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## **Molecular Diversity**

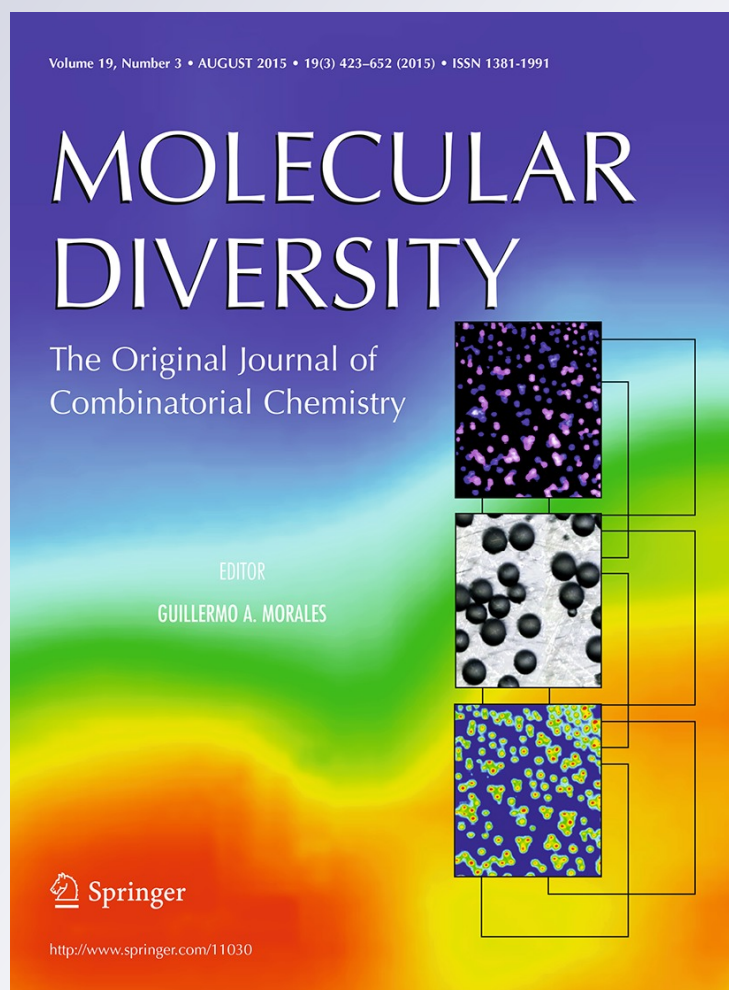
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# Efficient synthesis of highly substituted tetrahydroindazolone derivatives

Angela Scala<sup>1</sup> · Anna Piperno<sup>1</sup> · Francesco Risitano<sup>1</sup> ·  
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**Abstract** A straightforward and efficient method for the synthesis of novel highly substituted and diversely functionalized indazolone derivatives has been developed. The transformation consists of a cyclocondensation of selected 1, 3, 3'-tricarboxyls with monosubstituted hydrazines. The starting  $\beta$ -triketones were prepared by an efficient chemo- and regioselective method under MW irradiation, exploiting the oxazolone chemistry. The reaction is easily accomplished under mild conditions and appears versatile, providing a synthetic diversification method with potential for drug-like compounds preparation.

**Keywords** Indazolone · Hydrazines · Oxazolone ·  $\beta$ -Triketones

## Introduction

Indazole- and indazolone-based compounds have recently received special attention in virtue of their useful properties [1] and biological activities, such as analgesic [2], anticancer [3,4], anti-inflammatory [5], antifertility [6], antimicrobial

[7], antifungal [8], anti-angiogenic [9], antiproliferative [10] and cytotoxic [11].

Nonetheless, the synthesis of these privileged structures suffers from some limitations, such as the difficulties of regio- and stereochemical control. Accordingly, current efforts are directed towards the identification of new, efficient and selective synthetic strategies for the construction of highly substituted and diversely functionalized indazolone derivatives.

To address this issue, in the framework of our studies dealing with the design of poly functionalized heterocycles [12–18], we report herein the synthesis of a set of indazolone-based compounds, with the aim to maximize their molecular diversity by exploiting the oxazolone chemistry to functionalize the starting 1,3-dicarbonyls.

Indeed, it is well known the usefulness of oxazol-5-(4H)-ones as versatile intermediates for the preparation of highly substituted heterocycles and structurally complex amino acids [19]. Furthermore, our interest in the use of enolizable cyclic 1,3-dicarbonyls as building blocks for the synthesis of novel molecular architectures is well documented [17,18,20–22].

The proposed strategy appears versatile providing a synthetic diversification method with potential for drug-like compounds preparation. The biological relevance of selected novel compounds has been preliminarily assessed in vitro against HT-29 colorectal adenocarcinoma and HepG2 hepatocellular carcinoma cells, evaluating both the antiproliferative and the cytotoxic effects. Additionally, our indazolone scaffold includes necessary requirements for the optimization of pharmaceutical properties, such as the presence of an amino group in the side chain, which could be further exploited to improve the druggability by conjugation with aminoacids, peptides or biomaterials.

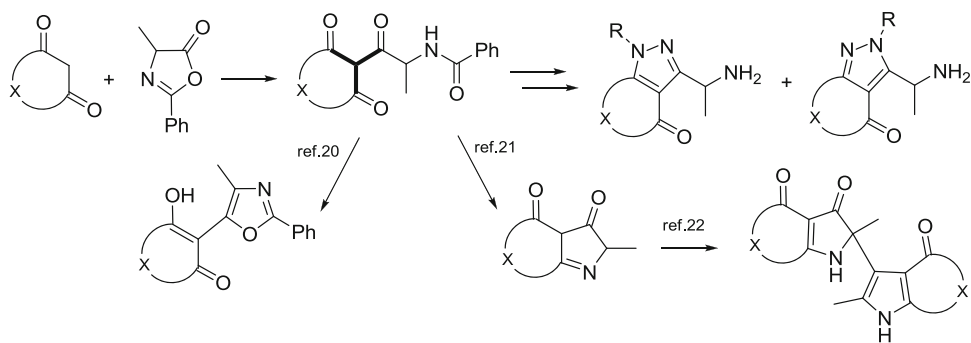
**Electronic supplementary material** The online version of this article (doi:10.1007/s11030-015-9583-5) contains supplementary material, which is available to authorized users.

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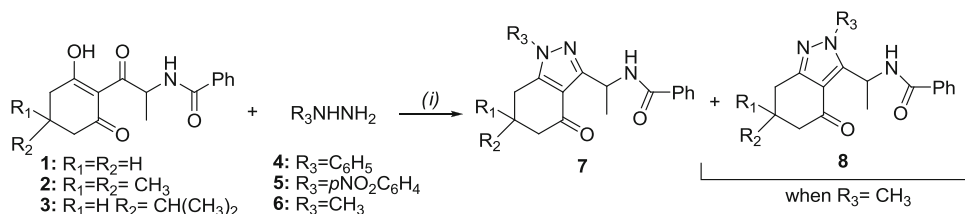
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**Fig. 1** Overview of our recent exploitation of oxazolone and  $\beta$ -triketones chemistry



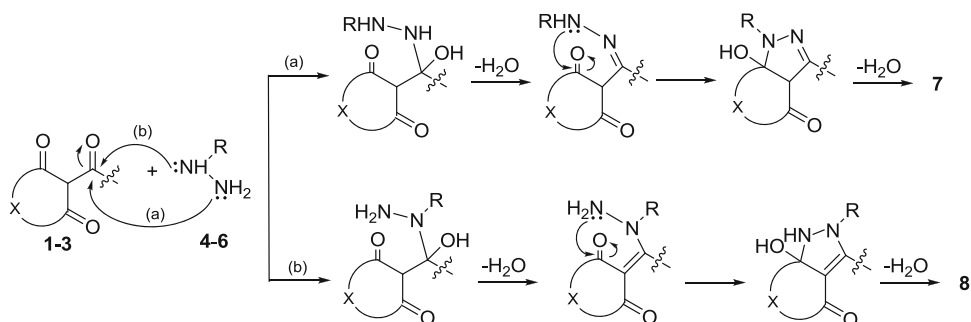
**Scheme 1** Synthetic route to tetrahydroindazolones **7** and **8**. (i) abs. EtOH, reflux, 5 h. Yields of compounds **7** and **8**



Entry	R <sub>1</sub>	R <sub>2</sub>	R <sub>3</sub>	Product	Yield (%) <sup>a</sup>
a	H	H	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>5</sub>	<b>7a</b>	73
b	H	H	<i>p</i> NO <sub>2</sub> C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	<b>7b</b>	84
c	H	H	CH <sub>3</sub>	<b>7c+8c</b>	58
d	CH <sub>3</sub>	CH <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>5</sub>	<b>7d</b>	81
e	CH <sub>3</sub>	CH <sub>3</sub>	<i>p</i> NO <sub>2</sub> C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	<b>7e</b>	98
f	CH <sub>3</sub>	CH <sub>3</sub>	CH <sub>3</sub>	<b>7f+8f</b>	66
g	H	CH(CH <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>5</sub>	<b>7g</b>	99
h	H	CH(CH <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>	<i>p</i> NO <sub>2</sub> C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	<b>7h</b>	98
i	H	CH(CH <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>3</sub>	<b>7i+8i</b>	98

<sup>a</sup>Yield of pure isolated product

**Scheme 2** Proposed mechanism for tetrahydroindazolones formation



## Results and discussion

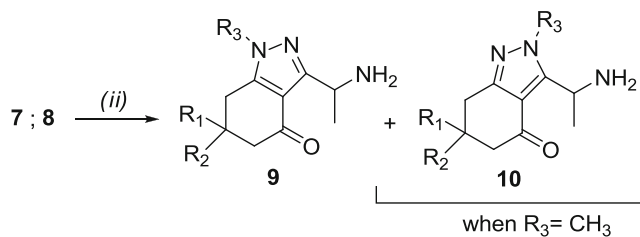
As reported in our previous study [20], starting from selected enolizable cyclic 1,3-dicarbonyls and 4-methyl-2-phenyl-1,3-oxazol-5(4*H*)-one, a series of powerful open-chain derivatives, bearing a Y-shaped 1, 3, 3'-tricarboxyl moiety, was prepared by an efficient chemo- and regioselective method under MW irradiation (Fig. 1). We have recently demonstrated that cyclic  $\beta$ -triketones and their enol derivatives represent useful building blocks for the construction of various heterocyclic systems [21–24], due to their high degree of

functionalization and their well-known [25] high reactivity (Fig. 1).

To further expand our ongoing studies on their synthetic usefulness, we have herein investigated the cyclocondensation of selected 1, 3, 3'-tricarboxyls **1–3** with mono-substituted hydrazines **4–6** as ambident nucleophiles (Scheme 1).

The reaction proceeds efficiently in refluxing ethanol through nucleophilic attack at the exo-cyclic carbonyl of **1–3** with the formation of a non-isolated hydrazone intermediate, followed by intramolecular cyclocondensation (Scheme 2).

**Scheme 3** Synthetic route to indazolones **9** and **10**. (ii) 6N HCl, glacial CH<sub>3</sub>COOH, reflux, 24 h. Yields of compounds **9** and **10**



Entry	Product	Yield (%) <sup>a</sup>
a	<b>9a</b>	66
b	<b>9b</b>	98
c	<b>9c+10c</b>	84
d	<b>9d</b>	49
e	<b>9e</b>	48
f	<b>9f+10f</b>	51
g	<b>9g</b>	92
h	<b>9h</b>	84
i	<b>9i+10i</b>	88

<sup>a</sup>Yield of pure isolated product

The reaction proceeds regioselectively yielding **7** as the sole product with arylhydrazines **4** and **5** because of the inherent differences between the nucleophilicities of the two nitrogens [26]. Indeed, the lower nucleophilicity of the internal nitrogen of arylhydrazines, due to the conjugation of the lone-pair in the aromatic ring, leads to the regioselective synthesis of 1,3-disubstituted tetrahydroindazolones **7**.

Conversely, the similar nucleophilicities of the two nitrogens of alkylhydrazines, such as **6**, induces a quite difficult regiochemical control [26], yielding inseparable regioisomeric mixtures of tetrahydroindazolones **7** and **8**. Therefore, the regioisomeric ratio was determined by <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectroscopy on the crude reaction mixture, resulting in a 3.5:1 ratio.

The proposed synthetic methodology appears versatile, and it allows to maximize the molecular diversity of tetrahydroindazolone scaffold, using different enolizable cyclic 1,3-dicarbonyls and different aminoacids as starting materials for the oxazolone formation. Compounds **7** and **8**, not previously described in literature, have been obtained in good to excellent yields (58–99%). Interestingly, to the best of our knowledge, the introduction of a functionalized chain at the pyrazole carbon is unprecedented, as only alkyl or aryl substituents (Me, Et, i-Pr, CF<sub>3</sub>, cyclohexyl, Ph, thienyl, etc.) have been introduced so far [27–29].

Another advantage of our approach relies on the possibility to further modify the mentioned chain derived from the oxazolone ring opening. Indeed, the acid-promoted *N*-deprotection of the functionalized chain of **7** and **8** leads to the interesting amino derivatives **9** and **10** (Scheme 3), whose NH<sub>2</sub> group could be further derivatized to improve the pharmaceutical properties including pharmacokinetic and druggability, by conjugation with aminoacids, peptides or biomaterials.

The regioisomeric ratio for compounds **9** and **10** was determined by <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectroscopy on the crude reaction mixture, resulting in a 3.5:1 ratio.

The structures of new products were determined on the basis of analytical and spectroscopic data (See “Experimental” section).

Structural assignment of regioisomers was based on gHMBCAD and confirmed by 2D-NOESY experiments carried out on compounds **7a** and on **7c+8c**.

The presence of a NOE correlation between the ortho protons of NC<sub>6</sub>H<sub>5</sub> and the protons of the closer methylene group in **7a** suggested the exclusive formation of one regioisomer.

Conversely, in the mixture **7c+8c**, the two regioisomers can be conveniently distinguished on the basis of diagnostic correlations between the protons of NMe group on the pyrazole ring and the protons of the closer methylene group in **7c** and between the protons of NMe group on the pyrazole ring and the proton of the CH of the side chain in **8c**.

Several indazolone derivatives have been reported as anticancer agents [3,4,10,11]. Therefore, the antiproliferative effect of selected indazolones has been preliminarily screened in vitro against HT-29 colorectal adenocarcinoma and HepG2 hepatocellular carcinoma cells. To determine cell proliferation, both MTT and cell count assays were performed, while cytotoxicity was assessed by either lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) and trypan blue tests. (see Electronic Supplementary Material)

## Conclusions

In summary, an efficient and straightforward route to novel highly substituted and diversely functionalized indazolone derivatives from enolizable cyclic 1,3,3'-tricarboxyls and monosubstituted hydrazines has been developed. The reaction is easily accomplished under mild conditions and appears versatile, making new compounds suitable for further studies. In addition, a preliminary screening has revealed that some of them display in vitro antiproliferative effect on HT-29 colorectal adenocarcinoma and HepG2 hepatocellular carcinoma cells, confirming the well-known biological relevance of this heterocyclic scaffold that may be exploited to design novel and more effective antiproliferative agents, by appropriate chemical modifications and decorations.



## Experimental

### General

Melting points were determined on a Kofler melting apparatus and are uncorrected. IR spectra were recorded in Nujol with a Nicolet Impact 410D spectrometer.  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$ -NMR spectra were obtained on a Varian 500MHz spectrometer. The chemical shifts ( $\delta$ ) and coupling constants ( $J$ ) are expressed in ppm and hertz, respectively. Microanalyses and mass spectrometry analyses were carried out on a Carlo Erba EA 1102 and on a 3200 QTRAP (Applied Biosystem SCIEX), respectively. All solvents and reagents were obtained from commercial sources and purified before use if necessary. Merck Kieselgel 60F<sub>254</sub> plates were used for TLC, and Merck Silica gel 60 (0.063–0.100 mm) for column chromatography. Compounds **1**, **2** and **3** were prepared according to the literature [20,22].

### Typical procedure for the preparation of compounds **7** and **8**

To a stirred solution of **1**, **2** or **3** (1 mmol) in abs EtOH (20 mL), hydrazine **4**, **5** or **6** (1.5 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred and heated at reflux for approximately 5h. The progress of the reaction was monitored by TLC ( $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{AcOEt}$  9:1). After completion of reaction as checked by TLC, the reaction mixture was evaporated and purified by chromatographic column ( $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{AcOEt}$  9:1), affording compounds **7** and **8** as yellowish oil.

### Analytical and spectral data of compounds **7** and **8**

*N*-(1-(4-oxo-1-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7a**) (73 %); IR ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ): 3287, 1732, 1660, 1645;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 1.55 (d,  $J$  = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 2.16–2.21 (m, 2H), 2.61–2.65 (m, 2H), 2.91–3.00 (m, 2H), 5.77 (dq,  $J$  = 7.0 Hz, 9.5 Hz, 1H), 7.41–7.48 (m, 3H Ar), 7.49–7.50 (m, 5H Ar), 7.91 (d,  $J$  = 7.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.94 (d,  $J$  = 9.5 Hz, 1H, NH);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 22.2, 23.3, 23.3, 38.0, 44.0, 116.5, 123.6, 127.1, 127.1, 128.4, 129.3, 131.2, 134.5, 138.1, 151.4, 154.7, 165.8, 195.2; ESI-MS ( $m/z$ ) = 360.14 [ $\text{M} + 1$ ]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{21}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$ : C, 73.56; H, 5.92; N, 11.71.

*N*-(1-(1-(4-nitrophenyl)-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7b**) (84 %); IR ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ): 3320, 1730, 1661, 1646, 1519, 1347;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 1.54 (d,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 2.21–2.24 (m, 2H), 2.63–2.67 (m, 2H), 3.03–3.08 (m, 2H), 5.74 (dq,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 9.8 Hz, 1H), 7.42–7.55 (m, 3H Ar), 7.73 (d,  $J$  = 8.8 Hz, 2H Ar), 7.86 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.34 (d,  $J$  = 8.8 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.76 (d,  $J$  = 9.8 Hz, 1H, NH);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 21.7, 23.3, 23.9, 37.9, 43.9, 117.8, 123.5, 124.9,

127.1, 128.5, 131.5, 134.1, 143.1, 146.5, 151.9, 155.8, 166.2, 195.0; ESI-MS ( $m/z$ ) = 405.14 [ $\text{M} + 1$ ]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{20}\text{N}_4\text{O}_4$ : C, 65.36; H, 4.94; N, 13.88.

*N*-(1-(1-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7c**) (45 %); IR ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ): 3270, 1730, 1656, 1638;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 1.47 (d,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 2.16–2.19 (m, 2H), 2.51–2.56 (m, 2H), 2.76–2.81 (m, 2H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 5.62 (dq,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 9.3 Hz, 1H), 7.40–7.45 (m, 3H Ar), 7.89 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.90 (d,  $J$  = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 22.1, 22.8, 35.7, 37.7, 43.9, 115.1, 127.0, 128.3, 131.1, 134.4, 151.5, 153.6, 165.8, 194.6; ESI-MS ( $m/z$ ) = 298.36 [ $\text{M} + 1$ ]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$ : C, 68.70; H, 6.42; N, 14.16.

*N*-(1-(2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-2H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**8c**) (13 %); IR ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ): 3270, 1730, 1656, 1638;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 1.48 (d,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 2.10–2.13 (m, 2H), 2.50–2.54 (m, 2H), 2.75–2.80 (m, 2H), 3.94 (s, 3H), 5.64 (dq,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.40–7.45 (m, 3H Ar), 7.89 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H Ar), 9.36 (d,  $J$  = 8.9 Hz, 1H, NH);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 20.5, 21.2, 35.7, 38.8, 41.0, 115.2, 127.1, 128.4, 131.5, 134.0, 146.8, 156.9, 166.1, 196.4; ESI-MS ( $m/z$ ) = 298.36 [ $\text{M} + 1$ ]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$ : C, 68.70; H, 6.42; N, 14.16.

*N*-(1-(6,6-dimethyl-4-oxo-1-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7d**) (81 %); IR ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ): 3294, 1730, 1670, 1630;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 1.08 (s, 3H), 1.16 (s, 3H), 1.55 (d,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 2.47 (d,  $J$  = 16.4 Hz, 1H), 2.56 (d,  $J$  = 16.4 Hz, 1H), 2.77 (d,  $J$  = 16.4 Hz, 1H), 2.87 (d,  $J$  = 16.4 Hz, 1H), 5.78 (dq,  $J$  = 7.1 Hz, 9.4 Hz, 1H), 7.41–7.48 (m, 3H Ar), 7.50–7.55 (m, 5H Ar), 7.92 (d,  $J$  = 10 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.96 (d,  $J$  = 9.4 Hz, 1H, NH);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 22.3, 27.8, 28.8, 35.8, 37.1, 44.0, 52.2, 115.7, 123.9, 127.2, 128.4, 128.4, 129.4, 131.2, 134.6, 138.1, 150.4, 154.8, 166.0, 194.4; ESI-MS ( $m/z$ ) = 388.16 [ $\text{M} + 1$ ]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$ : C, 74.41; H, 6.52; N, 10.86.

*N*-(1-(6,6-dimethyl-1-(4-nitrophenyl)-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7e**) (98 %); IR ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ): 3448, 1732, 1673, 1630; 1521; 1345;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 1.11 (s, 3H), 1.19 (s, 3H), 1.56 (d,  $J$  = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 2.50 (d,  $J$  = 16.5 Hz, 1H), 2.58 (d,  $J$  = 16.5 Hz, 1H), 2.87 (d,  $J$  = 17.0 Hz, 1H), 2.96 (d,  $J$  = 17.0 Hz, 1H), 5.78 (dq,  $J$  = 7.0 Hz, 9.4 Hz, 1H), 7.41–7.49 (m, 3H Ar), 7.75 (d,  $J$  = 9.4 Hz, 2H), 7.90 (d,  $J$  = 10 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.40 (d,  $J$  = 9.4 Hz, 2H), 8.76 (d,  $J$  = 9.4 Hz, 1H, NH);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 21.7, 27.8, 28.4, 35.8, 37.5, 43.7, 51.8, 116.7, 123.5, 124.8, 126.9, 128.3, 131.2, 134.1, 142.9, 146.4, 150.9, 155.5, 166.0, 194.2; ESI-MS ( $m/z$ ) = 388.16 [ $\text{M} + 1$ ]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{24}\text{N}_4\text{O}_4$ : C, 66.69; H, 5.61; N, 12.99.

*N*-(1-(1,6,6-trimethyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7f**) (51 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3294, 1733, 1653, 1600; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.93 (s, 3H), 0.98 (s, 3H), 1.34 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 3H), 2.20–2.32 (m, 2H), 2.44–2.58 (m, 2H), 3.58 (s, 3H), 5.48 (dq, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.25–7.34 (m, 3H Ar), 7.75 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.89 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H, NH); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 22.2, 28.0, 35.0, 35.7, 43.9, 51.9, 114.0, 127.0, 128.3, 131.1, 134.4, 150.7, 153.4, 165.8, 193.9; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 326.16 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> : C, 70.17; H, 7.16; N, 12.93.

*N*-(1-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-2H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**8f**) (14 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3294, 1733, 1653, 1600; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.92 (s, 3H), 0.95 (s, 3H), 1.35 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 3H), 2.21–2.33 (m, 2H), 2.45–2.59 (m, 2H), 3.81 (s, 3H), 5.50 (dq, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.25–7.34 (m, 3H Ar), 7.75 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H Ar), 9.32 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H, NH); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 20.8, 28.5, 35.2, 35.7, 41.1, 52.7, 114.2, 127.1, 128.4, 131.5, 133.9, 147.0, 156.2, 166.0, 195.9; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 326.16 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> : C, 70.17; H, 7.16; N, 12.93.

*N*-(1-(6-isopropyl-4-oxo-1-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7g**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (99 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3286, 1717, 1659, 1640; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.91 – –0.94 (m, 6H), 1.49 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.52 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.65–1.70 (m, 2H), 2.03–2.06 (m, 2H), 2.32–2.43 (m, 2H), 2.59–2.74 (m, 4H), 2.82–2.86 (m, 2H), 5.72 (dq, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 9.3 Hz, 2H), 7.31–7.48 (m, 16H Ar), 7.86 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H Ar), 7.90 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.97 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH), 9.07 (d, *J* = 9.6 Hz, 1H, NH); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.5, 19.5, 19.6, 19.6, 22.1, 22.2, 26.8, 26.9, 31.6, 31.8, 41.9, 42.0, 42.5, 42.7, 44.0, 116.5, 116.6, 123.8, 123.9, 127.1, 127.1, 127.2, 128.2, 128.4, 129.4, 129.9, 131.3, 132.9, 134.4, 138.0, 138.1, 151.5, 151.7, 154.5, 166.1, 195.1, 195.4; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 402.54 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> : C, 74.82; H, 6.81; N, 10.50.

*N*-(1-(6-isopropyl-1-(4-nitrophenyl)-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7h**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (98 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3355, 1716, 1661, 1650; 1520; 1346; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.99 – –1.01 (m, 6H), 1.53 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 3H), 1.57 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.76–1.79 (m, 2H), 2.13–2.14 (m, 2H), 2.40–2.50 (m, 2H), 2.68–2.86 (m, 4H), 2.90–3.05 (m, 2H), 5.70 (m, 2H), 7.41–7.56 (m, 6H Ar), 7.73 (d, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 2H Ar), 7.91 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.38 (d, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.75 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH), 8.82 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.3, 19.4, 19.5, 19.5, 21.7, 21.8, 27.3, 27.4, 31.6, 31.7, 41.7, 41.8, 42.5, 42.7, 43.9, 117.8, 117.8, 123.3, 123.5, 123.6, 124.9, 127.0, 127.0, 128.2, 128.4, 129.2, 131.4,

134.0, 142.9, 143.0, 146.5, 152.0, 152.1, 155.5, 166.2, 195.0, 195.1; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 447.24 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>26</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>4</sub> : C, 67.30; H, 5.90; N, 12.50.

*N*-(1-(6-isopropyl-1-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**7i**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (76 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3274, 1714, 1655; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.99 – –1.00 (m, 6H), 1.47 (d, *J* = 5.4 Hz, 3H), 1.50 (d, *J* = 5.7 Hz, 3H), 1.72–1.76 (m, 2H), 2.11–2.12 (m, 2H), 2.25–2.36 (m, 2H), 2.42–2.56 (m, 2H), 2.57–2.79 (m, 2H), 2.81–2.84 (m, 2H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 5.59–5.61 (m, 2H), 7.38–7.46 (m, 6H Ar), 7.87 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 7.90 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.90 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH), 8.95 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.5, 19.6, 19.6, 19.6, 22.2, 24.9, 31.6, 31.8, 31.9, 35.8, 41.9, 41.9, 42.1, 42.3, 43.9, 115.2, 115.3, 127.1, 127.2, 127.2, 128.3, 128.5, 131.1, 131.5, 134.6, 151.4, 151.6, 153.8, 153.8, 165.9, 194.4, 194.6; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 340.14 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> : C, 70.80; H, 7.44; N, 12.40.

*N*-(1-(6-isopropyl-2-methyl-4-oxo-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-2H-indazol-3-yl)ethyl)benzamide (**8i**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (22 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3274, 1714, 1655; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.96 – –0.97 (m, 6H), 1.47 (d, *J* = 5.4 Hz, 3H), 1.50 (d, *J* = 5.7 Hz, 3H), 1.69–1.73 (m, 2H), 1.99–2.10 (m, 2H), 2.25–2.36 (m, 2H), 2.42–2.56 (m, 2H), 2.57–2.79 (m, 2H), 2.85–2.90 (m, 2H), 3.94 (s, 3H), 5.62–5.64 (m, 2H), 7.38–7.46 (m, 6H Ar), 7.87 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 7.90 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H Ar), 9.39 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH), 9.41 (d, *J* = 9.3 Hz, 1H, NH); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 21.0, 21.0, 21.1, 21.1, 22.2, 26.5, 31.6, 31.8, 31.9, 36.9, 41.0, 42.7, 43.0, 43.0, 115.2, 115.3, 127.1, 127.2, 127.2, 128.3, 128.5, 131.1, 131.5, 134.6, 151.4, 151.6, 153.8, 153.8, 165.9, 194.4, 194.6; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 340.14 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> : C, 70.80; H, 7.44; N, 12.40.

#### Typical procedure for the preparation of compounds **9** and **10**

0.3 g of **7** and **8** were dispersed in 30 mL of a mixture of 6N HCl (15 mL) and glacial acetic acid (15 mL). The mixture was stirred and heated at reflux for approximately 24 h. After cooling, a 10 % solution of NaOH was added to reach pH 9–10. The aqueous solution was extracted with CHCl<sub>3</sub> (3 × 50 mL). The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, filtered, evaporated under reduced pressure and purified by chromatographic column (CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/AcOEt 9:1), affording compounds **9** and **10** as yellowish oil.

#### Analytical and spectral data of compounds **9** and **10**

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-1-phenyl-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9a**) (66 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3353, 1668, 1652; <sup>1</sup>H NMR

(500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.50 (d, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 3H), 2.19–2.22 (m, 2H), 2.57–2.60 (m, 2H), 3.02–3.05 (m, 2H), 4.34 (q, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 1H), 7.38–7.48 (m, 5H Ar); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 22.2, 23.4, 23.5, 38.3, 45.9, 116.6, 123.8, 128.1, 129.3, 138.5, 150.8, 158.8, 193.8; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 256.35 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>17</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 70.59; H, 6.74; N, 16.50.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-1-(4-nitrophenyl)-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9b**) (98 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3367, 1668, 1598, 1520, 1346; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.50 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 2.11–2.14 (m, 2H), 2.52–2.55 (m, 2H), 2.90–2.92 (m, 2H), 4.37 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (d, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.36 (d, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 2H Ar); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 22.0, 23.5, 24.0, 38.1, 45.7, 113.3, 123.3, 124.9, 143.5, 146.4, 151.2, 158.7, 193.6; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 301.15 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>16</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>3</sub> : C, 60.01; H, 5.41; N, 18.70.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-1-methyl-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9c**) (65 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3394, 1655, 1640; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.30 (d, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 3H), 2.02–2.10 (m, 2H), 2.30–2.42 (m, 2H), 2.65–2.70 (m, 2H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 4.10 (q, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 21.3, 22.0, 22.9, 35.6, 38.0, 45.6, 115.1, 150.9, 157.6, 193.4; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 194.20 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>10</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 62.10; H, 7.79; N, 21.70.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-2-methyl-6,7-dihydro-2H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**10c**) (19 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3394, 1655, 1640; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.32 (d, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 3H), 2.02–2.10 (m, 2H), 2.30–2.42 (m, 2H), 2.65–2.70 (m, 2H), 3.73 (s, 3H), 4.10 (q, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 21.4, 22.0, 22.30, 36.7, 37.0, 45.9, 115.1, 150.9, 157.6, 193.4; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 194.20 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>10</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 62.10; H, 7.79; N, 21.70.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-6,6-dimethyl-1-phenyl-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9d**) (49 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3351, 1670, 1598; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.05 (s, 3H), 1.06 (s, 3H), 1.45 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 3H), 2.37 (s, 2H), 2.73 (s, 2H), 4.30 (q, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 1H), 7.36–7.47 (m, 5H Ar); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 22.1, 28.2, 28.3, 35.6, 37.1, 45.8, 52.4, 115.6, 123.8, 128.1, 129.3, 138.4, 150.0, 158.5, 193.2; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 256.35 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 72.09; H, 7.44; N, 14.88.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-6,6-dimethyl-1-(4-nitrophenyl)-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9e**) (48 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3360, 1658, 1620; 1523; 1344; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.08 (s, 6H), 1.45 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 2.41 (s, 2H), 2.86 (s, 2H), 4.31 (q, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 1H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H Ar), 8.30 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H Ar); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 21.9, 28.2, 28.2, 35.8, 37.6, 45.6, 52.1, 116.9, 123.4, 124.9, 143.4, 146.3, 150.5, 159.2, 193.2; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 328.17 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>20</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>3</sub> : C, 62.20; H, 6.10; N, 17.09.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-1,6,6-trimethyl-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9f**) (40 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3354, 1657, 1610; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.07 (s, 3H), 1.08 (s, 3H), 1.38 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 3H), 2.29 (s, 2H), 2.57 (s, 2H), 3.68 (s, 3H), 4.17 (q, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 22.2, 28.5, 35.3, 35.4, 45.5, 52.2, 114.1, 150.2, 157.5, 192.7; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 222.20 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>12</sub>H<sub>19</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 65.15; H, 8.70; N, 18.95.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-2,6,6-trimethyl-6,7-dihydro-2H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**10f**) (11 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3354, 1657, 1610; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.02 (s, 6H), 1.38 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 3H), 2.29 (s, 2H), 2.57 (s, 2H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 4.17 (q, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 22.2, 28.4, 35.3, 35.4, 45.7, 52.2, 114.1, 150.2, 157.5, 192.7; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 222.20 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>12</sub>H<sub>19</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 65.15; H, 8.70; N, 18.95.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-6-isopropyl-1-phenyl-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9g**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (92 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3363, 1664, 1598; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.95 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 6H), 0.96 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 6H), 1.51 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 3H), 1.52 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 3H), 1.70–1.75 (m, 2H), 2.00–2.10 (m, 2H), 2.30–2.40 (m, 2H), 2.65–2.72 (m, 2H), 2.75–2.80 (m, 2H), 2.90–2.95 (m, 2H), 4.30 (q, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 2H), 7.40–7.52 (m, 10H Ar); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.5, 19.6, 22.0, 22.1, 26.9, 31.8, 42.0, 42.7, 45.9, 116.6, 123.8, 128.1, 129.4, 138.5, 151.5, 151.0, 158.3, 193.9; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 298.20 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 72.72; H, 7.81; N, 14.11.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-6-isopropyl-1-(4-nitrophenyl)-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9h**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (84 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3343, 1668, 1598; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.97 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 6H), 1.00 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 6H), 1.49 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 1.51 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 1.72–1.76 (m, 2H), 2.09–2.11 (m, 2H), 2.35–2.44 (m, 2H), 2.60–2.64 (m, 2H), 2.78–2.81 (m, 2H), 2.93–2.97 (m, 2H), 4.35 (q, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 4H Ar), 8.37 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 4H Ar); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.5, 19.6, 22.0, 27.5, 31.7, 42.0, 42.7, 45.8, 117.9, 123.4, 125.0, 143.5, 146.3, 151.5, 158.8, 193.7; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 343.20 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>22</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>3</sub> : C, 63.18; H, 6.50; N, 16.32.

3-(1-Aminoethyl)-6-isopropyl-1-methyl-6,7-dihydro-1H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**9i**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (68 %); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3476, 1660, 1600; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.89–0.93 (m, 12H), 1.33 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 1.34 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 1.60–1.68 (m, 2H), 1.98–2.05 (m, 2H), 2.17–2.21 (m, 2H), 2.37–2.47 (m, 4H), 2.73–2.77 (m, 2H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 4.13 (q, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.5, 19.6, 22.1, 24.8, 31.7, 35.6, 42.1, 42.1, 42.2, 45.6, 45.6, 115.1, 151.1, 151.1, 157.4, 193.2, 193.3; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 236.30 [M + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 66.38; H, 8.94; N, 17.90.



3-(1-Aminoethyl)-6-isopropyl-2-methyl-6,7-dihydro-2H-indazol-4(5H)-one (**10i**) (two diastereomers, in a 1:1 molar ratio racemic mixture) (20%); IR (CHCl<sub>3</sub>): 3476, 1660, 1600; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.88–0.92 (m, 12H), 1.33 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 1.34 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 1.42–1.43 (m, 2H), 1.85–1.90 (m, 2H), 2.17–2.21 (m, 2H), 2.37–2.47 (m, 4H), 2.73–2.77 (m, 2H), 3.76 (s, 3H), 4.13 (q, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 19.7, 19.7, 22.0, 26.5, 31.7, 36.3, 42.6, 42.8, 43.6, 115.1, 151.1, 151.1, 157.4, 193.2, 193.3; ESI-MS (*m/z*) = 236.30 [*M* + 1]<sup>+</sup>; Anal. Calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O : C, 66.38; H, 8.94; N, 17.90.

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