Supporting Information

NHC-Catalyzed Oxindole Synthesis via Single Electron Transfer

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General Methods and Materials:

Unless specified, all reactions were carried out under a nitrogen atmosphere (balloon) with dry solvents under anhydrous conditions. α -bromoamide starting materials were synthesized according to a previous literature.¹ Cs₂CO₃ (purity: 98%) was purchased from Alfa Aesar; 1, 4-dioxane (super dry, 99.8%) was purchased from J&K; all other reagents were purchased and used without further purification unless specified otherwise. Solvents for chromatography were technical grade and distilled prior to use. Flash chromatography was performed using 200-300 mesh silica gel with the indicated solvent system according to standard techniques. Analytical thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed on pre-coated, glass-backed silica gel plates. Visualization of the developed chromatogram was performed by UV absorbance (254 nm). ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR data were recorded on Bruker 300 M nuclear resonance spectrometers unless otherwise specified, respectively. Chemical shifts (δ) in ppm are reported as quoted relative to the residual signals of chloroform (1 H 7.26 ppm or 13 C 77.16 ppm). Multiplicities are described as: s (singlet), bs (broad singlet), d (doublet), t (triplet), q (quartet), m (multiplet); and coupling constants (J) are reported in Hertz (Hz). ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded with total proton decoupling. HRMS (ESI) analysis was performed by The Analytical Instrumentation Center at College of Chemistry and Materials Science, Jinan University, and (HRMS) datas were reported with ion mass/charge (m/z) ratios as values in atomic mass units.

Conditions screening ^a



NHC (10 mol%) Base (0.2 equiv.) Solvent (0.5 M), 100 °C, 30 h

D

2a

Entry	Solvent	Catalysis	Base	Isolated yield
1	THF	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	28%
2	1, 4-dioxane	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	33%
3	MeCN	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	13%
4	Toluene	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	21%
5	DCE	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	11%
6	DMF	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	<5%
7	MTBE	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	12%
8 ^b	1, 4-dioxane	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	37%
9 °	1, 4-dioxane	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	33%
10	1, 4-dioxane (0.15 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	33%
11	1, 4-dioxane (0.2 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	32%
12	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃	39%
13	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.1 equiv)	9%
14	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.2 equiv)	39%
15	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.3 equiv)	44%
16	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.5 equiv)	77%
17	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	88%
18	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (1.0 equiv)	71%
19	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (1.2 equiv)	53%
20	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (1.5 equiv)	50%
21	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (2.0 equiv)	45%
22 ^d	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	77%
23 ^d	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A (5 mol%)	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	43%
24 ^c	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	83%
25 ^e	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	35%
26 ^f	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	16%
27	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%
28	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	_	K ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%
29	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	NaHCO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%
30	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	<i>t</i> -BuONa (0.8 equiv)	0%
31	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	KOAc (0.8 equiv)	0%
32	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	NaOH (0.8 equiv)	trace
33	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	_	Na ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%
34	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	DBU (0.8 equiv)	0%
35	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	Et₃N (0.8 equiv)	0%

36	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	DIPEA (0.8 equiv)	trace
37	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	-	TMP (0.8 equiv)	0%
38	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	_	K ₃ PO ₄ (0.8 equiv)	0%
39	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	_	-	0%
40	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	-	0%
41	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	<i>t-</i> BuONa (0.8 equiv)	14%
42	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	DIPEA (0.8 equiv)	10%
43	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	DBU (0.8 equiv)	6%
44	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	NaOH (0.8 equiv)	33%
45	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	K ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	51%
46	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC B	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	<5%
47	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	MHC C	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	<5%
48	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC D	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%
49	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC E	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	22%
50	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC F	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	10%
51	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC G	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	trace
52	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC H	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	30%
53	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC I	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	45%
54	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC J	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	79%
55	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC K	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	13%
56	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC L	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%
57	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC M	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	41%
58	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC N	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	63%
59	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC O	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	10%
60 ^g	1, 4-dioxane (0.3 M)	NHC A	Cs ₂ CO ₃ (0.8 equiv)	0%

^{a.} Reaction on a 0.3 mmol scale, under N₂, isolated yield; ^{b.} react at 120 °C; ^{c.} react at 80 °C;

^{*d.*} react for 22 h; ^{*e.*} react at 60 °C; ^{*f.*} react at 40 °C; ^{*g.*} react at rt.

Note:

DCE = 1, 2-dichloroethane; MTBE = *tert*-Butyl methyl ether; DIPEA = N, N-diisopropylethylamine; DBU = 1, 8-Diazabicyclo[5, 4, 0]undec-7-ene; TMP = 2, 2, 6, 6-tetramethylpiperidine.

The structure of NHC catalysts:





NHC F





CIO4



NHC D









General Procedure for NHC-Catalyzed Oxindole Synthesis



 α -bromoamide **1** (0.3 mmol, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe (*if* α -bromoamide **1** is a liquid, it was first dissolved in 1, 4-dioxane, then added to the reaction tube). The reaction was stirred under nitrogen at 100 °C for 30 h. Upon complete consumption of α -bromoamide **1** compound, the reaction was cooled to room temperature. Volatile solvent and reagents were removed by rotary evaporation and the residue was purified by silica gel flash chromatography using petroleum ether/EtOAc (50:1 to 30:1) to afford the desired product **2**.

General Procedure for Scalable Reaction (5.0 mmol scale)



 α -bromoamide **1a** (5 mmol, 1.28 g), NHC **A** (0.5 mol, 207 mg) and Cs₂CO₃ (4 mmol, 1.30 g) were weighed into a 100 mL Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (20 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under nitrogen at 100 °C for 34 h. Upon complete consumption of α -bromoamide **1a** compound, the reaction was cooled to room temperature. Volatile solvent and reagents were removed by rotary evaporation and the residue was purified by silica gel flash chromatography using petroleum ether/EtOAc (50:1 to 30:1) to afford the desired product **2a** as a yellow oil, got: 767 mg, yield: 88%.

Characterization of Oxindole Products



1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2a).² yield: 88%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.25 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.20 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.84 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.3, 142.6, 135.8, 127.7, 122.5, 122.2, 108.0, 44.1, 26.2, 24.4.



1-ethyl-3, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2b).² yield: 61%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.28-7.20 (m, 2H), 7.05 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.87 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.77 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.37 (s, 6H), 1.26 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.1, 141.8, 136.2, 127.7, 122.5, 122.3, 108.3, 44.2, 34.6, 24.5, 12.8.



1-isopropyl-3, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2c).² yield: 75%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.26-7.19 (m, 2H), 7.05-7.01 (m, 2H), 4.65 (hept, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 1H), 1.48 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 6H), 1.35 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.1, 141.8, 136.2, 127.7, 122.5, 122.3, 108.3, 44.2, 34.6, 24.5, 12.8.



1-cyclopropyl-3, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2d). yield: 74%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.26 (t, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 2.68-2.61 (m, 1H), 1.34 (s, 6H), 1.09-1.03 (m, 2H), 0.93-0.87 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 182.2, 143.1, 135.6, 127.7, 122.5, 122.2, 109.5, 44.2, 24.6, 22.2, 6.1. IR (ATR): 2967, 1716, 1611, 1488, 1385, 1126, 821, 743, 754, 694. HRMS (ESI): found: 202.1234, calcd. for C₁₃H₁₆NO [M+H]⁺: 202.1226.



1-cyclohexyl-3, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2e). yield: 80%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.26-7.19 (m, 2H), 7.08-6.99 (m, 2H), 4.23-4.08 (m, 1H), 2.22-2.08 (m, 2H), 1.91-1.87 (m, 2H), 1.77-1.73 (m, 2H), 1.49-1.19 (m, 4H), 1.34 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.3, 141.7, 136.4, 127.3, 122.6, 121.9, 110.2, 51.9, 43.8, 29.3, 26.1, 25.5, 24.6. IR (ATR): 2930, 2858, 1705, 1610, 1457, 1360, 1183, 755, 741. HRMS (ESI): found: 244.1700, calcd. for C₁₆H₂₂NO [M+H]⁺: 244.1696.



1-butyl-3, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2f).² yield: 72%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.27-7.19 (m, 2H), 7.04 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.71-1.61 (m, 2H), 1.44-1.26 (m, 2H), 1.36 (s, 6H), 0.95 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.4, 142.1, 136.1, 127.6, 122.5, 122.3, 108.4, 44.2, 39.6, 29.6, 24.5, 20.2, 13.9.



3, 3-dimethyl-1-phenylindolin-2-one (2g).² yield: 84%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.54-7.49 (m, 2H), 7.43-7.37 (m, 3H), 7.27 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (td, *J* = 7.7, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 1.49 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.8, 142.6, 135.8, 134.8, 129.7, 128.0, 127.7, 126.7, 123.1, 122.7, 109.5, 44.4, 24.9.



1-benzyl-3, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2h).² yield: 61%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.33-7.22 (m, 6H), 7.13 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.02 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 4.91 (s, 2H), 1.44 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.6, 141.8, 136.2, 135.9, 128.9, 127.7, 127.6, 127.3, 122.6, 122.4, 109.2, 44.3, 43.6, 24.6.



3-ethyl-1, 3-dimethylindolin-2-one (2i).² yield: 85%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.26 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.17 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.84 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 1.99-1.87 (m, 1H), 1.83-1.71 (m, 1H), 1.35 (s, 3H), 0.59 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.8, 143.6, 134.0, 127.7, 122.6, 122.5, 107.9, 49.0, 31.5, 26.1, 23.4, 8.9.



1'-methylspiro[cyclobutane-1, 3'-indolin]-2'-one (2j).³ yield: 63%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.51 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (td, *J* = 7.6, 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.18 (s, 3H), 2.71-2.62 (m, 2H), 2.40-2.20 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.3, 143.0, 134.5, 127.9, 122.6, 122.3, 107.7, 48.2, 31.4, 26.2, 16.9.



1'-methylspiro[cyclopentane-1, 3'-indolin]-2'-one (2k).³ yield: 83%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.26-7.18 (m, 2H), 7.04 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 2.17-1.81 (m, 8H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 182.0, 143.0, 137.0, 127.4, 122.6, 122.3, 107.8, 54.0, 38.4, 26.7, 26.3.



1, 3, 3, 7-tetramethylindolin-2-one (2l).² yield: 77%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.05-6.91 (m, 3H), 3.50 (s, 3H), 2.59 (s, 3H), 1.35 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 182.2, 140.5, 136.6, 131.5, 122.5, 120.3, 119.8, 43.6, 29.6, 24.8, 19.2.



7-chloro-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2m).¹ yield: 82%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.18 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.08 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.59 (s, 3H), 1.36 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.6, 138.7, 138.6, 130.1, 123.4, 120.9, 115.6, 44.1, 29.7, 24.8.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-7-phenylindolin-2-one (2n).² yield: 63%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.40-7.34 (m, 5H), 7.22-7.19 (m, 1H), 7.09-7.03 (m, 2H), 2.74 (s, 3H), 1.41 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 182.5, 139.6, 139.2, 136.9, 130.8, 130.0, 127.9, 127.7, 125.5, 121.9, 121.4, 43.6, 30.2, 24.9.



1, 3, 3, 4-tetramethylindolin-2-one (2o) and 1, 3, 3, 6-tetramethylindolin-2-one (2o').⁴ **2o** : **2o'** = 1.8 : 1, total yield: 84%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.16 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 0.6H), 6.88 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 0.6H), 6.83 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.71-6.68 (m, 1.5H), 3.20 (s, 4.7H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 1.6H), 1.45 (s, 6H), 1.35 (s, 3.3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.8, 181.4, 143.0, 142.8, 137.8, 134.1, 133.0, 132.6, 127.5, 125.1, 123.0, 122.0, 109.1, 105.8, 45.0, 44.0, 26.4, 26.2, 24.5, 22.4, 21.8, 18.2.



4-bromo-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2p). yield: 58%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.18-7.10 (m, 2H), 6.79 (dd, *J* = 7.2, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 1.52 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.9, 144.8, 133.4, 129.2, 126.9, 118.9, 107.2, 46.6, 26.5, 21.5.



1, 3, 3, 5-tetramethylindolin-2-one (2q).² yield: 81%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.06-7.02 (m, 2H), 6.73 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.35 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.4, 140.3, 136.0, 132.1, 127.9, 123.2, 107.8, 44.3, 26.3, 24.5, 21.2.



5-methoxy-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2r).² yield: 75%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 6.82 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.77-6.72 (m, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 1.36 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.2, 156.2, 137.4, 136.3, 111.7, 110.2, 108.3, 56.0, 44.8, 26.4, 24.5.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-5-(methylthio)indolin-2-one (2s). yield: 73%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.25-7.20 (m, 2H), 6.79 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 2.48 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.1, 141.1, 136.8, 131.4, 128.0, 123.2, 108.6, 44.4, 26.4, 24.4, 18.1. IR (ATR): 2967, 1705, 1608, 1489, 1344, 1243, 1128, 806, 544. HRMS (ESI): found: 222.0952, calcd. for C₁₂H₁₆NOS [M+H]⁺: 222.0947.



5-isopropyl-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2t).² yield: 58%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.12 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.08 (s, 1H), 6.77 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 2.91 (hept, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 1.37 (s, 6H), 1.26 (d, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.6, 143.5, 140.7, 136.0, 125.3, 120.6, 107.8, 44.4, 34.1, 26.3, 24.5, 24.4.



5-(*tert*-**butyl**)-**1**, **3**, **3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2u**).² yield: 63%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.29 (dd, *J* = 8.1, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.24 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 1.38 (s, 6H), 1.33 (s, 9H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.7, 145.9, 140.4, 135.7, 124.3, 119.5, 107.5, 44.5, 34.7, 31.8, 26.3, 24.6.



5-(dimethylamino)-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2v).⁴ yield: 88%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 6.75-6.72 (m, 2H), 6.64 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 3.18 (s, 3H), 2.91 (s, 6H), 1.37 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.0, 147.8, 137.0, 133.8, 111.9, 109.2, 108.4, 44.7, 41.8, 26.3, 24.6.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-5-phenylindolin-2-one (2w).² yield: 91%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.56 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.50-7.40 (m, 4H), 7.31 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.90 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 3.23 (s, 3H), 1.42 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.4, 142.1, 141.1, 136.5, 136.1, 128.9, 127.0, 126.9, 126.6, 121.3, 108.3, 44.4, 26.4, 24.5.



5-cyclohexyl-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2x). yield: 74%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.10 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 6.77 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 2.52-2.45 (m, 1H), 1.88-1.77 (m, 6H), 1.48-1.15 (m, 4H), 1.36 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.6, 142.8, 140.7, 135.9, 125.7, 121.0, 107.8, 44.5, 44.4, 35.0, 27.0, 26.3, 26.2, 24.6. IR (ATR): 2923, 2850, 1709, 1620, 1494, 1350, 1247, 1064, 810, 731. HRMS (ESI): found: 258.1862, calcd. for C₁₇H₂₄NO [M+H]⁺: 258.1852.



5-fluoro-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2y).² yield: 62%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300

MHz): δ 6.99-6.94 (m, 2H), 6.78-6.74 (m, 1H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 6H); ¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 282 MHz): δ -120.9 (m, 1F); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.1, 159.53 (d, J_{1F} = 238.8), 138.6, 137.6 (d, J_{3F} = 7.8), 113.8 (d, J_{2F} = 23.3), 110.7 (d, J_{2F} = 24.4), 108.6 (d, J_{3F} = 8.1), 44.8, 26.5, 24.4.



5-chloro-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2z).³ yield: 87%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.23 (dd, *J* = 8.2, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.77 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.9, 141.3, 137.5, 127.9, 127.6, 123.0, 109.0, 44.5, 26.4, 24.3.



5-bromo-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (2ab).³ yield: 52%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.38 (dd, *J* = 8.2, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.31 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 1.36 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.8, 141.8, 138.0, 130.6, 125.8, 115.3, 109.6, 44.6, 26.4, 24.4.



methyl 1, 3, 3-trimethyl-2-oxoindoline-5-carboxylate (2ac).³ yield: 73%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 8.02 (dd, *J* = 8.2, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (s, 1H), 6.89 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 3.92 (s, 3H), 3.26 (s, 3H), 1.40 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.7, 167.0, 146.9, 135.8, 130.6, 124.5, 123.7, 107.6, 52.1, 44.1, 26.5, 24.3.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-2-oxoindoline-5-carbonitrile (2ad).³ yield: 84%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.61 (dd, *J* = 8.1, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (s, 1H), 6.93 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (s, 3H), 1.40 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.0, 146.6, 136.8, 133.2, 125.8, 119.3, 108.6, 105.6, 44.1, 26.5, 24.2.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-5-nitroindolin-2-one (2ae).⁴ yield: 68%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 8.26 (dd, *J* = 8.6, 2.2 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d, *J* = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 3.30 (s, 3H), 1.44 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.3, 148.5, 143.6, 136.6, 125.3, 118.4, 107.7, 44.3, 26.7, 24.2.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-5-(trifluoromethyl)indolin-2-one (2af).³ yield: 68%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.56 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.44 (s, 1H), 6.93 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (s, 3H), 1.40 (s, 6H); ¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 282 MHz): δ -61.4 (m, 1F); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.3, 145.8, 136.4, 125.7 (q, *J*_{3F} = 4.0), 124.9 (q, *J*_{2F} = 32.3), 124.6 (q, *J*_{3F} = 269.8), 119.5 (q, *J*_{3F} = 3.6), 107.9, 44.3, 26.5, 24.3.



1, 3, 3, 7-tetramethyl-5-nitroindolin-2-one (2ag). yield: 49%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.98 (s, 1H), 7.92 (s, 1H), 3.56 (s, 3H), 2.69 (s, 3H), 1.40 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 182.2, 146.5, 143.0, 137.3, 127.9, 120.2, 116.2, 43.6, 29.7, 24.6, 19.3.



7-bromo-1, 3, 3, 5-tetramethylindolin-2-one (2ah). yield: 84%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.17 (s, 1H), 6.93 (s, 1H), 3.57 (s, 3H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 1.34 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.7, 138.9, 137.6, 133.7, 133.3, 122.5, 102.0, 44.1, 29.8, 24.8, 20.6. IR (ATR): 2969, 1717, 1570, 1468, 1336, 1252, 1066, 853, 789, 743. HRMS (ESI): found: 268.0334, calcd. for C₁₂H₁₅BrNO (M⁺): 268.0332.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-1,3-dihydro-2H-pyrrolo[3, 2-c]pyridin-2-one (2ai).⁵ yield: 51%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 8.47 (d, *J* = 5.3 Hz, 1H), 8.34 (s, 1H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 5.3 Hz, 1H), 3.23 (s, 3H), 1.43 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.2, 150.1, 149.7, 142.8, 131.3, 103.9, 43.1, 26.4, 24.3.



1, 1-dimethyl-5, 6-dihydro-4H-pyrrolo[3, 2, 1-ij]quinolin-2(1H)-one (2aj).² yield: 81%, yellow oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.05-6.92 (m, 3H), 3.72 (t, *J* = 5.8 Hz, 2H), 2.79 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.01 (quint, *J* = 5.9 Hz, 2H), 1.38 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.4, 138.5, 134.5, 126.5, 122.0, 120.2, 120.1, 45.6, 38.9, 24.7, 24.3, 21.3.



3-ethyl-1-methyl-2-oxoindoline-3-carbonitrile (2ak).⁶ yield: 58%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.43-7.38 (m, 2H), 7.17 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.90 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (s, 3H), 2.31-2.07 (m, 2H), 0.99 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 170.7, 143.3, 130.4, 125.4, 124.3, 123.8, 117.2, 109.1, 47.2, 31.0, 27.0, 8.5.



ethyl 1-methyl-2-oxo-3-phenylindoline-3-carboxylate (2al).⁷ yield: 40%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.46 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.40 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (s, 5H), 7.16 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.93 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 4.30-4.14 (m, 2H), 3.23 (s, 3H), 1.20 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 172.9, 169.3, 144.5, 136.1, 129.7, 128.6, 128.3, 128.0, 127.2, 126.1, 123.0, 108.8, 64.2, 62.4, 26.9, 14.1.



ethyl 3-butyl-1-methyl-2-oxoindoline-3-carboxylate (2am). yield: 34%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.32 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.26-7.24 (m, 1H), 7.07 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.18-4.07 (m, 2H), 3.25 (s, 3H), 2.31-2.13 (m, 2H), 1.25-1.22 (m, 4H), 1.16 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 7.32 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 174.5, 169.7, 144.3, 129.0, 128.5, 123.5, 122.9, 108.3, 61.9, 59.7, 34.1, 26.6, 25.8, 22.8, 14.1, 13.9. IR (ATR): 2926, 1717, 1611, 1493, 1348, 1226, 1080, 964, 749. HRMS (ESI): found: 276.1600, calcd. for C₁₆H₂₂NO₃ [M+H]⁺: 276.1594.

Diversity of the products

(a) Demethylation ⁸



A solution of oxindole **2a** (1 mmol, 175 mg) and benzoyl peroxide (2.0 equiv.) in dry DCM (2 mL) in a sealed tube was heated slowly to 80 °C. After stirring for 18 h, the reaction mixture was cooled to rt and the solvent was evaporated. The residue was dissolved in MeOH (4 mL), NaOH (3.65 mmol, 146 mg) was added and the reaction mixture was stirred at rt for 18 h. Then the slurry was poured into saturated aqueous NH₄Cl (10 mL) and extracted with DCM (3*6 mL). The combined organic layers were dried by anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and concentrated. The residue was dissolved in a methanolic NH₃ solution (5 mL, 7M) and stirred for 19 h at rt. After reaction, the mixture was extracted by EtOAc (3*10 mL) and dried by anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and concentrated, purified by silica gel flash chromatography using Petroleum ether/EtOAc (30:1 to 2:1) to afford the desired product **3a** as a white solid.



3, **3-dimethylindolin-2-one (3a).**⁸ yield: 70%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 9.71 (s, 1H), 7.21-7.16 (m, 2H), 7.05-6.97 (m, 2H), 1.41 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 184.9, 140.2, 136.4, 127.7, 122.6, 122.5, 110.2, 44.9, 24.4.

(b) Synthesis of the indoline-2-thione ⁹



Oxindoles (**2a** or **2g**, 1 mmol) and Lawesson's reagent (0.51 equiv.) were added into a test tube under N₂. Then dry toluene (2 mL) was added by syringe. It was sealed and refluxed for 1.5-2 h. After cooling down, the mixture was poured into water. The organic layer was separated and the aqueous layer was extracted with ether. The organic layers were combined, washed with brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, concentrated in vacuo and finally purified by silica gel chromatography eluting with EtOAc/PE (1:40) to afford the product **3b-c**.



3, 3-dimethyl-1-phenylindoline-2-thione (3b).⁹ yield: 96%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.61-7.48 (m, 3H), 7.40-7.36 (m, 3H), 7.21-7.19 (m, 2H), 6.71-6.68 (m, 1H), 1.57 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 213.8, 145.1, 140.3, 137.1, 130.0, 129.2, 127.8, 127.7, 124.4, 123.0, 110.7, 55.4, 28.7.



1, 3, 3-trimethylindoline-2-thione (3c).¹⁰ yield: 50%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.35-7.30 (m, 2H), 7.19 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 3.65 (s, 3H), 1.44 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 211.9, 143.9, 140.3, 127.8, 124.2, 122.7, 109.6, 54.9, 31.5, 28.0.

(c) Reduction of amide ¹¹



In a flame-dried Schlenktube, oxindole **2a** was dissolved in anhydrous THF (5 mL), LiAlH₄ (1 mmol, 175 mg) was then added slowly at 0 °C under N₂. The reaction was then heated to reflux overnight. After cooling to room temperature, the reaction was quenched with a saturated solution of NH₄Cl. The reaction was then extracted with ether three times. The combined organic extracts were washed with brine, dried with MgSO₄, filtrated and concentrated *in vacuo*. The product was purified by flash column chromatography (20:1, PE/Et₂O) to yield **3d** as a colorless oil.



1, 3, 3-trimethylindoline (3d).¹¹ yield: 98%, volatile colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.09 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.01 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.70 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.49 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.06 (s, 2H), 2.75 (s, 3H), 1.30 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 151.9, 139.0, 127.4, 121.4, 117.9. 107.2, 70.2, 40.1, 35.8, 27.3. (d) C–H alkenylation ¹²



Oxindole **2g** (0.3 mmol, 71.2 mg), methyl acrylate (81.6 μ L, 2.5 equiv.), [Cp*Rh(MeCN)₃][SbF₆]₂ (12.6 mg, 5 mol %), AgOAc (50.4 mg, 1 equiv.) were stirred in DCE (2.0 mL) at 130 °C for 12 h. After completion, the reaction mixture was purified by flash chromatography eluting with ethyl acetate and petroleum ether (1:40 to 1:10) to give the product **3e** as a white solid.



methyl (*E*)-**3-(2-(3, 3-dimethyl-2-oxoindolin-1-yl)phenyl)acrylate** (**3e**).¹² yield: 86%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.80 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.56-7.45 (m, 3H), 7.35-7.29 (m, 2H), 7.18-7.07 (m, 2H), 6.50 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.43 (d, *J* = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 1.57 (s, 3H), 1.52 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.0, 166.8, 142.8, 139.3, 135.6, 134.1, 133.0, 131.4, 129.3, 128.9, 127.8, 127.8, 123.3, 122.8, 120.3, 109.4, 51.7, 44.6, 25.5, 24.1.

(e) C–H arylation ¹³



Under N₂ atmosphere, to a 15 mL oven-dried screw-top pressure reaction tube equipped with a magnetic stirring bar were added oxindole **2g** (1.2 equiv, 57.0 mg), 1, 4-dihydro-1, 4-epoxynaphthalene (0.2 mmol, 28.8 mg), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (5 mol %, 6.2 mg), AgNTf₂ (40 mol %, 31.0 mg), AgOAc (0.9 equiv, 30.0 mg) and anhydrous DCE (2.0 mL). The reaction tube was sealed with a screw teflon cap. After stirring at 110 ° C for 40 h, the reaction mixture was diluted with EtOAc, dried with MgSO₄, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 40:1 to 20:1 as eluent) to afford the desired product **3f** as a colorless oil.



3, 3-dimethyl-1-(2-(naphthalen-2-yl)phenyl)indolin-2-one (3f).¹³ yield: 46%, colorless oil. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): 7.74-7.53 (m, 7H), 7.41-7.38 (m, 4H), 7.09-7.03 (m, 2H), 6.94 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.53 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 1.39 (s, 3H), 1.00 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.1, 143.2, 141.7, 136.3, 135.5, 133.2, 132.6, 132.5, 131.7, 129.4, 129.3, 129.1, 128.2, 127.9, 127.7, 127.6, 127.4, 126.7, 126.2, 126.1, 122.7, 122.4, 109.4, 44.3, 24.7, 24.1.

(f) C–H activation and cascade cyclization ⁹



Under N₂ atmosphere, to a 15 mL tube were added oxindole **2g** (0.2 mmol, 47.5 mg), diphenylacetylene (2.2 equiv, 78.4 mg), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (5 mol %, 6.2 mg), AgNTf₂ (40 mol %, 31.0 mg), Ag₂O (1.1 equiv, 51.0 mg) and DCE (anhydrous, 1.5 mL). Then *i*-PrCOOH (2.2 equiv, 41.0 µL) was added at room temperature. After stirring at 100 °C for 40 h, the reaction mixture was diluted with EtOAc, dried with MgSO₄, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 40:1 to 20:1 as the eluent) to afford the desired product **3g** as a white solid.



3, **3**-dimethyl-1-(5, 6, 7, 8-tetraphenylnaphthalen-1-yl)indolin-2-one (3g).⁹ yield: 59%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): 7.79 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.36-7.20 (m, 6H), 7.11-7.06 (m, 2H), 6.96-6.59 (m, 15H), 6.49 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 6.36 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 1.26 (s, 3H), 0.88 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.0, 144.3, 142.2, 140.5, 140.3, 140.0, 139.8, 139.3, 135.9, 135.7, 134.5, 133.1, 131.5, 131.3, 131.1, 130.4, 130.2, 129.3, 129.0, 127.8, 127.7, 126.9, 126.7, 126.6, 126.4, 126.2, 126.1, 125.9, 125.5, 125.1, 122.4, 121.7, 110.7, 44.0, 27.4, 23.2.

(g) Bromination ⁹



To a Schlenktube were added 3,3-dimethyl-1-phenylindolin-2-one (1 mmol, 237.3mg), *N*-Bromosuccinimide (NBS) (1.1 equiv, 195.8 mg) and CH₃CN (10 mL). The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 3 h. Concentration of the reaction mixture in vacuo followed by silica gel chromatography eluting with EtOAc/PE (1:20) afforded the *N*-phenyl oxindole **3h** as a white solid.



5-bromo-3, 3-dimethyl-1-phenylindolin-2-one (3h).⁹ yield: 99%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.52 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.43-7.38 (m, 4H), 7.30 (dd, *J* = 8.3, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 1.48 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 180.1, 141.7, 137.8, 134.4, 130.6, 129.8, 128.3, 126.5, 126.1, 115.7, 111.0, 44.6, 24.8.

(h) Dichlorination 14



Oxindole **2a** (1.0 mmol, 175 mg) was dissolved in 80% *t*-BuOH (2.0 mL), and NCS (1.6 equiv., 214 mg) was added to this solution. The mixture was stirred for 38 h at 50 °C. Then allowed to cool to room temperature, diluted with water and extracted with ether, dried with MgSO₄, filtered and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 40:1 to 20:1 as the eluent) to afford the desired product **3i** as a white solid.



5, 7-dichloro-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (3i).¹⁴ yield: 59%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.20 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 3.56 (s, 3H), 1.36 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.1, 139.9, 137.5, 129.5, 128.1, 121.7, 115.9, 44.4, 29.6, 24.6.

(i) Nitration ¹⁵



Nitric acid (65%; 329 μ L, 1.1 equiv) was added dropwise to oxindole **2a** (526 mg, 3.0 mmol) in acetic acid (5.1 mL) at room temperature. After 44 h, diluted with water and extracted with EtOAc, dried with MgSO₄, filtered and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 20:1 to 4:1 as the eluent) to afford the desired product **3j** as a yellow solid.



1, 3, 3-trimethyl-5-nitroindolin-2-one (3j).¹⁵ yield: 80%, yellow solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 8.26 (dd, *J* = 8.6, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 8.10 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 3.30 (s, 3H), 1.44 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.4, 148.5, 143.6, 136.6, 125.3, 118.4, 107.7, 44.3, 26.7, 24.2.

(j) Synthesis of analogue of anti-anxiety treatment drug Ziprasidone ¹⁶



Step I

To a 50 mL round bottom flask was added anhydrous AlCl₃ (6.2 equiv., 4.13 g), CS₂ (20 mL) and chloroacetyl chloride (1.3 equiv., 517 μ L). To the stirring mixture was added oxindole **2a** (5 mmol, 1.0 equiv., 876 mg) portionwise over 15 min. The reaction mixture was stirred further 10 min, then refluxed for 5.5 h. The reaction mixture was allowed to cool, added to ice, stirred thoroughly, the beige precipitate was filtered, washed with water and dried to afford the product **4a** as a beige solid.



5-(2-chloroacetyl)-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (4a).¹⁶ yield: 91%, beige solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.94 (dd, *J* = 8.2, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (s, 1H), 6.94 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 4.69 (s, 2H), 3.27 (s, 3H), 1.41 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 190.1, 181.6, 148.0, 136.5, 130.2, 129.0, 122.7, 107.8, 45.6, 44.1, 26.6, 24.3.

Step II

Oxindole **4a** (1.0 equiv., 3 mmol, 755 mg) was added to a Schlenktube followed by addition of TFA (2.5 mL) under N₂. To this solution was added Et₃SiH (2.3 equiv., 1.1 mL) while cooling to prevent exotherm. The reaction was stirred for 19 h at rt. After reaction, it was diluted with water and extracted with EtOAc, dried with MgSO₄, filtered and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 20:1 to 3:1 as the eluent) to afford the desired product **4b** as a white solid.



5-(2-chloroethyl)-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (4b).¹⁶ yield: 88%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.12 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 6.80 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 3.06 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 1.37 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.5, 141.7, 136.3, 132.5, 128.1, 123.0, 108.1, 45.4, 44.4, 39.0, 26.4, 24.5.

Step III

To a 100 ml round-bottom flask equipped with nitrogen inlet and condenser were added oxindole **4b** (1.0 equiv., 2.57 mmol, 610 mg), N-(3-benzisothiazolyl)-piperazine (1.5 equiv., 845 mg), sodium carbonate (2.0 equiv., 544 mg), sodium iodide (6 mg), and methylisobutyl ketone (30 mL). The reaction was refluxed 47 hours, cooled, filtered, and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 3:1 to 1:1 as the eluent) to afford the desired product **4c** as a beige solid.



5-(2-(4-(benzo[d]isothiazol-3-yl)piperazin-1-yl)ethyl)-1, 3, 3-trimethylindolin-2-one (4c).¹⁶ yield: 65%, beige solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.89 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.58 (t, *J* = 4.4 Hz, 4H), 3.17 (s, 3H), 2.86-2.81 (m, 2H), 2.74 (t, *J* = 4.5 Hz, 4H), 2.69-2.64 (m, 2H), 1.35 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 181.3, 163.9, 152.7, 140.9, 136.0, 134.5, 128.0, 127.7, 127.5, 123.9, 122.8, 120.6, 107.9, 60.8, 53.0, 50.1, 44.2, 33.3, 26.2, 24.4. IR (ATR): 2980, 2968, 1703, 1619, 1491, 1382, 1350, 1255, 1128, 1003, 821, 773, 731. HRMS (ESI): found: 421.2065, calcd. for $C_{24}H_{31}N_4OS$ [M+H]⁺: 421.2057.

(k) Synthesis of potent oral inotropes 17



Step I

Dimethylformamide (1.1 mL, 2.8 equiv.) was added in a dropwise fashion to anhydrous AlCl₃ (6.67 g, 10.0 equiv.), and the exothermic reaction mixture was then allowed to cool to room temperature. An intimate mixture of succinic anhydride (500 mg, 5 mmol, 1.0 equiv.) and oxindole **3a** (806 mg, 1.0 equiv.) was slowly added to the AlCl₃/DMF melt. The reaction mixture was then stirred 5 h at 80 °C. The reaction mixture was slowly poured onto ice, and the product **5a** was isolated by filtration as a beige solid.



4-(3, 3-dimethyl-2-oxoindolin-5-yl)-4-oxobutanoic acid (5a).¹⁷ yield: 77%, beige solid. ¹H NMR (d₆-DMSO, 300 MHz): δ 12.14 (s, 1H), 10.76 (s, 1H), 7.97 (s, 1H), 7.93 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 3.24 (t, *J* = 5.9 Hz, 2H), 2.60 (t, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 2H), 1.33 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 197.9, 183.5, 174.9, 146.6, 137.2, 131.5, 130.0, 123.4, 110.0, 44.6, 33.7, 28.9, 24.8.

Step II

A mixture of **5a** (784 mg, 3.0 mmol) and 50% hydrazine hydrate (661 mg, 2.2 equiv.) in 10 mL of absolute ethanol was refluxed for 4.5 h and then cooled slowly to room temperature. The precipitate was filtered and dried to afford 630 mg of product **5b** as a light-tan solid.



3, 3-dimethyl-5-(4-oxo-1, 4, 5, 6-tetrahydropyridazin-3-yl)indolin-2-one (5b).¹⁷ yield: 87%, light-tan solid. ¹H NMR (d₆-DMSO, 300 MHz): δ 10.84 (s, 1H), 10.53 (s, 1H), 7.74 (s, 1H), 7.60 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 2.96 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.46 (t, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 1.30 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 183.2, 168.0, 150.6, 143.1, 137.3, 130.6, 126.7, 121.0, 110.1, 44.7, 27.0, 24.9, 22.9. IR (ATR): 3198, 1709, 1652, 1617, 1499, 1355, 1209, 970, 808, 698. HRMS (ESI): found: 258.1238, calcd. for $C_{14}H_{16}N_3O_2$ [M+H]⁺: 258.1237.

Mechanism study

Scheme 1 Control experiment



Procedures:

 α -bromoamide **1a** (0.3 mmol, 76.8 mg, 1.0 equiv.) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under argon at 100 °C for 30 h. After reaction, the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 50:1 to 15:1 as the eluent) to afford **1a'** as a white solid.



N-methyl-N-phenylmethacrylamide (1a').¹⁸ yield: 23%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.33 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 7.22 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 5.02 (s, 1H), 4.97 (s, 1H), 3.33 (s, 3H), 1.75 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 171.7, 144.4, 140.5, 129.1, 126.7, 126.3, 119.1, 37.4, 20.1.

Scheme 2 Heck-type cyclization reaction



Procedures:

 α -bromoamide **1a'** (0.30 mmol, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under N₂ at 100 °C for 30 h. After reaction, the mixture was detected by GC-MS and showed no desired product produced.

Scheme 3 Radical trapping experiments



Procedures:

(a) TEMPO

 α -bromoamide **1a** (0.3 mmol, 76.8 mg, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%), TEMPO (66.1 mg, 1.0 equiv.) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under argon at 100 °C for 30 h. Only little product **2a** (<5%) was detected by GC-MS.

(b) Under O₂

 α -bromoamide **1a** (0.3 mmol, 76.8 mg, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to O₂ (via O₂ balloon). Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under argon at 100 °C for 30 h. Only trace product **2a** was detected by GC-MS.

(c) N-allyl substrate for radical cyclization



Procedures:

 α -bromoamide **1an** (0.30 mmol, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred

under N₂ at 100 °C for 30 h. After reaction, the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 50:1 to 30:1 as the eluent) to afford the products **2an** and **2ao**.



N-methyl-N-phenylmethacrylamide (2an).¹⁹ yield: 32%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.65 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 7.36 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.12 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (dd, *J* = 9.4, 7.7 Hz, 1H), 3.38 (t, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H), 2.27-2.14 (m, 1H), 1.22 (s, 3H), 1.08 (d, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 3H), 1.03 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 179.4, 139.9, 128.9, 124.3, 119.7, 52.4, 44.8, 37.8, 23.8, 18.5, 12.5.



N-methyl-N-phenylmethacrylamide (2ao). yield: 33%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.65 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 7.38 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.15 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 4.00 (dd, *J* = 9.9, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 3.62-3.53 (m, 2H), 3.40 (t, *J* = 10.3 Hz, 1H), 2.64-2.54 (m, 1H), 1.32 (s, 3H), 1.10 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 177.8, 139.4, 129.0, 124.8, 119.9, 50.7, 45.6, 45.4, 31.3, 24.5, 18.7. IR (ATR): 2967, 1691, 1595, 1499, 1394, 1298, 1101, 896, 798, 757. HRMS (ESI): found: 282.0489, calcd. for C₁₃H₁₇BrNO [M+H]⁺: 282.0488.

Scheme 4 Radical rearrangement experiments



Procedures:

 α -bromoamide **1ao** (0.30 mmol, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under N₂ at 100 °C for 30 h. After reaction, the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 40:1 to 10:1 as the eluent) to afford the products **2ap** and **2aq**.

Proposed mechanism:



2-methyl-N-phenyl-2-(*p***-tolyl)propanamide (2ap).²⁰** yield: 15%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.37-7.32 (m, 4H), 7.27 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 7.21 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.05 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (s, 1H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 1.65 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 176.0, 141.7, 138.2, 137.2, 129.8, 129.0, 126.6, 124.2, 119.7, 47.9, 27.2, 21.1.

Ĥ Ts

4-methyl-N-phenylbenzenesulfonamide (2aq).²¹ yield: 69%, white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 7.69 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H), 7.37 (s, 1H), 7.25-7.19 (m, 4H), 7.10-7.05 (m, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 144.0, 136.7, 136.1, 129.7, 129.4, 127.4, 125.3, 121.5, 21.6.

Scheme 5 Influences of the amount of base



Procedure: Following the General Procedure for NHC-Catalyzed Oxindole Synthesis.

Scheme 6 Competitive experiments



Procedures:

(a) α -bromoamides **1a/1q** (0.15 mmol, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under N₂ at 100 °C for 18 h. After reaction, the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 50:1 to 30:1 as the eluent) to afford the products mixture as an oil, then CH₂Br₂ (0.15 mmol) was added and the mixture was subjected to ¹H NMR, the ratios of the products were determined by ¹ H NMR.



(b) α -bromoamides **1a/1ad** (0.15 mmol, 1.0 equiv.), NHC **A** (12.4 mg, 10 mol%) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred under N₂ at 100 °C for 18 h. After reaction, the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 50:1 to 30:1 as the eluent) to afford the product **3a** (15.9 mg, 60% yield), **3q** (28.0 mg, 99% yield).

Scheme 7 Reaction under light or in the dark



Procedures:

(a) α -bromoamides **1a** (0.3 mmol, 1.0 equiv.) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred *under UV or visible light* at rt for 30 h. After reaction, only starting material **1a** was detected.

(b) α -bromoamides **1a** (0.3 mmol, 1.0 equiv.) and Cs₂CO₃ (0.24 mmol, 78.2 mg, 0.8 equiv.) were weighed into a Schlenk tube. The reaction vessel was capped and subjected to three vacuum-purge/nitrogen-flush cycles. Then 1, 4-dioxane (1.0 mL) was added through the side-arm by syringe. The reaction was stirred *in the dark* at rt for 30 h. After reaction, only starting material **1a** was detected.

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NMR Spectra Images of Products














-1,4917

140 130 120 110 100 fl (ppm) 200 190 180 170 160 150







CMW-II-17-1

























2 9745 2 9745 2 9746 2 9286 2 9286 2 8256 2 8556

CMW-I-174-1











CMW-I-188



-80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -190 -200 fl(ppm)

0 -10 -20 -30

-40 -50 -60 -70

























CMW-II-67-B








21,000 21,000



7.3664 7.3469 7.3195 7.2787 7.2787 7.2266 7.2256 7.2256 7.2256 7.2226 7.2226 7.2236 7.2233 6.8203









160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 fl (ppm) 200 190





CMW-II-18



-1 5666













-1.2595





-1.4839

210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -10 fl(ppm)













