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Supporting Information

Ni(II)-Catalyzed Mono-Selective *ortho*-Arylation of Unactivated Aryl C-H Bonds Utilizing Amino Acid as A Directing Group

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1. General Information

Unless otherwise noted, the reagents (chemicals) were purchased from commercial sources, and used without further purification. Water was deionized before used. Analytical thin layer chromatography (TLC) was HSGF 254 (0.15-0.2 mm thickness). Compound spots were visualized by UV light (254 nm). Column chromatography was performed on silica gel FCP 200-300. NMR spectra were run on 500 MHz instrument. Chemical shifts were reported in parts per million (ppm, δ) downfield from tetramethylsilane. Proton coupling patterns are described as singlet (s), doublet (d), triplet (t), quartet (q), multiplet (m), and broad (br). Low- and high-resolution mass spectra (LRMS and HRMS) were measured on spectrometer. Melting points were measured on melting point apparatus.

2. Experimental Procedures

General procedure for synthesis of 2-benzamido-2-methylpropanoic acid¹

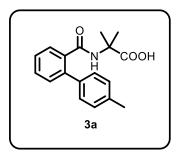
General Procedure for the Synthesis of Substrates **1a**. 2-Amino-2-methylpropionic acid (2 g, 19.4 mmol) was dissolved in 1M NaOH aqueous solution (20 mL). The mixture was cooled to 0 °C, andthen benzoyl chloride (2.30 mL, 19.4 mmol) and 1M NaOH aqueous solution (20 mL) were added dropwise simultaneously. The resulting mixture was stirred for 5 h at room temperature. Then 1 M HCl (60 mL)was added to the reaction mixture and stirred for 10 min. The resulting solid was collected by filtration and washed with water and Et₂O. The desired product 1a was obtained as a white solid (3.02 g, 72%).

General procedures for Ni(II)-Catalyzed Mono-Selective ortho-Arylation of Unactivated Aryl C-H Bonds

Synthesis of **3a** is representative. A 25 mL tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar was charged with 2-amino-2-methylpropionic acid **1a** (0.2 mmol), 1-iodo-4-methylbenzene **2a** (0.60 mmol), Ni(OTf)₂ (10 mol%), MesCOOH (20 mol%), TBAI (0.6mmol) and Na₂CO₃ (0.6mmol). 2 mL of DMSO was charged, and then the resulting mixture was stirred in a pre-heated oil bath at 140 °C for 16 h. After the reaction was completed, 1 M HCl (4 mL)was added to the reaction, the mixture was extracted with Et₂O (30mL) three times and the organic solvent was removed under vacuum. The residue was purified by silica gel column using 2% methanol in DCM as eluent to afford desired arylation product **3a** as a white solid.

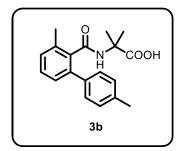
2-methyl-2-(4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-carboxamido)propanoic acid (3a)

Compound **3a** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 48.6 mg, 81% yield. Mp: 177-181°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.41 (s, 1H), 7.50 – 7.46 (m, 1H), 7.40 – 7.37 (m, 3H), 7.34 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.18 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.4, 168.4, 139.1, 137.0, 136.6, 136.2, 129.6, 129.3, 128.6, 128.4, 128.0, 126.6, 55.1, 24.5, 20.7. HRMS (ESI)[M+Na]⁺calcd for C₁₈ H₁₉NNaO₃:320.1257, found:320.1266.



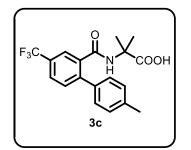
2-(3,4'-dimethyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3b)

Compound **3b** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 40.2 mg, 64% yield. Mp: 195-197°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.34 (s, 1H), 7.32 (dd, *J* = 7.8, 6.4 Hz, 3H), 7.22 – 7.11 (m, 4H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 1.16 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.9, 168.2, 139.3, 137.8, 137.3, 136.5, 135.5, 129.1, 129.0, 128.8, 128.6, 127.2, 55.33, 24.8, 21.1, 19.4.HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd for C₁₉H₂₂NO₃: 312.1594, found: 312.1589.



2-methyl-2-(4'-methyl-4-(trifluoromethyl)-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)propanoic acid (3c)

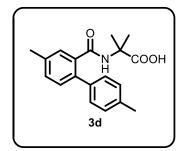
Compound **3c** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 50.2 mg, 68% yield. Mp: 242-245°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.72 (s, 1H), 7.86 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.66 – 7.63 (m, 2H), 7.40 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.24 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 1.35 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.6, 167.5, 143.8, 137.8, 137.7, 136.0, 131.2, 129.3, 128.9, 127.5 (q, J = 32.2 Hz), 126.5, 125.0, 124.5 (q, J = 272.2 Hz), 55.8, 24.9, 21.2.**HRMS** (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd for C₁₉H₁₉F₃NO₃: 366.1312, found: 366.1320.



2-(4,4'-dimethyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3d)

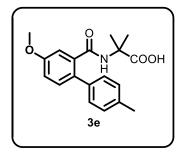
Compound **3d** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 49.1 mg, 78% yield. Mp:

197-201°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.37 (s, 1H), 7.28 (dd, *J* = 13.6, 6.0 Hz, 4H), 7.18 (s, 1H), 7.14 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 1.30 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.5, 168.4, 136.9, 136.5, 136.3, 136.0, 135.9, 129.9, 129.6, 128.4, 128.4, 128.4, 55.1, 24.5, 20.7, 20.4. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd for C₁₉H₂₂NO₃: 312.1594, found: 312.1593.



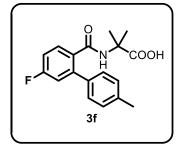
2-(4-methoxy-4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3e)

Compound **3e** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 33.7 mg, 51% yield. Mp: 203-205°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.34 (s, 1H), 7.31 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.28 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 7.15 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 7.06 (dd, J = 8.5, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, J = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 3.82 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 1.32 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.9, 168.4, 158.3, 138.1, 137.2, 136.1, 132.11, 131.4, 129.0, 128.8, 115.2, 114.0, 55.8, 55.7, 24.9, 21.1. HRMS (ESI)[M-H]⁻calcd forC₁₉H₂₀NO₄: 326.1398, found: 326.1395.



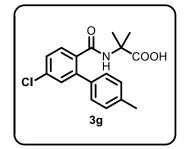
2-(5-fluoro-4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3f)

Compound **3f** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 49.1 mg, 77% yield. Mp: 193-195°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.44 (s, 1H), 7.43 (dd, J = 7.9, 6.4 Hz, 1H), 7.35 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.23 (dd, J = 13.3, 5.9 Hz, 2H), 7.19 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.8, 168.0, 162.6 (d, J = 246.2 Hz), 142.4 (d, J = 8.1 Hz), 137.4, 136.3, 133.6 (d, J = 2.7 Hz), 130.8 (d, J = 8.7 Hz), 129.2, 128.9, 116.6 (d, J = 21.8 Hz), 113.8 (d, J = 21.3 Hz), 55.6, 24.9, 21.2. HRMS (ESI)[M-H]-calcd forC₁₈H₁₇FNO₃: 314.1198, found: 314.1197.



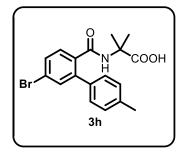
2-(5-chloro-4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3g)

Compound **3g** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 44.2 mg, 66% yield. Mp: 167-170°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.52 (s, 1H), 7.47 (dd, J = 8.1, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.43 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.40 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.35 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.19 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.30 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 137.0, 129.9, 129.1, 128.8, 128.4, 126.5, 55.1, 24.5, 20.7. HRMS (ESI)[M-H] calcd for C₁₈H₁₇CINO₃: 330.0902, found: 330.0901.



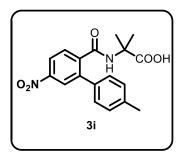
2-(5-bromo-4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3h)

Compound **3h** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 48.5 mg, 64% yield. Mp: 177-179°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.51 (s, 1H), 7.61 (dd, J = 8.1, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.56 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (dd, J = 8.1, 5.0 Hz, 3H), 7.19 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.30 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.3, 167.5, 141.5, 137.0, 135.7, 135.5, 131.9, 130.1, 129.5, 128.8, 128.4, 122.4, 55.2, 24.5, 20.7. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd forC₁₈H₁₉BrNO₃: 376.0543, found: 376.0541.



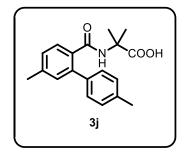
2-methyl-2-(4'-methyl-5-nitro-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)propanoic acid (3i)

Compound **3i** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 51.9 mg, 75% yield. Mp: 206-208°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.28 (s, 1H), 7.80 (dd, J = 8.3, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.70 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 6.98 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 6.79 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 1.90 (s, 3H), 0.88 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.6, 167.2, 148.2, 142.9, 141.0, 138.0, 135.3, 130.0, 129.4, 128.9, 124.5, 122.2, 55.9, 24.9, 21.2. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd forC₁₈H₁₉N₂O₅: 343.1288, found: 343.1290.



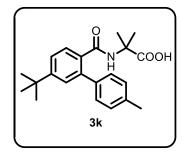
2-(4',5-dimethyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3j)

Compound **3j** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 48.4 mg, 77% yield. Mp: 192-194°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.30 (s, 1H), 7.31 (dd, J = 8.0, 6.2 Hz, 3H), 7.18 (dd, J = 13.9, 6.7 Hz, 4H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.5, 168.4, 139.2, 138.9, 137.1, 136.1, 133.9, 130.2, 128.6, 128.4, 128.1, 127.1, 55.0, 24.5, 20.8, 20.7. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd forC₁₉H₂₂NO₃: 312.1594, found: 312.1594.



2-(5-(tert-butyl)-4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (3k)

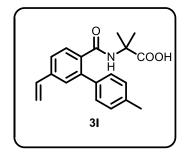
Compound **3j** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 54.3 mg, 76% yield. Mp: 199-202°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.31 (s, 1H), 7.42 (dd, J = 8.1, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.33 (dd, J = 5.0, 2.9 Hz, 4H), 7.18 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.32 (s, 9H), 1.30 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.9, 168.9, 152.3, 139.3, 137.9, 136.6, 134.6, 129.1, 129.0, 128.3, 126.9, 124.0, 55.5, 34.9, 31.4, 25.0, 21.1.HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd forC₂₂H₂₈NO₃: 354.2064, found: 354.2067.



2-methyl-2-(4'-methyl-5-vinyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)propanoic acid (31)

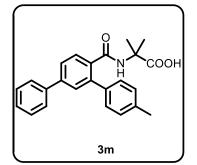
Compound **31** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 49.7 mg, 76% yield. Mp: $123-126^{\circ}$ C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.39 (s, 1H), 7.51 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.37 (dd, *J* = 15.3, 8.0 Hz, 3H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 6.81 (dd, *J* = 17.7, 11.0 Hz, 1H), 5.94 (d, *J* = 17.6 Hz, 1H), 5.34 (d, *J* = 11.5 Hz, 1H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.4, 168.2, 139.6, 138.1, 136.9, 136.4, 136.0, 136.0, 128.6, 128.5, 128.4, 127.6, 124.0, 115.6, 55.1, 24.5, 20.7.**HRMS** (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd forC₂₀H₂₂NO₃: 324.1594, found: 324.1599.



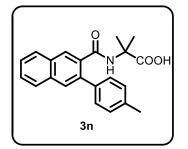
2-methyl-2-(4"-methyl-[1,1':3',1"-terphenyl]-4'-ylcarboxamido)propanoic acid (3m)

Compound **3m** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 55.8 mg, 74% yield. Mp: 188-191°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.46 (s, 1H), 7.74 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.68 (dd, J = 7.9, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (s, 1H), 7.52 – 7.47 (m, 3H), 7.44 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.40 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.20 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.34 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.9, 168.7, 141.7, 140.3, 139.9, 137.4, 136.9, 136.1, 129.5, 129.3, 129.1, 129.0, 128.4, 128.3, 127.4, 125.4, 55.6, 25.0, 21.2. HRMS (ESI)[M-H]-calcd forC₂₄H₂₄NO₃:372.1605, found: 372.1595.



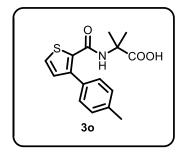
2-methyl-2-(3-(p-tolyl)-2-naphthamido)propanoic acid (3n)

Compound **3n** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 42.1 mg, 60% yield. Mp: 247-250°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.70 (s, 1H), 8.27 – 8.24 (m, 1H), 8.00 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.99 – 7.96 (m, 1H), 7.57 – 7.54 (m, 2H), 7.50 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.23 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 1.23 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.5, 167.5, 137.2, 136.5, 135.6, 133.9, 131.8, 130.5, 128.9, 128.6, 128.4, 127.9, 127.6, 126.6, 126.0, 125.9, 55.1, 20.7, 19.3. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcd forC₂₂H₂₂NO₃:348.1594, found: 348.1596.



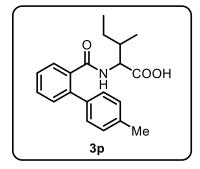
2-methyl-2-(3-(p-tolyl)thiophene-2-carboxamido)propanoic acid (30)

Compound **30** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 25.8 mg, 42% yield. Mp: 140-142°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 7.91 (s, 1H), 7.68 (d, J = 5.1 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.21 (s, 1H), 7.19 (d, J = 5.0 Hz, 2H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.32 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.2, 161.8, 141.3, 136.9, 132.6, 131.9, 129.6, 128.9, 128.5, 127.1, 55.6, 24.4, 20.7. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₆H₁₈NO₃S: 304.1002, found: 304.1009.



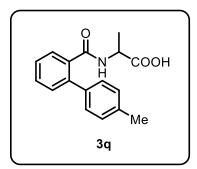
3-methyl-2-(4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)pentanoic acid (3p)

Compound **3p** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 19.6 mg, 30% yield. Mp: 97-101°C.¹H **NMR** (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 7.48 (ddd, *J* = 8.8, 4.6, 2.9 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 3.9 Hz, 2H), 7.35 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.16 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 4.08 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 6.2 Hz, 1H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 1.75 – 1.71 (m, 1H), 1.30 – 1.25 (m, 2H), 0.77 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H), 0.75 (d, *J* = 4.6 Hz, 3H).¹³C **NMR** (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 172.9, 169.0, 139.1, 137.3, 136.9, 136.3, 129.6, 129.3, 128.7, 128.3, 127.9, 127.8, 126.7, 57.1, 36.0, 24.6, 20.6, 19.3, 15.5, 11.2. **HRMS** (ESI)[M-H]⁻calcdfor C₂₀H₂₂NO₃: 324.1605, found: 324.1601.



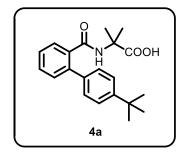
2-(4'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)propanoic acid (3q)

Compound **3q** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 19.6 mg, 30% yield. Mp: 97-101°C.¹H **NMR** (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 7.51 – 7.47 (m, 1H), 7.44 – 7.36 (m, 3H), 7.32 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.17 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 4.20 – 4.13 (m, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 1.20 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H).¹³C **NMR** (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 173.8, 168.6, 139.2, 137.1, 136.5, 136.2, 129.7, 129.4, 128.6, 128.3, 127.9, 126.6, 48.0, 20.6, 16.9. **HRMS** (ESI)[M-H]⁻calcdfor C₁₇H₁₆NO₃Ion(M-H): 282.1136, found: 282.1132.



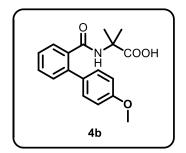
2-(4'-(tert-butyl)-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4a)

Compound **4a** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 54.8 mg, 80% yield. Mp: 181-184°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.34 (s, 1H), 7.51 – 7.46 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.37 (m, 7H), 1.32 (s, 9H), 1.30 (s, 6H).¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.9, 168.8, 149.9, 139.6, 137.4, 137.1, 130.1, 129.8, 128.7, 128.5, 127.1, 125.2, 55.5, 34.6, 31.6, 24.9.HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₂₁H₂₆NO₃: 340.1907, found: 340.1905.



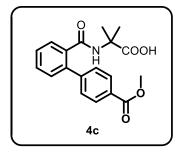
2-(4'-methoxy-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4b)

Compound **4b** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 41.8 mg, 66% yield. Mp: 177-180°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 7.49 – 7.45 (m, 1H), 7.40 – 7.35 (m, 5H), 6.93 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 1.32 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.9, 168.9, 168.8, 159.0, 139.3, 137.0, 137.0, 132.6, 130.2, 130.0, 129.8, 128.5, 126.8, 114.2, 55.5, 55.4, 25.0. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₈H₂₀NO₄: 314.1387, found: 314.1391.



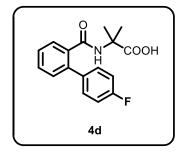
2-(4'-(methoxycarbonyl)-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4c)

Compound **4c**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 52.4 mg, 76% yield. Mp: 178-180°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.55 (s, 1H), 7.96 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.56 – 7.52 (m, 1H), 7.49 – 7.45 (m, 3H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.4, 168.0, 166.1, 144.8, 144.7, 138.2, 136.8, 129.6, 129.0, 128.9, 128.2, 128.1,



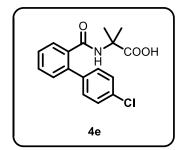
2-(4'-fluoro-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4d)

Compound **4d**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 45.1 mg, 74% yield. Mp: 198-201°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.43 (s, 1H), 7.52 – 7.38 (m, 6H), 7.19 (t, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 2H), 1.30 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.8, 168.6, 162.1 (d, *J* = 243.7 Hz), 138.6, 137.3, 136.7 (d, *J* = 2.8 Hz), 131.0 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz), 130.1, 129.9, 128.4, 127.5, 115.3 (d, *J* = 21.3 Hz), 55.6, 24.9. HRMS(ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₇H₁₇FNO₃: 302.1187, found: 302.1192.



2-(4'-chloro-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4e)

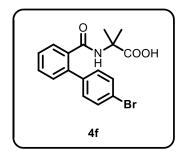
Compound **4e**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 42.3 mg, 66% yield. Mp: 212-214°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.50 (s, 1H), 7.51 (ddd, J = 7.6, 6.2, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.46 – 7.40 (m, 7H), 1.32 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.8, 168.5, 139.2, 138.4, 137.2, 132.5, 130.8, 130.1, 130.0, 128.6, 128.5, 127.7, 55.7, 24.9. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₇H₁₇ClNO₃: 318.0891, found:318.0889.



2-(4'-bromo-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4f)

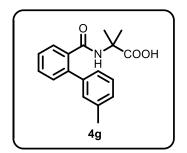
Compound **4f**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 50.4 mg, 69% yield. Mp: $222-225^{\circ}$ C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 7.57 – 7.55 (m, 2H), 7.53 – 7.50 (m, 1H), 7.46 – 7.40

(m, 3H), 7.40 – 7.37 (m, 2H), 1.32 (s, 6H). ¹³**C NMR** (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.3, 168.1, 139.1, 138.1, 136.6, 136.5, 130.9, 130.7, 129.6, 128.2, 127.3, 120.6, 55.1, 24.5. **HRMS** (ESI)[M-H]⁻calcdfor C₁₇H₁₅BrNO₃: 360.0241, found:360.0237.



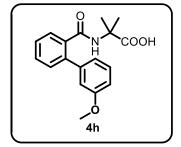
2-methyl-2-(3'-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)propanoic acid (4g)

Compound **4g**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 45.1 mg, 75% yield. Mp: 178-181 °C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.33 (s, 1H), 7.48 (dd, J = 7.5, 4.0 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (t, J = 6.7 Hz, 3H), 7.26 (dd, J = 15.6, 8.2 Hz, 3H), 7.14 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 1.29 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.8, 168.7, 140.3, 139.7, 137.4, 137.3, 130.1, 129.8, 129.6, 128.5, 128.4, 128.2, 127.3, 126.1, 55.6, 24.9, 21.4. **HRMS** (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₈H₂₀NO₃: 298.1438, found:298.1440.



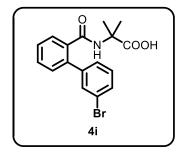
2-(3'-methoxy-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4h)

Compound **4h**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 43.7 mg, 69% yield. Mp: 196-198°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.37 (s, 1H), 7.49 (dd, J = 10.2, 4.6 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (dd, J = 15.1, 7.9 Hz, 3H), 7.28 (t, J = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (s, 1H), 6.90 (dd, J = 8.2, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 1.27 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.4, 168.2, 158.9, 141.3, 139.1, 136.8, 129.7, 129.3, 129.0, 127.9, 127.0, 121.0, 114.0, 112.7, 55.0, 55.0, 24.5. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₈H₂₀NO₄: 314.1387, found:314.1393.



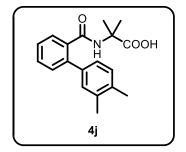
2-(3'-bromo-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4i)

Compound **4i**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 46.7 mg, 64% yield. Mp: 202-205°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.47 (s, 1H), 7.57 (s, 1H), 7.52 (dd, J = 14.6, 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.44 (dd, J = 21.0, 7.2 Hz, 4H), 7.35 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.7, 168.4, 142.8, 138.0, 137.3, 131.4, 130.7, 130.4, 130.1, 130.0, 128.4, 128.2, 128.0, 121.8, 55.7, 25.0. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₇H₁₇BrNO₃: 362.0386, found:362.0390.



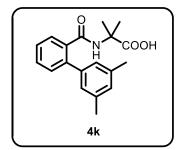
2-(3',4'-dimethyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4j)

Compound **4j**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 50.3 mg, 80% yield. Mp: 203-205°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.35 (s, 1H), 7.49 – 7.44 (m, 1H), 7.39 – 7.35 (m, 3H), 7.20 (s, 1H), 7.15 (dd, *J* = 17.7, 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.24 (s, 3H), 2.23 (s, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.9, 168.8, 139.6, 137.9, 137.2, 136.1, 135.4, 130.0, 129.7, 129.7, 128.4, 127.0, 126.3, 55.6, 24.9, 19.8, 19.5. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₉H₂₂NO₃: 312.1594, found:312.1602.



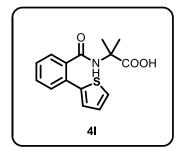
2-(3',5'-dimethyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4k)

Compound **4j**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 47.8 mg, 76% yield. Mp: 194-197°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.31 (s, 1H), 7.49 – 7.45 (m, 1H), 7.40 – 7.36 (m, 3H), 7.03 (s, 2H), 6.96 (s, 1H), 2.28 (s, 6H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.8, 168.7, 140.3, 139.8, 137.4, 137.2, 130.1, 129.7, 128.9, 128.4, 127.2, 126.8, 55.6, 24.9, 21.3. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₉H₂₂NO₃: 312.1594, found:312.1599.



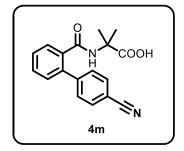
2-methyl-2-(2-(thiophen-2-yl)benzamido)propanoic acid (41)

Compound **4I**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 46.1 mg, 79% yield. Mp: 181-183°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.54 (s, 1H), 7.55 (dd, J = 5.1, 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (td, J = 7.5, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (ddd, J = 4.3, 1.1, 0.6 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (dd, J = 7.5, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (dd, J = 3.6, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (dd, J = 5.0, 3.6 Hz, 1H), 1.36 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.8, 168.7, 141.3, 137.0, 131.7, 129.8, 128.6, 128.1, 127.7, 127.2, 126.7, 55.7, 25.0. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₅H₁₆NO₃S: 290.0845, found:290.0852.



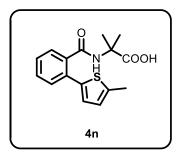
2-(4'-cyano-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-ylcarboxamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4m)

Compound **4m**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 21.2 mg, 34% yield. Mp: 219-222°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.60 (s, 1H), 7.83 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.61 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.55 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (dt, *J* = 14.9, 7.4 Hz, 3H), 1.31 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.7, 168.3, 145.3, 138.2, 137.2, 132.4, 130.3, 130.2, 130.0, 128.7, 128.4, 119.3, 110.2, 55.7, 25.0. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₈H₁₇N₂O₃: 309.1234, found:309.1232.



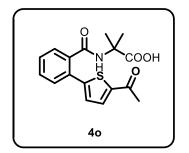
2-methyl-2-(2-(5-methylthiophen-2-yl)benzamido)propanoic acid (4n)

Compound **4n**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 41.0 mg, 67% yield. Mp: 167-170°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.55 (s, 1H), 7.43 (t, J = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 7.37 – 7.33 (m, 1H), 7.30 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (d, J = 3.4 Hz, 1H), 6.74 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H), 2.45 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.8, 168.8, 140.1, 138.9, 136.6, 131.8, 129.7, 129.4, 128.6, 127.3, 127.0, 126.6, 55.6, 25.0, 15.3. HRMS (ESI)[M-H]⁻calcdfor C₁₆H₁₆NO₃S: 302.0856, found:302.0853.



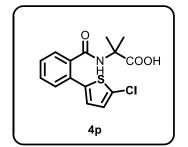
2-(2-(5-acetylthiophen-2-yl)benzamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (40)

Compound **40**was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 48.8 mg, 73% yield. Mp: 222-224°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.64 (s, 1H), 7.85 (d, J = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 7.57 (dd, J = 7.6, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (dtd, J = 16.3, 7.3, 1.3 Hz, 3H), 7.40 (dd, J = 7.4, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.35 (d, J = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 2.53 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 191.1, 175.8, 168.2, 149.8, 144.0, 137.3, 134.5, 130.8, 130.1, 130.0, 129.1, 128.7, 128.5, 55.9, 26.8, 25.0. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₇H₁₈NO₄S: 332.0951, found:332.0955.



2-(2-(5-(chlorocarbonyl)thiophen-2-yl)benzamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4p)

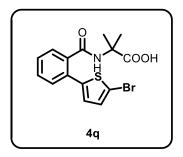
Compound **4p** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 43.9 mg, 62% yield. Mp: 175-178°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 8.63 (s, 1H), 7.48 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 2H), 7.45 – 7.41 (m, 1H), 7.36 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.13 (d, *J* = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (d, *J* = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 1.37 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 175.8, 168.3, 140.3, 136.9, 130.7, 130.0, 129.7, 128.7, 128.5, 128.3, 127.7, 127.0, 55.7, 25.0. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₆H₁₅ClNO4S: 324.0456, found:324.0457.



2-(2-(5-bromothiophen-2-yl)benzamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4q)

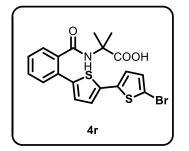
Compound 4q was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 57.3 mg, 72% yield. Mp: 185-188°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.65 (s, 1H), 7.48 (d, J = 3.7 Hz, 2H), 7.45 – 7.41 (m, 1H), 7.35 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.17 (d, J = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (d, J = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 1.37 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR

(126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆)δ 175.3, 167.9, 142.6, 136.4, 130.8, 130.3, 129.5, 129.2, 128.2, 127.9, 127.5, 111.3, 55.2, 24.6. **HRMS** (ESI)[M-H]⁻calcdfor C₁₅H₁₃BrNO₃S: 365.9805, found:365.9805.



2-(2-(5'-bromo-[2,2'-bithiophen]-5-yl)benzamido)-2-methylpropanoic acid (4r)

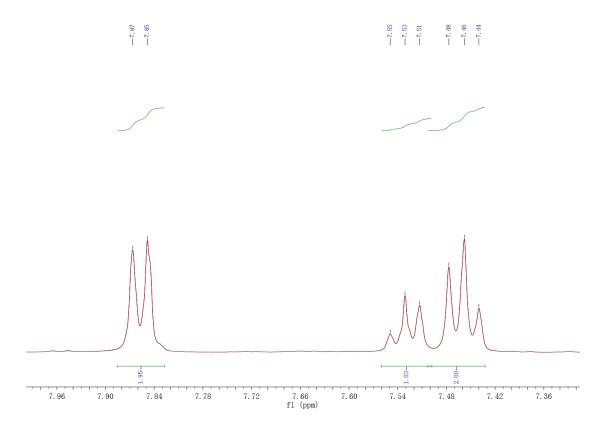
Compound **4r** was prepared as described in general procedure for Ni(II)-catalyzed mono-selective ortho-arylation of unactivated aryl C-H bonds. White solid, 65.2 mg, 72% yield. Mp: 206-209°C.¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.67 (s, 1H), 7.54 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.36 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.26 (d, J = 3.8 Hz, 1H), 7.25 – 7.23 (m, 2H), 7.16 (d, J = 3.8 Hz, 1H), 1.39 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.8, 168.5, 141.0, 138.4, 136.8, 135.7, 132.1, 130.9, 130.0, 129.5, 128.8, 128.2, 128.1, 125.5, 125.0, 110.7, 55.7, 25.1. HRMS (ESI)[M+H]⁺calcdfor C₁₉H₁₇BrNO₃S₂: 449.9828, found:449.9839.

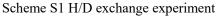


3. Mechanistic Investigations

H/D exchange experiments

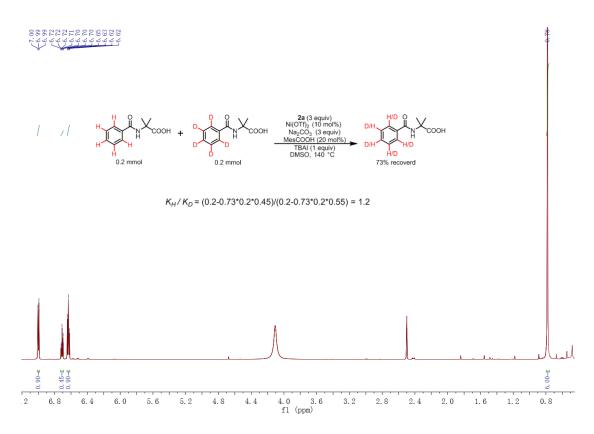
The dry tube was charged with **1a** (0.2 mmol), Ni(OTf)₂ (10 mol%), MesCOOH (20 mol%), TBAI (0.6mmol), Na₂CO₃(0.6mmol) and D₂O (2mmol) were dissolved in DMSO (2mL). The resulting mixture was stirred at 140 °C for 16 h. Then the solvent was removed under vacuum and ¹H NMR indicated that the H/D rate was greater than 95%





KIE experiments

A mixture of 2-benzamido-2-methylpropanoic acid1a (0.2 mmol) or deuterium-labeled compound[D₅]-1a (0.2 mmol), 2a (0.6mmol), Ni(OTf)₂ (10 mol%), MesCOOH (20 mol%), TBAI (0.6mmol) and Na₂CO₃(0.6mmol)and DMSO (2mL) were added into a dry tube. The reactions were stirred at 140°C in parallel for 50 min. After cooling to room temperature, these two reactions were combined and the solvent was removed under vacuum. The residue was purified by flash chromatography using 2% methanol in DCM as eluent. 73% starting material was recovered and the KIE value was determined to be 1.2



Scheme S2KIE experiment

4. References

(1) S. Li, W.Zhu, F.Gao, C.Li, J.Wang, H.Liu, J.Org. Chem., 2017, 82, 126.

5. NMR spectra

