

# Supporting Information

## **NIR Emission and Acid-Induced Intramolecular Electron Transfer Derived from a SOMO-HOMO Converted Non-Aufbau Electronic Structure**

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## Materials and methods

### Materials

Water was purified using AUTOPURE WD500 (Yamato Scientific Co., Ltd.). Acetonitrile (MeCN), dichloromethane (CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>), diethyl ether (Et<sub>2</sub>O), hexane, tetrahydrofuran (THF) and toluene used for synthesis were purified through organic solvent purifier (Nikko Hansen Co., Ltd.).

### Equipments

NMR spectra were recorded with a Bruker US500 spectrometer at room temperature. Chemical shifts in ppm were referenced to tetramethylsilane (0.00 ppm) as an internal standard. MALDI-TOF mass spectra were recorded with a Shimadzu KRATOS AXIMA-CFR TOF-MS spectrometer. UV-vis-NIR absorption spectra were recorded with a JASCO V570 spectrophotometer. Steady-state emission spectra were measured with HORIBA Fluorolog-3 spectrometer. ESR spectra were recorded with a JEOL JES-FA200 spectrometer. Observed *g*-values were calibrated with Mn<sup>2+</sup>/MgO marker. Emission lifetime was recorded using a Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaaurus-τ (C11367-22) with a picosecond light pulser (M12488-29).

Cyclic voltammetry was carried out under a N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere with a GC working electrode, a platinum wire counter electrode and an Ag<sup>+</sup>/Ag reference electrode (10 mM AgClO<sub>4</sub> and 0.1 mM <sup>*n*</sup>Bu<sub>4</sub>NClO<sub>4</sub> in MeCN solution) with an ALS-650DT voltammetric analyzer. The platinum working electrode was polished with Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> fine particles and washed with water and acetone with ultrasonication. The counter electrode was heated with oxygen flame to remove organic compounds on the surface and washed with acetone. The reference electrode was washed with acetone. The potential of the voltammograms is shown relative to the Fc<sup>+</sup>/Fc redox couple.

### DFT calculation

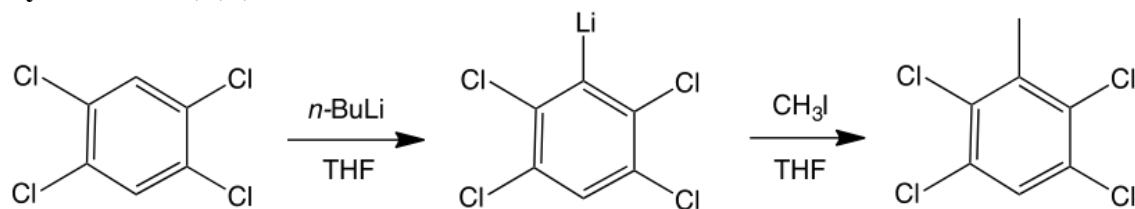
DFT calculations were carried out using Gaussian 09 program package.<sup>1</sup> The three-parameterized Becke-Lee-Yang-Parr (B3LYP) hybrid exchange-correlation functional<sup>2-4</sup> and long-range-corrected version of B3LYP using the Coulomb-attenuating method (CAM-B3LYP)<sup>5</sup> were employed with 6-31G\* basis set.<sup>6,7</sup> The open-shell electronic structures were approximated by spin-unrestricted method. All molecular structures were optimized with those level of theories in the gas phase, and were confirmed by calculating the molecular vibrational frequencies, in which no imaginary frequencies were observed in any of the compounds. We also optimized the structure of TPA-R<sup>•</sup> under a solvent (cyclohexane) condition with a polarizable continuum model (PCM) using the integral equation formalism variant (IEFPCM).<sup>8</sup> On the basis of this optimized structure, TD-DFT method was applied to calculate the excited states relevant to the absorption spectra in cyclohexane. B3LYP and CAM-B3LYP functional sets were used for the TD-DFT calculations with 6-31+G\* basis set.

### **Estimation of emission quantum yield**

Absolute emission quantum yield of TPA-R<sup>+</sup> was measured using a Hamamatsu Photonics Quantaaurus-QY Plus (C13534-02) with a high power Xe lamp unit and a NIR photoluminescence measurement unit. The quantum yields were 0.0010 and 0.0007 upon excitation at  $\lambda = 475$  and 650 nm, respectively. The emission quantum yield was also estimated based on the relative method using Indocyanine green as a standard. Indocyanine green is reported to display photoluminescence maximum wavelength at  $\lambda = 813$  nm with the emission quantum yield of 0.106 upon excitation at  $\lambda = 694.3$  nm.<sup>9</sup> The emission quantum yield of TPA-R<sup>+</sup> calculated according to the literature procedure<sup>10</sup> was 0.0004 upon excitation at  $\lambda = 700$  nm.

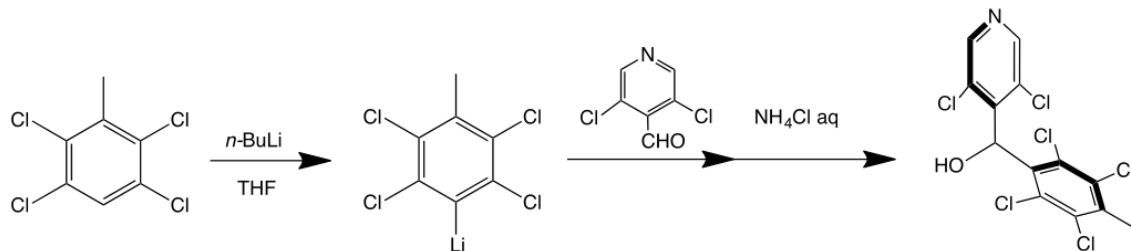
## Synthesis and characterization

### Synthesis of 2,3,5,6-tetrachlorotoluene



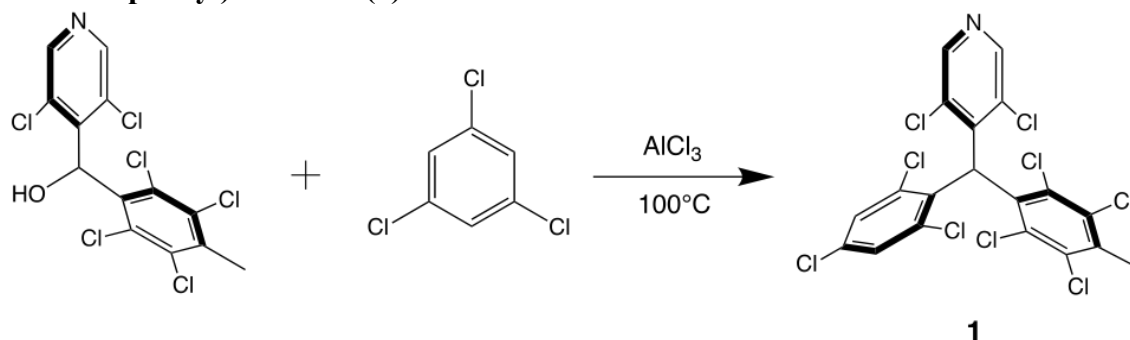
Under a  $\text{N}_2$  atmosphere, to a mixture of tetrachlorobenzene 10.50 g (48.6 mmol) in anhydrous THF (200 mL) was added  $n\text{-BuLi}$  (30 mL, 48.9 mmol) in 1.63 M hexane solution was added dropwise at  $-60^\circ\text{C}$  ( $\text{CHCl}_3\text{-CH}_3\text{CN}$ -dry ice bath) (tetrachlorobenzene was not completely dissolved at  $-60^\circ\text{C}$ ). The mixture was stirred for an hour and the resulting pink solution was cooled to  $-78^\circ\text{C}$  (acetone/dry ice bath). To the solution was added iodomethane 3 mL (48.2 mmol) in THF (30 mL) rapidly (not dropwise). Cooling was stopped, and the mixture was warmed to room temperature. The mixture was quenched with a water solution of  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  and extracted with ether. The organic layer was separated and the aqueous layer was extracted with ether (100 mL $\times$ 2). The extracts were combined with the organic phase, dried with  $\text{MgSO}_4$ . Evaporation of the solvent left a pale-yellow solid (10.44 g, 93 %). This crude product included little tetrachlorobenzene as impurity but was used in the next step without further purification.  $^1\text{H NMR}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ , 500 MHz): 2.53 (s, 3H), 7.41 (s, 1H). **GC-MS**:  $m/z = 230$  ( $[\text{C}_7\text{H}_4\text{Cl}_4]^+$ ).

### Synthesis of (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl)(2,3,5,6-tetrachloro-4-toluenyl)methanol



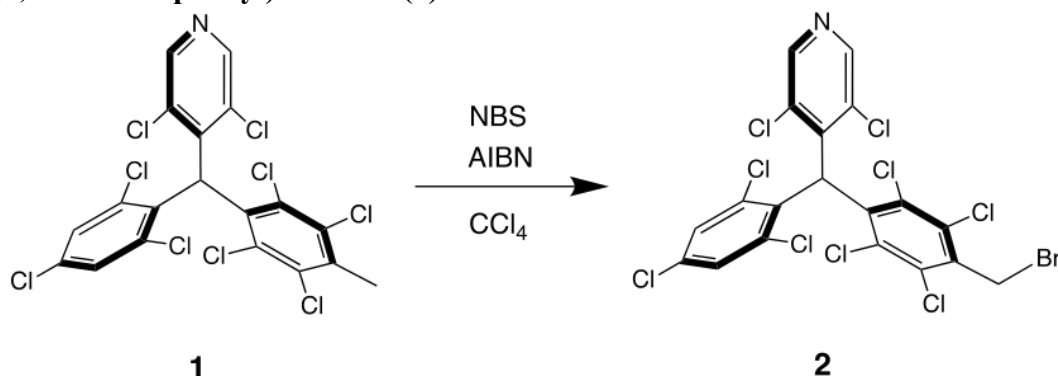
Under a N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere, to a solution of 2,3,5,6-tetrachlorotoluene (2.512 g, 10.9 mmol) in anhydrous THF (30 ml) was added dropwise a 1.60 M solution of *n*BuLi in hexane (8.8 mL, 10.6 mmol) at  $-78^{\circ}\text{C}$  (acetone/dry ice bath). The brown mixture was stirred for 15 min at  $-78^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and was added 3,5-dichloro-4-pyridinecarboxaldehyde<sup>11</sup> (2.070 g, 11.8 mmol) in THF (20 mL). The resulting mixture was stirred for 2 h at  $-78^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and was warmed up to room temperature. After addition of saturated aqueous NH<sub>4</sub>Cl, the mixture was extracted with Ether. The organic layer was separated and the water layer was washed with ether (50 mL $\times$ 2). The organic phase was collected, dried (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>) and filtered. Evaporation of the solvent gave yellow solid. The solid was washed with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (30 mL) and became white solid (1.834 g, 43 %). This product was used in the next step without further purification. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, 500 MHz): 2.62 (s, 3H), 3.41 (d, 1H, *J*=11 Hz), 6.85 (d, 1H, *J*=11 Hz), 8.44 (s, 2H). GC-MS: *m/z* = 405 ([C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>7</sub>Cl<sub>6</sub>NO]<sup>+</sup>).

**Synthesis of (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl)(2,3,5,6-tetrachlorotoluenyl)(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl) methane (1)**



Under a N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere, a mixture of (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl)(2,3,5,6-tetrachloro-4-toluenyl)methanol (1.43 g, 3.5 mmol) and 1,3,5-trichlorobenzene (3.24 g, 17.5 mmol) and aluminum chloride (1.10 mg, 8.8 mmol) was heated to 100°C. The suspension (melting point of 1,3,5-trichlorobenzene is 63°C) was stirred for 20 h. The resulting dark-brown mixture was cooled to room temperature, dissolved in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> and added to ice water. The mixture was neutralized by aqueous NaHCO<sub>3</sub> and the organic layer was separated. The water layer was extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (3 times). The organic layers were combined, dried (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>), and evaporated. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/hexane = 1/1). Drying in vacuo gave white solid of (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl)(2,3,5,6-tetrachlorotoluenyl)(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)methane (846 mg, 42%). This product was used in the next step without further purification. **<sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, 500 MHz):** 2.62 (d, 3H, *J*=2.0 Hz), 6.80 (s, 1H), 7.25 (m, 1H), 7.37 (m, 1H), 8.36 (d, 1H, *J*=6.5 Hz), 8.47 (d, 1H, *J*=10 Hz). **GC-MS:** *m/z* = 569 ([C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>8</sub>Cl<sub>9</sub>N]<sup>+</sup>).

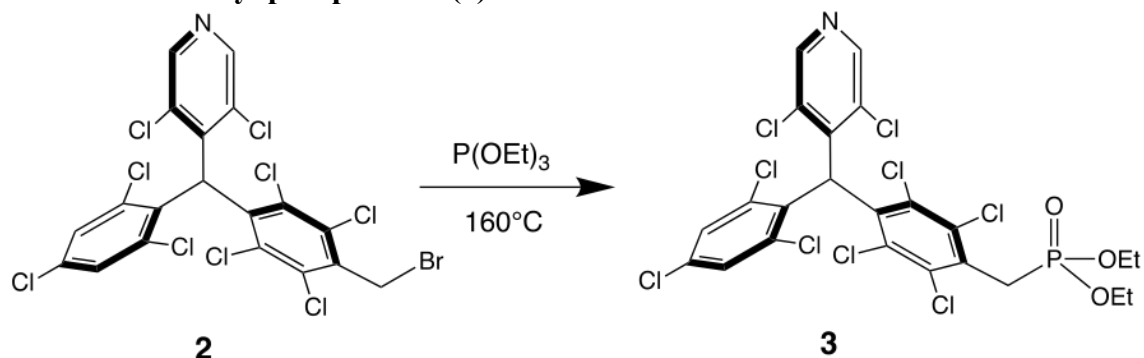
**Synthesis of (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl)(4-bromomethyl-2,3,5,6-tetrachlorophenyl)(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)methane (2)**



Under a N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere, to a solution of compound **1** (440 mg, 0.77 mmol) in CCl<sub>4</sub> (15 mL) was added a mixture of *N*-bromosuccinimide (NBS) (686 mg, 3.9 mmol) and azobis(isobutyronitrile) (AIBN) (32 mg, 0.19 mmol). The mixture was refluxed for 2 days. During the reaction, NBS (1969 mg, 11 mmol) and AIBN (106 mg, 0.65 mmol) were split into four portions and each portion was added every 6-12 hours. The resulting mixture was cooled, added CCl<sub>4</sub> (15 mL) and filtered. The filtrate was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>) to give colorless oil. Evaporation in vacuo gave white solid of (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl)(4-bromomethyl-2,3,5,6-tetrachlorophenyl)(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)methane (361 mg, 72 %). This crude was used in the next step without further purification. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, 500 MHz): 4.85 (s, 2H), 6.84 (s, 1H), 7.33 (m, 1H), 7.42 (m, 1H), 8.40 (d, 1H, *J*=8.8 Hz), 8.52 (d, 1H, *J*=10 Hz) MALDI-TOF-MS: *m/z* = 648 ([C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>7</sub>BrCl<sub>9</sub>N]<sup>+</sup>).

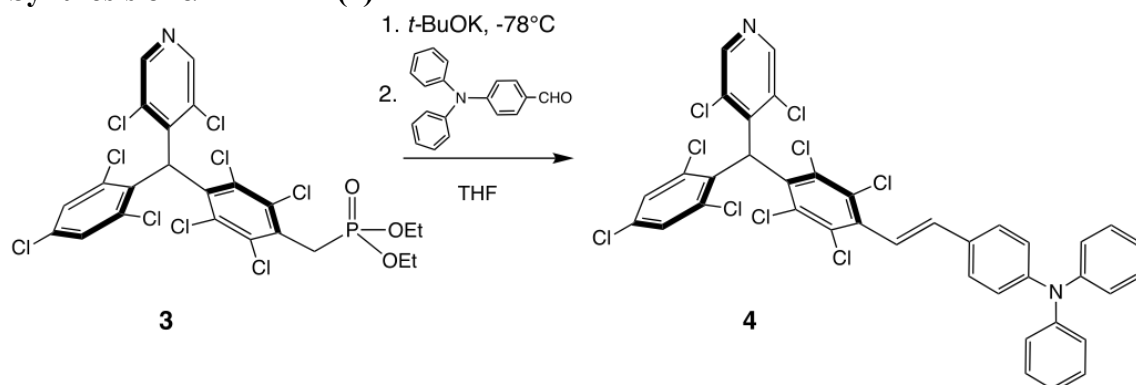


**Synthesis of diethyl (3,5-dichloro-4-pyridyl) (2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)methyl-2,3,5,6-tetrachloro-benzyl phosphonate (3)**



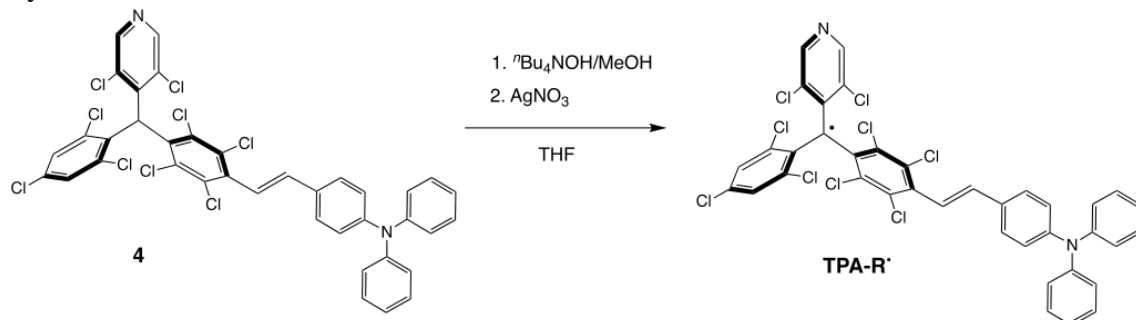
Under an  $\text{N}_2$  atmosphere, a solution of compound **2** (196 mg, 0.30 mmol) in  $\text{P(OEt)}_3$  (0.50 mL, 3.0 mmol) was heated under reflux for 2 h at  $160^\circ\text{C}$ . After cooling the resulting solution to room temperature,  $\text{P(OEt)}_3$  was removed by evaporation. The resulting residue was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent:  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ) to yield red oil of compound **3** (111 mg, 52 %).  $^1\text{H NMR}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ , 500 MHz): 1.26 (t, 6H,  $J=7.0$  Hz), 3.77 (d, 2H,  $J=22.7$  Hz), 4.07 (m, 4H), 6.80 (s, 1H), 7.26 (m, 1H), 7.38 (m, 1H), 8.36 (d, 1H,  $J=9.5$  Hz), 8.48 (d, 1H,  $J=9.2$  Hz). **HRMS (FAB+)**:  $m/z$  Calcd for  $\text{C}_{23}\text{H}_{17}\text{Cl}_9\text{NO}_3\text{P}$ : 701.8221, Found: 701.8226.

### Synthesis of $\alpha$ H-TPA-R (4)



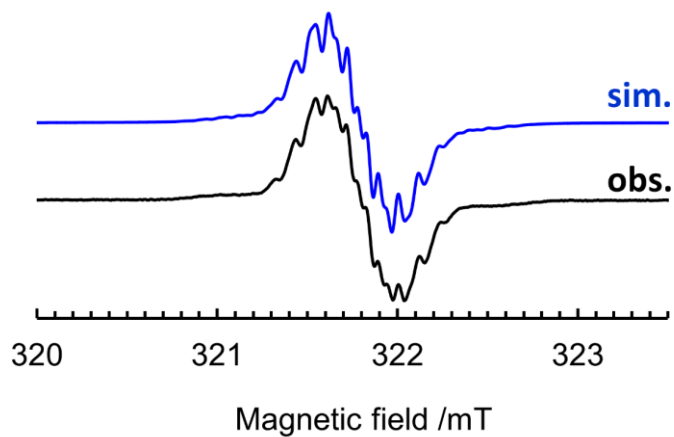
Under a  $\text{N}_2$  atmosphere, to a phosphonate compound **3** (63.3 mg, 0.090 mmol), 1 M *t*-BuOK solution in THF (0.20 mL, 0.197 mmol) was added to a solution of the phosphonate in dry THF (10 mL) at  $-78^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The resulting orange solution was stirred for 20 min and was added 4-diphenylaminobenzaldehyde (29.4 mg, 0.108 mmol). The resulting purple solution was warmed up to room temperature and stirred for 18 h. The reaction mixture was extracted with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ , washed with water and dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ). The crude product obtained by evaporation was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent:  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ /hexane = 1/1) to yield yellow oil (32.8 mg, 44 %).  **$^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ , 500 MHz):** 6.36 (d, 1H), 6.74 (d, 1H), 6.84 (s, 1H), 7.04-7.07 (m, 8H), 7.13 (m, 2H), 7.24 (m, 2H), 7.28 (m, 2H), 7.40 (d, 2H), 8.38 (d, 1H), 8.50 (d, 1H). **HRMS (FAB+):**  $m/z$  Calcd for  $\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{22}\text{Cl}_9\text{N}_2$ : 819.8902, Found: 819.8916.

### Synthesis of TPA-R'



Under a  $\text{N}_2$  atmosphere, compound **4** (24 mg, 0.029 mmol) was dissolved in dry THF (24 mL). 1 M  $t\text{Bu}_4\text{NOH}$  solution in THF (0.070 mL, 0.070 mmol) was added. The resulting purple solution was stirred overnight in the dark. Silver(I) nitrate (44 mg, 0.174 mmol) was added and stirred for 3 h. The resulting suspension was filtered, evaporated, purified by  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  column chromatography ( $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{hexane} = 1/1$ ) and dried in vacuo to afford red oil. Slow evaporation of acetone/ethanol solution provided reddish brown powder (13.9 mg, 58 %). **HRMS (ESI-TOF+)**  $m/z$  Calcd for  $\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{21}\text{Cl}_9\text{N}_2$ : 818.8823, Found: 818.8817. HPLC chromatogram (SunFire Silica Prep Column, 100 Å, 5  $\mu\text{m}$ , 4.6 mm  $\times$  250 mm, eluent:  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ) showed a single peak attributed to TPA-R', confirming the high purity.

## ESR spectroscopy



**Figure S1** ESR spectrum of the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  solution of  $\text{TPA-R}^\cdot$  at 175 K (black) and computer simulation (blue). Hyperfine coupling constants used for the simulation are shown in Table S1.

**Table S1** Hyperfine coupling constants (mT) used for simulating ESR spectrum and DFT-calculated values.

	N	$H_{\text{aryl}}$	$H_{\text{vinyl1}}$	$H_{\text{vinyl2}}$	ortho- $^{13}\text{C}$	$\alpha$ - $^{13}\text{C}$
Sim.	0.107	0.112 <sup>a</sup>	0.163	0.066	1	-
Calcd.	0.1222	0.1338	0.1751	-0.0889	1.0633	3.6508
		0.1335			1.0996	
		0.1516			1.0992	
		0.1423			1.0516	
					1.1035	
					1.1463	

# TDDFT calculation for TPA-R\*

**Table S2** Absorption wavelengths and energies of TPA-R\* in cyclohexane and the corresponding transition energies and oscillator strengths calculated by the TD-DFT method using uB3LYP or uCAM-B3LYP functionals with 6-31+G\* basis set.

	$\lambda_{\max}^a/\text{nm}$	$E_{\max}^a/\text{eV}$	$E_{\text{calc}}^b/\text{eV}$	Oscillator Strength <sup>c</sup>	Configuration	Coefficient <sup>d</sup>
uB3LYP	714	1.73	1.30	0.1094	207B→208B	0.991
	482	2.57	2.39	0.0960	206B→208B 208A→209A	0.688 −0.414
	393	3.16	2.71	0.0314	200B→208B	0.819
			2.84	0.7703	208A→209A	0.590
					207B→209B	0.664
			2.96	0.0790	197B→208B	−0.618
			3.20	0.0267	208A→210A	0.657
uCAM-B3LYP	714	1.73	—	—	—	—
	482	2.57	2.75	0.1314	206B→208B 207B→208B	0.402 0.411
	393	3.16	3.03	0.3044	207B→208B	0.664

*a* Absorption maxima

*b* Corresponding transition energy calculated by TD-DFT method

*c* Oscillator strength calculated by TD-DFT method

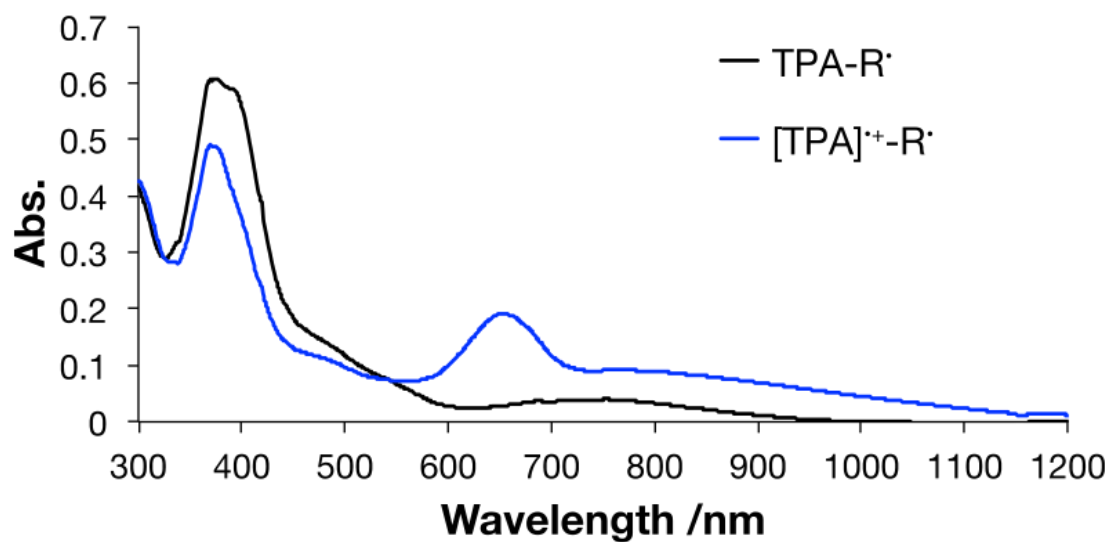
*d* Major contribution (>0.4) are shown.

### Stokes shifts of TPA-R<sup>•</sup>

**Table S3** Absorption and emission spectral data for TPA-R<sup>•</sup> in cyclohexane and chloroform solution.

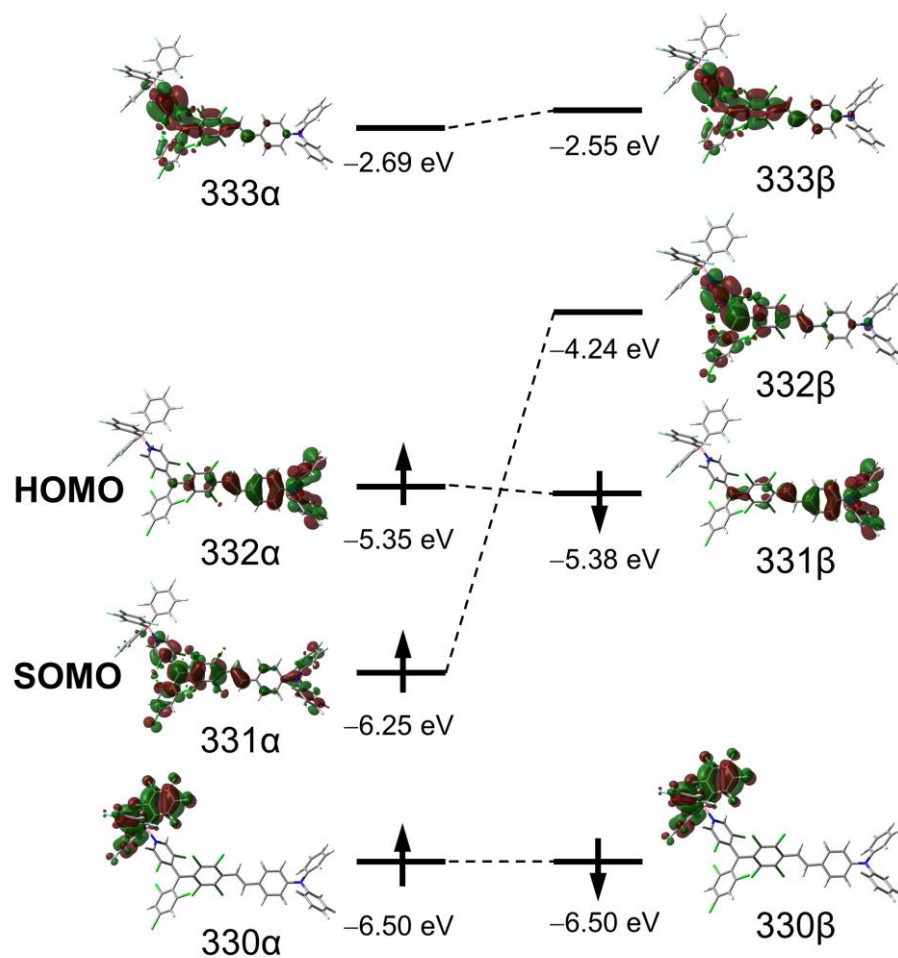
	$\lambda_{\text{abs}}$ (nm)	$\lambda_{\text{exc}}$ (nm)	$\lambda_{\text{em}}$ (nm)	Stokes Shift (cm <sup>-1</sup> )
Cyclohexane	714	400	915	3077
Chloroform	733	400	1003	3673

UV-vis-NIR absorption spectroscopy (one-electron oxidation of TPA-R<sup>•</sup>)



**Figure S2** UV-vis-NIR absorption spectra of TPA-R<sup>•</sup> and [TPA]<sup>•+</sup>-R<sup>•</sup> in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> containing <sup>n</sup>Bu<sub>4</sub>PF<sub>6</sub> (0.1 M). [TPA]<sup>•+</sup>-R<sup>•</sup> was generated in-situ by electrochemical oxidation.

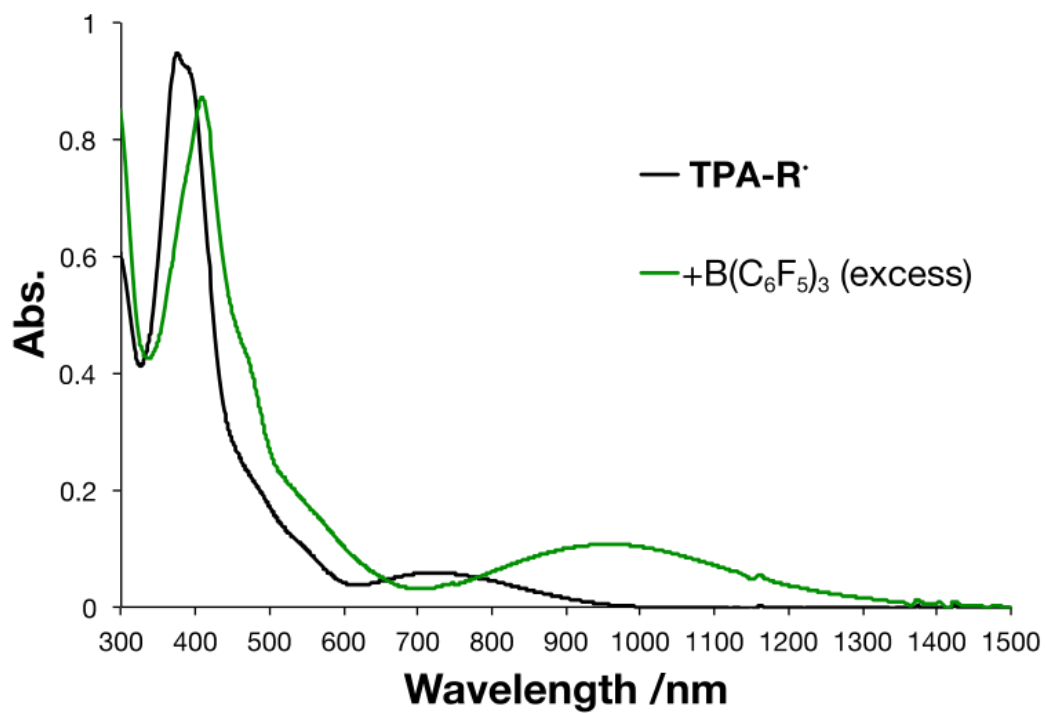
DFT calculation for [TPA-R<sup>•</sup>][B(C<sub>6</sub>F<sub>5</sub>)<sub>3</sub>]



**Figure S3** MO diagram for [TPA-R<sup>•</sup>][B(C<sub>6</sub>F<sub>5</sub>)<sub>3</sub>] calculated using DFT (uB3LYP/6-31G<sup>\*</sup>).

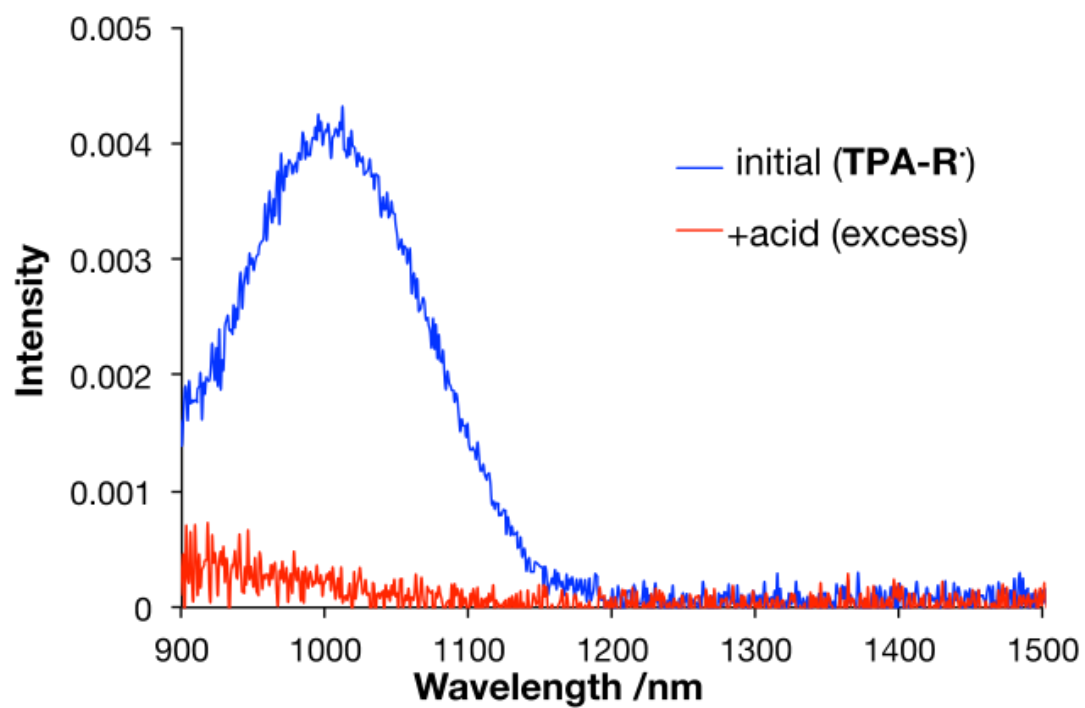


UV-vis-NIR absorption spectroscopy (Lewis-acid addition)



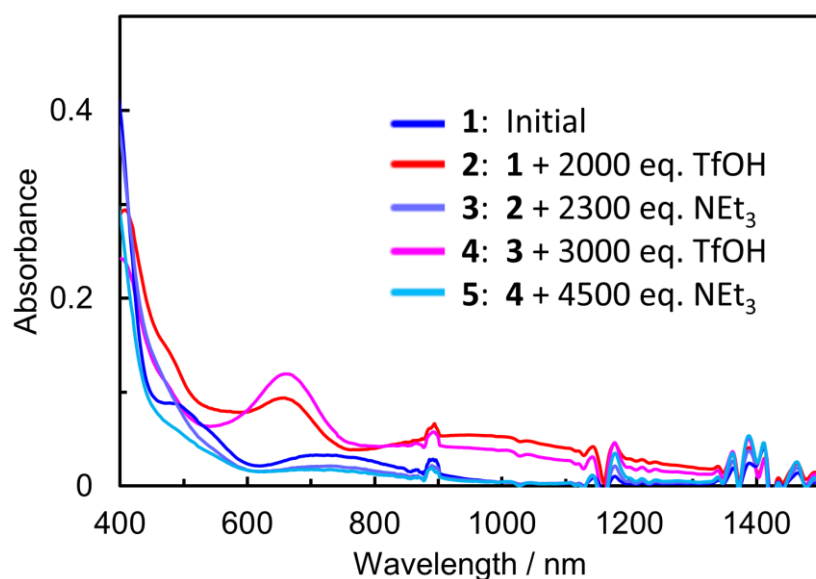
**Figure S4** Change in UV-vis-NIR absorption spectra upon addition of B(C<sub>6</sub>F<sub>5</sub>)<sub>3</sub> (Lewis acid) to a CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> solution of TPA-R•.

Emission spectroscopy (Brønsted-acid addition)



**Figure S5** Changes in emission spectra upon addition of  $\text{CF}_3\text{SO}_3\text{H}$  (acid) to a cyclohexane/ $\text{CHCl}_3$  (1/1) solution of  $\text{TPA-R}^\bullet$ .

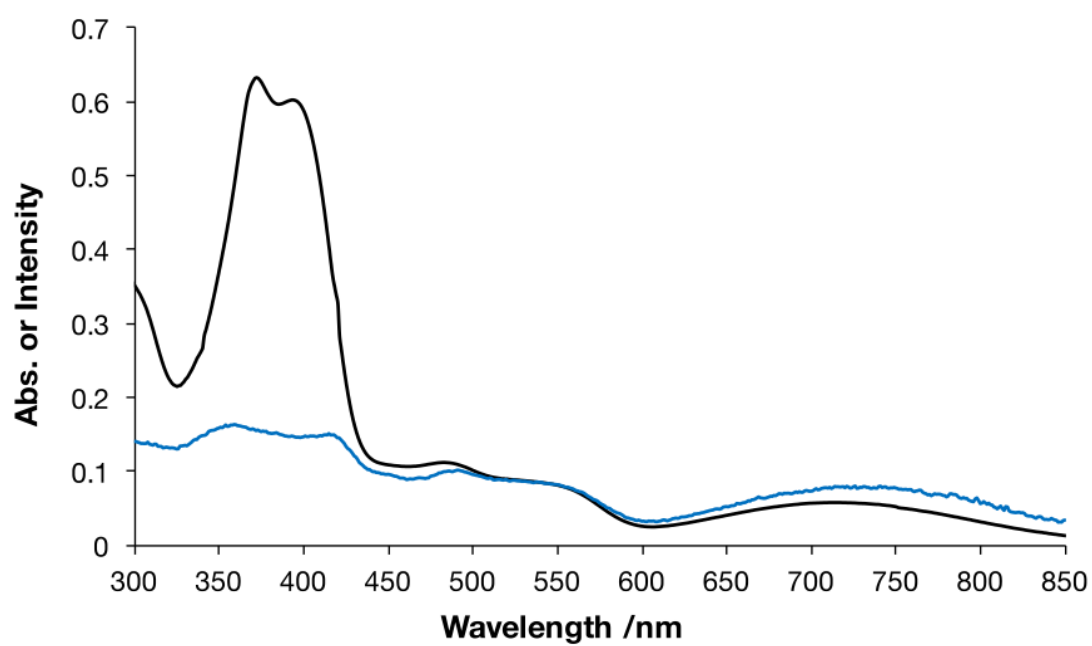
UV-vis-NIR absorption spectroscopy (Brønsted-acid and base addition)



**Figure S6** Changes in UV-vis-NIR absorption spectra upon addition of TfOH (acid) and NEt<sub>3</sub> (base) to a CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> solution of TPA-R\*.

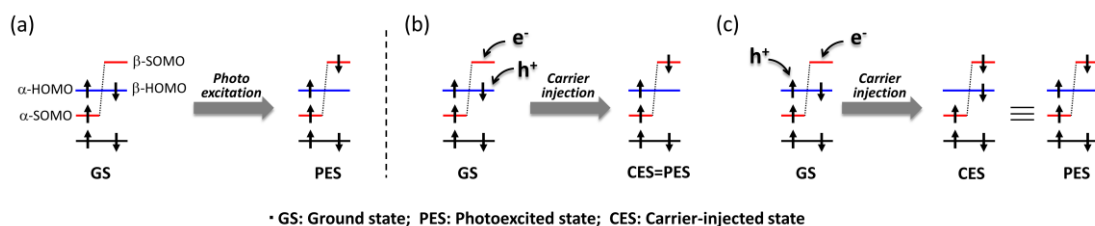
In Figure S6, the absorbance of the transition band around 650 nm, which is the indicative of the intramolecular electron transfer, is larger in **4** than in **2**. This would probably be due to the enhanced polarity of the solution by larger amount of the salt (NEt<sub>3</sub>H)OTf in **4**. The enhanced polarity is expected to facilitate the intramolecular electron transfer.

Excitation spectrum of TPA-R\*

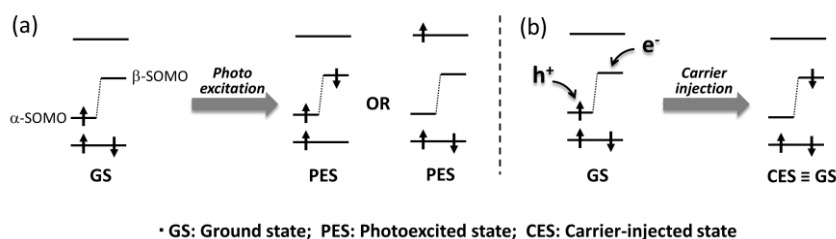


**Figure S7** Excitation spectrum of TPA-R\* observed for emission wavelength at 907 nm (blue line) and absorption spectrum of TPA-R\* (black line) in a cyclohexane solution.

## Schematic descriptions of photoexcitation and carrier injection



**Figure S8** Schematic (a) photoexcitation (b, c) and two possible carrier injection processes of radicals with a SOMO-HOMO converted non-Aufbau electronic structure. Blue and red lines indicate the energy levels of the HOMO (electron-donor centered orbital) and SOMO (radical-centered orbital). For simplicity, the energy levels of  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -orbitals other than SOMOs are assumed to degenerate.



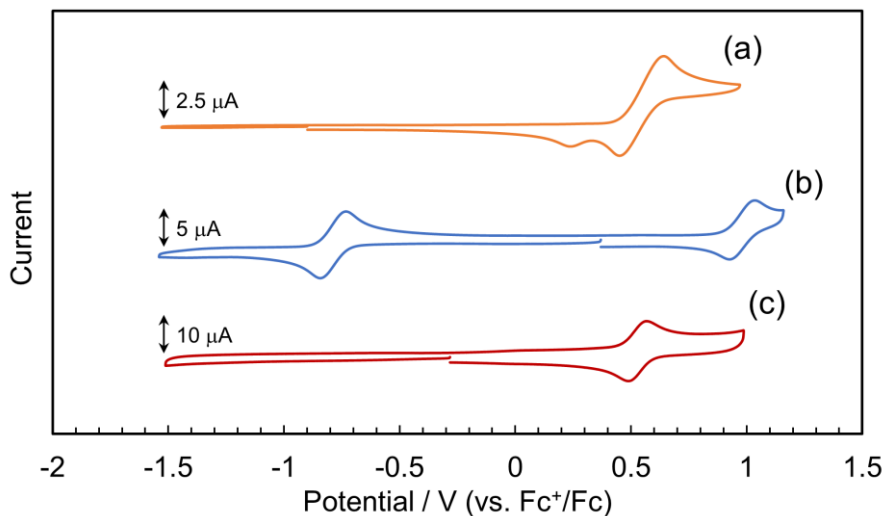
**Figure S9** Schematic (a) photoexcitation (b) and carrier injection processes of radicals with conventional Aufbau orbital configuration. For simplicity, the energy levels of  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -orbitals other than SOMOs are assumed to degenerate.

As shown in Figure S8a, photoexcitation of a radical with a SOMO-HOMO converted non-Aufbau electronic structure transfers an electron from the  $\beta$ -HOMO to the  $\beta$ -SOMO, then the radical in the photoexcited state (PES) has two electrons in its radical-centered orbital (shown in red) and one electron on its electron-donor centered orbital (shown in blue). Upon carrier injection into the radical, the electron is expected to be injected to the  $\beta$ -SOMO, which is an empty orbital with the lowest energy, while hole is assumed to be injected into either  $\alpha$ - or  $\beta$ -HOMOs (Figure S8b,c), which are filled orbitals with the highest energy. As shown in Figure S8b and S8c, the carrier injected state (CES) is identical to the PES in these two cases. We note that, in Figure S8c, the CES looks different from the PES, but this difference originates from the way of depicting spin configuration in the CES, in which  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -electron should become  $\beta$ - and  $\alpha$ -electrons, on the basis of the number of their total electrons ( $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -electrons are defined in such a way that total number of electron is larger in  $\alpha$  than in  $\beta$ ) Indeed, we can confirm that both the CES and PES have two electrons in its radical-centered orbital (shown in red)

and one electron on its electron-donor centered orbital (shown in blue), and that the spin multiplicity of CES and PES is the same (= doublet). Consequently, carrier injection can form the PES in this type of radicals.

In case of radicals with conventional Aufbau orbital configuration,  $\alpha$ - or  $\beta$ -electron are photoexcited to form the PES upon photoexcitation (Figure S9a), while the hole and electron are injected into  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -SOMOs, respectively, to yield the CES upon electrical excitation (Figure S9b). The resulting CES is not the PES but the GS. According to this simple consideration, the carrier injection does not produce the PES but afford the GS in this type of radicals.

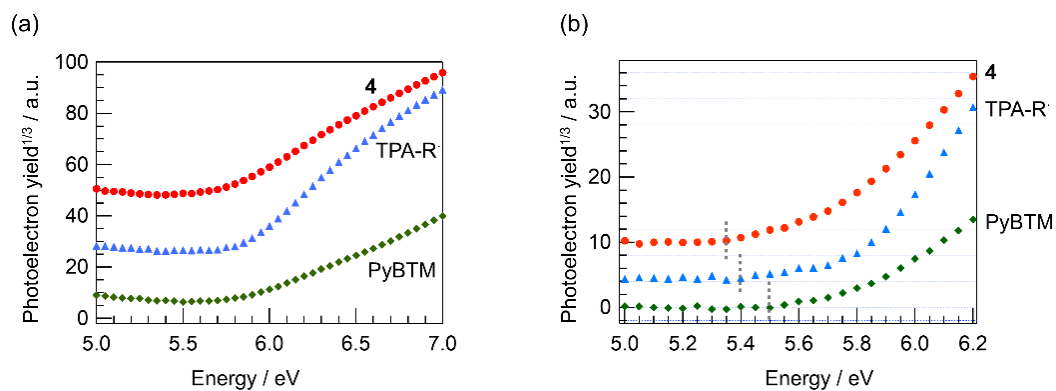
# Cyclic voltammograms of the related compounds



**Figure S10** Cyclic voltammograms of (a) TPA, (b) PyBTM, and (c) **4** in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> containing 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub>, obtained at a scan rate of 0.1 V s<sup>-1</sup>.

The reduction potential of TPA-R<sup>•</sup> ( $E^{0'}_1 = -0.69$  V vs. Fc<sup>+</sup>/Fc) is close to that of PyBTM ( $E^{0'}_1 = -0.79$  V) while **4** does not show any reduction waves in this potential region. These results indicate that the first reduction of TPA-R<sup>•</sup> is attributed to the diphenylpyridylmethyl radical moiety. On the other hand, the oxidation potential of TPA-R<sup>•</sup> ( $E^{0'}_2 = 0.38$  V) is close to that of **4** ( $E^{0'}_1 = 0.53$  V) while less positive than that of PyBTM ( $E^{0'}_2 = 0.98$  V), suggesting that the first oxidation TPA-R<sup>•</sup> occurs mainly at the TPA moiety. These results support the SOMO–HOMO converted electronic structure of TPA-R<sup>•</sup>.

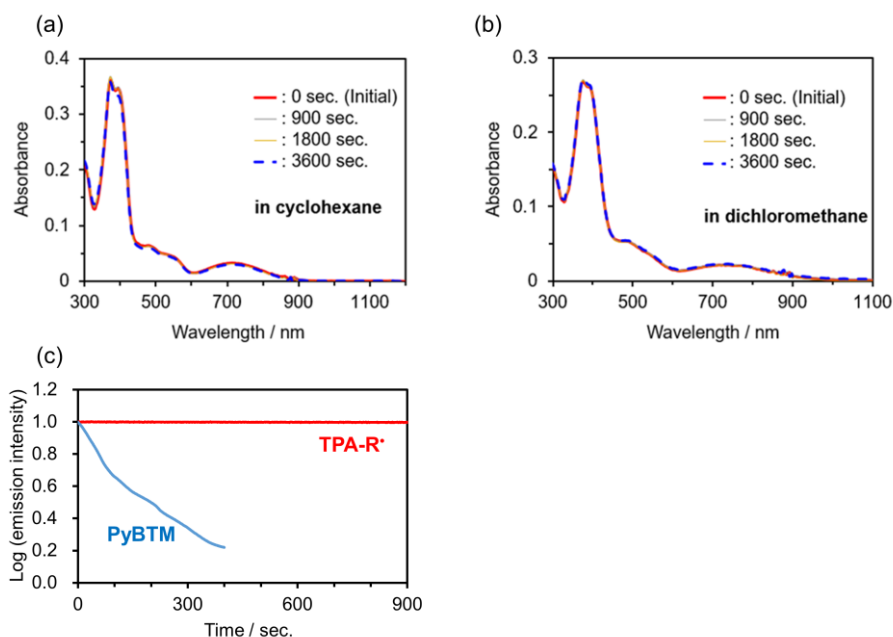
## Photoemission yield spectroscopy



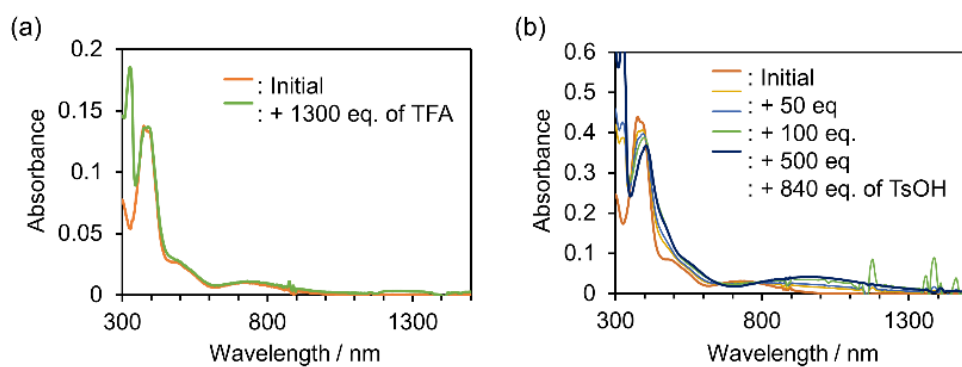
**Figure S11** Photoemission yield spectra of related compounds. (a) Raw data and (b) baseline-corrected data. The spectra of **4** (red) and TPA-R\* (blue) were shifted to upper direction for clarity. Gray dotted lines in (b) indicate estimated ionization potentials. The compounds were spin-coated or drop-casted on ITO substrates.



## Photostability examination

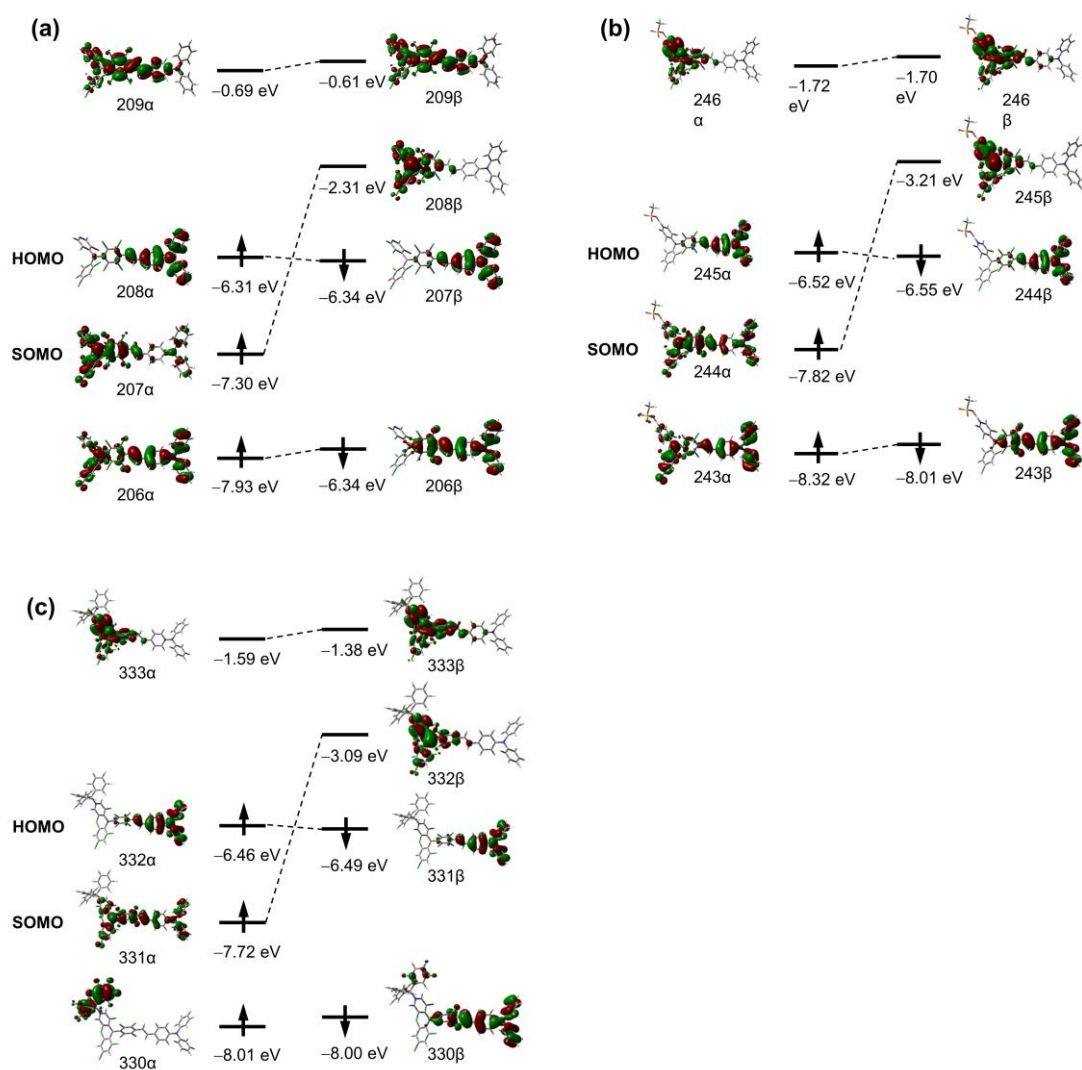


**Figure S12** Time-dependent absorption spectra of TPA-R\* in cyclohexane (a) and in dichloromethane (b) upon continuous photoirradiation at  $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 400$  nm. (c) Time-dependent emission intensities of TPA-R\* and PyBTM in cyclohexane upon continuous photoirradiation at  $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 400$  and 370 nm, respectively.



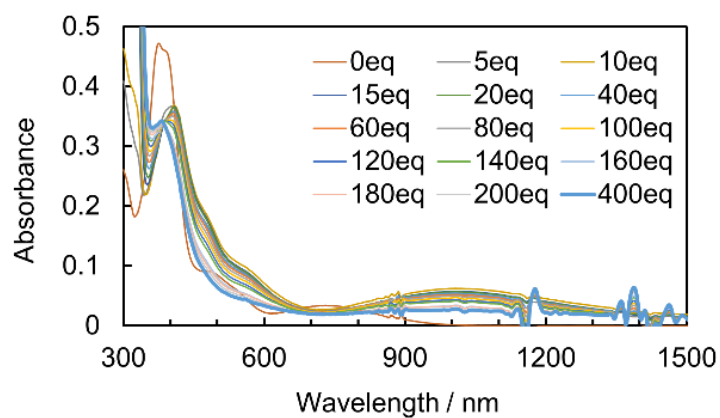
**Figure S13** UV–vis–NIR absorption spectra upon the addition of (a) trifluoroacetic acid or (b) tosylic acid to TPA-R<sup>\*</sup> in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>3</sub>CN (5/1). Intramolecular electron transfer was not observed in both cases.

MO diagrams calculated using uCAM-B3LYP functional



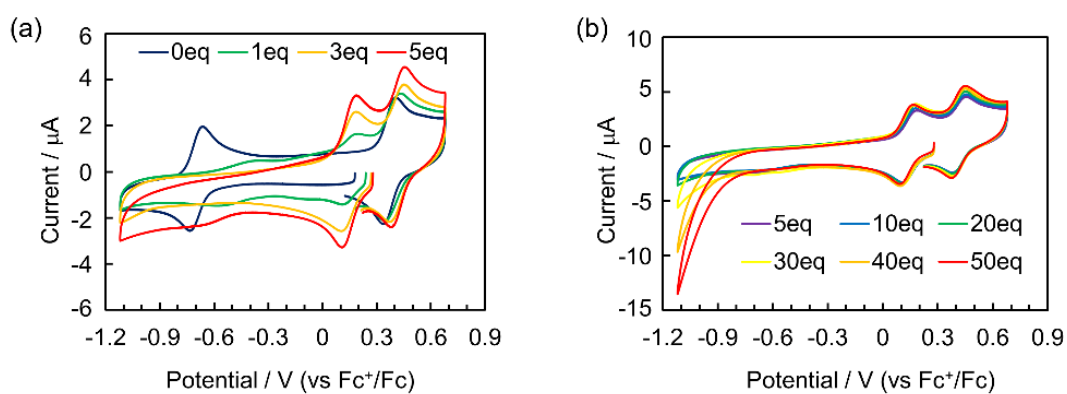
**Figure S14** MO diagrams for (a) TPA-R<sup>•</sup>, (b) [TPA-RH<sup>•</sup>]OTf, and (c) [TPA-R<sup>•</sup>][B(C<sub>6</sub>F<sub>5</sub>)<sub>3</sub>] calculated using DFT (uCAM-B3LYP/6-31G<sup>\*</sup>).

UV-vis-NIR absorption spectroscopy upon gradual addition of TfOH



**Figure S15** UV-vis-NIR absorption spectra upon gradual addition of TfOH to TPA-R<sup>•</sup> in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>3</sub>CN (5/1). The electronic transition band around 650 nm attributed to an intramolecular electron transfer was not detected even under addition of 400 eq. of TfOH.

Cyclic voltammetry upon titration with TfOH



**Figure S16** Cyclic voltammograms of TPA-R\* in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> containing 0.1 M tBu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> obtained at a scan rate of 0.1 V·s<sup>-1</sup> upon addition of TfOH. (a) 0 to 5 eq. of TfOH. (b) 5 to 50 eq. of TfOH.

# Parameters for simulating a IVCT band

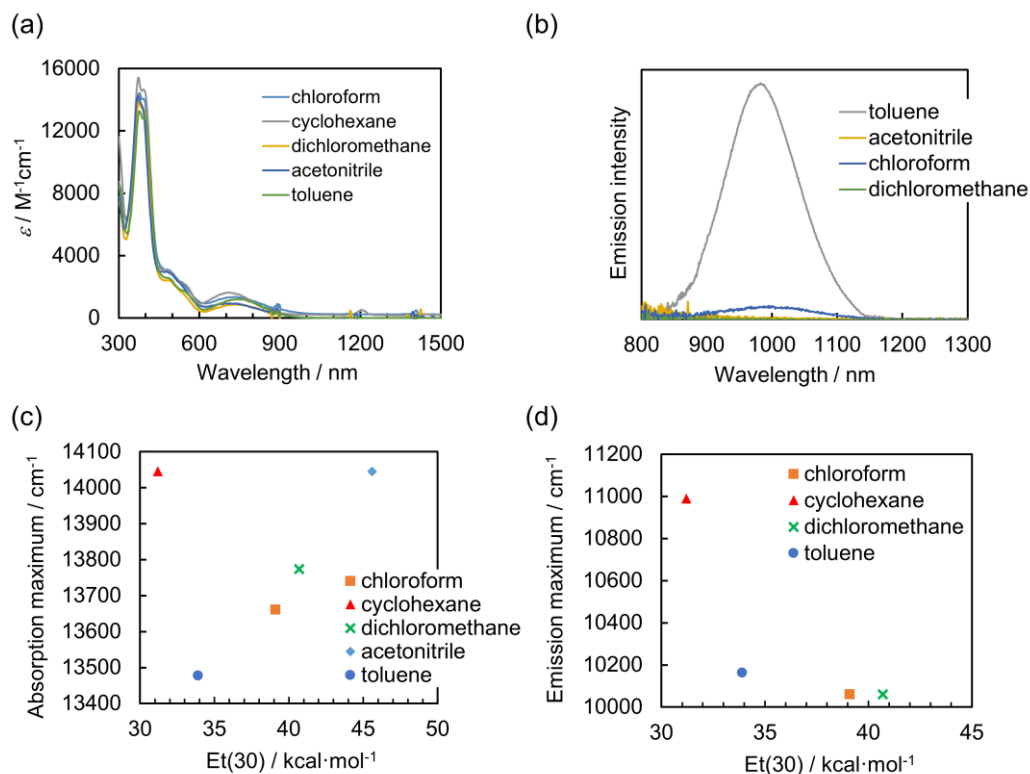
**Table S4** Parameters for simulating the IVCT band in the absorption spectrum of TPA-R<sup>•</sup>.

Solvent	$r_{DA} / \text{\AA}^a$	$\nu_{\max} / \text{cm}^{-1}$	$\epsilon_{\max} / \text{M}^{-1}\text{cm}^{-1}$	$\Delta \nu_{1/2} / \text{cm}^{-1}$	$H_{ab} / \text{cm}^{-1}{}^b$
Cyclohexane	12.4	14096	1435	3419	437
Toluene	12.4	13479	1215	3311	387
Chloroform	12.4	13730	1106	3855	402
Dichloromethane	12.4	13355	1369	4406	472
Acetonitrile	12.4	13935	944	4081	385

a: Distance between the nitrogen atom at the triphenylamine moiety and the centering carbon atom at the triarylmethyl radical moiety estimated from DFT-optimized structure.

b: Electronic coupling  $H_{ab}$  was estimated by analyzing the lowest-energy transition band in absorption spectra based on the Hush theory ( $H_{ab} = 0.0206(\nu_{\max}\epsilon_{\max}\Delta\nu_{1/2})^{1/2} / r_{DA}$ ).<sup>12,13</sup>

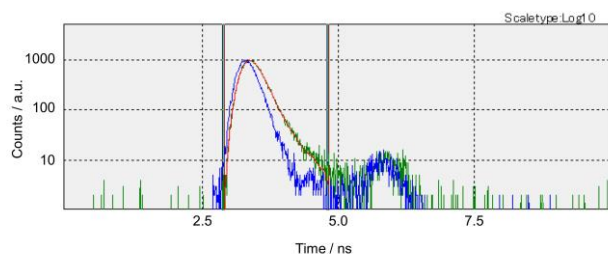
## Solvent-dependent optical properties



**Figure S17** Solvent-dependent (a) absorption and (b) emission spectra of TPA-R\* in various solvents with different polarity. The (c) absorption and (d) emission peak maxima were plotted against Et(30).

As the solvent polarity increased, the peak energy of the lowest-energy absorption band increased while that of the emission band decreased, except for cyclohexane. These two trends are presumably resulted from the competition between the increase of the solvent reorganization energy ( $\lambda_o$ ) and the decrease of  $\Delta G^{00}$ .<sup>14</sup> Charge transfer excited state has zwitterionic character and is more polar than the ground state, thus  $\Delta G^{00}$  decreases and  $\lambda_o$  increases as the solvent polarity increases. Judging from the experimentally obtained solvent dependence,  $\lambda_o$  would affect more than  $\Delta G^{00}$  in the present case.

## Emission decay curve



**Figure S18** Emission decay curve (green) at  $\lambda = 915$  nm of TPA-R\* upon photoexcitation ( $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 405$  nm). Blue and red lines indicate instrument response function and fitting curve with  $\tau_1 = 0.08$  ns ( $A_1 = 123$ ) and  $\tau_2 = 0.43$  ns ( $A_2 = 3.93$ ), respectively.  $\tau_{\text{ave}} = 0.13$  ns is estimated using an equation:  $\tau_{\text{ave}} = (\tau_1^2 A_1 + \tau_2^2 A_2) / (\tau_1 A_1 + \tau_2 A_2)$ .



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