Supporting Information for:

# Copper-Catalyzed Mannich-Type Oxidative β-Functionalization of Tertiary Amines

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# **1. General Information**

Unless otherwise noted, all solvents used in the reactions were distilled from appropriate drying agent prior to use.<sup>1</sup> Copper (II) chloride (Sigma-Aldrich) were used without further purification. Imines<sup>2-5</sup> and amines<sup>6-9</sup> were synthesized according to the literature procedures. Melting points were measured on a RY-I apparatus and uncorrected. <sup>1</sup>H NMR and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were recorded with a Brucker AV 400 spectrometer at 400 MHz (<sup>1</sup>H NMR) and 101 MHz (<sup>13</sup>C NMR). Chemical shifts for <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra were reported in ppm down field from internal Me<sub>4</sub>Si ( $\delta$  0.0) and relative to the signal of chloroform-*d* ( $\delta$  7.26, singlet). Chemical shifts for <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were reported in ppm relative to the signal of chloroform-*d* ( $\delta$  77.00, triplet). Multiplicities were given as: s (singlet); brs (broad singlet); d (doublet); t (triplet); q (quartet); dd (doublets of doublet); m (multiplets) and etc. HRMS were recorded on an IonSpec FT-ICR mass spectrometer with ESI resource. NMR yield was calculated by <sup>1</sup>H NMR of crude product using an internal standard (1,3,5-trimethoxylbenzene).

# 2. Optimization of the Reaction Conditions

Table S	1. Eva	luation	of	cata	lysts
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			1) 10 mol% <b>Catatyst</b>	
			2.5 equiv AcOO <sup>t</sup> Bu	NHTs
PhNFta	+	NTs 	4Å MS, DMSO, 25 °C, 4 h	Ph_N
1 1111212	·	H́Ph	2) 5.0 equiv HOAc	Et
			5.0 equiv NaBH(OAc) <sub>3</sub>	
1a		2a	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> , rt, 12 h	4a

entry	Catalyst	<b>4a</b> $(\%)^b$
1	CuCl <sub>2</sub>	68
2	CuCl	67
3	CuBr <sub>2</sub>	25
4	CuBr	24
5	CuI	trace
6	Cu(OAc) <sub>2</sub>	$ND^{c}$
7	Cu(OTf) <sub>2</sub>	$\mathbf{ND}^{c}$
8	Cu(acac) <sub>2</sub>	$ND^{c}$
9	FeCl <sub>3</sub>	$ND^{c}$

10	CoBr <sub>2</sub>	$ND^{c}$
11	NiCl <sub>2</sub>	$ND^{c}$

<sup>*a*</sup> Reaction conditions: **1a** (1.0 mmol, 5.0 equiv), **2a** (0.2 mmol, 1.0 equiv), metal catalyst (10 mol%), AcOO<sup>*t*</sup>Bu (2.5 equiv), 4Å MS (50 mg) and DMSO (2.0 mL) at 25 °C for 4 h; <sup>*b*</sup> Determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR using 1,3,5-trimethoxylbenzene as an internal standard; <sup>*c*</sup> ND = not detected.

# Table S2. Evaluation of Solvent<sup>a</sup>

PhNEt <sub>2</sub>	+	NTs ↓	1) 10 mol% CuCl₂ 2.5 equiv AcOO <sup>t</sup> Bu 4Å MS, <b>solvent</b> , 25 °C, 4 h	NHTs
		H´ `Ph	<ol> <li>5.0 equiv HOAc</li> <li>5.0 equiv NaBH(OAc)<sub>3</sub></li> </ol>	Ét
1a		2a	$CH_2Cl_2$ , rt, 12 h	4a

entry	solvent	<b>4a</b> $(\%)^b$
1	DMSO	68
2	DMF	18
3	THF	trace
4	1,4-dioxane	trace
5	DCM	$\mathbf{ND}^{c}$
6	DCE	$ND^{c}$
7	toluene	$\mathbf{ND}^{c}$

<sup>*a*</sup> Reaction conditions: **1a** (1.0 mmol, 5.0 equiv), **2a** (0.2 mmol, 1.0 equiv), CuCl<sub>2</sub> (10 mol%), AcOO'Bu (2.5 equiv), 4Å MS (50 mg) and solvent (2.0 mL) at 25 °C for 4 h; <sup>*b*</sup> Determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR using 1,3,5-trimethoxylbenzene as an internal standard; <sup>*c*</sup> ND = not detected.

# **3.** Typical Procedure for Oxidative β-Functionaliation of Amines

# 3.1 Typical Procedure for Oxidative β-Functionaliation of Acyclic Amines with Imines



CuCl<sub>2</sub> (1.4 mg, 0.01 mmol, 5 mol%), *N*-benzylidene-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (**2a**) (51.9 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4Å MS (50 mg) were introduced into an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. PhNEt<sub>2</sub> (**1a**) (255 uL, 1.6 mmol), DMSO (2 mL) and 50% AcOO<sup>*t*</sup>Bu (212 mg, 0.8

mmol) were successively added via syringes at room temperature, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 4 h. CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (1 mL), NaBH(OAc)<sub>3</sub> (212 mg, 1.0 mmol) and HOAc (60 uL, 1.0 mmol) were then added successively under argon atmosphere. After the mixture was stirred at room temperature for another 12 h, the mixture was diluted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, quenched with 1N NaOH and then extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> ( $3 \times 5$  mL). The combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. After the desiccant was filtered off, the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 5:1 to 3:1) to give **4a** as yellow oil.

3.2 Typical Procedure for Oxidative β-Functionaliation of Cyclic Amines with Imines



CuCl<sub>2</sub> (1.4 mg, 0.01 mmol, 5 mol%), *N*-benzylidene-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (**2a**) (51.9 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4Å MS (50 mg) were introduced into an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. *N*-phenyl piperidine **5a** (162 mg, 1.0 mmol), DMSO (2 mL) and 50% AcOO<sup>*t*</sup>Bu (132 mg, 0.5 mmol) were successively added via syringes at room temperature, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 12 h. Then the mixture was directly purified by column chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 5:1 to 3:1) to give **6a** as yellow oil.

3.3 Gram-Sacle Experiment for 4b



CuCl<sub>2</sub> (10.8 mg, 0.08 mmol, 2 mol%), *N*-(4-chlorobenzylidene)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (**2b**) (1.2 g, 4.0 mmol) and 4Å MS (1.0 g) were introduced into an oven-dried 250 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. PhNEt<sub>2</sub> (**1a**) (5.1 mL, 32.0 mmol), DMSO (40 mL) and 50% AcOO'Bu (4.2 g,

16.0 mmol) were successively added via syringes at room temperature, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 4 h. CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (20 mL), NaBH(OAc)<sub>3</sub> (4.2 g, 20.0 mmol) and HOAc (1.2 mL, 20 mmol) were then added successively under argon atmosphere. After the mixture was stirred at room temperature for another 12 h, the mixture was diluted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, quenched with 1N NaOH and then extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (3 × 30 mL). The combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. After the desiccant was filtered off, the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 5:1 to 3:1) to give **4b** as brown oil.

# 4. Analytical Data of Products

### *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4a)



1H), 3.33–3.20 (m, 3H), 3.16–3.06 (m, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.05–1.85 (m, 2H), 1.03 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 147.5, 142.9, 140.4, 137.4, 129.24, 129.20, 128.5, 127.4, 127.0, 126.4, 116.8, 113.5, 56.9, 47.1, 45.9, 34.5, 21.4, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 409.1950, Found: 409.1953.

### *N*-(1-(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4b)



6.61 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.15 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.36 (dd, J = 14.1, 7.3 Hz, 1H), 3.32–3.18 (m, 3H), 3.16–3.05 (m, 1H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.00–1.80 (m, 2H), 1.02 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.5, 143.2, 139.0, 137.3, 133.1, 129.3, 129.2, 128.5, 127.9, 126.9, 117.0, 113.7, 56.4, 47.1, 46.0, 34.3, 21.4, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>ClN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 443.1560, Found: 443.1562.

N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(4-fluorophenyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4c)

Ph NHTs Yellow oil, 69.1 mg, 81% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.48 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.18 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.11–6.99 (m, 4H), 6.83 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.72 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.61 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H),

5.99 (d, J = 7.1 Hz, 1H), 4.37 (q, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 3.33–3.16 (m, 3H), 3.16–3.03 (m, 1H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.02–1.80 (m, 2H), 1.02 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  162.0 (d,  $J_{CF} = 246.4$  Hz), 147.6, 143.1, 137.5, 136.4 (d,  $J_{CF} = 2.0$  Hz), 129.3, 129.2, 128.2 (d,  $J_{CF} = 8.1$  Hz), 127.0, 117.1, 115.2 (d,  $J_{CF} = 22.2$  Hz), 113.8, 56.3, 47.2, 46.0, 34.5, 21.4, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>FN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 427.1856, Found: 427.1857.

### N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)propyl)-4-

### methylbenzenesulfonamide (4d)

Ph NHTs Brown oil, 89.7 mg, 94% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.42 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.35 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.23–7.12 (m, 4H), 7.01 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 6.75 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.65 (d, J = 8.0 Hz,

2H), 6.23 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 4.47 (dd, J = 13.8, 7.3 Hz, 1H), 3.37–3.21 (m, 3H), 3.21– 3.07 (m, 1H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 2.02–1.82 (m, 2H), 1.03 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.5, 144.5, 143.3, 137.2, 129.5 (q,  $J_{CF} = 32.3$  Hz), 129.29, 129.26, 126.94, 126.93, 125.3 (q,  $J_{CF} = 3.4$  Hz), 123.9 (q,  $J_{CF} = 273.7$  Hz), 117.6, 114.3, 56.8, 47.3, 46.4, 34.3, 21.2, 11.7; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>28</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 477.1824, Found: 477.1822.

### *N*-(1-(4-bromophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4e)

NHTsBrown oil, 85.8 mg, 88% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 
$$\delta$$
 7.47 $Ph_{N_{Et}}$ (d,  $J = 8.3$  Hz, 2H), 7.24 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 7.19 (dd,  $J = 8.6$ , 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.07 (d,  $J = 8.1$  Hz, 2H), 6.92 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 6.72 (t,  $J = 7.3$ 

Hz, 1H), 6.61 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.16 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.35 (q, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 3.34–3.18 (m, 3H), 3.17–3.04 (m, 1H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 2.01–1.79 (m, 2H), 1.02 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.5, 143.2, 139.5, 137.3, 131.4, 129.3, 129.2, 128.3, 126.9, 121.2, 117.1, 113.8, 56.4, 47.1, 46.0, 34.2, 21.4, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 487.1055, Found: 487.1056.

# *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(p-tolyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4f)

Ph NHTs Brown oil, 59.2 mg, 70% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 
$$\delta$$
 7.48 (d,  $J = 8.2$  Hz, 2H), 7.18 (dd,  $J = 8.3$ , 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.07 (d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz, 2H), 6.95 (dd,  $J = 18.8$ , 8.0 Hz, 4H), 6.71 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 1H),

6.60 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 5.54–5.43 (m, 1H), 4.32 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 3.33–3.16 (m, 3H), 3.15–3.05 (m, 1H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.28 (s, 3H), 2.05–1.83 (m, 2H), 1.03 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.6, 142.9, 137.5, 137.4, 137.2, 129.24, 129.21, 129.1, 127.0, 126.4, 116.8, 113.6, 56.7, 47.2, 45.9, 34.4, 21.4, 21.0, 11.9; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 423.2106, Found: 423.2109.

# *N*-(1-(3-bromophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4g)

NHTsBrown oil, 88.7 mg, 91% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.46PhBrown oil, 88.7 mg, 91% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.46(d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 7.25–7.21 (m, 1H), 7.18 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.06(d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.03–7.00 (m, 2H), 6.71 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.61

(d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 6.11–5.95 (m, 1H), 4.33 (dd, J = 13.9, 7.4 Hz, 1H), 3.33–3.20 (m, 3H), 3.18– 3.06 (m, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.99–1.79 (m, 2H), 1.02 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.5, 143.2, 142.7, 137.2, 130.4, 130.0, 129.7, 129.3, 129.2, 126.9, 125.1, 122.4, 117.1, 113.8, 56.5, 47.2, 46.1, 34.4, 21.4, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 487.1055, Found: 487.1051.

### N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(m-tolyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4h)



6.60 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 5.48–5.37 (m, 1H), 4.32 (q, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 3.36–3.20 (m, 3H), 3.19–3.07 (m, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H), 2.06–1.85 (m, 2H), 1.05 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.7, 142.9, 140.3, 138.1, 137.6, 129.3, 129.2, 128.5, 128.2, 127.3, 127.1, 123.5, 116.9, 113.7, 57.0, 47.3, 46.0, 34.5, 21.4, 21.2, 11.9; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 423.2106, Found: 423.2105.

N-(1-(2-bromophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4i)

Ph NHTs Br Brown oil, 90.0 mg, 92% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 
$$\delta$$
 7.54 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.36 (dd, J = 7.9, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.23–7.14 (m, 3H), 7.13–7.02 (m, 3H), 6.99 (td, J = 7.9, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.66

(d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.19 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.81 (dd, J = 13.3, 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.39–3.24 (m, 3H), 3.24–3.13 (m, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.01–1.81 (m, 2H), 1.05 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.5, 143.1, 139.7, 136.9, 132.9, 129.24, 129.23, 128.6, 128.2, 127.5, 127.0, 122.2, 117.3, 114.1, 56.4, 47.3, 46.3, 33.5, 21.4, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 487.1055, Found: 487.1056.

### *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(o-tolyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4j)

 NHTsMe
 Brown oil, 62.5 mg, 74% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.47 (d, J

 Ph
  $\uparrow$  = 7.3 Hz, 2H), 7.17 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.07–6.92 (m, 6H), 6.69 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.59 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 5.69–5.54 (m, 1H), 4.67 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 1H

1H), 3.38–3.24 (m, 3H), 3.22–3.09 (m, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.15 (s, 3H), 1.98–1.85 (m, 2H), 1.05 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.6, 142.9, 138.7, 137.4, 134.6, 130.4, 129.19, 129.16, 127.1, 126.8, 126.3, 125.5, 116.8, 113.5, 52.6, 47.2, 46.0, 34.4, 21.4, 19.0, 11.9; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 423.2106, Found: 423.2103.

### *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(naphthalen-2-yl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4k)

Ph NHTs Brown oil, 67.4 mg, 81% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.79– 7.71 (m, 1H), 7.63 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.42 (dd, J = 15.1, 6.9 Hz, 5H), 7.18 (t, J = 7.9 Hz, 3H), 6.87 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 6.71 (t, J =

7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.63 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 5.82–5.68 (m, 1H), 4.55 (q, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 3.38–3.21 (m, 3H), 3.22–3.06 (m, 1H), 2.14 (s, 3H), 2.10–1.94 (m, 2H), 1.03 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.6, 142.9, 137.4, 137.3, 132.9, 132.7, 129.2, 129.1, 128.5, 127.8, 127.5, 127.0, 126.2, 126.0, 125.9, 123.9, 117.0, 113.8, 57.2, 47.3, 46.0, 34.3, 21.2, 11.9; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 459.2106, Found: 459.2108.



J = 5.8 Hz, 1H), 4.48 (dd, J = 15.3, 7.0 Hz, 1H), 3.36–3.25 (m, 3H), 3.23–3.11 (m, 1H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 2.03–1.95 (m, 2H), 1.06 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  152.7, 147.6, 143.1, 142.0, 137.5, 129.4, 129.3, 127.0, 116.8, 113.4, 110.2, 107.2, 50.4, 46.9, 46.0, 32.1, 21.5, 12.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 399.1742, Found: 399.1743.

#### N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(thiophen-2-yl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4m)

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Ph}_{N} \\ \text{Figure 1} \\ \text{Figure 2} \\ \text{Figure 2}$$

Hz, 1H), 4.69 (q, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 3.34–3.26 (m, 3H), 3.25–3.16 (m, 1H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 2.03 (q, J = 6.9 Hz, 2H), 1.05 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.6, 144.5, 143.2, 137.5, 129.4, 129.3, 127.0, 126.7, 125.1, 124.9, 117.1, 113.9, 52.5, 47.1, 46.2, 34.9, 21.5, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 415.1514, Found: 415.1508.

#### N-(1-cyclohexyl-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4n)

NHTs**3s**, yellow oil, 43.7 mg, 52% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.69Ph(d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.23 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 7.16 (t, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 6.66(t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.55 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 4.63 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 1H),

3.24–3.16 (m, 2H), 3.13–3.02 (m, 2H), 2.41 (s, 1H), 2.38 (s, 3H), 1.74–1.63 (m, 4H), 1.50 (d, J = 12.2 Hz, 2H), 1.38–1.27 (m, 2H), 1.09–1.05 (m, 2H), 1.01 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 0.96–0.81 (m, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.6, 143.2, 138.5, 129.6, 129.3, 127.0, 116.3, 112.8, 57.6, 47.4, 45.6, 41.9, 29.1, 28.62, 28.59, 26.3, 26.2, 26.1, 21.5, 12.1; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>35</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 415.2419, Found: 415.2418.

# N-(1-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)octan-3-yl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (40)



1H), 3.32–3.24 (m, 3H), 3.22–3.13 (m, 1H), 2.49–2.40 (m, 4H), 1.77–1.69 (m, 1H), 1.57–1.51 (m, 1H), 1.44–1.33 (m, 2H), 1.24–1.11 (m, 6H), 1.08 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 0.84 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.7, 143.3, 138.2, 129.6, 129.3, 127.0, 116.4, 113.0, 52.9, 46.9, 45.6, 35.4, 32.3, 31.5, 25.0, 22.4, 21.5, 13.9, 12.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>35</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 403.2419, Found: 403.2418.

### N-(3-(ethyl(4-methoxyphenyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4p)



Brown oil, 49.0 mg, 55% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.44 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.20–7.14 (m, 3H), 7.11–7.03 (m, 4H), 6.86–6.78 (m, 4H), 6.71 (d, *J* = 3.8 Hz, 1H), 4.41 (dd, *J* = 12.1,

6.0 Hz, 1H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.18–3.08 (m, 2H), 3.04 (t, J = 6.2 Hz, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.90–1.72 (m, 2H), 0.97 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  153.9, 142.7, 142.1, 140.9, 137.6, 129.2, 128.3, 127.2, 127.0, 126.5, 119.9, 114.6, 57.8, 55.6, 49.0, 48.8, 33.7, 21.4, 11.6; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 439.2055, Found: 439.2057.

### N-(3-((4-bromophenyl)(ethyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4q)

Br NHTs NHTs NHTs 7.49 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.18-7.12 (m, 3H), 7.09-6.96 (m, 6H), 6.49-6.40 (m, 2H), 5.65 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 4.34 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H)

1H), 3.30–3.15 (m, 3H), 3.14–3.00 (m, 1H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 2.06–1.80 (m, 2H), 1.00 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 146.2, 143.1, 140.3, 137.5, 129.3, 129.0, 128.6, 127.7, 127.0, 126.4, 121.5, 114.5, 56.8, 47.3, 46.0, 34.5, 21.5, 11.8; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 487.1055, Found: 487.1057.

N-(3-(ethyl(p-tolyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4r)



Brown oil, 64.4 mg, 76% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.46 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.20–7.13 (m, 3H), 7.11–6.97 (m, 6H), 6.60 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 6.03–5.89 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.39 (q,

J = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 3.30–3.12 (m, 3H), 3.12–3.02 (m, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.26 (s, 3H), 1.97–1.81 (m, 2H), 1.00 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  145.6, 142.8, 140.6, 137.5, 129.8, 129.2, 128.4, 127.3, 127.2, 127.0, 126.5, 115.4, 57.3, 47.6, 46.9, 34.2, 21.4, 20.3, 11.7; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 423.2106, Found: 423.2104.

### 4-methyl-N-(2-methyl-1-phenyl-3-(phenyl(propyl)amino)propyl)benzenesulfonamide (4s)



1H), 4.17–4.05 (m, 1H), 3.36–3.21 (m, 3H), 3.17–3.07 (m, 1H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 2.15–2.07 (m, 1H), 1.54– 1.46 (m, 2H), 0.88 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 0.65 (d, J = 6.7 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  148.4, 142.6, 139.7, 137.7, 129.3, 129.0, 128.1, 127.4, 127.3, 127.1, 118.9, 116.5, 64.3, 57.3, 56.1, 36.3, 21.4, 19.2, 15.8, 11.6; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>33</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 437.2263, Found: 437.2260. [for more polar diastereomer (major)] <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.43 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.21–7.17 (m, 2H), 7.12–7.09 (m, 3H), 7.01 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.94–6.89 (m, 2H), 6.72 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 6.62 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 5.55 (d, J = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 4.39 (dd, J = 9.0, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 3.29–3.23 (m, 2H), 3.18– 3.10 (m, 1H), 3.02–2.94 (m, 1H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 2.24–2.16 (m, 1H), 1.48 (dd, J = 14.8, 7.3 Hz, 2H), 0.87– 0.83 (m, 6H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  148.1, 142.8, 139.3, 137.6, 129.2, 128.1, 127.0, 127.0, 126.8, 117.2, 114.4, 60.6, 55.3, 54.6, 37.5, 21.4, 19.4, 13.7, 11.5; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>33</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 437.2263, Found: 437.2260.

**4-methyl-***N*-(**phenyl**(**1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl**)**methyl**)**benzenesulfonamide** (6a) NHTs Yellow solid, mp: 143–144 °C, 66.5 mg, 79% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.72 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.30–7.22 (m, 7H), 7.16 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 6.88 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.38 (s, 1H), 5.26 (dd, *J* = 13.1, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 5.01 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 3.38–3.27 (m, 1H), 3.25–3.14 (m, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.84–1.73 (m, 3H), 1.70–1.58 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  146.3, 143.1, 139.7, 137.7, 129.2, 129.1, 129.0, 128.3, 127.4, 127.2, 126.7, 119.7, 114.8, 109.4, 62.3, 44.8, 21.7, 21.4, 21.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 419.1793, Found: 419.1788.

### N-((4-bromophenyl)(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)-4-

# methylbenzenesulfonamide (6b)

Ρh

NHTs Yellow oil, 82.6 mg, 83% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.66 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.35 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.26–7.21 (m, 2H), 7.13 (dd, J = 13.5, 8.3 Hz, 4H), 6.87 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 6.31 (s, 1H), 5.33–5.17 (m, 1H), 4.92 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 3.35–3.25 (m, 1H), 3.24–

3.15 (m, 1H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.83–1.71 (m, 3H), 1.71–1.63 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  146.2, 143.3, 138.8, 137.5, 131.4, 129.31, 129.29, 129.2, 128.6, 127.4, 121.1, 119.9, 115.0, 108.8, 61.9, 44.8, 21.7, 21.4, 21.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>24</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M – H]<sup>+</sup>: 495.0742, Found: 495.0745.

### N-((4-fluorophenyl)(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)-4-

# methylbenzenesulfonamide (6c)



3.26 (m, 1H), 3.24–3.14 (m, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 1.83–1.71 (m, 3H), 1.70–1.65 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  161.9 (d,  $J_{CF}$  = 246.4 Hz), 146.2, 143.2, 137.6, 135.5 (d,  $J_{CF}$  = 3.0 Hz), 129.3, 129.19, 129.15, 128.5 (d,  $J_{CF}$  = 8.1 Hz), 127.4, 119.8, 115.1 (d,  $J_{CF}$  = 21.2 Hz), 114.9, 109.2, 61.7, 44.8, 21.7, 21.4, 21.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>26</sub>FN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 437.1699, Found: 437.1689.

# 4-methyl-*N*-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(p-tolyl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6d)



3.22–3.13 (m, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 1.80–1.69 (m, 3H), 1.66–1.60 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 146.4, 143.0, 137.8, 136.9, 136.7, 129.2, 129.1, 129.0, 128.9, 127.4, 126.7, 119.6, 114.9, 109.6, 62.1, 44.8, 26.9, 21.8, 21.4, 21.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M – H]<sup>+</sup>: 431.1793, Found: 431.1796.

# 4-methyl-*N*-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(m-tolyl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6e)



3H), 1.83–1.70 (m, 3H), 1.67–1.55 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  146.3, 143.0, 139.6, 137.9, 137.8, 129.2, 129.1, 128.8, 128.2, 127.9, 127.44, 127.41, 123.8, 119.6, 114.8, 109.6, 62.3, 44.7, 21.7, 21.4, 21.3, 21.0; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 433.1950, Found: 433.1939.

# 4-methyl-*N*-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(*o*-tolyl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6f)



1.77 (m, 3H), 1.74–1.64 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 146.4, 143.0, 137.8, 137.4, 135.4, 130.6, 129.3, 129.18, 129.15, 127.3, 127.1, 126.2, 125.8, 119.7, 115.0, 109.1, 58.8, 45.0, 22.3, 22.0, 21.5, 19.3; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 433.1950, Found: 433.1941.

# 4-methyl-N-(naphthalen-2-yl(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-

### yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6g)



467.1793, Found: 467.1796.

### 4-methyl-N-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(thiophen-2-

# yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6h)

NHTs Yellow oil, 43.3 mg, 51% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.72 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.29–7.26 (m, 2H), 7.19–7.15 (m, 3H), 6.91–6.86 (m, 3H), 6.80–6.76 (m, 2H), 6.48 (s, 1H), 5.23 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 5.06 (brs, 1H), 3.39–3.30 (m, 1H), 3.19–3.10 (m, 1H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.95–1.87 (m, 1H), 1.83–1.75 (m, 1H), 1.74–1.64 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  146.3, 144.9, 143.3, 137.8, 129.4, 129.3, 129.2, 127.5, 126.9, 125.0, 124.9, 120.0, 115.1, 108.9, 58.9, 44.9, 21.7, 21.5, 20.6; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 425.1357, Found: 425.1359.

# N-((1-(4-bromophenyl)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(phenyl)methyl)-4-

### methylbenzenesulfonamide (6i)

NHTsYellow solid, mp: 155–156 °C, 93.3 mg, 93% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz,CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.68 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 7.34–7.28 (m, 2H), 7.26–7.17 (m, 5H), 7.13(d, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 6.64–6.55 (m, 2H), 6.31 (s, 1H), 5.27 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 1H),4.97 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 3.31–3.20 (m, 1H), 3.20–3.08 (m, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H),1.82–1.71 (m, 3H), 1.69–1.58 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  145.3,

143.1, 139.5, 137.7, 131.9, 129.3, 128.4, 128.2, 127.4, 127.3, 126.7, 116.3, 111.7, 110.7, 62.2, 44.8,

21.7, 21.4, 21.1; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>26</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M – H]<sup>+</sup>: 497.0898, Found: 497.0898.

# 4-methyl-*N*-(phenyl(1-(p-tolyl)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6j)



21.1, 20.4; ESI-HRMS calcd for  $[C_{26}H_{29}N_2O_2S, M + H]^+$ : 433.1950, Found: 433.1948.

# 4-methyl-*N*-(phenyl(1-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-azepin-3-yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6k)



Yellow oil, 60.6 mg, 70% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.73 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.29–7.20 (m, 9H), 6.81 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.69 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 6.21 (s, 1H), 5.11–5.02 (m, 1H), 4.99 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 3.60–3.45 (m, 2H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 1.94 (t, *J* = 5.7 Hz, 2H), 1.70–1.64 (m, 2H), 1.48–1.37 (m,

2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 146.1, 143.3, 139.9, 137.7, 133.6, 129.5, 129.2, 128.5, 127.4, 127.3, 126.7, 122.5, 118.8, 113.9, 62.9, 48.0, 27.3, 26.7, 23.9, 21.5; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 433.1950, Found: 433.1948.

# 5. Transformations of the products

 $N^1$ -ethyl- $N^1$ ,3-diphenylpropane-1,3-diamine (7)



Sodium metal (22.3 mg, 0.97 mmol) and dry degassed THF (2 mL) was added into an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. Then a solution of naphthalene in dry THF (0.5 mL) was added. After the mixture was stirred for approximately 1 hour at room temperature, formation of the naphthalene anion radical was indicated by the intense green color observed. At this time, a solution of *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (**4a**, 99.4 mg, 0.24 mmol) in dry THF (0.5 mL) was added and the mixture was stirred for another 8 hours at room temperature. The mixture was quenched by addition of a small amount of water and dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. After removal of solvent under reduced pressure, the crude product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/MeOH = 20:1) to give **7** as light yellow oil, 56.0 mg, 91% yield. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.38–7.29 (m, 4H), 7.30–7.23 (m, 1H), 7.21–7.13 (m, 2H), 6.66–6.57 (m, 3H), 3.95 (t, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 3.38–3.25 (m, 3H), 3.24–3.13 (m, 1H), 2.15 (brs, 2H), 2.02–1.92 (m, 2H), 1.09 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  147.8, 145.6, 129.2, 128.6, 127.3, 126.2, 115.6, 112.1, 54.5, 47.5, 44.9, 36.3, 12.2; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>2</sub>, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 255.1861, Found: 255.1856.

# N-(3-(ethylamino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (8)



To *N*-(3-(ethyl(4-methoxyphenyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide **4p** (46.3 mg, 0.11 mmol) in acetonitrile/water (1:1, 2 mL) at 0 °C was added a solution of ceric ammonium nitrate (179 mg, 0.33 mmol) in acetonitrile/water (1:1, 2 mL) and the mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 5 min. After completion of the reaction, the mixture was diluted with water (10 mL) and ethyl acetate (10 mL). The aqueous phase was extracted with ethyl acetate (3 × 10 mL), diluted with

saturated sodium bicarbonate solution (10 mL) and further extracted with ethyl acetate (2 × 10 mL). The combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous MgSO<sub>4</sub>, concentrated under reduced pressure and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/MeOH = 10:1) to give **8** as brown oil, 27.8 mg, 80% yield. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.43 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.09–6.98 (m, 5H), 6.95 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 6.79 (brs, 2H), 4.49–4.38 (m, 1H), 3.23–3.11 (m, 1H), 3.04–2.88 (m, 3H), 2.46–2.33 (m, 1H), 2.30–2.18 (m, 4H), 1.28 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  142.7, 139.3, 137.4, 129.1, 128.4, 127.4, 126.9, 126.5, 56.6, 45.2, 43.5, 33.5, 21.3, 11.3; ESI-HRMS calcd for [C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, M + H]<sup>+</sup>: 333.1637, Found: 333.1636.

# N-(1-(4-chlorophenyl)-3-oxopropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (9)



CuCl<sub>2</sub> (1.4 mg, 0.01 mmol, 5 mol%), *N*-benzylidene-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (**2a**) (51.9 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4Å MS (50 mg) were introduced into an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. PhNEt<sub>2</sub> (**1a**) (255 uL, 1.6 mmol), DMSO (2 mL) and 50% AcOO'Bu (212 mg, 0.8 mmol) were successively added via syringes at room temperature, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 4 h. CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (1 mL) and 3N HCl (~ 0.5 mL) were added and the mixture was stirred for about 5 min at 25 °C. The mixture was diluted with water (3 mL) and CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (3 mL), and the aqueous phase was separated and extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (2 × 5 mL). The combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, concentrated under reduced pressure and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 3:1 to 2:1) to give **9** as brown oil, 37.8 mg, 56% yield. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  9.63 (s, 1H), 7.61–7.54 (m, 2H), 7.20–7.13 (m, 5H), 7.09–7.02 (m, 2H), 5.45 (brs, 1H), 4.80 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 3.06–2.97 (m, 1H), 2.94–2.83 (m, 1H), 2.37 (s, 3H).

### Typical procedure for producing $E - \alpha, \beta$ -unsaturated aldehydes (10)



CuCl<sub>2</sub> (1.4 mg, 0.01 mmol, 5 mol%), *N*-benzylidene-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (**2a**) (51.9 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4Å MS (50 mg) were introduced into an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. PhNEt<sub>2</sub> (**1a**) (255 uL, 1.6 mmol), DMSO (2 mL) and 50% AcOO'Bu (212 mg, 0.8 mmol) were successively added via syringes at room temperature, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 4 h. Then 3 mL water was added into the mixture and the mixture was stirred at 80 °C for about 10 hours. After completion of the reaction, the mixture was cooled to room temperature and extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (3 × 5 mL). The combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, concentrated under reduced pressure and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 20:1) to give **10**.

### Cinnamaldehyde (10a)



6.73 (dd, J = 16.0, 8.0 Hz, 1H).

# (E)-3-(4-chlorophenyl)acrylaldehyde (10b)

CHO Yellow solid, 26.9 mg, 81% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 9.70
 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.55–7.35 (m, 5H), 6.69 (dd, J = 16.0, 7.6 Hz, 1H).

# (E)-3-(p-tolyl)acrylaldehyde (10c)



Yellow solid, 17.8 mg, 67% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 9.69 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.54–7.41 (m, 3H), 7.29–7.21 (m, 2H), 6.99 (dd, J = 15.9, 7.8 Hz, 1H), 2.39 (s, 3H).

# (E)-3-(naphthalen-2-yl)acrylaldehyde (10d)



Yellow solid, 30.2 mg, 83% yield, <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  9.77 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.00 (s, 1H), 7.93–7.83 (m, 3H), 7.72–7.61 (m, 2H),

7.59–7.51 (m, 3H), 6.84 (dd, J = 15.9, 7.7 Hz, 1H).

# 6. The <sup>1</sup>H NMR Spectra Evidence of the Enamine Intermediates



CuCl<sub>2</sub> (1.4 mg, 0.01 mmol), 4-methyl-*N*-(naphthalen-2-ylmethylene)benzenesulfonamide (**2k**) (61.9 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4Å MS (50 mg) were introduced into an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk tube under argon atmosphere. PhNEt<sub>2</sub> (**1a**) (225 uL, 1.6 mmol), DMSO (2 mL) and 50% AcOO'Bu (212 mg, 0.8 mmol) were successively added via syringes at room temperature. A little amount of the mixture was taken out intermediately via syringe and monitored by <sup>1</sup>H NMR in CDCl<sub>3</sub> (Figure S1, a). After stirring at 25 °C under argon atmosphere for 4 hours, a little amount of the mixture was taken out again via syringe and monitored by <sup>1</sup>H NMR in CDCl<sub>3</sub> (Figure S1, b). Then the reaction mixture was stirred in air for another 10 hours. A little amount of the mixture was taken out at this time and monitored by <sup>1</sup>H NMR in CDCl<sub>3</sub> (Figure S1, c).



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**Figure S1**. The <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra evidence of the enamine intermediates. a) after 0 hour; b) after 4 hours, signals of enamine intermediate  $4\mathbf{k}$  can be observed; c) after 14 hours, signals of enamine intermediate  $4\mathbf{k}$  were disappeared due to hydrolysis in air.

# 8. NMR Spectra of Products

N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4a)





N-(1-(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4b)



N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(4-fluorophenyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4c)

# N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)propyl)-4-

methylbenzenesulfonamide (4d)





### N-(1-(4-bromophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4e)



# *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(p-tolyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4f)



N-(1-(3-bromophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4g)



# *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(m-tolyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4h)



# N-(1-(2-bromophenyl)-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4i)



# N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(o-tolyl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4j)



# N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(naphthalen-2-yl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4k)



# *N*-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(furan-2-yl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4l)



N-(3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)-1-(thiophen-2-yl)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4m)



# N-(1-cyclohexyl-3-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)propyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4n)



### N-(1-(ethyl(phenyl)amino)octan-3-yl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (40)



N-(3-(ethyl(4-methoxyphenyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4p)



*N*-(3-((4-bromophenyl)(ethyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4q)



# N-(3-(ethyl(p-tolyl)amino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (4r)



# 4-methyl-N-(2-methyl-1-phenyl-3-(phenyl(propyl)amino)propyl)benzenesulfonamide (4s)





4-methyl-N-(phenyl(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6a)

# N-((4-bromophenyl)(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)-4-





# N-((4-fluorophenyl)(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)-4-

methylbenzenesulfonamide (6c)





4-methyl-N-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(p-tolyl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide

(6d)



(6e)



 $\label{eq:linear} 4-methyl-N-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(o-tolyl) methyl) benzenesulfon a mide (1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(o-tolyl) methyl benzenesulfon a mide (1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(0-tolyl) methyl benzenesulfon a mide (1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydr$ 

(**6f**)



# 4-methyl-N-(naphthalen-2-yl(1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-

yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6g)



# 4-methyl-N-((1-phenyl-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(thiophen-2-

# yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide (6h)



# N-((1-(4-bromophenyl)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)(phenyl)methyl)-4-

methylbenzenesulfonamide (6i)



# 4-methyl-N-(phenyl(1-(p-tolyl)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydropyridin-3-yl)methyl)benzenesulfonamide

(6j)



 $\label{eq:linear} 4-methyl-\textit{N-(phenyl(1-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-azepin-3-yl)} methyl) benzene sulfon a mide a start of the second start of$ 

(6k)





# $N^1$ -ethyl- $N^1$ ,3-diphenylpropane-1,3-diamine (7)



# N-(3-(ethylamino)-1-phenylpropyl)-4-methylbenzenesulfonamide (8)

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