 (C<sub>a</sub>), 149.30 (C<sub>a</sub>), 131.00 (C<sub>a</sub>), 128.47 (CH), 123.49 (CH), 118.73 (CH), 109.88 (CH), 104.69 (CH), 88.84 (CH), 76.54 (CH), 69.14 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.00 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 60.40 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 53.59 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 53.12 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 41.26 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 38.12 (C<sub>a</sub>), 35.15 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 34.79 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.15 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 21.73 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 21.66 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 19.28 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2926 (m), 2860 (s), 1655 (m), 1604 (m), 1466 (m), 1310 (s), 1267 (s), 1190 (s), 1115 (m), 1057 (m), 964 (m), 947 (m), 858 (s); HRMS (ESI): m/z calculated for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>34</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 384.2646, found: 384.2655

# (4S,5aS,10bS)-4-(1-methylcyclohexyl)-5-phenethyl-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8ak)

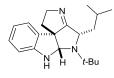


Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), phenethylamine (119  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and 1-methylcyclohexane-1-carboxaldehyde (139 mg, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.40 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a

yellow oil (332 mg, 0.83 mmol, 83%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.33 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.26 – 7.20 (m, 3H), 7.08 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.62 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.48 – 4.36 (m, 1H), 4.35 – 4.26 (m, 2H), 4.16 (s, 1H), 3.29 (s, 1H), 3.16 (dt, *J* = 13.2, 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.12 – 3.03 (m, 1H), 2.91 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.31 (ddd, *J* = 12.3, 10.7, 8.1 Hz, 1H), 2.24 (dd, *J* = 12.2, 5.5 Hz, 1H), 1.54 – 1.40 (m, 2H), 1.40 – 1.19 (m, 5H), 1.19 – 0.99 (m, 3H), 0.52 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  187.67 (C<sub>q</sub>), 149.15 (C<sub>q</sub>), 139.60 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.17 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.80 (CH), 128.63 (CH), 128.58 (CH), 126.39 (CH), 119.46 (CH), 110.36 (CH), 86.62 (CH), 74.65 (CH), 69.18 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.06 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 59.92 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 41.73 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 38.19 (C<sub>q</sub>), 35.60 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.14 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 34.69 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.19 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 21.83 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 21.73 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 19.63 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2926 (I), 2860 (m), 2363 (I), 1654 (m), 1605 (m), 1483 (m), 1466 (m), 1259 (s), 1111 (m), 1094 (s), 964 (m), 698 (m); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>34</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 400.2747, found: 400.2762

#### N-(tert-butyl)-1-(4,9-dihydro-3H-pyrido[3,4-b]indol-1-yl)-3-methylbutan-1-amine (8al)



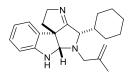
Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), *tert*-butylamine (116  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and isovaleraldehyde (118  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.29 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (125 mg, 0.40

mmol, 40%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>)  $\delta$  6.98 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.56 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.53 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 4.49 (s, 1H), 4.29 – 4.20 (m, 1H), 4.10 (dd, *J* = 14.6, 8.5 Hz, 1H), 3.51 (dd, *J* = 11.4, 4.9 Hz, 1H), 2.25 – 2.15 (m, 1H), 1.99 (dd, *J* = 12.4, 5.9 Hz, 1H), 1.49 – 1.37 (m, 1H), 1.05 (s, 9H), 0.98 (dq, *J* = 14.7, 5.0, 4.6 Hz, 1H), 0.83 (d, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 3H), 0.74 – 0.66 (m, 1H), 0.52 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>)  $\delta$  185.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 150.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.1 (CH), 122.0 (CH), 117.2 (CH), 109.2 (CH), 79.1 (CH), 67.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 65.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 55.7 (CH), 54.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 47.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 27.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 24.6 (CH), 23.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 21.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat): *v*<sub>max</sub> (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2359 (s), 1682 (s), 1593 (l), 1560 (s), 1485 (s), 1329 (s), 1090 (m), 1015 (m), 908 (s), 731 (m); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 312.2434, found: 312.2429.

Note: multiple peaks were not present in the  ${}^{1}H$  and  ${}^{13}C$  NMR spectrums or showed unclear splitting patterns when taken in CDCl<sub>3</sub>.

#### 4-cyclohexyl-5-(2-methylallyl)-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8am)

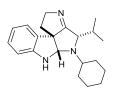


Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), 2-methylallylamine (100  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and cyclohexanecarboxaldehyde (133  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 5:1, R<sub>f</sub> =0.53 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil

(124 mg, 0.37 mmol, 37%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.08 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.64 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.98 (s, 1H), 4.88 (s, 1H), 4.44 – 4.33 (m, 1H), 4.29 (dd, *J* = 14.7, 8.5 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (s, 1H), 3.33 (d, *J* = 13.6 Hz, 1H), 3.24 (d, *J* = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 3.07 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 2.29 (q, *J* = 11.8 Hz, 1H), 2.13 (dd, *J* = 12.4, 5.5 Hz, 1H), 1.77 (s, 3H), 1.73 (d, *J* = 10.8 Hz, 1H), 1.65 (s, 1H), 1.58 – 1.41 (m, 2H), 1.32 (d, *J* = 12.7 Hz, 1H), 1.17 – 0.95 (m, 4H), 0.85 (q, *J* = 12.5 Hz, 1H), 0.63 (q, *J* = 11.2 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  186.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 149.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 144.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.4 (CH), 123.1 (CH), 119.2 (CH), 113.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 110.2 (CH), 86.4 (CH), 69.3 (CH), 69.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 62.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 41.9 (CH), 39.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 30.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 28.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 20.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2924 (m), 2851 (s), 1664 (s), 1605 (m), 1481 (m), 1464 (m), 1447 (m), 1097 (s), 964 (m), 897 (m), 738 (l); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 336.2434, found: 336.2428

# (4S,5aS,10bS)-5-cyclohexyl-4-isopropyl-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8an)



Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), cyclohexylamine (126  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and isobutyraldehyde (99  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 5:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.21 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 5:1). Isolated as a yellow solid (155 mg, 0.48 mmol, 48%).

m.p.: 122-126 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- $d_6$ )  $\delta$  6.97 – 6.90 (m, 2H), 6.49 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 5.85 (s, 1H), 4.50 (s, 1H), 4.28 (ddd, J = 15.4, 10.3, 6.0 Hz, 1H), 4.11 (dd, J = 14.6, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 2.91 (d, J = 9.3 Hz, 1H), 2.56 (t, J = 10.7 Hz, 1H), 2.20 (ddd, J = 11.9, 10.2, 8.8 Hz, 1H), 2.02 (dd, J = 12.4, 5.7 Hz, 1H), 1.82 (d, J = 11.5 Hz, 1H), 1.78 – 1.68 (m, 2H), 1.68 – 1.60 (m, 1H), 1.56 (d, J = 11.9 Hz, 1H), 1.32 – 0.98 (m, 6H), 0.92 – 0.81 (m, 1H), 0.79 (d, J = 6.4 Hz, 3H), 0.55 (d, J = 6.5 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- $d_6$ )  $\delta$  186.19 (C<sub>q</sub>), 150.37 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.35 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.58 (CH), 122.49 (CH), 117.45 (CH), 108.99 (CH), 79.91 (CH), 67.70 (C<sub>q</sub>), 67.12 (CH), 65.89 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 62.45 (CH), 40.01 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.47 (CH), 32.19 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 29.71 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.45 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.03 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.99 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 20.09 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 19.06 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2922 (m), 2849 (m), 2336 (m), 1664 (m), 1605 (m), 1483 (m), 1466 (m), 1265 (s), 1053 (m), 1041 (m), 964 (m), 708 (m); HRMS (ESI): m/z calculated for C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 324.2434, found: 324.2436

Note: multiple peaks were not present in the <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrums or showed unclear splitting patterns when taken in  $CDCl_3$ .

#### N,N-dibenzyl-1-(4',5'-dihydrospiro[indole-3,3'-pyrrol]-2'-yl)butan-1-amine (12aa)

Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), dibenzylamine (212  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and valeraldehyde (99  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 6:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.60 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (278 mg, 0.66 mmol, 66%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  8.06 (s, 1H), 7.55 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.33 – 7.25 (m, 6H), 7.21 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 6H), 7.13 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.04 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 4.31 – 4.23 (m, 1H), 4.20 – 4.12 (m, 1H), 3.88 (d, *J* = 13.8 Hz, 2H), 3.39 (d, *J* = 13.8 Hz, 2H), 2.55 (d, *J* = 10.6 Hz, 1H), 2.43 – 2.35 (m, 1H), 2.14 – 2.07 (m, 1H), 2.02 – 1.85 (m, 2H), 1.48 – 1.40 (m, 1H), 1.30 – 1.16 (m, 1H), 0.72 – 0.65 (m, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  174.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 173.0 (CH), 155.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 139.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 138.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 129.0 (CH), 128.3 (CH), 128.2 (CH), 126.8 (CH), 126.1 (CH), 121.5 (CH), 121.2 (CH), 74.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 60.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 57.3 (CH), 54.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 31.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 19.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 13.9 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2954 (s), 1634 (s), 1545 (s), 1495 (s), 1452 (m), 1375 (s), 1124 (m), 995 (s), 908 (s), 744 (I), 698 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>32</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 422.2591, found: 422.2587.

#### 2'-(3-methyl-1-(pyrrolidin-1-yl)butyl)-4',5'-dihydrospiro[indole-3,3'-pyrrole] (12ab)

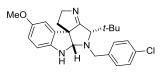


Prepared from isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol), pyrrolidine (92  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and aldehyde isovaleraldehyde (118  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (4% MeOH in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.19 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1. Isolated as a brown oil (279 mg, 0.90 mmol, 90%) as a mixture

of diastereoisomers (2.6:1 based on <sup>1</sup>H NMR).

*Major diastereoisomer*: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.97 (s, 1H), 7.60 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.21 – 7.14 (m, 1H), 4.30 – 4.18 (m, 2H), 2.97 (dd, J = 10.1, 4.7 Hz, 1H), 2.64 – 2.49 (m, 1H), 2.48 – 2.28 (m, 4H), 2.03 – 1.97 (m, 1H), 1.68 – 1.54 (m, 4H), 1.31 – 1.24 (m, 1H), 1.07 (ddd, J = 13.9, 9.9, 5.1 Hz, 1H), 0.79 (d, J = 6.5 Hz, 3H), 0.69 (ddd, J = 13.9, 10.5, 3.9 Hz, 1H), 0.37 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 178.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 173.7 (CH), 155.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 139.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.3 (CH), 126.0 (CH), 121.9 (CH), 121.1 (CH), 72.6 (C<sub>q</sub>), 63.5 (CH), 60.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 50.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 39.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 24.8 (CH), 23.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 23.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 22.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>); *Minor diastereoisomer*: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.90 (s, 1H), 7.60 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.21 – 7.13 (m, 2H), 4.28 – 4.19 (m, 2H), 2.64 – 2.49 (m, 2H), 2.47 – 2.29 (m, 4H), 2.20 – 2.12 (m, 1H), 1.77 (ddd, J = 14.4, 9.6, 5.1 Hz, 1H), 1.69 – 1.55 (m, 4H), 1.40 – 1.30 (m, 1H), 1.13 (ddd, J = 13.5, 9.0, 4.4 Hz, 1H), 0.75 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 0.43 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 176.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 173.3 (CH), 155.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 139.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.4 (CH), 126.0 (CH), 121.7 (CH), 120.8 (CH), 73.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 61.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 54.7 (CH), 47.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 31.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 24.9 (CH), 23.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 23.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 21.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2947 (m), 1629 (m), 1541 (m), 1448 (m), 1113 (s), 986 (m), 879 (m), 750 (I). HRMS (ESI): m/z calculated for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 310.2278, found: 310.2265.

# 4-(tert-butyl)-5-(4-chlorobenzyl)-9-methoxy-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8ba)

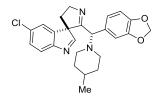


Prepared from isocyanide **1b** (200 mg, 1.0 mmol), 4-chlorobenzylamine (134  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and pivaldehyde (119  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.26 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a

yellow oil (385 mg, 0.94 mmol, 94%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.37 (q, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 4H), 6.64 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 6.60 (s, 1H), 6.42 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.44 – 4.35 (m, 1H), 4.32 (dd, *J* = 14.9, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.20 (s, 1H), 4.16 (d, *J* = 13.9 Hz, 1H), 3.86 (d, *J* = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.25 (s, 1H), 2.32 (q, *J* = 11.2 Hz, 1H), 2.17 (dd, *J* = 12.3, 5.4 Hz, 1H), 0.81 (s, 9H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  187.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 153.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 143.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 138.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 133.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 132.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 130.1 (CH), 129.1 (CH), 113.6 (CH), 110.7 (CH), 110.7 (CH), 88.7 (CH), 73.8 (CH), 69.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 61.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 56.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 41.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 27.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2951 (m), 1647 (m), 1488 (l), 1464 (s), 1448 (m), 1435 (s), 1288 (m), 1205 (m), 1090 (m), 1007 (s), 937 (m), 851 (l), 636 (s); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>29</sub>ClN<sub>3</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 410.1994, found: 410.1983.

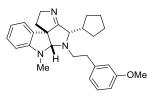
### 2'-(benzo[d][1,3]dioxol-5-yl(4-methylpiperidin-1-yl)methyl)-5-chloro-4',5'-dihydrospiro[indole-3,3'pyrrole] (12ca)



Prepared from isocyanide **1c** (205 mg, 1.0 mmol), 4-methylpiperidine (130  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and piperonal (165 mg, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (4% MeOH in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.30 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (192 mg, 0.44 mmol, 44%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.57 (s, 1H), 7.51 (d, *J* = 10.1 Hz, 1H), 7.28 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (s, 1H), 6.59 (s, 1H), 6.54 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.45 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 5.87 (d, *J* = 13.1 Hz, 2H), 4.31 – 4.15 (m, 2H), 3.35 (s, 1H), 2.93 (d, *J* = 10.9 Hz, 1H), 2.58 (d, *J* = 11.2 Hz, 1H), 2.50 – 2.41 (m, 1H), 2.00 – 1.94 (m, 1H), 1.72 (t, *J* = 11.0 Hz, 1H), 1.59 – 1.51 (m, 2H), 1.40 (d, *J* = 12.1 Hz, 1H), 1.34 – 1.21 (m, 2H), 1.08 (q, *J* = 11.6 Hz, 1H), 0.84 (d, *J* = 3.9 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  174.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 173.1 (CH), 153.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 147.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 147.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 141.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 132.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 130.0 (CH), 128.3 (CH), 123.1 (CH), 122.1 (CH), 122.0 (CH), 108.9 (CH), 107.7 (CH), 101.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 73.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 71.5 (CH), 60.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 53.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 51.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 32.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 30.7 (CH), 21.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat):  $v_{max}$  (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2962 (m), 1655 (m), 1605 (m), 1462 (s), 1263 (s), 1163 (m), 1045 (s), 906 (m), 733 (l); HRMS (ESI<sup>+</sup>) calculated C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>27</sub>ClN<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 436.1786, found 436.1804.

# 4-cyclopentyl-5-(3-methoxyphenethyl)-6-methyl-1,2,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole (8db)

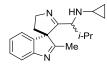


Prepared from isocyanide **1d** (184 mg, 1.0 mmol), 3-methoxyphenethylamine (160  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and cyclopentanecarboxaldehyde (117  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Purification: column

chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.57 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (299 mg, 0.72 mmol, 72%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.21 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.79 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.57 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.34 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.39 – 4.32 (m, 1H), 4.28 (dd, *J* = 14.7, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.14 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 3.07 (t, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 2.87 (s, 3H), 2.80 – 2.71 (m, 2H), 2.32 (dd, *J* = 12.6, 5.7 Hz, 1H), 2.25 – 2.16 (m, 1H), 1.54 – 1.40 (m, 3H), 1.37 – 1.17 (m, 6H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  186.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 159.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 150.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 141.4 (C<sub>q</sub>), 131.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 129.5 (CH), 128.9 (CH), 122.1 (CH), 121.2 (CH), 117.3 (CH), 114.7 (CH), 111.4 (CH), 106.0 (CH), 90.3 (CH), 67.90 (CH), 66.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 66.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 58.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 55.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 44.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 40.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 35.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 30.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 30.6 (CH), 28.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>); IR (neat): *v*<sub>max</sub> (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2954 (m), 2866 (s), 1665 (s), 1601 (m), 1489 (m), 1298 (s), 1258 (m), 1151 (m), 1099 (s), 1043 (s), 953 (s), 738 (m); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>34</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 416.2696, found: 416.2696.

#### N-(2-methyl-1-(2-methyl-4',5'-dihydrospiro[indole-3,3'-pyrrol]-2'-yl)propyl)cyclopropanamine (12ea)



Prepared from isocyanide **1e** (184 mg, 1.0 mmol), cyclopropylamine (76  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) and isobutyraldehyde (100  $\mu$ L, 1.1 mmol) according to general procedure B within 16 h. Evaporation of the solvent and excess starting materials afforded the compound as an orange solid. Isolated as an orange oil (292 mg, 0.99 mmol, 99%) as

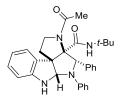
a mixture of diastereoisomers (1:1 based on <sup>1</sup>H NMR). Separation of the diastereoisomers was not possible, and since no other side products were formed, no further purification was required.

<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.54 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.40 – 7.29 (m, 2H), 7.19 (s, 2H), 7.15 (d, *J* = 4.4 Hz, 2H), 4.39 (dt, *J* = 12.2, 6.0 Hz, 1H), 4.29 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 4.18 (dt, *J* = 15.9, 7.9 Hz, 1H), 2.53 – 2.50 (m, 1H), 2.49 – 2.42 (m, 2H), 2.41 – 2.36 (m, 2H), 2.29 (s, 3H), 2.30 – 2.25 (m, 1H), 2.23 (s, 3H), 2.10 – 2.01 (m, 3H), 1.96 – 1.89 (m, 1H), 1.31 (s, 1H), 1.01 (dd, *J* = 9.6, 3.8 Hz, 1H), 0.74 – 0.66 (m, 6H), 0.63 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 3H), 0.56 (d, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 3H), 0.34 – 0.28 (m, 2H), 0.28 – 0.22 (m, 3H), 0.11 – 0.02 (m, 2H), -0.16 (s, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  181.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 181.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 177.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 177.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 155.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 155.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 141.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 140.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 128.5 (CH), 128.5 (CH), 125.7 (CH), 125.5 (CH), 122.0 (CH), 121.9 (CH), 120.1 (CH), 75.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 62.7 (CH), 62.5 (CH), 60.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 60.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 34.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.9(CH<sub>2</sub>), 30.2 (CH), 29.8 (CH), 29.2 (CH), 20.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 20.1 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 17.1 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 16.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 15.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 15.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 6.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 6.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 6.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>); IR (cm<sup>-1</sup>): *v*<sub>max</sub> = 2957 (s), 1634 (s) 1573 (s), 1456 (s), 1364 (s), 1014 (s), 906 (m), 727 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>26</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 296.2121, found: 296.2107.

### General procedure C: Subsequent Ugi reaction to form compounds of type 8.

To a solution of **3** (1.0 equiv) in dichloromethane (0.1M) were added carboxylic acid (1.2 equiv) and isocyanide (1.2 equiv). After full depletion of the isocyanide on TLC the reaction was concentrated *in vacuo*. Purification by silica gel chromatography afforded the desired product with an eluent system of cyclohexane/EtOAc.

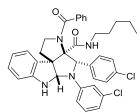
### 3-acetyl-N-(tert-butyl)-4,5-diphenyl-2,3,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4]pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole-3a(1H)-carboxamide (13a)



Prepared from interrupted Ugi product **3aa** (86 mg, 0.25 mmol, 1 equiv), acetic acid (15.7  $\mu$ l, 0.275 mmol, 1.1 equiv) and *tert*-butyl isocyanide (31.1  $\mu$ l, 0.275 mmol, 1.1 equiv) according to general procedure B within 24 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 1:2, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.11 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 1:2). Isolated as a yellow oil (83 mg, 0.17 mmol, 67%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.51 – 7.45 (m, 2H), 7.21 – 7.13 (m, 7H), 6.74 – 6.68 (m, 3H), 6.53 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 5.68 (s, 1H), 5.55 (s, 1H), 4.39 (s, 1H), 3.90 (t, *J* = 9.5 Hz, 1H), 3.75 – 3.57 (m, 1H), 2.73 (q, *J* = 12.5, 10.5 Hz, 1H), 2.30 (dd, *J* = 12.7, 6.4 Hz, 1H), 2.12 (s, 3H), 0.87 (s, 9H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  170.2 (C<sub>q</sub>), 165.7 (C<sub>q</sub>), 149.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 144.0 (C<sub>q</sub>), 139.5 (C<sub>q</sub>), 129.7 (CH), 129.6 (CH), 129.5 (CH), 129.3 (CH), 128.5 (CH), 126.9 (CH), 125.9 (C<sub>q</sub>), 119.0 (CH), 117.6 (CH), 112.4 (CH), 109.6 (CH), 82.0 (CH), 81.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 71.9 (CH), 66.8 (C<sub>q</sub>), 51.3 (C<sub>q</sub>), 46.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 36.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 28.0 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 23.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat): *v*<sub>max</sub> (cm<sup>-1</sup>) = 2361 (s), 1636 (s), 1504 (s), 1213 (s), 1041 (s), 906 (I), 727 (I); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>35</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 495.2755, found: 495.2742.

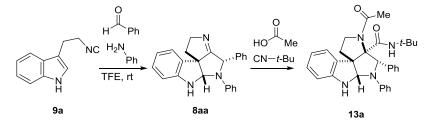
# 3-benzoyl-N-butyl-5-(3-chlorophenyl)-4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2,3,4,5,5a,6-hexahydropyrrolo[3',2':3,4] pyrrolo[2,3-b]indole-3a(1H)-carboxamide (13b)



Prepared from interrupted Ugi product **3ac** (59 mg, 0.14 mmol, 1 equiv), benzoic acid (21 mg, 0.17 mmol, 1.2 equiv) and 1-pentyl isocyanide (21.4  $\mu$ l, 0.17 mmol, 1.2 equiv) according to general procedure B within 24 h. Purification: column chromatography on silicagel (cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1, R<sub>f</sub> = 0.27 in cyclohexane/EtOAc 4:1). Isolated as a yellow oil (40 mg, 0.44 mmol, 44%).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotamers observed in 5:1 ratio)  $\delta$  8.10 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1.2H), 7.63 – 7.51 (m, 4.4H), 7.46 (t, J = 7.7 Hz, 1.4H), 7.44 – 7.35 (m, 2.6H), 7.25 – 7.14 (m, 3.4H), 7.11 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 0.4H), 7.05 (t, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.79 - 6.68 (m, 2.6H), 6.62 (s, 1H), 6.52 (s, 0.2H), 6.42 - 6.34 (m, 1.2H), 5.73 (s, 1.2H), 5.67 (s, 1.2H), 4.66 (s, 0.2H), 4.14 (s, 1H), 3.86 - 3.74 (m, 2H), 3.72 - 3.62 (m, 0.2H), 3.58 – 3.50 (m, 0.2H), 3.49 – 3.42 (m, 0.2H), 3.34 – 3.27 (m, 0.2H), 3.13 – 3.04 (m, 1H), 2.97 (dt, J = 12.8, 5.9 Hz, 0.2H), 2.89 – 2.76 (m, 1.2H), 2.70 (q, J = 10.7, 10.3 Hz, 1H), 2.22 (dd, J = 12.8, 5.4 Hz, 1H), 1.11 (h, J = 7.1 Hz, 2.2H), 0.98 – 0.85 (m, 1H), 0.82 – 0.64 (m, 5.6H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  170.9 (C<sub>a</sub>), 170.8 (C<sub>a</sub>), 170.1 (C<sub>a</sub>), 166.3 (C<sub>a</sub>), 149.4 (C<sub>a</sub>), 147.5 (C<sub>a</sub>), 144.9 (C<sub>a</sub>), 137.0 (C<sub>a</sub>), 136.4 (C<sub>a</sub>), 135.4 (C<sub>a</sub>), 134.9 (C<sub>a</sub>), 133.6 (CH), 130.8 (CH), 130.7 (CH), 130.5 (CH), 130.4 (CH), 130.2 (CH), 130.1 (CH), 129.6 (CH), 129.5 (CH), 128.7 (CH), 128.5 (CH), 128.4 (CH), 127.2 (CH), 125.8 (C<sub>a</sub>), 125.7 (CH), 122.4 (CH), 122.3 (CH), 119.8 (CH), 119.6 (CH), 118.9 (CH), 118.6 (CH), 118.1 (CH), 113.7 (CH), 112.4 (CH), 112.0 (CH), 111.5 (CH), 111.2 (CH), 110.1 (CH), 82.0 (CH), 81.5 (C<sub>a</sub>), 71.6 (CH), 67.3 (C<sub>a</sub>), 62.5 (CH), 48.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 40.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 39.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 37.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 29.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 27.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 27.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 22.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 14.0 (CH<sub>3</sub>); IR (neat): v<sub>max</sub> (cm<sup>-</sup> <sup>1</sup>) = 3427 (s), 2930 (s), 2357 (s), 2357 (s), 1624 (s), 1593 (l), 1485 (l), 1447 (s), 1406 (m), 1265 (m), 1173 (s), 1092 (m), 1026 (s), 908 (m), 729 (l); HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for C<sub>37</sub>H<sub>36</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>2</sub> [M+Na]<sup>+</sup> 661.2108, found: 661.2088.

# One pot interrupted Ugi / Joullié-Ugi towards 8a.



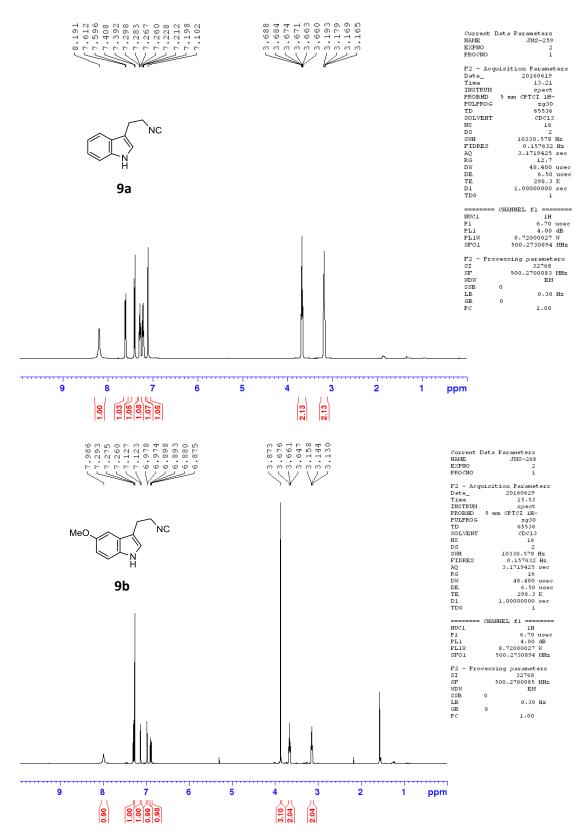
To a solution of isocyanide **1a** (170 mg, 1.0 mmol, 1.0 equiv) in TFE (10.0 mL) was added aniline (100  $\mu$ l, 1.1 mmol, 1.1 equiv) and benzaldehyde (112  $\mu$ l, 1.1 mmol, 1.1 equiv). The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 48 h. After full depletion of **1a** (monitored by TLC), acetic acid (69  $\mu$ l, 1.2 mmol, 1.2 equiv) and *tert*-butyl isocyanide (136  $\mu$ l, 1.2 mmol, 1.2 equiv) were respectively added. The intermediate interrupted Ugi product was fully converted after 24h. The reaction was concentrated and purified by column chromatography (cyclohexane/EtOAc, 2:1), to afford compound **8a** as a pale yellow oil (207 mg, 0.42 mmol, 42 %).

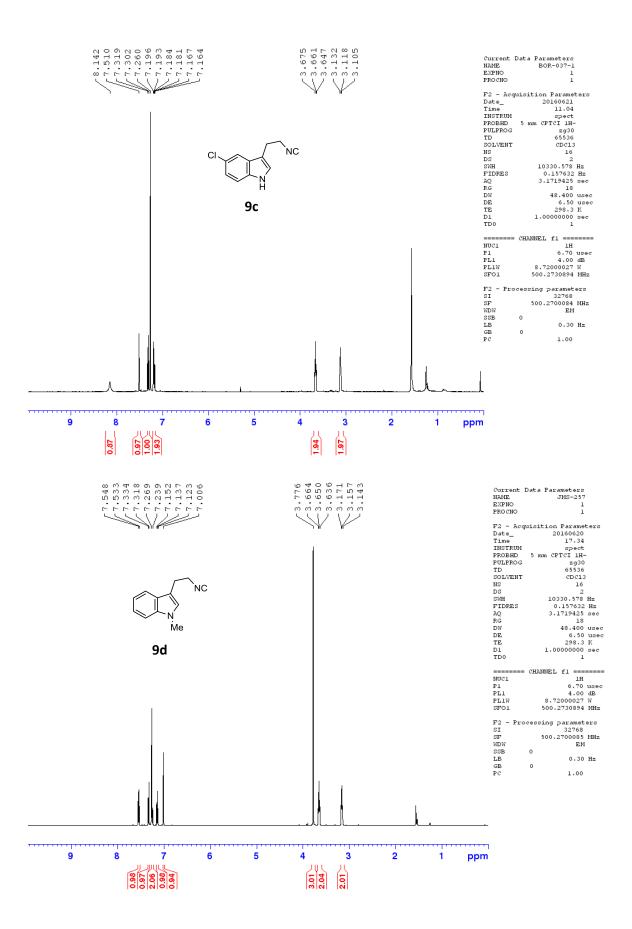
# X-ray analysis

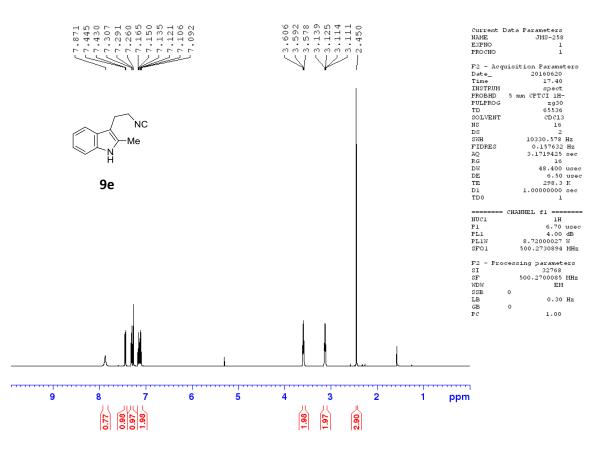
A single crystal of **8ah** was mounted on a Mitegen kapton loop and placed in the cold stream (104K) of the diffractometer setup described in the experimental section. Data collection and refinement led to the CIF file in the supporting information, in which all further pertinent details are described.

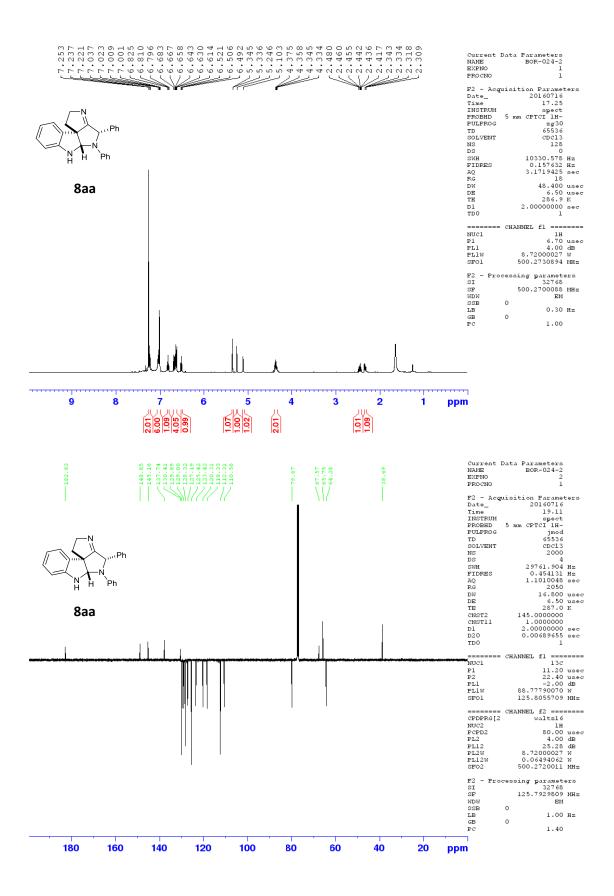
The main finding from the diffraction experiment is that **8ah** crystallizes in the centrosymmetric space group P2<sub>1</sub>/c, as a racemic mixture of two enantiomers, (*S*,*S*,*S*) and (*R*,*R*,*R*), while NMR allows to conclude that the bulk product is diastereomerically pure. In the packing, the benzyl substituent of one molecule points into the cleft formed by the spiroindole, benzyl and *tert*-butyl substituents of its enantiomer, and *vice versa*. The resulting bimolecular building block is much more regularly shaped and thus easier to pack into a crystal. Intermolecular contacts below the van der Waals radius just barely occur between N12 of the hexahydropyrrole and H3 in the indoline benzene ring of the molecule in the a-direction, and the same N12 and H4 in the same ring of the molecule in the b-direction (both distances 2.72 Å, van der Waals distance 2.75 Å). This is consistent with the packing being largely determined by dispersion forces.

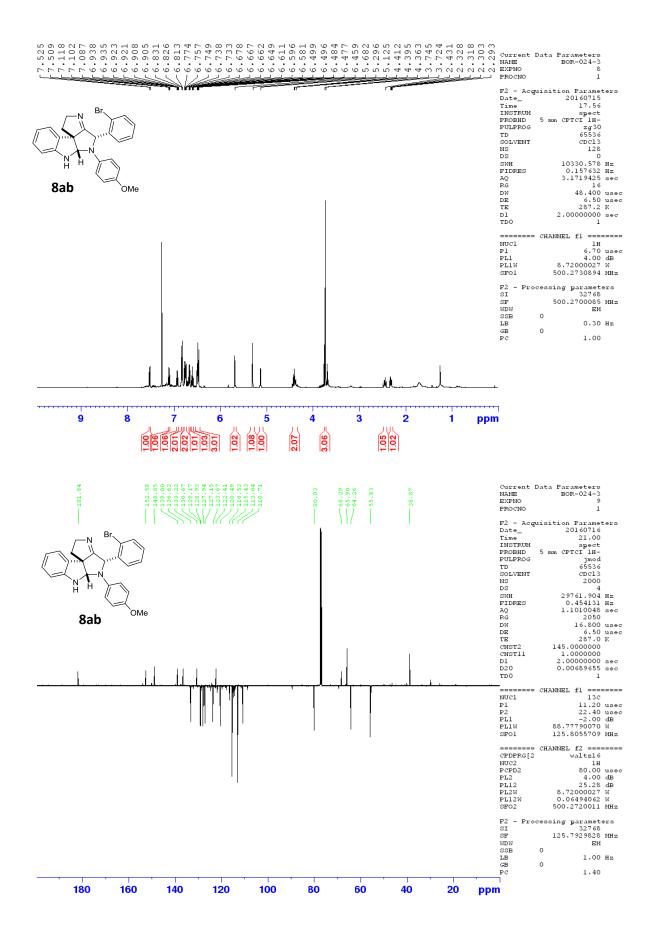
# **Copies of Spectra**

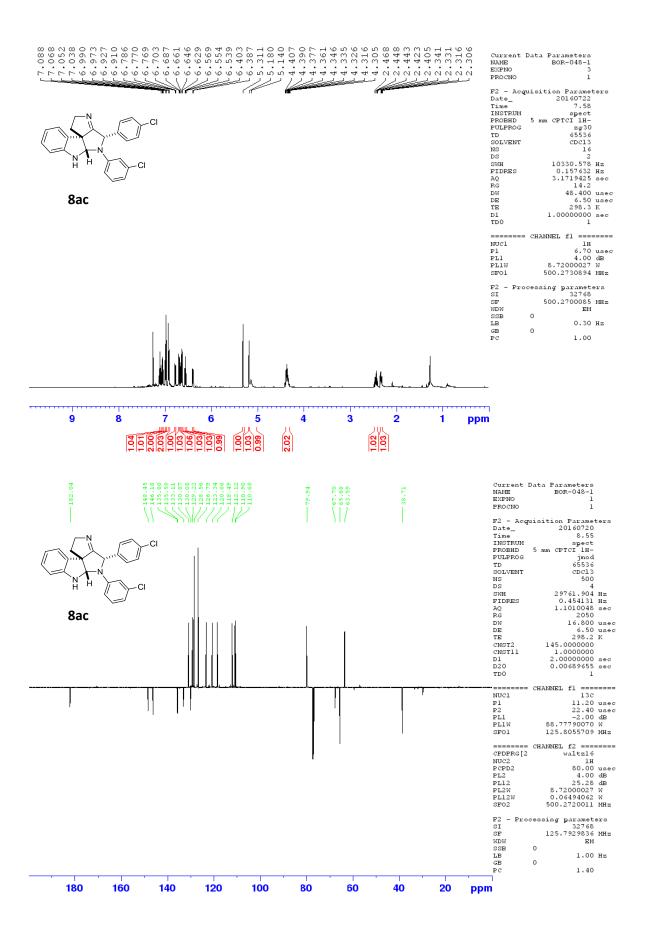


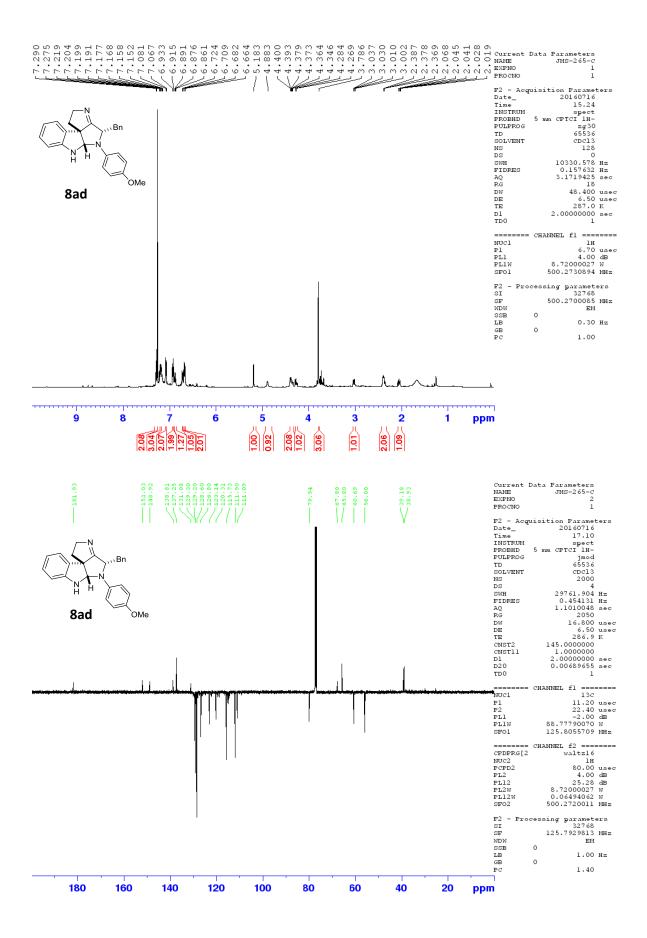


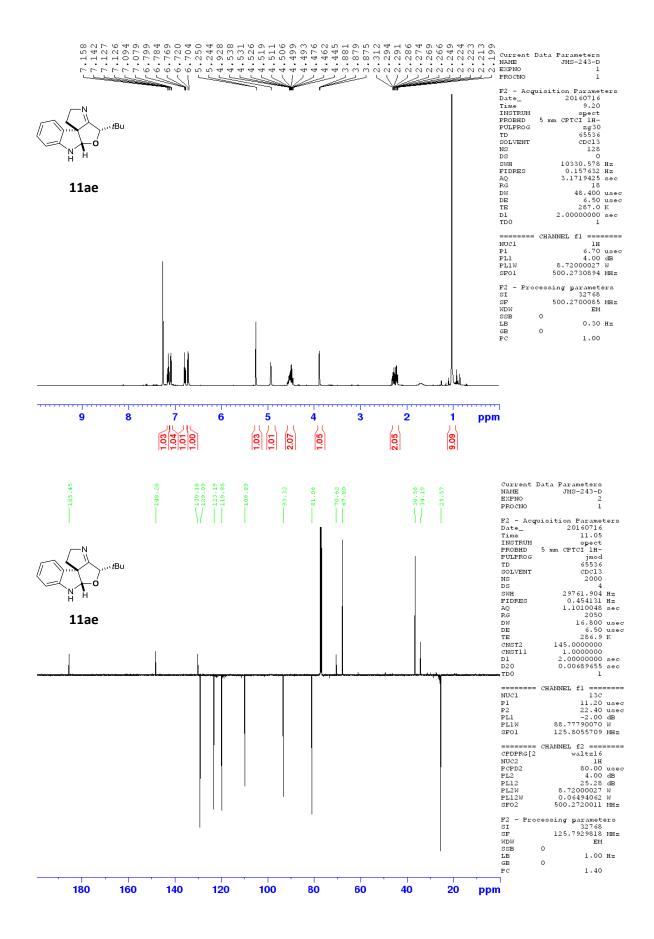


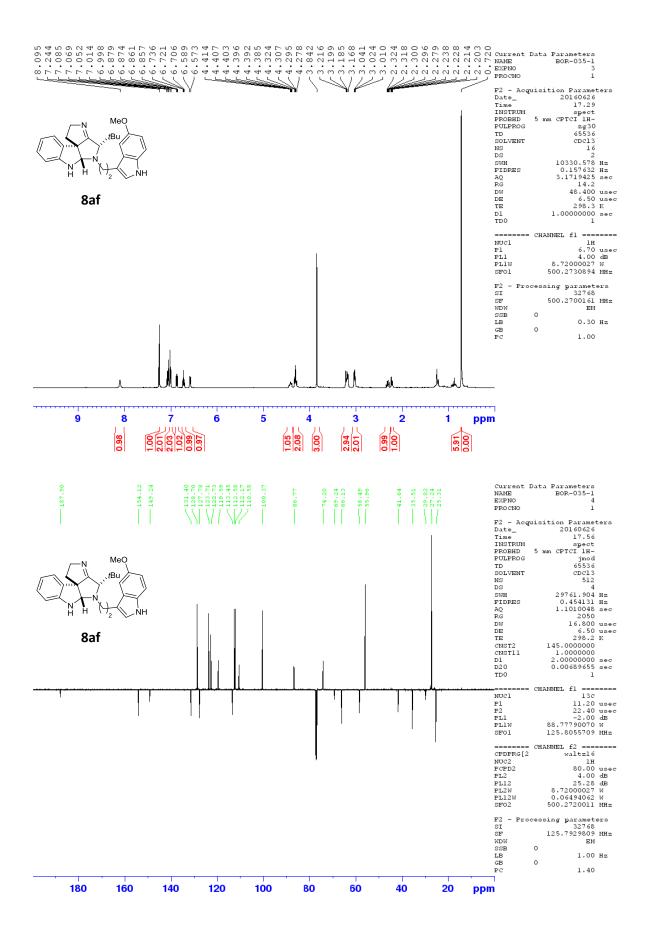


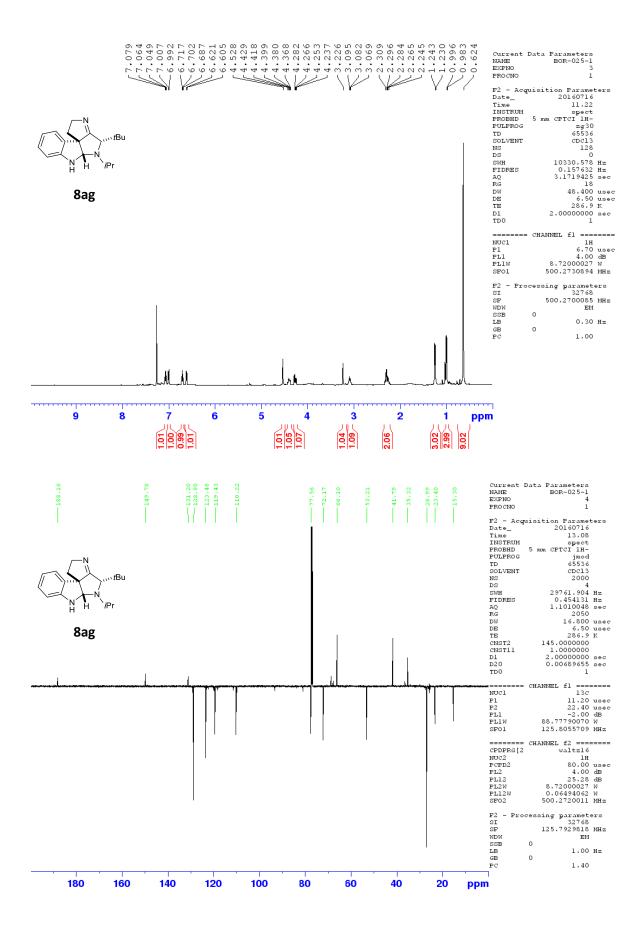


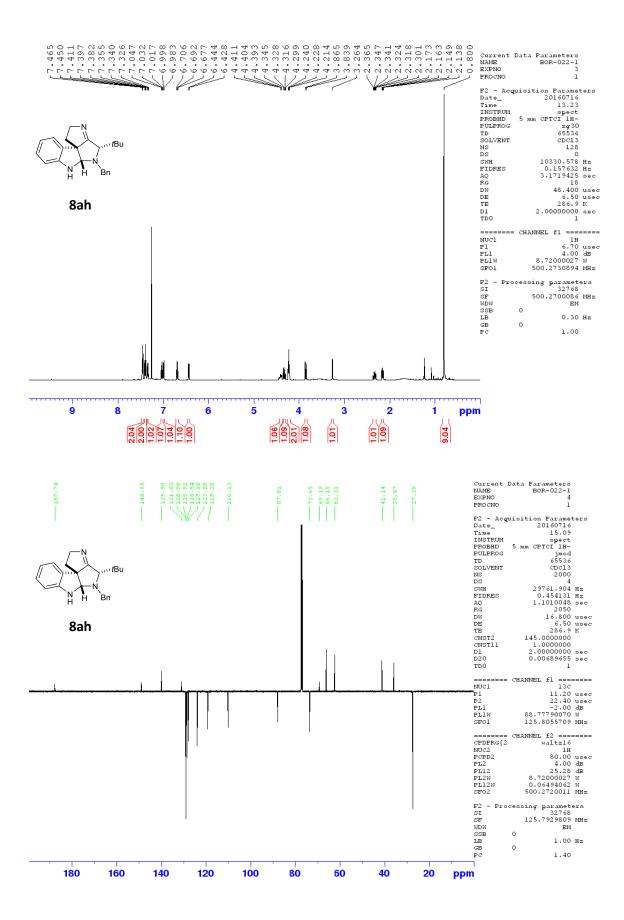


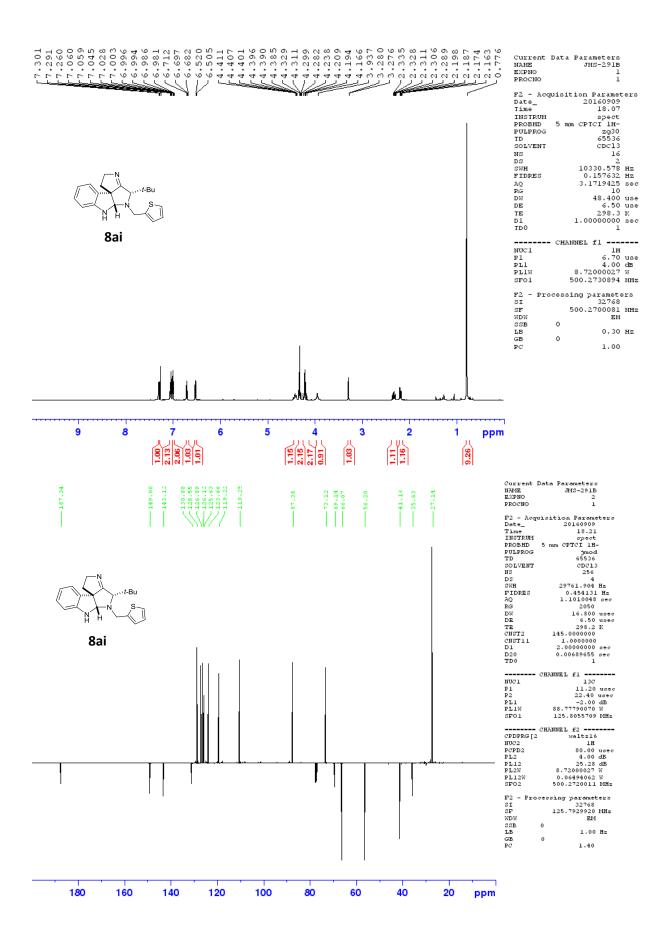


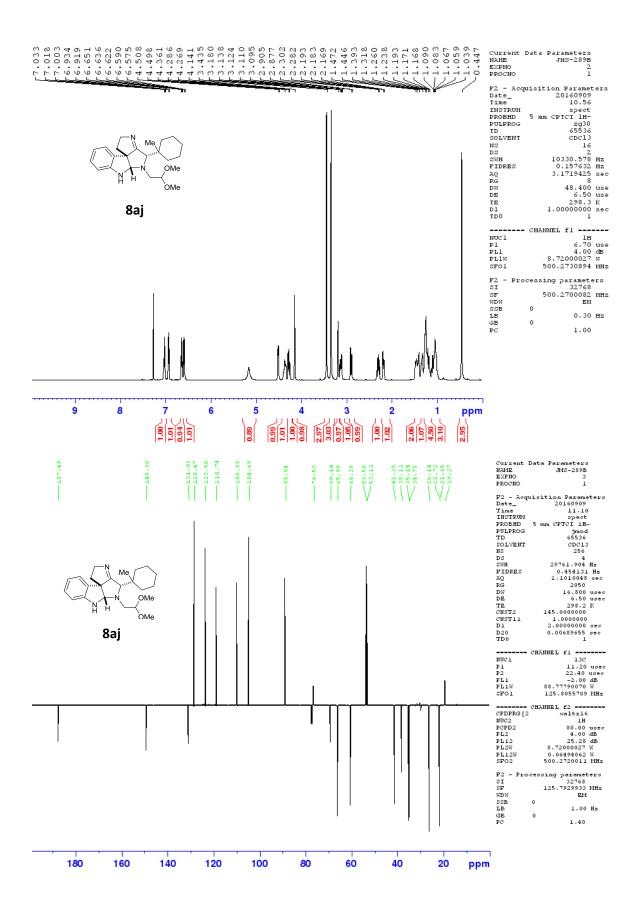


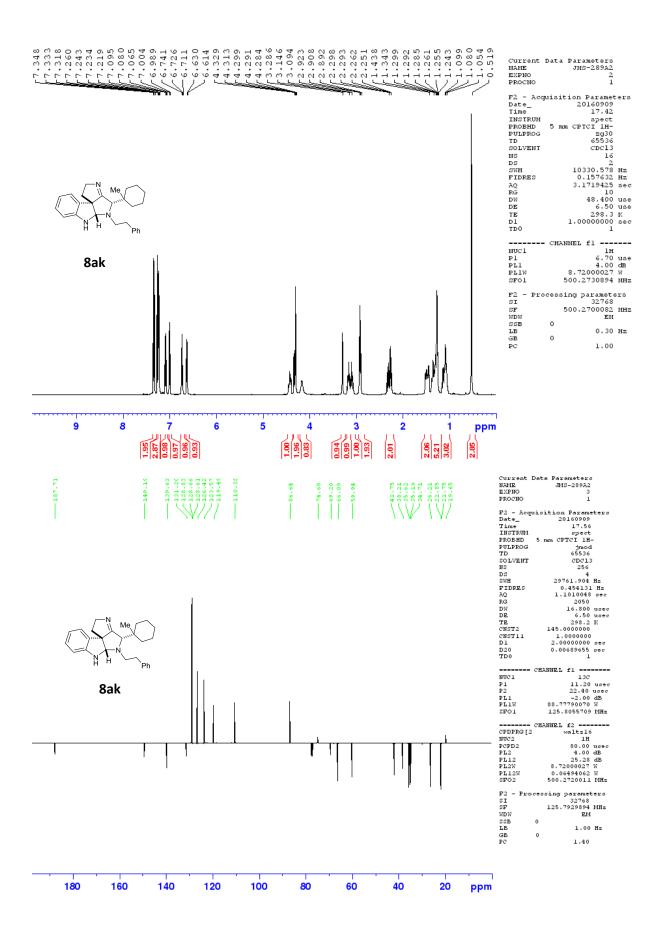


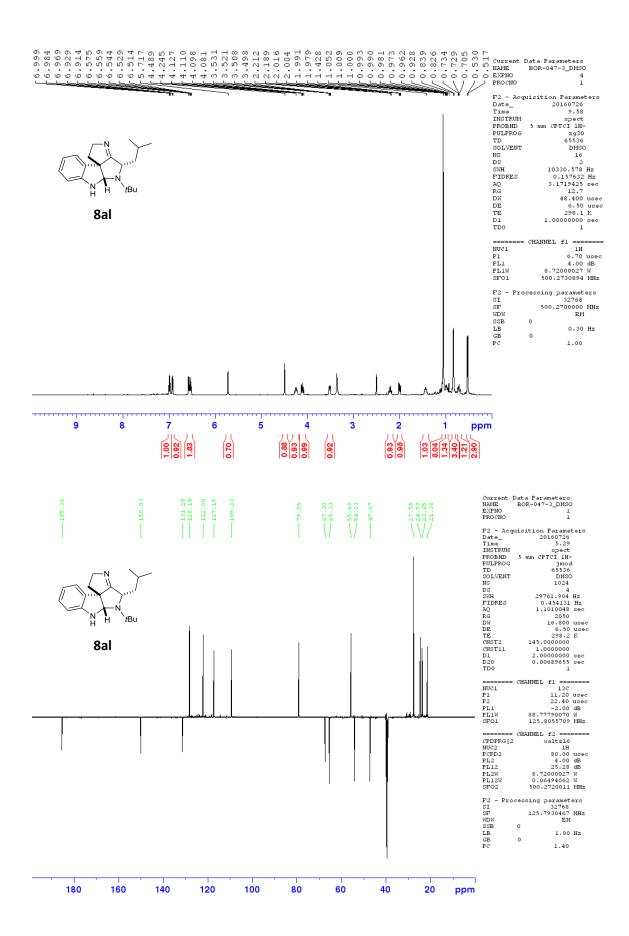


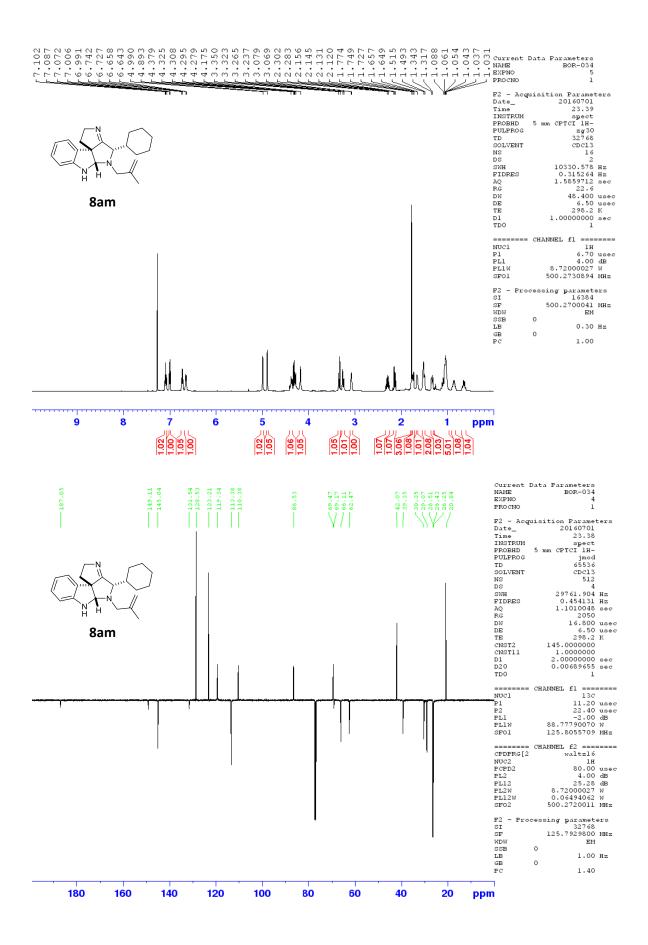


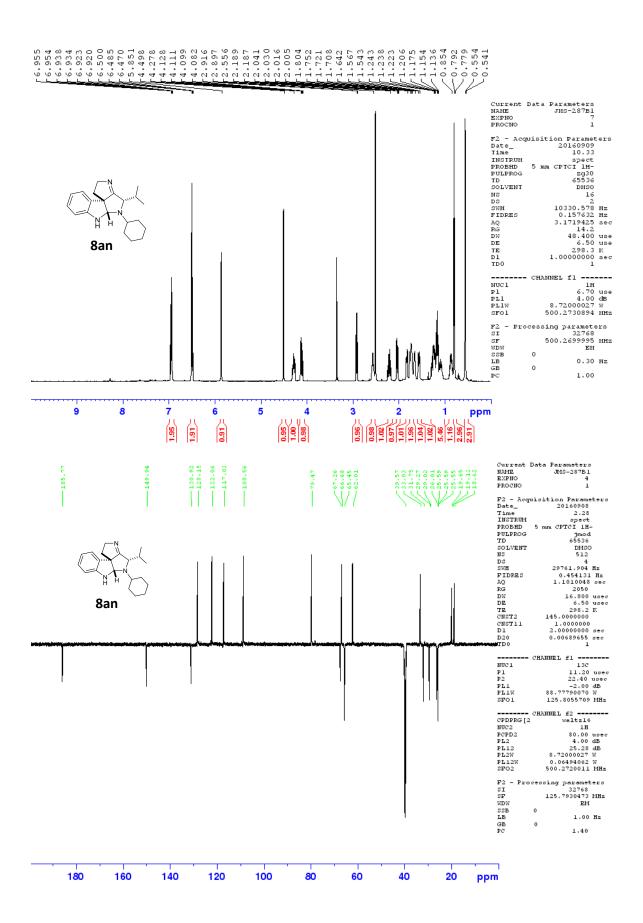


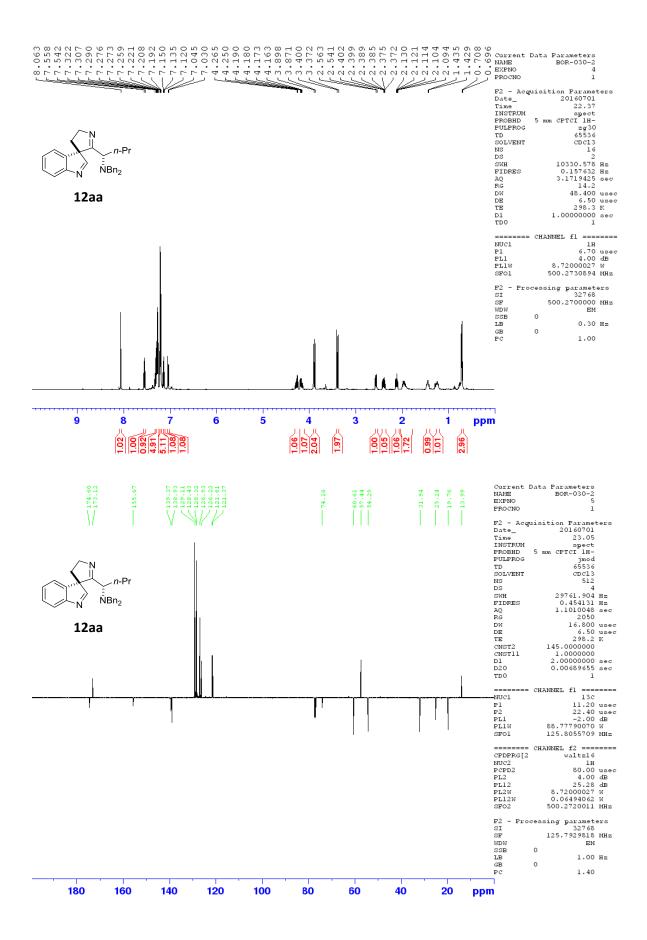


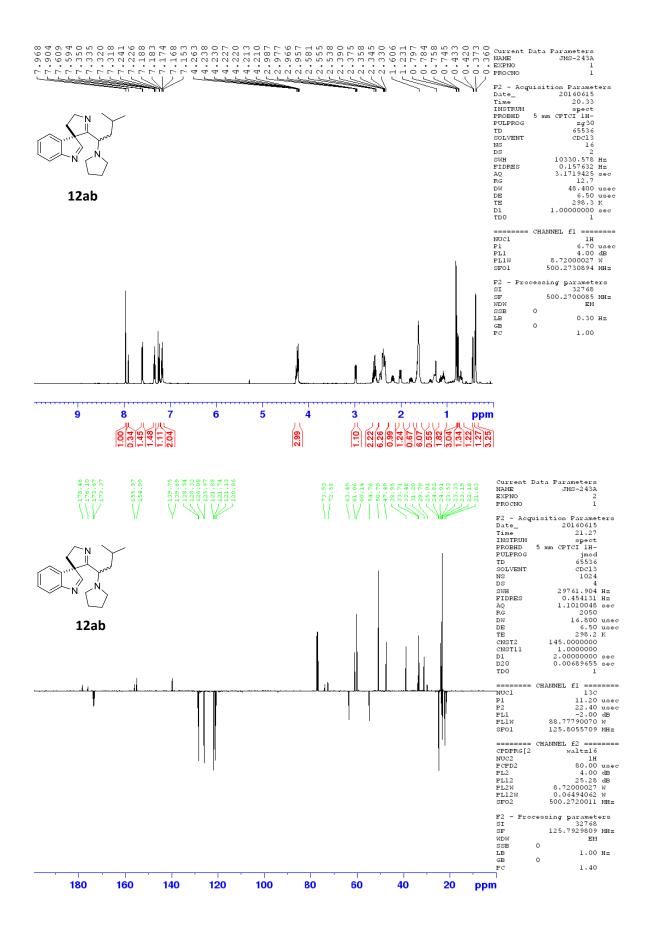


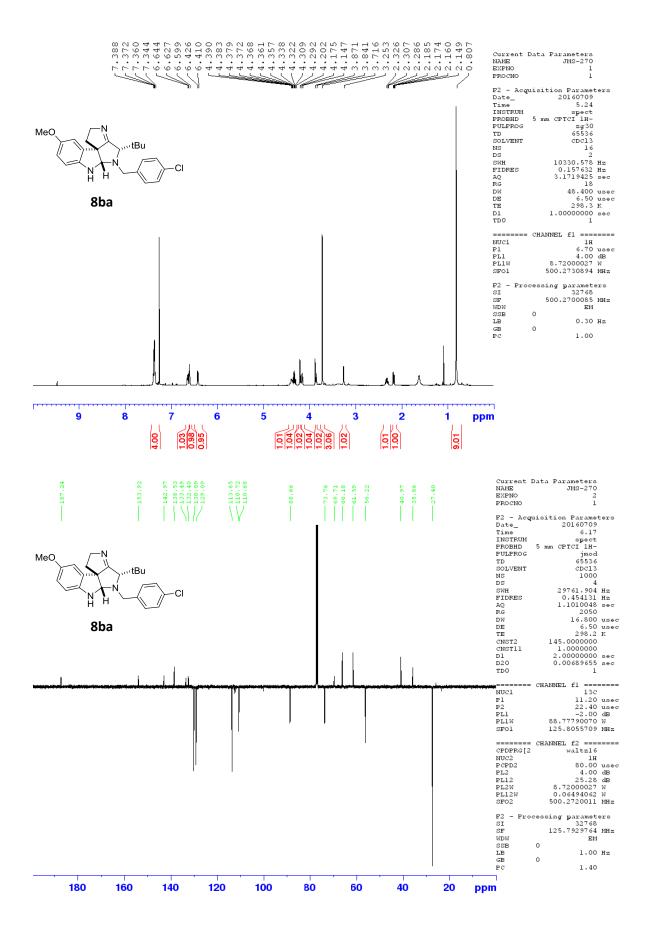


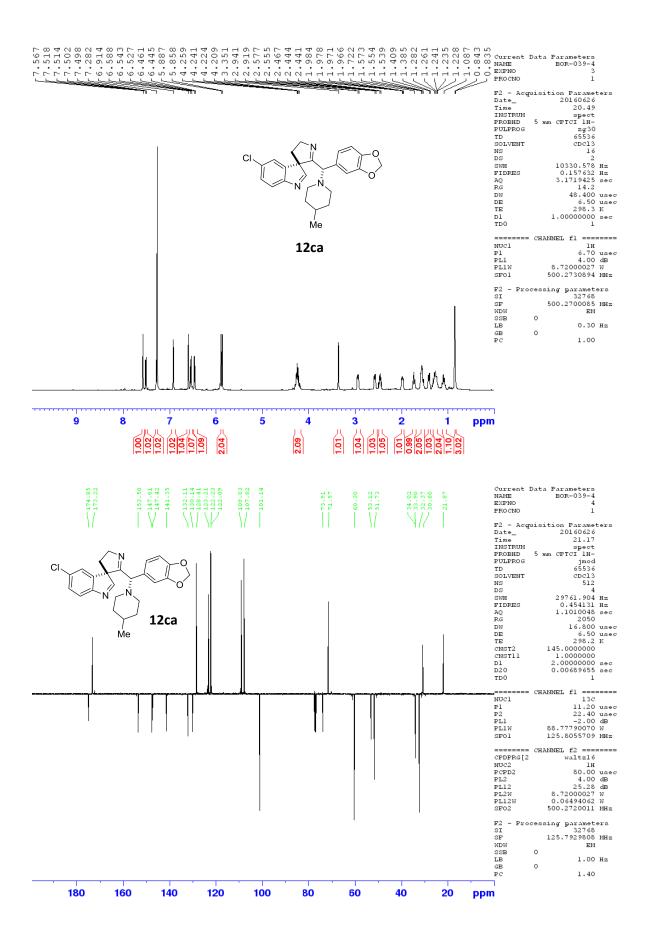


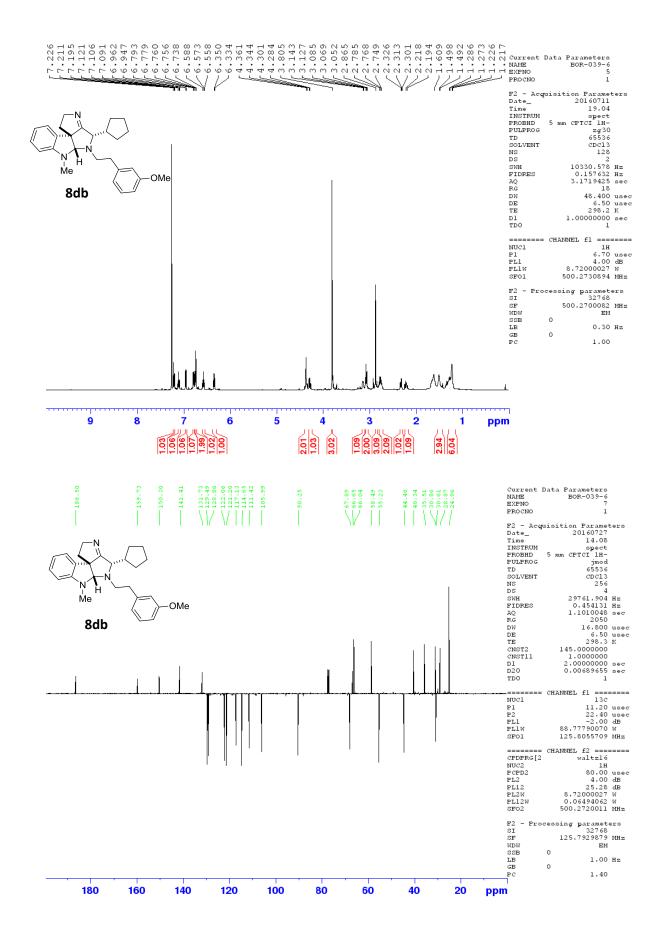


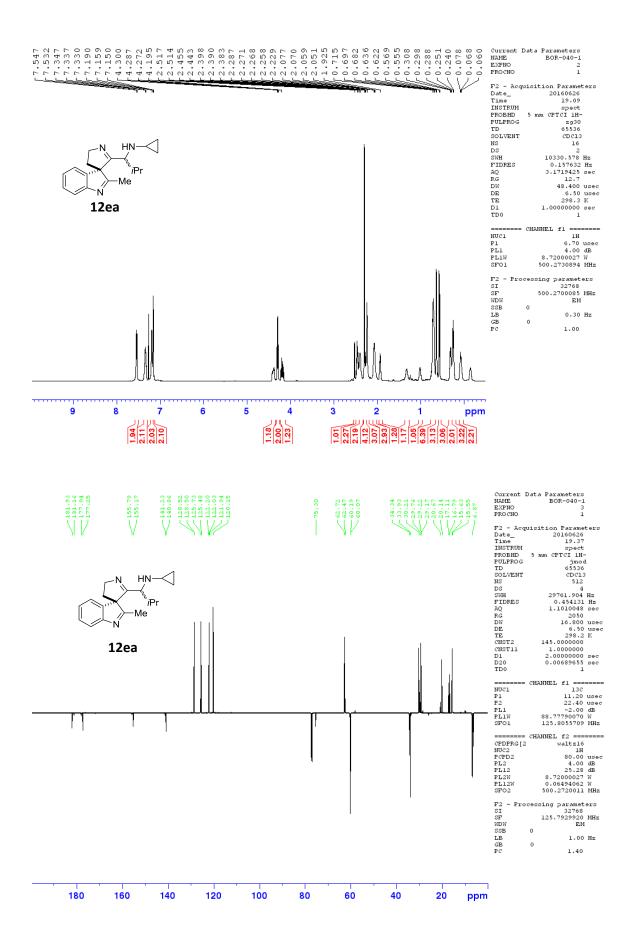


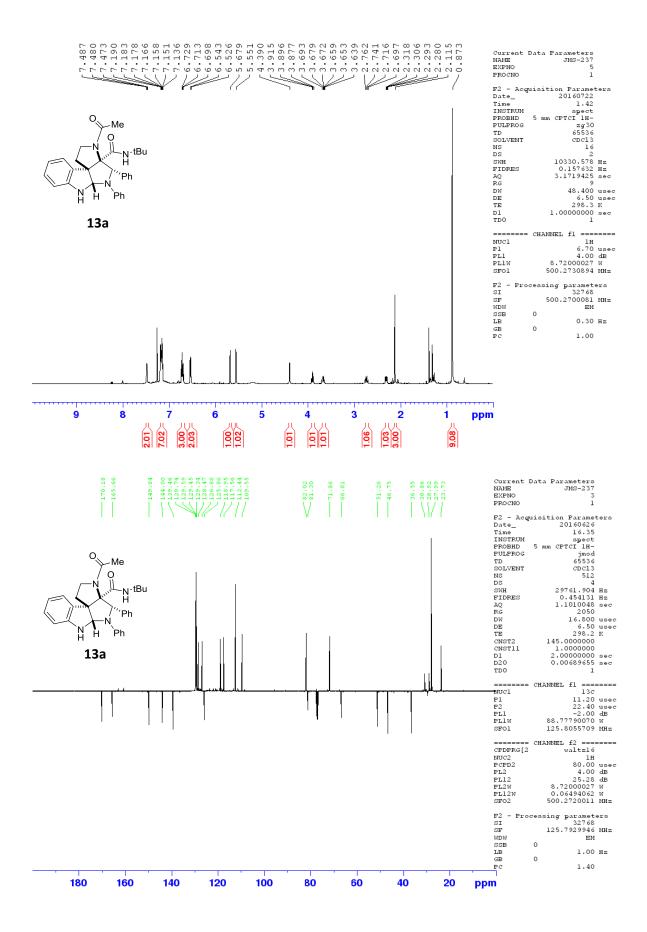


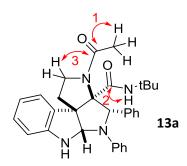


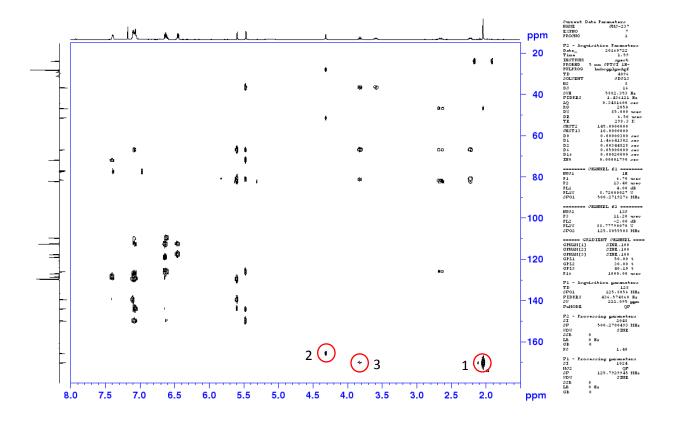


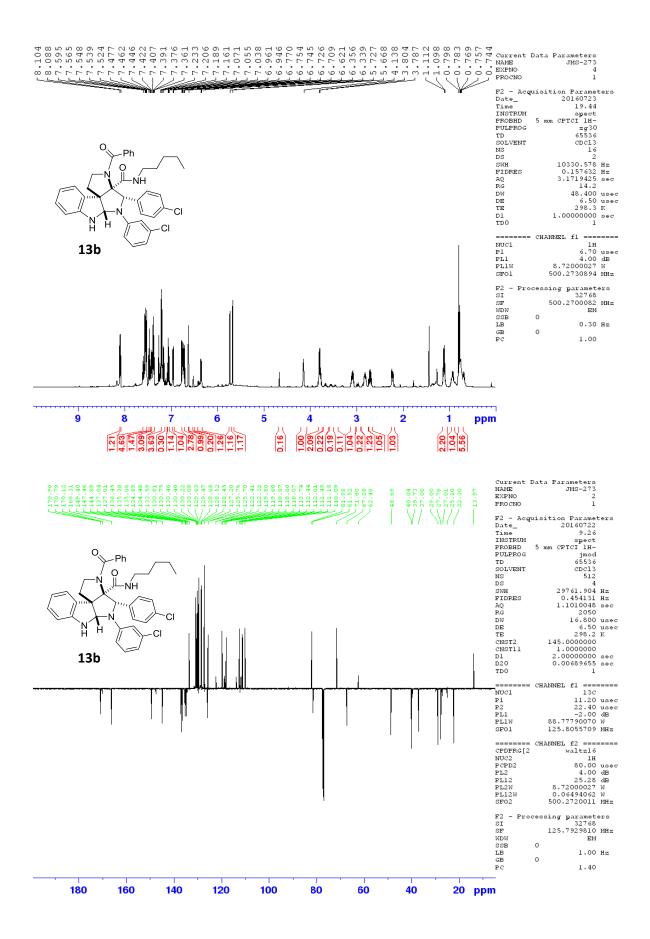












# References

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