

Supporting information for:

Facile synthesis of biarylmethanes and tetrasubstituted arenes *via* base-mediated [3+3] benzannulation reaction of Morita-Baylis-Hillman adducts and unsaturated sulfones

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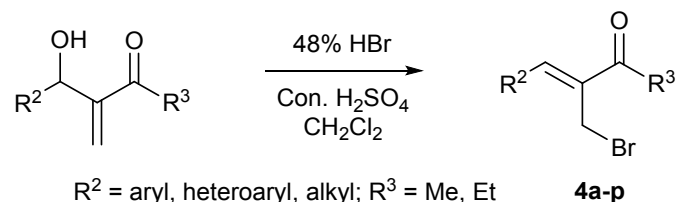
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General Information: All ¹H NMR (400 MHz) and ¹³C NMR (100 MHz) spectra were recorded in CDCl₃ solvent at ambient temperature, chemical shift δ are given in ppm on a scale downfield from TMS, and the coupling constant *J* are in Hz. The signal patterns are indicated as follows: s, singlet; d, doublet; t, triplet; dd, doublet of doublet; m, multiplet. FTIR spectra were recorded as neat. Melting points were recorded on an electrothermal apparatus and are uncorrected. All the reagents and solvents were used without further purification unless specified otherwise. Technical grade ethyl acetate and petroleum ether used for column chromatography were distilled prior to use. Column chromatography was carried out using silica gel (60-120 mesh and 100- 200 mesh) packed in glass columns. All reactions were performed in oven-dried glassware with magnetic stirring. TLC analysis was performed on commercially prepared 60 F₂₅₄ silica gel plates. Visualization of spots on TLC plate was accomplished with UV light (254 nm) and staining by KMnO₄. High-resolution mass spectra were recorded with q-TOF electrospray mass spectrometer. All purchased chemicals were used as received. The Morita-Baylis-Hillman (MBH) bromides **4a-p** were prepared from methyl vinyl ketone and various aldehydes as previously reported.¹ 1,3-Bis-toluenesulfonylpropene **3a** and 1,3-bis-phenylsulfonylpropene **3b** were also prepared by following the reported protocol.²

General procedure for the preparation of MBH bromides **4a-p**¹



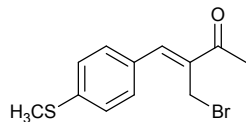
To a solution of the MBH adduct in CH₂Cl₂ (3 mL/mmol of MBH adduct) kept at 0 °C, 48% HBr solution (0.4 mL/mmol of the MBH adduct) was added dropwise. Then, con. H₂SO₄ (0.3 mL/mmol of MBH

¹ R. Buchholtz and H. M. R. Hoffmann, *Helv. Chim. Acta.*, 1991, **74**, 1213.

² (a) E. T. Gallagher and D. H. Grayson, *Org. Biomol. Chem.* 2003, **1**, 1374. (b) A. Padwa, Y. Gareau, B. Harrison, N. Brian and H. Bryan, *J. Org. Chem.*, 1991, **56**, 2713.

adduct) was added and stirred overnight at room temperature. The reaction mixture was diluted with water (10 mL) and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 X10 mL). The combined extracts were dried with anhydrous sodium sulfate and solvent was evaporated on a rotavapor. Column chromatography of the resulting residue on silica gel using ethyl acetate-petroleum ether as eluent afforded analytically pure samples of the MBH bromide **4a-p**.

Spectroscopic data for novel MBH bromides



4f, (Z)-3-(bromomethyl)-4-[4-(methylthio)phenyl]but-3-en-2-one

Colorless crystal, 558 mg, 87% (from 500 mg of MBH adduct)

R_f = 0.8 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

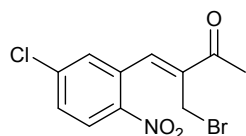
Melting point: 93-94 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 2922, 2852, 1657, 1614, 1587, 1489 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.55(d, *J* = 8.4Hz, 2H), 7.32(d, *J* = 8.4Hz, 2H), 4.38 (s, 2H), 2.53 (s, 3H), 2.50 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 197.1, 142.6, 142.5, 142.0, 136.3, 130.4, 125.8, 25.9, 25.4, 15.0.

HRMS calcd for C₁₂H₁₄BrOS (M+H) 284.9949; found 284.9949.



4h, (Z)-3-(bromomethyl)-4-(5-chloro-2-nitrophenyl)but-3-en-2-one

Pale yellow solid, 553 mg, 89% (from 500 mg of MBH adduct)

R_f = 0.6 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

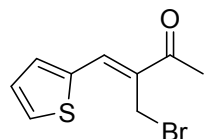
Melting point: 108-109 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 1676, 1599, 1560, 1523, 1464, 1427, 1338, 906, 813, 679, 526 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.21 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (s, 1H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 2.2Hz, 1H), 7.57 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 2.2Hz, 1H), 4.06 (s, 2H), 2.53 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 196.4, 145.3, 140.9, 138.6, 138.2, 132.2, 130.3, 129.9, 127.0, 26.2, 23.6

HRMS calcd for C₁₁H₁₀BrClNO₃ (M+H) 317.9533; found 317.9544



4k, (Z)-3-(bromomethyl)-4-(thiophen-2-yl)but-3-en-2-one

Yellow solid, 531mg, 79% (from 500 mg of MBH adduct)

R_f = 0.7 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

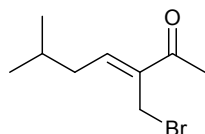
Melting point: 129-131 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 2922, 1659, 1603, 1414, 1203, 700 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.75 (s, 1H), 7.68 (dd, *J* = 5.2, 0.4 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (dd, *J* = 3.6, 0.4 Hz, 1H), 7.20 (dd, *J* = 5.2, 3.6 Hz, 1H), 4.55 (s, 2H), 2.48 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 196.6, 137.1, 135.5, 134.1, 133.6, 132.6, 128.3, 25.8, 25.0

HRMS calcd for C₉H₁₀BrOS (M+H) 244.9636; found 244.9636.



4n, (Z)-3-(bromomethyl)-6-methylhept-3-en-2-one

Pale Yellow oil, 505 mg, 72% (from 500 mg of MBH adduct)

R_f = 0.7 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

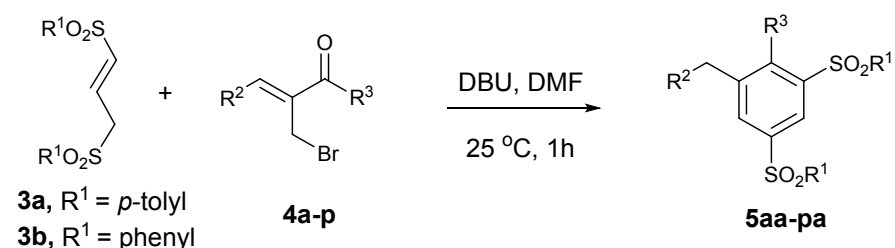
IR (KBr) ν_{max}: 2957, 1670, 1462, 412 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 6.81 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.16 (s, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 2.25-2.21 (m, 2H), 1.87-1.79 (m, 1H), 0.96 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 6H)

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 196.7, 147.7, 139.0, 38.3, 28.3, 25.6, 22.8, 22.7

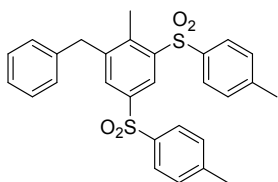
HRMS calcd for C₉H₁₆BrO (M+H) 219.0385; found 219.0379.

General procedure for the DBU-mediated benzannulation reaction



DBU (0.07 mL, 0.45 mmol) was added to a solution of MBH bromide **4a-p** (0.30 mmol) and 1,3-bis(sulfonyl)propene **3a-b** (0.33 mmol) in DMF (5 mL). The reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 1h. After completion of the reaction, 10 mL deionized water was added and the solution was extracted with ethylacetate (3×10 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with brine, dried over sodium sulfate and the solvent was evaporated off on a rotavapor under reduced pressure. The residue was subjected to column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether-ethyl acetate as eluent to afford analytically pure sample of the product.

Spectroscopic data for the products 5aa-5na



5aa, 4,4'-(5-benzyl-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 110 mg, 75%

$R_f = 0.6$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

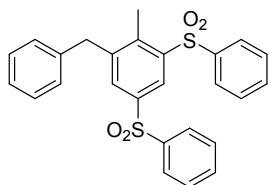
Melting point: 189-191 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3082, 2926, 1591, 1492, 1442, 1319, 1294, 1147, 540 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.63 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.87 (d, $J = 2.0$, 1H), 7.79 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.71 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.33-7.29 (m, 4H), 7.27-7.20 (m, 3H), 6.94 (d, $J = 6.5$ Hz, 2H), 4.00 (s, 2H), 2.43 (s, 6H), 2.35 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.8, 143.7, 142.3, 141.9, 140.3, 137.9, 137.7, 137.4, 133.2, 130.2, 130.0, 128.9, 128.6, 128.0, 127.9, 126.9, 39.7, 21.7, 16.3

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{27}\text{O}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 491.1351; found 491.1346.



5ab, (5-benzyl-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)dibenzene

White solid, 108 mg, 75%

$R_f = 0.6$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

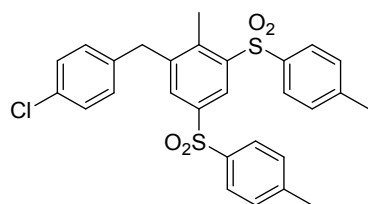
Melting point: 160-162 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3086, 3059, 1583, 1496, 1446, 1315, 1147, 835, 567 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.68 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.92 (dd, $J = 7.2, 1.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.89 (d, $J = 2.0$, 1H), 7.82 (dd, $J = 7.2, 1.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.61 (t, $J = 7.2$, 2H), 7.65-7.48 (m, 4H), 7.28-7.17 (m, 3H), 6.94 (d, $J = 6.8$ Hz, 2H), 4.00 (s, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 143.9, 142.7, 141.6, 140.9, 140.3, 140.0, 137.6, 133.8, 133.5, 129.6, 129.4, 129.0, 128.5, 127.9, 127.1, 126.9, 39.7, 16.4.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{23}\text{O}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 463.1038; found 463.1049.



5ba, 4,4'-[5-(4-chlorobenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 112 mg, 71%

$R_f = 0.6$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

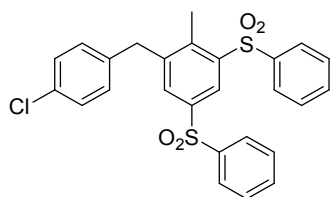
Melting point: 192-194 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3066, 2920, 1595, 1492, 1435, 1404, 1303, 1143, 817, 711, 667 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.62 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.83 (d, $J = 2.0$, 1H), 7.79 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, $J = 8.4$, 2H), 7.33-7.29 (m, 4H), 7.20 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 6.86 (d, $J = 8.4$, 2H), 3.95 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.32 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.9 (2), 143.1, 142.2, 142.1, 140.5, 137.8, 137.3, 136.3, 133.1, 132.7, 130.3, 130.0, 129.9, 129.0, 128.0, 127.9, 127.0, 39.0, 21.74, 16.3.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{26}\text{ClO}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 525.0961; found 525.0978.



5bb, (5-(4-chlorobenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)dibenzene

White solid, 112 mg, 74%

R_f = 0.4 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

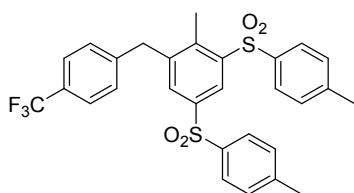
Melting point: 147-149 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3082, 1581, 1489, 1442, 1315, 1149, 559 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.68 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.92 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.85 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.82 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.64-7.59 (m, 2H), 7.55 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.52 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.21 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.86 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 3.97 (s, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.3, 142.5, 141.8, 140.7, 140.2, 136.1, 133.8, 133.4, 132.8, 129.9, 129.7, 129.4, 129.1, 127.9, 127.3, 39.0, 16.4.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{22}\text{ClO}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 497.0648; found 497.0631.



5ca, 4,4'-{4-methyl-5-[4-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl]-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl}bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 110 mg, 66%

R_f = 0.6 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

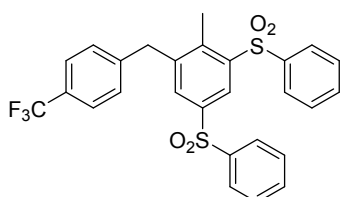
Melting point: 187-189 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3082, 2925, 1593, 1419, 1323, 1149, 1112, 812, 709, 659 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.64 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.85 (d, J = 2.0, 1H), 7.79 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, J = 8.4, 2H), 7.49 (d, J = 8.1, 2H), 7.33-7.28 (m, 4H), 7.05 (d, J = 8.1, 2H), 4.05 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.32 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.9, 144.8, 142.4, 142.1(2), 140.5, 137.6, 137.1, 133.1, 130.2, 129.9, 128.7, 127.9, 127.8, 127.1, 125.7 (q, J = 3.8 Hz), 39.3, 21.6(2), 16.3.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{26}\text{F}_3\text{O}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 559.1225; found 559.1206.



5cb, {4-methyl-5-[4-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl]-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl}dibenzene

White solid, 110 mg, 69%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

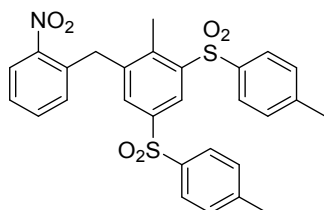
Melting point: 156-157 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3066, 1583, 1448, 1325, 1298, 1142, 1112, 1070, 690, 549 cm^{-1}

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.69 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.90 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.82 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.63-7.54 (m, 2H), 7.53-7.49 (m, 6H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 4.07 (s, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 142.6, 142.4, 141.9, 141.7, 140.5, 140.2, 140.0, 133.8, 133.7, 133.4, 129.6, 129.3, 128.7, 127.8(2), 127.3, 125.8 (q, *J* = 3.6 Hz), 39.3, 16.3.

HRMS calcd for C₂₇H₂₂F₃O₄S₂ (M+H) 531.0912; found 531.0930.



5da, 4,4'-[4-methyl-5-(2-nitrobenzyl)-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 93 mg, 58%

R_f = 0.4 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

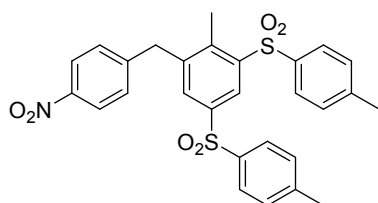
Melting point: 170-172 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3059, 2922, 1593, 1523, 1435, 1348, 1315, 1143, 837, 659 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.63 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.71 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.63 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.53-7.40 (m, 2H), 7.32-7.28 (m, 4H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.28 (s, 2H), 2.41 (s, 6H), 2.34 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 149.0, 144.9, 142.1(2), 141.8, 140.6, 137.7, 137.2, 133.8, 132.8, 132.3, 131.6, 130.2, 130.0, 128.5, 128.0, 127.9, 127.1, 125.5, 36.6, 21.8, 16.3.

HRMS calcd for C₂₈H₂₆NO₆S₂ (M+H) 536.1202; found 536.1243.



5ea, 4,4'-[4-methyl-5-(4-nitrobenzyl)-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 90 mg, 56%

R_f = 0.4 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

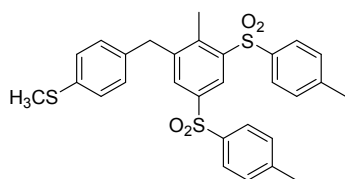
Melting point: 122-124 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3072, 2924, 1597, 1519, 1492, 1438, 1348, 1309, 1145, 837, 812, 705, 661 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.65 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 8.08 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.80 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.33-7.29 (m, 4H), 7.10 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 4.10 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.31 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 146.9, 145.5, 145.1(2), 142.4, 142.2, 141.8, 140.8, 137.6, 137.0, 133.2, 130.4, 130.1, 129.3, 128.0, 127.9, 127.4, 124.1, 39.5, 21.8, 16.4

HRMS calcd for C₂₈H₂₆NO₆S₂ (M+H) 536.1202; found 536.1225.



5fa, 4,4'-[4-methyl-5-(4-methylthiobenzyl)-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 126 mg, 78%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

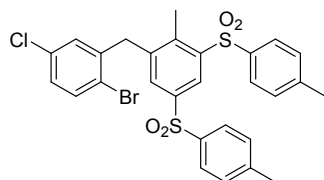
Melting point: 145-147 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3062, 2924, 1593, 1492, 1436, 1319, 1147, 1085, 707, 671, 545 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.62 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.78 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.32-7.28 (m, 4H), 7.12 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 6.85 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 3.94 (s, 2H), 2.45 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.33 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.7, 143.4, 142.1, 141.8, 140.2, 137.7, 137.2, 136.8, 134.4, 133.0, 130.1, 130.1, 129.9, 129.8, 128.9, 127.8, 126.9, 126.7, 39.0, 21.6, 21.6, 16.2, 15.8.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{29}\text{O}_4\text{S}_3$ (M+H) 537.1228; found 537.1247.



5ga, 4,4'-[5-(2-bromo-5-chlorobenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 121 mg, 67%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

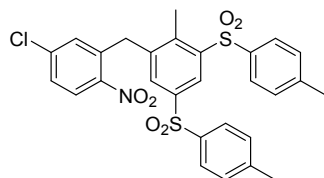
Melting point: 189-191 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3062, 2924, 1593, 1448, 1317, 1143, 1087, 812, 711, 549 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.67 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.71 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.68 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (d, J = 8.5, 1H), 7.31 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 4H), 7.11 (dd, J = 8.5, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.62 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 4.00 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.32 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.9, 142.2, 142.0, 141.5, 140.6, 139.0, 137.7, 137.2, 134.3, 134.2, 134.0, 132.7, 130.3(2), 130.1, 130.0, 129.0, 127.9, 127.1, 122.7, 39.7, 21.8, 21.73, 16.3.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{25}\text{BrClO}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 603.0066; found 603.0076.



5ha, 4,4'-[5-(5-chloro-2-nitrobenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 106 mg, 62%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

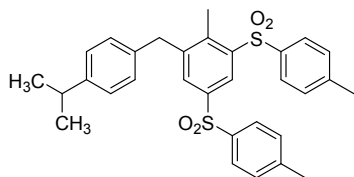
Melting point: 182-184 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3067, 2927, 1525, 1440, 1313, 1296, 1145, 813, 549 cm^{-1}

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.66 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.65 (d, *J* = 1.6, 1H), 7.42 (dd, *J* = 8.6, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (d, *J* = 8.0, 4H), 6.81 (d, *J* = 2.0, 1H), 4.28 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.34 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 147.3, 145.0(2), 142.3, 142.0, 140.8(2), 140.3, 137.6, 137.2, 135.0, 132.3, 131.4, 130.3, 130.1, 128.7, 128.0, 127.9, 127.4, 127.0, 36.5, 21.7, 16.3.

HRMS calcd for C₂₈H₂₅ClNO₆S₂ (M+H) 570.0812; found 570.0832.



5ia, 4,4'-[5-(4-isopropylbenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 120 mg, 75%

R_f = 0.7 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

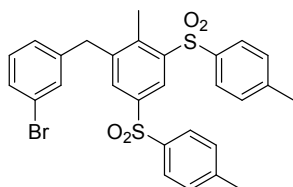
Melting point: 167-168 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3078, 2964, 1593, 1425, 1319, 1139, 1083, 808, 705, 671, 565 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.61 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.32-7.28 (m, 4H), 7.09 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.85 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 3.95 (s, 2H), 2.89-2.80 (m, 1H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 1.21 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 147.5, 144.8(2), 144.0, 142.3, 141.8, 140.2, 138.0, 137.4, 135.0, 133.2, 130.2, 130.0, 128.4, 128.0, 127.9, 126.9, 126.8, 39.2, 33.7, 24.0, 21.7, 16.4

HRMS calcd for C₃₁H₃₃O₄S₂ (M+H) 533.1820; found 533.1829.



5ja, 4,4'-[5-(3-bromobenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 125 mg, 73%

R_f = 0.6 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

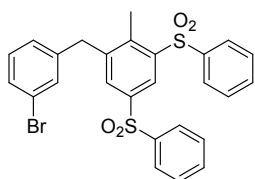
Melting point: 204-206 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3072, 2924, 1591, 1566, 1446, 1294, 1141, 840, 812, 709, 661, 545 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.65 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.35-7.29 (m, 5H), 7.14-7.10 (m, 1H), 7.05 (s, 1H), 6.87 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.96 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.33 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 144.8, 144.7, 142.6, 142.1, 141.9, 140.4, 139.9, 137.6, 137.1, 133.0, 131.4, 131.3, 130.3, 130.2, 129.9, 127.8, 127.8, 127.1, 126.9, 122.8, 39.0, 21.6(2), 16.2.

HRMS calcd for C₂₈H₂₆BrO₄S₂ (M+H) 569.0456; found 569.0444.



5jb, [5-(3-bromobenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl]dibenzene

White solid, 124 mg, 76%

$R_f = 0.5$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

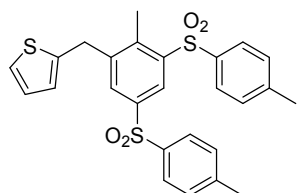
Melting point: 156-157 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3064, 1568, 1446, 1309, 1143, 1978, 684, 567 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.68 (d, $J = 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.92 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.87 (d, $J = 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.82 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 7.62-7.60 (m, 2H), 7.56-7.50 (m, 4H), 7.34 (d, $J = 7.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.14-7.01 (m, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 6.86 (d, $J = 7.4$ Hz, 1H), 3.97 (s, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 143.0, 142.6, 141.8, 140.7, 140.2, 139.9, 133.9, 133.8, 133.5, 131.5, 130.5, 130.2, 129.7, 129.5, 127.9, 127.3, 127.2, 123.0, 39.2, 16.4.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{22}\text{BrO}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 541.0143; found 541.0122.



5ka, 2-(2-methyl-3,5-ditosylbenzyl)thiophene

White solid, 107 mg, 72%

$R_f = 0.6$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

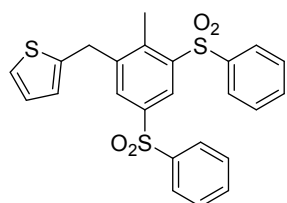
Melting point: 199-201 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 2924, 1591, 1498, 1436, 1315, 1294, 1143, 1083, 812, 542 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.63 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.95 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.80 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.32-7.29 (m, 4H), 7.14 (d, $J = 5.1$ Hz, 1H), 6.88 (dd, $J = 5.1, 3.5$ Hz, 1H), 6.58 (d, $J = 3.5$ Hz, 1H), 4.14 (s, 2H), 2.41 (s, 6H), 2.40 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 144.9, 143.2, 142.0, 141.9, 140.5, 140.4, 137.9, 137.3, 132.8, 130.2, 130.0, 128.0, 127.9, 127.2, 125.9, 124.8, 124.7, 34.0, 21.8, 16.2.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{25}\text{O}_4\text{S}_3$ (M+H) 497.0915; found 497.0933.



5kb, 2-[2-methyl-3,5-bis(phenylsulfonyl)benzyl]thiophene

White solid, 104 mg, 74%

$R_f = 0.5$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

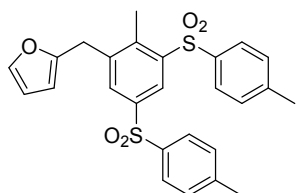
Melting point: 187-189 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3082, 2362, 1581, 1444, 1311, 1147, 1089, 725, 686, 570 cm^{-1}

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.69 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.94 (d, *J* = 7.8Hz, 2H), 7.83 (dd, *J* = 7.8Hz, 2H), 7.62-7.60 (m, 2H), 7.56- 7.52 (m, 4H), 7.14 (dd, *J* = 5.2, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (dd, *J* = 5.2, 3.6Hz, 1H), 6.59 (dd, *J* = 3.6, 1.2Hz, 1H), 4.16 (s, 2H), 2.41 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 143.4, 142.3, 141.7, 140.8, 140.3, 140.2(2), 133.8, 133.1, 129.7, 126.4, 127.9, 127.4, 127.2, 126.0, 124.8, 34.0, 16.2.

HRMS calcd for C₂₄H₂₁O₄S₃ (M+H) 469.0602; found 469.0590.



5la, 2-(2-methyl-3,5-ditosylbenzyl)furan

White solid, 100 mg, 70%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

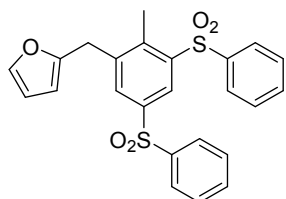
Melting point: 203-204 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 2926, 1593, 1498, 1440, 1315, 1294, 1143, 1083, 810, 707, 553 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.63 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.90 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.81 (d, *J* = 8.3Hz, 2H), 7.71 (d, *J* = 8.3Hz, 2H), 7.32-7.30 (m, 4H), 7.28 (dd, *J* = 1.9, 0.8 Hz, 1H), 6.25 (dd, *J* = 3.2, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 5.88 (dd, *J* = 3.2Hz, 1H), 3.96 (s, 2H), 2.41 (s, 9H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 151.2, 144.8, 142.1, 142.0, 141.8, 141.2, 140.4, 137.9, 137.3, 133.0, 130.3, 130.0, 128.0, 127.9, 127.2, 110.6, 110.5, 107.5, 107.4, 32.5, 21.7, 16.1.

HRMS calcd for C₂₆H₂₅O₅S₂ (M+H) 481.1143; found 481.1166.



5lb, 2-[2-methyl-3,5bis(phenylsulfonyl)benzyl]furan

White solid, 97 mg, 71%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

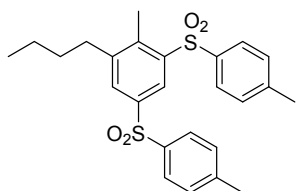
Melting point: 175-177 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 2922, 2855, 2306, 1585, 1444, 1307, 1145, 725, 535 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.67 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.97-7.88 (m, 3H), 7.83 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 1.2 Hz, 2H), 7.64-7.55 (m, 2H), 7.57-7.50 (m, 4H), 7.28 (dd, *J* = 2.0, 0.8Hz, 1H), 6.26 (dd, *J* = 3.2, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 5.88 (dd, *J* = 3.2, 0.8 Hz, 1H), 3.97 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 151.1, 141.6, 141.4, 140.3, 140.1, 133.8, 133.3, 129.6, 129.4, 127.9, 110.6(2), 107.5(2), 32.5, 16.2.

HRMS calcd for C₂₄H₂₁O₅S₂ (M+H) 453.0830; found 453.0840



5ma, 4, 4'-(5-butyl-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 99 mg, 72%

$R_f = 0.7$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

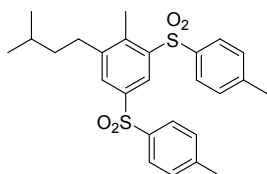
Melting point: 146-148 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3068, 2953, 2924, 2864, 1593, 1442, 1309, 1296, 1145, 1085, 813, 565, 549 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.56 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.91 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.82 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.70 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.32-7.25 (m, 4H), 2.60 (t, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 6H), 2.38 (s, 3H), 1.48-1.44 (m, 2H), 1.35-1.29 (m, 2H), 0.89 (t, $J = 7.3$ Hz, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 145.8, 144.8, 144.7, 141.5, 141.4, 140.0, 138.1, 137.5, 132.2, 130.2, 130.0, 128.0, 127.9, 126.3, 33.5, 31.9, 22.6, 21.7, 15.8, 13.9.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{29}\text{O}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 457.1507; found 457.1499.



5na, 4, 4'-(5-isopentyl-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 103 mg, 73%

$R_f = 0.7$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

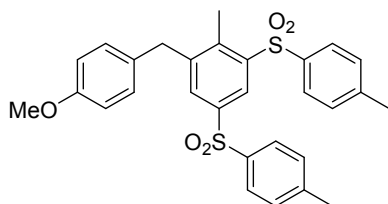
Melting point: 165-167 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3072, 2958, 2908, 1593, 1442, 1313, 1296, 1145, 1083, 812, 549 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.56 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.92 (d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.85 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.71 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.33-7.26 (m, 4H), 2.60 (t, $J = 8$ Hz, 2H), 2.42 (s, 6H), 2.39 (s, 3H), 1.59-1.56 (m, 1H), 1.38-1.32 (m, 2H), 0.91 (d, $J = 6.7$ Hz, 6H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 146.0, 144.7(2), 141.5, 141.3, 140.1, 138.1, 137.5, 132.1, 130.2, 130.0, 128.0, 127.9, 126.3, 39.0, 31.7, 28.3, 22.4, 21.7, 15.7.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{31}\text{O}_4\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 471.1664; found 471.1657.



5oa, 4,4'-(5-(4-methoxybenzyl)-4-methyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 128 mg, 82%

$R_f = 0.5$ (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

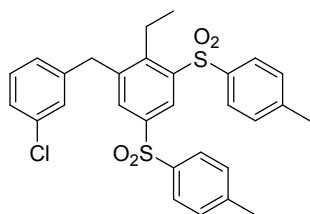
Melting point: 167-169 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 2926, 1591, 1510, 1444, 1315, 1246, 1150, 567, 545 cm^{-1}

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.61 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.78 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.69 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.29 (dd, J = 7.9, 5.9 Hz, 4H), 6.85 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 6.77 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.91 (s, 2H), 3.76 (s, 3H), 2.40 (s, 6H), 2.34 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 158.4, 144.8, 144.7, 144.2, 142.2, 141.8, 140.2, 137.9, 137.4, 133.0, 130.2, 129.9, 129.6, 128.0, 127.9, 126.7, 114.3, 55.3, 38.8, 21.7, 16.2.

HRMS calcd for C₂₉H₂₈O₅S₂ (M+H) 521.1456; found 521.1479.



5pa, 4,4'-(5-(3-chlorobenzyl)-4-ethyl-1,3-phenylenedisulfonyl)bis(methylbenzene)

White solid, 102 mg, 63 %

R_f = 0.6 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

Melting point: 146-148 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{max}: 2976, 1591, 1475, 1429, 1317, 1294, 1147, 669, 559 cm⁻¹

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.59 (d, J = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.74-7.69 (m, 5H), 7.31 (dd, J = 8.4, 2.0 Hz, 4H), 7.20-7.18 (m, 2H), 6.89 (s, 1H), 6.84 (dd, J = 8.4, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 3.99 (s, 2H), 2.89 (q, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.41 (s, 6H), 0.88 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H).

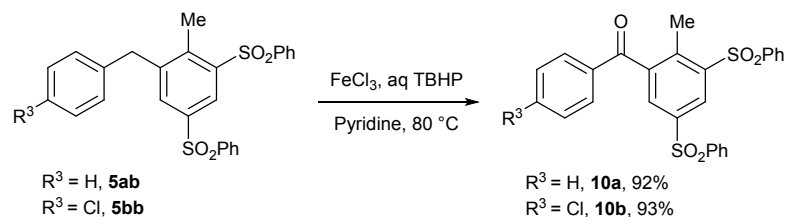
¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 147.7, 144.9, 144.8, 142.7, 141.9, 140.5, 140.4, 137.9, 137.7, 134.8, 133.7, 130.3, 130.2, 130.1, 128.7, 128.0, 127.9, 127.3, 127.2, 126.9, 37.6, 22.9, 21.7, 14.1

HRMS calcd for C₂₉H₂₇ClO₄S₂ (M+H) 539.1118; found 539.1121

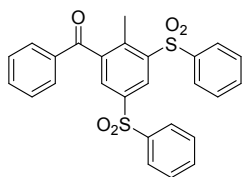
Procedure for the gram scale benzannulation reaction

DBU (0.88 mL, 5.88 mmol) was added to a solution of MBH bromide **5j** (1g, 3.92 mmol) and 1,3-bis-tolylsulfonylpropene **3a** (1.51 g, 4.31 mmol) in DMF (15 mL). The reaction mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 1h. After completion of the reaction, 50 mL deionized water was added and the solution was extracted with ethylacetate (3×30 mL). Work-up and column chromatography as described above afforded a white solid (1.58 g, 71%) which was identical to the product **5ja** obtained in the low-scale reaction.

General procedure for FeCl₃-TBHP mediated benzylic oxidation



To a solution of FeCl₃·6H₂O (2.2 mg, 0.008 mmol) in pyridine (0.5 mL), the bis-sulfonyl arene **5ab** or **5bb** (0.22 mmol) was added. To this, *tert*-butyl hydroperoxide (0.05 mL, 0.33 mmol) was added and the reaction mixture heated at 80 °C for 24 h. Then the reaction mixture was poured into a separating funnel containing 10 mL 1N HCl. It was then extracted with dichloromethane (3 X 10 mL). The combined organic layers were dried with anhydrous sodium sulphate, filtered and evaporated to dryness on a rotavapor. The residue was subjected to column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether-ethyl acetate as eluent to afford the benzophenones **10a-b** in analytically pure form.



10a, [2-methyl-3,5-bis(phenylsulfonyl)phenyl](phenyl)methanone

White solid, 96 mg, 92%

R_f = 0.5 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

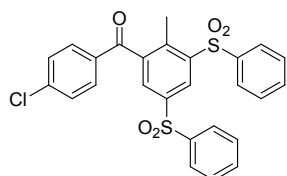
Melting point: 168-170 °C

IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3066, 1664, 1583, 1442, 1296, 1145, 1078, 727, 684, 559 cm^{-1}

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.88 (d, J = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 8.03 (d, J = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.96 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.86 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.67-7.63 (m, 5H), 7.58- 7.53 (m, 4H), 7.46 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.36 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 195.3, 143.4, 142.3, 141.6, 140.5, 140.3, 139.6, 135.7, 134.8, 134.1, 130.8, 130.2, 129.8, 129.6, 129.1, 128.1, 128.0, 17.4.

HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{21}\text{O}_5\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 477.0830; found 477.0852.



10b, (4-chlorophenyl)[2-methyl-3,5-bis(phenylsulfonyl)phenyl]methanone

White solid, 102 mg, 91%

R_f = 0.6 (20% ethyl acetate in hexanes)

Melting point: 153-155 °C

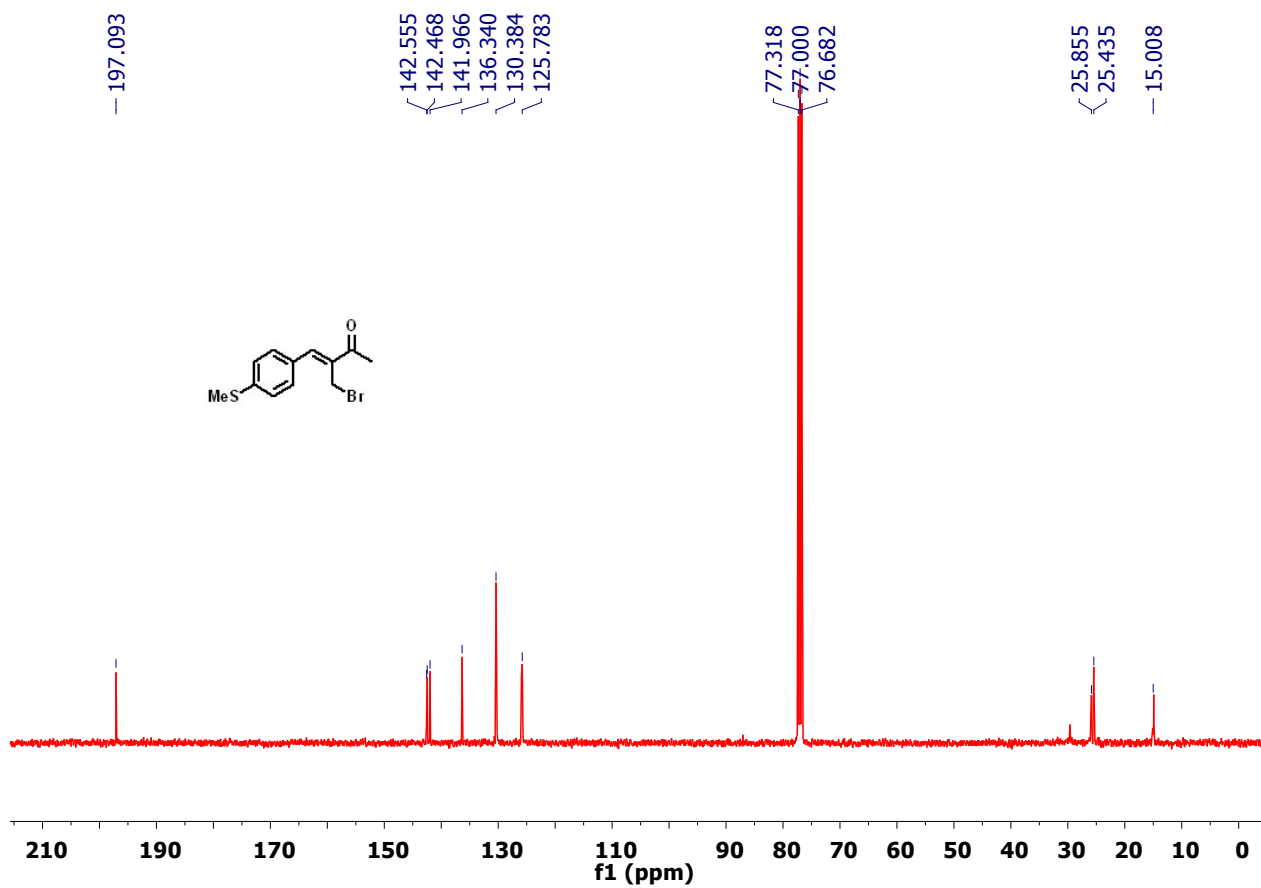
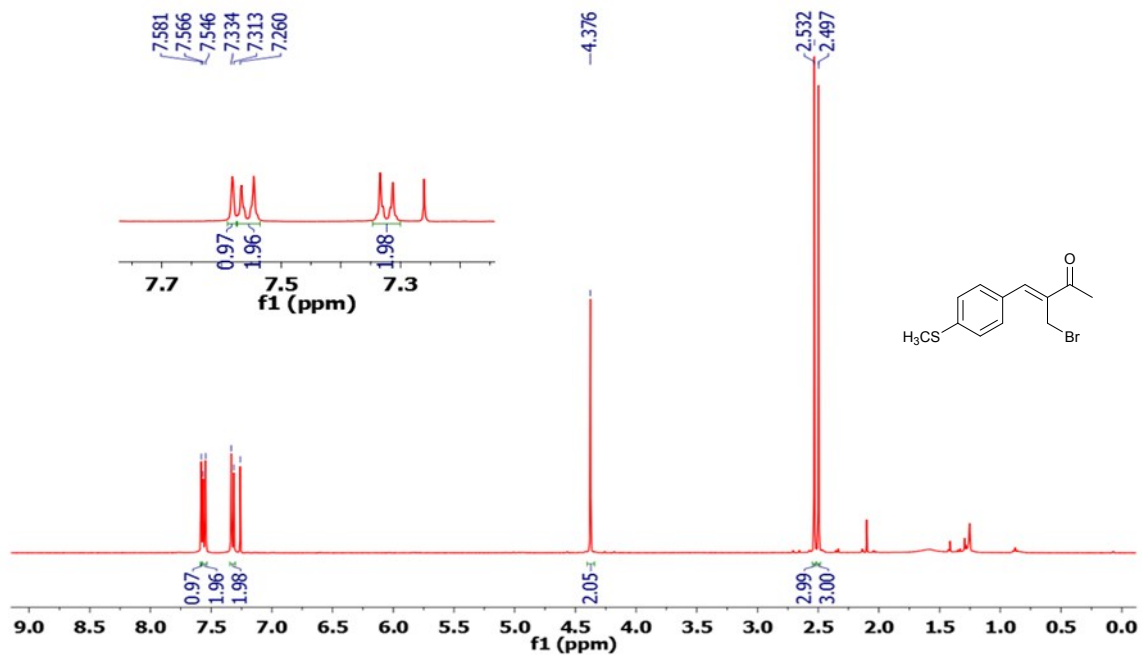
IR (KBr) ν_{\max} : 3068, 2974, 1672, 1585, 1444, 1317, 1143, 1085, 723, 688, 559 cm^{-1}

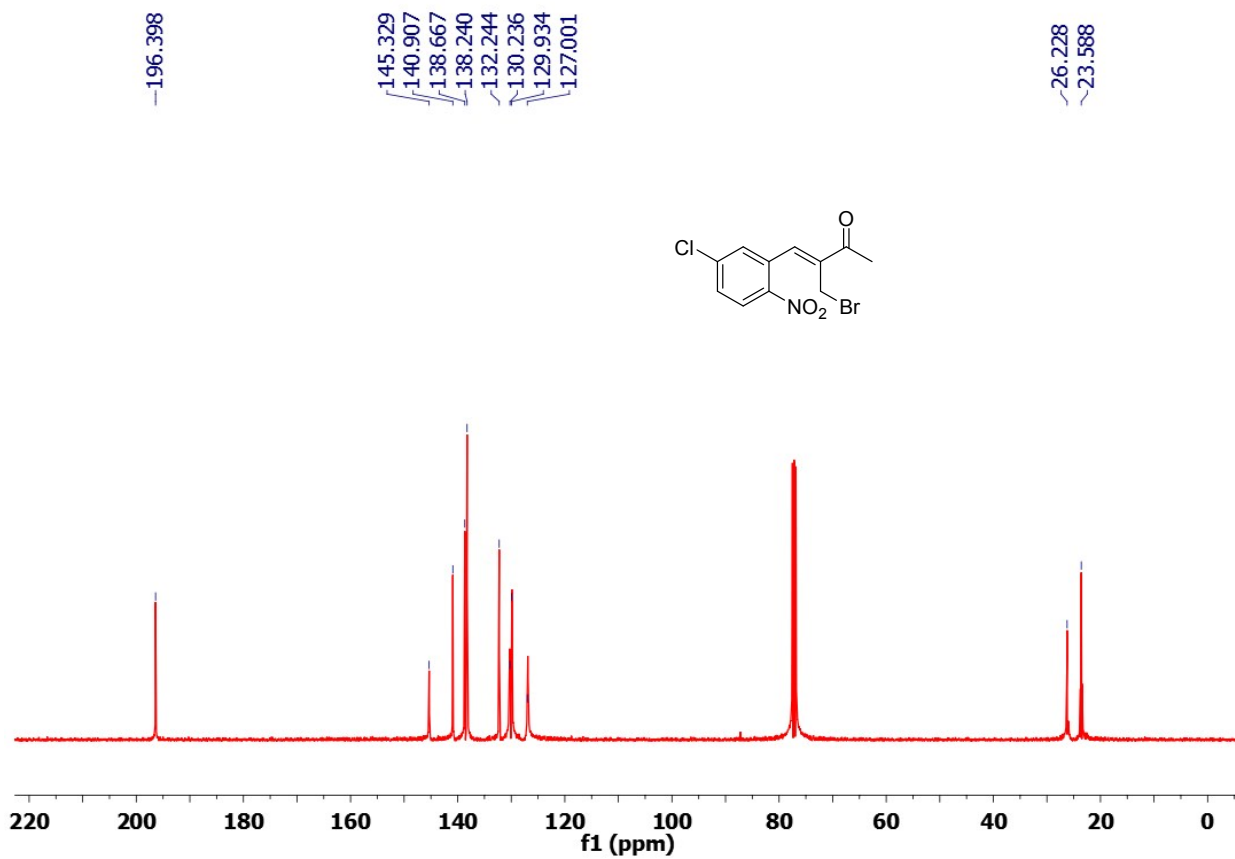
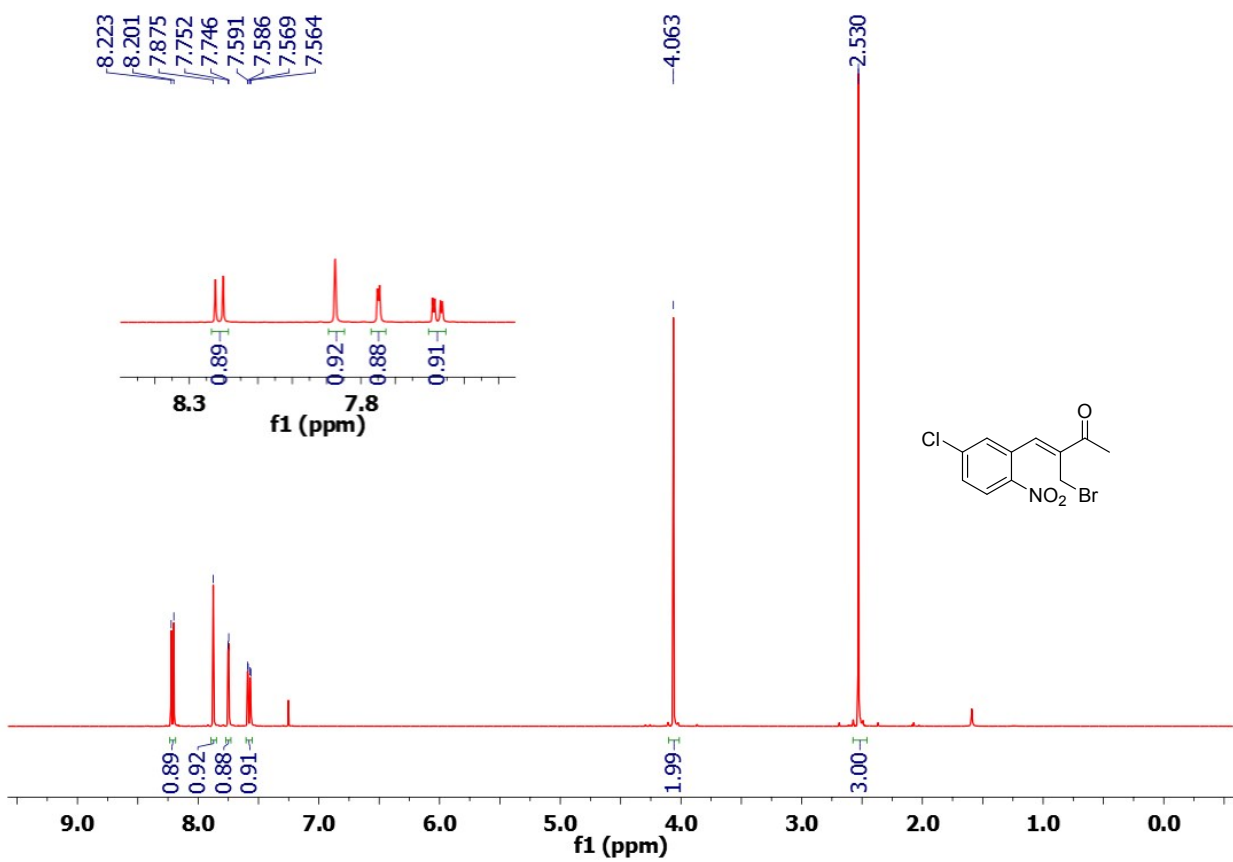
^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.87 (d, J = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 8.00 (d, J = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.85 (d, J = 7.6, 2H), 7.67- 7.53(m, 8H), 7.43 (d, J = 8.5, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H).

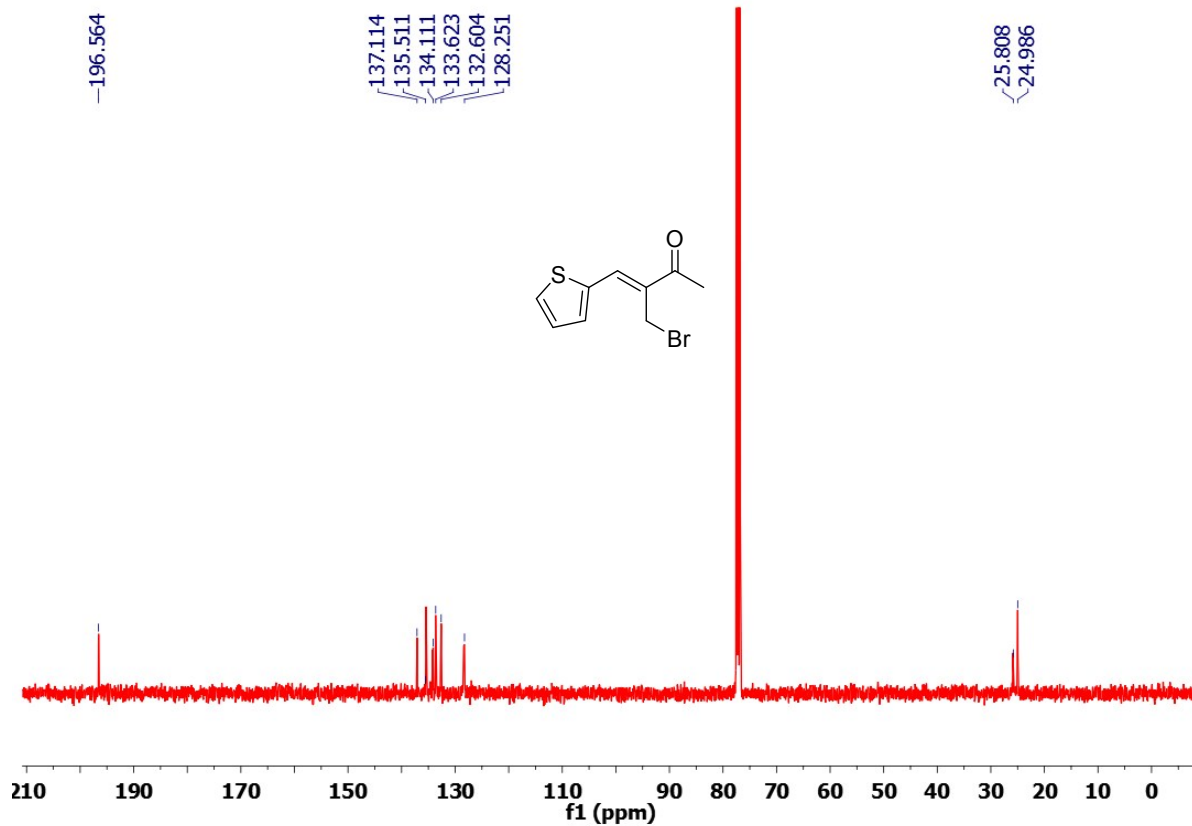
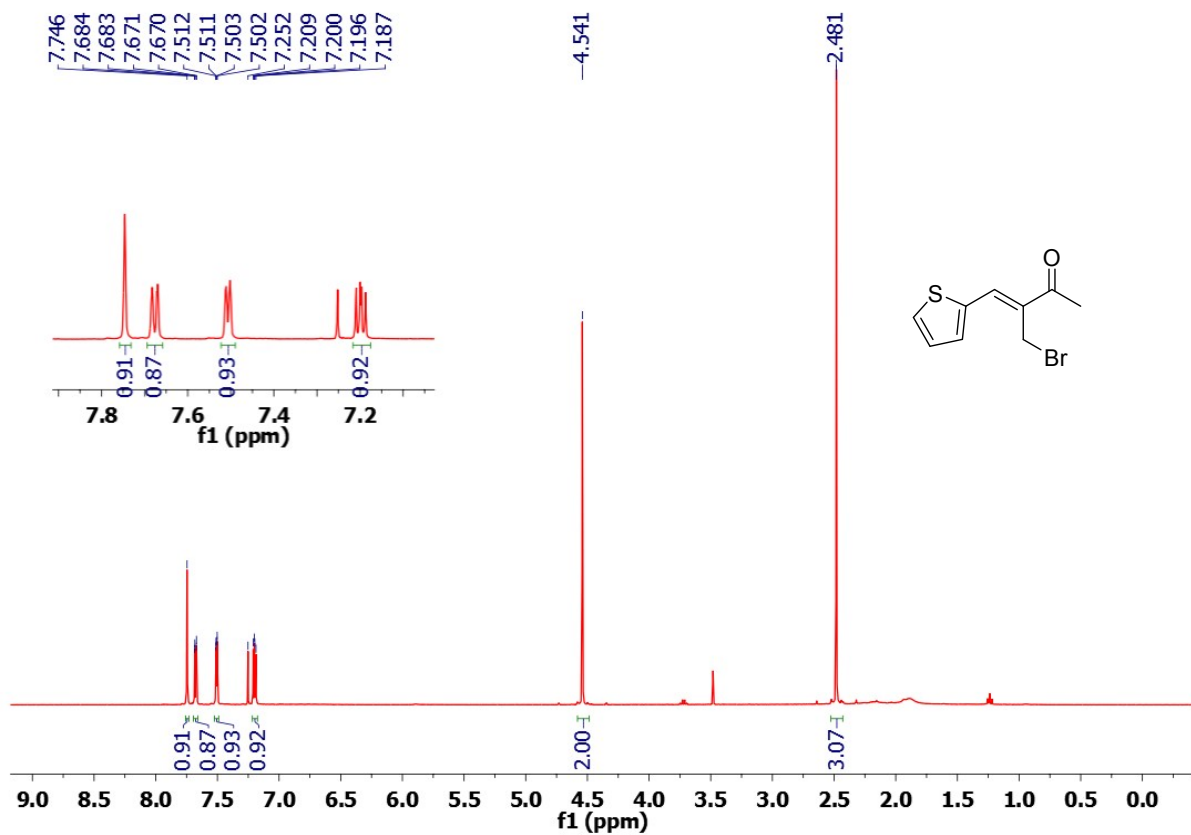
^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 194.1, 142.8, 142.5, 141.6, 141.5, 140.7, 140.3, 139.6, 134.2, 134.1, 131.5, 130.7, 129.8, 129.6, 128.2, 128.0, 17.4.

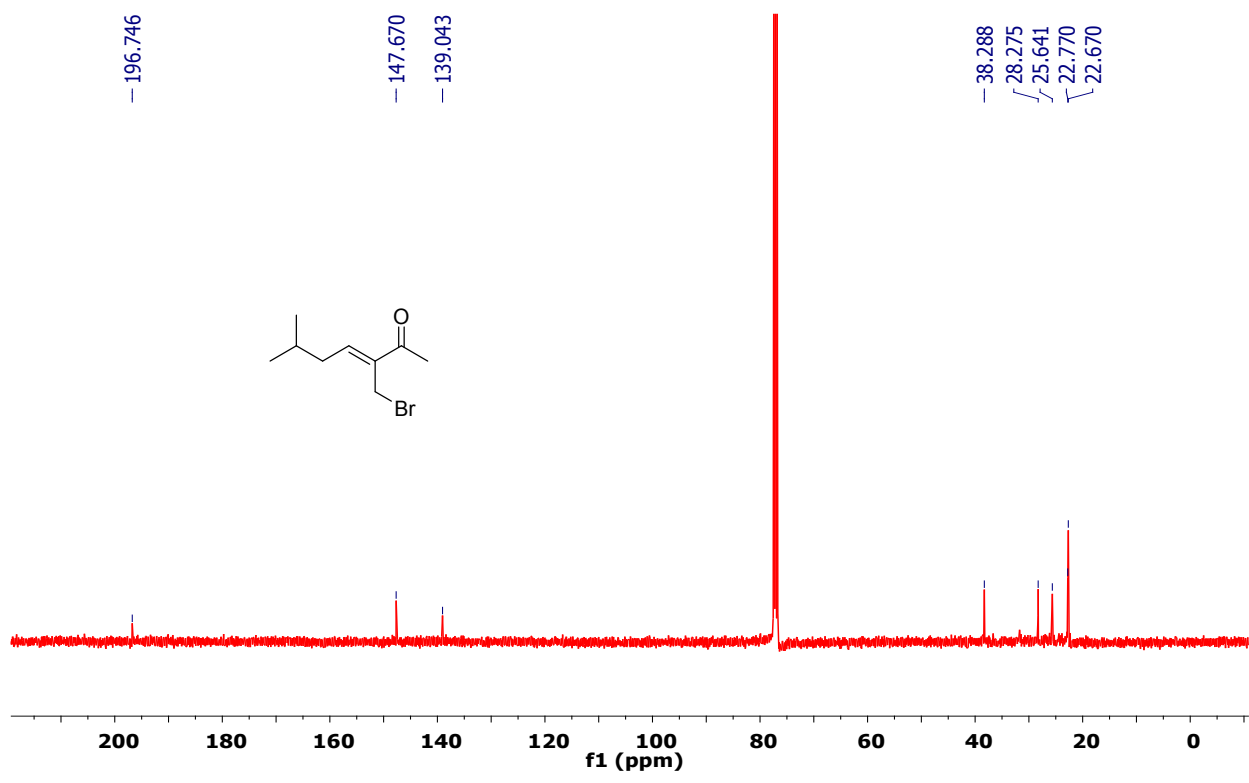
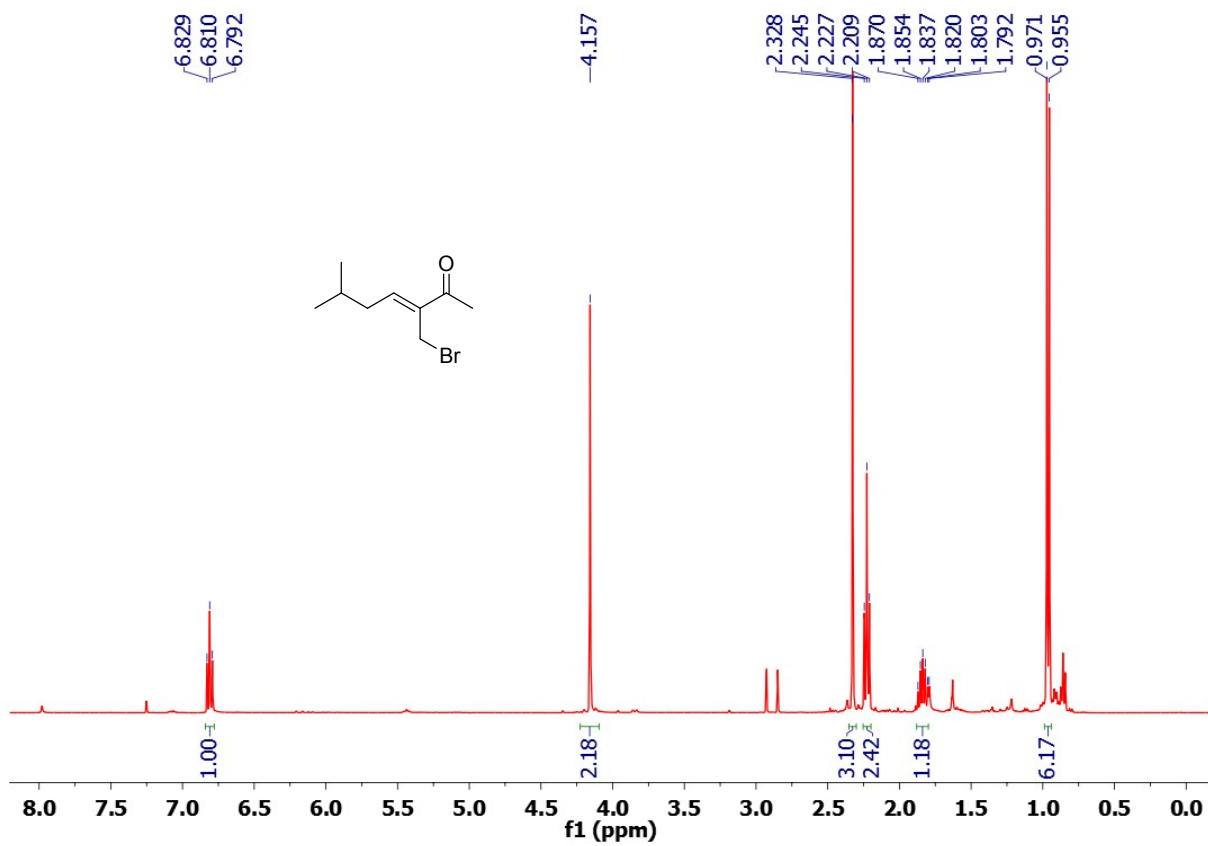
HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{20}\text{ClO}_5\text{S}_2$ (M+H) 511.0441; found 511.0461.

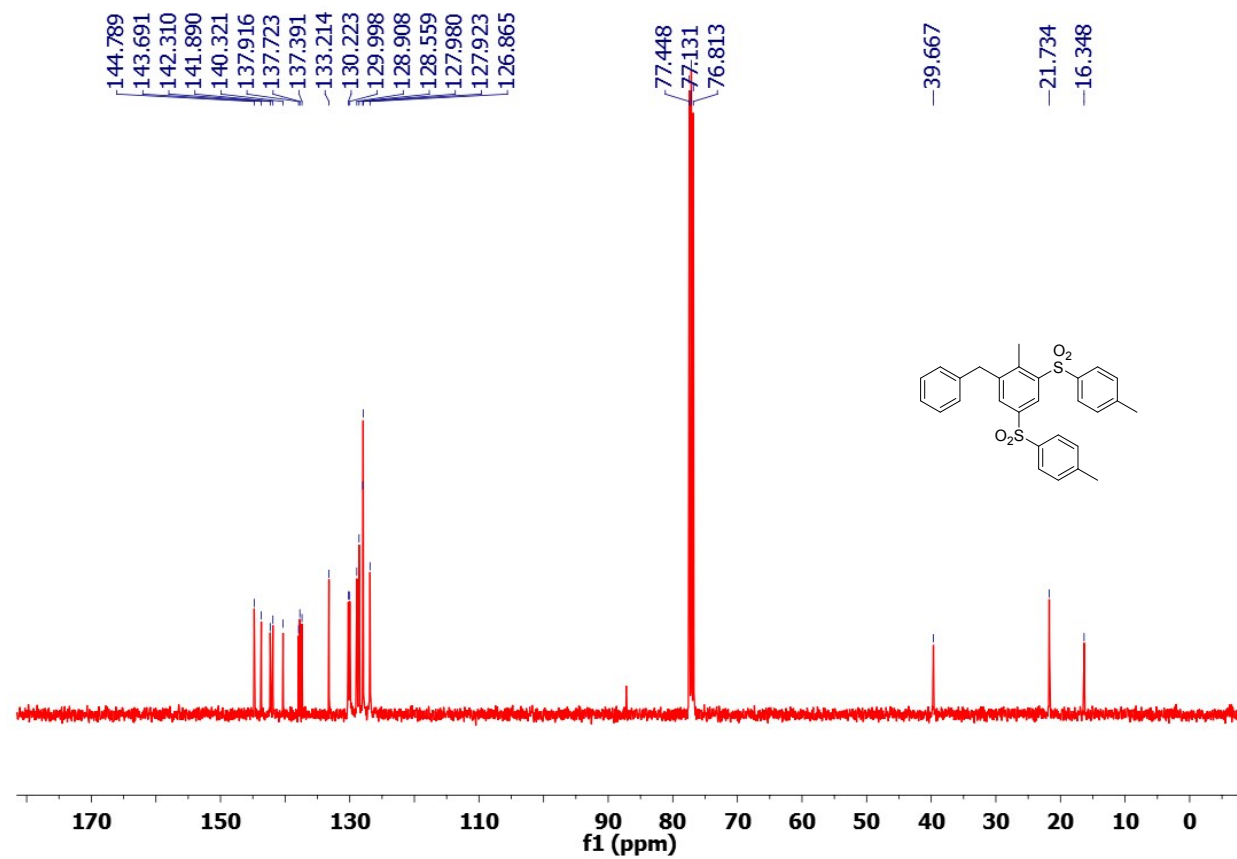
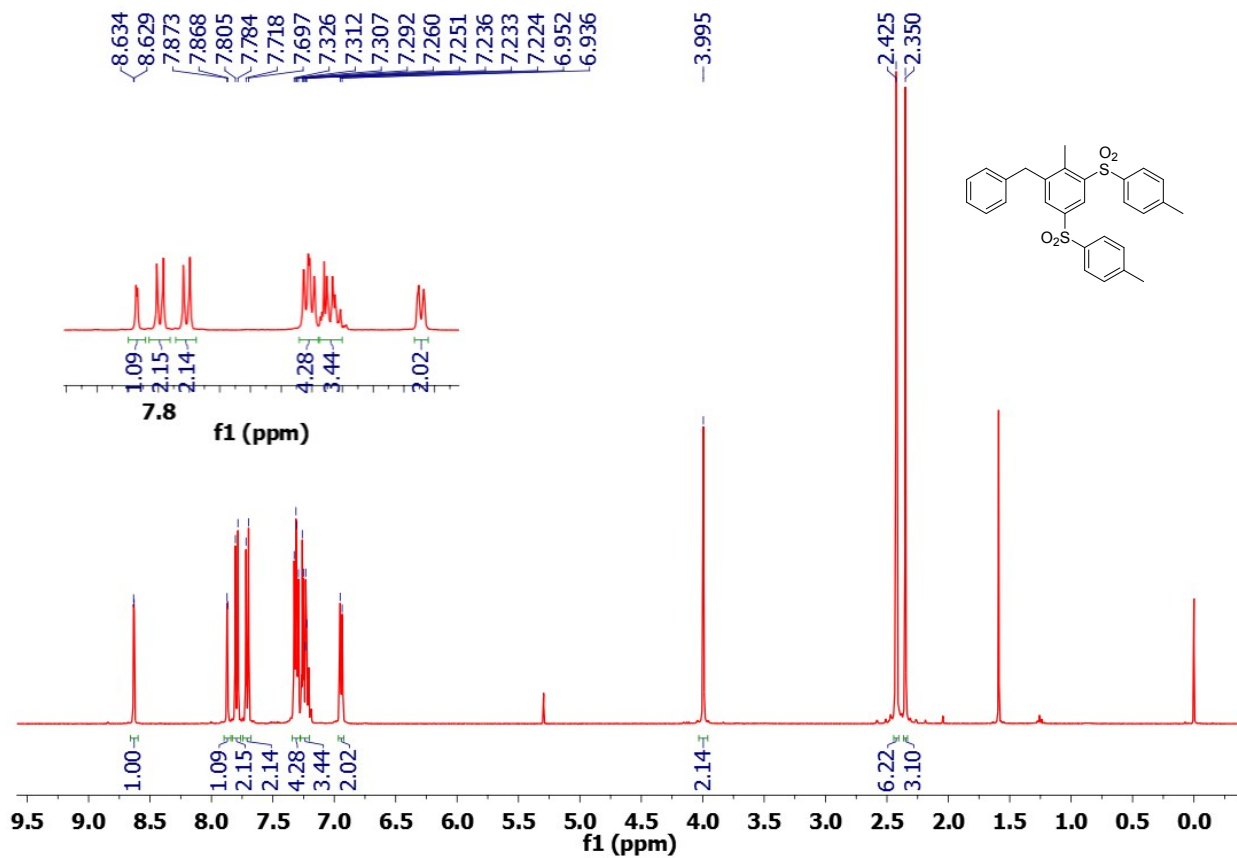
NMR Spectra of new compounds

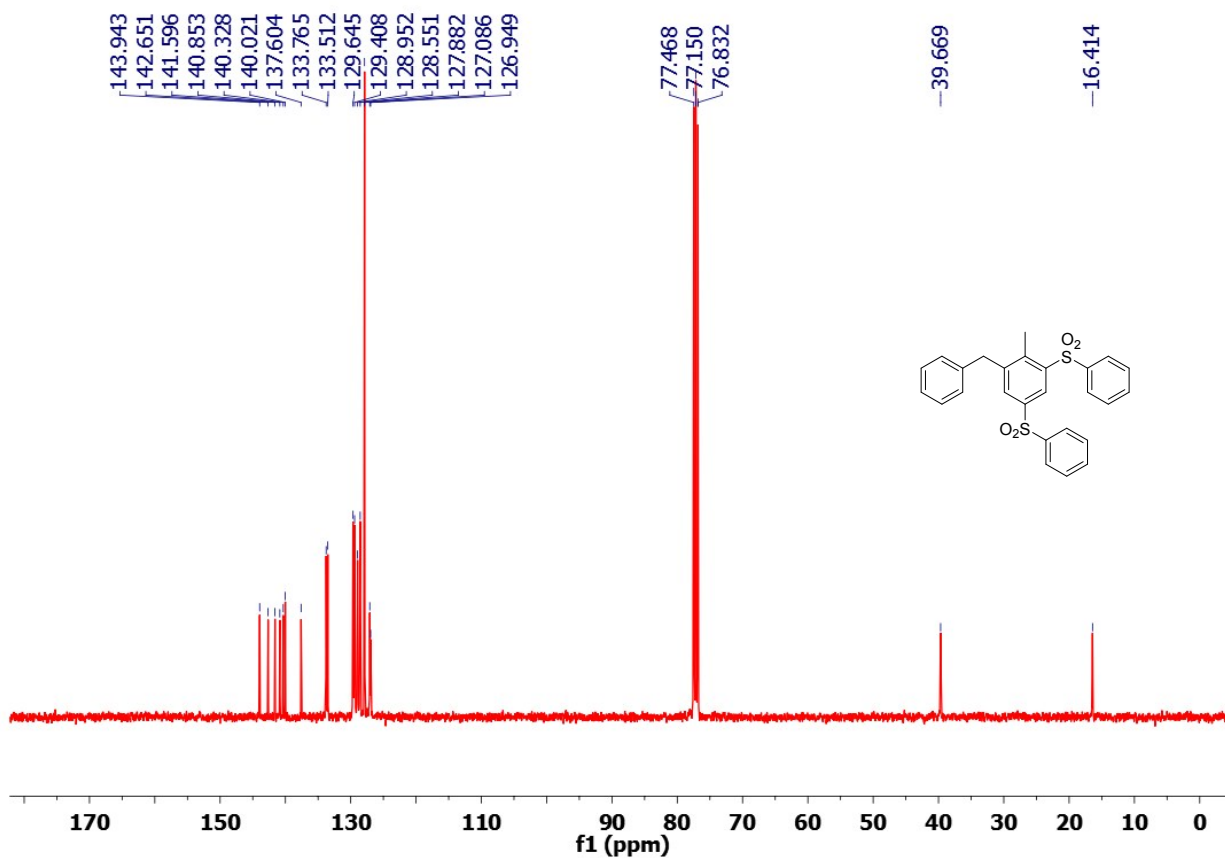
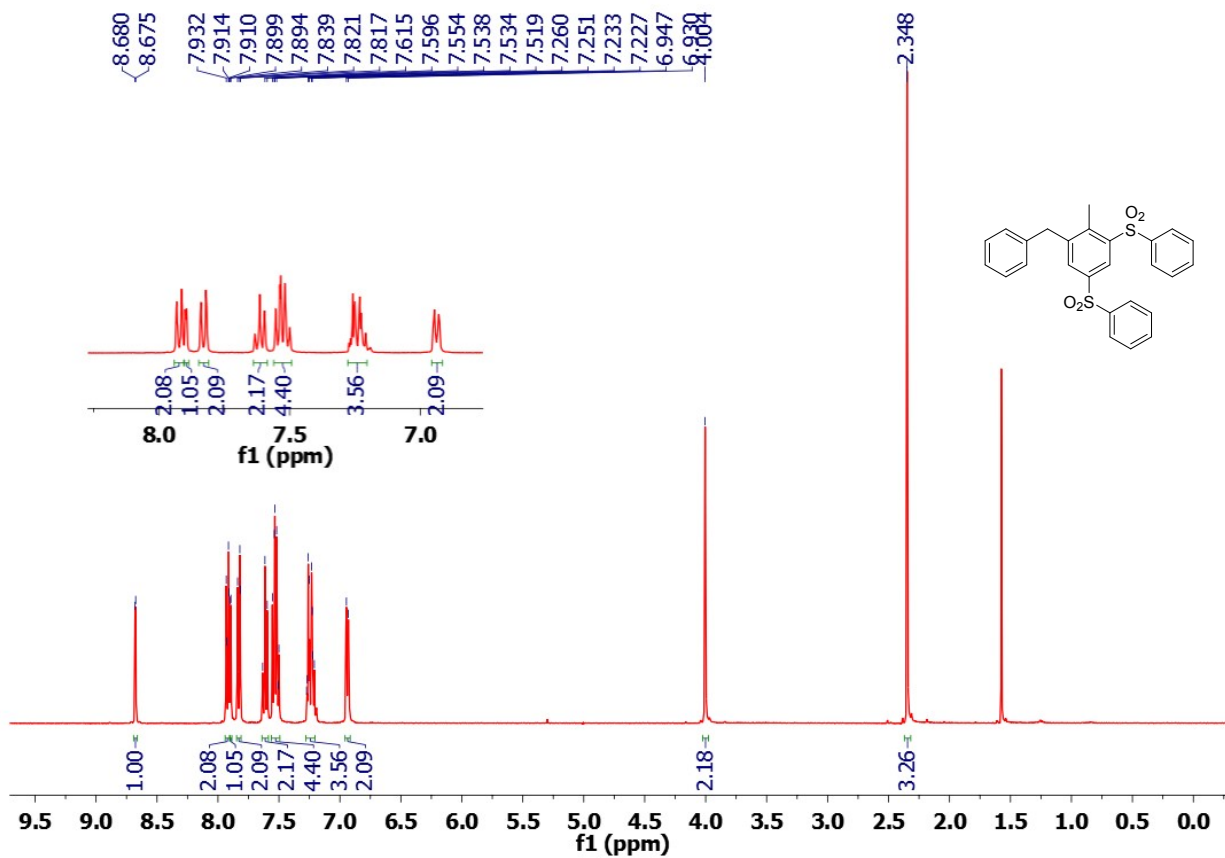


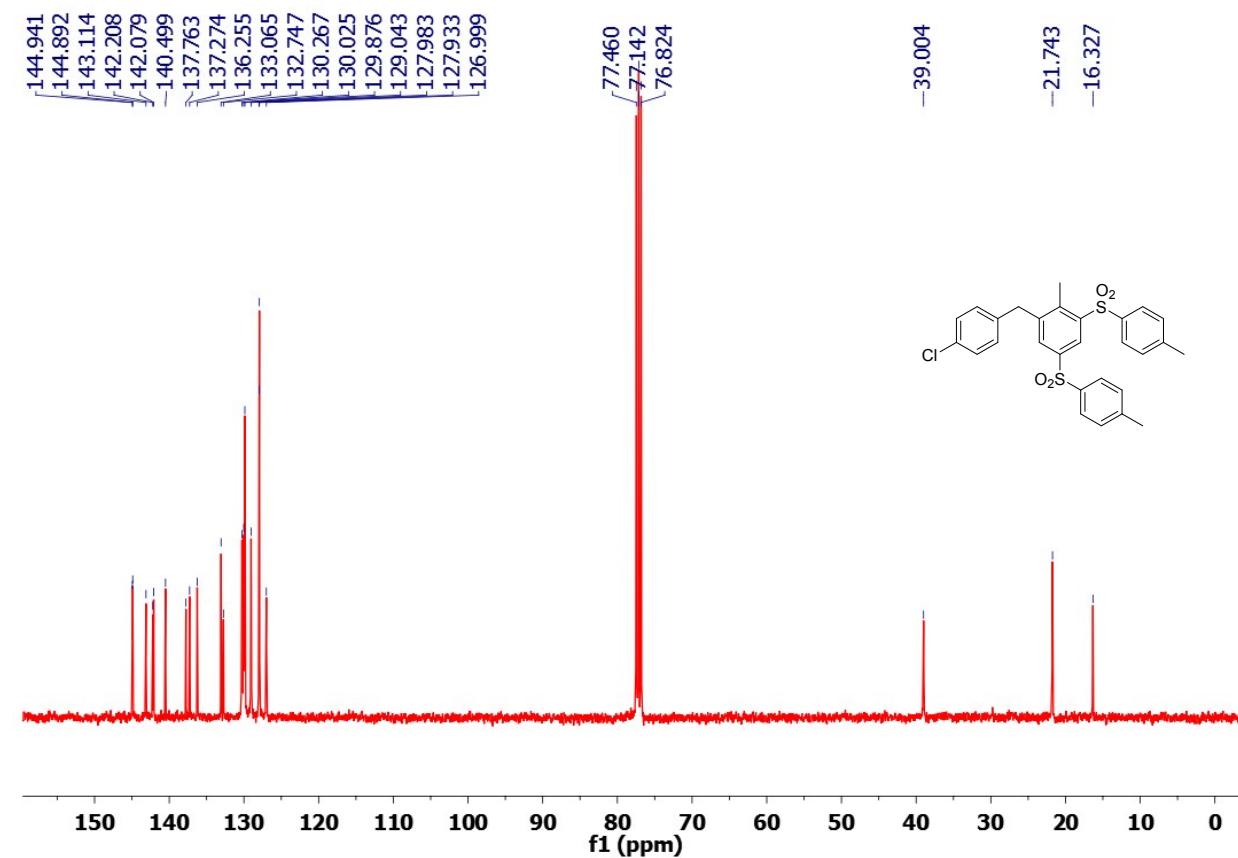
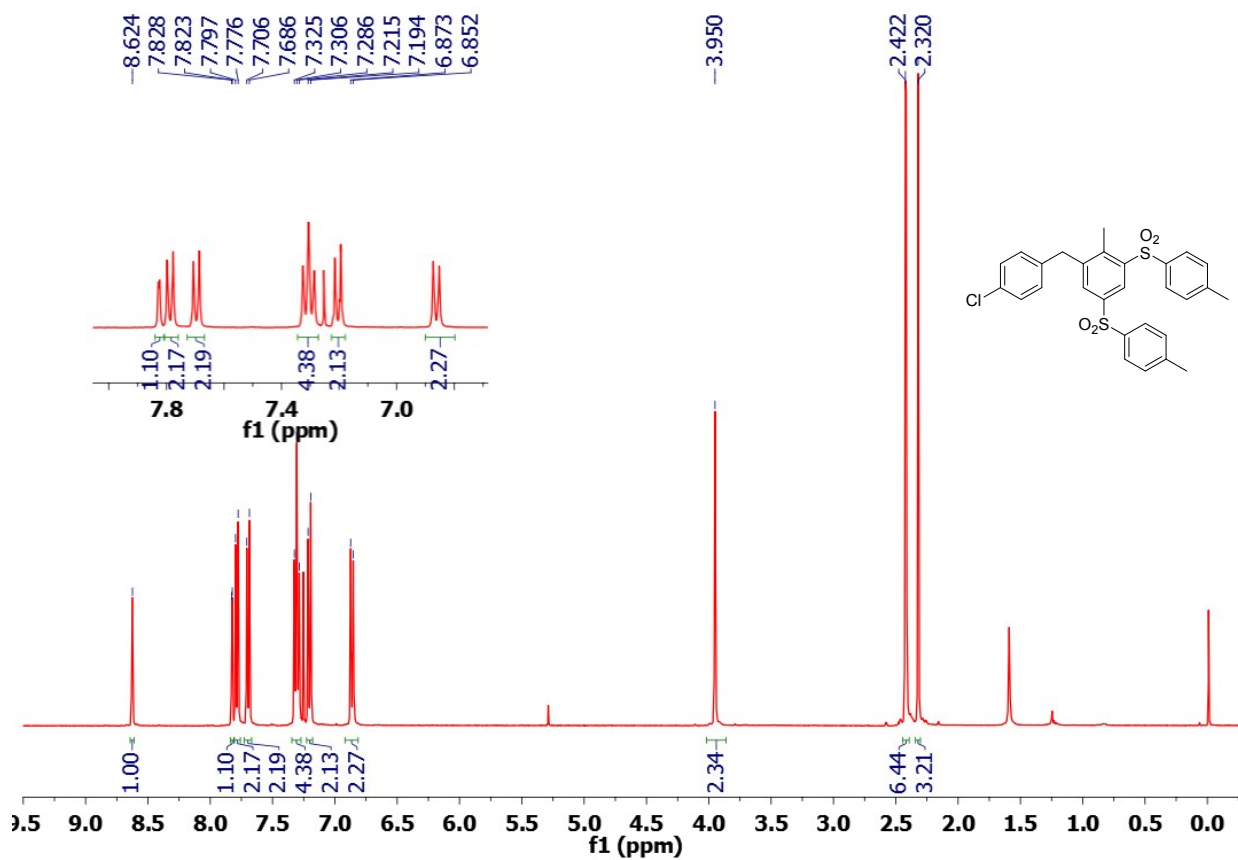


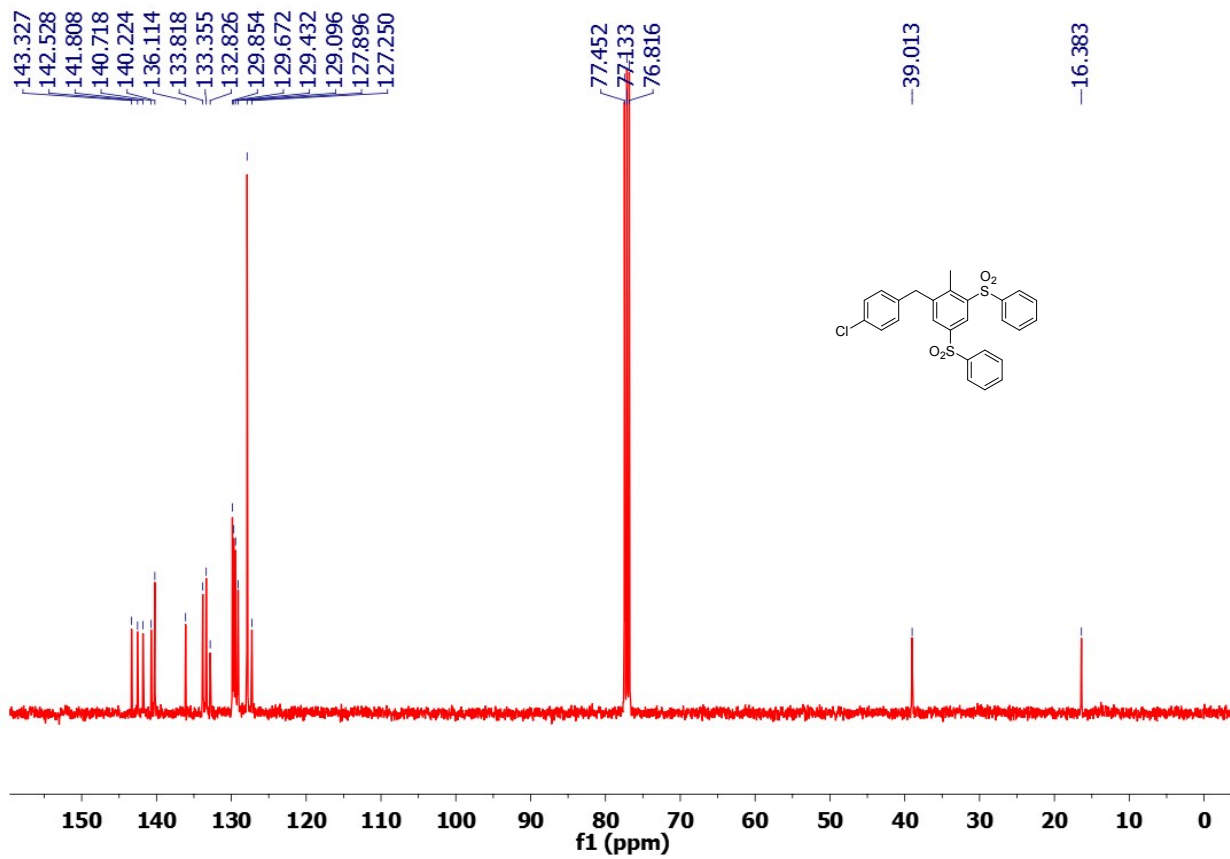
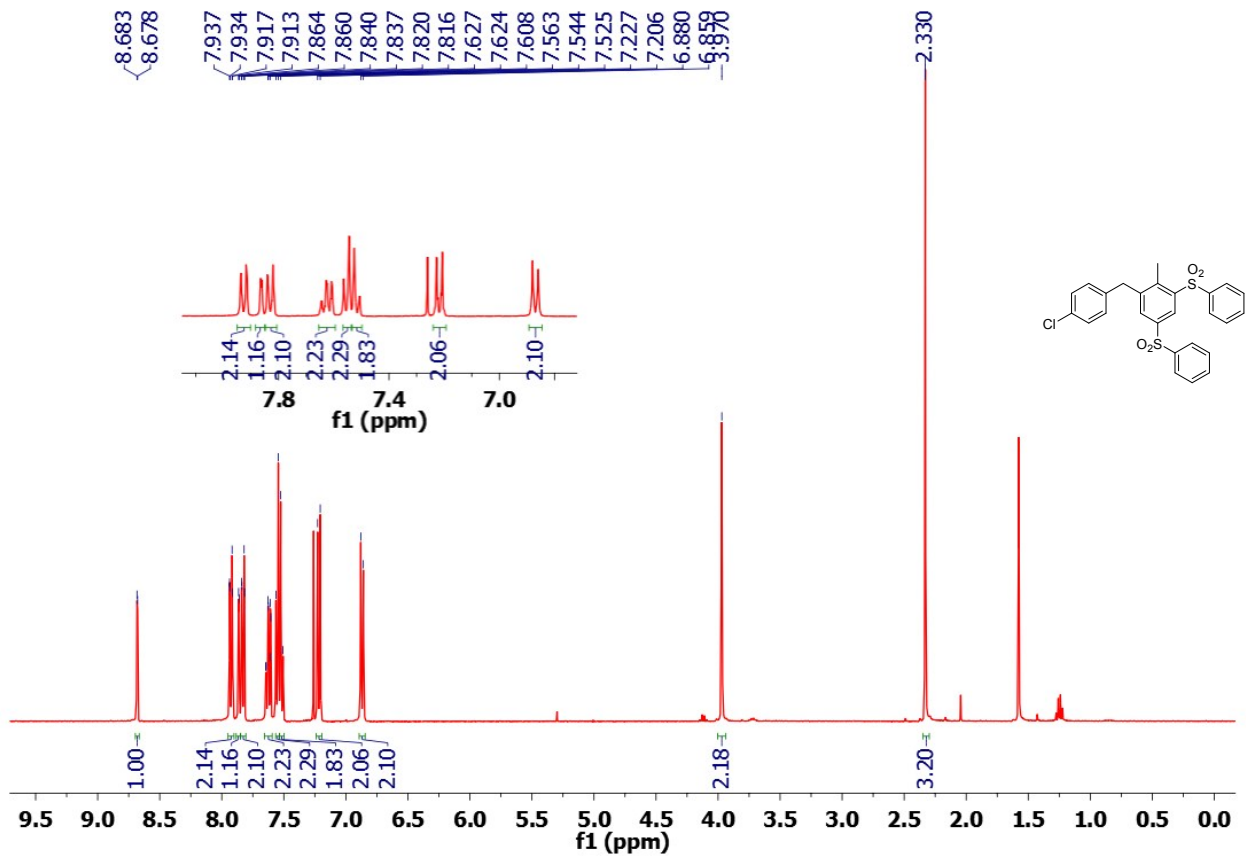


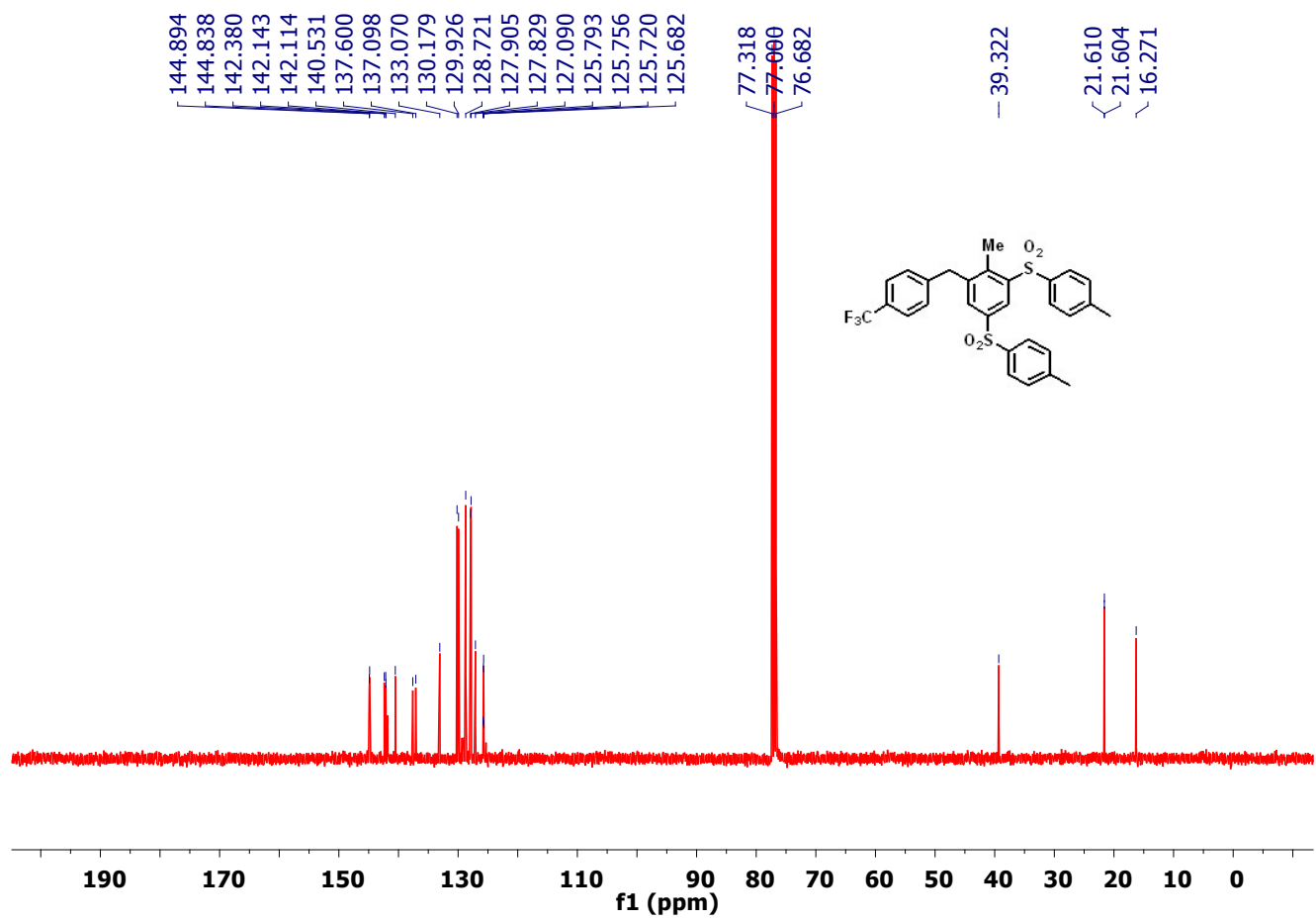
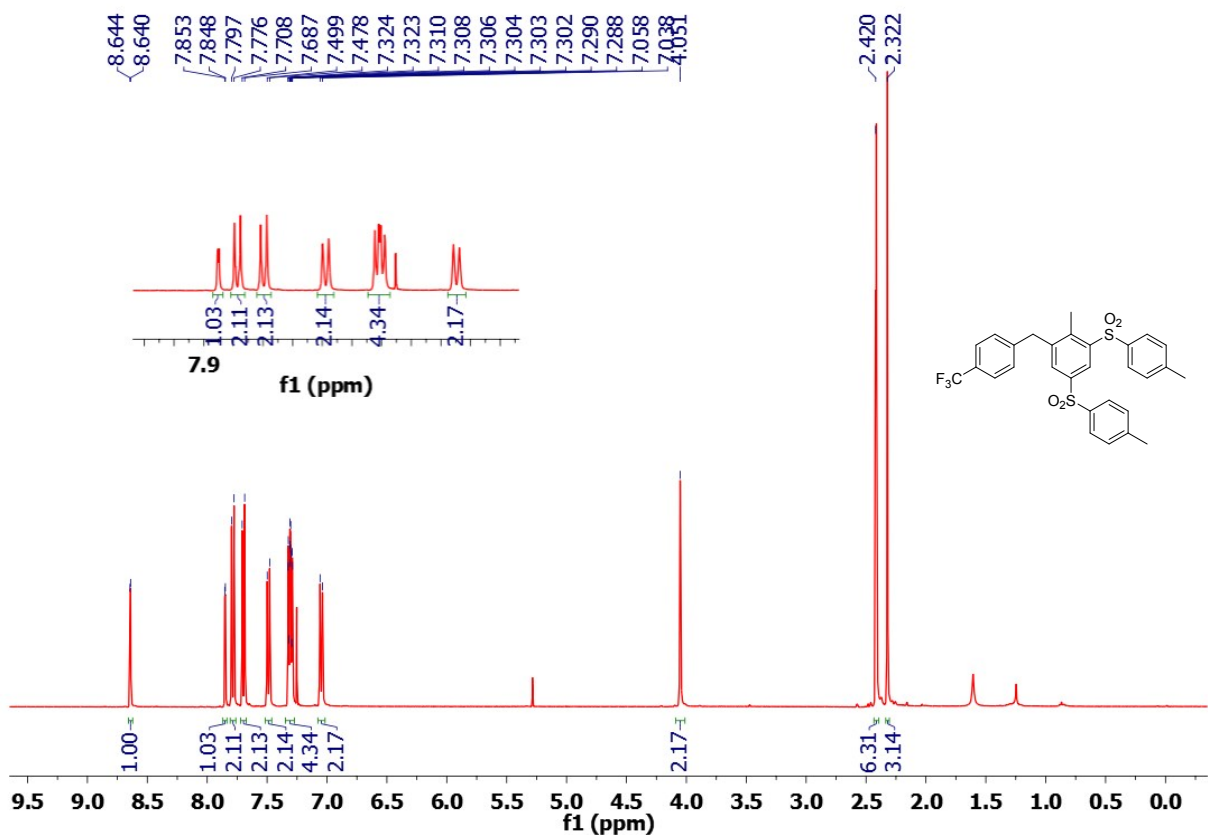


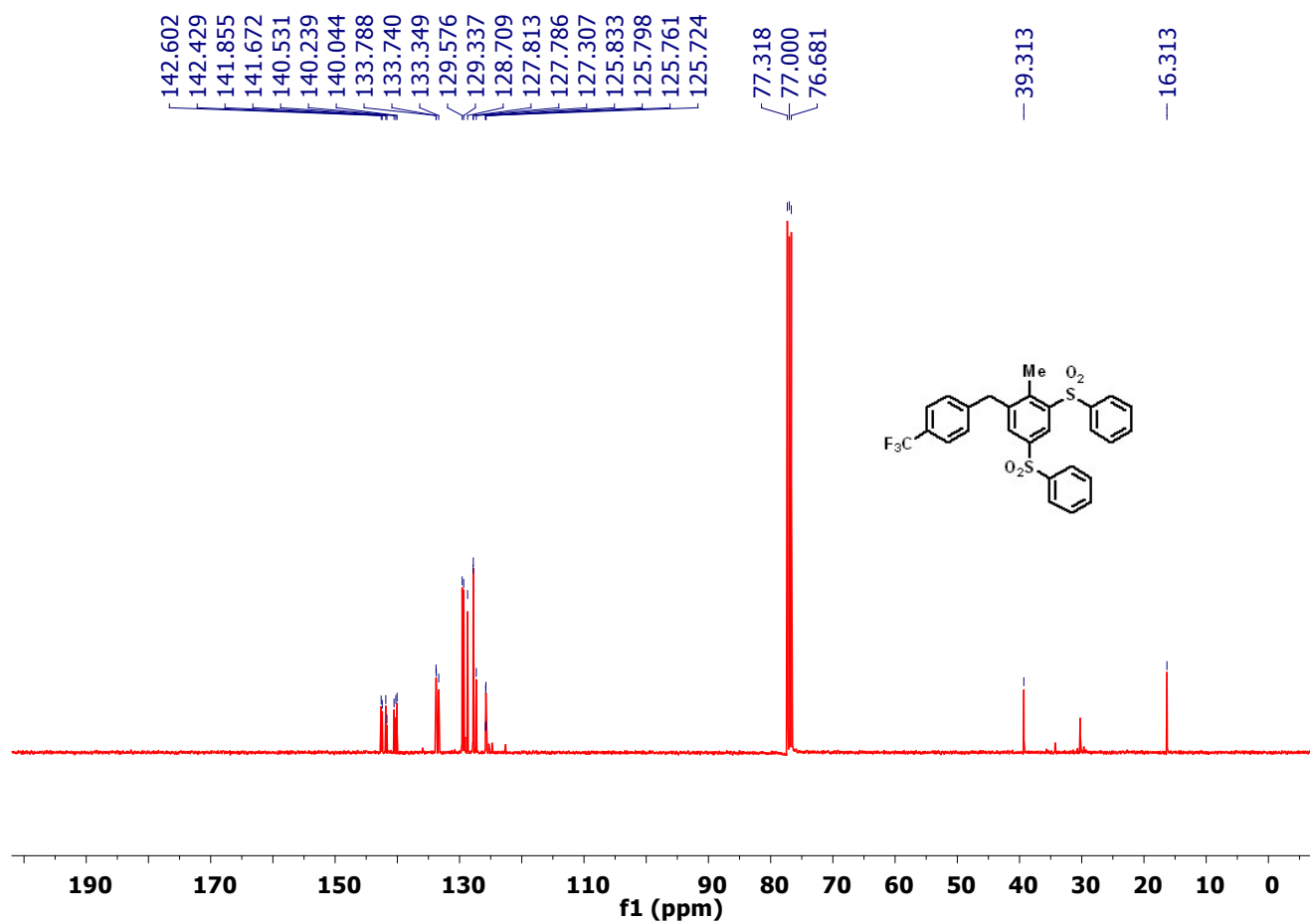
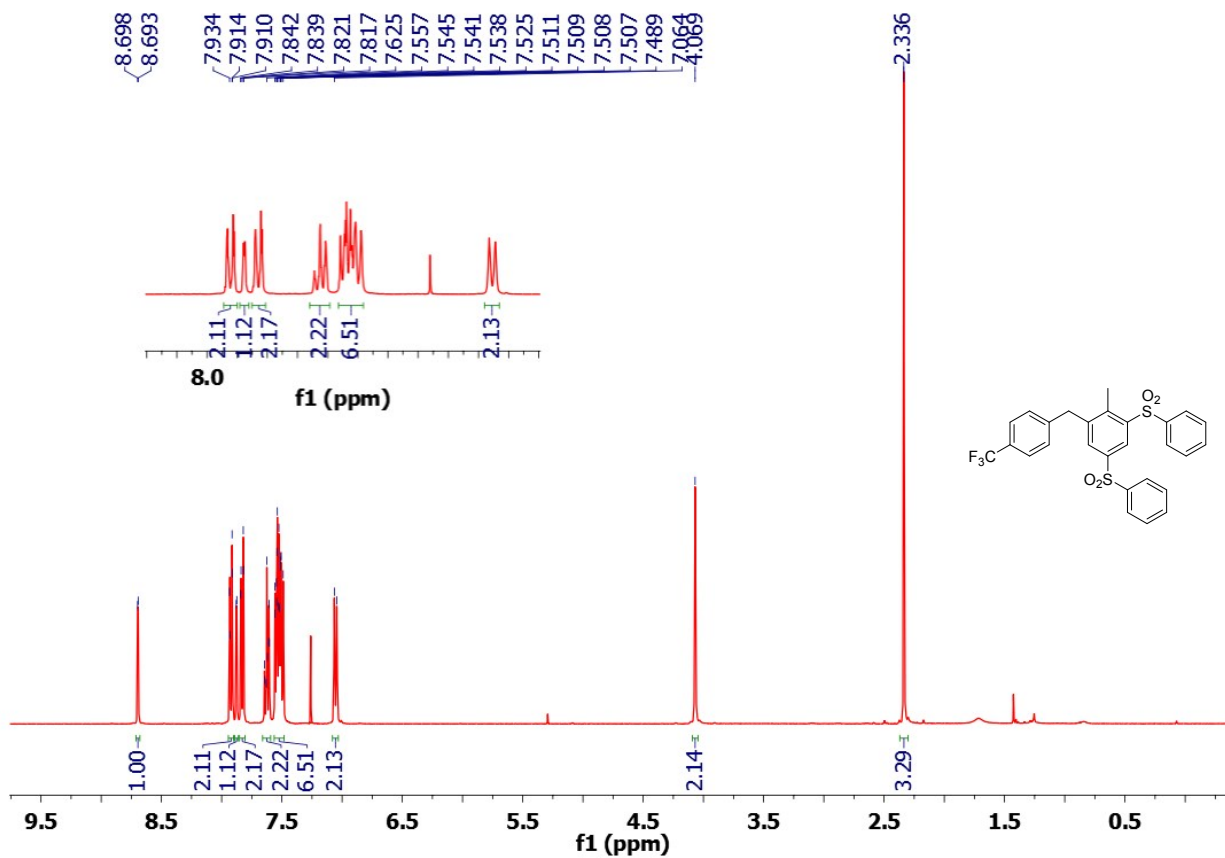


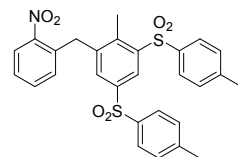
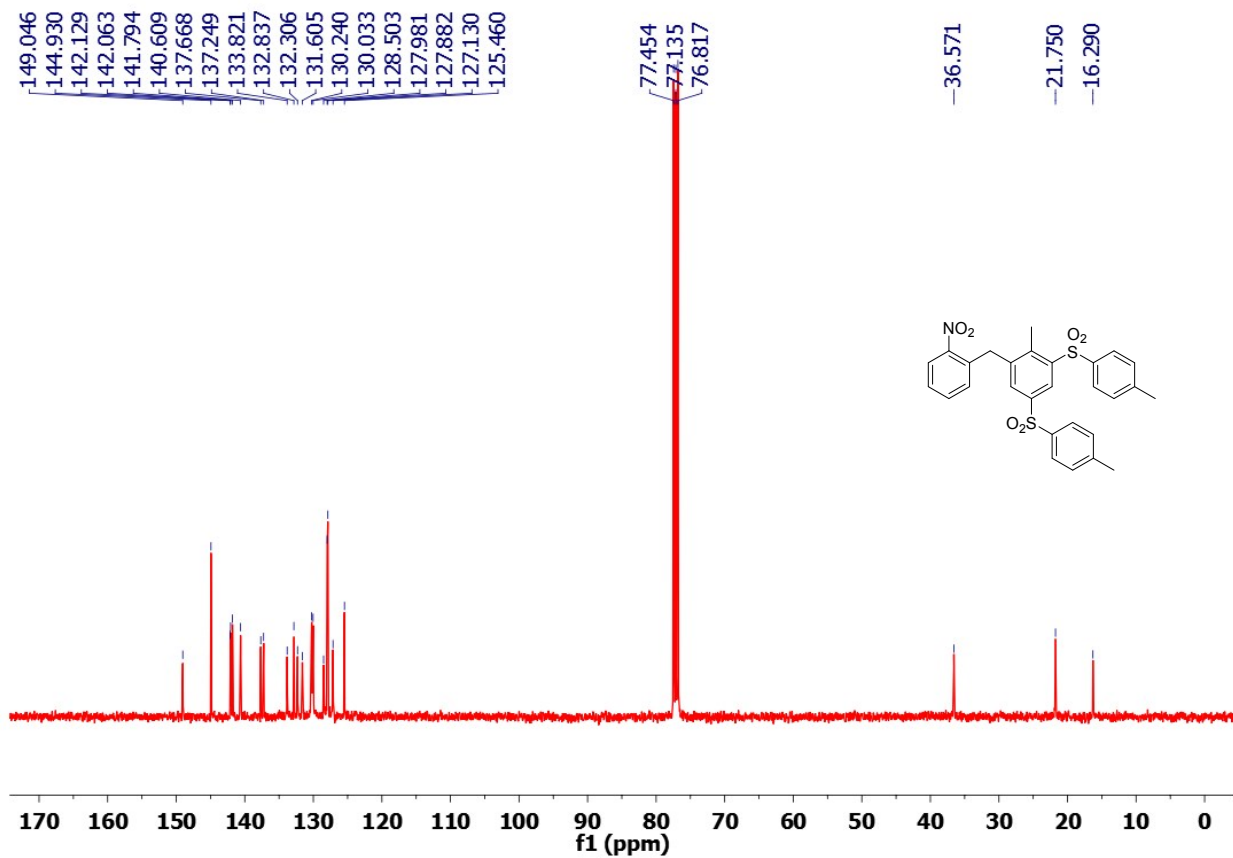
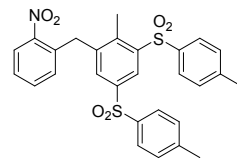
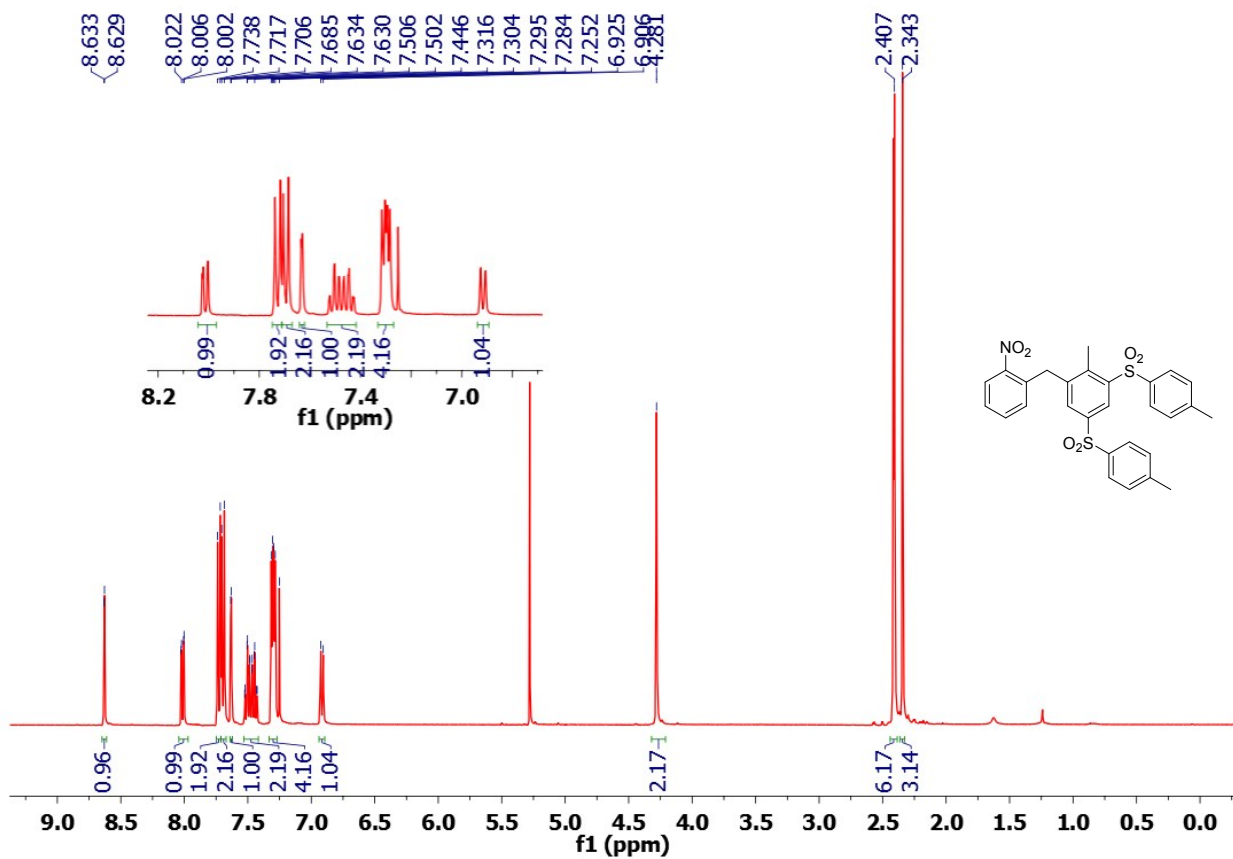


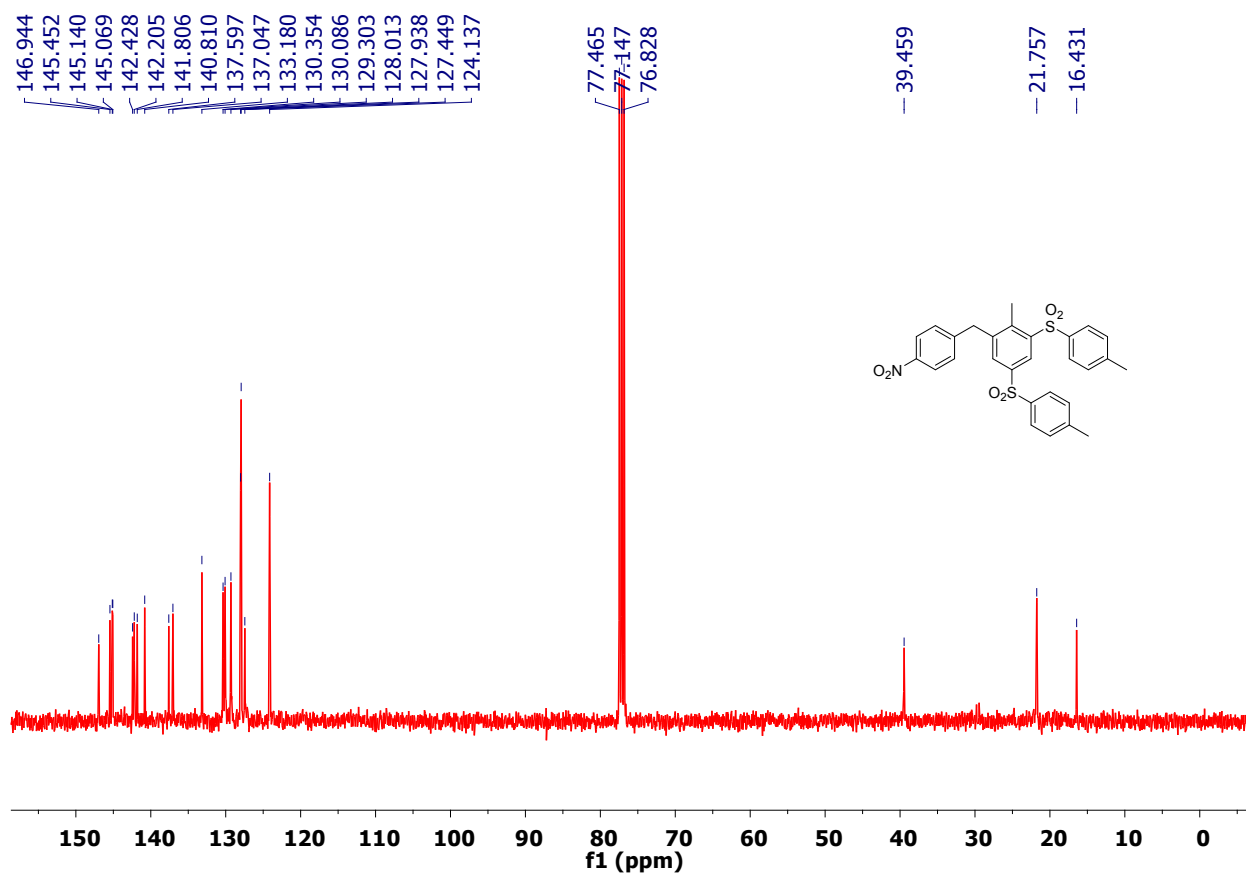
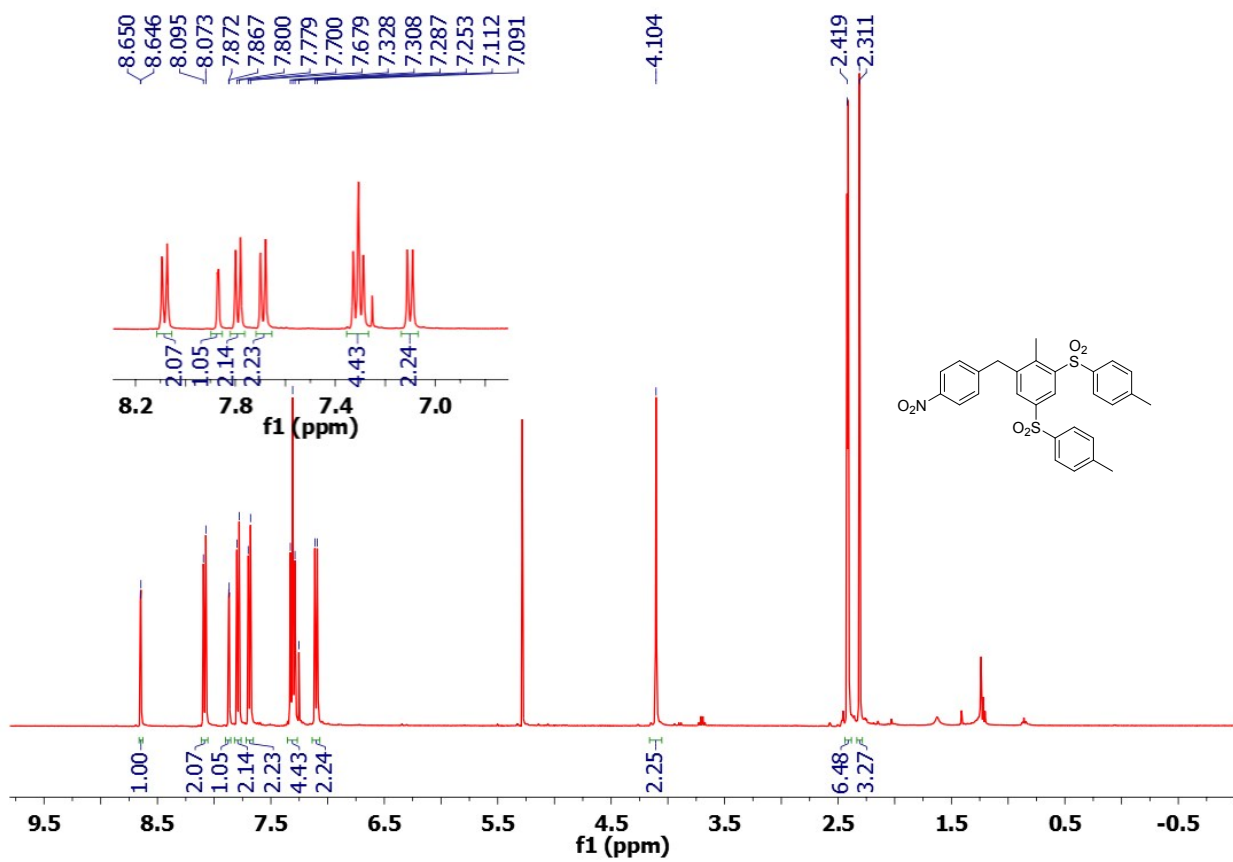


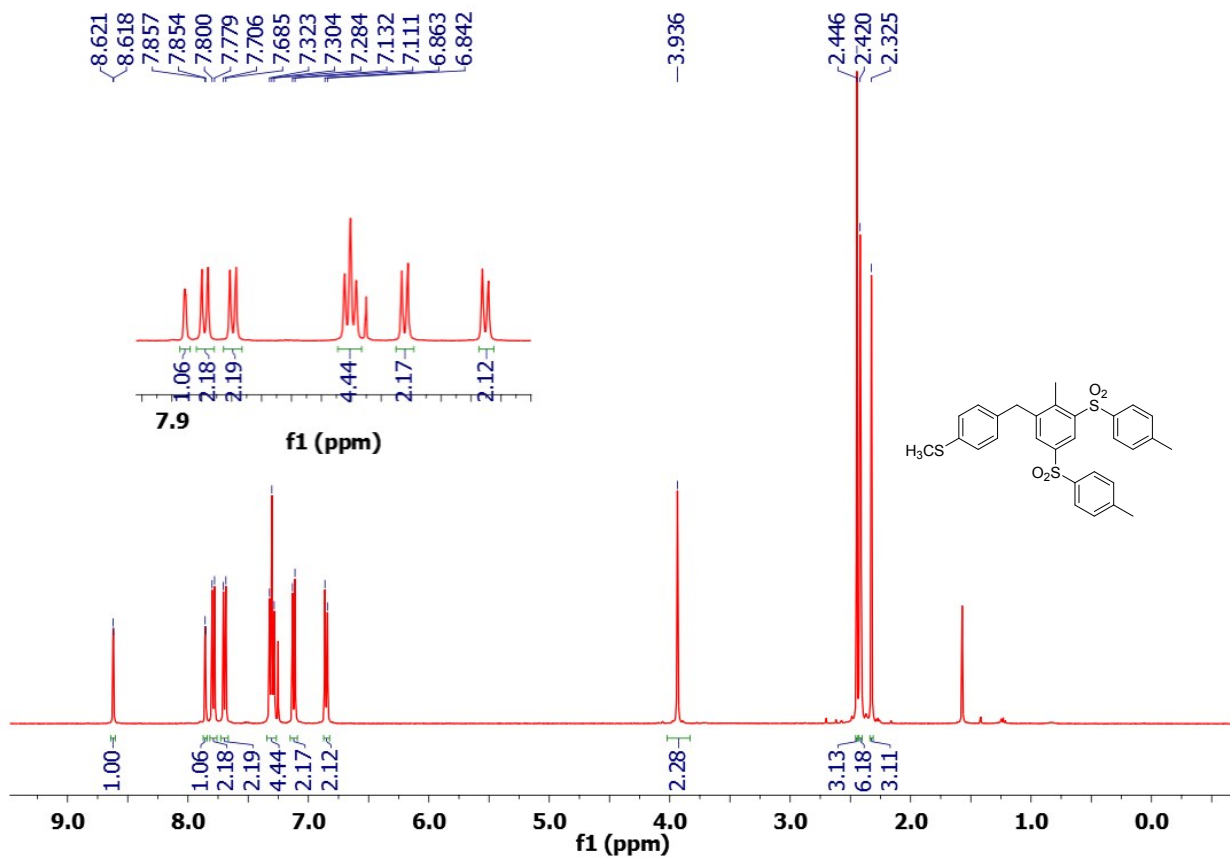












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