

Mild and Highly Efficient Metal-Free Oxidative  $\alpha$ -Cyanation of *N*-Acyl/Sulfonyl  
Tetrahydroisoquinolines  
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**Supporting Information**

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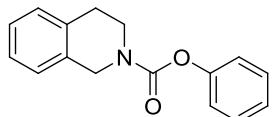
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**General Information:** All reagents were used as received. Acetonitrile was distilled on phosphorus pentoxide.  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectra were recorded on Bruker Avance 400 Ultrashield NMR spectrometers. Chemical shifts ( $\delta$ ) were given in parts per million (ppm) and were measured downfield from internal tetramethylsilane. High-resolution mass spectrometry (HRMS) data were obtained on an FTICR-MS instrument (Ionspec 7.0 T). The melting points were determined on an X-4 microscope melting point apparatus and are uncorrected. Conversion was monitored by thin layer chromatography (TLC). Flash column chromatography was performed over silica gel (100-200 mesh). 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine *N*-oxide fluoroborate salt ( $\text{T}^+\text{BF}_4^-$ ) was synthesized with a described procedure previously.<sup>S1</sup>

### Characterization of starting materials

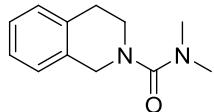
To a solution of tetrahydroisoquinoline (THIQ, 1mmol, 1 equiv.) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (20 mL) was added triethylamine (0.17 mL, 1.2 equiv.). The mixture was cooled to 0 °C, and acyl chloride or anhydride (1.2 equiv.) was added slowly. The mixture was stirred 10 min at 0 °C and then 1 h at rt. The solution was washed with water and brine, then dried over  $\text{MgSO}_4$  and concentrated. The crude product was purified by flash column chromatography (elution: PE:EA = 5:1), and **1** was obtained in the yield of 75-99%. Characterization of non-previous reported compounds is given.

### phenyl 3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (**1d**)



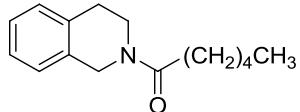
White solid, Mp: 90-91 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.35 (t,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.29 – 7.05 (m, 7H), 4.82 and 4.69 (s, 2H), 3.93 – 3.71 (m, 2H), 3.02 – 2.83 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  154.0, 151.5, 134.6, 134.4, 133.3, 132.9, 129.4, 129.0, 128.7, 126.8, 126.6, 126.5, 126.3, 125.4, 121.9, 46.3, 46.0, 42.4, 41.7, 29.2, 28.8. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_{18}\text{NO}_2$  [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 234.1489, found 234.1489.

### *N,N*-dimethyl-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxamide (**1f**)



Yellow oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.18 – 7.05 (m, 4H), 4.40 (s, 2H), 3.47 (t,  $J$  = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.90 (t,  $J$  = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.86 (s, 6H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  164.9, 134.6, 134.0, 128.9, 126.4, 126.3, 126.1, 48.8, 44.8, 38.5, 28.7. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2\text{O}$  [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 205.1335, found 205.1340.

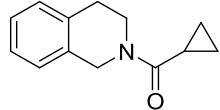
### 1-(3,4-dihydroisoquinolin-2(1*H*)-yl)hexan-1-one (**1h**)



Pale yellow oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.25 – 7.02 (m, 4H), 4.72 and 4.60 (s, 2H), 3.81 and 3.66 (t,  $J$  = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.88 and 2.82 (t,  $J$  = 6.0, 2H), 2.45 – 2.34 (m, 2H), 1.75

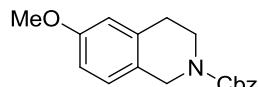
– 1.58 (m, 2H), 1.43 – 1.27 (m, 4H), 0.98 – 0.82 (m, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  172.2, 172.1, 135.1, 134.1, 133.6, 132.7, 128.9, 128.3, 126.8, 126.6, 126.5, 126.4, 126.3, 126.0, 47.4, 44.2, 43.2, 39.6, 33.8, 33.6, 31.7, 31.6, 29.6, 28.5, 25.0, 24.9, 22.5, 14.0. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{22}\text{NO} [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  232.1696, found 232.1698.

### cyclopropyl(3,4-dihydroisoquinolin-2(1*H*)-yl)methanone (**1m**)



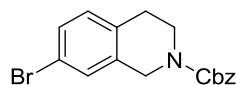
Colorless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.35 – 7.14 (m, 4H), 4.95 and 4.82 (s, 2H), 4.05 – 3.85 (m, 2H), 3.11 – 2.85 (m, 2H), 2.02 – 1.85 (m, 2H), 1.16 – 1.05 (m, 2H), 0.98 – 0.85 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  172.4, 135.3, 134.5, 133.9, 132.9, 128.9, 128.2, 126.7, 126.6, 126.4, 126.2, 47.2, 44.7, 43.3, 40.1, 29.6, 28.7, 12.6, 11.6, 11.4, 8.4, 7.6, 7.4. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{13}\text{H}_{16}\text{NO} [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  202.1226, found 202.1230.

### benzyl 6-methoxy-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (**1p**)



Colorless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.45 – 7.27 (m, 5H), 7.00 (d,  $J = 12.8$  Hz, 1H), 6.74 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.70 – 6.63 (m, 1H), 5.17 (s, 2H), 4.58 (s, 2H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 3.74 – 3.64 (m, 2H), 2.88 – 2.75 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  158.2, 155.6, 136.8, 135.9, 128.5, 128.1, 128.0, 127.4, 127.2, 125.7, 125.2, 113.4, 112.6, 67.2, 55.3, 45.3, 41.6, 41.4, 29.3, 29.1. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{26}\text{NO}_3 [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  292.1907, found 292.1903.

### benzyl 7-bromo-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (**1s**)



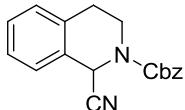
Colorless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.44 – 7.33 (m, 5H), 7.33 – 7.22 (m, 2H), 7.03 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 5.22 (s, 2H), 4.64 and 4.62 (s, 2H), 3.78 – 3.69 (m, 2H), 2.88 – 2.76 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  155.4, 136.6, 135.6, 135.2, 133.6, 133.4, 130.5, 130.3, 129.6, 129.5, 129.2, 129.1, 128.6, 128.4, 128.2, 128.1, 120.1, 119.9, 67.4, 45.4, 41.5, 41.2, 28.6, 28.3. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{21}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4 [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  293.1496, found 293.1498.

### General procedure to synthesize **2a-t** and **4**

An oven dried Schlenk tube was charged with substrate **1** or **3** (0.4 mmol) and  $\text{T}^+\text{BF}_4^-$  (146 mg, 0.6 mmol). The tube was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen (this process was repeated three times) and then  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$  (2 mL), TMSCN (75  $\mu\text{L}$ , 0.6 mmol) and AcOH (23  $\mu\text{L}$ , 0.4 mmol) were added successively by syringe. The reaction mixture was stirred at rt for 2–16 h. Upon consumption of the starting material, the reaction mixture was concentrated in vacuo to give the crude product, which was purified by flash column chromatography (elution: PE:EA = 5:1) to give the desired compound **2** or **4**.

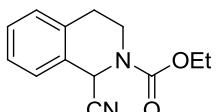
## Characterization of products

### **benzyl 1-cyano-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2a)**



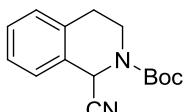
Yield: 97%. White solid, Mp: 88-89 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.47 – 7.34 (m, 5H), 7.33 – 7.26 (m, 3H), 7.24 – 7.15 (m, 1H), 6.13 and 5.97 (s, 1H), 5.28 – 5.19 (m, 2H), 4.33 and 4.17 (d,  $J$  = 12.4 Hz, 1H), 3.49 and 3.38 (t,  $J$  = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 3.04 – 2.91 (m, 1H), 2.88 and 2.84 (t,  $J$  = 3.6, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  154.9, 154.2, 135.7, 135.6, 134.5, 134.2, 129.6, 129.4, 129.0, 128.7, 128.5, 128.3, 128.2, 127.9, 127.9, 127.3, 127.1, 127.1, 118.0, 68.5, 68.3, 46.2, 40.1, 39.6, 29.7, 28.1, 28.0. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$  [ $\text{M}+\text{H}$ ]<sup>+</sup> 293.1285, found 293.1286.

### **ethyl 1-cyano-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2b)**



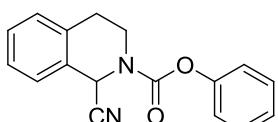
Yield: 93%. White solid, Mp: 93-94 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.34 – 7.26 (m, 3H), 7.24 – 7.17 (m, 1H), 6.12 and 5.98 (s, 1H), 4.38 – 4.08 (m, 3H), 3.44 and 3.35 (t,  $J$  = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 2.99 and 2.95 (dd,  $J$  = 10.8, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 2.87 and 2.83 (t,  $J$  = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 1.39 – 1.27 (m, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  155.0, 154.3, 134.5, 134.3, 129.6, 129.4, 128.9, 128.5, 128.0, 127.3, 127.1, 118.1, 62.7, 46.2, 46.1, 39.9, 39.3, 28.0, 14.6. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{13}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$  [ $\text{M}+\text{H}$ ]<sup>+</sup> 231.1128, found 231.1123.

### **tert-butyl 1-cyano-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2c)**



Yield 78%. White solid, Mp: 88-89 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.37 – 7.29 (m, 3H), 7.26 – 7.19 (m, 1H), 6.10 and 5.87 (s, 1H), 4.37 – 3.98 (m, 1H), 3.52 – 3.18 (m, 1H), 2.98 and 2.94 (dd,  $J$  = 10.8, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 2.86 and 2.82 (t,  $J$  = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 1.55 (s, 9H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  153.9, 153.3, 134.6, 134.5, 129.4, 128.8, 128.1, 127.2, 127.1, 118.2, 82.2, 81.8, 46.6, 45.6, 40.1, 38.7, 28.3, 28.1. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$  [ $\text{M}+\text{H}$ ]<sup>+</sup> 259.1441, found 259.1435.

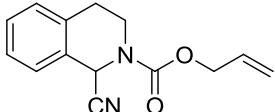
### **phenyl 1-cyano-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2d)**



Yield 89%. White solid, Mp: 119-120 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.43 (t,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.40 – 7.33 (m, 3H), 7.33 – 7.26 (m, 2H), 7.21 (t,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.25 and 6.21 (s, 1H), 4.45 – 4.35 (m, 1H), 3.76 – 3.45 (m, 1H), 3.19 – 2.91 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ,

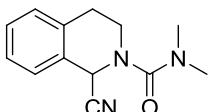
rotomers seen)  $\delta$  153.5, 152.8, 150.9, 150.7, 134.4, 134.1, 129.7, 129.5, 129.4, 129.2, 128.3, 127.7, 127.5, 127.2, 127.1, 126.1, 126.0, 121.7, 121.6, 117.8, 46.7, 46.3, 40.7, 39.9, 28.1, 27.9. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{17}H_{15}N_2O_2$  [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 279.1128, found 279.1123.

#### **allyl 1-cyano-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2e)**



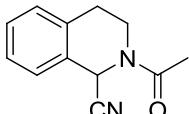
Yield: 93%. Colorless Oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.34 – 7.24 (m, 3H), 7.24 – 7.16 (m, 1H), 6.18 – 5.88 (m, 2H), 5.42 – 5.30 (m, 1H), 5.26 (d,  $J$  = 10.4 Hz, 1H), 4.80 – 4.62 (m, 2H), 4.30 and 4.17 (d,  $J$  = 11.6 Hz, 1H), 3.47 and 3.34 (t,  $J$  = 9.2 Hz, 1H), 2.98 and 2.94 (dd,  $J$  = 10.6, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 2.90 – 2.80 (m, 1H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen)  $\delta$  154.7, 153.9, 134.5, 134.8, 132.2, 129.6, 129.4, 129.0, 128.4, 128.0, 127.3, 127.1, 118.6, 118.4, 118.0, 67.2, 46.2, 40.0, 39.5, 28.0. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{14}H_{15}N_2O_2$  [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 243.1128, found 243.1133.

#### **1-cyano-N,N-dimethyl-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxamide (2f)**



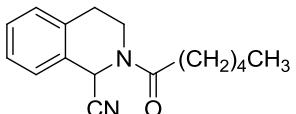
Yield: 81%. White solid, Mp: 120-121 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.33 – 7.24 (m, 3H), 7.22 – 7.17 (m, 1H), 5.58 (s, 1H), 3.82 – 3.74 (m, 1H), 3.48 and 3.45 (dd,  $J$  = 12.0, 4.0 Hz, 1H), 3.16 – 3.05 (m, 1H), 2.93 (s, 6H), 2.92 – 2.80 (m, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  163.1, 134.1, 129.5, 129.2, 128.7, 127.3, 127.1, 118.8, 48.6, 43.5, 38.3, 28.0. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{13}H_{16}N_3O$  [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 230.1288, found 230.1287.

#### **2-acetyl-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2g)**



Yield: 86%. White solid, Mp: 107-108 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.37 – 7.26 (m, 3H), 7.25 – 7.18 (m, 1H), 6.45 (s, 1H), 3.95 and 3.92 (t,  $J$  = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 3.70 and 3.66 (dd,  $J$  = 8.8, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 3.04 – 2.90 (m, 2H), 2.21 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen)  $\delta$  169.8, 169.2, 133.9, 129.7, 129.2, 129.0, 128.5, 127.6, 127.3, 126.9, 117.9, 117.5, 48.3, 43.5, 42.2, 37.5, 28.5, 27.6, 21.8, 21.4. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{12}H_{13}N_2O$  [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 201.1022, found 201.1024.

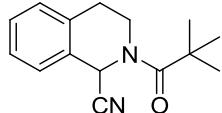
#### **2-hexanoyl-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2h)**



Yield: 87%. Pale yellow oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.36 – 7.26 (m, 3H), 7.24 – 7.18 (m, 1H), 6.48 (s, 1H), 4.00 and 3.96 (t,  $J$  = 4.4 Hz, 1H), 3.67 and 3.65 (dd,  $J$  = 13.6, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 3.03 – 2.93 (m, 2H), 2.53 – 2.30 (m, 2H), 1.77 – 1.61 (m, 2H), 1.39 – 1.30 (m, 4H),

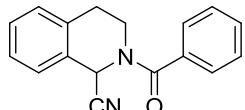
0.91 (t,  $J = 6.4$  Hz, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  172.4, 135.0, 133.9, 129.8, 129.2, 129.0, 128.7, 127.9, 127.6, 127.4, 127.0, 118.1, 117.6, 47.7, 43.6, 41.5, 37.6, 33.6, 33.4, 31.5, 31.3, 28.6, 27.7, 24.6, 22.5, 14.0. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{21}\text{N}_2\text{O} [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  257.1648, found 257.1654.

### **2-pivaloyl-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2i)**



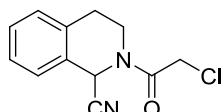
Yield 83%. White solid, Mp: 128-129 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.34 – 7.21 (m, 3H), 7.18 – 7.12 (m, 1H), 6.35 (s, 1H), 4.40 and 4.37 (d,  $J = 4.4$  Hz, 1H), 3.62 – 3.49 (m, 1H), 3.02 and 2.98 (dd,  $J = 11.6, 5.2$  Hz, 1H), 2.88 – 2.78 (m, 1H), 1.30 (s, 9H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  177.2, 133.6, 129.3, 128.8, 128.6, 127.4, 127.3, 118.3, 45.7, 42.2, 39.0, 28.5, 28.0. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{O} [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  243.1492, found 243.1496.

### **2-benzoyl-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2j)**



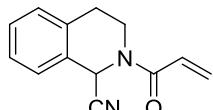
Yield 86%. White solid, Mp: 95-96 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.53 – 7.43 (m, 5H), 7.42 – 7.27 (m, 3H), 7.25 – 7.19 (m, 1H), 6.58 – 5.41 (m, 1H), 5.05 – 3.88 (m, 1H), 3.66 – 3.42 (m, 1H), 3.13 – 2.97 (m, 1H), 2.92 – 2.78 (m, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  171.0, 134.0, 133.7, 131.0, 129.6, 129.1, 128.9, 128.1, 127.5, 127.2, 117.9, 44.6, 43.3, 28.6. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}_2\text{O} [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  263.1179, found 263.1184.

### **2-(2-chloroacetyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2k)**



Yield 83%. White solid, Mp: 109-110 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.30 – 7.20 (m, 3H), 7.17 – 7.11 (m, 1H), 6.28 (s, 1H), 4.11 (dd,  $J = 32.7, 12.5$  Hz, 2H), 4.00 – 3.92 (m, 1H), 3.67 and 3.64 (dd,  $J = 10.4, 3.6$  Hz, 1H), 3.07 and 3.03 (dd,  $J = 10.8, 5.4$  Hz, 1H), 2.92 and 2.88 (t,  $J = 3.6$  Hz, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  166.1, 133.6, 129.3, 129.2, 127.7, 127.6, 127.3, 117.4, 44.2, 42.1, 40.8, 28.4. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{12}\text{ClN}_2\text{O} [\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$  235.0633, found 235.0635.

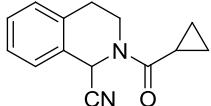
### **2-acryloyl-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-1-carbonitrile (2l)**



Yield: 82%. White solid, Mp: 104-105 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.34 – 7.21 (m, 3H), 7.19 – 7.09 (m, 1H), 6.57 and 6.53 (d,  $J = 10.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.40 and 6.36 (s, 2H), 5.78 (d,  $J = 10.4$  Hz, 1H), 4.11 – 3.91 (m, 1H), 3.75 – 3.54 (m, 1H), 3.00 – 2.83 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  165.8, 133.9, 130.5, 129.2, 129.1, 128.5, 127.6, 127.4, 126.3, 117.7, 44.0, 41.8, 28.6.

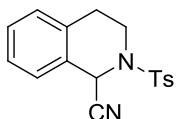
HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>13</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 213.1022, found 213.1018.

**2-(cyclopropanecarbonyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2m)**



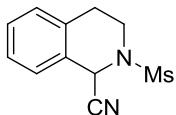
Yield: 86%. White solid, Mp: 117-118 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen) δ 7.40 – 7.28 (m, 3H), 7.23 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 6.37 and 6.11 (s, 1H), 4.68 – 4.15 (m, 1H), 3.91 – 3.66 (m, 1H), 3.14 – 2.82 (m, 2H), 1.90 – 1.78 (m, 1H), 1.28 – 1.01 (m, 2H), 1.00 – 0.78 (m, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen) δ 173.0, 134.3, 129.7, 129.2, 129.0, 128.9, 127.5, 127.3, 127.0, 118.0, 47.4, 44.1, 41.6, 38.1, 28.6, 27.8, 11.3, 8.6, 8.1. HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 227.1179, found 227.1184.

**2-tosyl-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2n)**



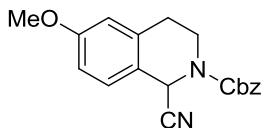
Yield: >99%. White solid, Mp: 114-115 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen) δ 7.80 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.36 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.32 – 7.22 (m, 3H), 7.18 – 7.13 (m, 1H), 5.89 (s, 1H), 4.11 – 4.03 (m, 1H), 3.23 – 3.04 (m, 2H), 2.87 – 2.79 (m, 1H), 2.43 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 144.7, 134.3, 133.1, 130.0, 129.7, 129.2, 128.0, 127.8, 127.4, 127.0, 116.1, 47.1, 40.8, 28.1, 21.7. HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>17</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S [M+H]<sup>+</sup> 313.1005, found 313.1009.

**2-(methylsulfonyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinoline-1-carbonitrile (2o)**



Yield: >99%. Colorless oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen) δ 7.31 – 7.21 (m, 3H), 7.17 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 5.80 (s, 1H), 4.00 and 3.97 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 1H), 3.33 and 3.30 (dd, J = 12.4, 3.6 Hz, 1H), 3.11 and 3.07 (dd, J = 11.6, 6.0 Hz, 1H), 3.02 (s, 3H), 2.90 – 2.82 (m, 1H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 133.1, 129.8, 129.3, 127.5, 127.3, 127.1, 117.0, 47.1, 40.7, 37.7, 28.3. HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>10</sub>H<sub>12</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>S [M-CN]<sup>+</sup> 210.0583, found 210.0584.

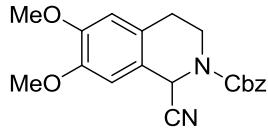
**benzyl 1-cyano-6-methoxy-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2p)**



Yield: 83%. Colorless oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen) δ 7.45 – 7.28 (m, 5H), 7.23 – 7.14 (m, 1H), 6.81 (dd, J = 8.4, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 6.74 – 6.65 (m, 1H), 6.06 and 5.92 (s, 1H), 5.21 (s, 2H), 4.27 and 4.11 (d, J = 12.4 Hz, 1H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 3.47 and 3.36 (t, J = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 2.99 – 2.86 (m, 1H), 2.83 and 2.79 (t, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, rotomers seen) δ 159.8, 154.9, 154.2, 136.0, 135.8, 135.7, 128.7, 128.5, 128.3, 128.3, 120.5, 120.0, 118.2, 114.1, 113.6, 113.5, 68.4, 68.3, 55.5, 45.9, 40.0, 39.6, 28.4, 28.3. HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>19</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>

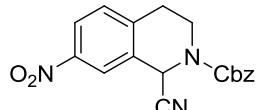
$[M+H]^+$  323.1390, found 323.1396.

**benzyl 1-cyano-6,7-dimethoxy-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2q)**



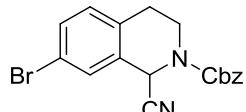
Yield 86%. White solid, Mp: 129-130 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.49 – 7.31 (m, 5H), 6.73 (d,  $J = 16.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.64 (s, 1H), 6.06 and 5.90 (s, 1H), 5.22 (s, 2H), 4.36 and 4.21 (d,  $J = 12.4$  Hz, 1H), 3.87 (s, 6H), 3.43 and 3.33 (t,  $J = 10.4$  Hz, 1H), 2.99 – 2.83 (m, 1H), 2.81 – 2.68 (m, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  154.9, 154.1, 149.4, 148.4, 135.8, 128.7, 128.5, 128.4, 128.2, 126.7, 126.4, 119.8, 119.2, 118.1, 111.5, 109.2, 109.1, 68.5, 68.3, 56.1, 56.0, 46.0, 40.0, 39.5, 27.6. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{21}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$   $[M+H]^+$  353.1496, found 353.1499.

**benzyl 1-cyano-7-nitro-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2r)**



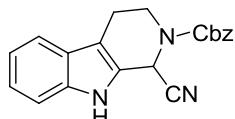
Yield 97%. White solid, Mp: 156-157 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  8.23 (d,  $J = 20.0$  Hz, 1H), 8.16 (dd,  $J = 8.4, 1.6$  Hz, 1H), 7.47 – 7.30 (m, 6H), 6.31 and 6.12 (s, 1H), 5.25 (s, 2H), 4.43 and 4.29 (d,  $J = 10.8$  Hz, 1H), 3.50 and 3.38 (t,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 1H), 3.15 – 2.89 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  154.7, 153.8, 146.9, 142.0, 141.8, 135.4, 135.3, 130.9, 130.7, 130.0, 129.5, 128.8, 128.4, 123.8, 122.6, 116.9, 68.7, 46.0, 39.3, 38.8, 28.3. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{16}\text{N}_3\text{O}_4$   $[M+H]^+$  338.1135, found 338.1134.

**benzyl 7-bromo-1-cyano-3,4-dihydroisoquinoline-2(1*H*)-carboxylate (2s)**



Yield >99%. White solid, Mp: 124-125 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.53 – 7.30 (m, 7H), 7.07 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.11 and 5.94 (s, 1H), 5.22 (s, 2H), 4.34 and 4.19 (d,  $J = 11.6$  Hz, 1H), 3.43 and 3.32 (t,  $J = 9.6$  Hz, 1H), 2.97 – 2.74 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  154.7, 153.9, 135.5, 135.4, 133.4, 133.1, 132.1, 131.1, 131.0, 130.2, 129.9, 128.7, 128.5, 128.2, 120.6, 117.3, 68.4, 45.7, 39.7, 39.2, 27.6. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{16}\text{BrN}_2\text{O}_2$   $[M+H]^+$  371.0390, found 371.0381.

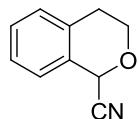
**benzyl 1-cyano-3,4-dihydro-1*H*-pyrido[3,4-b]indole-2(9*H*)-carboxylate (2t)**



Yield 41%. Pale yellow dope.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  8.27 and 8.17 (s, 1H), 7.50 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 7.43 – 7.31 (m, 6H), 7.28 – 7.21 (m, 2H), 7.15 (t,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 1H), 6.25

and 6.07 (s, 1H), 5.26 (s, 2H), 4.65 and 4.51 (dd,  $J = 12.4, 2.8$  Hz, 1H), 3.45 – 3.24 (m, 1H), 2.95 – 2.74 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  155.3, 154.2, 136.6, 135.6, 128.7, 128.6, 128.4, 128.2, 126.1, 123.5, 123.0, 120.3, 118.8, 116.4, 111.5, 111.1, 68.6, 43.1, 40.6, 40.2, 21.0, 20.7. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{16}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$  [ $\text{M}-\text{H}$ ] 330.1248, found 330.1247.

#### isochroman-1-carbonitrile (4)



Yield: 79%. Colorless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , rotomers seen)  $\delta$  7.33 – 7.26 (m, 2H), 7.23 – 7.16 (m, 2H), 5.65 (s, 1H), 4.22 – 4.08 (m, 2H), 3.07 and 3.03 (dd,  $J = 10.0, 6.4$  Hz, 1H), 2.79 and 2.75 (t,  $J = 3.2$  Hz, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  133.0, 129.5, 129.1, 128.7, 127.1, 125.5, 118.1, 65.3, 63.3, 27.2. HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{10}\text{H}_{10}\text{NO}$  [ $\text{M}+\text{H}$ ] $^+$  160.0757, found 160.0757

#### References

- [S1] Richter, H.; Mancheno, O. G. *Eur. J. Org. Chem.* **2010**, 4460.

Copies of  $^1\text{H}$  NMR and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra for new compounds

