## Supporting Information File

# Mechanochromic Hydrogen-Bonded Cocrystals with Salient Effect Upon Heating

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#### Materials and methods

Reagents and solvents were purchased from company Sigma-Aldrich®. Reactions were monitored through TLC using silica gel plates 60 F<sub>254</sub> purchased from Merck®. Spots were detected by UV-light absorption. Reactions were carried out in inert atmosphere using nitrogen (N<sub>2</sub>). Solution <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C experiments were recorded at room temperature using a Jeol Eclipse 300. The spectroscopic data is referenced to CDCl<sub>3</sub> (<sup>1</sup>H:  $\delta$  = 7.26 ppm, s; <sup>13</sup>C:  $\delta$  = 77.0 ppm). High-Resolution Mass Spectrometry was obtained in a Jeol JMS-AccuTOF JMS-T100LC spectrometer, ionization mode: Direct Analysis in Real Time (DART). FTIR spectra experiments were recorded with Bruker ATR equipped with a diamond tip in the spectral window from 4000 to 500 cm<sup>-1</sup>. Uncorrected melting points were determined in a Fisher-Johns melting point apparatus, unless otherwise noted.

#### Synthesis of 9-(*N*-carbazolyl)acridine (AC)

Synthesis of AC has been previously reported by Zeghada et. al. in 2020.<sup>S1</sup> The procedure was replicated as stated there. Quantities: 180 mg (1.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) of acridine, 168 mg (1.0 mmol, 1.0 eq) of carbazole, 654.5 mg (2.01 mmol, 2.0 eq.) of Cs<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, 38 mg (0.2 mmol, 0.2 eq.) of CuI and 0.5 mL of dry DMSO. The mixture was heated to 110 °C for 24 hours under nitrogen atmosphere.



Scheme S1. Synthetic route for the obtaining of AC molecule.

The purification of the compound was carried out by pouring water into the reaction mixture and filtering the solids in vacuum. Then, the solids were redissolved in ethyl acetate, dried with Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and filtered through cotton. The mixture was then supported in silica gel and purified by column chromatography, using a gradient eluent (hexanes  $\rightarrow$  hexanes/ethyl acetate 85:15) to obtain a pure yellow powder (276 mg, 80% yield). Melting point: 255 °C (as solvent free form, determined by coupled DSC/TGA). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, Room temperature)  $\delta$ : 8.42 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 8.29 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.86 – 7.80 (m, 2H), 7.39 – 7.28 (m, 8H), 6.76 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, Room temperature)  $\delta$ :150.2, 142.3, 139.7, 130.9, 130.2, 127.2, 126.5, 124.6, 124.0, 123.6, 120.7, 120.7, 110.4. FTIR (ATR, cm<sup>-1</sup>) v: 3036, 2922, 2851, 1620, 1593, 1554, 1517, 1475, 1447, 1419, 1312, 1227, 1147, 1012, 920, 857, 743, 721, 630, 607. HRMS (DART) m/z: [C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>17</sub>N<sub>2</sub>]<sup>+</sup>, calculated 345.13917, found 345.13864, difference (ppm): -1.54. To obtain the single crystals, the

compound can be recrystallized from acetonitrile (solvent free), THF/methanol (THF solvate) or toluene (Toluene solvate). In all cases, yellow prismatic crystals are obtained.

#### Hirshfeld fingerplots and energy frameworks in cocrystals

Hirshfeld surface calculations and interaction energies were calculated using *CrystalExplorer* 21.5®,<sup>S2</sup> using the *CE*-B3LYP 6-31G(d,p) functional integrated in the software. Isosurfaces are displayed at 0.002 a.u. The scale factors for electrostatic, dispersion, polarization and repulsion are depicted in the table below. SC XRD structures of **AC-TFTA** and **AC-PFBA** were employed for the calculations.

Scale factors for functional used in Hirshfeld surfaces calculations.

$CE D2I VD/(21C(d_m))$	k <sub>elec</sub>	k <sub>disp</sub>	$k_{ m pol}$	k <sub>rep</sub>
CE-D5L11/0-51G(u,p)	1.057	0.740	0.871	0.618

#### **Computational details**

The crystalline structures of AC, TFTA and PFBA crystals and AC-TFTA and AC-PFBA cocrystals were refined to optimize the Hydrogen and Oxygen positions by using Periodic Density Functional Theory with PBE and dispersion correction (D2 scheme)<sup>S3</sup> with the Vienna Ab Initio Simulation Package (VASP) version 5.4.4.<sup>S4</sup>

The photophysical properties of AC crystal and AC-PFBA and AC-TFTA co-crystals were modeled within the ONIOM(QM:QM') embedded cluster model as implemented in the fromage code.<sup>S5,S6</sup> Semi spherical clusters with radius ~20 Å were used, where the QM region includes a monomer (AC), dimer (AC-PFBA) and trimer (AC-TFTA) and treated at the CAM-B3LYP/6-311++G(d,p) level of theory<sup>7</sup> including Grimme's dispersion correction (D3)<sup>8</sup> with the program package Gaussian16 rev C.01.<sup>9</sup> Due to the asymmetry observed in the AC-TFTA crystal, two different trimers were considered, labeled as AC-TFTA-a and AC-TFTA-b. The modelling of the QM' region was carried out with the GFN2-xTB<sup>10</sup> Hamiltonian using the XTB software version 6.5.1.<sup>11</sup> In the embedding calculations the RESP charges were used at the CAM-B3LYP/6-311++G(d,p) and PBE-D3/6-31G(d) level of theory for the QM and QM' regions, respectively.

The energies of the Highest Occupied Crystalline and Lowest Unoccupied Crystalline Orbitals, HOCO and LUCO, respectively, were obtained from the periodic DFT calculations, as above mentioned and summarized in Table S1. For comparison, we included the energy of the Highest Occupied and Lowest Unoccupied Molecular Orbitals (HOMO and LUMO, respectively) computed as the isolated system (monomer, dyad or triad) in gas phase, and embedded in the point charges used in the ONIOM calculation at the CAM-B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p) level of theory to simulate the crystalline environment. Figure S7 shows the relationship between the frontier MO's of the raw

components and the co-crystals. In both co-crystals, HOMO and LUMO are localised over the AC molecule and are slightly stabilised regarded to those in the pure AC crystal. AC-TFTA shows a degeneracy of HOMO and HOMO-1 (LUMO and LUMO+1) corresponding to each monomer of AC in the triad. While the LUMO+1 (LUMO+2) is related to the LUMO of PFBA (TFTA). Because of the level of localisation of the orbitals, the energies of the frontier orbitals are closer to the ones of AC. The computed  $DG_{HL}$  values correspond to the fundamental gap and as expected are overestimated with respect to the experimental fitting for the optical gap (Figure S6). The predicted optical gaps for the S<sub>1</sub>-S<sub>0</sub> transitions are in better agreement with the calculations. We also performed a single point calculation with the B3LYP functional, which has been reported to accurately reproduce the HOMO-LUMO gap of organic chromophores. <sup>S12</sup> Nevertheless, such DFT approximation is well known for predicting spurious excited states at low energy, then we keep using CAM-B3LYP results for the analysis of photophysical properties of the co-crystals.

Geometry optimization in the  $S_1$  energy surface was performed with the time dependent version of the CAM-B3LYP functional and the same basis set as specified above for the AC crystal but with the SVP basis set for the co-crystals, to decrease the computational cost. At the  $S_{1min}$  geometry, a single point calculation of each system was performed at the TD-CAM-B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p), including the point charges of the embedded model.

To simulate the photoluminescence properties of the co-crystals, we predicted the minimum energy geometry in the  $S_1$  potential energy surface by following the same ONIOM QM:QM' embbeded scheme as before. The emission energy of the pristine AC crystal is 2.99 eV (414 nm vs the experimental maximum determined at 507 nm). The shift of the co-crystals with respect to the raw component is negligible (less than 0.1 eV). SI includes de characterization of the emissive states, for both co-crystals PL happens from the  $S_{1min}$  geometry, which corresponds to the AC component with almost no influence of the acid molecule, explaining the very close emission of AC-PFBA and AC-TFTA with AC.

#### Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC) and Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)

DSC and TGA experiments were performed in a Netzsch STA 449 F3 Jupiter in a coupled/simultaneous mode. Samples were placed as powders in 5 mm Aluminum crucibles with a hole in the cap. The heating ramp employed was 10 °C per minute under nitrogen atmosphere.

#### Crystallographic information tables and X-Ray diffraction studies

X-Ray diffraction data were obtained at variable temperature from Bruker Smart APEX II CCD<sup>S13</sup> with graphite monochromatic MoK $\alpha$  radiation ( $\lambda$ =0.71073 Å) or CuK $\alpha$  radiation (1.54183 Å). Cell

refinement was carried out using SAINT V8.38A.<sup>S14</sup> Structure solution, final refinement and data output was carried out using SHELX-2014<sup>S15</sup> through direct methods. Non-hydrogen atoms were refined anisotropically and hydrogen atoms were placed in geometrically calculated positions using a riding model, with isotropic thermal parameters  $U_{iso}(H) = 1.2U_{eq}(C)$ . Crystal structures were generated with Mercury 2022.3.0.<sup>S16</sup> Powder X-Ray diffraction data were collected at room temperature in a Bruker D8 Advance diffractometer, using CuK $\alpha$  radiation and Linxeye detector. It was operated at 30 kV and 25 mA with a Bragg-Brentano configuration in a 2 $\theta$  interval of 5-50°, stepsize: 0.03°, steptime: 0.06 s.

#### Solid-state NMR Spectroscopy

Solid-state <sup>13</sup>C with CP MAS NMR spectra were obtained in a Bruker Avance II with a Larmor frequency of 500 MHz (11.7 T), equipped with a PH MAS DVT 500S1 BL3.2 N-P/F-H probe and Zirconia MAS rotors with VESPEL caps. The spectra were acquired by averaging between 1000 and 4000 transients, with a MAS rate of 20 kHz, delay time of 20 s, pulse width of 4 µs, and a contact time of 3 ms at 20 °C. Chemical shifts were referenced to adamantane ( $\delta$  = 37.7 ppm). <sup>19</sup>F MAS were acquired in the same probe at a frequency of 470.6 MHz with rotation at 20 kHz, averaging scans, delay time of 10 s and pulse width of 4 µs. Chemical shifts were referenced externally to Teflon® ( $\delta$  = -123.2 ppm) as secondary reference.



Figure S1. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of compound AC (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, 300 MHz, Room temperature).



Figure S2. <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra of compound AC (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, 75 MHz, Room temperature).



Figure S3. Comparative ATR-FTIR spectra of the starting materials AC, TFTA, PFBA and the cocrystals AC-TFTA and AC-PFBA.



Figure S4. PXRD diffractograms of compound AC (solvent-free form).



Figure S5.  $\pi$ -interactions between fragments in the crystalline packings of a) AC-TFTA and b) AC-PFBA, detrimental for fluorescence enhancement.



Figure S6. Tauc plots obtained from diffuse reflectance data with optical band gaps for pristine cocrystals.



**Figure S7.** Frontier molecular orbitals diagram and representation of raw materials (AC, PFBA, TFTA) and co-crystals (AC-PFBA, AC-TFTA) computed at the CAM-B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p) level of theory.



**Figure S8.** Characterization of the S<sub>1</sub> state of d) AC, e) AC-PFBA, f) AC-TFTA-a and, g) AC-TFTAb. Electronic density difference plots (pink positive, blue negative) for the S<sub>0</sub> $\rightarrow$ S<sub>1</sub> transition computed at TD-CAM-B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p) level of theory. Excitation energies are reported in eV and the oscillator strength presented in parentheses. Isosurface contour value = 0.02 for d) and e) and 0.01 for f) and g).



**Figure S9.** Photographs of **AC-TFTA** single crystals on the hot plate of a Fisher-Johns apparatus, displaying jumping due to heating.





**Figure S10.** a) Gas chromatogram of the volatile mixture injected after the heating of pristine AC-**TFTA**; b-h) Compounds found in the mixture associated with their respective mass spectrogram and the corresponding retention time.



**Figure S11.** Characterization of residual powder after heating and thermosalient effect of **AC-TFTA**: a) comparative PXRD diffractogram and b) comparative solid-state fluorescence spectra, both against the pristine AC and **AC-TFTA** pristine.



Figure S12. DSC and TGA profiles of AC as solvent-free form.



Figure S13. DSC and TGA profiles of TFTA.



Figure S14. DSC and TGA profiles of pristine AC-PFBA.



Figure S15. Fingerprint plots of each coformer in the AC-TFTA cocrystal with insets of the most important interactions: a) TFTA and b) AC.



Figure S16. Fingerprint plots of each coformer in the AC-PFBA cocrystal with insets of the most important interactions: a) PFBA and b) AC.



**Figure S17.** Powder X-Ray diffractograms obtained from ground cocrystals (850 rpm, 60 minutes, 5 mm Zirconium oxide grinding balls).



Figure S18. Tauc plots obtained from diffuse reflectance data with optical band gaps for ground powders of cocrystals.



**Figure S19.** <sup>19</sup>F MAS spectra (470.6 MHz, Spin Rate = 20 kHz,  $d_1 = 10$  s) of cocrystal **AC-TFTA** at several temperatures and zoomed region between -110 and -170 ppm (right). Red line depicts the spectra of pristine sample and black represents the spectra of ground cocrystal. Sets of signals marked with '\*' are referred to spinning sidebands.



**Figure S20.** <sup>19</sup>F MAS spectra of cocrystal **AC-PFBA** (470.6 MHz, Spin Rate = 20 kHz,  $d_1$  = 10 s) at several temperatures and zoomed region between -120 and -170 ppm (right). Red line depicts the spectra of pristine sample and black represents the spectra of ground cocrystal. Sets of signals marked with '\*' are referred to spinning sidebands.



Figure S21. Solid-state fluorescence spectra of fumed solids. The spectra associated with the fumed solids is displayed as continuous lines and the comparison against the pristine samples is dotted.



Figure S22. Progressive solid-state fluorescence spectra obtained from the fatigue tests on AC-TFTA.



Figure S23. Progressive solid-state fluorescence spectra obtained from the fatigue tests on AC-PFBA.

**Table S1.** Absolute energy of frontier crystalline and molecular orbitals of co-crystals and their components. Highest Occupied and Lowest Unoccupied Crystalline Orbital (HOCO an LUCO) are computed with PBE-D3. Highest Occupied and Lowest Unoccupied Molecular Orbitals (HOMO and LUMO) are computed at the CAM-B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p) level of theory. Values in parenthesis were computed at B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p). Energies are reported in eV.

	periodic model			isolated system			embedded model		
	НОСО	LUCO	$\mathrm{DG}_{\mathrm{H}}$	НОМО	LUMO	$\mathrm{DG}_{\mathrm{H}}$	HOMO	LUMO	$\mathrm{DG}_{\mathrm{HL}}$
			L			L			
AC	0.25	1.95	1.70	-7.19	-1.48	5.71	-7.01	-1.20	5.81
							(-5.72)	(-2.29)	(3.43)
PFBA	-0.54	2.74	3.28	-9.40	-1.08	8.32			
TFTA	0.13	2.81	2.68	-9.27	-1.53	7.74			
AC-PFBA	-0.08	1.64	1.72	-7.43	-1.89	5.54	-7.61	-1.84	5.77
							(-6.30)	(-2.93)	(3.37)
AC-TFTA	-0.08	1.84	1.92	-7.37	-1.80	5.57	-7.11.	-1.28	5.83
							(-5.82)	(-2.38)	(3.44)

**Table S2.** Vertical excitation energy (ee) in eV, oscillator strength (f) and character of the lowest-lying excited singlets of AC, AC-PFBA and AC-TFTA at the ground state geometry computed at the B3LYP-D3/6-311++G(d,p) level of theory. iCT = intraCharge Transfer, CT = Charge Transfer, LE = Local Excitation.

	AC		AC-PFBA		AC-TFTA			
state	ee	f	ee	f	character	ee	f	character
$\mathbf{S}_1$	2.76	0.0114	2.71	0.0148	iCT (AC)	2.78	0.0176	iCT (AC) +CT (AC→AC)
$S_2$	3.18	0.0003	3.14	0.0303	iCT (AC)	2.78	0.0071	iCT (AC) +CT (AC→AC)
$S_3$	3.22	0.0822	3.14	0.0689	LE (AC)	3.12	0.2064	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
$S_4$	3.83	0.0063	3.85	0.0664	LE (AC)	3.13	0.0002	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
$S_5$	3.89	0.0435	3.95	0.0000	CT (PFBA→AC)	3.18	0.0013	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
$S_6$	4.00	0.0358	4.01	0.0049	LE (AC)	3.18	0.0011	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
$S_7$	4.10	0.0009	4.03	0.0407	LE(AC) + CT	3.29	0.0000	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
					(AC→PFBA)			
$S_8$	4.34	0.0039	4.11	0.0003	CT (PFBA→AC)	3.29	0.0000	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
$S_9$	4.37	0.0101	4.19	0.0000	CT (PFBA→AC)	3.41	0.0000	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$
$S_{10}$	4.38	0.0151	4.28	0.0003	LE (AC)	3.41	0.0000	$CT (AC \rightarrow AC) + iCT (AC)$

Identification code	AC-Toluene_solvate_100K		AC-THF_solvate_100K		
Empirical formula	C <sub>23</sub> H <sub>24</sub> N <sub>2</sub>		C <sub>29</sub> H <sub>24</sub> N <sub>2</sub> O		
Formula weight	436.53		416.50		
Temperature [K]	100	0(2)	100(2)		
Wavelength [Å]	0.71	073	0.71073		
Crystal system	Mono	clinic	Monoclinic		
Space group	CZ	2/c	C2/c		
	a = 13.8355(8) Å	a= 90°	a = 14.1494(3) Å	a= 90°	
Unit cell dimensions	b = 10.5769(6) Å	b=112.5690(10)°	b = 10.4352(2) Å	b=96.6880(10)°	
	c = 17.1587(13) Å	g = 90°	c = 15.0991(4) Å	g = 90°	
Volume [Å <sup>3</sup> ]	2318	.7(3)	2214.	24(9)	
Ζ	4	1	4		
Density (calculated) [g cm <sup>-3</sup> ]	1.2	.51	1.249		
Absorption coefficient [mm <sup>-1</sup> ]	0.0	073	0.076		
F(000)	92	23	880		
Crystal size [mm]	0.420 x 0.392 x 0.364		0.288 x 0.157 x 0.076		
Theta range for data collection [°]	2.500 to	30.507	2.431 to 32.592°		
	-17 ≤	$h \le 19$	$-21 \le h \le 21$		
Index ranges	-15 ≤ 1	$k \le 15$	$-15 \le k \le 15$		
	<u>-24 ≤</u>	$l \leq 24$	<u>-22 ≤</u>	$l \leq 22$	
Reflections collected	13471		<u> </u>		
Independent reflections	3540 [R(101	(t) = 0.0330	4042 [R(int) = 0.0337]		
Completeness to theta = $25.242^{\circ}$	99.8	30%	99.7%		
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical	from equivalents	Semi-empirical from equivalents		
Max. and min. transmission	0.7464 an	d 0.66770	0.7464 and 0.6999		
Refinement method	Full-matrix least-squares on F <sup>2</sup>		Full-matrix least-squares on F <sup>2</sup>		
Data / restraints / parameters	3540 /	0 / 188	4042 / 0 / 178		
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	1.048		1.082		
Final R indices	R1 = 0.0470		R1 = 0.0584		
[1>2sigma(1)]	wR2 = 0.1237		wR2 = 0.1758		
R indices (all data)	RI = 0	0.1227	KI = 0.0695 WP2 = 0.1870		
Extinction coefficient	wK2 -	0.1327	m/2		
Largest diff neak and hole $[e^{\lambda}-3]$			0.575  and  0.206		
CCDC Number	0.372 all	1867	0.373 and -0.290		
	233	1002	2331803		

Table S3. Final refinement parameters for structures AC as solvated forms.

Identification code	AC-TFTA_100K		AC-PFBA_300K			
Empirical formula	$C_{58}H_{34}F_4N_4O_4$		$C_{32}H_{17}F_5N_2O_2$			
Formula weight	926.89		556.47			
Temperature [K]	100(2)		298	(2)		
Wavelength [Å]	0.71	.073	1.54	178		
Crystal system	Tric	linic	Mono	Monoclinic		
Space group	P	-1	P2 <sub>1</sub> /c			
	a = 8.2289(4) Å	a=90.7200(10)°	a = 22.6117(3) Å	a= 90°		
Unit cell dimensions	b = 12.7093(7) Å	b=95.6660(10)°	b = 8.39190(10) Å	b= 92.8810(10)°		
	c = 20.6345(10)  Å	$g = 91.6730(10)^{\circ}$	c = 13.2304(2)  Å	g = 90°		
Volume [Å <sup>3</sup> ]	2118.2	23(19)	2507.	36(6)		
Ζ		2	4			
Density (calculated) [g cm <sup>-3</sup> ]	1.4	153	1.474			
Absorption coefficient [mm <sup>-1</sup> ]	0.1	.04	1.010			
F(000)	9:	56	1136			
Crystal size [mm]	0.386 x 0.2	214 x 0.207	0.402 x 0.398 x 0.388			
Theta range for data collection [°]	2.010 to	31.506	3.915 to 70.054			
	<b>-</b> 12 ≤	$h \le 12$	$-27 \le h \le 26$			
Index ranges	-18 ≤ 1	$k \le 18$	$-10 \le k \le 10$			
	-29 ≤	<u>1≤29</u>	<u>-16≤</u>	l ≤ 16		
Reflections collected	519	935	401	72		
Independent reflections	14071 [R(in	(t) = 0.0358]	4711 [R(int) = 0.0342]			
Completeness to theta = $25.242^{\circ}$	99.	9%	99.0%			
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical	from equivalents	Semi-empirical from equivalents			
Max. and min. transmission	0.7464 ar	nd 0.6843	0.7535 and 0.6209			
Refinement method	Full-matrix leas	st-squares on F <sup>2</sup>	Full-matrix least-squares on F <sup>2</sup>			
Data / restraints / parameters	14071 /	0 / 637	4711 / 270 / 393			
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	1.028		1.042			
Final R indices	R1 = 0.0426		R1 = 0.0376			
[I>2sigma(I)]	wR2 = 0.1088		wR2 = 0.1020			
R indices (all data)	R1 = 0	0.0562	R1 = 0.0392			
Extinction coefficient	WK2 =	0.11//	WK2 = 0.103 / 0.0042(2)			
EXUNCTION COEFFICIENT	$\begin{array}{c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c $			$\frac{1}{10000}$		
Largest diff. peak and hole [eA <sup>-3</sup> ]	0.537 an	a -0.270	0.202 and	a -0.20/		
CCDC Number	235	1864	2351865			

### Table S4. Final refinement parameters for cocrystals.

#### References

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