

Electronic Supplementary Information for Ligand Engineering of Solution-Processed NiO_x for High- Performance n-i-p Perovskite Photovoltaics

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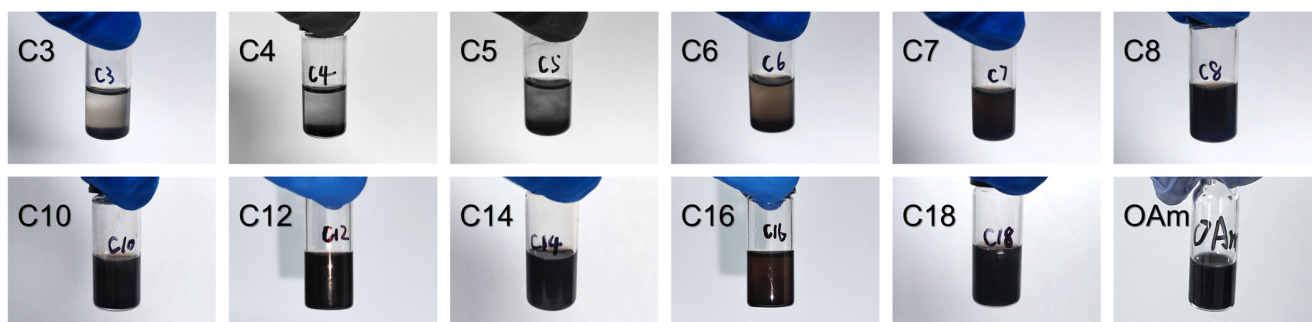


Figure S1. Photos of varied alkylamine-modulated NiO_x inks.

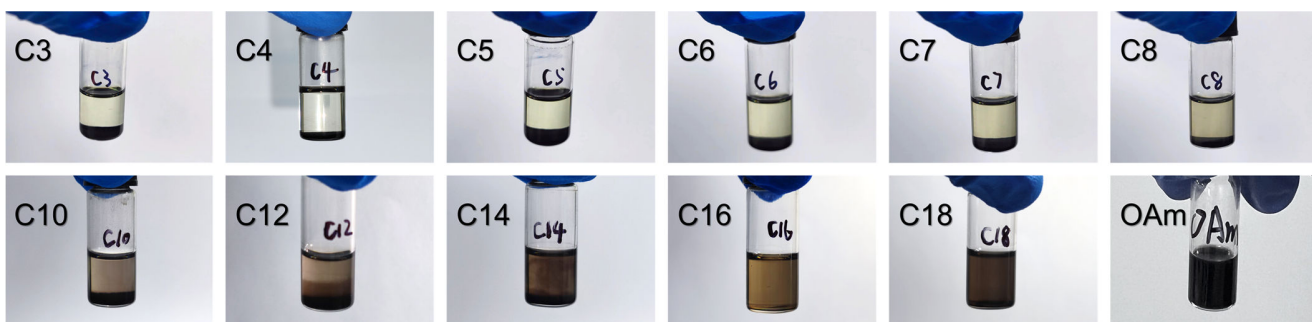


Figure S2. Photos of varied alkylamine-modulated NiO_x inks after aging for 4 hours.

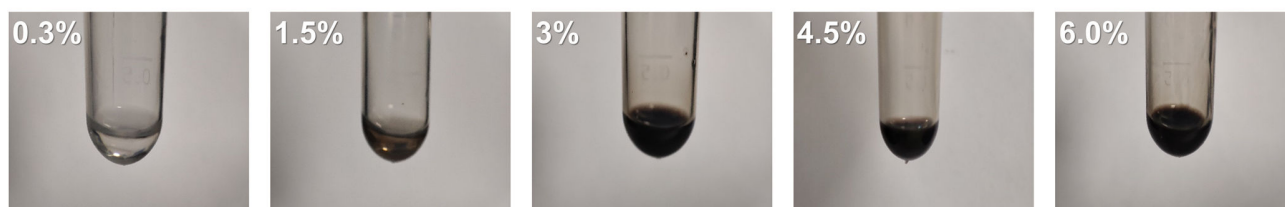


Figure S3. Photographs of NiO_x inks modulated by OAm at different molar ratios.

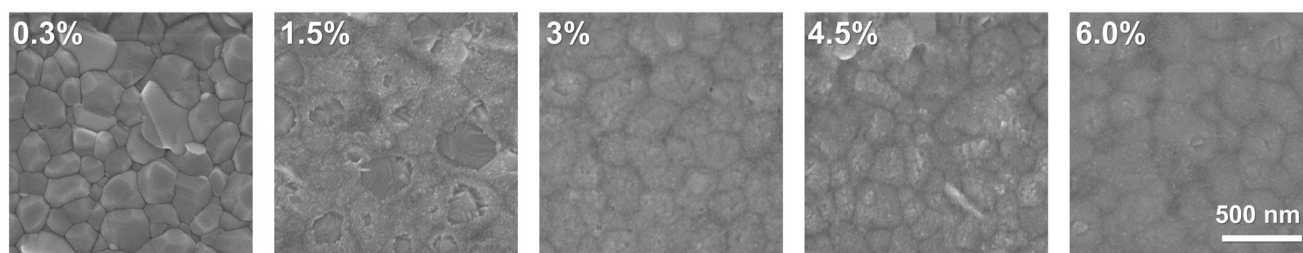


Figure S4. SEM images of NiO_x films modulated by OAm at different molar ratios.

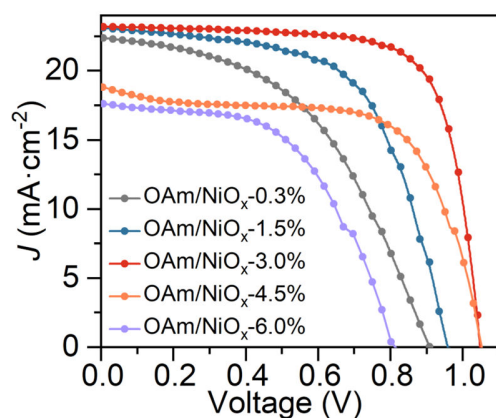


Figure S5. Optimal J - V curves of PSCs with NiO_x HTLs modulated by OAm at different molar ratios.

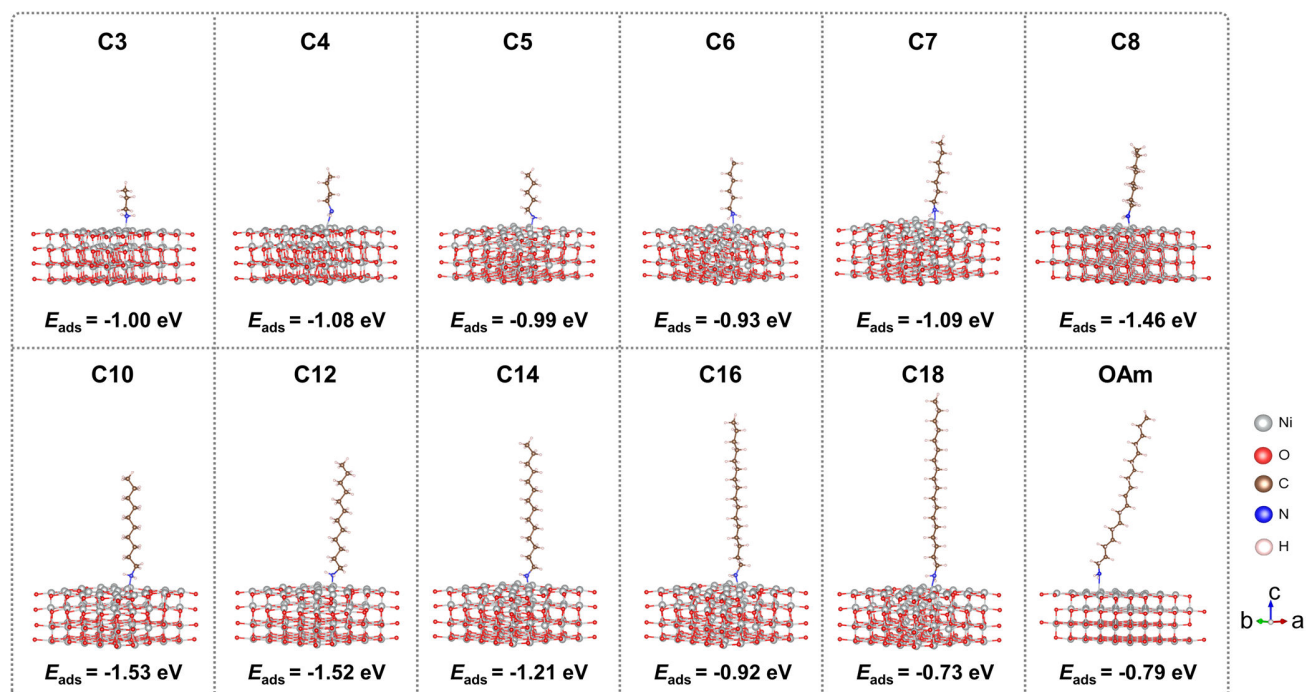


Figure S6. Adsorption configurations of varied amines on NiO(100).

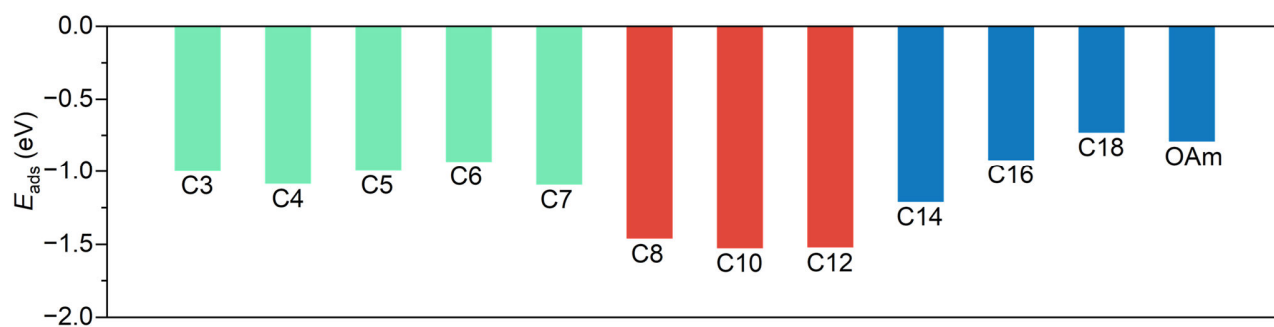


Figure S7. Adsorption energies of varied amines on NiO(100).

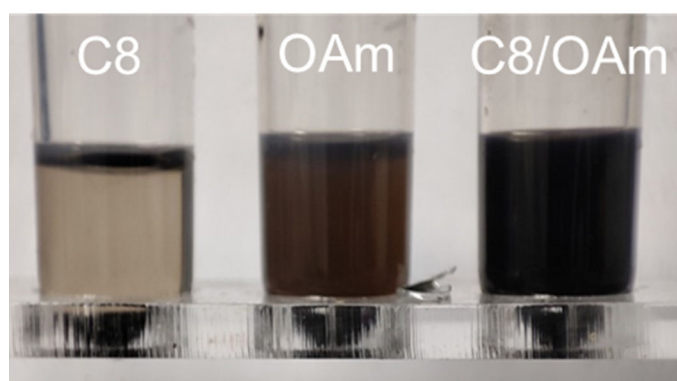


Figure S8. Photographs of varied NiO_x inks after aging for 12 hours. The inks were modulated using C8, OAm, and a combination of C8/OAm with a molar ratio of 4:1.

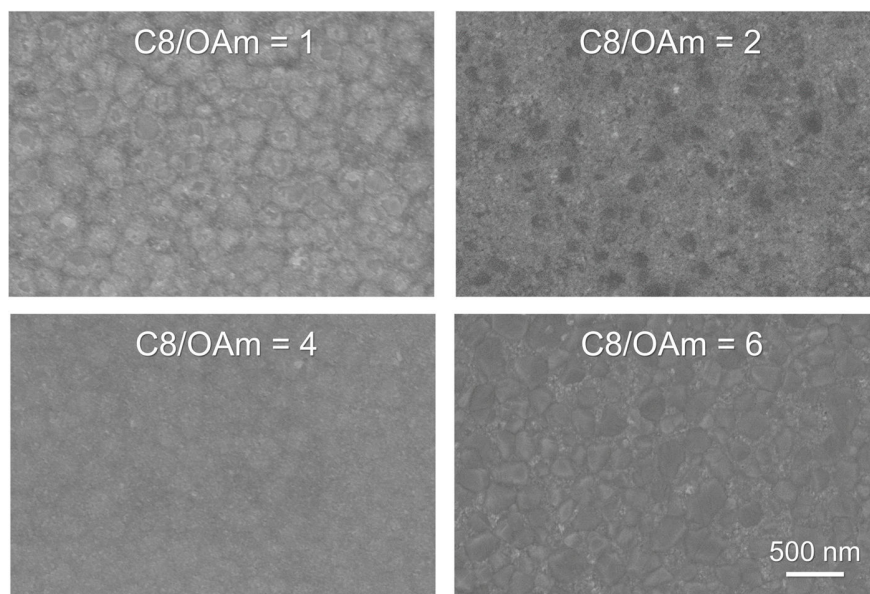


Figure S9. Top-view SEM images of NiO_x films modulated by varied C8/OAm molar ratios.

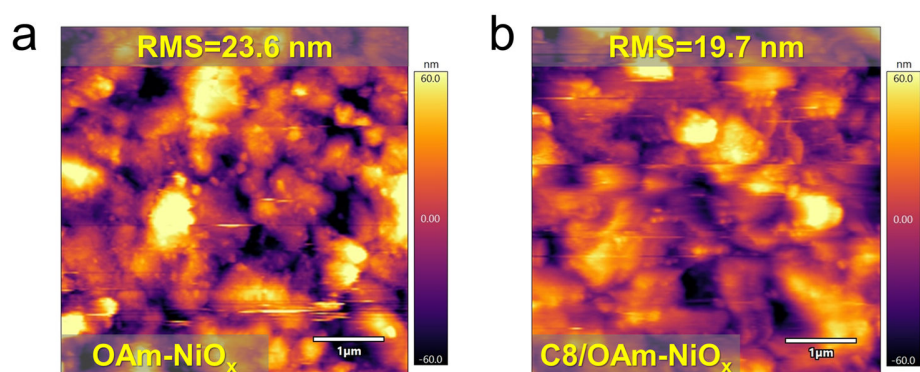


Figure S10. Top-view AFM images of the corresponding FTO/PVK/NiO_x samples.

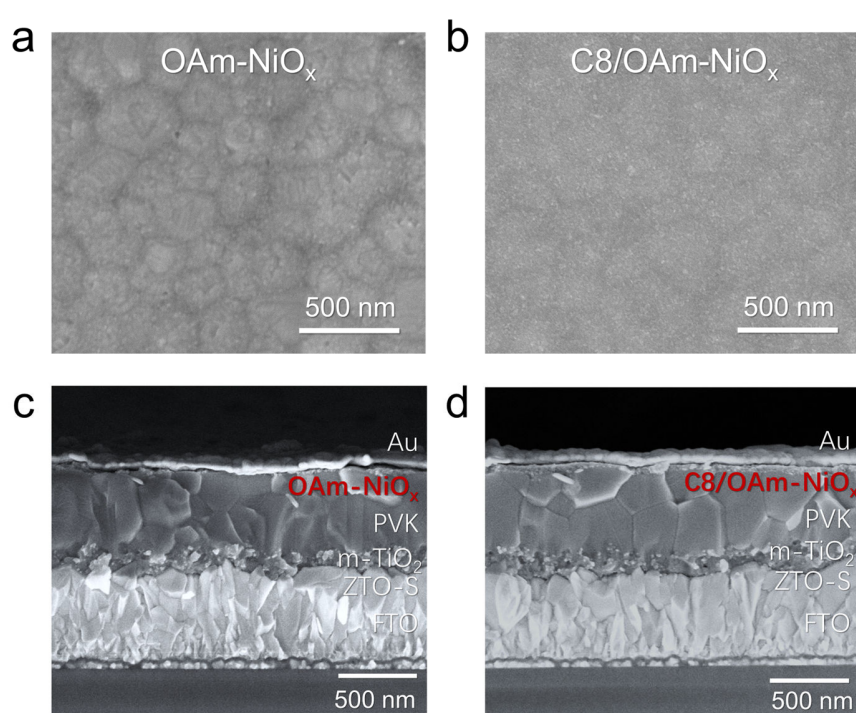


Figure S11. Top-view SEM images of (a) OAm-NiO_x and (b) C8/OAm-NiO_x films on perovskites. Cross-section SEM images of PSCs based on (c) OAm-NiO_x and (d) C8/OAm-NiO_x films.

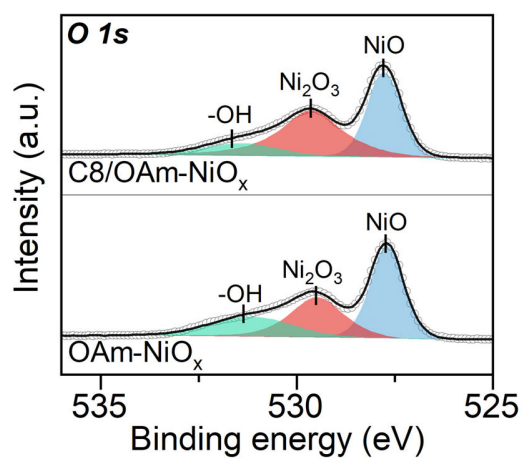


Figure S12. XPS spectra of O 1s core level for the corresponding NiO_x films.

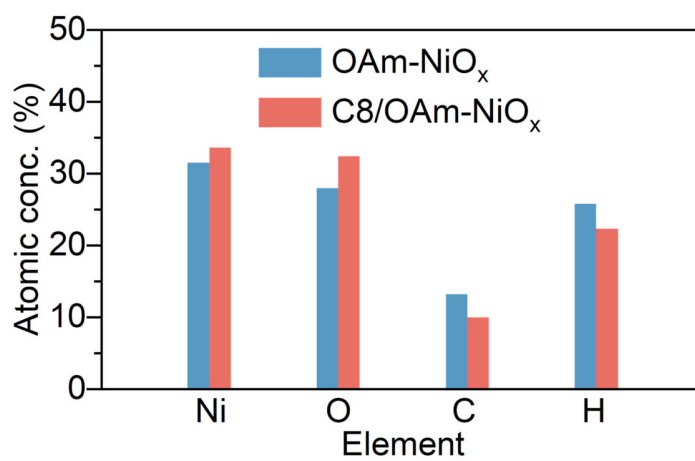


Figure S13. Atomic concentrations of C, Ni, O, and H in the corresponding NiO_x samples.

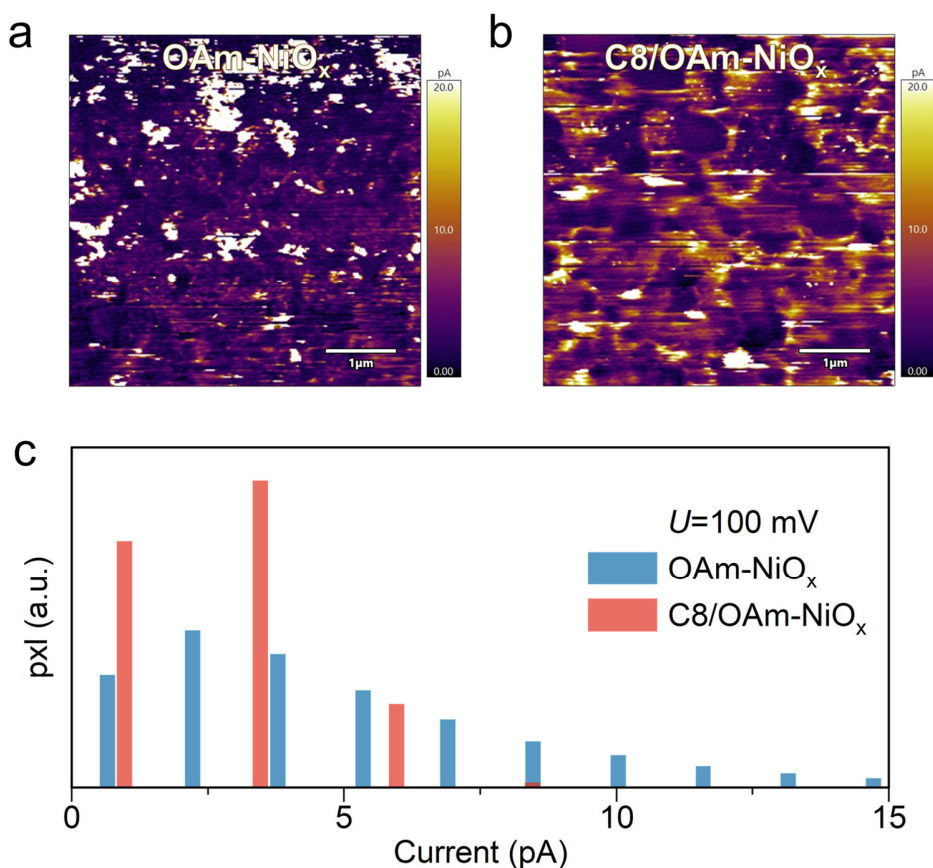


Figure S14. Microscale conductivity of films. (a-b) c-AFM images of the corresponding FTO/PVK/NiO_x samples at a bias potential of 100 mV. (c) Surface current of the films obtained by c-AFM. The C8/OAm-NiO_x film demonstrated a higher and more uniform surface current distribution compared to the OAm-NiO_x film, indicating improved conductivity and uniformity in surface coverage.

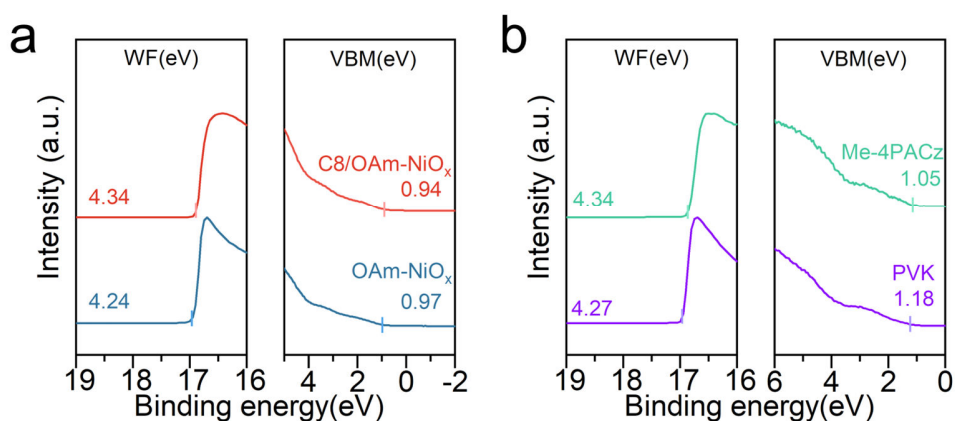


Figure S15. UPS spectra of (a) NiO_x and (b) perovskite films.

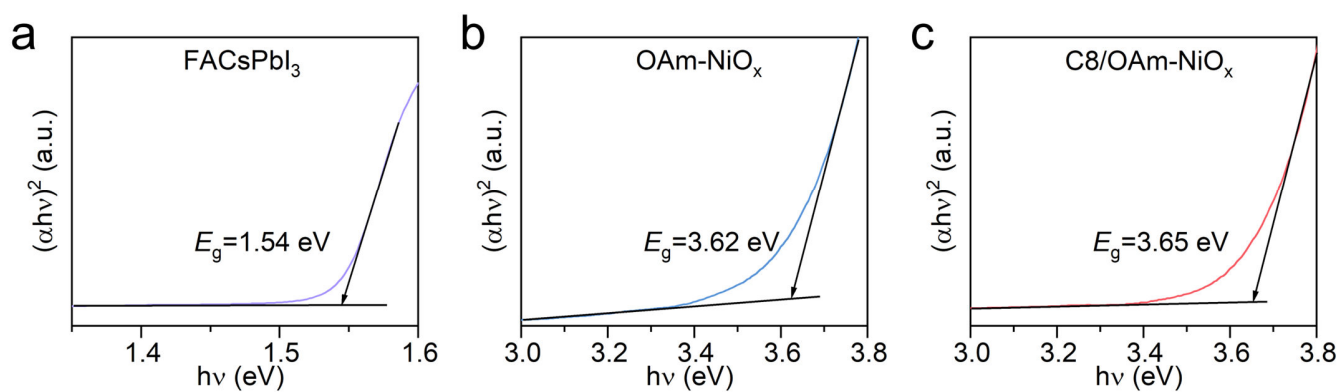


Figure S16. Bandgap measurements. Tauc plots of (a) perovskite, (b) OAm-NiO_x and (c) C8/OAm-NiO_x films.

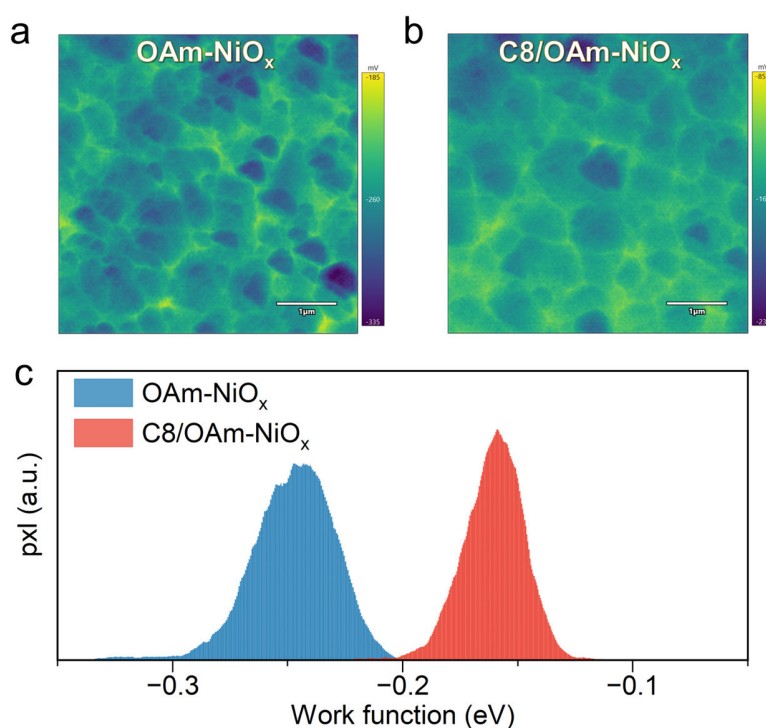


Figure S17. (a-b) KPFM surface potential maps and (c) work function distributions of the corresponding FTO/PVK/NiO_x samples. The mean work function of the C8/OAm-NiO_x film was increased to -0.158 ± 0.037 eV, compared to -0.254 ± 0.046 eV for the OAm-NiO_x film.

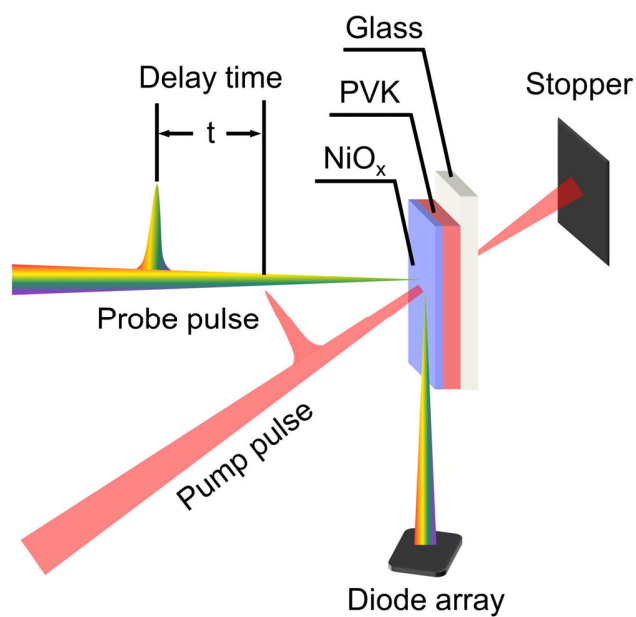


Figure S18. Schematic diagram of the fs-TR measurement for the glass/PVK/NiO_x samples.

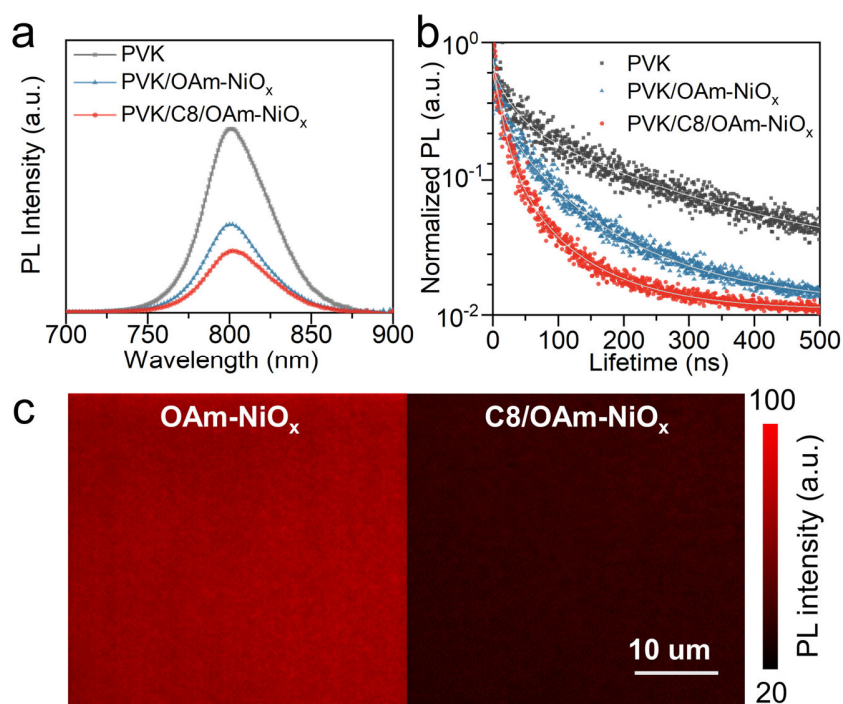


Figure S19. Film quality characterization. (a) Steady-state PL, (b) TRPL and (c) PL mapping spectra of the corresponding films.

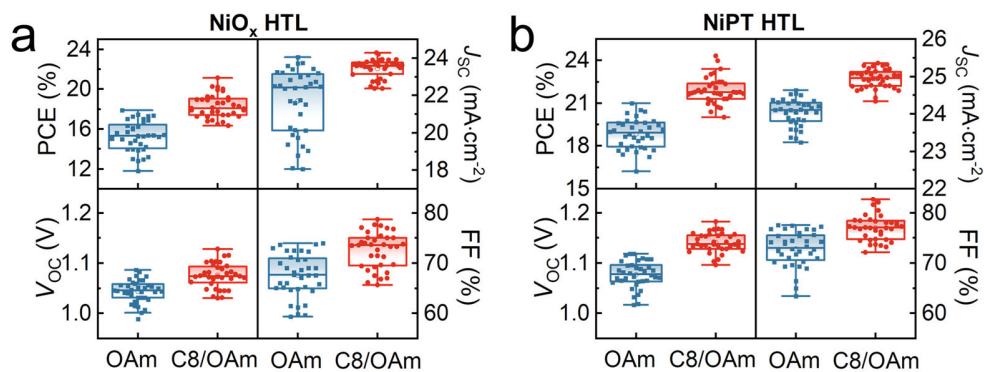


Figure S22. Device performance statistics. Distribution histograms of PCE, J_{sc} , V_{oc} and FF for PSCs with (a) NiO_x and (b) NiPT HTLs. Each HTL type comprises 36 cells for statistical analysis and data evaluation. Utilizing the dual ligand strategy, the average PCE of NiO_x -based devices underwent a significant enhancement, rising from 15.28% to 18.30%. Meanwhile, NiPT-based devices also exhibited a notable improvement in their average PCE, increasing from 18.84% to 21.88%.

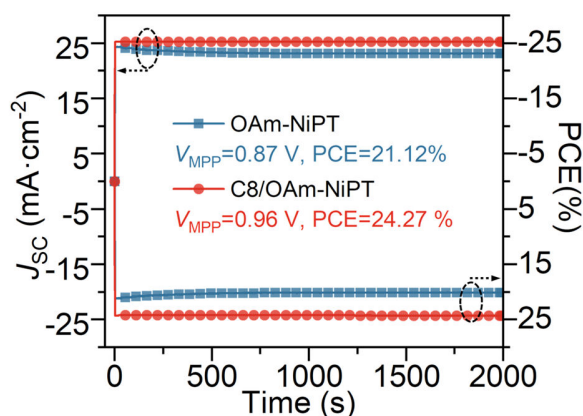


Figure S23. Steady-state power output of unencapsulated PSCs with the corresponding NiP HTLs under maximum power point at atmosphere ($\sim 50\%$ RH).

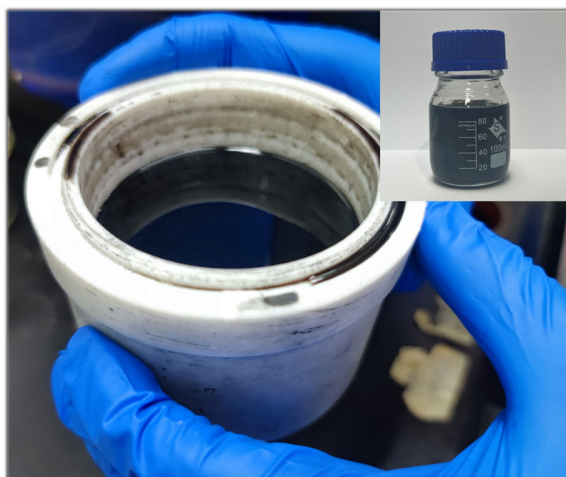


Figure S24. Scale-up production of the NiO_x ink via a ball-milling method.

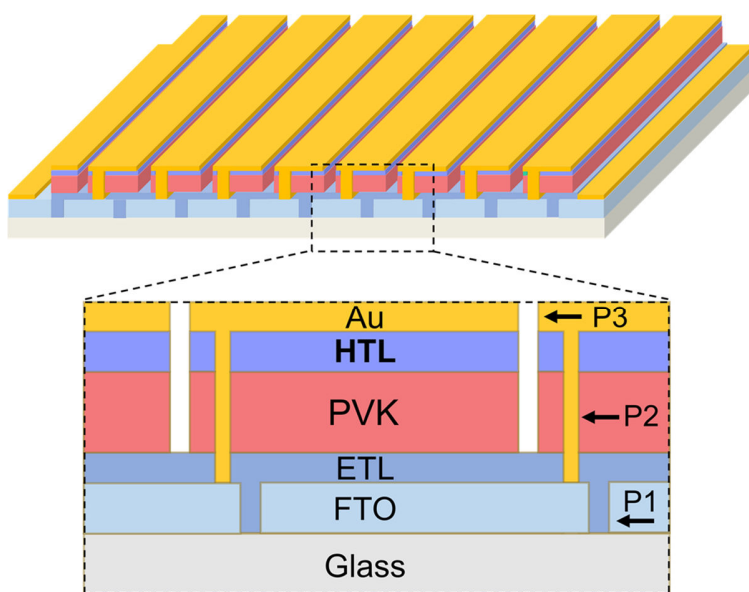


Figure S25. Structural schematic diagram of 6×6 cm² PSM.

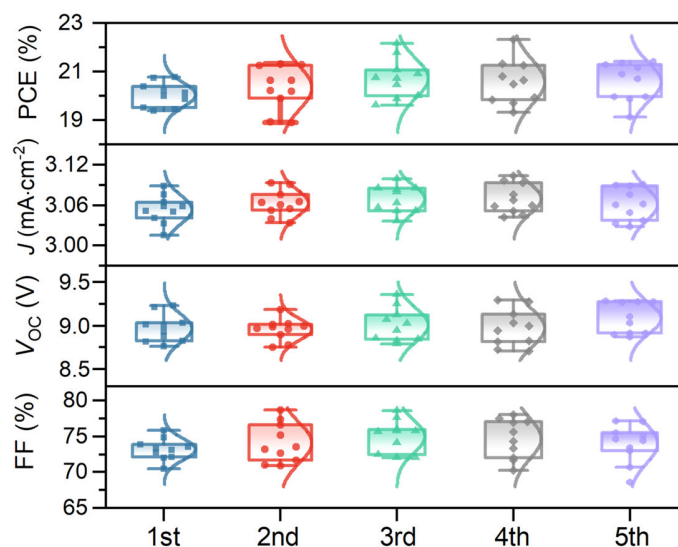


Figure S26. Statistical distribution of 50 PSMs incorporating C8/OAm-NiPT HTLs, sourced from five distinct synthesis batches. Each PSM boasts an active area of 21.8 cm², achieving a champion PCE of 22.34% and an average PCE of 20.44%.

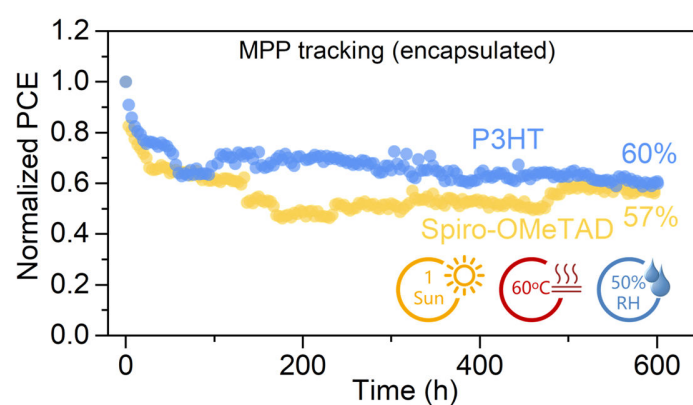


Figure S27. MPP tracking of encapsulated modules employing P3HT and spiro-OMeTAD as HTLs under simulated one-sun illumination, 60°C and 50% RH.

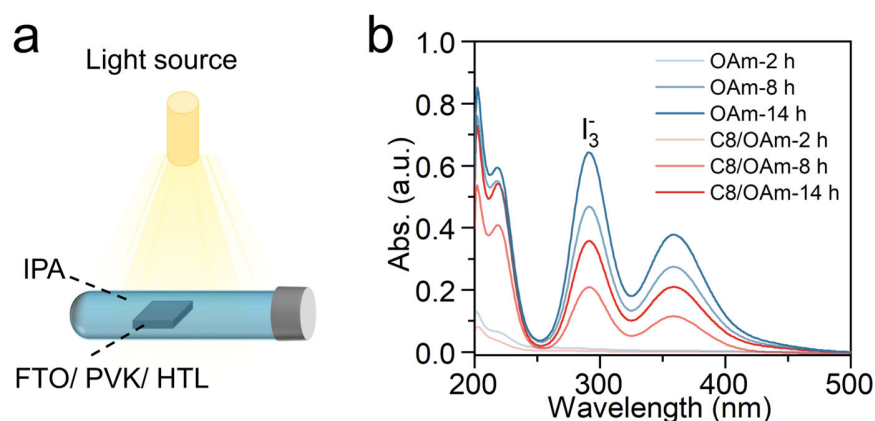


Figure S28. Iodine-escape analysis in perovskite films with the corresponding HTLs. (a) Schematic of the experimental setup designed for real-time monitoring of iodine migration from perovskite films. (b) UV-vis absorption spectra of the IPA solvent recorded during the aging process. In this experiment, perovskite films coated with varied HTLs were fully immersed in IPA within a nitrogen-sealed vial and exposed to full-spectrum sunlight under ambient conditions. This setup enables a precise assessment of iodine loss from the films. Rapid extraction of I_3^- ions indicates active iodine migration upon illumination.^{S1} However, the C8/OAm-NiPT HTLs reduces iodine migration, which is beneficial to operational stability.

Table S1. Photovoltaic parameters of the corresponding devices with NiO_x HTLs modulated by OAm at different molar ratios.

Entry	V_{oc} (V)	J_{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	FF (%)	PCE (%)
OAm/NiO _x -0.3%	0.912	22.36	47.78	9.74
OAm/NiO _x -1.5%	0.958	23.11	60.34	13.36
OAm/NiO _x -3.0%	1.046	23.20	73.65	17.87
OAm/NiO _x -4.5%	1.052	18.79	64.82	12.81
OAm/NiO _x -6.0%	0.820	17.71	53.15	7.72

Table S2. Element analysis of the corresponding NiO_x sample. The estimation of Ni content is determined by subtracting the combined content of C, H, N, and O.

Entry	C (wt%)	H (wt%)	N (wt%)	O (wt%)	Ni (wt%)	C/Ni (mol%)
OAm-NiO _x -1	6.47	1.06	0.85	18.15		
OAm-NiO _x -2	6.29	1.01	0.82	17.69		
Ave.	6.38	1.03	0.84	17.92	73.83	42.1
C8/OAm-NiO _x -1	4.74	0.88	0.87	19.34		
C8/OAm-NiO _x -2	4.30	0.80	0.88	19.38		
Ave.	4.52	0.84	0.88	19.51	74.25	29.7

Table S3. Hall effect measurements of the corresponding NiO_x films.

Entry	Type	Hall coefficient (cm ³ C ⁻¹)	Carrier concentration (cm ⁻³)
OAm-NiO _x	p	3.01±0.37	(2.25±0.25)×10 ¹⁸
C8/OAm-NiO _x	p	0.85±0.16	(9.06±1.65)×10 ¹⁸

Table S4. TRPL decay curves lifetime fitting of PVK and PVK-NiO_x films. TRPL curves were fitted using a bi-exponential decay equation of $I(t) = I_0 + A_1\exp(-t/\tau_1) + A_2\exp(-t/\tau_2)$.

Entry	A ₁ (%)	τ_1 (ns)	A ₂ (%)	τ_2 (ns)
PVK	16.19	32.81	63.44	470.39
PVK/OAm-NiO _x	14.45	16.34	70.45	192.27
PVK/C8/OAm-NiO _x	30.51	22.65	60.59	118.57

Table S5. Photovoltaic parameters of the corresponding devices with NiO_x HTLs modulated by C8/OAm at different molar ratios.

Entry	<i>V</i> _{oc} (V)	<i>J</i> _{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	<i>FF</i> (%)	PCE (%)
C8/OAm=1	1.064	23.33	73.30	18.19
C8/OAm=2	1.073	23.45	75.47	18.99
C8/OAm=4	1.128	24.27	77.10	21.12
C8/OAm=6	1.013	23.40	61.16	14.50

Table S6. Photovoltaic parameters of the corresponding devices with NiO_x HTLs.

Entry	Scan direction	<i>V</i> _{oc} (V)	<i>J</i> _{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	<i>FF</i> (%)	PCE (%)
OAm-NiO _x	Reverse	1.046	23.20	73.65	17.87
	Forward	1.015	22.80	62.63	14.51
C8/OAm-NiO _x	Reverse	1.128	24.27	77.10	21.12
	Forward	1.097	24.15	74.80	19.82

Table S7. Photovoltaic parameters of the corresponding devices with NiPT HTLs.

Entry	Scan direction	<i>V</i> _{oc} (V)	<i>J</i> _{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	<i>FF</i> (%)	PCE (%)
OAm-NiPT	Reverse	1.118	24.25	77.40	20.99
	Forward	1.092	24.20	70.21	18.55
C8/OAm- NiPT	Reverse	1.168	25.35	82.10	24.32
	Forward	1.145	25.25	77.43	22.39

Table S8. Fitted data of charge transport resistance (R_{tr}) and charge recombination resistance (R_{rec}) of devices utilizing NiO_x HTLs.

Entry	R_{tr} (k Ω)	R_{rec} (k Ω)
OAm-NiPT	9.46	86.65
C8/OAm- NiPT	5.23	103.11

Table S9. Total material cost for the amine-modulated NiPT ink encompasses the expenses incurred for raw materials and solvent. The data were sourced from the online website: <https://www.inno-chem.com.cn>.

Raw material	Brand	Retail price US \$ (quantity)	Experimental dosage	Experimental consumption US\$	Yield
P3HT	Innochem	198 (1 g)	0.55 g	109	367.7 mL (84%)
Ni(NO ₃) ₂ ·6H ₂ O	Sinopharm	25 (500 g)	58 g	2.900	
NaOH	Sinopharm	3.5 (500 g)	1.2 g	0.084	
C8	Sigma-aldrich	121 (1 L)	1.11 mL	0.135	
OAm	Sigma-aldrich	197 (500 g)	0.44 g	0.173	
CB	Alfa Aesar	83 (1 L)	367.7 mL	30.5	
NiPT	Lab-synthesized			142.8	0.39 US\$ mL ⁻¹

Table S10. Total materials cost for the Spiro-OMeTAD solution^{S2} encompasses the expenses incurred for raw materials and solvent.

Raw material	Brand	Retail price US \$ (quantity)	Experimental dosage	Experimental consumption US\$	Yield
Spiro-OMeTAD	TCI	174 (1 g)	9.4 g	1635.6	107.1 mL
Li-TFSI	Sigma-aldrich	85 (5 g)	1.2 g	20.4	
Co-TFSI	Sigma-aldrich	127 (5 g)	0.34 g	8.64	
<i>t</i> BP	Alfa Aesar	145 (1 L)	3.9 mL	0.57	
acetonitrile	Alfa Aesar	92 (1 L)	3.2 mL	0.3	
CB	Alfa Aesar	83 (1 L)	100 mL	8.3	
Spiro-OMeTAD solution	Lab-prepared			1673.80	15.63 US\$ mL ⁻¹

Table S11. Total materials cost for the PTAA solution^{S3} encompasses the expenses incurred for raw materials and solvent.

Raw material	Brand	Retail price US \$ (quantity)	Experimental dosage	Experimental consumption US\$	Yield
PTAA	TCI	974 (1 g)	1.5 g	1461	101.75 mL
Li-TFSI	Sigma-aldrich	85 (5 g)	0.135 g	2.3	
<i>t</i> BP	Alfa Aesar	145 (1 L)	1 mL	0.15	
acetonitrile	Alfa Aesar	92 (1 L)	0.75 mL	0.12	
CB	Alfa Aesar	83 (1 L)	100 mL	8.3	
PTAA solution	Lab-prepared			1471.87	14.47 US\$ mL ⁻¹

Table S12. Summary of efficiency and stability of NiO_x-based mini-modules from publicly reported data. IE: Initial efficiency.

n-i-p structure

Device structure	Highlight	Efficiency	Module stability	Ref.
FTO/ZTO/CsFAMAPb(IBr) ₃ /NiO _x -P3HT/Au	Organic inorganic hybrid HTL	16.8% (18 cm ²)	91% IE (85°C/85% RH for 1000 h); 80% IE (MPP tracking at 85°C for 166 h)	S4
FTO/ZTO/FAMAPb(IBr) ₃ /QDs/NiO _x /Au	Inorganic QDs passivation	19.1% (18 cm ²)	91% IE (85°C/85% RH for 1000 h); 90% IE (MPP tracking at 50°C for 16 h)	S5
FTO/ZTO/CsFAMAPb(IBr) ₃ /NiO _x -P3HT/Au	NiO _x passivator; Multi-defect management	17.0% (18 cm ²)	87% IE (85°C/85% RH for 2000 h); 100% IE (MPP tracking at 60°C for 1600 h)	S6
FTO/ZTO/CsFAPbI ₃ /Me-4PACz/NiO _x -P3HT/Au	Ligand engineering	22.3% (21.8 cm ²)	99% IE (85°C for 500 h); 95% IE (MPP tracking at 60°C for 700 h)	This work

p-i-n structure

Device structure	Highlight	Efficiency	Module stability	Ref.
FTO/NiO _x /Me-4PACz/FAPbI ₃ /PCBM/SnO ₂ /Cu	H ₂ O ₂ for homogeneous nickel oxide	21.0% (14.7 cm ²)	n/a	S7
FTO/NiO _x /urea/CsFAMA Pb(IBr) ₃ /C ₆₀ /BCP/Ag	Urea passivation	19.0% (16 cm ²) 17.2% (196 cm ²)	n/a	S8

ITO/NiO _x /PTAA/CsFAMAPb (IBr) ₃ /PCBM/BCP/Ag	2D/3D perovskite	21.6% (19.3 cm ²)	n/a	S9
ITO/NiO _x /2PACz/ FAPbI ₃ /C ₆₀ /BCP/Au	Vacuum- assisted growth	18.3% (12.3 cm ²)	100% IE (MPP tracking at 85°C for 20 h)	S10
ITO/NiO _x /CsFAMAPb(IBr) ₃ / LiF _x /C ₆₀ /BCP/Cu	Co-evaporation of PbI ₂ /CsBr layer	19.8% (16 cm ²)	n/a	S11
ITO/NiO _x /MeO-2PACz/ FACsPbI ₃ /C ₆₀ /BCP/Cu	THF co-solvent dilution	12.6% (110 cm ²)	84 % IE (MPP tracking at 85°C for 1000 h)	S12
FTO/NiO _x /LiF/CsFAMAPb (IBr) ₃ /C ₆₀ /BCP/Cu	LiF evaporation for NiO _x doping	19.5% (57.3 cm ²)	80% IE (MPP tracking for 700 h)	S13
FTO/NiO _x /NCS/ CsFAMAPb(IBr) ₃ / PCBM/BCP/Ag	NCS passivation	21.2% (18 cm ²)	n/a	S14
ITO/NiO _x / MeO-2PACz/ MAPbI ₃ /PCBM/BCP/Cu	CBD NiO _x	19.0% (18.1 cm ²)	n/a	S15
FTO/NiO _x /KBH ₄ /CsFAMA PbI ₃ /PCBM/BCP/Ag	KBH ₄ for synergistic redox modulation	20.2% (29 cm ²)	94% IE (MPP tracking at 65°C for 2000 h)	S16
ITO/NiO _x / NA-Me/FACs PbI ₃ /PCBM/BCP/Ag	Buried interface molecular hybrid	22.7% (11.1 cm ²)	n/a	S17
FTO/NiO _x /CsFAPbI ₃ / PCBM/BCP/Ag	Surface redox engineering	18.6% (174 cm ²)	80% IE (aging in ambient environment for 1500 h)	S18
ITO/NiO _x / CsFAPb(IBr) ₃ / PEABr/PMMA/C ₆₀ /BCP/Ag	Modulation of A- site cations eliminates DMSO adsorption	19.1% (18 cm ²)	84% IE (MPP tracking for 1056 h)	S19
FTO/NiO _x /FAMAPb(IBr) ₃ /PM MA/PCBM/BCP/Ag	Flash infrared annealing for NiO _x	16.7% (17 cm ²)	n/a	S20

Table S13. Summary of NiO_x-based HTLs in n-i-p PSCs.

Device structure	V _{oc} [V] (C/T)	J _{sc} [mA cm ⁻²] (C/T)	FF [%] (C/T)	PCE [%] (C/T)	Year	Ref.
FTO/TiO ₂ /MAPbI ₃ /NiO _x /Au	0.38 0.88	15.75 19.49	30.8 53.1	1.8 9.1	2017	S21
FTO/TiO ₂ /MAPbI ₃ /NiO _x / MWCNT	0.90 0.91	21.03 22.84	74.4 76.0	14.1 15.8	2017	S22
FTO/TiO ₂ /MAPbI ₃ /NiO _x /Au	0.83 0.97	15.03 18.12	52.0 62.0	6.5 10.9	2018	S23
FTO/TiO ₂ /CsPbI ₂ Br/ NiO _x /Au	1.07 1.26	14.51 15.12	51.5 79.8	8.9 15.1	2019	S24
FTO/TiO ₂ /CsFAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x /Au	0.80 0.99	18.10 21.90	38.0 60.0	5.5 13.1	2019	S25
FTO/SnO ₂ /CsFAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x /Au	0.69 1.04	21.16 22.53	39.2 54.4	5.8 12.7	2019	S26
FTO/TiO ₂ /CsFAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /Cs: NiO _x /CuSCN/Au	1.03 1.10	22.10 23.15	73.6 75.7	17.2 19.2	2019	S27
ITO/SnO ₂ /FAMAPbI(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x /Spiro-OMeTAD/Au	1.10 1.14	23.03 23.82	78.2 79.8	19.8 21.6	2019	S28
FTO/TiO ₂ /CsFAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x /CNT/Carbon	0.89 0.97	16.55 18.30	54.0 64.0	7.9 11.4	2021	S29
FTO/SnO ₂ /FAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x /Au	1.07 1.07	24.08 24.96	65.7 71.3	16.9 19.1	2021	S30
FTO/SnO ₂ /FAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x /ITO	1.08 1.08	23.27 23.33	71.7 77.3	18.0 19.5	2022	S31
FTO/ZTO/CsFAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x -P3HT/Au	1.02 1.15	23.37 24.07	66.8 76.5	16.0 21.2	2022	S4
FTO/ZTO/FAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /QDs/NiO _x /Au	1.08 1.11	23.62 24.86	73.3 78.1	18.8 21.9	2022	S5
ITO/SnO ₂ /FAPbI ₃ /PDCBT /NiO _x /Au	1.09 1.18	25.20 25.30	78.9 79.8	21.7 23.8	2024	S32
ITO/SnO ₂ /CsFAMAPb(I Br) ₃ /NiO _x -F4TCNQ/Ag	1.18 1.20	25.36 25.24	78.2 83.3	23.3 25.2	2024	S33
FTO/ZTO/CsFAPbI ₃ /Me-4PACz/NiO _x -P3HT/Au	1.12 1.17	24.25 25.35	77.4 82.1	21.0 24.3	2025	This work

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