

**Supporting Information**

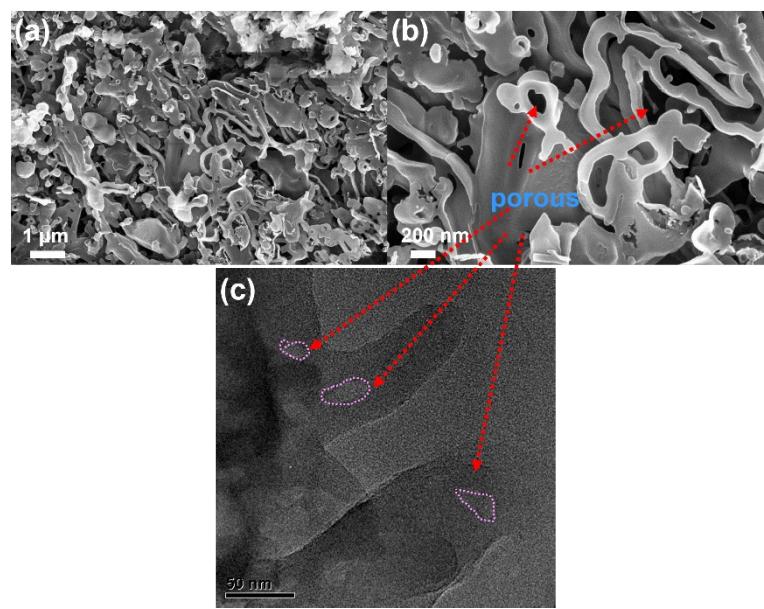
A gradual carbon doping graphitic carbon nitride towards  
the metal-free visible light photocatalytic hydrogen  
evolution

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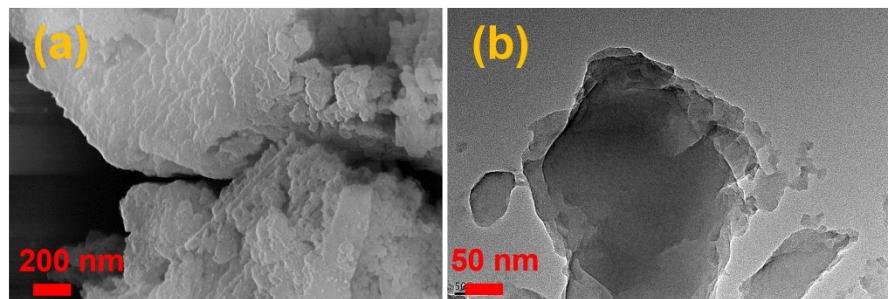
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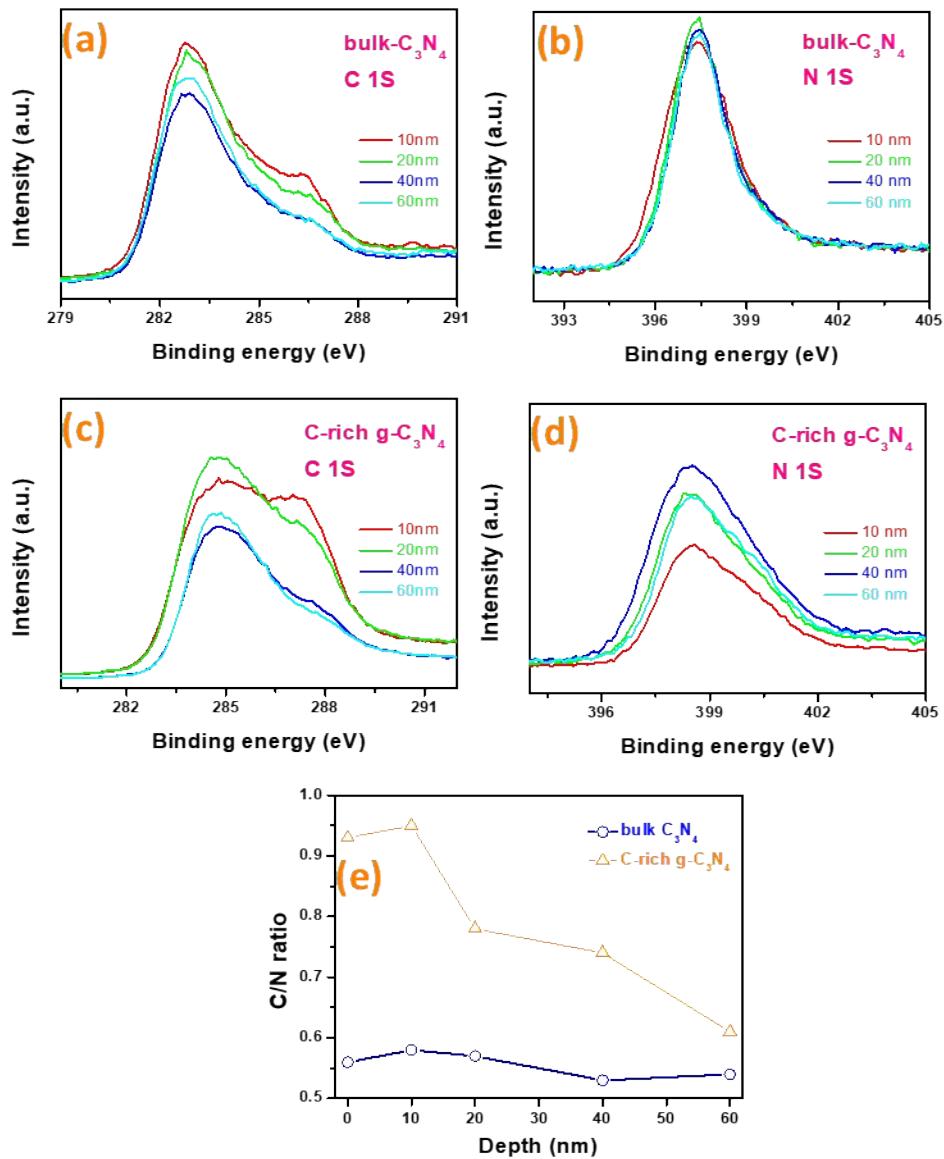
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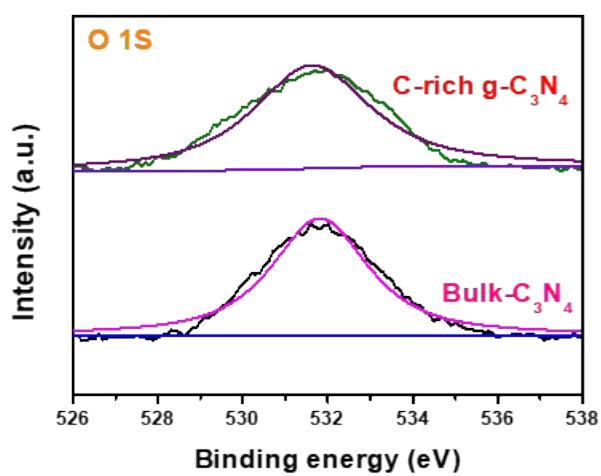
**Figure S1.** SEM (a, b) and TEM (c) images of C-rich g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>.



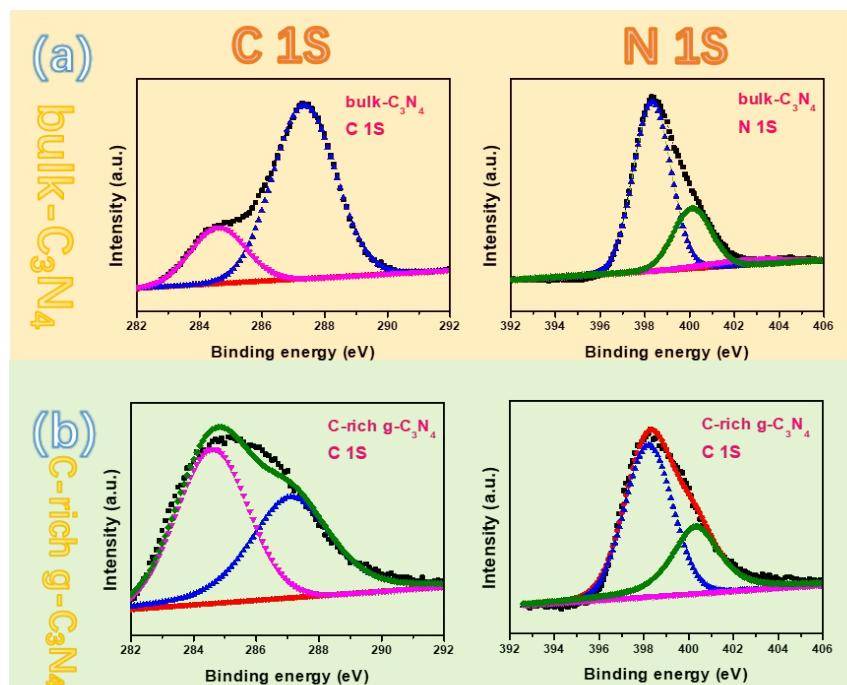
**Figure S2.** (a) SEM and (b) TEM images of bulk-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>.



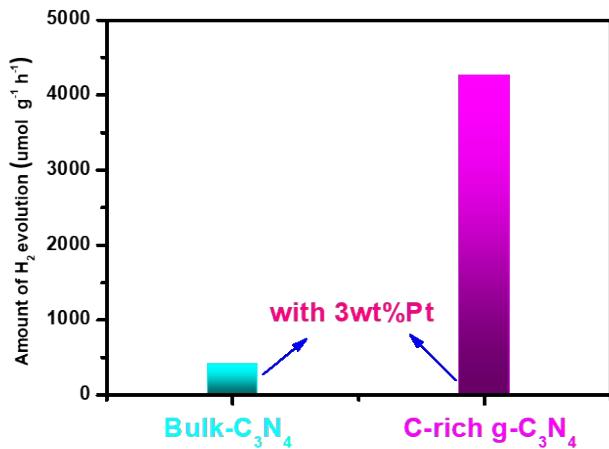
**Figure S3.** XPS signals with different depth of C 1s (a), N 1s (b) for bulk-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>, C 1s (c), N 1s (d) for C-rich g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> and Diagram of the variation with depth of the C/N ratio for both samples.



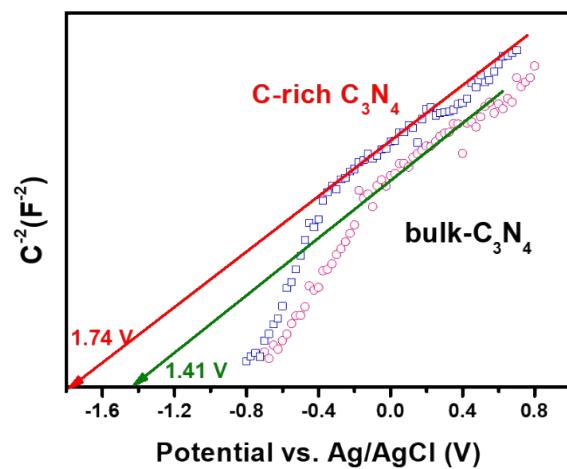
**Figure S4.** XPS spectra of O 1s for bulk-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> and C-rich g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> photocatalysts.



**Figure S5.** XPS spectra of C 1s and N 1s of (a) bulk- $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$  and (b) C-rich  $\text{g-C}_3\text{N}_4$  photocatalysts.



**Figure S6.** H<sub>2</sub> generation rate over bulk-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> and C-rich g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> with 3wt% Pt as co-catalyst (300-W Xe lamp, 35 ml aqueous triethanolamine solution (10 vol %).



**Figure S7.** Mott-Schottky plots of bulk- $C_3N_4$  and C-rich g- $C_3N_4$  in 0.2 M  $Na_2SO_4$  aqueous solution.

**Table S1.** Recently published g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> based materials towards noble metal free photocatalytic hydrogen generation.

catalysts	Light source	Conditions	Hydrogen generate rate ( $\mu\text{mol h}^{-1} \text{g}^{-1}$ ) <sup>1)</sup>	Reference
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -10% Cu <sub>3</sub> P	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	17 vol% triethanolamine	159.41	[1]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -2% acetylene - 2%CuS	350W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	348	[2]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -2% Co <sub>2</sub> P	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	17 vol% triethanolamine	128.4	[3]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -5% H-MoSe	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	136.8	[4]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -3% Co <sub>2</sub> P	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	53.3	[5]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -3.5% Ni <sub>2</sub> P	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	474.7	[6]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -5% Ni <sub>12</sub> P <sub>5</sub>	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	535.7	[7]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -0.01% WS <sub>2</sub>	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	101	[8]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -3.5% Ni <sub>3</sub> P	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 400 \text{ nm}$ )	20 vol% triethanolamine	120	[9]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -2% Ni <sub>2</sub> P	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 400 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	82.5	[10]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> -2% Ni <sub>12</sub> P <sub>5</sub>	350W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	126.61	[11]
C-rich g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine	125.1	This work

**Table S2.** Recently published g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> based materials towards photocatalytic hydrogen generation.

Materials	Elements	Light source	Conditions	Hydrogen generate rate ( $\mu\text{mol h}^{-1}\text{g}^{-1}$ )	Apparent quantum efficiency	Reference
Amorphous C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine, 1 wt% Pt	2035	420 nm 6.1 %	[12]
CQD/g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	33.3 vol% methanol, 3 wt% Pt	3538.3	420 nm 10.94 %	[13]
GD-C3N4	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	23060	420 nm 31.07 %	[14]
CMB-HCl-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N, Cl	A white LED array	10 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	380	420 nm 1.6 %	[15]
Carbon-rich g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> Nanosheets	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 400 \text{ nm}$ )	12 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	3960	420 nm 4.52 %	[16]
CCN <sub>550</sub>	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% methanol, 3 wt% Pt	600	420 nm 6.8 %	[17]
CN-Br-3	C, N, Br	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 ml lactic acid, 1 wt% Pt	1354	420 nm 14.3 %	[18]
3D porous C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> monolith	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 420 \text{ nm}$ )	10 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	2900	Not mentioned	[19]
Holey Ultrathin g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N	300W xenon lamp ( $\lambda > 400 \text{ nm}$ )	12 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	2860	420 nm 4.03 %	[20]

		300W xenon	10 vol%			
High-crystalline g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N	lamp (λ > 400 nm)	triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	808.5	420 nm 6.17 %	[21]
O-CN2	C, N	300W xenon lamp (λ > 420 nm)	10 vol% lactic acid, 1 wt% Pt.	1062.4	420 nm 13.2 %	[22]
"seaweed" g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N	300W xenon lamp (λ > 420 nm)	10 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	9900	420 nm 7.8 %	[23]
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub> nanomesh	C, N	300W xenon lamp (λ > 420 nm)	10 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	8510	420 nm 5.1 %	[24]
C-rich g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	C, N	300W xenon lamp (λ > 420 nm)	10 vol% triethanolamine, 3 wt% Pt	4268	420 nm 6.8 %	This work

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