

**CO₂ electroreduction activity and dynamic structural evolution of
in situ reduced Nickel-Indium mixed oxides**

Electronic supplementary information

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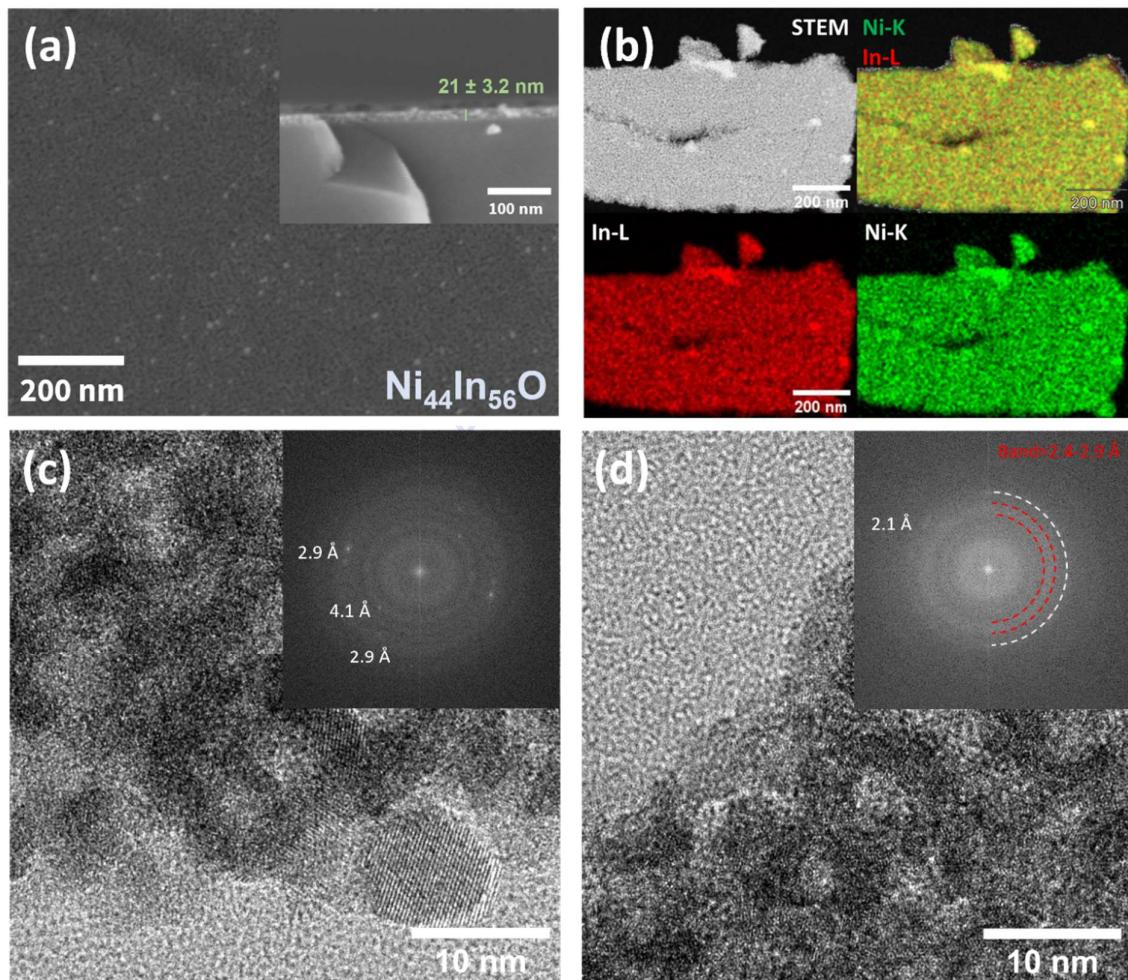


Figure S1. Structural characterization of as synthesized $\text{Ni}_{44}\text{In}_{56}\text{O}_x$ thin film. (a) SEM micrograph. (b) STEM-EDS mapping. (c-d) HRTEM images displaying small crystallites (resolution: 0.0194 pix/nm), FFT analysis of HRTEM images are presented as inset. The Ni fraction referred total metal (Ni+In) as determined by ICP is displayed as a text inset on the SEM micrograph.

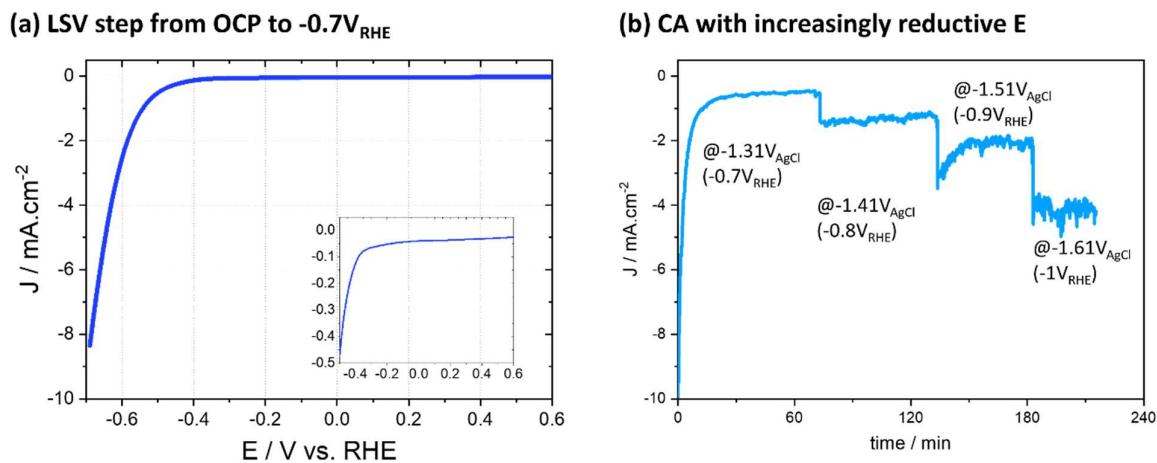


Figure S2. Representative data of typical CO₂ER electrochemical test for Ni₅₀In₅₀Ox. (a) LSV from the measured open circuit potential (OCP) to -0.7 V vs RHE at 10 mV s⁻¹, followed by (b) sequence of potentiostatic electrolysis at increasingly reductive potential ranging from -0.7 V to -1.0 V at 0.1 V intervals holding each potential for 45-60 min.

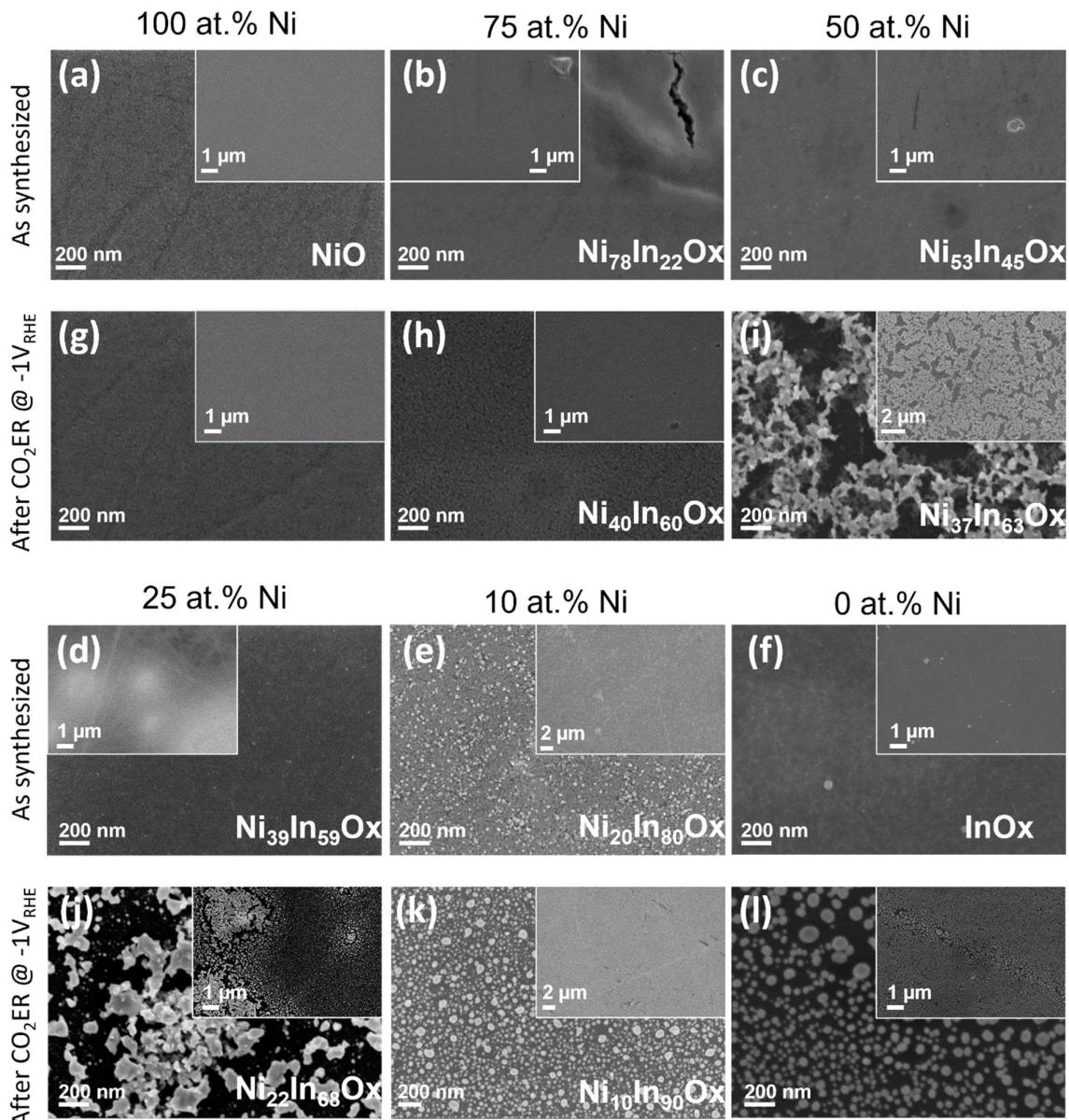


Figure S3. SEM investigation of $\text{Ni}_x\text{In}_{8-x}\text{O}_x$ thin films morphology with nominal composition NiO , $\text{Ni}_{75}\text{In}_{25}\text{Ox}$, $\text{Ni}_{50}\text{In}_{50}\text{Ox}$, $\text{Ni}_{75}\text{In}_{25}\text{Ox}$, $\text{Ni}_{10}\text{In}_{90}\text{Ox}$ and In_2O_3 , as synthesized (a-f) and after CO_2ER electrolysis test at -1.0 V (g-l). Low magnification (10kx) image is presented as inset for evaluation of homogeneity. Experimental composition found by EDS is presented as text inset on the SEM image for each sample.

Summary of composition analysis of Ni-In mixed oxides by EDS and ICP-OES

Table S1. Composition analysis of $\text{Ni}_{\text{A}}\text{In}_{\text{B}}\text{O}_x$ EDS (SEM) and ICP-OES.

$\text{Ni}_{\text{A}}\text{In}_{\text{B}}\text{O}_x$	Nominal Ni fraction	As synthesized				Ni fraction after CO_2ER at - 1 V	
		Ni fraction		Catalyst loading ^{a)}			
		SEM-EDS	ICP	$\mu\text{g cm}^{-2}$	$\mu\text{mol cm}^{-2}$		
NiO	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.8	0.099	1.00	
$\text{Ni}_{75}\text{In}_{25}\text{O}_x$	0.75	0.82	0.78	6.9	0.096	0.73	
$\text{Ni}_{50}\text{In}_{50}\text{O}_x$	0.50	0.62	0.53	7.6	0.089	0.37	
$\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$	0.40	0.48	0.44	8.1	0.089	0.36	
$\text{Ni}_{25}\text{In}_{75}\text{O}_x$	0.25	0.39	0.31	8.2	0.084	0.22	
$\text{Ni}_{10}\text{In}_{90}\text{O}_x$	0.10	0.20	0.14	8.6	0.079	<0.10	
In_2O_3	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.6	0.109	0	
Ni_2In_3 alloy	0.4	0.42	0.4	6.9	0.073	0.4	

^{a)} Catalyst loading in total μg or μmol of M = Ni + In per cm^{-2}

Summary of surface and bulk composition analysis of $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$ after diverse electrochemical CO_2ER experiments.

Table S2. Composition analysis of $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$ by XPS, ICP-OES and EDS (SEM and TEM)

		XPS		ICP-OES		SEM-EDS		TEM-EDS	
		Ni fraction	Std. dev ^{a)}	Ni fraction	Std. dev ^{a)}	Ni fraction	Std. dev ^{b)}	Ni fraction	Std. dev ^{c)}
$\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$	As synthesized.	0.27	0.02	0.44	0.02	0.48	0.01	0.44	0.00
	-0.8 V_1h	0.20	0.02	0.38	0.02	0.44	0.04	0.43	0.00
	-0.8 V_10h	0.20	0.02	0.33	0.01	0.35	0.02	0.26	0.02
	-1 V_1h	0.33	0.02	0.36	0.01	0.34	0.02	0.21	0.03
Ni_2In_3 alloy	As synthesized.			0.40	0.02	0.42	0.06		
	-1 V_1h			0.35	0.02	0.40	0.02		

^{a)} Standard deviation of quantification results measured on two or three replicate samples.

^{b)} Standard deviation of quantification results measured on three different spots on at least two replicate samples.

^{c)} Standard deviation of quantification results measured on two different spots of one sample.

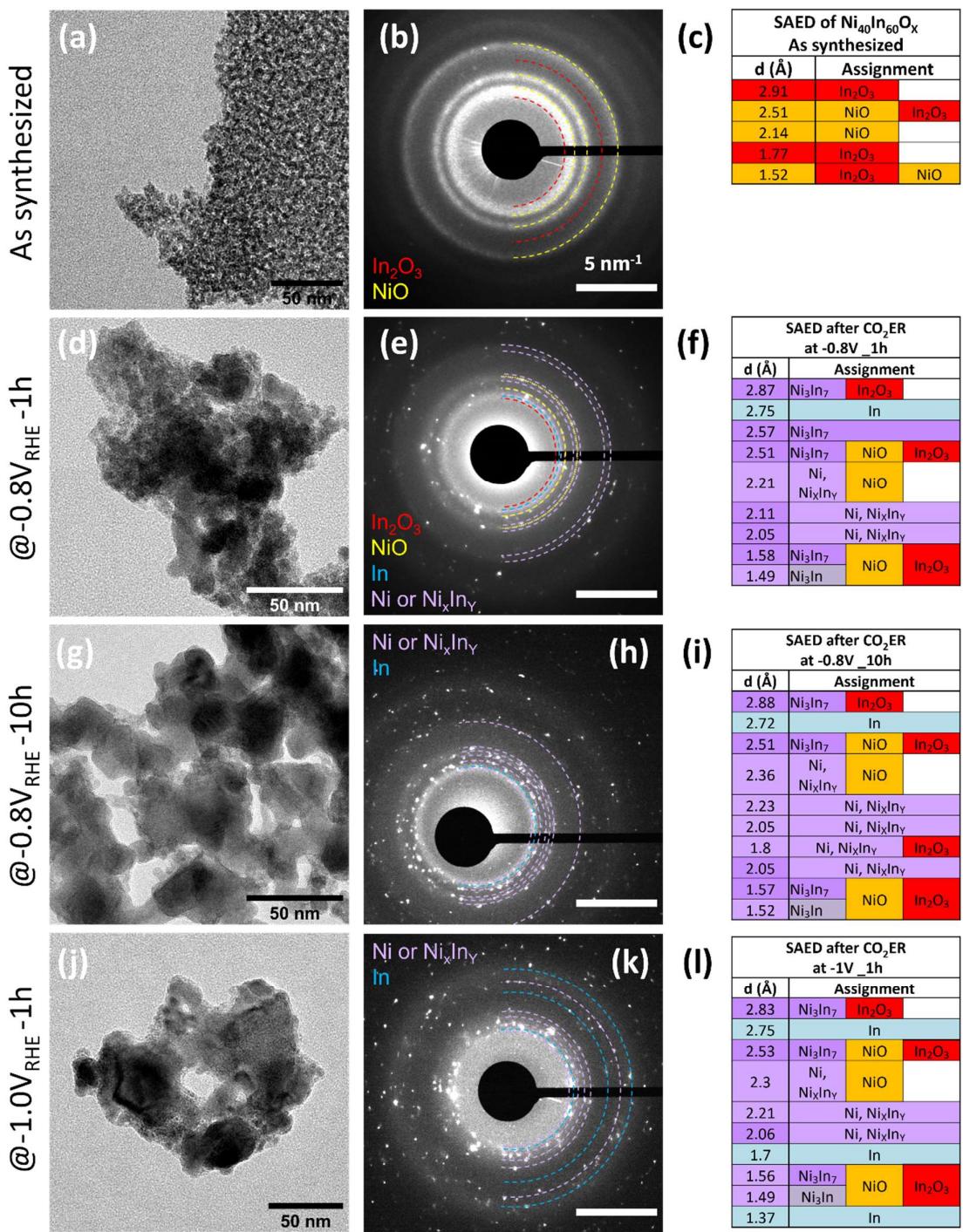


Figure S4. TEM-SAED analysis of $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$ thin film at different stages of reduction during CO_2ER operation. From left to right TEM micrograph, associated SAED image and assignment are presented for $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$ thin film (a, b, c) in as synthesized condition, and after CO_2ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO_3 at (d,e,f) -0.8 V for 1 h; (g,h,i) -0.8 V for 10 h and (j,k,l) -1.0 V for 1 h. The instrumental error of $<1\%$ for SAED measurements was determined using an Au reference.

Table S3. Analysis of SAED images of Ni₄₀In₆₀Ox and correlation of d-spacing with possible phases.

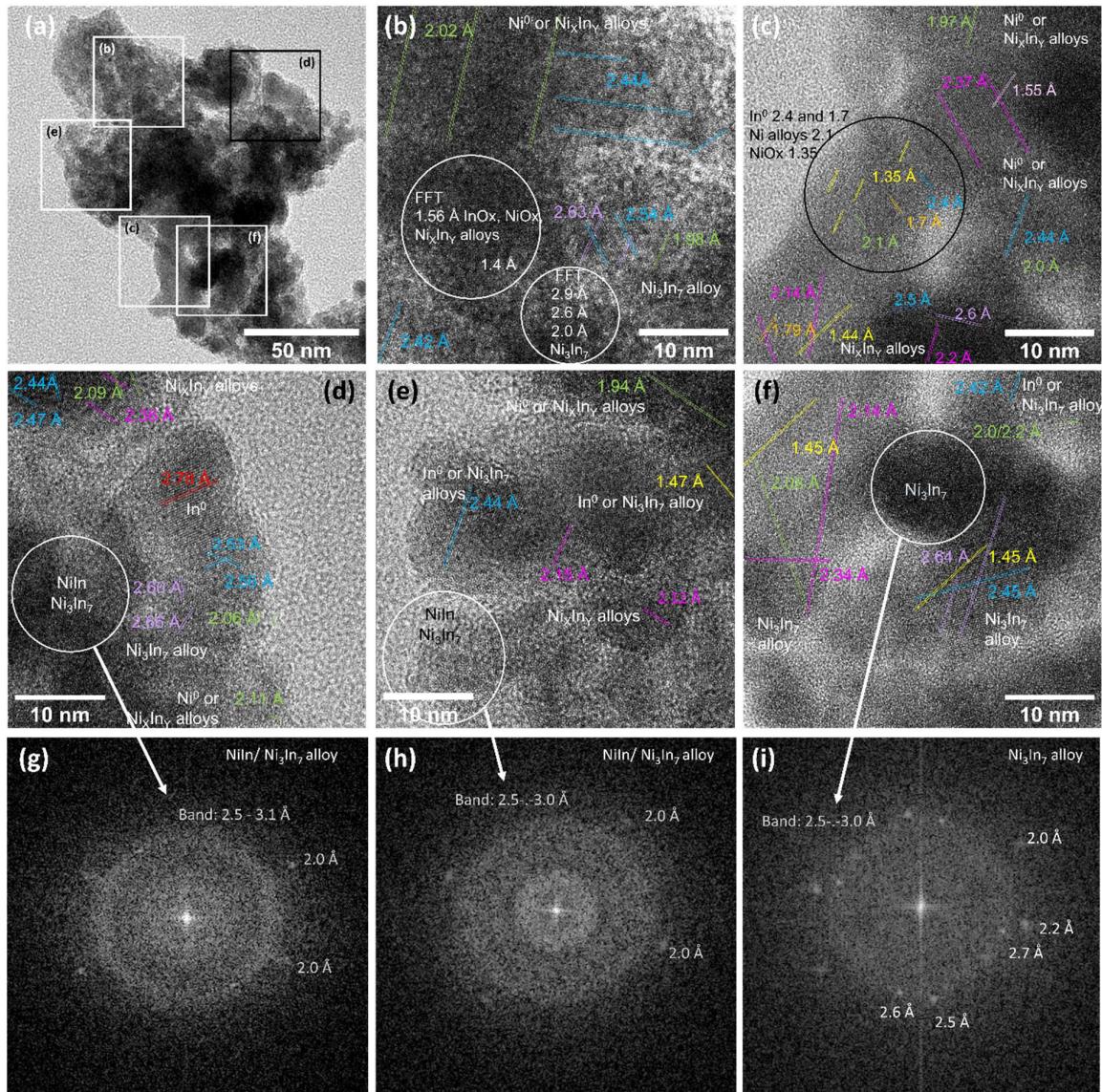


Figure S5. HRTEM analysis of Ni₄₀In₆₀Ox thin film after CO₂ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO₃ at -0.8 V for 1h. (a) TEM micrograph of investigated region. **(b-f)** high resolution images of corresponding areas labeled in image (a). **(g-i)** FFT analysis of marked areas in images (d-f). HRTEM resolution is 0.0194 pix/nm.

The analysis of HRTEM data indicates the formation of Ni⁰ and/or Ni_xIn_y crystallites mainly NiIn and Ni₃In₇ and a few In⁰. The highly amorphous material was analyzed by FFT and revealed the presence of very small domain with d spacings typical of Ni_xIn_y (NiIn and Ni₃In₇) and oxidic phases NiO and In₂O₃. The persistence of oxidized Ni and In was further confirmed by HAADF-STEM-EDS indicating the persistence of oxygen in the material even on a sample protected from oxidation in air prior EDS analysis (Figure S9c).

Table S4. Details on d-spacing assignment on HRTEM micrographs images of Ni₄₀In₆₀Ox after CO₂ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO₃ at -0.8 V for 1 h presented in Figure S5.

HRTEM of Ni ₄₀ In ₆₀ Ox @ -0.8 V for 1 h					Possible phases						
b	d	c	f	e	In ⁰ (2.72)						
	2.76				Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.65 Å)						
2.63	2.57		2.61		In ⁰ (2.48 Å)	In ₂ O ₃ (2.53 Å)	NiO (2.55 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.46 Å)			
2.55 2.44		2.51 2.44	2.44	2.45	In ⁰ (2.30 Å)	NiO (2.21 Å)	Ni ⁰ (2.27 Å)	Niln (2.27 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (2.20 Å)		
2.38	2.37	2.29	2.33		Ni ⁰ (2.16 Å)	Niln (2.17 Å)	Ni ₃ In (2.10 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (2.17 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.17 Å)		
		2.13	2.15	2.13	Ni ⁰ (2.04 Å)	NiO (2.01 Å)	Niln (2.01 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.05 Å)			
		1.8	1.83		In ₂ O ₃ (1.79 Å)	Ni ⁰ (1.77 Å)	Niln (1.79 Å)				
1.59					In ⁰ (1.69 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.59 Å)					
1.55		1.55 1.43	1.45	1.47	In ₂ O ₃ (1.53 Å)	NiO (1.56 Å)	Ni ⁰ (1.57 Å)	Niln (1.57 Å)	Ni ₃ In (1.48 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (1.54 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.58 Å)
1.4	1.34	1.34	1.35		In ⁰ (1.40)	NiO (1.33 Å)					

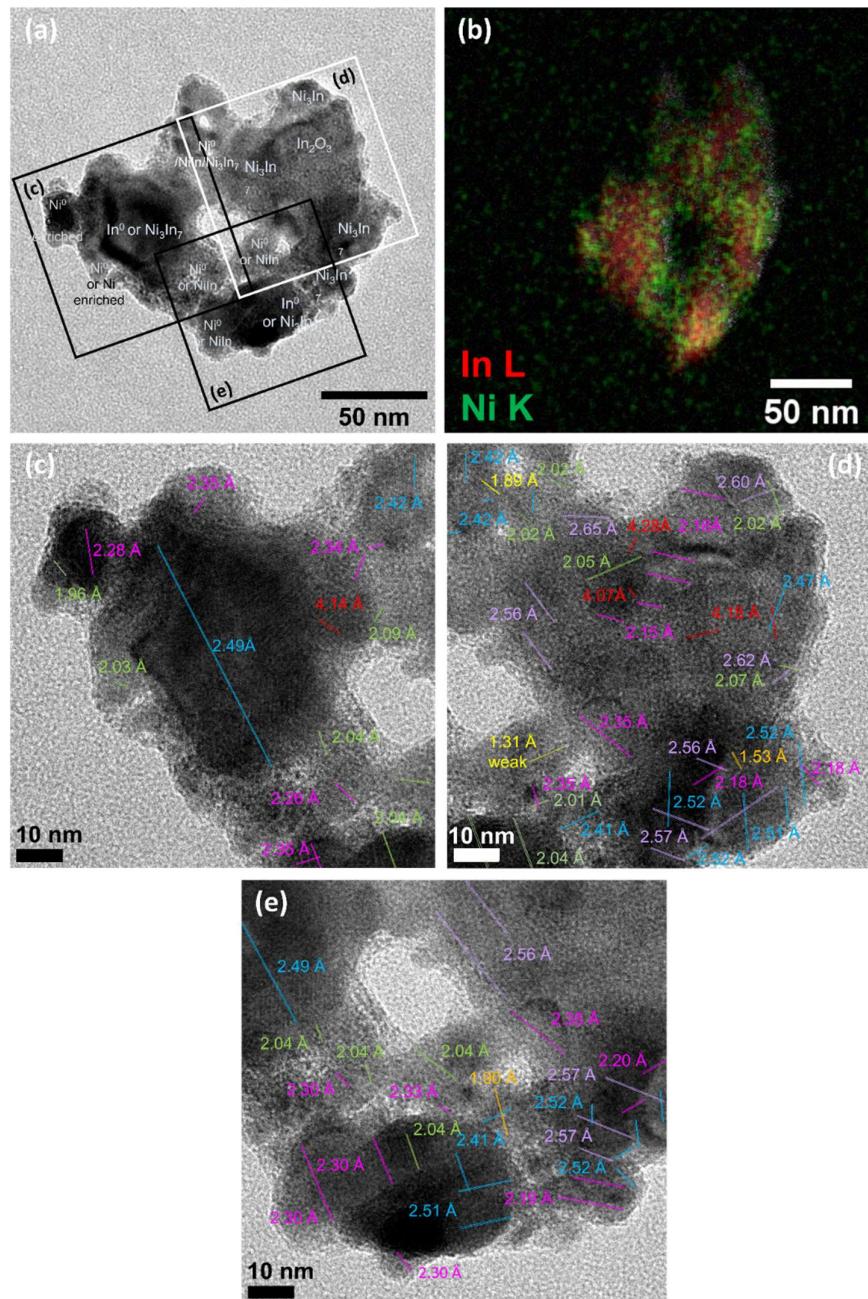


Figure S6. HRTEM analysis of Ni₄₀In₆₀O_x thin film after CO₂ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO₃ at -1.0 V for 1h. (a) TEM micrograph of investigated region. (b) STEM-EDS Ni-In elemental mapping. (c-e) high resolution images of corresponding areas labeled in image (a). HRTEM resolution is 0.011 pix/nm.

The analysis of HRTEM data in correlation with the HAADF-STEM-EDS mapping indicates the formation of an interconnected array of In^0 and Ni_3In_7 alloy grains, decorated with smaller Ni-rich grains composed by NiIn , Ni^0 and/or NiO . The HAADF-STEM-EDS was conducted on a sample a sample protected from oxidation in air prior analysis (Figure S9e). It reveals minimum O content, indicating complete reduction of original $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{Ox}$ oxide.

Table S5. Details on d-spacing assignment on HRTEM micrographs images of Ni₄₀In₆₀Ox after CO₂ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO₃ at -1.0 V for 1h presented in Figure S6.

HRTEM of Ni ₄₀ In ₆₀ Ox @ -1.0 V for 1 h			Possible phases							
c	d	e								
4.18	4.18		In ₂ O ₃ (4.13 Å)							
	2.61		Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.65 Å)	In ⁰ (2.72 Å)						
2.49	2.54	2.51 2.41	In ⁰ (2.48 Å)	In ₂ O ₃ (2.53 Å)	NiO (2.55 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.46 Å)				
2.29	2.26	2.35 2.29	In ⁰ (2.30 Å)	NiO (2.21 Å)	Ni ⁰ (2.27 Å)	NiIn (2.27 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (2.20 Å)			
	2.14		Ni ⁰ (2.16 Å)	NiIn (2.17 Å)	Ni ₃ In (2.10 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (2.17 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.17 Å)			
2.04	2.07	2.04	Ni ⁰ (2.04 Å)	Ni ⁰ (2.01 Å)	NiIn (2.01 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.05 Å)				
		1.91	NiCO ₃ (1.93 Å)							
			In ⁰ (1.69 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.59 Å)						
1.54 1.47	1.54 1.47		In ₂ O ₃ (1.53 Å)	NiO (1.56 Å)	Ni ⁰ (1.57 Å)	NiIn (1.57 Å)	Ni ₃ In (1.48 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (1.54 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.58 Å)	
	1.4		In ⁰ (1.4 Å)	NiO (1.33 Å)						
1.26	1.25			NiO (1.28 Å)	Ni ⁰ (1.25 Å)	Ni ₃ In (1.19 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (1.26 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.25 Å)		

Table S6. Details on d-spacing assignment on HRTEM micrographs images of Ni₄₀In₆₀Ox after CO₂ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO₃ at -0.8 V for 10h presented in Figure S7

HRTEM of Ni ₄₀ In ₆₀ Ox @ -0.8 V for 10 h					Possible phases					
b	c	d	e	f						
			2.91		Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.91 Å)					
2.67 2.64	2.69	2.71 2.68	2.63	2.63	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.65 Å)	In ⁰ (2.72 Å)				
2.43	2.35 2.21	2.37	2.45		In ⁰ (2.48 Å)	In ₂ O ₃ (2.53 Å)	NiO (2.55 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.46 Å)		
	2.16				In ⁰ (2.30 Å)	NiO (2.21 Å)	Ni ⁰ (2.27 Å)	NiIn (2.27 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (2.20 Å)	
					Ni ⁰ (2.16 Å)	NiIn (2.17 Å)	Ni ₃ In (2.10 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (2.17 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.17 Å)	
			2.05 1.98	2.04 2.05	Ni ⁰ (2.04 Å)	Ni ⁰ (2.01 Å)	NiIn (2.01 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (2.05 Å)		
1.79	1.77	1.79			In ₂ O ₃ (1.79 Å)	Ni ⁰ (1.77 Å)	NiIn (1.79 Å)			
			1.61	1.61	In ⁰ (1.69 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.59 Å)				
1.34	1.31	1.31	1.33		In ⁰ (1.4 Å)	NiO (1.33 Å)				
1.20	1.15	1.20				NiO (1.28 Å)	Ni ⁰ (1.25 Å)	Ni ₃ In (1.19 Å)	Ni ₂ In ₃ (1.26 Å)	Ni ₃ In ₇ (1.25 Å)

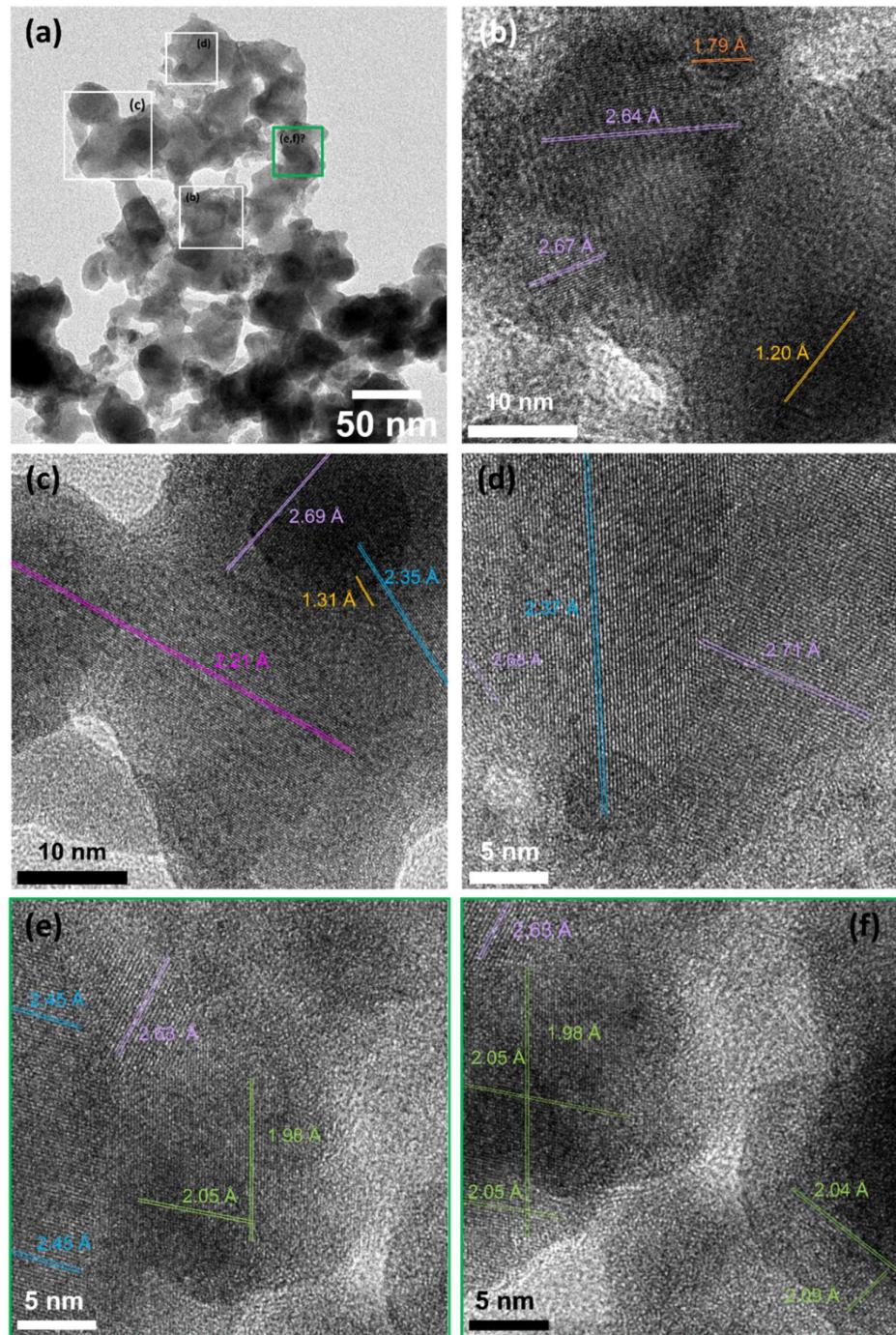


Figure S7. HRTEM analysis of $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{O}_x$ thin film after CO_2ER electrolysis in 0.1 M KHCO_3 at -0.8 V for 10h. (a) TEM micrograph of investigated region. (b-f) high resolution images of corresponding areas labeled in image (a). HRTEM resolution for images b-c is 0.019 pix/nm and 0.013 pix/nm for images d-f.

The analysis of HRTEM data indicates the formation Ni_xIn_y alloys predominantly Ni_3In_7

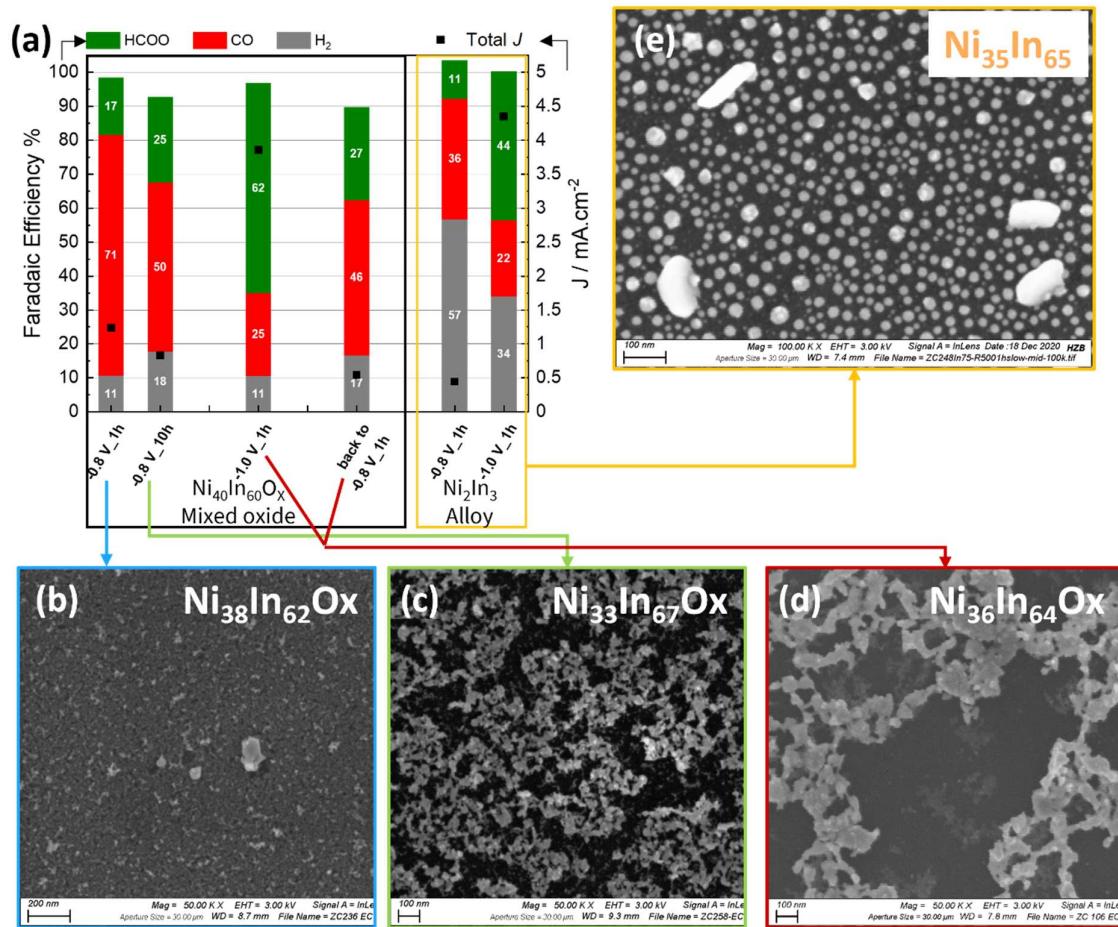


Figure S8. Correlation of (a) CO₂ER activity of Ni₄₀In₆₀O_x thin film and structural changes observed by SEM during in situ reduction at (b) -0.8 V for 1h; (c) -0.8V for 10h and (d) -1.0V for 1h, in comparison to (d) Ni₂In₃ alloys nanoparticles

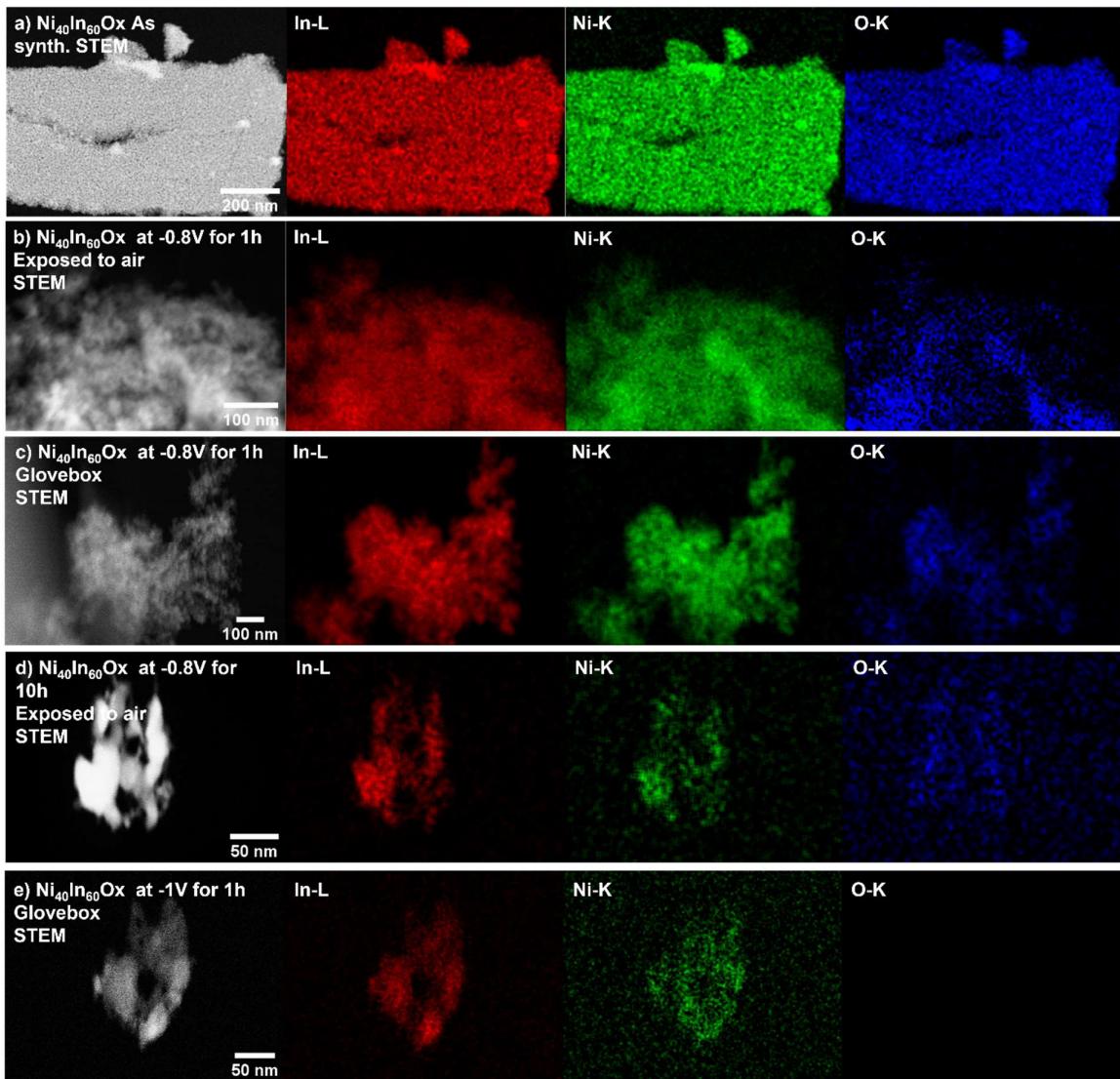


Figure S9. Complimentary HAADF-STEM-EDS mapping of $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{Ox}$ including oxygen distribution. From top to bottom. The EDS mappings for (a) As synthesized sample (exposed to air) and after CO₂ER at (b) -0.8 V for 1h (exposed to air), (c) -0.8 V for 1h (handled in glovebox to prevent air exposure), (d) -0.8 V for 10h (exposed to air) and (e) -1.0 V for 1h (handled in glovebox to prevent air exposure).

The EDS mappings presented in Figure S9c,e were conducted on samples $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{Ox}$ tested for CO₂ER inside an O₂-free glovebox and transferred to the TEM under inert atmosphere prior EDS analysis to prevent oxidation due to contact with air. In this manner the catalysts' structure can be investigated in a condition close to the *in situ* conditions. The so obtained results show that the sample tested at -0.8V for 1h (Figure S9c) display appreciable oxygen content indicating a persistence of oxide phases in this condition. In contrast the sample tested at -1.0V for 1h (Figure S9e) does not display detectable oxygen content, indicating a complete reduction of the original $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{Ox}$ under this potential.

Double layer capacitance measurements

The roughness was measured electrochemically performing cyclic voltammetry experiments between OCP ± 100 mV at different sweeping rates between 10mVs^{-1} and 500mVs^{-1} . Representative CV sets for $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{Ox}$ derivatives are shown in the image below. The capacitive currents (anodic and cathodic) recorded at the OCP are plotted as a function of sweeping rate (v). The slope of the obtained linear plot corresponds to the double layer capacitance (C_{DL}) according to equation S1.

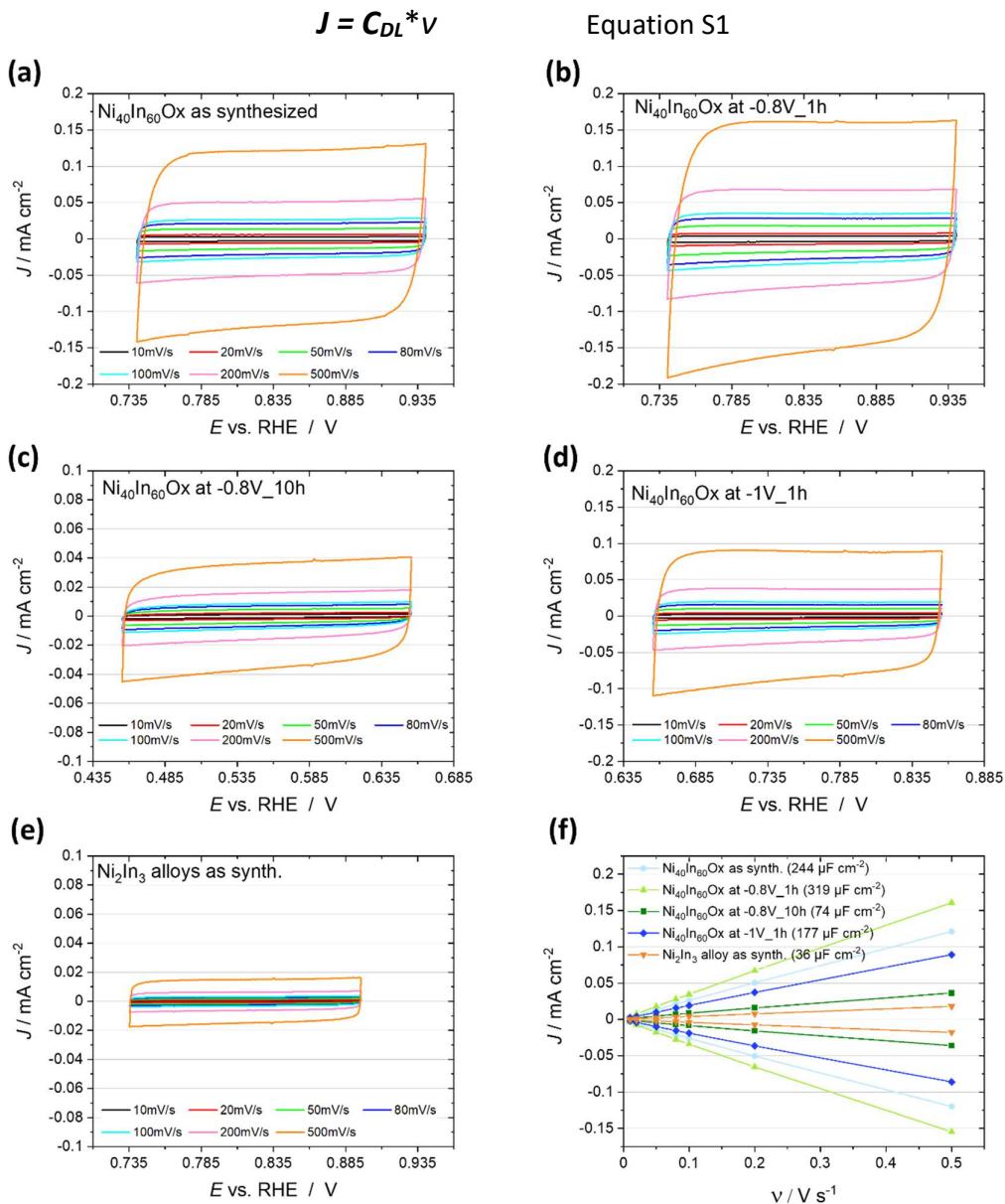


Figure S10. Double layer capacitance C_{DL} measurements by cyclic voltammetry in N_2 saturated 0.1 M KHCO_3 (pH 8.9) around OCP at sweeping rates from 5 mV s^{-1} to 500 mV s^{-1} for $\text{Ni}_{40}\text{In}_{60}\text{Ox}$ thin films (a) as synthesized and after electrolysis at (b) -0.8 V for 1 h , (c) -0.8 V for 10 h and (d) -1 V for 1 h as well as (e) Ni_2In_3 alloy. (f) Plot of anodic and cathodic current density as a function sweeping rate for the different samples. ($E_{\text{RHE}} = E_{\text{Ag/AgCl}} + 0.211 + 0.0591 \times \text{pH}$).

Gas chromatography method

(a) Representative gas chromatograms of standard gas mixtures

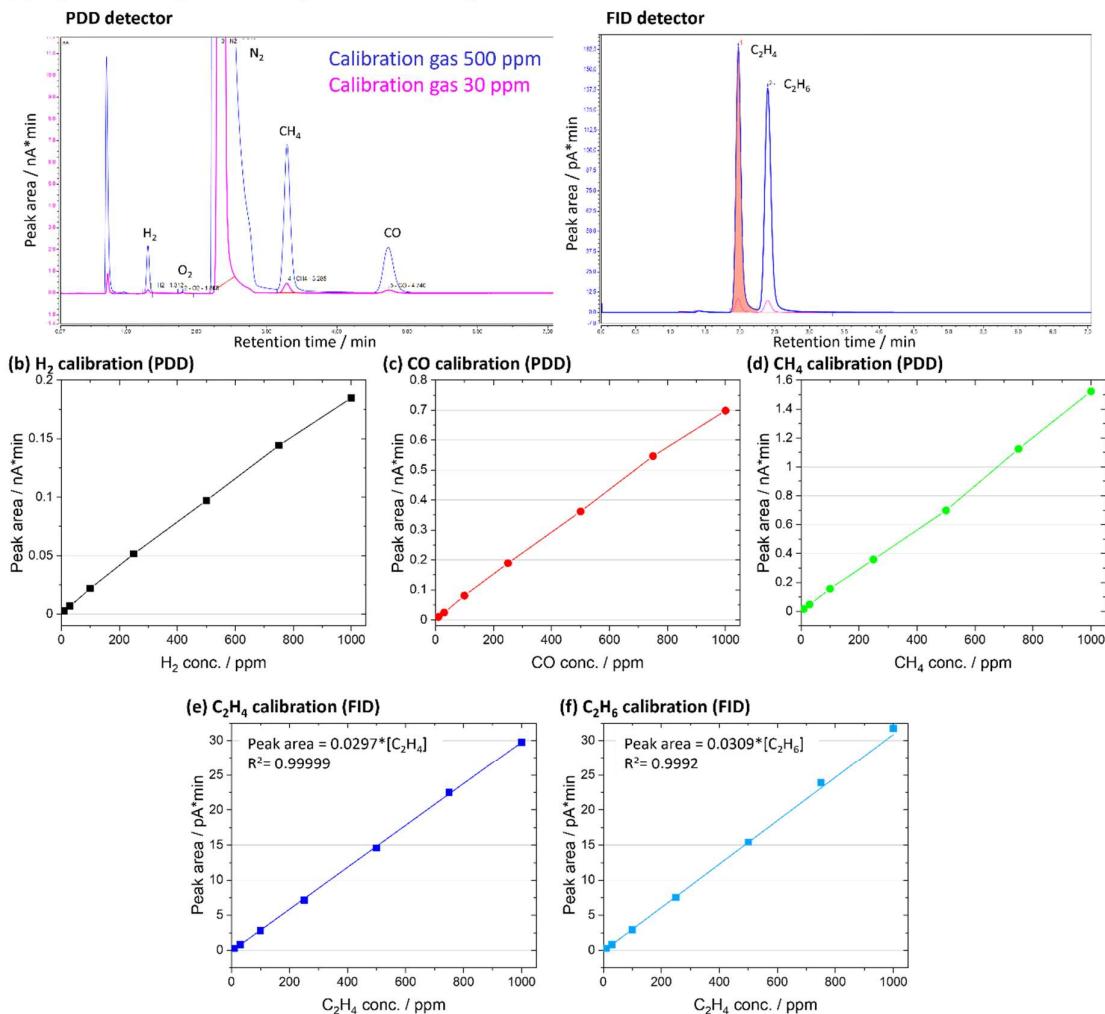


Figure S11. Gas chromatography method details. (a) Representative chromatograms with PDD detector (left) and FID detector (Right) for standard gas mixtures of 30 ppm (pink) and 500 ppm (blue). Calibration curve for (b) H₂-PDD, (c) CO-PDD, (d) CH₄-PDD, (e) C₂H₄-FID and (f) C₂H₆-FID. Note that components detected on the FID are quantified using a linear regression. For components detected on the PDD detector a Point-Point calibration mode from Chromeleon software (Thermoscientific) is used.

HPLC method

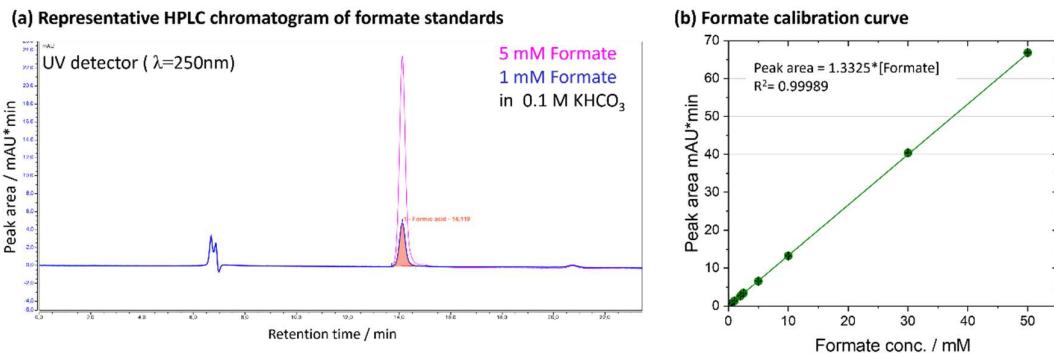


Figure S12. HPLC method details. (a) Representative chromatograms for 5 mM (pink) and 1 mM (blue) formate standards in 0.1 M KHCO_3 . (b) Calibration curve for formate.

Table S7. Comparison of CO₂ER activity of the catalysts in present study with previous literature reports.

Ref	Catalysts	Electrolyte	pH	E V _{RHE}	J mAcm ⁻²	CO ₂ ER selectivity				Catalyst loading			
						F _E _{CO}	J _{CO}	F _E _{HCOO}	J _{HCOO}	Mass μg cm ⁻²	J _{mass} ^{a)} A/g	η μmol cm ⁻¹	J _η ^{a)} mA/μmol
this work	Ni ₄₀ In ₆₀ Ox -0.7V	0.1M KHCO ₃	6.8	-0.7	0.5	71	0.36	5.2	0.03	8.1	43.7	0.089	4.0
	Ni ₄₀ In ₆₀ Ox -0.8V		6.8	-0.8	1.2	71	0.85	17	0.20	8.1	104.9	0.089	9.5
	Ni ₂₅ In ₇₅ Ox -0.7V	0.1M KHCO ₃	6.8	-0.7	0.5	73	0.37	12	0.06	8.2	44.6	0.084	4.4
	Ni ₂₅ In ₇₅ Ox -0.8V		6.8	-0.8	1	60	0.60	22	0.22	8.2	73.4	0.084	7.2
	Ni ₁₀ In ₉₀ Ox -0.7V	0.1M KHCO ₃	6.8	-0.7	0.5	60	0.30	26	0.13	8.6	15.2	0.079	3.8
	Ni ₁₀ In ₉₀ Ox -1V		6.8	-1	5.6	13	0.73	79	4.42	8.6	516.5	0.079	55.8
	In ₂ O ₃ -0.7V	0.1M KHCO ₃	6.8	-0.7	0.3	18	0.05	79	0.24	12.6	4.3	0.109	0.5
	In ₂ O ₃ -1V		6.8	-1	4	5.7	0.23	90	3.60	12.6	286.7	0.109	32.9
1	Ni _{0.02} In _{0.98}	0.5M NaHCO ₃	7.2	-0.7	1.5	60	0.90			1819.2	0.5	16	0.056
	Ni _{0.25} In _{0.75}		7.2	-0.7	2.2	25	0.55			1612.6	0.3	16	0.034
2	Ni-In ₂ O ₃ @C NFs GDE	1M KOH	14	-0.8	185			93.6	173.16	1500.0	115.4	10.8	16.0
	Ni-In ₂ O ₃ @C NFs GDE		14	-1	358			90	322.20	1500.0	214.8	10.8	29.8
	In ₂ O ₃ @C NFs GDE	1M KOH	14	-0.8	140			85	119.00	1500.0	79.3	10.8	11.0
	In ₂ O ₃ @C NFs GDE		14	-1	260			80	208.00	1500.0	138.7	10.8	19.2
3	C-Cu/SnO ₂ -0.8 core shell NP	0.5M NaHCO ₃	7.2	-0.8	15	90	13.50			13469.4	1.0	188.994	0.1
	C-Cu/SnO ₂ -1.8 core shell NP		7.2	-0.8	no info			85		14285.7		178.359	
4	Cu20Sn Bronze NP ~100nm	0.1M KHCO ₃	6.8	-0.9	2	90	1.80			1000.0	1.8	15.082	0.1
	Cu6Sn5 Bronze NP ~100nm		6.8	-1.17	6			73	4.38	1000.0	4.4	11.316	0.4
	FeNG-p (0.36wt.% Fe) Fe sites on N-graphene		6.8	-0.67	5.8	80	4.64			10.8	429.6	0.193	24.0
5	FeNC (2.14 wt% Fe) Fe on N doped carbon	0.1M KHCO ₃	6.8	-0.65	6.9	42	2.90			64.2	45.2	1.150	2.5
	NiNC (2.83 wt.% Ni) Ni on N doped carbon		6.8	-0.75	8.5	96	8.20			84.9	96.6	1.447	5.7
	Ni-NG (0.44 wt.% Ni) Ni sites on N-graphene	0.5M KHCO ₃	7.2	-0.62	11	95	9.20			4.4	2090.9	0.075	122.7

Note that red or green shading indicate the main product is CO or formate respectively. ^{a)}The corresponding J_{mass} and J_η presented are calculated for the main product.

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