

Supplementary Information

Collaborative multi-interface engineering and dynamic iron exchange boost robust bifunctional water electrolysis at 2 A cm⁻²

1. Experimental section

Synthesis of the NiMoO₄ precursor. NiMoO₄ precursor was synthesized on Ni foam by a hydrothermal method. 0.04 M Ni(NO₃)₂·6H₂O and 0.01M (NH₄)₆Mo₇O₂₄·4H₂O were dissolved into 40 mL ultrapure water and stirred for 15 min at room temperature, which was then transferred into a 100 mL Teflon-lined autoclave with a piece of nickel foam. After a hydrothermal process at 150 °C for 6 h in drying oven, the as-prepared NiMoO₄ samples were cleaned by ultrapure water and dried in room temperature.

Synthesis of the Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray. NiMoO₄ precursor was soaked in ferric nitrate ink for a few seconds. After drying at room temperature overnight, the as-prepared samples were placed at the center of the tube furnace, which was then heated to 400 °C with a duration of 2 h under H₂/Ar atmosphere to obtain the final Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂. After that, the as-prepared samples were cooled down to room temperature and passivated overnight under Ar atmosphere.

Synthesis of the MoNi₄/MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ samples. NiMoO₄ precursor was directly treated in Ar or H₂/Ar (8:92) atmosphere using the same conditions to obtain Ar-NiMoO₄ and MoNi₄/MoO₂ samples, respectively.

Synthesis of FeMo/MoO₂. FeMo/MoO₂ was prepared following the same procedure for

MoNi₄/MoO₂ by changing Ni(NO₃)₂·6H₂O into Fe(NO₃)₃·9H₂O during the hydrothermal treatment.

Synthesis of MoO₂. MoO₂ was prepared following the same procedure for MoNi₄/MoO₂ with the absence of Ni(NO₃)₂·6H₂O.

Electrochemical measurements. All the electrochemical measurements were performed in 100 mL 1 M KOH (pH = 14) or 100 mL 1M PBS (pH ≈ 6.5) solutions at room temperature based on the standard three-electrode system. In 1 M KOH, the as-prepared samples were used as working electrode, Hg/HgO electrode and graphite rod were assigned as reference and counter electrodes, respectively. The linear polarization curves were obtained at a scan rate of 2 mV s⁻¹ by linear sweep voltammetry mode. Before testing, all the catalysts were electrochemically activated by 50 cyclic voltammetry at a scan rate of 50 mV s⁻¹ with the potentials from 0.05 V to -0.23 V (HER) and 1.124 V to 1.574 V (OER). The EIS spectra were tested at -0.05 V for HER and 1.53 V for OER along with the frequencies varying from 0.1 Hz to 100 kHz. In 1 M PBS, graphite rod and saturated calomel electrode were employed as the counter and reference electrodes, respectively. During all the data measurements, on-the-fly *iR* compensation was automatically performed for all the polarization curves by the workstation system (Gamry Reference 3000 or 600+).^[1]

Electrochemical active surface area (ECSA) calculation. The ECSA can be estimated

on the basis of the follow equation: $ECSA = \frac{C_{dl}}{C_s}$, where C_s is the capacitance per unit area of an electrode with very flat surface, and C_{dl} is related to the double-layer capacitances of our porous electrodes measured by an electrochemical method.^[2,3] Here the value of $C_s = 40 \mu\text{F cm}^{-2}$ was selected for ECSA calculation.

Turnover frequency (TOF) calculation. TOF was calculated according to the

following equation:
$$\text{TOF} = \frac{j}{N \times n_s \times F}$$
 where j is the HER current density, N is the number of electrons transferred per H_2 molecule ($N = 2$), F represents the Faraday constant, and n_s represents the density of total active sites per unit area of electrode material. The number of

active sites for HER was evaluated according to this formula:
$$n_s = \frac{Q}{2FS}$$
 where S , F and Q correspond to the geometric area of the electrode materials, Faraday constant and the whole charge of cyclic voltammetry curve collected in 1M PBS electrolyte ($\text{pH} \approx 6.5$).

***In-situ* Raman measurements.** The Raman spectra were recorded under a 532 nm laser (Horiba JY HR Evolution). A typical three-electrode configuration (Beijing Scistar Technology Co. Ltd) was designed for in-situ Raman measurements, in which the self-supported catalyst, AgCl/Ag and Pt wire were served as the working, reference and counter electrodes, respectively. The potential was controlled by an electrochemical workstation, as described previously, with applied potentials ranging from 1.12 to 1.72 V. Before collecting the Raman spectra at each potential, chronoamperometric tests were conducted on the OER catalysts for five minutes.

***In-situ* XPS measurements.** The X-ray photoelectron (XPS) spectra were tested by a XPS spectroscopy (Thermo Fisher Scientific-Escalab 250Xi) with an analyzer pass energy of 30 eV and a dwell time of 50 ms. The chamber pressure was remained below 4.3×10^{-7} during the tests. For the in-situ XPS tests, a self-assembly three-electrode setup (working, reference and counter electrodes) was employed for OER testing, in which the OER catalyst, Hg/HgO electrode and Pt wire were served as working, reference and counter electrodes, respectively. The samples were tested at different anodic potentials ranging from 1.12 to 1.72 V for 30 min

in a glovebox continuously purged by N₂ gas (Suzhou Vigor Technologies Co., Ltd.). Following the OER tests, the samples were dried and transferred to the XPS spectrometer under N₂ atmosphere.

Fine structure characterization. Fe K-edge X-ray absorption spectra (XAS) were recorded in a transmission mode at the 1W1B and 1W2B beamlines of the Beijing Synchrotron Radiation Facility in China.

Computational method. Spin-polarized density functional theory (DFT) calculations were performed with the Vienna Ab Initio Simulation Package (VASP 5.3.5).^[4] In our calculations, we adopted the Perdew-Burke-Ernzerhof (PBE) functional to consider exchange and correlation effects.^[5] A cutoff energy of 400 eV was used for the plane-wave basis. The Gaussian smearing method with a smearing width of 0.03 eV was used to determine partial occupancies. DFT-D3 method was used to take into account the VdW interactions.^[6]

Our calculated lattice constants of bulk MoNi₄ are $a=5.64$ Å and $c=3.53$ Å. For bulk MoO₂, the optimized lattice constants are $a=4.92$ Å and $c=2.75$ Å. The calculated bulk structures were used to construct surface models. A 2×2 unit cell of MoNi₄ (200) with eight atomic layers was considered in our calculations. Here, the top four atomic layers were relaxed, and the bottom four layers were frozen. For comparison, the MoO₂ (110) surface was constructed with also six atomic layers. Here, we optimized the top three atomic layers and fixed the bottom three layers. In this work, the interfaces of Fe/MoNi₄ (200) and Fe/MoO₂ (110) models were modelled by Fe₄ cluster placed on MoNi₄ (200) and MoO₂ (110) surfaces. The size of MoNi₄ (200) and Fe/MoNi₄ (200) unit cells both were 11.37 Å \times 10.78 Å \times 20.11 Å. For the MoO₂ (110) and Fe/MoO₂ (110), we used the unit cell of 11.00 Å \times 13.90 Å \times

20.46 Å. The atom-layer slab separated by a 15 Å vacuum was considered for all the calculations. All the supercells in our DFT calculations are large enough to avoid interactions between periodic images that would affect the results of the predicted surface catalytic properties involving the small adsorbates. For the Brillouin zone integration, a Monkhorst-Pack k-point mesh of $3 \times 3 \times 1$ was used. Structure optimization was finished until the residual Hellmann-Feynman forces were smaller than 0.02 eV/Å.

To explore the energy barriers for water dissociation on the catalysts, we calculated the location and total electronic energy of transition states by the climbing-image nudged elastic band (CI-NEB) method.^[7] A frequency analysis was performed to confirm that each transition state has a single imaginary frequency in the direction of the reaction coordinate. The Gibbs free energies of hydrogen and water at 298.15 K and 1 atm were calculated with

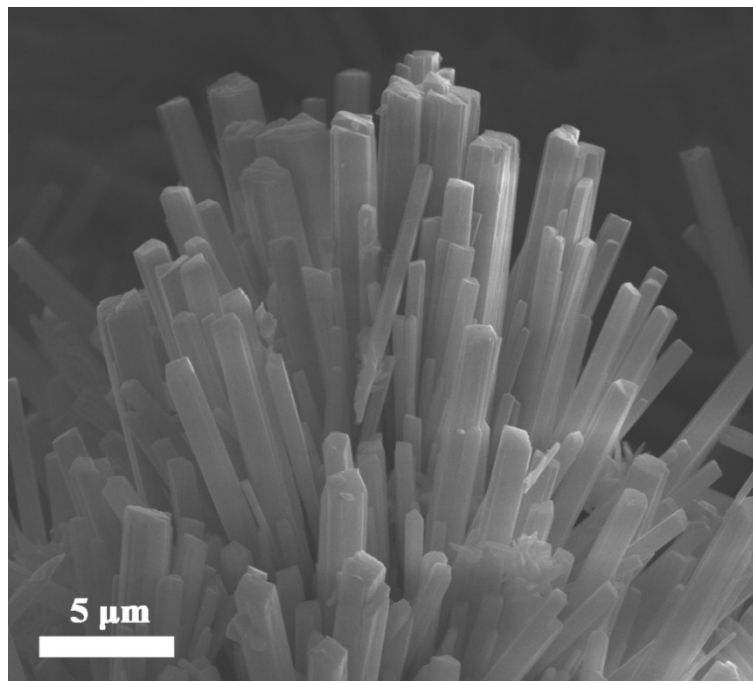
$$G = E_{DFT} + E_{ZPE} - TS \quad (1)$$

Where G is Gibbs free energy, E_{DFT} is the electronic total energy from DFT calculation, E_{ZPE} is the zero-point energy of the calculated system, T stands for the Kelvin temperature and S represents the entropy. Free energy of hydrogen and water adsorption were calculated by

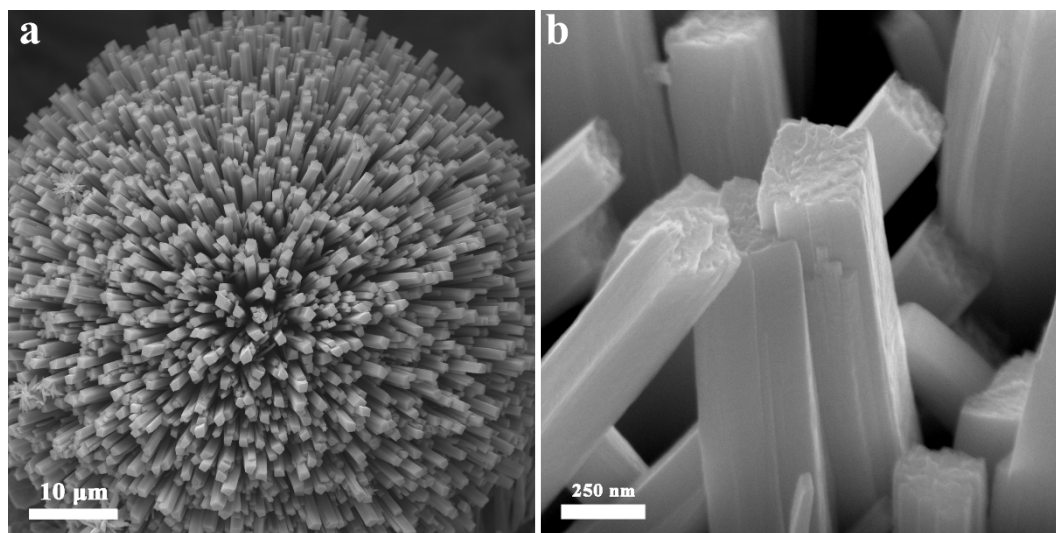
$$\Delta G_{ads} = G_{surf+M} - (G_{surf} + G_M) \quad (2)$$

Here, G_{surf+M} and G_{surf} are the free energies of atomic hydrogen atom or water adsorbed surface, and the catalytic surface, respectively. For the free energy of atomic hydrogen adsorption, G_M is half of the free energies of the gas phase hydrogen. For the free energy of molecular water adsorption, G_M is the free energy of the gas phase water molecule.

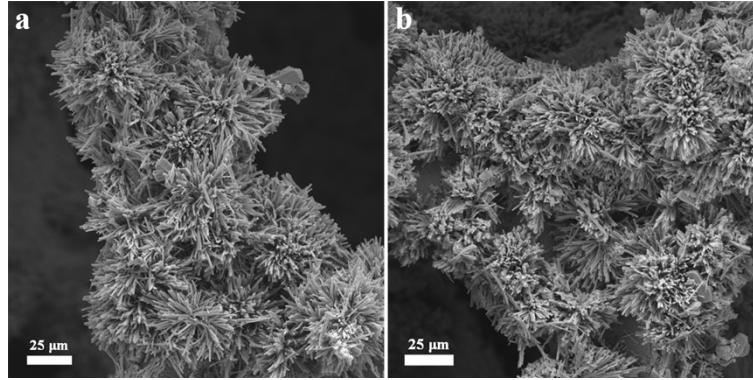
2. Material characterization and electrochemical analysis



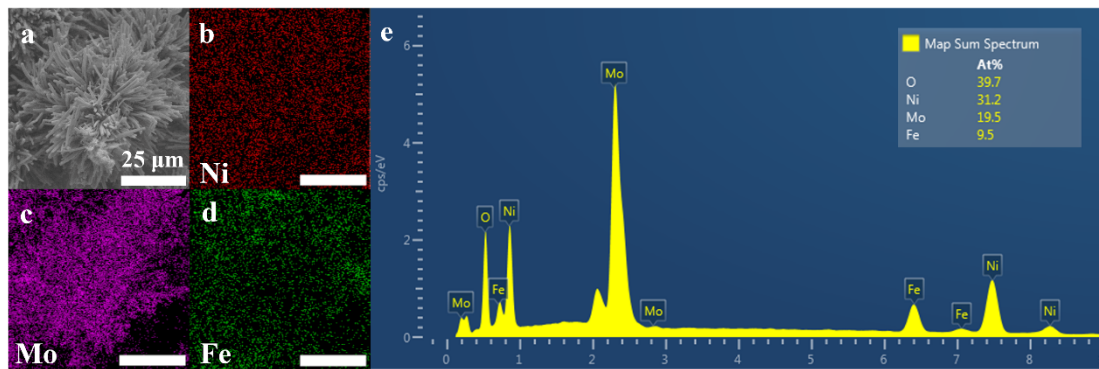
Supplementary Fig. 1. SEM image of NiMoO₄ precursor.



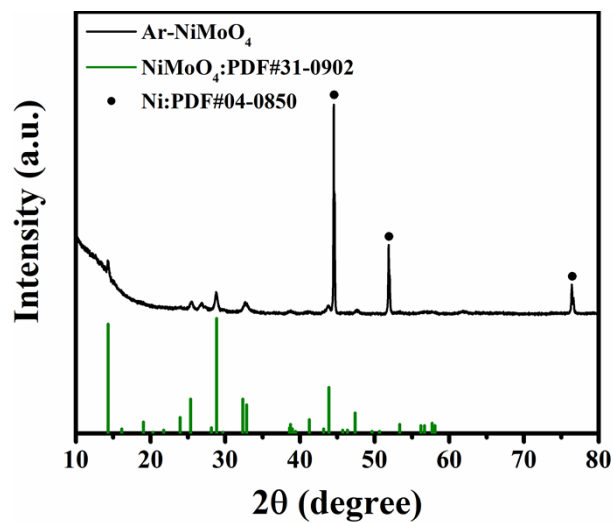
Supplementary Fig. 2. SEM images of MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray.



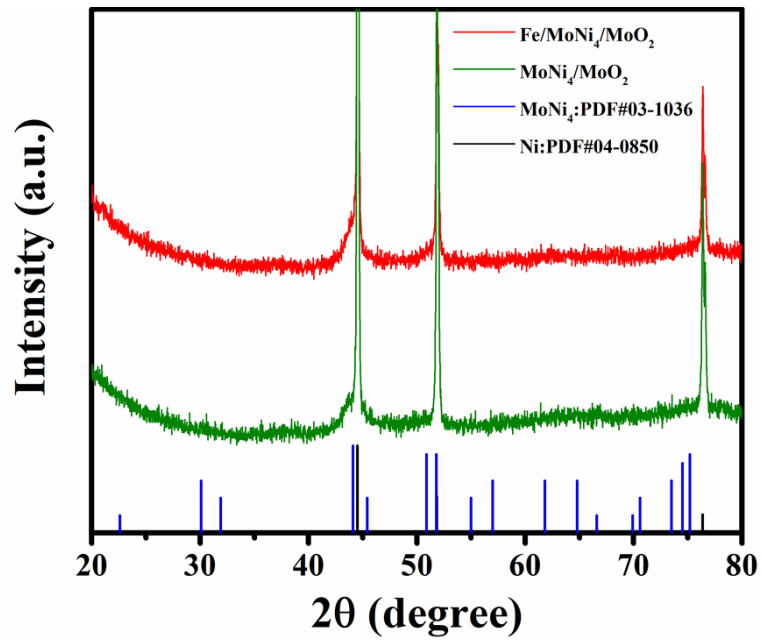
Supplementary Fig. 3. SEM images of the as-prepared Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray.



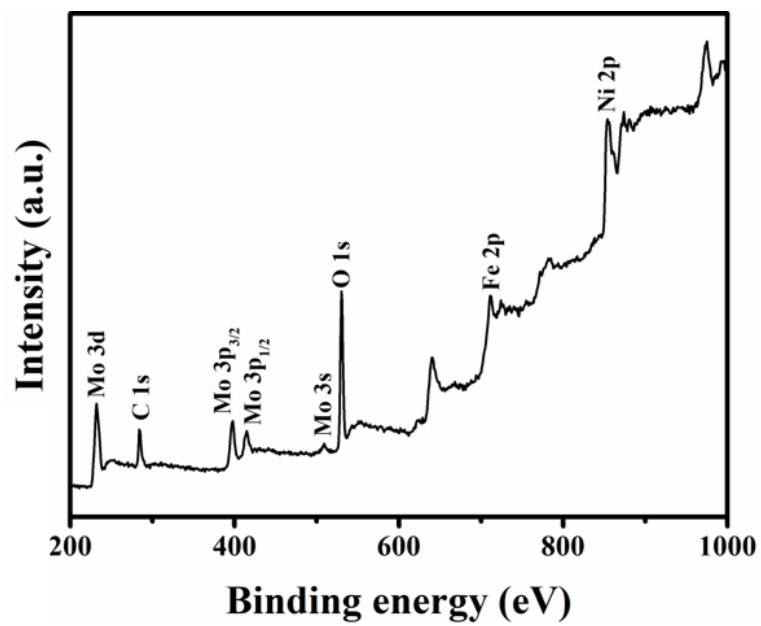
Supplementary Fig. 4. (a) SEM image of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanorod and corresponding elemental mapping images of (b) Ni, (c) Mo and (d) Fe. (e) A typical EDX spectrum of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray.



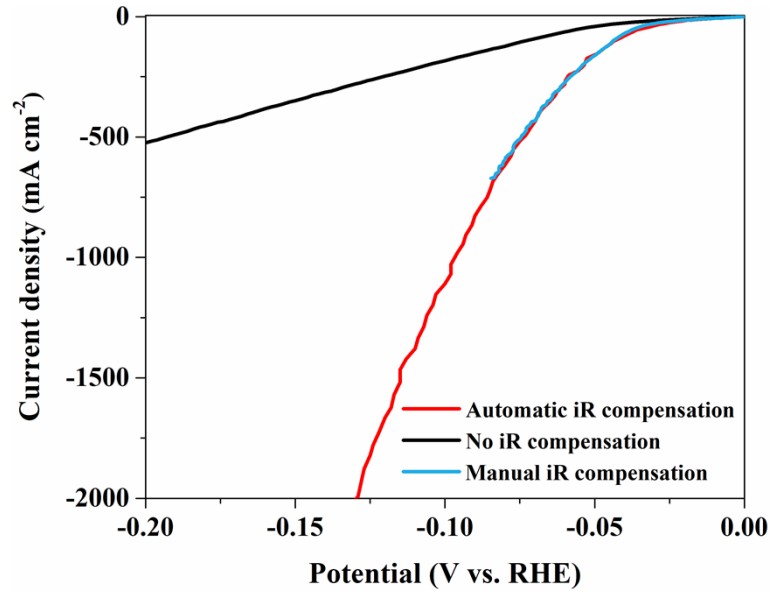
Supplementary Fig. 5. A typical XRD pattern of the Ar-NiMoO₄ nanorods on Ni foam.



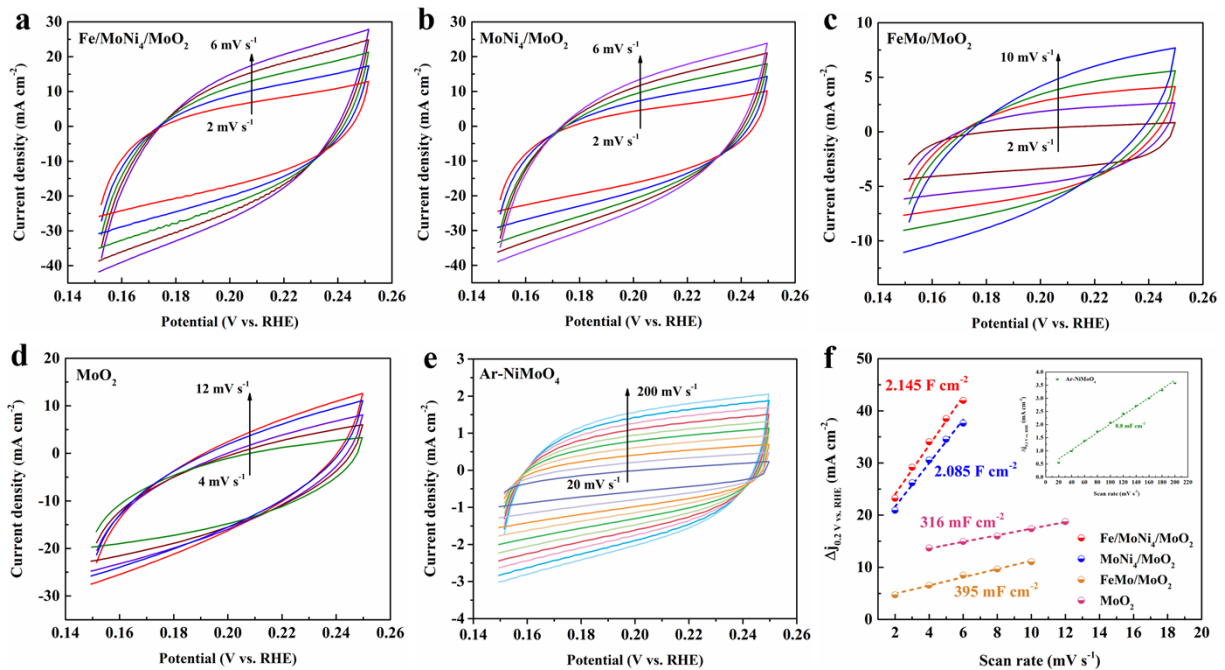
Supplementary Fig. 6. XRD spectra of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ (red line) and MoNi₄/MoO₂ (green line) nanoarray grown on Ni foam.



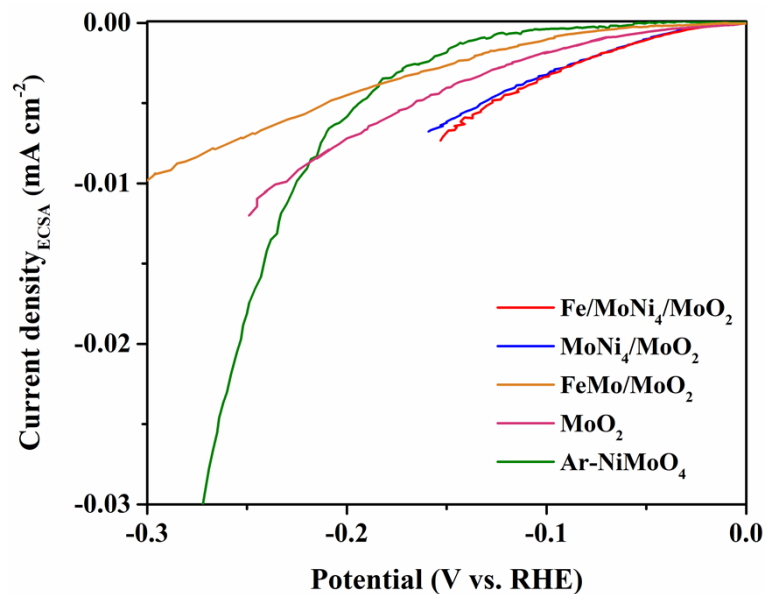
Supplementary Fig. 7. The XPS survey spectra of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray.



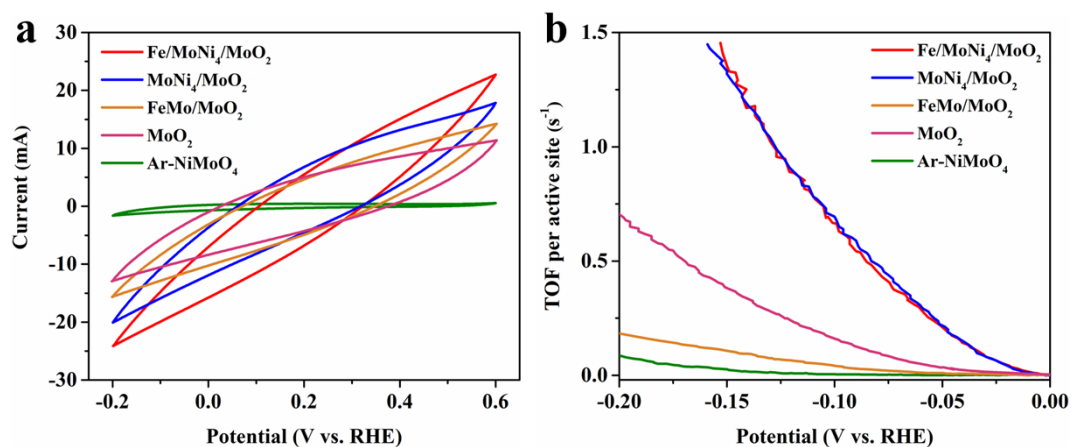
Supplementary Fig. 8. The HER polarization curves of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ with automatic, manual (100%) *iR* compensation or without compensation.



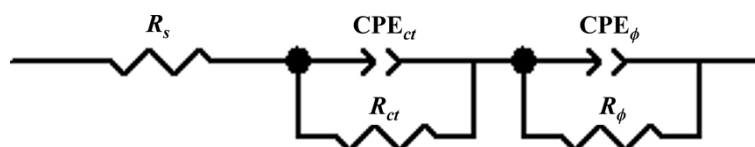
Supplementary Fig. 9. Typical cyclic voltammetry curves collected on (a) Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, (b) MoNi₄/MoO₂, (c) FeMo/MoO₂, (d) MoO₂ and (e) Ar-NiMoO₄ electrodes in 1 M KOH with different scan rates. (f) The double-layer capacitance (C_{dl}) of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoNi₄/MoO₂, FeMo/MoO₂, MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ electrodes in 1 M KOH.



Supplementary Fig. 10. The ECSA-normalized HER polarization curves of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoNi₄/MoO₂, FeMo/MoO₂, MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ electrodes.

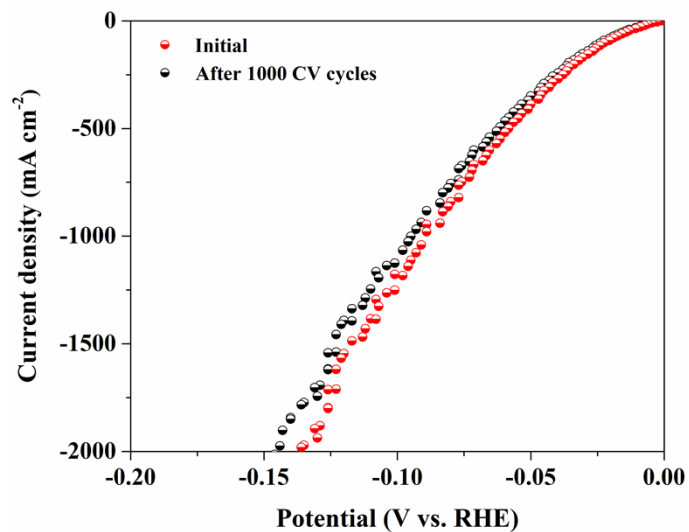


Supplementary Fig. 11. (a) The cyclic voltammograms collected on Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoNi₄/MoO₂, FeMo/MoO₂, MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ electrodes at a scan rate of 50 mV s⁻¹ in 1 M PBS. (b) The corresponding TOF values of these catalysts for the HER in 1 M KOH.

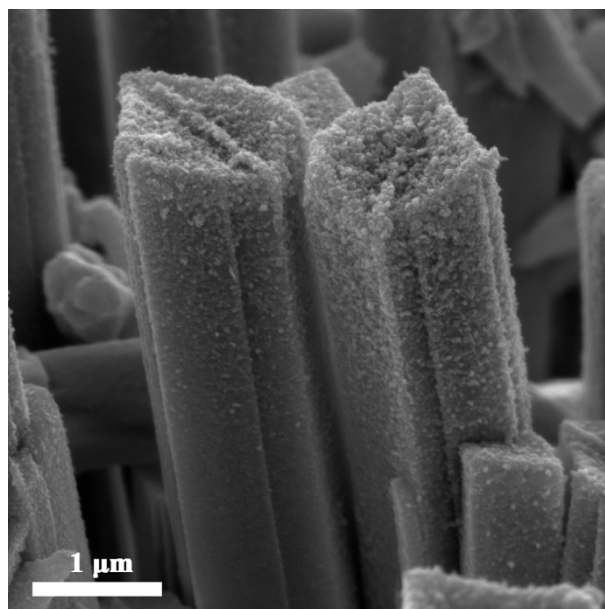


Supplementary Fig. 12. The schematic diagram of equivalent circuit. R_s : series resistance,

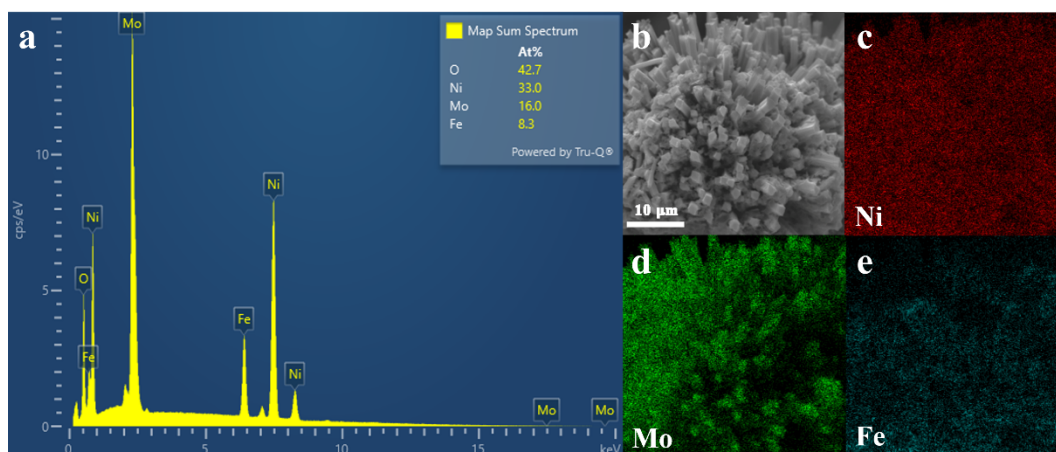
CPE_{ct} : charge transfer constant phase element, R_{ct} : charge transfer resistance, CPE_{ϕ} : ionic intermediate adsorption constant phase element, R_{ϕ} : ionic intermediate adsorption resistance.



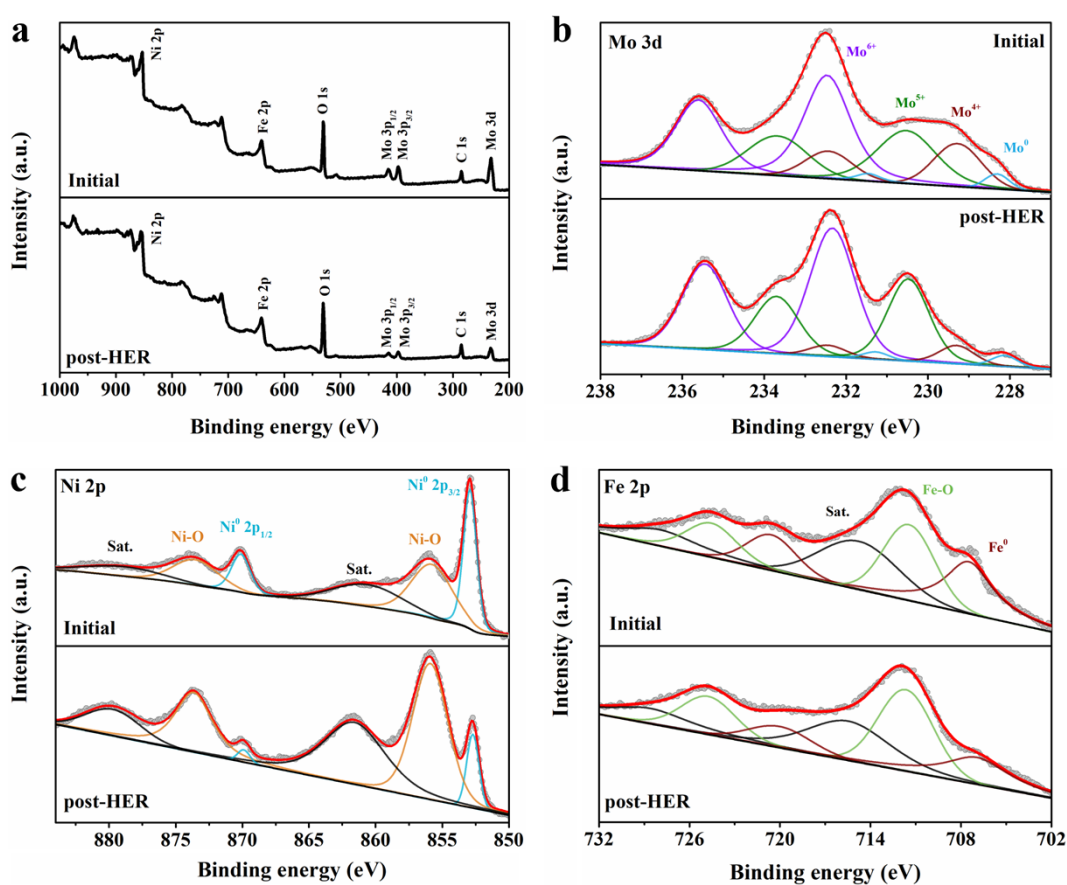
Supplementary Fig. 13. Cyclic stability of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray for HER.



Supplementary Fig. 14. The SEM image of post-HER Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ nanoarray.

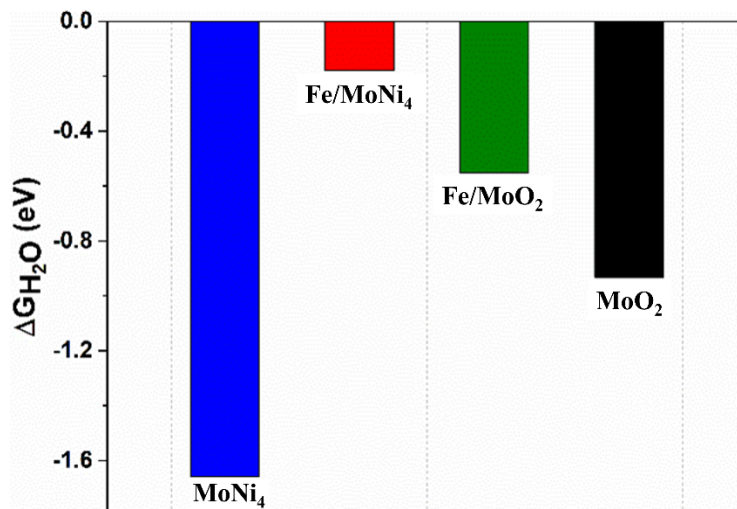


Supplementary Fig. 15. (a) A typical EDX spectrum for Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ sample after HER and the atomic ratios of O, Ni, Mo and Fe elements were shown in the inset. (b) SEM image of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ after HER cycling test and corresponding EDS mapping of (c) Ni, (d) Mo and (e) Fe elements.

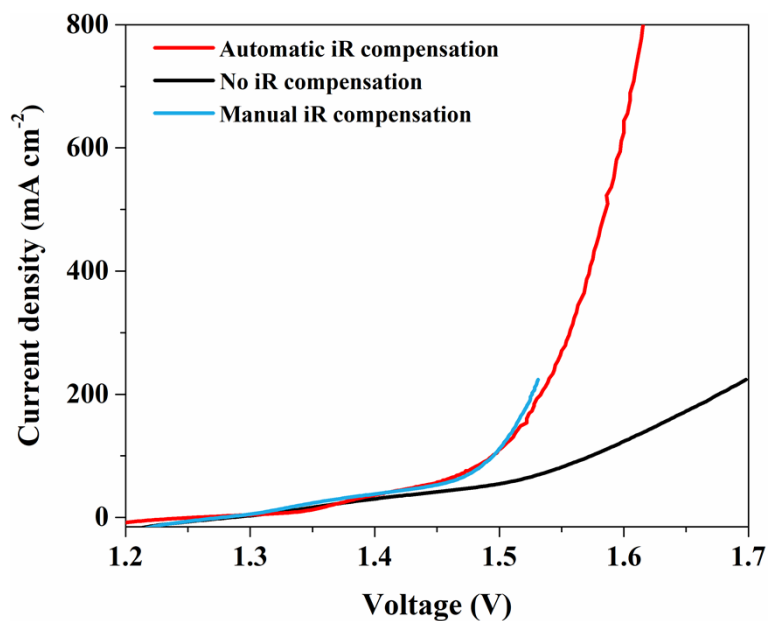


Supplementary Fig. 16. (a) The XPS survey and corresponding high-resolution spectra of (b)

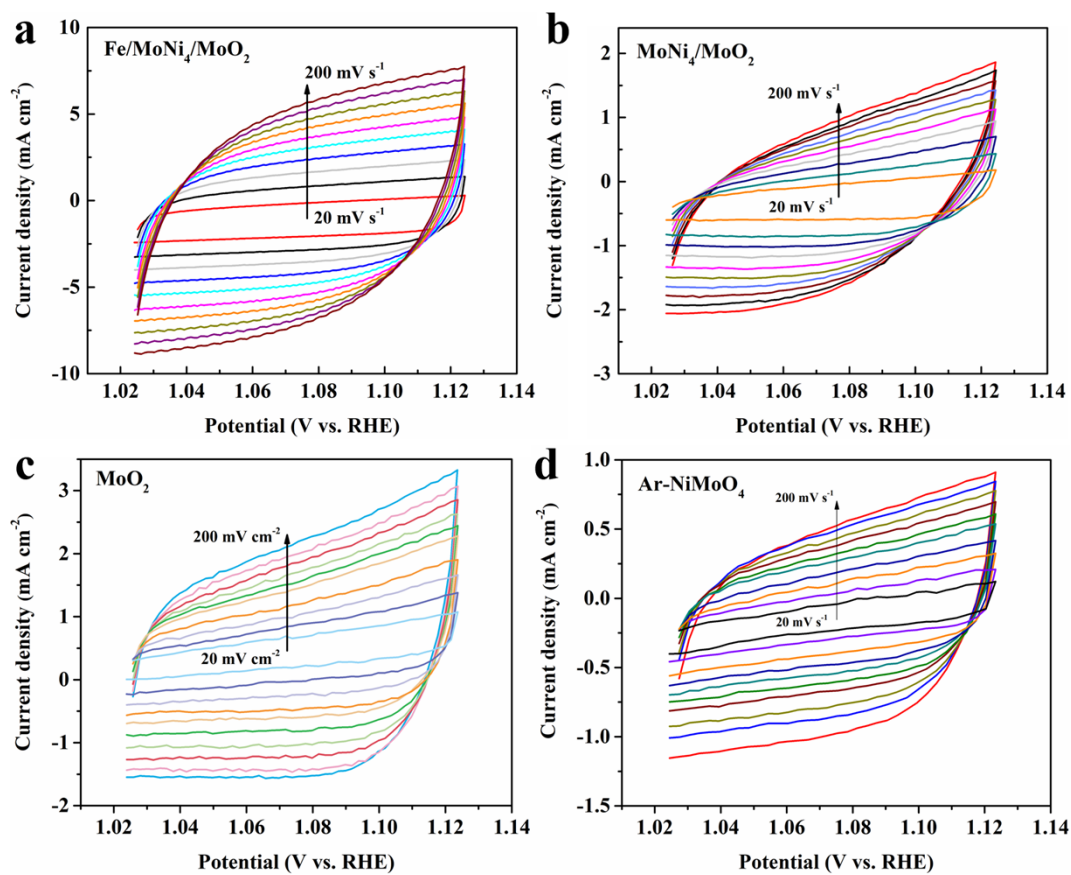
Mo 3d, (e) Ni 2p, (d) Fe 2p for original (top) and post-HER Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ (bottom).



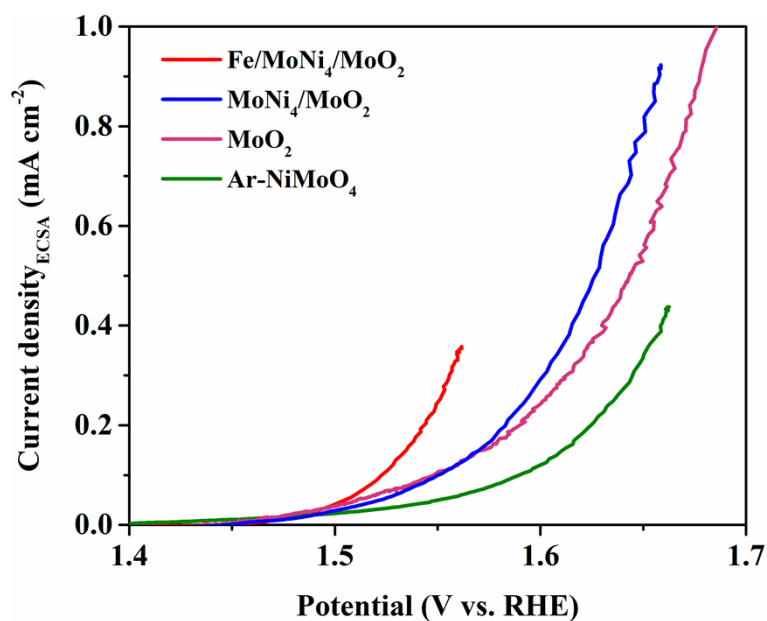
Supplementary Fig. 17. Adsorption free energy of water on MoNi₄, Fe/MoNi₄, Fe/MoO₂ and MoO₂ catalysts.



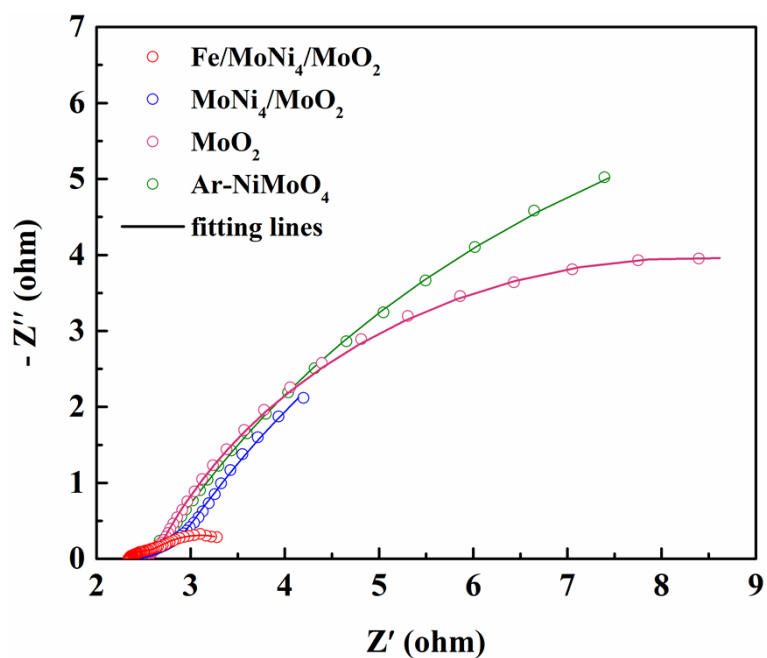
Supplementary Fig. 18. The polarization curves of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ for OER with automatic, manual (100%) *iR* compensation or without compensation.



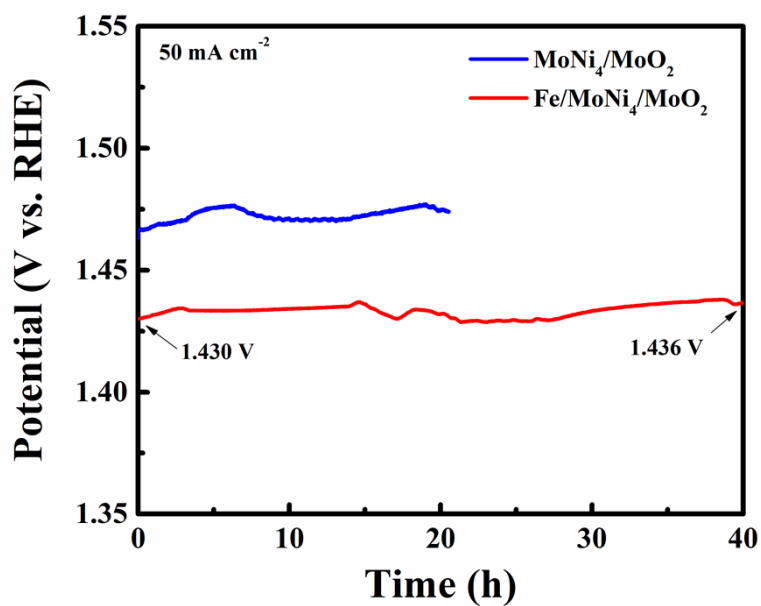
Supplementary Fig. 19. Cyclic voltammograms of (a) Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, (b) MoNi₄/MoO₂, (c) MoO₂ and (d) Ar-NiMoO₄ catalysts at various scan rates from 20 to 200 mV s⁻¹.



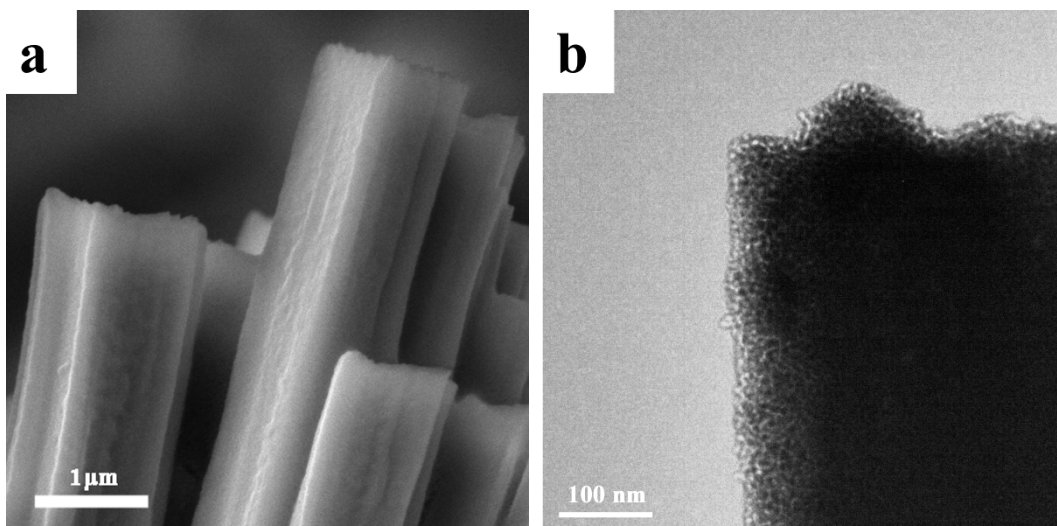
Supplementary Fig. 20. The ECSA-normalized OER polarization curves of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ electrodes.



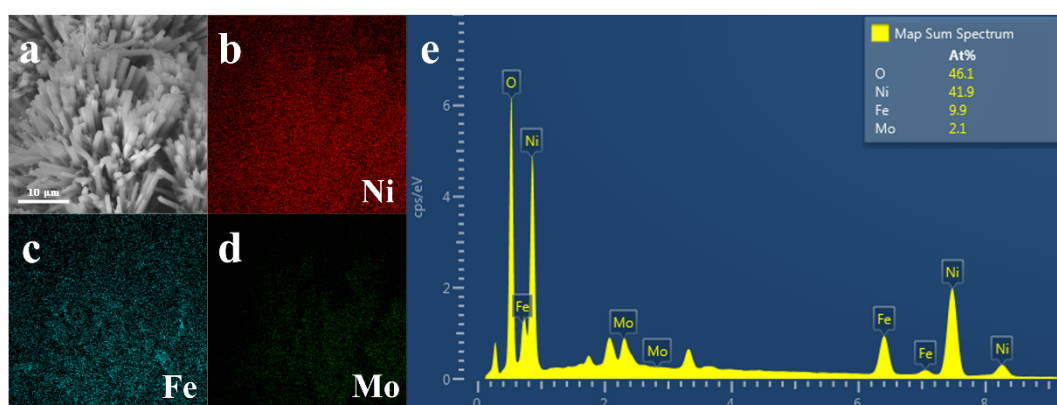
Supplementary Fig. 21. The Nyquist plots of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ catalysts in 1 M KOH at 1.53 V.



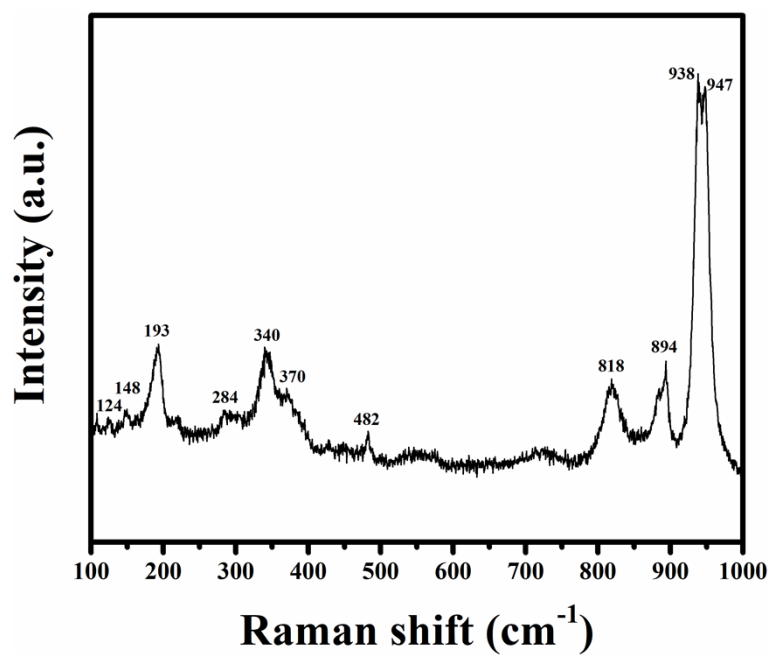
Supplementary Fig. 22. Long-term stability tests of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ and MoNi₄/MoO₂ catalysts for OER at current density of 50 mA cm⁻² in 1 M KOH.



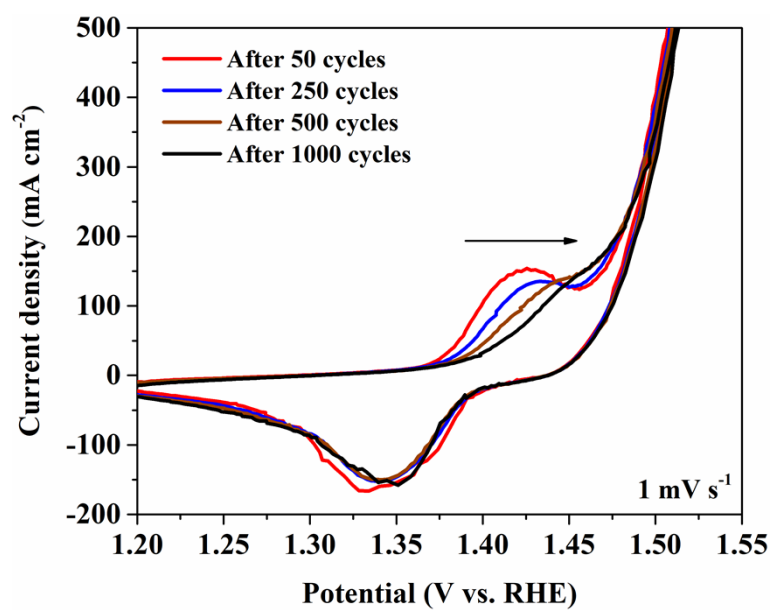
Supplementary Fig. 23. (a) SEM image and (b) TEM image of post-OER Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂.



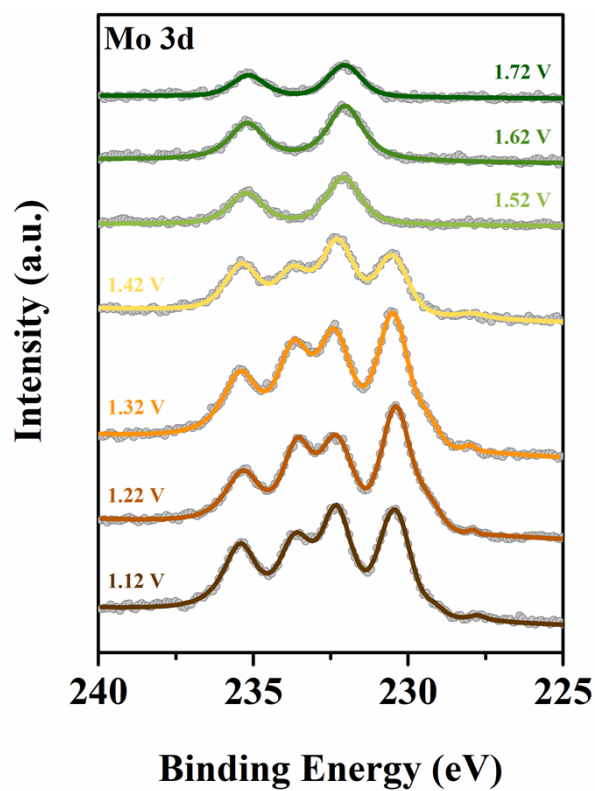
Supplementary Fig. 24. (A) SEM image of post-OER Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ and corresponding EDS mapping of (b) Ni, (c) Fe and (d) Mo elements. (e) A typical EDX spectrum for Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ sample after OER and the atomic ratios of O, Ni, Mo and Fe elements were shown in the inset.



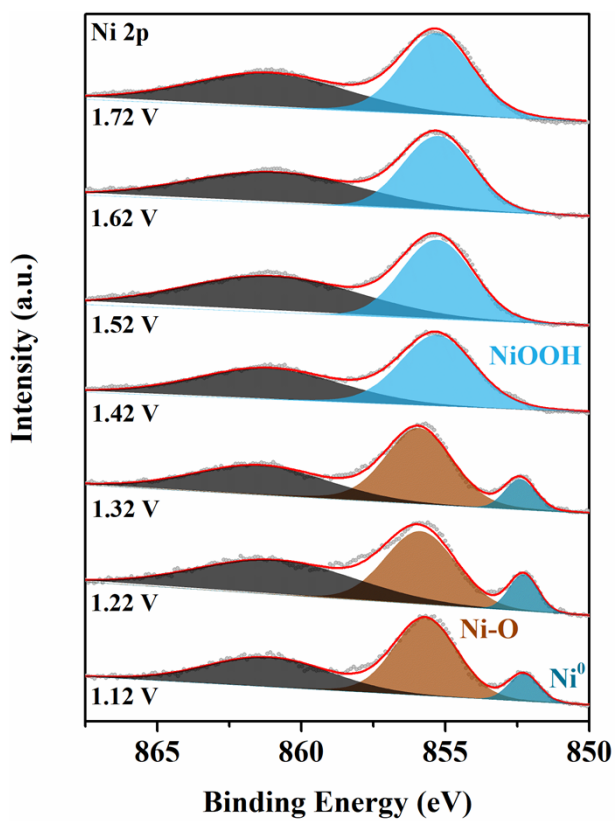
Supplementary Fig. 25. Raman spectra of initial Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ sample.



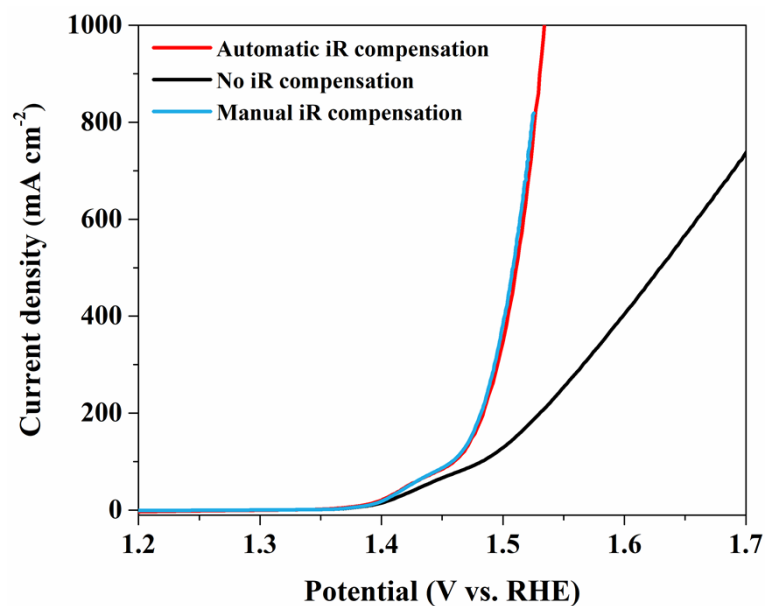
Supplementary Fig. 26. The linear polarization curves of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ collected after different CV cycles.



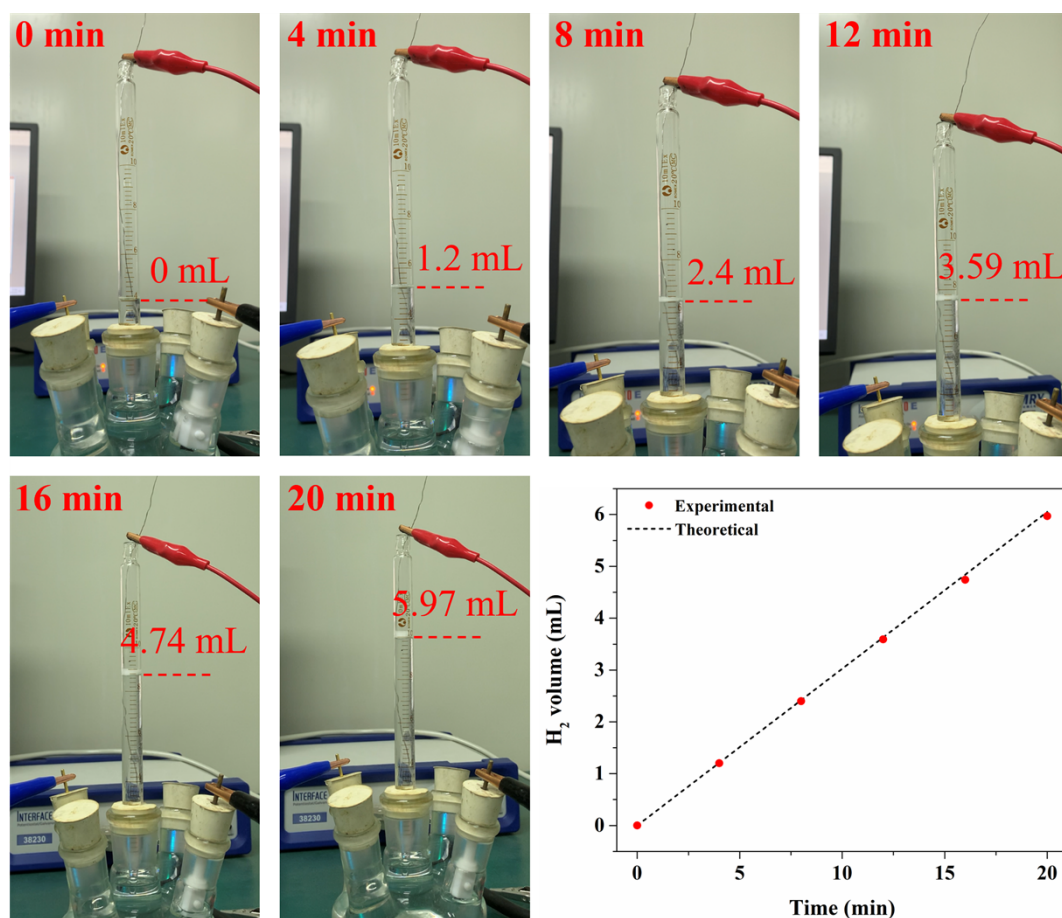
Supplementary Fig. 27. *In-situ* XPS spectra of Mo 3d for Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ during OER.



Supplementary Fig. 28. *In-situ* XPS spectra of Ni 2p for MoNi₄/MoO₂ during OER.

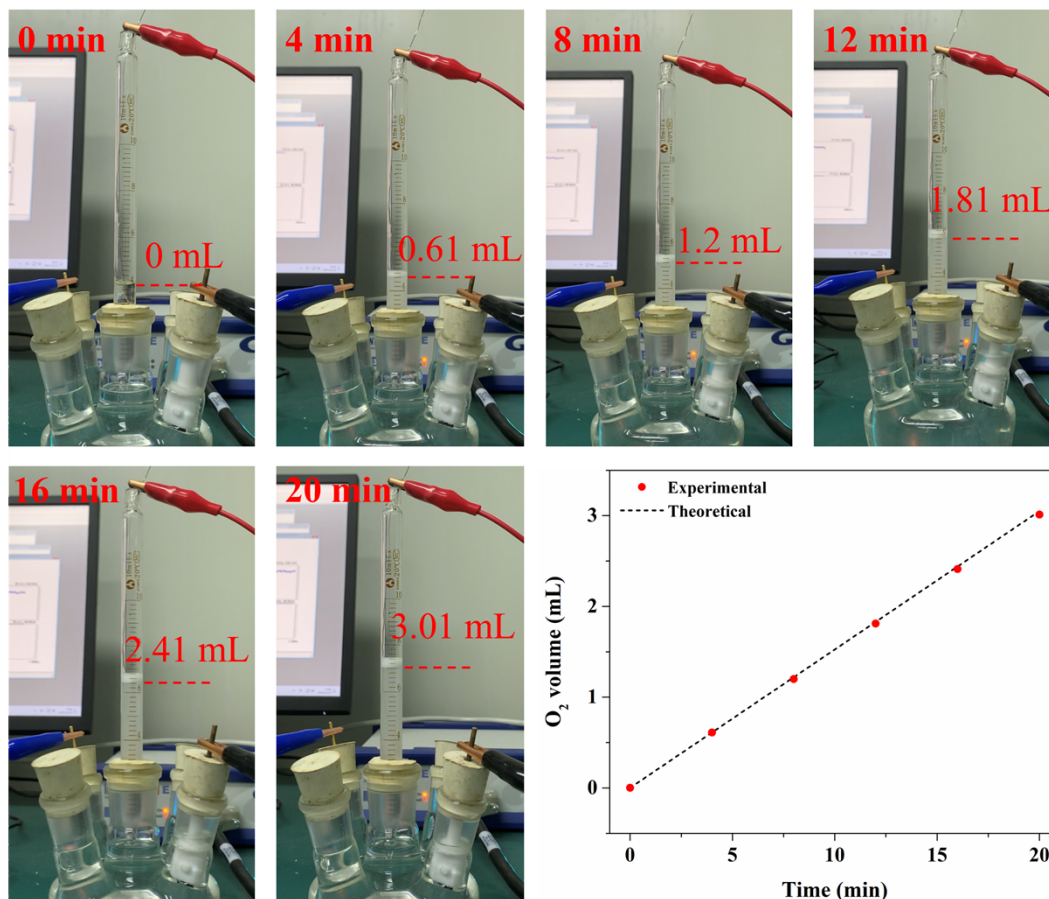


Supplementary Fig. 29. The overall-water-splitting polarization curves of Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂|| Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂ with automatic, manual (100%) *iR* compensation or without compensation.

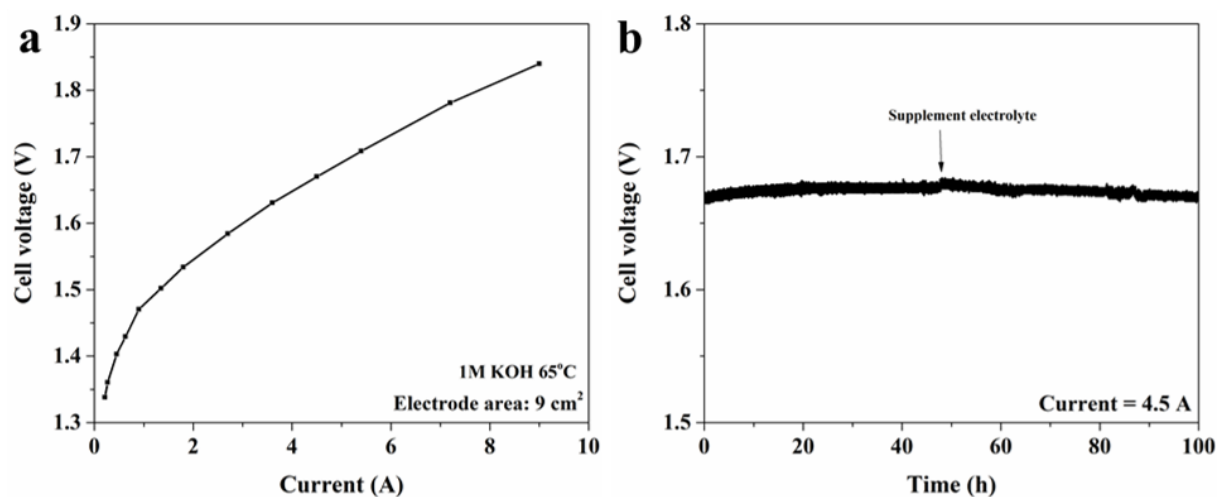


Supplementary Fig. 30. Measuring H₂ gas volume and determining the Faradaic efficiency

by comparing experimental (red dot) and theoretical (black line) H_2 amounts using a drainage method during HER catalysis at 200 mA cm^{-2} in 1 M KOH .



Supplementary Fig. 31. Measuring O_2 gas volume and determining the Faradaic efficiency by comparing experimental (red dot) and theoretical (black line) O_2 amounts using a drainage method during OER catalysis at 200 mA cm^{-2} in 1 M KOH .



Supplementary Fig. 32. (a) The current vs. cell voltage for the anion-exchange-membrane water electrolyzer in 1 M KOH at 65 °C. (b) Long-term stability test under a constant current of 4.5 A in 1 M KOH at 65 °C.

Supplementary Table 1. The HER activity comparison between our work and other non-noble electrocatalysts in 1 M KOH. η_{100} and η_{500} mean the overpotentials at 100 and 500 mA cm^{-2} , respectively.

Electrocatalyst	η_{100} (mV)	η_{500} (mV)	Reference
Fe/MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	23	59	This work
MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	25	60	This work
NiMoO _x /NiMoS	89	174	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2020 , <i>11</i> , 5462
Fe,P-NiSe ₂	83	141	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2021 , <i>33</i> , 2101425
FeNi-LDH/CoP	183*	265*	<i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2019 , <i>58</i> , 11903
CoP-MNA	121	196*	<i>Adv. Funct. Mater.</i> 2015 , <i>25</i> , 7337
Fe _{0.01} -Ni&Ni _{0.2} Mo _{0.8} N	59	135	<i>Energy Environ. Sci.</i> 2022 , <i>15</i> , 3945
Cu@NiFe LDH	192	-	<i>Energy Environ. Sci.</i> 2017 , <i>10</i> , 1820

Fe-CoP	162*	311*	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2017 , 29, 1602441
Ni ₃ N@C	95*	222*	<i>J. Mater. Chem. A</i> 2021 , 9, 13562
NiMoN@NiFeN	84	180	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2019 , 10, 5106
Ni ₃ N/Co ₃ N/CoP	74	115	<i>Small</i> 2024 , 20, 2311289
Co ₃ Mo/Cu	65*	111*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2020 , 11, 2940
NiMo/MoO _x	116*	254*	<i>Adv. Energy Mater.</i> 2019 , 9, 1901454

“*” means the data was estimated from the literatures.

Supplementary Table 2. The fitted results of the EIS Nyquist plots for Fe/MoNi₄/MoO₂, MoNi₄/MoO₂, FeMo/MoO₂, MoO₂ and Ar-NiMoO₄ catalysts.

At -0.05 V	Fe/MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	FeMo/MoO ₂	MoO ₂	Ar-NiMoO ₄
R_s (Ω)	2.3	2.2	2.9	2.2	4.0
R_{ct} (Ω)	1.5	1.8	14.8	5.9	4.8
At 1.53 V	Fe/MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	MoO ₂	Ar-NiMoO ₄	
R_s (Ω)	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5	
R_{ct} (Ω)	0.2	0.4	11.5	20.7	

Supplementary Table 3. Adsorption free energies of H and H₂O on MoNi₄, Fe/MoNi₄, Fe/MoO₂ and MoO₂ catalysts.

Models	MoNi ₄	Fe/MoNi ₄	MoO ₂	Fe/MoO ₂
ΔG_H (eV)	-0.70	-0.11	-1.03	-0.77
ΔG_{H_2O} (eV)	-1.66	-0.18	-0.93	-0.55

Supplementary Table 4. The OER activity comparison between our work and other non-noble electrocatalysts in 1 M KOH. η_{500} corresponds to the overpotentials at 500 mA cm⁻² and

j_{300} means the current density at the overpotential of 300 mV.

Electrocatalyst	η_{500} (mV)	j_{300} (mA cm ⁻²)	Reference
Fe/MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	277	1044	This work
MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂	370	191	This work
NiMoO _x /NiMoS	278	682*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2020 , <i>11</i> , 5462
Fe ₃ P-NiSe ₂	317	289*	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2021 , <i>33</i> , 2101425
Ni ₂ P-Fe ₂ P	322*	346*	<i>Adv. Funct. Mater.</i> 2021 , <i>31</i> , 2006484
Ni _x Fe _{1-x} Se ₂ -DO	283*	615*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2016 , <i>7</i> , 12324
NiMoN/NiFe LDH	236	1467*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2023 , <i>14</i> , 1873
Cu@NiFe LDH	312*	210*	<i>Energy Environ. Sci.</i> 2017 , <i>10</i> , 1820
NiMoN@NiFeN	337	207*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2019 , <i>10</i> , 5106
Co ₃ Mo/Cu	414*	43*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2020 , <i>11</i> , 2940
NiOOH@FeOOH	292	643*	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2022 , <i>34</i> , 2108619
NiOOH/(LDH/ α -FeOOH)	366*	255*	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2023 , <i>35</i> , 2209338
NiFe-LDH/NiFe ₂ O ₄	-	55*	<i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2021 , <i>60</i> , 26829
FeNiOOH(Se)	350*	175*	<i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2019 , <i>141</i> , 7005

“ * ” means the data was estimated from the literature.

Supplementary Table 5. The overall water splitting performance of different water electrolyzers made of non-noble electrocatalysts. The cell voltages at 100 and 500 mA cm⁻² are denoted as V_{100} and V_{500} .

Electrocatalysts	V_{100} (V)	V_{500} (V)	Reference
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Fe/MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂ ^(+/-)	1.508	1.586	This work
MoNi ₄ /MoO ₂ ^(+/-)	1.554	1.665	This work
NiMoO _x /NiMoS ^(+/-)	1.62	1.75	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2020 , <i>11</i> , 5462
Fe,P-NiSe ₂ ^(+/-)	1.599	1.733	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2021 , <i>33</i> , 2101425
Ni ₂ P-Fe ₂ P ^(+/-)	1.682	1.865	<i>Adv. Funct. Mater.</i> 2021 , <i>31</i> , 2006484
NiMoN/NiFe LDH ^(+/-)	1.538*	1.7	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2023 , <i>14</i> ,1873
EO-Co ₃ Mo ⁽⁺⁾ Co ₃ Mo ⁽⁻⁾	1.62	1.825*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2020 , <i>11</i> , 2940
NiFe LDH@Ni ₃ N ^(+/-)	1.63	1.8	<i>J. Mater. Chem. A</i> 2020 , <i>8</i> , 17202
Fe _{0.01} -Ni&Ni _{0.2} Mo _{0.8} N ^(+/-)	1.525	1.632	<i>Energy Environ. Sci.</i> 2022 , <i>15</i> , 3945
NiFe LDH-NS ^(+/-)	1.8*	2.02*	<i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2017 , <i>29</i> , 1700017
Co-Fe ₂ P ^(+/-)	1.69	1.8*	<i>Appl. Catal. B Environ.</i> 2021 , <i>297</i> , 120386
MoS ₂ /FeCoNiP _x ^(+/-)	1.59	1.78*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2021 , <i>12</i> , 1380
Fe ₂ P/Co ₂ N ^(+/-)	1.561	1.663	<i>Adv. Funct. Mater.</i> 2023 , <i>33</i> , 2209465
NiFe LDH ⁽⁺⁾ NiO/Ni-CNT ⁽⁻⁾	1.584*	1.936*	<i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2014 , <i>5</i> , 4695

“*” means the data was estimated from the polarization curves given in the literature.

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