

Supporting Information

Synthesis of cationic π -extended imidazolium salts by sequential Cu-catalyzed arylation/annulation and photocyclization

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I. General Remarks

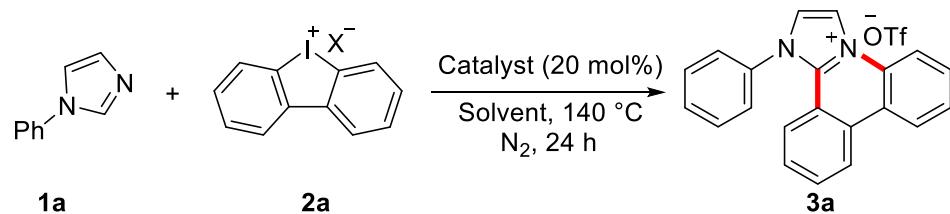
All commercially available reagents were used without further purification unless otherwise noted. DMF was dried through a solvent purification system from Innovative Technology. Cu₂O (99% purity) was purchased from Shanghai Aladdin Biochemical Technology Co., Ltd. MeOH (AR) and MeCN (AR) were purchased from Chengdu Kelong Chemical Engineering Reagent (China) CO., Ltd. Analytical thin layer chromatography was performed on HG/T2354-92 GF254 plates (Qingdao Haiyang Chemical Co., Ltd.). The 1-arylimidazoles¹, 1,2,3-triaryl imidazolium salts² and cyclic diaryliodonium salts³ were prepared according to the literature procedures.

NMR spectroscopy were obtained on a Agilent 400-MR DD2 spectrometer. The ¹H NMR (400 MHz) chemical shifts were recorded relative to CDCl₃ or DMSO-d₆ as the internal reference (CDCl₃: δ = 7.26 ppm; DMSO-d₆: δ = 2.50 ppm). The ¹³C NMR (100 MHz) chemical shifts were given using CDCl₃ or DMSO-d₆ as the internal standard (CDCl₃: δ = 77.16 ppm; DMSO-d₆: δ = 39.52 ppm). High resolution mass spectra (HR-MS) were obtained with a Shimadzu LCMS-ITTOF (ESI). Single crystal X-Ray diffraction data were collected on an Agilent Technologies Gemini single-crystal diffractometer. Absorption spectra were obtained on a HITACHI U-2910 spectrometer. Fluorescence spectra and absolute quantum yields were collected on a Horiba Jobin Yvon-Edison Fluoromax-4 fluorescence spectrometer with a calibrated integrating sphere system. Photocyclization reactions were performed with a Rayonet reactor (RPR-200) with 254 nm (168 W) lamps in quartz flasks.

II. Optimization of Reaction Conditions and General Procedures

a) Screening of reaction conditions

Table S1 Optimization for the arylation/annulation of 1a.^a



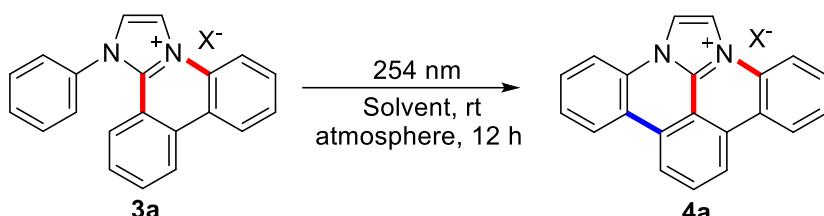
Entry	Catalyst	Solvent	Base	X ⁻	Yield (%) ^b
1	Cu ₂ O	DMF	--	OTf ⁻	95
2	Cu(OAc) ₂ ·H ₂ O	DMF	--	OTf ⁻	91
3	Cu ₂ O	DMF	NaOAc	OTf ⁻	53
4	Cu ₂ O	DMF	--	BF ₄ ⁻	94

5	Cu ₂ O	DMF	--	Cl ⁻	trace
6	Cu ₂ O	Dioxane	--	OTf ⁻	94
7	Cu ₂ O	1,2-Dichlorobenzene	--	OTf ⁻	75

^a1a (0.2 mmol), 2a (0.4 mmol), a catalyst (20 mol%), and a solvent (1 mL) at 140 °C, N₂, 24 h;

^bIsolated yield.

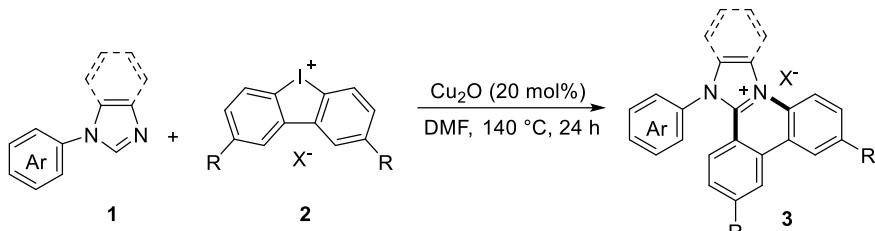
Table S2 Optimization for the photocyclization of 3a.^a



Entry	Solvent	X ⁻	Atmosphere	Yield (%) ^b
1	MeOH	OTf ⁻	air	70
2	MeOH	BF ₄ ⁻	air	67
3	DMF	OTf ⁻	air	trace
4	MeCN	OTf ⁻	air	trace
5	DCM	OTf ⁻	air	13
6	MeOH	OTf ⁻	N ₂	trace

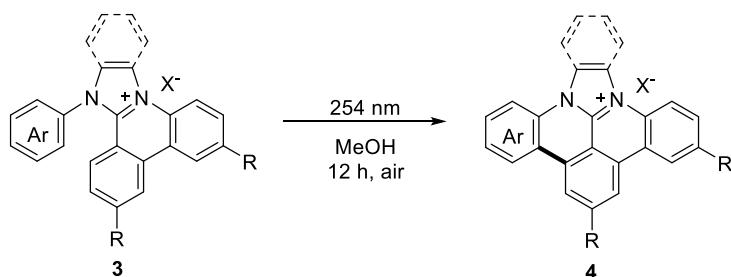
^a3a (30 mg) in a solvent (30 mL) under 254 nm UV-light (168 W), rt, 12 h; ^bIsolated yield.

b) General procedure for the synthesis of 3



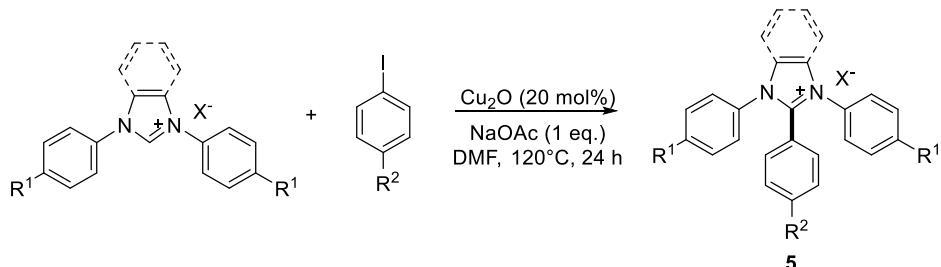
A flame-dried Schlenk tube with a magnetic stirring bar was charged with 1-arylimidazole **1** (0.2 mmol), cyclic diaryliodonium salt **2** (0.4 mmol), Cu₂O (5.7 mg, 20 mol%), and DMF (1 mL) under N₂. The reaction mixture was heated at 140 °C for 24 h. After reaction was complete, the reaction mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂/MeOH (v/v, 40/1–25/1) to provide product **3**.

c) General procedure for the intramolecular photocyclization reaction of 3



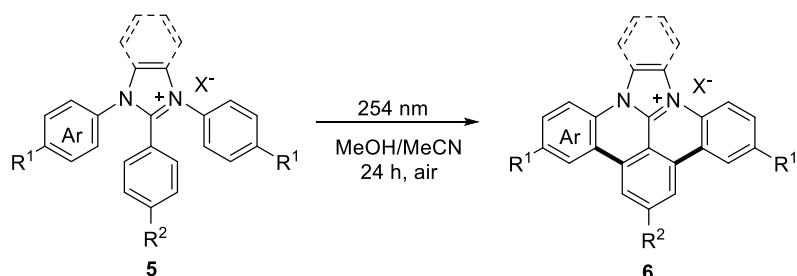
A quartz tube was charged with **3** (30 mg) and MeOH (30 mL) in air. The reaction mixture reacted at room temperature for 12 hours under the irradiation of 254 nm ultraviolet light. Then the reaction mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂/MeOH (v/v, 40/1–10/1) to provide product **4**.

d) General procedure for the synthesis of **5**



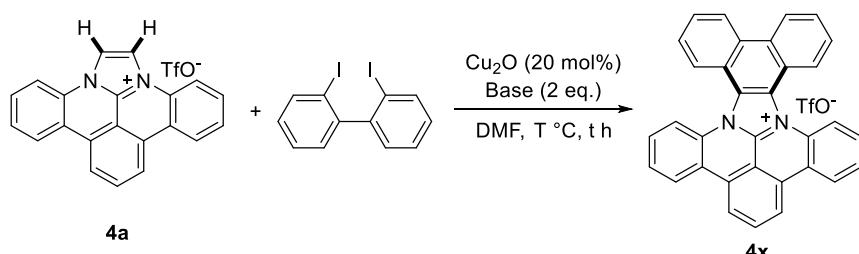
A flame-dried Schlenk tube with a magnetic stirring bar was charged with 1,3-diaryl imidazolium salt (0.2 mmol), an iodoaromatic compounds (0.4 mmol), Cu₂O (5.7 mg, 20 mol%), NaOAc (16.4 mg, 0.2 mmol) and DMF (1 mL) under N₂. The reaction mixture was heated at 120 °C for 24 h. After reaction was complete, the reaction mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂/MeOH (v/v, 50/1–30/1) to provide product **5**.

e) General procedure for the intramolecular photocycloisomerization reaction of **5**



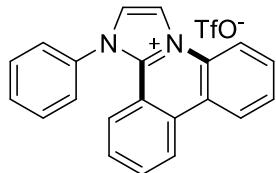
A quartz tube was charged with **5** (30 mg) and MeOH/MeCN (26 mL/4 mL) in air. The reaction mixture reacted at room temperature for 24 hours under the irradiation of 254 nm ultraviolet light. Then the reaction mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂/MeOH (v/v, 40/1–10/1) to provide product **6**.

f) Synthesis of **4x**

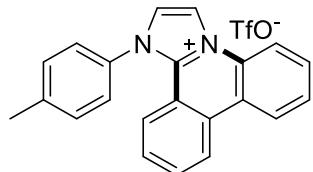


A flame-dried Schlenk tube with a magnetic stirring bar was charged with **4a** (44.2 mg, 0.1 mmol), 2,2'-diiodo-1,1'-biphenyl (81.2 mg, 0.2 mmol), Cu₂O (2.8 mg, 20 mol%), KOAc (39.2 mg, 0.2 mmol) and DMF (1 mL) under N₂. The reaction mixture was heated at 120 °C for 24 h. After reaction was complete, the reaction mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂/MeOH (v/v, 50/1–25/1) to provide product **4x** as a light yellow solid (30.8 mg, 52% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.94–8.04 (m, 8H), 8.52 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.64 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 9.11–9.18 (m, 6H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 112.1, 120.0, 120.9, 122.5, 123.0, 123.8, 125.2, 126.1, 126.3, 127.7, 128.6, 128.9, 129.98, 130.03, 130.1, 131.1, 134.5, 138.9 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₈H₁₂N₅⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[−]]⁺ 443.1543, found 443.1590.

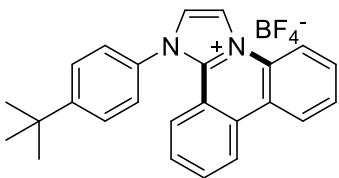
III. Characterization of **3**, **4**, **5** and **6**



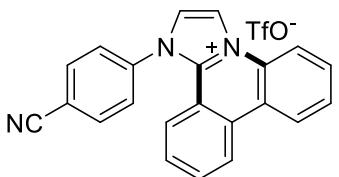
1-phenyl-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3a): A white solid (84.4 mg, 95% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.26 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.61 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.82–8.00 (m, 7H), 8.03–8.07 (m, 1H), 8.59 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.76 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.00 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.42 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 115.2, 116.7, 117.4, 121.8, 123.7, 124.4, 125.0, 127.1, 127.4, 128.6, 129.1, 129.2, 130.3, 130.9, 131.1, 131.7, 132.6, 136.5, 136.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₁H₁₅N₂ [M–CF₃SO₃[−]]⁺ 295.1230, found 295.1225.



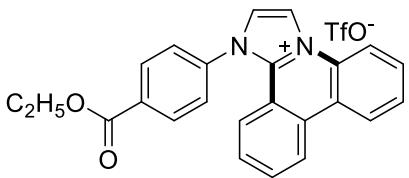
1-(*p*-tolyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3b): A white solid (86 mg, 94% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 9.40 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.99 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 8.75 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.53 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.90–8.06 (m, 3H), 7.73 (d, *J* = 8 Hz, 2H), 7.63 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 2.54 (s, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 21.0, 115.1, 116.8, 117.4, 121.8, 123.8, 124.4, 125.0, 126.8, 127.6, 128.6, 129.1, 129.3, 130.2, 131.1, 131.3, 132.5, 134.1, 136.7, 141.6 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₂H₁₇N₂ [M–CF₃SO₃[−]]⁺ 309.1386, found 309.1357.



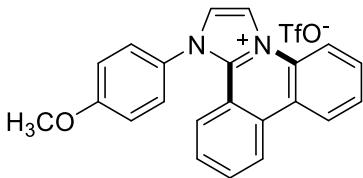
1-(4-(*tert*-butyl)phenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium tetrafluoroborate (3c): A white solid (73.6 mg, 84% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.43 (s, 9H), 7.29 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.60 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.85 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.93 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.04 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.57 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.75 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.99 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.40 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 31.0, 35.0, 115.1, 116.7, 117.3, 121.8, 123.7, 124.4, 124.9, 126.5, 127.5, 127.6, 128.6, 129.1, 129.2, 130.2, 131.0, 132.5, 134.0, 136.7, 154.5 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{23}\text{N}_2[\text{M}-\text{BF}_4^-]^+$ 351.1856, found 351.1852.



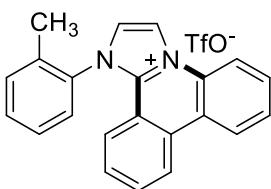
1-(4-cyanophenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3d): A white solid (88.5 mg, 94% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.31 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.66 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.00-8.11 (m, 4H), 8.34-8.38 (m, 2H), 8.61 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.77 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.02 (dd, J = 3.6 Hz, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.46 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 114.5, 115.5, 116.4, 117.4, 117.9, 121.9, 124.1, 124.5, 125.0, 127.2, 128.4, 128.8, 129.1, 129.5, 130.3, 131.2, 132.8, 135.1, 136.9, 140.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{14}\text{N}_3[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 320.1182, found 320.1178.



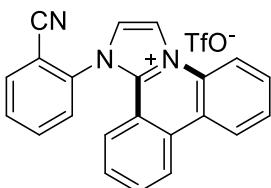
1-(4-(ethoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3e): A white solid (92.5 mg, 90% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.40 (t, J = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 4.44 (q, J = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.30 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.63 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.91-8.07 (m, 5H), 8.39 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.61 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.75 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.99 (dd, 2H, J = 3.6 Hz, J = 8.4 Hz), 9.44 (d, J = 2.8 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 14.1, 61.5, 115.4, 116.5, 117.4, 121.8, 123.9, 124.4, 124.9, 127.1, 127.7, 128.6, 129.1, 129.3, 130.2, 131.1, 131.6, 132.6, 132.6, 136.8, 140.1, 164.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 367.1441, found 367.1440.



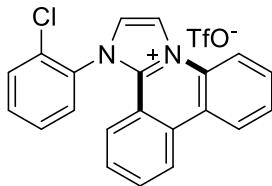
1-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3f): A white solid (87.2 mg, 92% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 3.94 (s, 3H), 7.34-7.38 (m, 3H), 7.65 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.76-7.78 (m, 2H), 7.92 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.96-8.06 (m, 2H), 8.51 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.75 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.98-9.00 (m, 2H), 9.38 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 55.9, 115.0, 115.9, 116.8, 117.3, 119.1, 121.8, 122.3, 123.8, 124.4, 124.9, 127.8, 128.4, 128.6, 129.0, 129.2, 129.2, 130.2, 131.1, 132.5, 136.9, 161.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2\text{O} [\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 325.1335, found 325.1334.



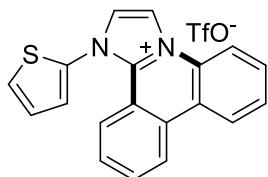
1-(*o*-tolyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3g): A white solid (89.8 mg, 98% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 2.17 (s, 3H), 7.16 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.59-7.65 (m, 2H), 7.72-7.79 (m, 3H), 7.92-8.08 (m, 3H), 8.56 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.78 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 9.01 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.48 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 16.8, 115.8, 116.7, 117.4, 121.9, 122.9, 124.5, 124.9, 126.7, 127.6, 128.4, 128.6, 129.45, 129.48, 130.4, 131.0, 131.9, 132.2, 132.7, 135.1, 135.4, 136.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 309.1386, found 309.1386.



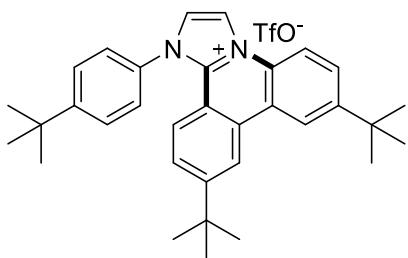
1-(3-cyanophenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3h): A white solid (91.0 mg, 97% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.30 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.66 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.00-8.08 (m, 3H), 8.21-8.24 (m, 1H), 8.37 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.46 (s, 1H), 8.60 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.76 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.02 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.45 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 113.6, 115.4, 116.4, 117.4, 117.5, 121.9, 124.1, 124.5, 125.0, 127.4, 128.8, 129.0, 129.5, 130.3, 131.0, 131.2, 132.3, 132.8, 135.5, 137.0, 137.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{14}\text{N}_3[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 320.1182, found 320.1182.



1-(2-chlorophenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3i): A white solid (92.7 mg, 97% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.20 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.91-7.98 (m, 2H), 8.01-8.09 (m, 4H), 8.68 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.79 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.02-9.05 (m, 2H), 9.54 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 116.1, 116.2, 117.6, 121.9, 122.8, 124.7, 125.0, 127.1, 128.9, 129.2, 129.7, 129.9, 130.0, 130.5, 130.6, 131.3, 131.4, 133.2, 133.6, 133.8, 136.6 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{14}\text{ClN}_2$ [M- CF_3SO_3^-] $^+$ 329.0840, found 329.0840.

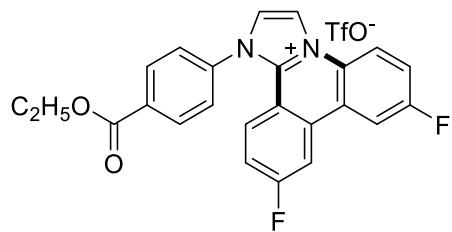


1-(thiophen-2-yl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3j): A white solid (89.3 mg, 99% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.39-7.43 (m, 2H), 7.70-7.74 (m, 2H), 7.93 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.01-8.06 (m, 3H), 8.64 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.74 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.00 (dd, J = 3.2 Hz, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.40 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 115.2, 116.5, 117.4, 121.9, 123.7, 124.4, 124.9, 127.1, 128.6, 128.7, 129.0, 129.1, 129.3, 129.9, 130.5, 131.1, 132.9, 135.3, 138.0 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{13}\text{N}_2\text{S}$ [M- CF_3SO_3^-] $^+$ 301.0794, found 301.0790.



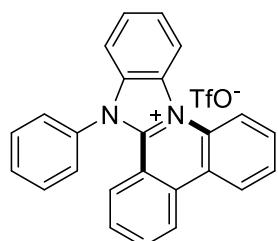
7,10-di-*tert*-butyl-1-(4-(*tert*-butyl)phenyl)-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3k): A white solid (67.7 mg, 55% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.429-1.433 (m, 18H), 1.52 (s, 9H), 7.26 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.76 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.84 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 8.09 (d, J = 9.2 Hz, 1H), 8.51 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.66 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.80 (s, 2H), 9.36 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 30.7, 31.1, 31.1, 35.0, 35.3, 35.6, 114.5, 114.8, 117.2, 120.0, 120.5, 121.4, 123.7, 126.6, 127.1, 127.3, 127.4, 127.6, 128.7, 130.2, 134.0, 136.5, 151.2, 154.4, 155.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{39}\text{N}_2$

$[M-CF_3SO_3^-]^+$ 463.3108, found 463.3109.

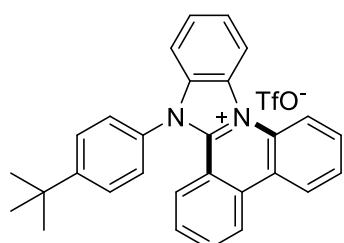


1-(4-(ethoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-7,10-difluoro-1*H*-imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-4-i um trifluoromethanesulfonate (3l):

A white solid (59.0 mg, 53% yield). 1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.40 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 4.43 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.34-7.38 (m, 1H), 7.59-7.64 (m, 1H), 7.99-8.07 (m, 3H), 8.37-8.40 (m, 2H), 8.60 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.83-8.87 (m, 1H), 8.88-8.94 (m, 2H), 9.42 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 14.1, 61.5, 111.3 (d, J_{CF} = 24.8 Hz), 111.5 (d, J_{CF} = 25.2 Hz), 113.9, 115.5, 118.6 (d, J_{CF} = 23.7 Hz), 119.9 (d, J_{CF} = 24.9 Hz), 120.2 (d, J_{CF} = 9.4 Hz), 123.6, 126.2, 127.1, 127.3 (d, J_{CF} = 9.5 Hz), 127.6, 131.7, 132.66, 132.74 (d, J_{CF} = 3.2 Hz), 132.8 (d, J_{CF} = 2.5 Hz), 136.4, 139.8, 161.3 (d, J_{CF} = 244.7 Hz), 163.9 (d, J_{CF} = 251.8 Hz), 164.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $C_{24}H_{17}F_2N_2O_2 [M-CF_3SO_3^-]^+$ 403.1253, found 403.1250.



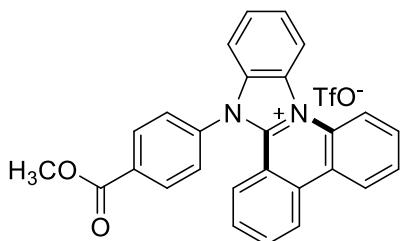
9-phenyl-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-i um trifluoromethanesulfonate (3m): A yellow solid (69.1 mg, 70% yield). 1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.45 (dd, J = 8.8 Hz, J = 3.2 Hz, 2H), 7.65 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.85-8.01 (m, 8H), 8.08-8.15 (m, 2H), 9.06-9.12 (m, 2H), 9.24-9.29 (m, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 113.3, 116.2, 117.0, 118.3, 119.1, 122.1, 122.3, 124.4, 125.3, 125.7, 127.3, 127.9, 128.1, 128.5, 129.2, 131.2, 131.65, 131.67, 132.1, 132.3, 134.2, 134.3, 134.8, 142.2 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $C_{25}H_{17}N_2 [M-CF_3SO_3^-]^+$ 345.1386, found 345.1386.



9-(4-(*tert*-butyl)phenyl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-i um trifluoromethanesulfonate (3n):

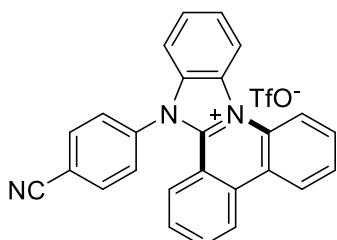
A yellow solid (110.6 mg, 83% yield). 1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.48 (s, 9H), 7.43-7.46 (m, 2H), 7.64 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.82-7.88 (m, 3H), 7.93-8.01 (m, 4H), 8.07-8.14 (m, 2H), 9.07 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.11 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.23 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 9.27 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 31.1, 35.1, 113.4, 116.4, 117.0,

118.3, 122.1, 124.4, 125.3, 125.6, 127.3, 127.4, 127.8, 128.1, 128.4, 128.5, 129.2, 131.2, 131.6, 131.7, 132.3, 134.3, 134.9, 142.3, 154.9 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₉H₂₅N₂ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 401.2012, found 401.2012.



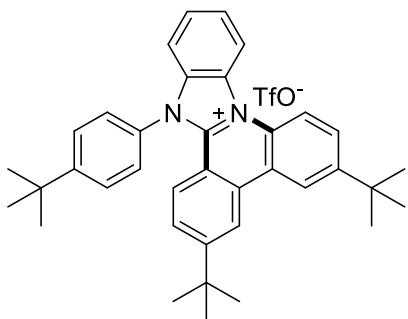
9-(4-(methoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (3o): A white solid (66.3 mg, 60% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 4.01 (s, 3H), 7.47-7.50 (m, 2H), 7.66-7.71 (m, 1H), 7.87 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.94-8.03 (m, 2H), 8.07-8.16 (m, 4H), 8.49-8.51 (m, 2H), 9.09 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.13 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.26 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 9.29 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 52.8, 113.3, 116.1, 117.1, 118.4, 122.2, 124.4, 125.3, 125.9, 127.4, 128.0, 128.2, 128.6, 129.5, 131.1, 131.8, 132.3, 132.5, 132.8, 134.5, 134.5, 138.1, 142.3, 165.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₇H₁₉N₂O₂ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 403.1441, found 403.1437.



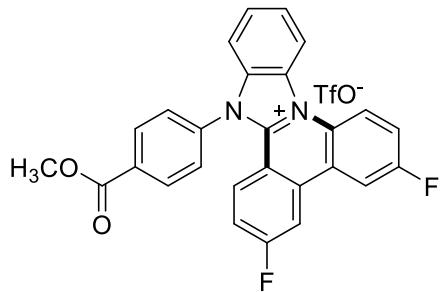
9-(4-cyanophenyl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (3p): A yellow solid (56.1 mg, 54% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.48 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.53 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.72 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.95-8.03 (m, 2H), 8.12-8.16 (m, 4H), 8.46 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 9.09-9.15 (m, 2H), 9.25-9.31 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 113.3, 115.0, 116.0, 117.1, 117.9, 118.4, 122.2, 124.5, 125.3, 126.0, 127.5, 127.9, 128.3, 128.7, 129.3, 129.7, 131.0, 131.8, 132.3, 134.4, 134.6, 135.9, 138.1, 142.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₆H₁₆N₃ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 370.1339, found 370.1334.

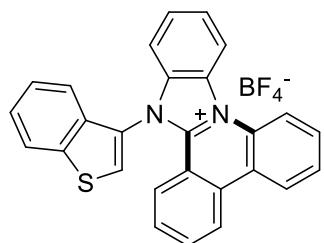


3,6-di-*tert*-butyl-9-(4-(*tert*-butyl)phenyl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (3q): A yellow solid (110.0 mg, 83% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.45 (s, 9H), 1.48 (s, 9H), 1.55 (s, 9H), 7.40 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.72 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.80-7.85 (m, 3H), 7.89-7.96 (m, 3H), 8.12 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.87 (s, 1H), 8.91 (s, 1H), 9.16 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 30.4, 30.8, 30.9, 34.85, 34.87, 35.6, 113.0, 113.9, 116.6, 117.9, 119.9, 120.8, 121.7, 123.3, 125.4, 126.7, 126.8, 127.0, 127.2, 127.5, 128.1, 128.2, 128.6, 129.1, 131.4, 132.0, 134.7, 141.7, 150.3, 154.6, 157.5 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₃₇H₄₁N₂[M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 513.3264, found 513.3260.

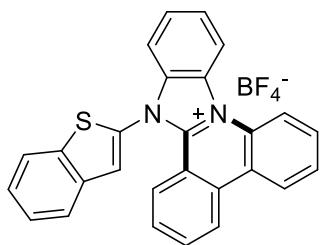


9-(4-(ethoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-3,6-difluoro-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3r): A pale yellow solid (62.6 mg, 52% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 4.01 (s, 3H), 7.49-7.55 (m, 2H), 7.67 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.95-8.07 (m, 4H), 8.50 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 9.01 (t, J = 12.0 Hz, 2H), 9.21 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.33-9.36 (m, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 53.8, 111.5 (d, J_{CF} = 24.6 Hz), 112.0 (d, J_{CF} = 25.0 Hz), 113.4, 113.5, 116.8, 119.0 (d, J_{CF} = 23.8 Hz), 120.0 (d, J_{CF} = 23.7 Hz), 121.1 (d, J_{CF} = 9.0 Hz), 124.05 (d, J_{CF} = 2.8 Hz), 124.14 (d, J_{CF} = 3.3 Hz), 127.6, 127.8, 128.0, 128.6, 128.8, 129.4 (d, J_{CF} = 10.2 Hz), 132.6, 132.9, 134.4, 134.9 (d, J_{CF} = 12.7 Hz), 137.8, 141.7, 160.7 (d, J_{CF} = 245.3 Hz), 165.1 (d, J_{CF} = 254.1 Hz), 165.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₂₈H₁₉F₂N₂O₂[M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 439.1253, found 439.1258.

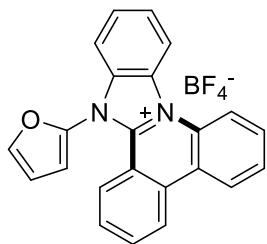


9-(benzo[*b*]thiophen-3-yl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium tetrafluoroborate (3s): A white solid (72.2 mg, 74% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.42-7.47 (m, 2H), 7.54 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (q, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.75 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.83 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.96 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.03 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.08 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.17 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.40 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.63 (s, 1H), 9.09-9.16 (m, 2H), 9.28-9.34 (m, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 113.2, 116.1, 117.2, 118.5, 121.3, 122.3, 124.3, 124.4, 125.05, 125.12, 125.3, 126.0,

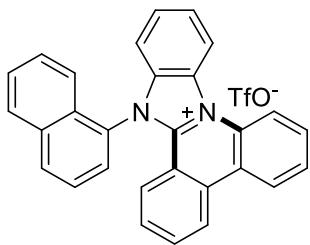
126.5, 127.5, 128.2, 128.3, 128.7, 129.6, 130.4, 131.5, 131.8, 132.5, 133.3, 134.6, 134.6, 139.0, 142.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₇H₁₇N₂S [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 401.1107, found 401.1103.



9-(benzo[*b*]thiophen-2-yl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium tetrafluoroborate (3t): A light yellow solid (52.0 mg, 53% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.64-7.79 (m, 4H), 7.90 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.96-8.05 (m, 3H), 8.13-8.22 (m, 4H), 8.30 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 9.10-9.16 (m, 2H), 9.24-9.30 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 113.4, 116.1, 117.1, 118.4, 122.3, 123.6, 124.3, 125.3, 125.8, 127.1, 127.6, 127.9, 128.4, 128.9, 129.7, 131.1, 131.8, 132.5, 133.0, 134.7, 135.3, 137.0, 139.5, 143.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₇H₁₇N₂S [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 401.1107, found 401.1108.

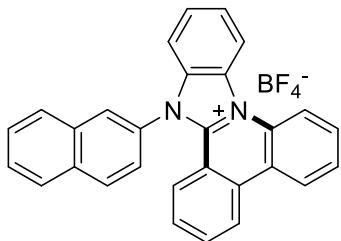


9-(furan-2-yl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium tetrafluoroborate (3u): A light yellow solid (33.8 mg, 47% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.14 (s, 1H), 7.22-7.25 (m, 2H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 7.87 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 7.96-8.03 (m, 3H), 8.13 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.20 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 8.30 (s, 1H), 9.11-9.14 (m, 2H), 9.22-9.27 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 110.7, 113.0, 113.6, 115.5, 117.5, 118.7, 122.5, 124.5, 124.8, 125.3, 127.8, 128.1, 128.6, 129.2, 130.0, 131.1, 131.9, 132.8, 134.3, 135.1, 137.1, 143.5, 144.9 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₃H₁₅N₂O [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 335.1179, found 335.1172.

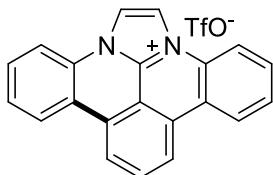


9-(naphthalen-1-yl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (3v): A white solid (42.4 mg, 39% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.20 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.55 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.75-7.82 (m, 3H), 7.94-8.05 (m, 4H), 8.12-8.20 (m, 2H), 8.36 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.57 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.09 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.15 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.31-9.38 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100

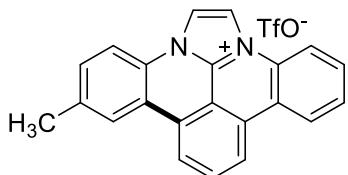
MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 113.3, 116.1, 117.3, 118.5, 122.1, 122.3, 124.4, 125.2, 125.3, 126.8, 127.3, 127.4, 128.09, 128.13, 128.4, 128.6, 128.7, 128.898, 128.904, 129.1, 129.4, 130.3, 131.65, 131.71, 132.49, 132.52, 134.4, 134.5, 134.9, 142.6 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₉H₁₉N₂ [M-TfO⁻]⁺ 395.1543, found 395.1543.



9-(naphthalen-2-yl)-9*H*-benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2-*f*]phenanthridin-14-ium tetrafluoroborate (3w): A white solid (66.5 mg, 69% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.52-7.58 (m, 3H), 7.81-7.86 (m, 3H), 7.93-8.08 (m, 4H), 8.15 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.22 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.30 (m, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.51 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.58 (s, 1H), 9.07-9.13 (m, 2H), 9.26-9.31 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 113.6, 116.3, 117.0, 118.4, 122.2, 124.3, 124.4, 125.3, 125.8, 127.4, 127.5, 127.9, 128.1, 128.2, 128.4, 128.6, 128.7, 128.8, 129.4, 131.3, 131.6, 131.7, 132.0, 132.3, 133.3, 133.9, 134.4, 135.0, 142.4 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₉H₁₉N₂ [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 395.1543, found 395.1543.

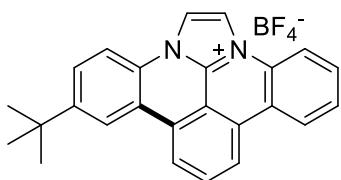


tribenzo[b,de,g]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4a): A yellow solid (21.2 mg, 70% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.86 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 8.00 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 8.29 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.61 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.88 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 9.53 (s, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 111.6, 117.0, 117.4, 121.9, 122.1, 125.6, 128.2, 128.3, 129.6, 131.2, 133.1, 133.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₁H₁₃N₂⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 293.1073, found 293.1075.

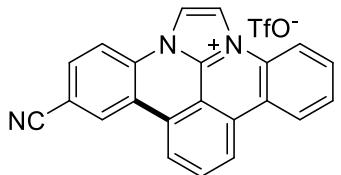


12-methyltribenzo[b,de,g]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4b): A light yellow solid (24.6 mg, 82% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 2.53 (s, 3H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.99 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.21 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.36 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.52 (s, 1H), 8.57 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.71 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.78-8.83 (m, 4H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 20.9, 111.2, 116.75, 116.80, 116.9, 117.2, 121.4, 121.7,

121.77, 121.83, 125.0, 125.5, 127.2, 127.8, 128.0, 128.2, 129.4, 131.1, 132.0, 132.4, 133.0, 138.2 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₂H₁₅N₂⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 307.1230, found 307.1226.

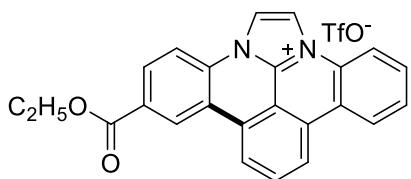


12-(*tert*-butyl)tribenzo[*b,de,g*]imidazo[1,2,3-*ij*][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium tetrafluoroborate (4c): A white solid (18.6 mg, 62% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 1.53 (s, 9H), 7.87 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.09 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.30 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.55 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.61 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.80 (s, 1H), 8.89 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 9.04 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.52 (d, *J* = 5.6 Hz, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 31.2, 35.3, 111.8, 116.9, 117.0, 117.2, 117.4, 121.6, 121.7, 122.0, 122.4, 125.6, 127.7, 128.2, 128.3, 128.4, 128.9, 129.7, 131.2, 133.0, 133.1, 151.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₅H₂₁N₂⁺ [M–BF₄[–]]⁺ 349.1699, found 349.1693.



12-cyanotribenzo[*b,de,g*]imidazo[1,2,3-*ij*][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4d):

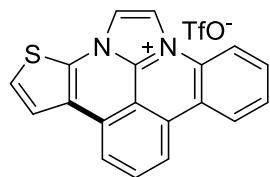
A yellow solid (18.9 mg, 63% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.93 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.45 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.52 (t, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.70 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.87 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.0 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.06-9.12 (m, 2H), 9.59 (s, 1H), 9.65 (s, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 111.2, 112.3, 117.57, 117.63, 117.7, 118.0, 118.9, 121.9, 122.0, 122.9, 123.3, 125.9, 127.4, 128.5, 128.7, 129.7, 130.9, 131.6, 132.4, 133.8, 134.0, 134.2, 135.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₂H₁₂N₃⁺ [M– CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 318.1026, found 318.1024.



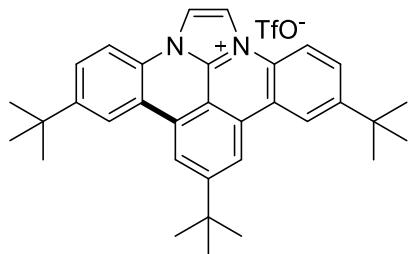
12-(ethoxycarbonyl)tribenzo[*b,de,g*]imidazo[1,2,3-*ij*][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4e):

A light yellow solid (24.6 mg, 82% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 1.46 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 4.46 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.87 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.03 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.33 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.39 (dd, *J* = 1.2 Hz, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.63-8.69 (m, 2H), 8.88-8.95 (m, 3H), 9.15 (s, 1H), 9.59 (s, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 14.2, 61.7, 111.7, 117.47, 117.54, 118.1, 119.1, 121.87, 121.93, 122.3, 122.5, 122.8, 125.7, 126.3, 127.6, 128.4, 128.6,

129.4, 129.5, 131.0, 131.5, 132.3, 133.6, 133.7, 164.5 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₄H₁₇N₂O₂⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[−]]⁺ 365.1285, found 365.1280.

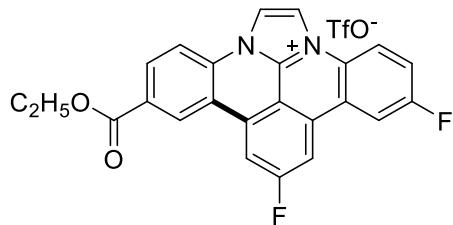


dibenzo[b,de]imidazo[1,2,3-ij]thieno[3,2-g][1,8]naphthyridin-14-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4j): A yellow solid (24.0 mg, 80% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 7.87 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.00–8.05 (m, 2H), 8.30–8.36 (m, 2H), 8.66 (t, J = 9.6 Hz, 2H), 8.87 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.92 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 9.39 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 9.59 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 111.3, 117.3, 117.5, 117.6, 120.7, 122.0, 122.1, 122.3, 122.7, 124.7, 125.7, 126.9, 127.2, 128.35, 128.39, 130.0, 131.3, 133.0, 133.3, 133.6 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₁₉H₁₁N₂S⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[−]]⁺ 299.0637, found 299.0634.



6,9,12-tri-tert-butyltribenzo[b,de,g]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4k):

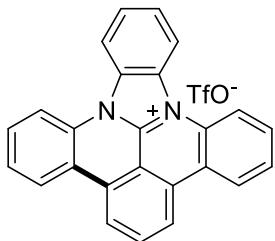
A yellow solid (21.0 mg, 70% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 1.54 (s, 18H), 1.68 (s, 9H), 8.08 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 8.59 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 8.92 (s, 2H), 9.00 (s, 2H), 9.53 (s, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 31.2, 31.4, 35.3, 36.8, 110.4, 116.7, 117.1, 119.3, 121.8, 121.1, 128.0, 128.45, 128.52, 133.1, 151.1, 157.2 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₃H₃₇N₂⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[−]]⁺ 461.2951, found 461.2946.



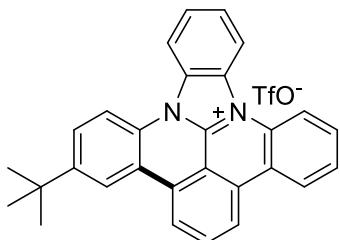
12-(ethoxycarbonyl)-6,9-difluorotribenzo[b,de,g]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4l):

A yellow solid (15.9 mg, 53% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 1.46 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 4.47 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 8.04–8.09 (m, 1H), 8.50 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.76–8.81 (m, 2H), 8.90 (dd, J = 2.8 Hz, J = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 9.00 (d, J = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 9.13 (d, J = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 9.32 (s, 1H), 9.64 (d, J = 5.6 Hz, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 14.2, 61.7, 108.7, 111.1 (d, J_{CF} = 10.7 Hz), 111.4 (d, J_{CF} = 11.0 Hz), 112.3 (d, J_{CF} = 25.2 Hz), 117.6 (d, J_{CF} = 26.0

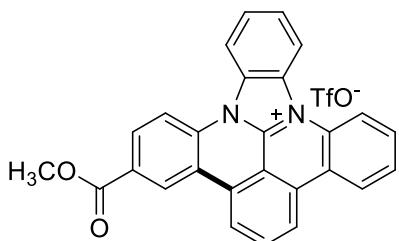
Hz), 118.1, 119.1, 120.1 (d, $J_{CF} = 14.3$ Hz), 120.3, 121.2 (d, $J_{CF} = 3.6$ Hz), 122.3, 123.4 (dd, $J_{CF} = 3.5$ Hz, $J_{CF} = 9.6$ Hz), 126.4, 127.0, 130.0, 130.5 (d, $J_{CF} = 11.2$ Hz), 130.6 (dd, $J_{CF} = 3.0$ Hz, $J_{CF} = 11.1$ Hz), 131.8, 132.3, 132.7, 161.1 (d, $J_{CF} = 245.7$ Hz), 164.2, 165.3 (d, $J_{CF} = 250.3$ Hz) ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₂₄H₁₅F₂N₂O₂⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 401.1096, found 401.1089.



tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4m): A white solid (17.1 mg, 57% yield). 1 H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.91 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 8.03-8.10 (m, 4H), 8.40 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.97 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 4H), 9.13 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.27-9.29 (m, 2H) ppm. 13 C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 111.9, 116.8, 118.4, 122.0, 122.1, 125.8, 128.1, 129.1, 130.0, 131.3, 132.0, 135.2, 138.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₂₅H₁₅N₂⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 343.1230, found 343.1228.

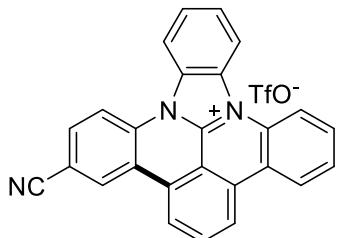


14-(tert-butyl)tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4n): A light yellow solid (24.1 mg, 80% yield). 1 H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 1.56 (s, 9H), 7.91 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.03-8.12 (m, 4H), 8.41 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.89 (s, 1H), 8.97 (t, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 9.06 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 9.11-9.14 (m, 2H), 9.26 (q, J = 4.4 Hz, 2H) ppm. 13 C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 31.1, 35.1, 111.9, 116.7, 116.8, 118.1, 118.3, 119.1, 121.86, 121.94, 121.97, 122.01, 122.04, 122.3, 122.4, 125.8, 127.99, 128.02, 129.08, 129.11, 129.16, 129.23, 130.0, 130.2, 131.3, 131.9, 135.1, 138.5, 150.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₂₉H₂₃N₂⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 399.1856, found 399.1852.



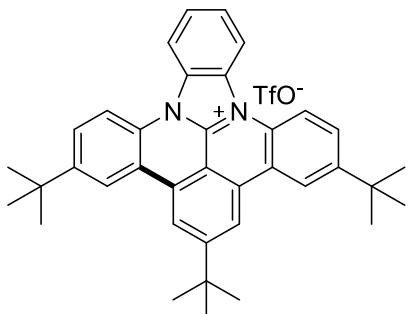
14-(methoxycarbonyl)tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4o): A white solid (18.9 mg, 63% yield). 1 H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 4.04 (s, 3H), 7.95 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.06-8.13 (m, 3H), 8.36-8.40 (m, 2H), 8.99-9.02 (m,

3H), 9.16-9.26 (m, 4H), 9.31-9.34 (m, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 52.9, 111.9, 116.7, 117.1, 118.5, 119.0, 122.0, 122.2, 122.6, 122.8, 125.9, 126.4, 128.4, 128.5, 128.7, 129.0, 129.2, 129.3, 130.2, 131.1, 131.6, 132.2, 133.8, 135.5, 139.1, 164.9 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₂₇H₁₇N₂O₂⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 401.1285, found 401.1288.



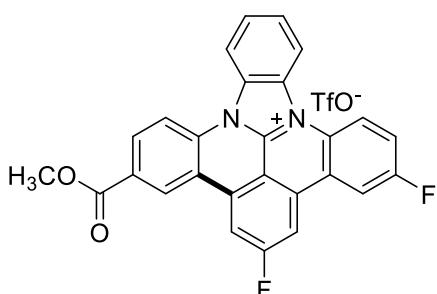
14-cyanotribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (4p): A light yellow solid (14.1 mg, 47% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 8.00 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.11-8.16 (m, 3H), 8.48 (dd, J = 2.0 Hz, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 8.57 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.12-9.27 (m, 4H), 9.35-9.41 (m, 3H), 9.69 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 110.9, 112.6, 116.9, 117.1, 117.8, 118.6, 119.7, 122.2, 123.0, 123.1, 123.3, 126.1, 128.45, 128.48, 129.1, 129.2, 129.4, 130.3, 130.9, 131.3, 132.3, 133.9, 134.5, 135.6, 139.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₂₆H₁₄N₃⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 368.1182, found 368.1181.



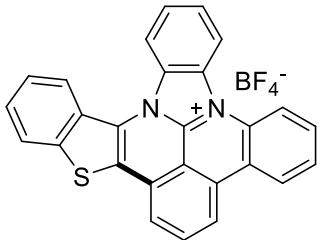
8,11,14-tri-tert-butyltribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (4q): A white solid (18.8 mg, 63% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.57 (s, 18H), 1.71 (s, 9H), 8.08-8.11 (m, 4H), 9.02 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 2H), 9.07 (s, 2H), 9.14 (t, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 9.30-9.32 (m, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 31.2, 31.3, 35.2, 36.9, 39.5, 110.7, 116.6, 118.1, 119.2, 122.2, 127.7, 128.9, 129.3, 129.6, 130.3, 138.7, 150.6, 159.2 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for C₃₇H₃₉N₂⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 511.3108, found 511.3103.

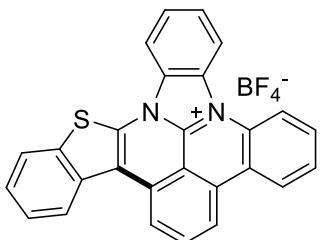


8,11-difluoro-14-(methoxycarbonyl)tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium

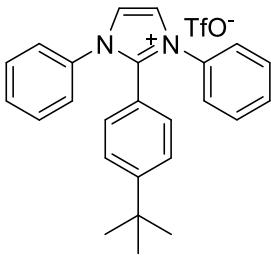
***ij*][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4r):** A light yellow solid (26.1 mg, 87% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 4.02 (s, 3H), 7.98 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 8.11-8.13 (m, 2H), 8.43 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.95-9.01 (m, 2H), 9.10 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 9.21-9.31 (m, 5H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 52.9, 109.3, 111.3 (d, *J*_{CF} = 26.7 Hz), 111.5 (d, *J*_{CF} = 26.7 Hz), 112.8 (d, *J*_{CF} = 25.3 Hz), 116.7, 116.8, 119.0, 119.1, 120.4 (d, *J*_{CF} = 23.7 Hz), 121.3 (d, *J*_{CF} = 9.3 Hz), 121.6 (d, *J*_{CF} = 3.5 Hz), 122.3, 127.2, 128.02, 128.04, 128.6 (d, *J*_{CF} = 3.0 Hz), 128.8, 129.0 (d, *J*_{CF} = 12.5 Hz), 132.4, 132.8 (d, *J*_{CF} = 11.7 Hz), 134.0, 138.5, 160.7 (d, *J*_{CF} = 246.2 Hz), 164.8, 166.5 (d, *J*_{CF} = 252.8 Hz) ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₅H₁₇F₂N₂O₂⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 437.1096, found 437.1089.



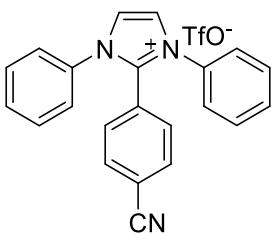
dibenzo[*b,de*]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-*ij*]benzo[4,5]thieno[2,3-*g*][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium tetrafluoroborate (4s): A yellow solid (16.8 mg, 56% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.78-7.84 (m, 2H), 7.92 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.07-8.15 (m, 3H), 8.40-8.45 (m, 3H), 8.80 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.96-9.00 (m, 3H), 9.16 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.28 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 111.8, 116.5, 116.9, 118.6, 121.9, 122.0, 122.0, 123.8, 124.7, 125.9, 126.0, 126.8, 126.8, 127.96, 128.04, 128.09, 128.13, 128.6, 128.9, 129.1, 129.2, 130.3, 131.4, 132.2, 135.7, 138.1, 139.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₇H₁₅N₂S⁺ [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 399.0950, found 399.0948.



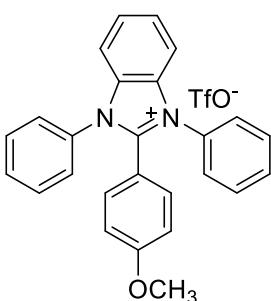
dibenzo[*b,de*]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-*ij*]benzo[4,5]thieno[3,2-*g*][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium tetrafluoroborate (4t): A light yellow solid (18.0 mg, 60% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.65-7.72 (m, 2H), 7.91 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.05 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.16-8.21 (m, 2H), 8.30-8.36 (m, 2H), 8.68-8.71 (m, 1H), 8.77 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 8.90 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.96 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 9.09 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 9.29-9.32 (m, 1H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 111.3, 114.4, 117.0, 118.2, 119.1, 120.6, 121.4, 122.0, 124.0, 124.2, 126.0, 127.0, 127.2, 127.3, 128.15, 128.19, 128.5, 128.6, 129.0, 130.6, 131.2, 131.9, 132.3, 134.1, 134.7, 135.7, 137.2 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₇H₁₅N₂S⁺ [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 399.0950, found 399.0946.



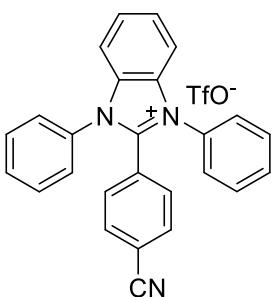
2-(4-(*tert*-butyl)phenyl)-1,3-diphenyl-1*H*-imidazol-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (5b**):** A light yellow solid (87.4 mg, 87% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 1.16 (s, 9H), 7.32 (q, J = 10.4 Hz, 4H), 7.48-7.55 (m, 10H), 8.39 (d, J = 0.8 Hz, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 30.6, 34.7, 118.6, 124.0, 125.4, 126.4, 129.7, 130.3, 131.0, 135.1, 144.6, 154.5 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 353.2012, found 353.2010.



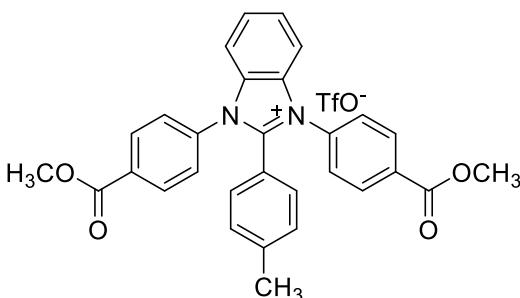
2-(4-cyanophenyl)-1,3-diphenyl-1*H*-imidazol-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (5c**):** A yellow solid (87.6 mg, 93% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.48-7.55 (m, 10H), 7.63 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.87 (s, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.49 (s, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 114.4, 117.6, 124.5, 126.2, 126.4, 129.9, 130.6, 132.40, 132.44, 134.6, 142.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{16}\text{N}_3[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 322.1339, found 322.1340.



2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1,3-diphenyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (5d**):** A white solid (97.9 mg, 93% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 3.70 (s, 3H), 6.91 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (q, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.62-7.69 (m, 12H), 7.74-7.79 (m, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 55.4, 112.8, 113.2, 114.1, 127.5, 127.6, 130.3, 130.8, 132.4, 132.7, 133.1, 150.9, 161.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{21}\text{N}_2\text{O}[\text{M}-\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3^-]^+$ 377.1648, found 377.1644.

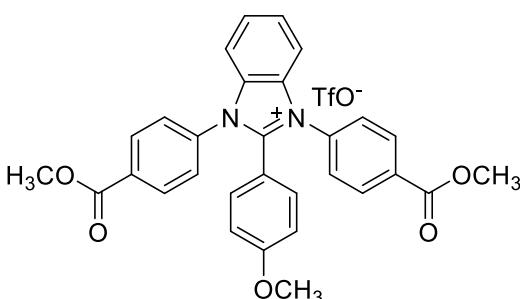


2-(4-cyanophenyl)-1,3-diphenyl-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazol-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (5e): A light yellow solid (99.0 mg, 95% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.66 (br, 10H), 7.70-7.73 (m, 2H), 7.77 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.81-7.85 (m, 2H), 7.92 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 113.6, 114.9, 117.4, 126.0, 127.4, 128.2, 130.5, 131.2, 132.0, 132.2, 132.5, 148.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₆H₁₈N₃[M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 372.1495, found 372.1496.



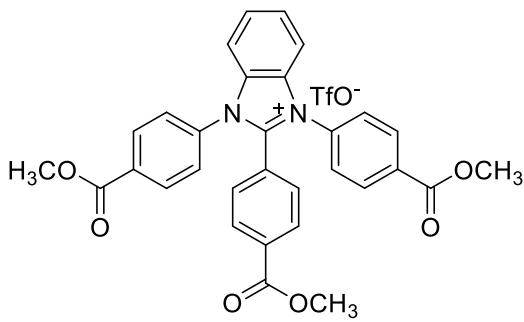
1,3-bis(4-(methoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazol-3-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (5f): A light yellow solid (110.2 mg, 88% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 2.23 (s, 3H), 3.90 (s, 6H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.37 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.71-7.75 (m, 2H), 7.78-7.83 (m, 6H), 8.20-8.22 (m, 4H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 21.0, 52.6, 113.4, 117.8, 127.9, 128.1, 129.3, 131.1, 131.2, 131.7, 132.3, 136.2, 143.0, 150.8, 165.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₀H₂₅N₂O₄[M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 477.1809, found 477.1813.



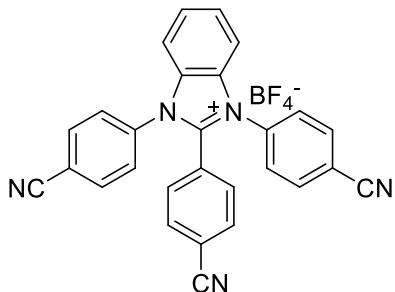
1,3-bis(4-(methoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazol-3-ium

trifluoromethanesulfonate (5g): A light yellow solid (105.3 mg, 82% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.90 (s, 6H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.38 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.70-7.73 (m, 2H), 7.77-7.80 (m, 6H), 8.23 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 4H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 52.6, 55.4, 112.2, 113.3, 114.4, 127.8, 128.1, 131.2, 131.6, 132.2, 133.2, 136.4, 150.8, 162.0, 165.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₀H₂₅N₂O₅[M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 493.1758, found 493.1755.

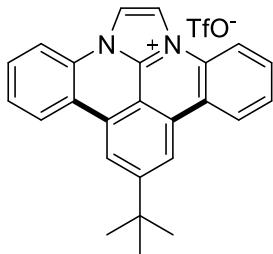


1,2,3-tris(4-(methoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazol-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (5h):

A light yellow solid (122.0 mg, 91% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.89 (s, 6H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.76-7.86 (m, 8H), 7.92 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 8.20 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 4H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 52.6, 52.7, 128.0, 128.1, 128.3, 129.3, 129.6, 131.3, 131.8, 131.87, 131.90, 132.3, 133.0, 135.8, 165.0, 165.1 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₁H₂₅N₂O₆ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 521.1707, found 521.1705.

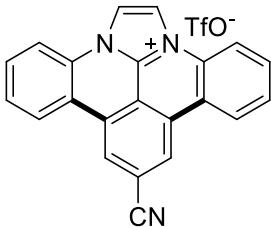


1,2,3-tris(4-cyanophenyl)-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazol-3-ium tetrafluoroborate (5i): A light yellow solid (97.7 mg, 96% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.71 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.81-7.88 (m, 8H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 8.18 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 4H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 113.7, 114.1, 115.4, 117.4, 117.5, 124.9, 128.6, 128.7, 132.1, 132.3, 132.9, 134.8, 135.5, 148.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₈H₁₆N₅ [M-BF₄⁻]⁺ 422.1400, found 422.1397.



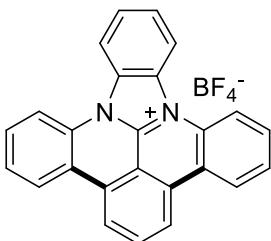
9-(*tert*-butyl)tribenzo[*b,de,g*]imidazo[1,2,3-*ij*][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6b):

A yellow solid (15.9 mg, 53% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 1.64 (s, 9H), 7.91 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 8.04 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 8.68 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.02 (s, 2H), 9.19 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 9.56 (s, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 31.4, 36.7, 110.0, 116.9, 117.3, 119.4, 122.1, 125.9, 128.1, 128.2, 129.8, 131.0, 133.3, 157.5 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₅H₂₁N₂⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 349.1699, found 349.1699.

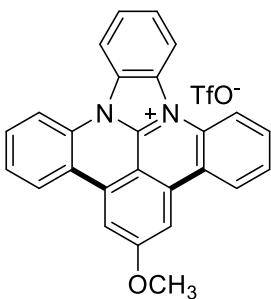


9-cyanotribenzo[b,de,g]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-3-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6c):

A light yellow solid (11.1 mg, 37% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.98 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.14 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.77 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.11 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.57 (s, 2H), 9.74 (s, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 114.1, 115.5, 117.7, 118.0, 118.4, 121.3, 125.8, 126.3, 128.8, 129.1, 130.1, 132.3, 132.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{12}\text{N}_3^+$ [M–CF₃SO₃ $^-$] $^+$ 318.1026, found 318.1023.

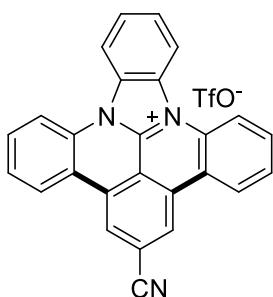


tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium tetrafluoroborate (4m'): A light yellow solid (15.1 mg, 50% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 7.95 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 8.06-8.12 (m, 4H), 8.48 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 9.04-9.07 (m, 4H), 9.20 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.32-9.35 (m, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 111.6, 116.7, 118.3, 121.9, 122.0, 125.7, 128.1, 129.0, 129.9, 131.1, 132.0, 135.2, 138.5 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}_2^+$ [M–BF₄ $^-$] $^+$ 343.1230, found 343.1226.



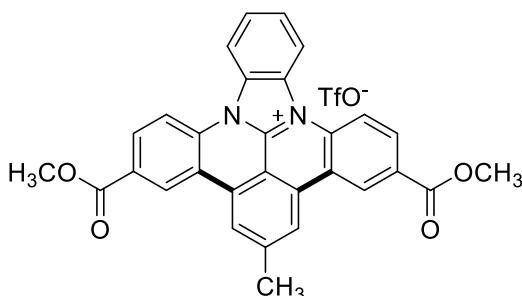
11-methoxytribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6d):

A red solid (14.1 mg, 47% yield). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 4.09 (s, 3H), 7.75 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.94 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.99-8.01 (m, 2H), 8.16 (s, 2H), 8.79 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.92 (s, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 9.08-9.10 (m, 2H) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6): δ = 56.9, 105.4, 107.9, 116.5, 118.1, 121.2, 126.0, 127.65, 127.74, 128.8, 131.1, 132.06, 132.11, 137.9, 165.0 ppm. HRMS (ESI $^+$): calcd for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2\text{O}^+$ [M–CF₃SO₃ $^-$] $^+$ 373.1335, found 373.1325.



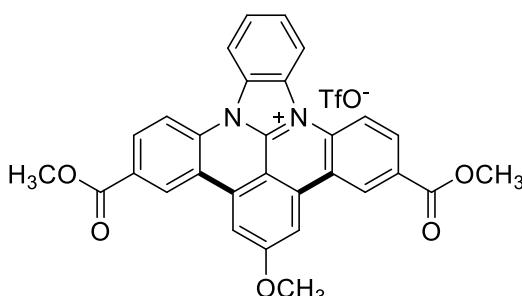
11-cyanotribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6e):

A yellow solid (18.9 mg, 63% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 8.00 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 8.14-8.18 (m, 4H), 9.17 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 9.27 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 9.39-9.42 (m, 2H), 9.60 (s, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 114.1, 117.1, 117.2, 118.1, 118.6, 121.3, 125.5, 126.4, 128.5, 128.7, 129.3, 130.8, 131.6, 133.0, 138.2 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₆H₁₄N₃⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 368.1182, found 368.1185.



8,14-bis(methoxycarbonyl)-11-methyltribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6f):

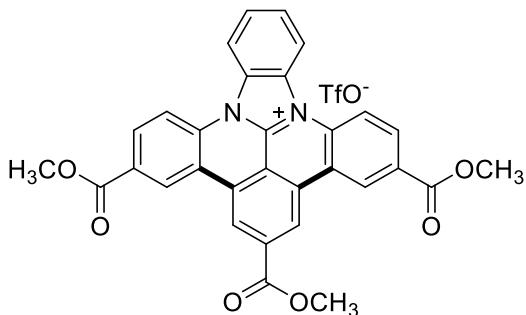
A light yellow solid (15.9 mg, 53% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 2.46 (s, 3H), 4.03 (s, 6H), 8.11-8.13 (m, 2H), 8.30 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 8.59 (s, 2H), 8.93 (s, 2H), 9.08 (d, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 2H), 9.16-9.18 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 22.2, 52.9, 116.8, 119.0, 121.8, 123.6, 123.7, 126.2, 126.3, 128.6, 128.8, 128.9, 129.0, 131.7, 133.6, 148.0, 164.8 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₀H₂₁N₂O₄⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 473.1496, found 473.1493.



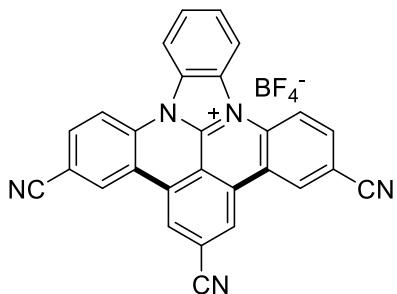
11-methoxy-8,14-bis(methoxycarbonyl)tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6g):

A light yellow solid (12.0 mg, 40% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 4.02-4.03 (m, 9H), 8.04-8.06 (m, 2H), 8.13 (s, 2H), 8.29 (d, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 2H), 9.00-9.02 (m, 4H), 9.06-9.09 (m, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ =

52.8, 57.1, 105.3, 108.9, 116.5, 118.7, 121.2, 126.6, 128.3, 128.5, 128.7, 131.4, 131.9, 133.5, 138.4, 164.7, 165.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₀H₂₁N₂O₅⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 489.1445, found 489.1442.

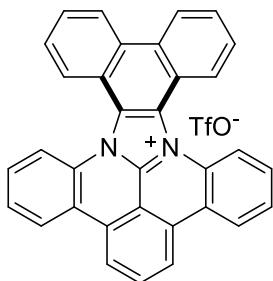


8,11,14-tris(methoxycarbonyl)tribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (6h): A yellow solid (15.3 mg, 51% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 4.07 (s, 6H), 4.10 (s, 3H), 8.21–8.23 (m, 2H), 8.52 (dd, J = 2.0 Hz, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 9.33–9.38 (m, 8H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 52.9, 53.0, 114.9, 117.0, 119.3, 122.1, 122.9, 126.8, 128.9, 129.2, 129.3, 130.0, 132.3, 134.1, 135.7, 139.6, 164.9, 165.3 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₃₁H₂₁N₂O₆⁺ [M–CF₃SO₃[–]]⁺ 517.1394, found 517.1393.



8,11,14-tricyanotribenzo[b,de,g]benzo[4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-5-ium tetrafluoroborate (6i):

Filtration with a funnel and washing with dichloromethane and methanol to provide **6i** as a yellow solid (24.3 mg, 81% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.24 (d, J = 6.4 Hz, 2H), 8.61 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 9.47–9.51 (m, 4H), 9.82 (d, J = 5.2 Hz, 4H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 111.5, 115.0, 117.3, 117.4, 117.6, 117.7, 120.1, 122.2, 127.2, 129.3, 129.7, 131.5, 133.9, 135.4, 139.7 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₈H₁₂N₅⁺ [M–BF₄[–]]⁺ 418.1087, found 418.1089.



tribenzo[b,de,g]phenanthro[9',10':4,5]imidazo[1,2,3-ij][1,8]naphthyridin-17-ium trifluoromethanesulfonate (4x):

A light yellow solid (30.8 mg, 52% yield). ¹H NMR (400 MHz,

DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 7.94-8.04 (m, 8H), 8.52 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.64 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 9.11-9.18 (m, 6H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ = 112.1, 120.0, 120.9, 122.5, 123.0, 123.8, 125.2, 126.1, 126.3, 127.7, 128.6, 128.9, 129.98, 130.03, 130.1, 131.1, 134.5, 138.9 ppm. HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for C₂₈H₁₂N₅⁺ [M-CF₃SO₃⁻]⁺ 443.1543, found 443.1590.

IV. DFT Calculations

Density functional theory (DFT) calculations were performed using the Gaussian 09 program. The configuration optimizations were finished using B3LYP level of density functional theory with the 6-31G(d) basis. The counter anion was deleted. Electron-density difference maps of the lowest lying relaxed singlet excited state (S1) as compared to the ground state (S0) at the same geometry for **5a** (a), **3f** (b) and **5x** (c); isocontour value = 0.001 au. The green (red) color indicates an increase (decrease) of electron density in a given molecular region upon excitation.

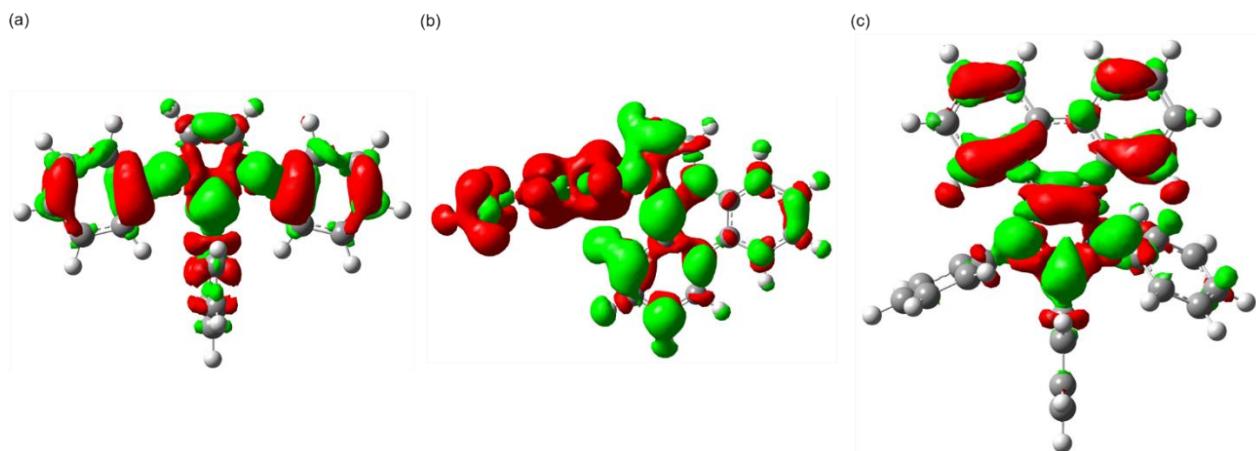
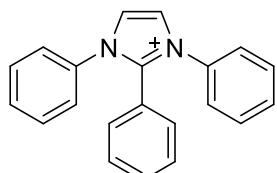


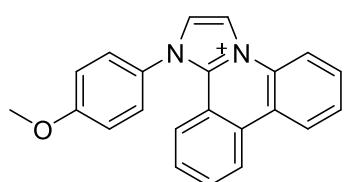
Fig. S1 Electron-density difference maps of **5a** (a), **3f** (b) and **5x** (c).

Table S3 Cartesian coordinates of optimized species



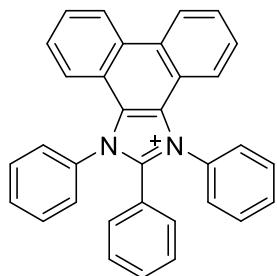
Symbolic	Z-matrix		
Charge = 1	Multiplicity = 1		
C	-4.57772	1.77229	-0.47557
C	-3.44963	2.50897	-0.67039
N	-2.34822	1.6903	-0.45041
C	-2.84132	0.46412	-0.12428
N	-4.20242	0.47931	-0.13033
C	-5.17652	-0.62273	0.16198

C	-1.97389	-0.77652	0.20783
C	-0.92688	2.15268	-0.57145
C	0.1696	1.32472	-0.35001
C	1.47706	1.81583	-0.47886
C	1.70218	3.14039	-0.83066
C	0.61869	3.9784	-1.05479
C	-0.68718	3.48879	-0.92627
C	-1.58192	-1.02643	1.53303
C	-0.80218	-2.14431	1.8275
C	-0.41275	-3.01204	0.80625
C	-0.79909	-2.76854	-0.51247
C	-1.57883	-1.65304	-0.81584
C	-4.79085	-1.91461	0.50703
C	-5.74987	-2.90386	0.76918
C	-7.1053	-2.61169	0.68909
C	-7.5055	-1.3279	0.34623
C	-6.54846	-0.33946	0.08427
H	-5.60911	2.06541	-0.55522
H	-3.34639	3.54314	-0.94611
H	0.10885	0.28768	-0.07457
H	2.32387	1.15418	-0.30192
H	2.71837	3.51645	-0.92934
H	0.78885	5.01742	-1.33076
H	-1.47457	4.20468	-1.11743
H	-1.88164	-0.35472	2.33514
H	-0.49526	-2.34367	2.85277
H	0.1961	-3.88418	1.03971
H	-0.48976	-3.45187	-1.30145
H	-1.87613	-1.4703	-1.84668
H	-3.77274	-2.24684	0.59731
H	-5.4306	-3.90985	1.03787
H	-7.84536	-3.38278	0.89345
H	-8.56642	-1.09293	0.2819
H	-6.94188	0.63348	-0.17574



Symbolic	Z-matrix		
Charge = 1	Multiplicity = 1		
C	-16.72662	-0.06214	0.01059
C	-16.70736	-1.42822	0.0246
N	-15.38258	-1.79333	0.08476
C	-14.60091	-0.70706	0.11265
N	-15.40701	0.36999	0.06257
C	-15.01684	1.7527	0.05622

C	-13.04662	-0.84143	0.18596
C	-14.8076	-3.16734	0.11482
C	-15.66819	-4.27645	0.08037
C	-15.15256	-5.56756	0.09951
C	-13.78088	-5.75044	0.15245
C	-12.92577	-4.64277	0.18944
C	-13.39778	-3.30525	0.17389
C	-12.52308	-2.16069	0.21344
C	-11.11021	-2.2717	0.28125
C	-10.26455	-1.1613	0.31994
C	-10.80228	0.11082	0.29116
C	-12.18308	0.2689	0.22393
C	-14.88529	2.40634	1.27176
C	-14.4962	3.74422	1.25079
C	-14.25148	4.40072	0.03502
C	-14.42678	3.71673	-1.17388
C	-14.818	2.37612	-1.16878
O	-13.8559	5.70157	0.16642
C	-13.3924	6.36195	-1.00653
H	-17.51593	0.67013	-0.03074
H	-17.49419	-2.16026	-0.00318
H	-16.74507	-4.16955	0.03724
H	-15.81652	-6.42944	0.07199
H	-13.36478	-6.75711	0.16531
H	-11.86242	-4.86896	0.22923
H	-10.61611	-3.24055	0.30871
H	-9.18617	-1.29858	0.37352
H	-10.14869	0.98031	0.32216
H	-12.54599	1.28772	0.20474
H	-15.06419	1.90101	2.21436
H	-14.37056	4.28841	2.18584
H	-14.26794	4.20576	-2.13082
H	-14.95111	1.84188	-2.10367
H	-13.02432	7.34927	-0.71165
H	-12.55895	5.81786	-1.46366
H	-14.2082	6.50773	-1.7217



Symbolic Z-matrix

Charge = 1 Multiplicity = 1

C	-3.05049	1.77632	-3.89376
C	-2.4412	0.63616	-4.52797
N	-1.69667	-0.08299	-3.52596

C	-1.80916	0.6092	-2.37535
N	-2.595	1.81749	-2.58245
C	-2.474	2.93542	-1.73319
C	-1.04293	0.23698	-1.07382
C	-0.84468	-1.23934	-3.6565
C	-1.32039	-2.46227	-3.20197
C	-0.48847	-3.57364	-3.31147
C	0.7903	-3.43704	-3.86361
C	1.24534	-2.18989	-4.30758
C	0.42183	-1.07139	-4.20278
C	0.21715	0.79388	-0.82642
C	0.91778	0.45613	0.33062
C	0.36498	-0.44338	1.24088
C	-0.88856	-1.00466	0.99737
C	-1.5931	-0.66567	-0.15815
C	-2.04112	4.16662	-2.24133
C	-1.90964	5.25925	-1.38365
C	-2.20252	5.12376	-0.02699
C	-2.6263	3.89515	0.47809
C	-2.7601	2.79647	-0.37162
C	-3.95245	2.62442	-4.5514
C	-4.10173	2.42876	-5.95092
C	-3.44103	1.33123	-6.62274
C	-2.6478	0.39051	-5.90348
C	-4.71054	3.59235	-3.86874
C	-5.55334	4.45699	-4.56073
C	-5.6639	4.3469	-5.93537
C	-4.95978	3.34586	-6.61147
C	-3.57007	1.09262	-8.01505
C	-2.99155	-0.00837	-8.65213
C	-2.26711	-0.92695	-7.91476
C	-2.09898	-0.73188	-6.54597
H	-2.31452	-2.5529	-2.78017
H	-0.82917	-4.54746	-2.96687
H	1.43841	-4.30827	-3.94433
H	2.24324	-2.09651	-4.73014
H	0.76169	-0.09758	-4.53624
H	0.65274	1.49784	-1.53147
H	1.89382	0.89472	0.52412
H	0.91305	-0.70737	2.14257
H	-1.31384	-1.70711	1.71035
H	-2.56845	-1.10857	-0.3417
H	-1.78872	4.29374	-3.29149
H	-1.5757	6.21863	-1.77218
H	-2.09967	5.97755	0.63895
H	-2.85712	3.79502	1.53603
H	-3.11745	1.85911	0.04559
H	-4.68733	3.69411	-2.78822
H	-6.12294	5.21168	-4.02382

H	-6.3159	5.02065	-6.48651
H	-5.12145	3.29355	-7.68476
H	-4.14256	1.76301	-8.65067
H	-3.12595	-0.1499	-9.72211
H	-1.83279	-1.79734	-8.40104
H	-1.54156	-1.49462	-6.02125

V. Single Crystal X-ray Crystallographic Data

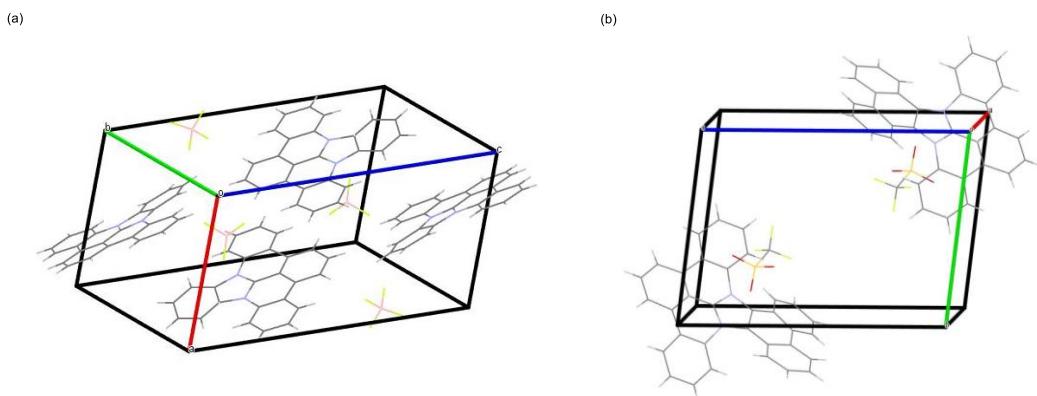
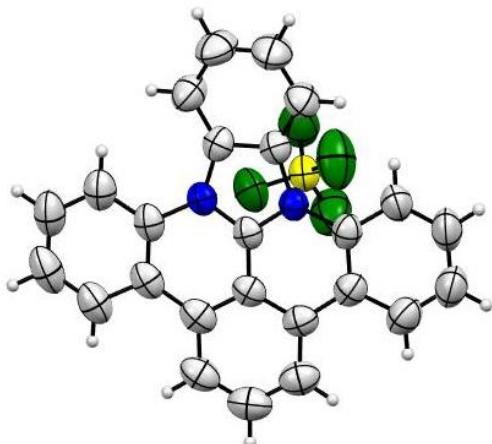


Fig. S2 Wireframe model of the packing structures of **4m'** (a) and **4x** (b)

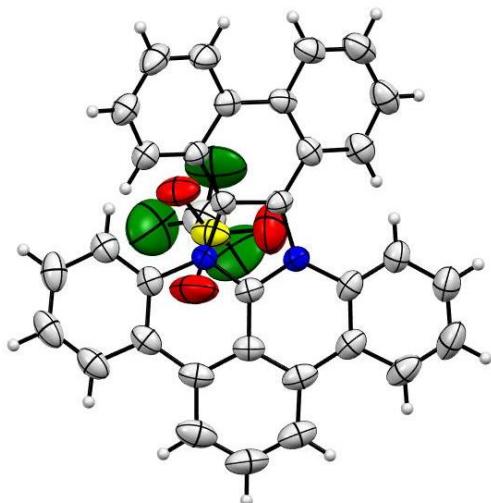
Table S4. Crystal data and structure refinement for **4m'**



Identification code	2114143
Empirical formula	C ₂₅ H ₁₅ BF ₄ N ₂
Formula weight	430.20
Temperature/K	301.0
Crystal system	monoclinic
Space group	P2 ₁ /n
a/Å	8.4814(4)

b/Å	14.5840(9)
c/Å	16.2845(10)
$\alpha/^\circ$	90
$\beta/^\circ$	103.547(2)
$\gamma/^\circ$	90
Volume/Å ³	1958.23(19)
Z	4
$\rho_{\text{calc}}/\text{cm}^3$	1.459
μ/mm^{-1}	0.112
F(000)	880.0
Crystal size/mm ³	0.38 × 0.34 × 0.29
Radiation	MoKα ($\lambda = 0.71073$)
2Θ range for data collection/°	5.008 to 55.074
Index ranges	-10 ≤ h ≤ 11, -18 ≤ k ≤ 18, -21 ≤ l ≤ 21
Reflections collected	90776
Independent reflections	4495 [$R_{\text{int}} = 0.0999$, $R_{\text{sigma}} = 0.0298$]
Data/restraints/parameters	4495/4/289
Goodness-of-fit on F^2	1.032
Final R indexes [$I \geq 2\sigma(I)$]	$R_1 = 0.0718$, $wR_2 = 0.2064$
Final R indexes [all data]	$R_1 = 0.1228$, $wR_2 = 0.2533$
Largest diff. peak/hole/eÅ ⁻³	0.72/-0.31

Table S5. Crystal data and structure refinement for **4x**



Identification code	2114141
Empirical formula	C ₃₄ H ₁₉ F ₃ N ₂ O ₃ S
Formula weight	592.57
Temperature/K	293.15
Crystal system	triclinic
Space group	P-1
a/Å	9.3567(6)
b/Å	10.7079(6)
c/Å	14.3234(8)
$\alpha/^\circ$	81.633(5)
$\beta/^\circ$	87.519(5)
$\gamma/^\circ$	83.289(5)
Volume/Å ³	1409.56(14)
Z	2
$\rho_{\text{calcd}}/\text{cm}^3$	1.396
μ/mm^{-1}	0.174
F(000)	608.0
Crystal size/mm ³	0.35 × 0.3 × 0.25
Radiation	MoKα ($\lambda = 0.71073$)
2Θ range for data collection/°	5.904 to 52.742
Index ranges	-8 ≤ h ≤ 11, -13 ≤ k ≤ 13, -17 ≤ l ≤ 16
Reflections collected	11362
Independent reflections	5757 [R _{int} = 0.0249, R _{sigma} = 0.0506]
Data/restraints/parameters	5757/0/388
Goodness-of-fit on F ²	1.094
Final R indexes [I>=2σ (I)]	R ₁ = 0.0749, wR ₂ = 0.2067
Final R indexes [all data]	R ₁ = 0.1117, wR ₂ = 0.2298
Largest diff. peak/hole/eÅ ⁻³	0.99/-0.35

VI. Optical Properties of Selected Compounds

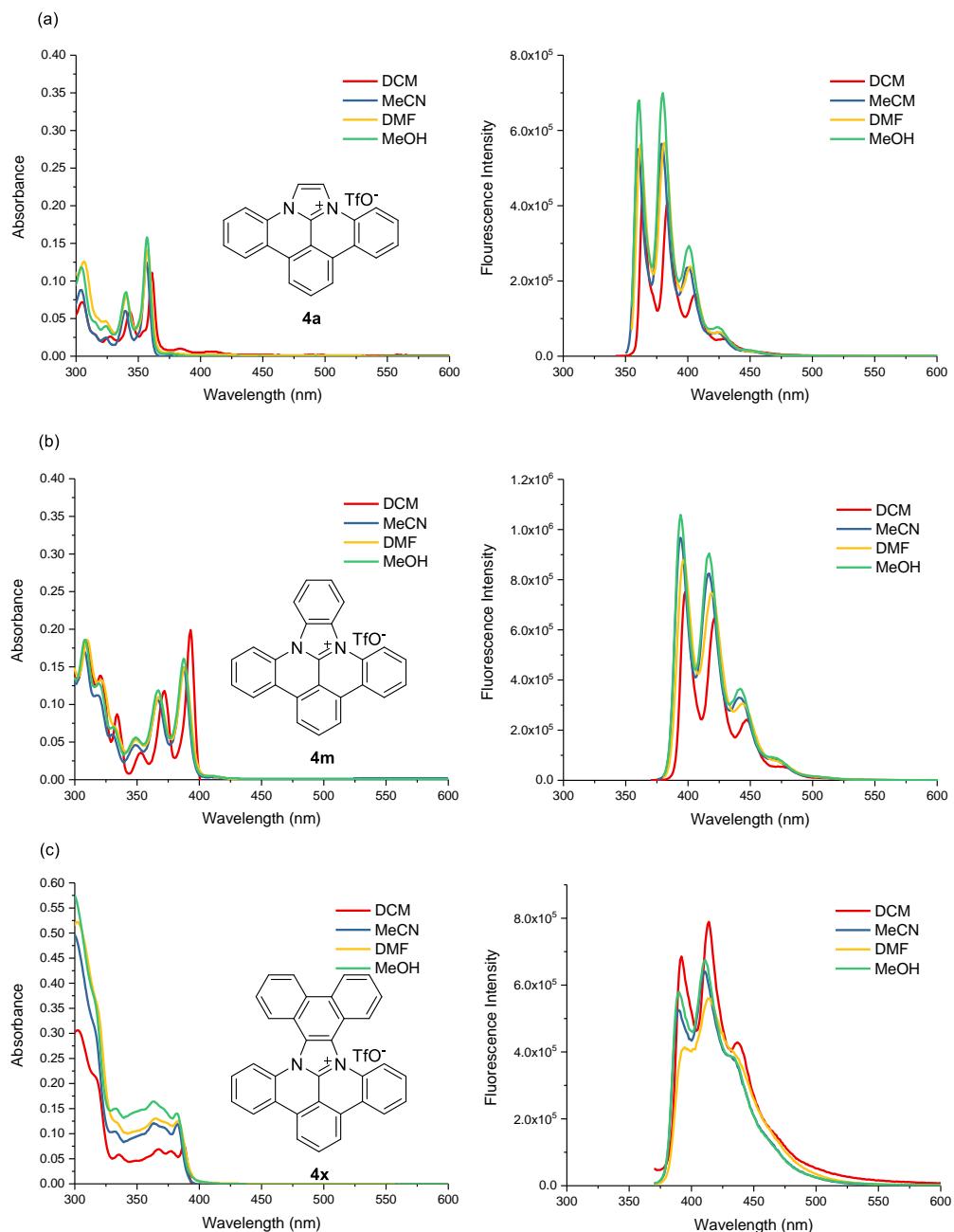


Fig. S3 UV-visible absorption and emission spectra of **4a** (a), **4m** (b) and **4x** (c) in different solvents.

Table S6 UV-visible absorption and emission data of some selected compounds

Compd.	λ_{abs}^a (nm)	ε ($M^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1}$)	λ_{em}^b (nm)	Φ_F^c
4a	361	11100	364, 384, 406, 430	0.29
4c	362	22900	366, 386, 408, 433	0.34
4d	393	11200	398, 422, 447, 477	0.27
4j	368	17400	373, 394, 416, 443	0.14
4m	393	19900	398, 422, 447, 477	0.29
4n	396	25800	401, 425, 451, 483	0.30
4p	363	10200	368, 387, 409, 433	0.29
4q	393	24200	398, 422, 448, 480	0.46

4s	306	30300	434, 459, 489	0.34
4t	418	26100	430, 454, 485	0.12
4x	302	30600	392, 414, 437	0.30
6c	376	12800	379, 401, 424, 451	0.18
6d	310	35400	379, 401, 425, 451	0.21
6e	312	20800	415, 441, 470, 504	0.18
6h	408	11400	413, 438, 467, 501	0.22

^aThe maximum absorption band over 300 nm. ^bEmission bands excited at the longest maximum absorption band. ^cAbsolute quantum yield. Concentration: 1.0×10^{-5} M in CH_2Cl_2 .

VII. References

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VIII. Copies of ^1H and ^{13}C NMR Spectra

