N-Heterocyclic Carbene and Brønsted Acid Cooperative Catalysis: Asymmetric Synthesis of *trans-γ*-Lactams

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1. General considerations

Commercial reagents were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich or Alfa Aesar and used without further purification unless otherwise indicated. KHMDS refers to potassium hexamethyldisilazide. All catalytic reactions were carried out under Ar with oven-dried glassware. Dichloromethane was degassed with argon and passed through two columns of neutral alumina. Acetontrile and propionitrile were distilled from CaH_2 prior to use. Ethyl *trans*-4-oxo-2-butenoate (**2a**) was distilled and stored in the refrigerator before use. Thin layer chromatography was performed on 0.25 mm silica gel 60-F plates from Silicycle Inc. Column chromatography was performed on silica gel 60 (230-400 mesh) from Silicycle Inc.

¹H, ¹³C{¹H}, and ¹⁹F NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian 300 or 400 spectrometer at ambient temperature. All NMR spectra are referenced to TMS or the residual solvent signal. Data for ¹H NMR are reported as follows: chemical shift (δ ppm), multiplicity (s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, q = quartet, m = multiplet, br = broad), coupling constant (Hz), integration. Data for ¹³C{¹H} NMR are reported as follows: chemical shift (δ ppm). Data for ¹⁹F NMR are reported as follows: chemical shift (δ ppm), multiplicity (s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, q = quartet, m = multiplet, br = broad), coupling constant (Hz), integration.

High resolution mass spectra (HRMS) were recorded on an Agilent Technologies 6210 Time of Flight LC/MS. HPLC spectra were obtained on an Agilent 1100 series system. Optical rotation was obtained with an Autopol-III automatic polarimeter.

All imines were synthesized from the corresponding aldehydes and amines. The triazolium salts C1-C6 were prepared according to our previous procedure.¹ Enals $2b^2$ and $2d^3$ were synthesized according to known procedures. Acids AA3 and AA4 were prepared from amino acids by known procedures.⁴ Sodium salts A1-A4 were easily prepared from the corresponding acids AA1-AA4 with stoichometric sodium hydroxide, respectively. AA1 and AA2 are commercially available. Imines $2f^5$ and $2g^6$, azoliums C1,⁷ C2,⁸ C5⁸ and C6,¹ enals $2b^2$ and $2d^3$, acids AA3⁴ and AA4⁹ are known compounds and were identified by NMR comparison to reported data.



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2. Experimental procedures

2.1. Synthesis of Triazolium Salts



Triazolium salt **C4**: Synthesized by a modification to the known procedure.¹ In a 20-mL vial was added (R)-5-cyclohexylpyrrolidin-2-one (0.5 g, 2.99 mmol) and dichloromethane (15 mL). Subsequently, trimethyloxonium tetrafluoroborate (0.443 g, 2.99 mmol) was added. The vial was sealed with white cap and the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 12 h, then, pentafluorophenyl hydrazine (0.593 g, 2.99 mmol) was added. The resulting solution was stirred at room temperature for 24 hours and then transferred to a 100 mL round-bottomed flask. All volatiles were removed under reduced pressure, and triethyl orthoformate (4 mL, 24.0 mmol) and chlorobenzene (20 mL) were subsequently added to the flask, and the solution was heated at 130 °C for 23 h. The resulting dark brown solution was concentrated. Chlorobenzene (20 mL) and HBF₄ (0.41 mL, 2.99 mmol) were added to the residue, and the resulting solution was stirred at 120 °C for 12 h. The dark solution was cooled to room temperature, and concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by silica gel column chromatoghy (eluent: DCM/acetone = 15/1 to 10/1, v/v) to afford a brown solid. The

solid was dissolved into dichloromethane (0.5 mL) in a vial, and ether was added in order to precipitate the azolium salt. The solution was poured out, and the remaining solid was washed with ether (5 mL x 3) to give a white solid **C4** (0.834 g, 63%). Triazolium salt **C4**: White solid. M.p.: 180-181 °C. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D}$ = +43.6 ° (c = 0.005 g/mL, MeOH). ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.37 (s, 1H), 5.00 (td, J = 5.9, 8.1 Hz, 1H), 3.51-3.36 (m, 2H), 3.14-3.04 (m, 1H), 2.91-2.84 (m, 1H), 2.21-2.13 (m, 1H), 1.94-1.91 (m, 1H), 1.82-1.79 (m, 2H), 1.75-1.67 (m, 2H), 1.38-1.17 (m, 4H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 164.2, 143.5, 67.0, 40.3, 29.9, 28.5, 27.3, 25.6, 25.4, 25.3, 21.4. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₇H₁₇F₅N₃ [M-BF₄]⁺: 358.1337; found: 358.1355.



Triazolium salt C3: Synthesized according to a modification to the known procedure.¹ To a flame-dried flask with magnetic stir bar was added (R)-5-((S)-sec-butyl)pyrrolidin-2-one (1.0 g, 7.08 mmol). The flask was then evacuated and back-filled with argon. Dichloromethane (35 mL) and trimethyloxonium tetrafluoroborate (1.05 g, 7.08 mmol) were then added via powder funnel. The heterogeneous mixture was stirred at room temperature until the reaction was homogeneous (about 6 hours). Pentafluorophenyl hydrazine (1.40 g, 7.08 mmol) was added in one portion and the mixture was stirred for 18 hours at which point dichloromethane was removed in vacuo. Triethylorthoformate (20.0 mL) was then added and the solution transferred to a 75 mL pressure flask and heated in a 130 °C oil bath for 12 h. The resulting dark brown solution was then concentrated in vacuo to leave a semi-solid which was then triturated with diethyl ether, filtered and washed with diethyl ether. The resulting off-white powder was dried under vacuum for 12 h to give triazolium salt C3 (1.04 g, 35%) as an off-white solid. Triazolium salt C3: White solid. $[\alpha]_{D}^{20} = +35.6^{\circ}(c = 0.00458 \text{ g/mL}, \text{MeOH}).$ M.p.: 176-178 °C. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.41 (s, 1H), 5.20-5.15 (m, 2H), 3.46 (ddd, J = 4.0, 6.6, 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.06 (dtd, J = 6.5, 8.5, 13.5 Hz, 1H), 2.89-2.82 (m, 1H), 2.46-2.36 (m, 1H), 1.71-1.60 (m, 1H), 1.46-1.35 (m, 1H), 1.03-0.99 (m, 6H). $^{13}\mathrm{C}\{^{1}\mathrm{H}\}$ NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 164.2, 143.4, 66.2, 36.9, 28.5, 25.3, 21.6, 12.5, 10.6. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₅H₁₅F₅N₃ [M-BF₄]⁺: 332.1181; found: 332.1171.

2.2. Synthesis of Imines

General procedure: To a 100 mL round-bottomed flask was added α,β -unsaturated aldehyde, amine (1 eq.) and 3A molecular sieves. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 12 h. Then, the mixture was fittered and concentrated to give the corresponding imine. The generated imine is typically pure. If necessary, it can be purified by recrystallization from toluene or hexanes.

2.3. Catalyst Screen

Achiral catalysts bearing varying *N*-aryl substituents were examined under the optimized reaction conditions and the results are reported below. Chiral azolium catalyst bearing an *N*-phenyl group was also examined.



Conditions: **2a**, 0.2 mmol; **1a**, 0.1 mmol; **A2**, 20 mol%; NHC precursor, 20 mol%; CH₂Cl₂, 1 mL; 4A MS under Ar. ^{*a*} NMR yields of *trans* and *cis*-diastereomers (internal standard). ^{*b*} The ratio of *trans/cis* determined by ¹H NMR. ^{*c*} Determined by chiral HPLC.

2.3. Synthesis of trans-y-Lactam Using Chiral Carbenes and Achiral Bases

General procedure for cyclization of N-(4-methoxycinnamylidene)aniline (1a) with ethyl trans-4-oxo-2-butenoate (**2a**): In а 10 mL tube was subsequently added N-(4-methoxycinnamylidene)aniline (1a) (23.7 mg, 0.1 mmol), triazoliun salt C4 (8.9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 20 mol%) and sodium o-chlorobenzoate (3.6 mg, 0.02 mmol, 20 mol%). The tube was moved into glovebox. Then, ethyl trans-4-oxo-2-butenoate (2a) (25.6 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4A molecular sieves (50 mg) were added. The tube was sealed with a septum and removed from the glovebox. Acrylonitrile (1 mL) was added, and the mixture was stirred at 0 $\,^{\circ}$ C for 15 h, then filtered through Celite and concentrated. The resulting residue was analyzed by proton NMR using 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene (16.8 mg, 0.1 mmol) as an internal standard to determine NMR yield (trans and cis isomers, 96%) and the diastereoselectivity (trans/cis = 11/1).

In order to obtain isolated yield, the NMR solution was diluted with 40 mL EtOAc and washed with 1M HCl (5 mL), water (5 mL), NaHCO₃ (sat., 5 mL) and brine (10 mL). The organic phase was dried over Na₂SO₄, concentrated *in vacuo* and the resulting residue was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: hexanes/EtOAc = 3:1 to 2/1, v/v) to afford the *trans-y*-lactam product **3a** as a yellow viscous oil (34.0 mg, 93% yield and 91% ee for *trans*-lactam).

Experimental procedure for synthesis of lactam 3m with ethyl trans-4-oxo-2-butenoate (2a) and aniline in one pot: In a 10 mL tube was subsequently added aniline (**1a**) (9.3 mg, 0.1 mmol), triazoliun salt **C4** (8.9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 20 mol%) and sodium *o*-chlorobenzoate (3.6 mg, 0.02 mmol, 20 mol%). The tube was moved into a glovebox, then, ethyl *trans-4-oxo-2-butenoate* (**2a**) (38.4 mg, 0.3 mmol) and 4A molecular sieves (50 mg) were added. The tube was sealed with a septum and removed from glovebox. Acrylonitrile (0.8 mL) was added, and the mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 15 h, then filtered through Celite and concentrated. The resulting residue was analyzed to determine the disatereoselectivity (*trans/cis* = 8/1). To isolate the product, the NMR solution was diluted with 40 mL EtOAc and washed with 1M HCl (5 mL), water (5 mL), NaHCO₃ (sat., 5 mL) and brine (10 mL). The organic phase was dried over Na₂SO₄, concentrated in vacuo and the resulting residue was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: hexanes/EtOAc = 3:1, v/v) to afford the *trans-y*-lactam product **3m** as a yellow viscous oil (28.1 mg, 85% yield and 92% ee for *trans*-lactam).



2.4. Synthesis of trans-y-Lactam Using Achiral Carbene and Chiral Base

In a 10 mL tube was subsequently added *N*-(4-methoxycinnamylidene)aniline (**1a**) (23.7 mg, 0.1 mmol), 2-pentafluorophenyl-6,7-dihydro-5H-pyrrolo[2,1-c][1,2,4]triazol-2-ium *tetrafluoroborate* (7.5 mg, 0.02 mmol, 20 mol%) and base **A3** (2.9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 20 mol%). The tube was moved into glovebox. Then, ethyl *trans*-4-oxo-2-butenoate (**2a**) (25.6 mg, 0.2 mmol) and 4A molecular sieves (50 mg) were added. The tube was sealed with a septum and removed from golvebox. Dichloromethane (1 mL) was added. The mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 15 h, then filtered through Celite and concentrated to give a residue. It was analyzed by proton NMR to determine the diastereoselectivity (*trans/cis* = 3/1). The NMR solution was concentrated and directly purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: hexanes/EtOAc = 3:1 to 2/1, v/v) to afford the *trans-y*-lactam product *ent*-**3a** as a yellow viscous oil (35.0 mg, 96% yield and 17% ee for *trans*-lactam). For HPLC trace, see page S76.

3. Analytical data

Starting material imines



N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)aniline (1a): Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 78.24 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.38 (t, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.24-6.91 (m, 7H), 3.84 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 161.8, 160.8, 151.8, 143.7, 129.1, 129.0, 128.3, 126.4, 125.8, 120.8, 114.3, 55.3. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₆H₁₆NO [M+H]⁺: 238.1226; found: 238.1200.



N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-methylaniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.23 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.16 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.09-7.04 (m, 3H), 6.97 (dd, J = 8.4, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 6.89 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 3.81 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 160.9, 160.7, 149.2, 143.2, 135.7, 129.7, 128.9, 128.4, 126.5, 120.7, 114.3, 55.3, 20.9. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for $C_{17}H_{18}NO [M+H]^+$: 252.1383; found: 252.1388.



MeO

N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-methoxylaniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.24 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.16 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 2H), 7.04 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (dd, J = 8.5, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.90-6.88 (m, 4H), 3.82 (s, 3H), 3.80 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 160.6, 159.8, 158.1, 144.7, 142.7, 128.8, 128.5, 126.6, 122.1, 114.4, 114.3, 55.4, 55.3. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for $C_{17}H_{18}NO_2$ [M+H]⁺: 268.1338; found: 268.1340.



N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-trifluoromethylaniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.17 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.59 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.47 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.24-7.11 (m, 3H), 6.96 (dd, J = 8.9, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 3.82 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 163.4, 161.1, 155.0, 145.2, 129.2, 128.0, 126.3 (q, J = 3.8 Hz), 125.9, 120.9, 114.4, 55.3. HRMS (ESI) m/z calc'd for $C_{17}H_{15}F_3NO [M+H]^+$: 306.1100; found: 306.1108.



N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-bromoaniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.20 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.50-7,46 (m, 4H), 7.12 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 7.04 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.01-6.91 (m, 3H), 3.85 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 162.2, 160.9, 150.8, 144.4, 132.1, 129.1, 128.2, 126.1, 122.5, 119.1, 114.4, 55.3. HRMS (ESI) m/z calc'd for C₁₆H₁₅BrNO [M+H]⁺: 316.0332; found: 316.0333.



N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-chloroaniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.17 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.30 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.11-7.07 (m, 3H), 6.94 (dd, J = 8.8, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.89 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 3.81 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 162.1, 160.9, 150.3, 144.3, 131.2, 129.1, 129.0, 128.2, 126.1, 122.1, 114.3, 55.3. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₁₆H₁₅ClNO [M+H]⁺: 272.0837; found: 272.0833.



N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-3-chloroaniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.17 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.47 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.26 (dd, J = 5.9, 13.8 Hz, 1H), 7.16-7.08 (m, 3H), 7.02 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.97-6.89 (m, 3H), 3.82 (s, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 162.8, 161.0, 153.2, 144.7, 134.6, 130.1, 129.1, 128.1, 126.0, 125.6, 120.7, 119.5, 114.4, 55.3. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₆H₁₅CINO [M+H]⁺: 272.0842; found: 272.0843.



N-(**4**-**Methoxycinnamylidene**)-**3**-**methoxylaniline**: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.20 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.25 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (dd, J = 8.7, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.89 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 6.76-6.72 (m, 3H), 3.80 (s, 6H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 161.8, 160.7, 160.2, 153.2, 143.8, 129.7, 128.9, 128.2, 126.2, 114.2, 112.8, 111.6, 106.6, 55.2, 55.1. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₇H₁₈NO₂ [M+H]⁺: 268.1338; found: 268.1336.



N-(4-Nitrocinnamylidene)aniline: Prepared by a modification to general procedure. Dichloromethane and toluene were used as mixed solvents instead of toluene because of the solubility of imine in toluene. Yellow solid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.29 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 8.23 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.65 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.38 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.26-7.22 (m, 1H), 7.20-7.14 (m, 4H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 160.2, 151.1, 141.7, 140.4, 132.5, 129.2, 127.9, 126.7, 124.2, 120.9. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₁₅H₁₃N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺: 253.0972; found: 253.0981.



N-(4-Methylpent-2-enylidene)aniline: Prepared by general procedure. Yellow liquid. ¹H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.04 (dd, J = 3.0, 5.3 Hz, 1H), 7.35-7.31 (m, 2H), 7.17 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 6.39-6.37 (m, 2H), 2.58-2.49 (m, 1H), 1.09 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 6H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 162.4, 155.1, 151.9, 129.0, 128.4, 125.6, 120.7, 31.4, 21.5. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₁₂H₁₆N [M+H]⁺: 174.1277; found: 174.1272.

Product lactams



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-5-oxo-1-phenylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3a): Yellow viscous oil. 93% yield, 91% ee and 11/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}{}_{D}$ = -15.2 °(c = 0.094 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 18.93 min, minor: 24.56 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.44 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.34-7.29 (m, 2H), 7.22 (d, J =8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.16-7.11 (m, 1H), 6.80 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.52 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.92 (dd, J = 7.8, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.05 (dd, J = 5.5, 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 3.14-3.07 (m, 1H), 3.00-2.83 (m, 2H), 1.27 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.7, 171.2, 159.2, 137.0, 132.7, 128.4, 127.9, 127.4, 125.3, 124.4, 123.0, 113.6, 64.3, 61.1, 54.8, 43.8, 33.9, 13.7. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₂₂H₂₄NO₄ [M+H]⁺: 366.1700; found: 366.1697.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-5-oxo-1-*p*-tolylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3b): Yellow viscous oil. 86% yield, 89% ee and 9/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}{}_{D}$ = -5.4 ° (c = 0.0236 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 21.98 min, minor: 29.88 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.29-7.22 (m, 4H), 7.13 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.50 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.90 (dd, J = 7.9, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 4.99 (dd, J = 5.6, 7.8 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.13-3.06 (m, 1H), 2.99-2.82 (m, 2H), 2.28 (s, 3H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.1, 171.5, 159.6, 135.6, 134.6, 133.1, 129.4, 128.3, 127.8, 124.9, 123.7, 113.9, 64.8, 61.5, 55.2, 44.2, 34.3, 20.9, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₂₃H₂₆NO₄ [M+H]⁺: 380.1856; found: 380.1865.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-1-(4-methoxyphenyl)-5-oxopyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3c): Yellow viscous oil. 35% yield, 86% ee and 6/1 dr in acrylonitrile; 87% yield, 81% ee and 4/1 dr in dichloromethane. $[\alpha]^{20}{}_{D} = +5.3 \circ$ (c = 0.0233 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 75:25 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 11.78 min, minor: 15.57 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.29-7.22 (m, 4H), 6.87-6.80 (m, 4H), 6.48 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.89 (dd, J = 8.1, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 4.93 (dd, J = 5.7, 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 3.13-3.06 (m, 1H), 2.99-2.82 (m, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.2, 171.6, 159.6, 157.5, 133.3, 130.0, 128.3, 127.8, 125.6, 124.9, 114.1, 113.9, 65.2, 61.5, 55.2, 44.2, 34.2, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₃H₂₆NO₅ [M+H]⁺: 396.1805; found: 396.1808.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl

2-(4-methoxystyryl)-1-(4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)-5-oxopyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3d) Yellow viscous oil. 76% yield, 86% ee and 10/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D}$ = -24.0 °(c = 0.021 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 95:5 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 29.87 min, minor: 38.57 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.64 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, J = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 7.25 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 6.83 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.55 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.92 (dd, J = 7.5, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.12 (dd, J = 5.1, 7.3 Hz, 1H), 4.23 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.15-3.08 (m, 1H), 2.94 (dq, J = 7.9, 17.2 Hz, 2H), 1.29 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.9, 159.8, 140.5, 133.4, 127.9, 125.9 (q, J = 3.1 Hz), 124.0, 122.3, 114.0, 64.1, 61.7, 55.3, 44.0, 34.3, 14.1.¹⁹F NMR (282 MHz, CDCl₃) δ -62.7. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₃H₂₃F₃NO₄ [M]⁺: 434.1574; found: 434.1578.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-1-(4-bromophenyl)-5-oxopyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3e): Yellow viscous oil. 96% yield, 89% ee and 10/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}{}_D = +2.62 \circ (c = 0.029 \text{ g/mL}, CHCl_3)$. HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 23.07 min, minor: 29.59 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.44 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.23 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.82 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.51 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.88 (dd, J = 7.8, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.02 (dd, J = 5.5, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.13-3.06 (m, 1H), 2.99-2.82 (m, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 172.0, 171.6, 159.8, 136.4, 133.4, 131.8, 128.0, 127.8, 124.7, 124.2, 118.7, 114.0, 64.4, 61.6, 55.3, 44.0, 34.3, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₂H₂₃BrNO₄ [M+H]⁺: 444.0805; found: 444.0810.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-1-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-oxopyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3f): Yellow viscous oil. 79% yield, 92% ee and 9/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}{}_D = -3.2 \circ (c = 0.0248 \text{ g/mL}, CHCl_3)$. HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 97:3 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 63.66 min, minor: 84.75 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.40 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.29 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.23 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.82 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.51 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.88 (dd, J = 7.8, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.02 (dd, J = 5.5, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.23 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.13-3.06 (m, 1H), 3.00-2.83 (m, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 172.0, 171.6, 159.8, 135.9, 133.4, 130.9, 128.9, 128.1, 127.9, 124.5, 124.3, 114.0, 64.5, 61.7, 55.3, 44.1, 34.3, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₂H₂₃CINO₄ [M+H]⁺: 400.1310; found: 400.1321.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-1-(3-chlorophenyl)-5-oxopyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3g): Yellow viscous oil. 91% yield, 90% ee and 9/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D}$ = -17.6 ° (c = 0.0238 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 98:2 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 57.29 min, minor: 87.01 min, 280 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.55 (s, 1H), 7.34-7.22 (m, 4H), 7.11 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.52 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.90 (dd, J = 7.6, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.04 (dd, J = 5.1, 7.4 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.13-3.06 (m, 1H), 3.00-2.83 (m, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.9, 171.7, 159.7, 138.6, 134.4, 133.3, 129.7, 128.1, 127.9, 125.6, 124.2, 123.2, 120.9, 114.0, 64.4, 61.7, 55.3, 44.1, 34.3, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m*/z calc'd for C₂₂H₂₃CINO₄ [M+H]⁺: 400.1310; found: 400.1310.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-methoxystyryl)-1-(3-methoxyphenyl)-5-oxopyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3h): Yellow viscous oil. 64% yield, 85% ee and 9/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D}$ = -18.1 ° (c = 0.0181 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 21.28 min, minor: 34.42 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.26-7.22 (m, 3H), 7.08-7.07 (m, 1H), 6.99 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.70 (dd, J = 2.4, 8.3 Hz, 1H), 6.52 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.93 (dd, J = 7.7, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.03 (dd, J = 5.2, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.76 (s, 3H), 3.12-3.05 (m, 1H), 3.00-2.83 (m, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.1, 171.6, 159.7, 159.6, 138.5, 132.9, 129.4, 128.3, 127.8, 124.7, 115.5, 113.9, 111.3, 109.3, 64.7, 61.5, 55.2, 44.1, 34.3, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₃H₂₆NO₅ [M+H]⁺: 396.1805; found: 396.1797.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 5-oxo-1-phenyl-2-styrylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3i): Yellow viscous oil. 92% yield, 92% ee and 14/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -21.4^{\circ}$ (c = 0.031 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 13.42 min, minor: 16.92 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.44 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.31-7.24 (m, 7H), 7.16 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.59 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.07 (dd, J = 7.7, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.09 (dd, J = 5.4, 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.24 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.12 (dt, J = 5.4, 8.1 Hz, 1H), 3.02-2.85 (m, 2H), 1.29 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.0, 171.6, 137.2, 135.5, 133.6, 128.8, 128.5, 128.2, 127.1, 126.5, 125.7, 123.4, 64.4, 61.6, 44.0, 34.3, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₂₁H₂₂NO₃ [M+H]⁺: 336.1594; found: 336.1602.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-(4-nitrostyryl)-5-oxo-1-phenylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3j): Yellow viscous oil. 95% yield, 93% ee and >20/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -20.5 \circ (c = 0.0198 \text{ g/mL}, \text{CHCl}_3)$. HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 80:20 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 18.12 min, minor: 21.45 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.13 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.44-7.32 (m, 6H), 7.17 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 6.65 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 6.27 (dd, J = 7.5, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.15 (dd, J = 5.8, 7.0 Hz, 1H), 4.25 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.14 (dt, J = 5.5, 8.2 Hz, 1H), 3.03-2.87 (m, 2H), 1.29 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.7, 171.4, 147.2, 141.8, 137.0, 132.1, 131.5, 129.0, 127.2, 126.0, 124.0, 123.2, 63.9, 61.8, 43.6, 34.2, 14.2. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₁H₂₁N₂O₅ [M+H]⁺: 381.1445; found: 381.1457.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-((*E*)-2-(furan-2-yl)vinyl)-5-oxo-1-phenylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3k): Yellow viscous oil. 93% yield, 89% ee and 12/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{Dv}$ = -16.4 °(c = 0.026 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 85:15 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 9.87 min, minor: 12.68 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.43 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.39-7.31 (m, 3H), 7.16 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.39-6.32 (m, 2H), 6.21 (d, J = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 6.02 (dd, J = 7.6, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.04 (dd, J = 5.2, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.23 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.13-3.06 (m, 1H), 2.91 (dq, J = 8.0, 17.1 Hz, 2H), 1.29 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.0, 171.6, 151.2, 142.5, 137.3, 128.9, 125.8, 125.4, 123.3, 121.6, 111.4, 109.4, 64.1, 61.6, 44.0, 34.2, 14.1. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₁₉H₂₀NO₄ [M+H]⁺: 326.1387; found: 326.1385.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-((E)-3-methylbut-1-enyl)-5-oxo-1-phenylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3l): Yellow viscous oil. 49% yield, 90% ee and >20/1 dr in acrylonitrile; 73% yield, 88% ee and >15/1 dr in dichloromethane. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -38.5^{\circ}$ (c = 0.0160 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 98:2 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 23.20 min, minor: 35.12 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.45-7.30 (m, 4H), 7.18-7.15 (m, 1H), 5.63 (dd, J = 6.7, 15.3 Hz, 1H), 5.23 (dd, J = 8.0, 15.4 Hz, 1H), 4.78 (t, J = 6.7 Hz, 1H), 4.21 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.00-2.96 (m, 1H), 2.87-2.85 (m, 2H), 2.21 (qd, J = 6.6, 13.4 Hz, 1H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 0.89-0.81 (m, 6H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.3, 171.6, 143.1, 137.2, 128.6, 125.7, 124.7, 123.9, 64.7, 61.4, 44.25, 34.4, 30.7, 21.9, 14.2. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₈H₂₄NO₃ [M+H]⁺: 302.1751; found: 302.1759.



(2S,3R)-Ethyl 2-((*E*)-2-(ethoxycarbonyl)vinyl)-5-oxo-1-phenylpyrrolidine-3-carboxylate (3m): Yellow viscous oil. 85% yield, 92% ee and 8/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D}$ = -36.5 ° (c = 0.0203 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 17.34 min, minor: 20.08 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.44-7.31 (m, 4H), 7.21-7.16 (m, 1H), 6.82 (dd, J = 7.0, 15.7 Hz, 1H), 5.97 (d, J = 15.3 Hz, 1H), 5.14-5.10 (m, 1H), 4.23 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.12 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 3.10-3.03 (m, 1H) ppm 2.98-2.83 (m, 2H), 1.32-1.22 (m, 6H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 171.3, 171.3, 165.2, 144.3, 136.9, 129.0, 125.9, 124.2, 122.7, 62.3, 61.9, 60.8, 42.6, 33.9, 14.0. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₁₈H₂₂NO₅ [M+H]⁺: 332.1492; found: 332.1497.



(4R,5S)-5-(4-Methoxystyryl)-1-phenyl-4-propionylpyrrolidin-2-one (3n): Yellow viscous oil. 62% yield, 66% ee and 11/1 dr. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -42.0 \circ (c = 0.0131 \text{ g/mL}, \text{ CHCl}_3)$. HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 19.98 min, minor: 26.12 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.39 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.35-7.30 (m, 2H), 7.22 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.17-7.12 (m, 1H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.49 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.88 (dd, J = 8.2, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.00 (dd, J = 6.1, 8.0 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.30-3.22 (m, 1H), 2.91 (dd, J = 9.4, 17.0 Hz, 1H), 2.77 (dd, J = 8.1, 17.0 Hz, 1H), 2.64-2.47 (m, 2H), 1.10 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 208.7, 171.3, 159.7, 137.2, 133.3, 128.8, 128.2, 127.8, 125.8, 125.3, 123.8, 114.0, 63.8, 55.3, 50.3, 36.0, 34.1, 7.5. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C₂₂H₂₄NO₃ [M+H]⁺: 350.1751; found: 350.1751.



(4S,5S)-5-(4-Methoxystyryl)-4-(4-nitrophenyl)-1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one (3o): White solid. 99% yield, 93% ee and 14/1 dr. M.p.: 77-79 °C. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D}$ = -150.3 ° (c = 0.0239 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IA column, 90:10 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 55.19 min, minor: 42.59 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.21 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.50-7.43 (m, 4H), 7.37-7.32 (m, 2H), 7.21-7.14 (m, 3H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.30 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.96 (dd, J = 7.9, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 4.71 (dd, J = 5.9, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.54 (dd, J = 8.0, 14.0 Hz, 1H), 3.17 (dd, J = 8.8, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 2.81 (dd, J = 7.6, 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.1, 159.8, 148.6, 147.3, 137.4, 133.4, 128.9, 128.2, 128.1, 127.8, 125.8, 124.4, 124.2, 123.3, 114.0, 69.8, 55.3, 45.4, 38.4. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₂₅H₂₃N₂O₄ [M+H]⁺: 415.1652; found: 415.1661.



(4S,5S)-5-(4-Methoxystyryl)-4-(4-bromophenyl)-1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one (3p): White solid. 58% yield, 91% ee and 17/1 dr. M.p.: 56-58 °C. $[α]^{20}_{D}$ = -117.8 ° (c = 0.0157 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IC column, 50:50 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 17.30 min, minor: 28.03 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.49-7.43 (m, 4H), 7.36-7.31 (m, 2H), 7.24-7.13 (m, 5H), 6.81 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 2H), 6.29 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.94 (dd, J = 7.8, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 4.66 (t, J = 6.7 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.37 (dd, J = 7.6, 14.1 Hz, 1H), 3.11 (dd, J = 8.8, 17.1 Hz, 1H), 2.76 (dd, J = 7.5, 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.7, 159.6, 140.1, 137.6, 132.9, 132.0, 129.0, 128.8, 128.3, 127.8, 125.6, 124.9, 123.3, 121.2, 114.0, 70.1, 55.3, 45.0, 38.5. HRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* calc'd for C₂₅H₂₃BrNO₂ [M+H]⁺: 448.0907; found: 448.0918.



(4S,5S)-5-(4-Methoxystyryl)-1,4-diphenylpyrrolidin-2-one (3q): White solid. 48% yield, 90% ee and 20/1 dr. M.p.: 49-51 °C. $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -94.6^{\circ}$ (c = 0.0121 g/mL, CHCl₃). HPLC analysis–Chiralcel IC column, 50:50 hexanes/isopropanol, 1.0 mL/min, major: 15.86 min, minor: 16.99 min, 254 nm. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.47 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.39-7.29 (m, 7H), 7.22-7.12 (m, 3H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 6.29 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.98 (dd, J = 7.7, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 4.72 (dd, J = 5.6, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.41 (dd, J = 8.0, 13.6 Hz, 1H), 3.13 (dd, J = 8.8, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 2.82 (dd, J = 7.3, 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C{¹H} NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 173.1, 159.5, 141.3, 137.8, 132.6, 128.9, 128.8, 128.6, 127.7, 127.3, 127.2, 125.5, 125.4, 123.3, 113.9, 70.2, 55.3, 45.4, 38.8. HRMS (ESI) *m*/z calc'd for C₂₅H₂₄NO₂ [M+H]⁺: 370.1802; found: 370.1797.

4. Absolute configuration assignment



In a 20-mL vial was added ester **3a** (33.0 mg, 0.09 mmol), MeOH (3 mL) and H₂O (1 mL). LiOH (10.8 mg, 0.45 mmol) was then added. The solution was stirred at room temperature for 11 h. MeOH was removed under reduced pressure. The aqueous solution was acidified with 1 M HCl until pH = $2\sim3$. The resulting mixture was extracted with EtOAc (4 mL x 3), dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered and concentrated to give slightly yellow solid residue, which was purified by silica gel column chromatoghy (eluent: EtOAc) to quantitatively give the desired product acid **I** as a white solid. Acid **I**: White solid. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 9.72 (br,

1H), 7.41 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.33 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.24-7.14 (m, 3H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.53 (d, J = 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.92 (dd, J = 7.8, 15.8 Hz, 1H), 5.07 (dd, J = 5.1, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.18-3.12 (m, 1H), 3.08-2.90 (m, 2H). $^{13}C{}^{1}H$ NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 176.3, 172.1, 159.7, 137.0, 133.5, 128.8, 128.2, 127.9, 126.1, 124.3, 123.7, 114.0, 64.8, 55.2, 43.9, 34.1. Treatment of obtained acid I with 1 eq. (s)-1-phenylethylamine afforded counterion II. Crude ¹H NMR: (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.59 (br, 3H), 7.42 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.32-7.15 (m, 9H), 7.08 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.34 (d, J = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 5.81 (dd, J = 7.2, 15.9 Hz, 1H), 4.89 (dd, J = 4.1, 6.9 Hz, 1H), 4.12-3.99 (m, 1H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 2.61-2.36 (m, 3H), 1.38 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 3H) (Note: the spectra are on page S41). A single crystal of II suitable for X-ray analysis was obtained by slow volatilization of its DCM/EtOAc solution.



Table 1. Crystal data and structure refinement for rovis125.

Identification code	rovis125
Empirical formula	$C_{29}H_{32}Cl_2N_2O_4$
Formula weight	543.47
Temperature	120 K
Wavelength	0.71073 Å
Crystal system	Monoclinic
Space group	<i>P</i> 2 ₁
Unit cell dimensions	$a = 6.0055(2) \text{ Å} = 90^{\circ}.$

	b = 27.8264(8) Å c = 8.3886(2) Å	= 99.216(2)°. = 90°.	
Volume	1383.74(7) Å ³		
Z	2		
Density (calculated)	1.304 Mg/m ³		
Absorption coefficient	0.272 mm ⁻¹		
F(000)	572		
Crystal size	0.25 x 0.14 x 0.13 mm ³		
Theta range for data collection	2.46 to 28.33 °.		
Index ranges	-6<=h<=8, -37<=k<=35, -11	<=l<=11	
Reflections collected	24033		
Independent reflections	6583 [R(int) = 0.0384]		
Completeness to theta = 28.33°	99.7 %		
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical from equivalents		
Max. and min. transmission	0.9661 and 0.9357		
Refinement method	Full-matrix least-squares on	F ²	
Data / restraints / parameters	6583 / 1 / 338		
Goodness-of-fit on F ²	1.057		
Final R indices [I>2sigma(I)]	R1 = 0.0589, wR2 = 0.1588		
R indices (all data)	R1 = 0.0774, wR2 = 0.1787		
Absolute structure parameter	0.13(11)		
Largest diff. peak and hole	0.459 and -0.741 e.Å ⁻³		

Table 2. Atomic coordinates (x 10^4) and equivalent isotropic displacement parameters (Å²x 10^3)

for rovis125. U(eq) is defined as one third of the trace of the orthogonalized U^{ij} tensor.

	Х	у	Z	U(eq)	
C(1)	1863(5)	2009(1)	5135(3)	17(1)	
C(2)	5441(5)	2326(1)	6283(3)	18(1)	

C(3)	4442(5)	2079(1)	7641(3)	17(1)
C(4)	2505(5)	1762(1)	6743(3)	19(1)
C(5)	3534(5)	2591(1)	3482(3)	17(1)
C(6)	1679(5)	2866(1)	2827(3)	23(1)
C(7)	1724(6)	3117(1)	1389(4)	26(1)
C(8)	3599(6)	3093(1)	636(3)	27(1)
C(9)	5450(6)	2823(1)	1293(3)	24(1)
C(10)	5428(5)	2568(1)	2709(3)	20(1)
C(11)	6158(5)	1808(1)	8852(3)	20(1)
C(12)	6259(5)	2827(1)	6714(3)	21(1)
C(13)	8312(5)	2990(1)	6664(3)	23(1)
C(14)	9162(5)	3472(1)	7138(3)	22(1)
C(15)	11057(6)	3653(1)	6588(4)	30(1)
C(16)	11912(6)	4110(1)	7032(5)	36(1)
C(17)	10840(6)	4391(1)	8044(5)	33(1)
C(18)	8956(6)	4215(1)	8606(4)	32(1)
C(19)	8130(6)	3764(1)	8154(4)	26(1)
C(20)	13554(7)	5026(2)	8155(9)	66(2)
C(21)	2809(5)	941(1)	3081(3)	22(1)
C(22)	4922(5)	1158(1)	3455(3)	22(1)
C(23)	6412(5)	1024(1)	4844(4)	28(1)
C(24)	5769(6)	669(1)	5851(4)	35(1)
C(25)	3691(6)	455(1)	5495(4)	35(1)
C(26)	2208(6)	588(1)	4119(4)	29(1)
C(27)	1158(5)	1067(1)	1574(3)	22(1)
C(28)	1447(7)	759(1)	118(4)	34(1)
C(29)	5684(11)	4041(2)	3524(7)	74(2)
Cl(1)	8191(3)	4076(1)	2820(2)	93(1)
Cl(2)	3567(3)	4372(1)	2335(4)	129(1)
N(1)	3506(4)	2334(1)	4948(3)	17(1)
N(2)	1327(4)	1581(1)	1106(3)	20(1)
O(1)	193(3)	1923(1)	4130(2)	20(1)
O(2)	11530(5)	4840(1)	8580(4)	47(1)
O(3)	5437(4)	1601(1)	9984(2)	28(1)
O(4)	8174(4)	1819(1)	8644(2)	31(1)

Table 3.Bond lengths [Å] and angles [] for rovis125.

C(1)-O(1)	1.225(3)
C(1)-N(1)	1.366(4)
C(1)-C(4)	1.509(4)
C(2)-N(1)	1.480(4)
C(2)-C(12)	1.503(4)
C(2)-C(3)	1.534(4)
C(3)-C(11)	1.524(4)
C(3)-C(4)	1.555(4)
C(5)-C(6)	1.390(4)
C(5)-C(10)	1.398(4)
C(5)-N(1)	1.425(3)
C(6)-C(7)	1.398(4)
C(7)-C(8)	1.379(5)
C(8)-C(9)	1.382(5)
C(9)-C(10)	1.385(4)
C(11)-O(3)	1.247(3)
C(11)-O(4)	1.251(4)
C(12)-C(13)	1.321(4)
C(13)-C(14)	1.466(4)
C(14)-C(15)	1.389(4)
C(14)-C(19)	1.393(4)
C(15)-C(16)	1.400(5)
C(16)-C(17)	1.387(6)
C(17)-O(2)	1.368(4)
C(17)-C(18)	1.383(5)
C(18)-C(19)	1.381(5)
C(20)-O(2)	1.419(5)
C(21)-C(22)	1.395(4)
C(21)-C(26)	1.399(4)
C(21)-C(27)	1.518(4)
C(22)-C(23)	1.401(4)
C(23)-C(24)	1.393(5)
C(24)-C(25)	1.372(6)
C(25)-C(26)	1.390(5)
C(27)-N(2)	1.491(4)
C(27)-C(28)	1.525(4)
C(29)-Cl(1)	1.706(6)
C(29)-Cl(2)	1.749(7)

O(1)-C(1)-N(1)	125.2(2)
O(1)-C(1)-C(4)	126.2(2)
N(1)-C(1)-C(4)	108.6(2)
N(1)-C(2)-C(12)	110.8(2)
N(1)-C(2)-C(3)	102.4(2)
C(12)-C(2)-C(3)	112.9(2)
C(11)-C(3)-C(2)	114.4(2)
C(11)-C(3)-C(4)	114.6(2)
C(2)-C(3)-C(4)	104.3(2)
C(1)-C(4)-C(3)	103.8(2)
C(6)-C(5)-C(10)	120.1(2)
C(6)-C(5)-N(1)	119.9(2)
C(10)-C(5)-N(1)	120.0(2)
C(5)-C(6)-C(7)	119.4(3)
C(8)-C(7)-C(6)	120.1(3)
C(7)-C(8)-C(9)	120.5(3)
C(8)-C(9)-C(10)	120.2(3)
C(9)-C(10)-C(5)	119.7(3)
O(3)-C(11)-O(4)	125.4(3)
O(3)-C(11)-C(3)	117.1(3)
O(4)-C(11)-C(3)	117.5(2)
C(13)-C(12)-C(2)	125.6(3)
C(12)-C(13)-C(14)	126.3(3)
C(15)-C(14)-C(19)	117.4(3)
C(15)-C(14)-C(13)	120.6(3)
C(19)-C(14)-C(13)	122.0(3)
C(14)-C(15)-C(16)	121.7(3)
C(17)-C(16)-C(15)	119.3(3)
O(2)-C(17)-C(18)	115.6(3)
O(2)-C(17)-C(16)	124.8(3)
C(18)-C(17)-C(16)	119.6(3)
C(19)-C(18)-C(17)	120.4(3)
C(18)-C(19)-C(14)	121.5(3)
C(22)-C(21)-C(26)	118.7(3)
C(22)-C(21)-C(27)	122.4(3)
C(26)-C(21)-C(27)	118.8(3)
C(21)-C(22)-C(23)	120.5(3)

C(24)-C(23)-C(22)	119.4(3)
C(25)-C(24)-C(23)	120.4(3)
C(24)-C(25)-C(26)	120.3(3)
C(25)-C(26)-C(21)	120.6(3)
N(2)-C(27)-C(21)	112.3(2)
N(2)-C(27)-C(28)	107.9(2)
C(21)-C(27)-C(28)	113.2(3)
Cl(1)-C(29)-Cl(2)	111.9(3)
C(1)-N(1)-C(5)	122.7(2)
C(1)-N(1)-C(2)	113.4(2)
C(5)-N(1)-C(2)	123.0(2)
C(17)-O(2)-C(20)	118.5(3)

Symmetry transformations used to generate equivalent atoms:

Table 4.Anisotropic displacement parameters ($Å^2x \ 10^3$) for rovis125.The anisotropic

displacement factor exponent takes the form: -2 $2[h^2a^*2U^{11} + ... + 2hka^*b^*U^{12}]$

	U11	U ²²	U33	U ²³	U13	U12
C(1)	16(1)	20(1)	15(1)	2(1)	4(1)	3(1)
C(2)	12(1)	26(1)	13(1)	0(1)	1(1)	2(1)
C(3)	10(1)	26(1)	14(1)	2(1)	1(1)	3(1)
C(4)	14(1)	29(1)	15(1)	5(1)	0(1)	-1(1)
C(5)	19(2)	21(1)	12(1)	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)
C(6)	18(2)	29(2)	22(1)	4(1)	4(1)	4(1)
C(7)	22(2)	31(2)	24(1)	8(1)	-2(1)	5(1)
C(8)	30(2)	33(2)	18(1)	7(1)	2(1)	-3(1)
C(9)	22(2)	35(2)	16(1)	-1(1)	5(1)	-4(1)
C(10)	15(2)	26(1)	18(1)	1(1)	0(1)	0(1)
C(11)	16(1)	30(1)	14(1)	1(1)	1(1)	4(1)
C(12)	19(2)	27(1)	16(1)	1(1)	2(1)	3(1)
C(13)	23(2)	29(2)	16(1)	3(1)	2(1)	2(1)
C(14)	17(2)	27(1)	20(1)	6(1)	0(1)	0(1)
C(15)	22(2)	37(2)	32(2)	5(1)	6(1)	-1(1)
C(16)	22(2)	37(2)	50(2)	14(2)	7(2)	-3(1)

C(17)	27(2)	24(2)	47(2)	9(1)	-1(2)	0(1)	
C(18)	26(2)	27(2)	41(2)	0(1)	4(1)	2(1)	
C(19)	20(2)	30(2)	29(1)	2(1)	6(1)	-1(1)	
C(20)	25(2)	32(2)	139(5)	10(3)	8(3)	-8(2)	
C(21)	18(2)	27(1)	21(1)	4(1)	3(1)	4(1)	
C(22)	16(2)	29(1)	22(1)	4(1)	3(1)	4(1)	
C(23)	20(2)	37(2)	24(1)	5(1)	-3(1)	5(1)	
C(24)	33(2)	41(2)	29(2)	13(2)	-2(1)	11(2)	
C(25)	31(2)	40(2)	34(2)	18(2)	4(2)	4(2)	
C(26)	25(2)	34(2)	29(2)	9(1)	4(1)	0(1)	
C(27)	16(2)	30(1)	20(1)	6(1)	-1(1)	-4(1)	
C(28)	44(2)	28(2)	27(2)	-1(1)	-2(1)	0(2)	
C(29)	91(4)	67(3)	67(3)	-13(3)	25(3)	-13(3)	
Cl(1)	77(1)	113(1)	91(1)	9(1)	20(1)	22(1)	
Cl(2)	65(1)	66(1)	236(3)	-49(1)	-36(1)	9(1)	
N(1)	11(1)	27(1)	12(1)	2(1)	-1(1)	1(1)	
N(2)	14(1)	28(1)	16(1)	4(1)	0(1)	4(1)	
O(1)	13(1)	31(1)	16(1)	1(1)	-2(1)	0(1)	
O(2)	35(2)	23(1)	81(2)	5(1)	4(1)	-5(1)	
O(3)	18(1)	44(1)	22(1)	15(1)	4(1)	2(1)	
O(4)	14(1)	61(2)	20(1)	16(1)	4(1)	8(1)	

Table 5. Hydrogen coordinates ($x \ 10^4$) and isotropic displacement parameters (Å²x 10^3) for rovis125.

	Х	У	Z	U(eq)	
H(2)	6669	2132	5981	21	
H(3)	3758	2327	8233	20	
H(4A)	3022	1436	6603	23	
H(4B)	1238	1751	7329	23	
H(6)	419	2882	3340	28	
H(7)	487	3301	941	32	
H(8)	3618	3260	-323	33	
H(9)	6716	2812	784	29	
H(10)	6667	2383	3144	24	
H(12)	5231	3041	7045	25	

H(13)	9315	2779	6293	27	
H(15)	11777	3465	5907	36	
H(16)	13185	4224	6651	43	
H(18)	8240	4402	9292	38	
H(19)	6855	3652	8537	31	
H(20A)	14812	4840	8671	99	
H(20B)	13738	5354	8502	99	
H(20C)	13483	5010	7005	99	
H(22)	5345	1394	2778	26	
H(23)	7817	1170	5091	33	
H(24)	6755	577	6770	42	
H(25)	3273	220	6177	42	
H(26)	803	440	3888	35	
H(27)	-369	1013	1809	27	
H(28A)	287	837	-770	50	
H(28B)	1340	426	389	50	
H(28C)	2898	821	-181	50	
H(29A)	5882	4160	4624	88	
H(29B)	5222	3707	3539	88	
H(2A)	1344	1767	1972	30	
H(2B)	145	1658	367	30	
H(2C)	2591	1626	698	30	

5. NMR spectra for new compounds

NMR Spectra of Triazolium Salt C4







NMR Spectra of *N*-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)aniline (1a)



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-methylaniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-methoxylaniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-trifluoromethylaniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-bromoaniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-4-chloroaniline


NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-3-chloroaniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methoxycinnamylidene)-3-methoxylaniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Nitrocinnamylidene)aniline



NMR Spectra of N-(4-Methylpent-2-enylidene)aniline

NMR Spectra of Product 3a





¹H NMR Spectrum of Acid I from Product 3a

10.0

ppm (f1)

S42

0.0

NMR Spectra of Product 3b



ppm (t1)

NMR Spectra of Product 3c









NMR Spectra of Product 3f



NMR Spectra of Product 3g











NMR Spectra of Product 3j

NMR Spectra of Product 3k 7.442 7.415 7.385 7.385 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.331 7.335 7.158 6.334 6.334 6.334 6.334 6.334 6.334 6.334 6.334 6.205 6.007 6.007 6.007 5.982 5.065 5.048 5.040 5.023 4.262 4.215 4.191 3.129 3.101 3.129 3.007 3.003 3.007 3.002 3.002 2.945 3.007 3.005 3.007 3.005 3.007 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 2.945 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 3.007 2.945 2.945 2.297 3.0070 N-Ph 0= ÒEt ₩Ÿ 4:00 8:00 ЧЧЧ -0.00 933 `→ 2.12 **⊣** 0.96 **⊣** 3.37 5.0 | 10.0 0.0 ppm (t1) 142.452 172.026 171.612 151.165 137.296 128.855 125.756 125.442 123.300 121.583 111.401 109.376 77.425 77.000 76.575 64.148 61.628 43.983 34.223 14.130 -Ph N 0= ÒEt Т Т 150 100 50 200 0









NMR Spectra of Product 3n







7.491 7.467 7.463 7.454 7.454 7.454 7.454 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.335 7.186 7.186 7.186 7.186 7.186 7.186 7.186 7.128 6.334 6.326 6.726 6.326 6.326 6.326 6.326 6.261 3.406 3.381 3.358 3.358 3.353 3.153 3.153 3.153 3.153 3.153 3.095 3.065 3.005 2.777 2.777 2.777 0.074 5.981 5.955 5.928 5.902 4.677 4.656 4.633 3.778 0 N-Ph Bı ÒМе 부 부부 부 1.13 3.32 ₩₩₩ 4.1.00 4.1.04 4.1.04 4.1.04 ₽ 1.03 10.0 0.0 5.0 ppm (t1) 55.288 45.010 38.546 Ö Ņ⁻^{Ph} Br юМе Т Т 150 50 200 100 0 ppm (t1)

NMR Spectra of Product 3p

7.482 7.455 7.368 7.388 7.388 7.387 7.317 7.317 7.317 7.215 7.215 7.215 7.215 6.268 6.205 6.205 6.208 6.2284 6.2284 6.2284 7.421 7.421 6.269 4.4725 5.5944 4.7701 3.780 3.780 3.447 3.447 3.3418 3.375 3.375 3.147 3.147 3.119 3.119 3.119 3.119 3.090 2.857 2.857 2.833 3.090 0.077 0.077 оМе 부 부부부 3.32 1.14 ₩¥ ¥ 1.00 ₩¥ 2.00 1:99 Y 1.05 0.0 10.0 5.0 ppm (t1) 173.124 159.529 137.804 137.804 137.804 137.804 137.804 128.757 128.754 128.738 127.349 127.738 127.738 127.738 127.738 125.557 125.357 1125.357 1125.357 1125.357 1125.357 1125.357 1125.357 1125.357 125.357 125.357 127.423 77.423 77.700 55.233 55.233 45.411 38.778 ÒМе

50

0

100

NMR Spectra of Product 3q

Т

ppm (t1)

200

150



6. HPLC spectra for products
































Peak #	RetTime [min]	Type	Width [min]	Area [mAU*s]	Height [mAU]	Area *
1	15.862	BV	0.4426	598.80872	21.13406	4.9966
2	16.987	VВ	0.4990	1.13856e4	350.45380	95.0034

S75

min

24

min

