

# **Medicines for All Institute**

# **Summary of Process Development Work on the Synthesis of Frag A of Lenacapavir**



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#### <span id="page-1-0"></span>**Executive Summary**

This process development report (PDR) describes the results of synthetic route scouting (SRS) and scale-up optimization (OPT) efforts at the Medicines for All Institute (M4ALL) to discover new, cost-effective synthetic strategies to make a key intermediate and cost-driver in the synthesis of lenacapavir: (*S*)-1-(3,6-dibromopyridin-2-yl)-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)ethan-1-amine (**Frag A**). Lenacapavir is a first-in-class antiretroviral that targets HIV's capsid protein. It was developed by Gilead Sciences Inc. and approved by the FDA in 2022. Gilead's baseline synthesis of **Frag A** leverages classical chiral synthesis using an expensive enantiopure auxiliary (and other costly raw materials). <sup>1</sup> Herein, we report a chiral resolution-based approach to produce **Frag A** from 3,6 dibromo-2-methylpyridine (LenA 4). <sup>a</sup> This route comprises 7 steps (linear). The key transformations include a two-step aldehyde synthesis, a telescoped three-step racemic amine synthesis, and a dynamic kinetic resolution (DKR) with N-acetyl-D-leucine (NADL). Process development of the LenA 4 enables the production of **Frag A** as a single enantiomer in 25-30% overall isolated yield, demonstrated at scales up to 200 grams. Techno-economic (TE) cost analysis suggests that, compared to the baseline route (Gilead's chiral auxiliary-based approach), LenA 4 offers an overall raw material cost (RMC) reduction of 33-41%.



<sup>a</sup> Two additional synthetic approaches to **Frag A** are summarized in the Appendix of this document, LenA 1 and LenC 3. They were not advanced for optimization, in view of the superior performance of LenA 4. Please see the appendices for further details.



# **Medicines for All – Contributors to the Research and Report**



\*With research support provided by WuXi Apptec (China)

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<sup>b</sup> PDR review, revisions, additions



# Contents









# <span id="page-5-0"></span>1 Introduction

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), is one of the world's most serious health and development challenges. Approximately 39 million people are currently living with HIV, and tens of millions of people have died of AIDS-related causes since the beginning of the epidemic.<sup>2</sup> In 2020, there were approximately 20 million people on antiretroviral therapy (ART), a number which was expected to reach 24 million by 2024. Approved HIV treatment regimens currently fall into seven drug classes, based on their distinct mechanism of action. Today, approximately 22 million individuals are on a dolutegravir-based regimen: the "gold-standard" treatment comprises the combination of two nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs), tenofovir disoproxil and lamivudine, and the integrase strand transfer inhibitor dolutegravir.<sup>3</sup>

Lenacapavir (Sunlenca®) is a high-potency HIV treatment in development by Gilead Sciences. The drug is a first-in-class HIV-1 capsid protein inhibitor that displays picomolar activity, extended pharmacokinetics, and little to no cross-resistance with clinically used antiretroviral agents.4,5 Lenacapavir achieves its revolutionary anti-HIV-1 activity by blocking the viral replication of the HIV-1 virus, which is closely related to many processes of the viral lifecycle: uptake, assembly, and release.<sup>1</sup> Because of this classification, the FDA has designated lenacapavir as a breakthrough drug. The novel therapy earned approval from both the European Commission and the FDA in 2022 as a treatment for multidrug-resistant HIV (MDR HIV) infections. $6-8$  In 2023, in the United States, the cost for HIV-indicated injections and tablets (wholesale; not for PrEP) was \$42,450 per patient per year. $9-11$  To ensure patient access to lenacapavir-for-PrEP globally, significantly lower annual costs must be realized.<sup>8,c</sup>

#### <span id="page-5-1"></span>1.1 Background of **Frag A** in Lenacapavir

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Lenacapavir was first reported by Gilead Sciences in a family of patents and publications in 2018-2020.1,12–<sup>14</sup> Structurally speaking, lenacapavir is an extremely complex active pharmaceutical ingredient (API), with three chiral sp<sup>3</sup>-hybridized carbon centers and 10 fluorine atoms in four different functional environments. Lenacapavir consists of three advanced intermediates - Fragment A (**Frag A**), Fragment B, and Fragment C - as shown in

<sup>6</sup>  $^c$  For example, "PrEP medications would need to cost <\$54 a year per patient for South Africa to afford them."<sup>10</sup>



<span id="page-6-1"></span>[Figure 1.1.1.](#page-6-1)



Gilead has published several patents related to the initial synthesis and optimization of this molecule with several approaches to each fragment being demonstrated.<sup>12,13,15,16</sup> These routes utilize expensive starting materials and reagents and rely on costly chiral separation techniques that are not amenable to scaleup. Improvements to **Frag A**'ssynthesis will, thus, have a meaningful impact on the overall cost of the molecule.

# <span id="page-6-0"></span>1.2 Introduction of LenA 4

M4ALL developed a DKR-based approach <sup>d</sup> to decrease raw material costs associated with **Frag A** synthesis (Scheme 1.2.1). M4ALL's development work consisted of four key project milestones: synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8** (Milestone 1), synthesis of the racemic amine **A1.5** (Milestone 2), chiral resolution to **Frag A** (Milestone 3), and the synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride A4.4a (Milestone 4). <sup>e</sup> For future work maybe consider use of Na-*t*-amylate as it is cheaper than *t-*BuOK.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>d</sup> It is also known as crystallization-induced diastereomer transformation.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>e</sup> 3,5-Difluorobenzyl chloride is the main cost-driver in LenA 4. We developed a cost-effective two-step process to make this molecule (Milestone 4). The details of the 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride synthesis are discussed in the Appendix 4.1.





Scheme 1.2.1 M4All approach (LenA 4) for the synthesis of **Frag A**

LenA 4 is a linear-7-step process that utilizes a readily available 3,6-dibromo-2-methylpyridine (**A4.5**) as a starting material. The synthesis commenced with oximation of 3,6-dibromo-2 methylpyridine **A4.5** and tertiary butyl nitrite. The resulting oxime **A4.6** was then hydrolyzed to aldehyde **A4.8** using glyoxylic acid. Aldehyde **A4.8** was converted to a racemic amine **A1.5**  through a telescoped three-step process (imination with diphenylmethanamine (**A4.9**), alkylation with 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride (**A4.4a**), then acidic hydrolysis). Lastly, racemic **A1.5** was resolved using N-acetyl-D-leucine (NADL) *via* dynamic kinetic resolution (DKR) to afford the desired enantiopure **Frag A**.

It should be noted that some chemistry in this report is known in the literature,<sup>13</sup> however, the reported sequence is lacking in sufficient experimental details and thus presenting challenges to reproduce and ultimately scale-up:

- Synthesis of aldehyde (**A4.8**) from 3,6-dibromo-2-methylpyridine (**A4.5**) is reported.13,18 Its synthesis was demonstrated on a gram scale; the procedure was not appropriate for scale-up, as defined.
- Alkylation of **A4.10** with 3.5-difluorobenzyl bromide (**A4.4**) was reported, however, our results showed low yield and low purity profile.<sup>f</sup> Additionally, the operation suffered from the acute lachrymatory property of the 3.5-difluorobenzyl bromide.

<sup>f</sup> The reaction of **A4.10** with 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide afforded **A4.11** in 83% yield with 76 wt% by qNMR) while the reaction of **A4.10** with 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride afforded **A4.11** in up to 94% yield and 87 wt% purity (see section 2.2 for details).



• Resolution of **A1.5** with *R*-mandelic acid and NADL was reported on small scale and lacked sufficient procedural details (i.e., purifications, purity profiles) to judge fitness for scale-up and tech transfer.

All of the abovementioned issues and unknowns presented challenges to our LenA 4 process development. These could only be resolved through independent process research and development. To this end, M4ALL developed DKR-based approach to prepare **Frag A** from readily available 3,6-dibromo-2-methylpyridine. We highlight an efficient 3-step telescoped racemic amine synthesis, alkylation with non-lachrymatory 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride, and high yielding of DKR to access **Frag A**. Furthermore, we provide detailed process development assessments of the aldehyde synthesis, racemic amine synthesis and chiral resolution. Together, these insights provide informative and valuable data for the large-scale synthesis of **Frag A**.

#### <span id="page-8-0"></span>2 Results & Discussion

- <span id="page-8-1"></span>2.1 Milestone 1: Synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8**
- <span id="page-8-2"></span>2.1.1 Optimization of aldehyde **A4.8** synthesis



Scheme 2.1.1. Familiarization of aldehyde **A4.8** synthesis

<span id="page-8-3"></span>9 M4ALL's work commenced with familiarization of the synthesis of **A4.8** from commercially available 3,6-dibromo-2-methylpyridine **A4.5** according to the reported method, on a gram-scale.13,18 As shown in [Scheme 2.1.1,](#page-8-3) oximation of **A4.5** with *t-*BuONO (1.3 eq) in the presence of *t*-BuOK (1.5 eq) gave A4.6 in approximately 83% conversion (<sup>1</sup>H NMR). Subsequent hydrolysis with 50 wt% glyoxylic acid (10V) furnished the aldehyde **A4.8** in 50-60% assay yield (qNMR) together with 40-50% starting material **A4.6** remaining. In our hands, as in the reported conditions, both oximation and hydrolysis reactions did not proceed to completion; purification by column chromatography was invoked in the reported preparations. Incomplete conversion and chromatographic purification are impediments to large-scale manufacture. To achieve a scalable process for the synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8**, we aimed to *1)* optimize the equivalents of *t-*BuONO



and *t-*BuOK in oximation of **A4.5** (Section 2.1.1.1) and *2)* identify the best concentration of glyoxylic acid for hydrolysis of **A4.6** to afford **A4.8**; and *3)* to eliminate column purification (thereby minimizing processing costs and enabling scalability).

### **2.1.1.1** Synthesis of oxime **A4.6**

Using Gilead's disclosed conditions, M4ALL observed ~93% (by HPLC) conversion in the oximation of **A4.5** with *t-*BuONO (1.3 eq) and *t-*BuOK (1.5 eq) (Table 2.1.1, Entry 1). To achieve complete conversion (i.e., improve scale-up suitability), initial efforts focused on screening equivalents of *t*-BuOK.<sup>g</sup> The team hypothesized that increasing the equivalents of the base would facilitate the complete consumption of **A4.5**. Treatment of **A4.5** with *t-*BuONO (1.3 eq) and *t-*BuOK (1.7 eq), however, negated the hypothesis: **A4.6** was obtained in 86 A% (Table 2.1.1, Entry 2). Examining *fewer* equivalents of *t-*BuOK (1.1 eq, Table 2.1.2, Entry 3) showed comparable performance, giving A4.6 in 84 A%.<sup>h</sup> To complement these experiments in which single-portion charges of *t-*BuOK and *t-*BuONO were enacted, respectively semi-batch additions were investigated.





Entry <sup>1</sup>		Crude mixture $(A\%)^2$			
	<b>Conditions</b>	A4.5	Unknown Impurities	A4.6	
	<i>t</i> -BuONO $(1.3 \text{ eq})$ , <i>t</i> -BuOK $(1.5 \text{ eq})$			89	
$2^3$	<i>t</i> -BuONO $(1.3 \text{ eq})$ , <i>t</i> -BuOK $(1.7 \text{ eq})$			86	
	<i>t</i> -BuONO $(1.3 \text{ eq})$ , <i>t</i> -BuOK $(1.1 \text{ eq})$	15		84	
	<i>t</i> -BuONO $(1.2 \text{ eq})$ , <i>t</i> -BuOK $(1.5 \text{ eq})$			88	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>All reactions were carried out on 1.0 g scale at 0-12 °C with 2-MeTHF (10 mL, 10V), followed by the addition of *t*-BuONO and *t-*BuOK, stirred for 7-8 h; <sup>2</sup>The reaction mixture was precipitated by addition of sat. NH4Cl (5mL, 5V).

<sup>g</sup> KOH and *t*-BuONa were also investigated. Neither afforded oxime **A4.6**.

<sup>h</sup> Employing fewer equivalents of *t-*BuONO also failed to completely consume **A4.5** (Table 2.1.**Error! Main Document Only.**).



The solid was collected for analysis. A% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm) unless otherwise stated; <sup>3</sup>A% was obtained by qNMR.

Incremental addition enabled complete consumption of **A4.5** and robust replicability in **A4.6** oxime formation. On treatment of **A4.5** with 1.1 eq of *t-*BuONO and 1.1 eq of *t-*BuOK (Table 2.1.2), conversion stalled after 3 h. At this juncture (3 h), **A4.6** was present in 85 A% (HPLC, 210 nm). A further 0.1 eq of *t-*BuONO and 0.2 eq *t-*BuOK were then added to the reactor. After an additional 5 h, >96% conversion (A%, HPLC, 210 nm) was observed. **A4.6** was obtained in >89 A% (HPLC, 210 nm) and <3.5A% **A4.5** remained. After the addition of saturated aq. NH4Cl (5V), precipitated solids were washed by DI water and then dried, affording **A4.6** in 87% isolated yield with 100 A% HPLC (210 nm) purity.







<sup>1</sup>Reactions were carried out on 50.0 g scale at 0-12 °C with 2-MeTHF (500 mL, 10V), followed by the addition of *t*-BuONO and *t*-BuOK as shown in table, 7-8 h; <sup>2</sup>A% was obtained by HPLC at 210 nm, unknown impurities (< 2) A%/each) were observed at different retention time; <sup>3</sup>At the end of 3h, 0.1 eq of *t-*BuONO and 0.2 eq of *t-*BuOK were added; <sup>4</sup>The reaction mixture was precipitated by addition of sat. NH<sub>4</sub>Cl (5V). The solid was collected and dried to afford **A4.6** (48g) in 87% isolated yield with 100 A% HPLC (210 nm) purity.

Thus, optimized conditions of oximation are:

• Incremental addition of *t-*BuONO and *t-*BuOK, using 1.1 eq of *t-*BuONO and *t-*BuOK, 2-MeTHF (10V), at 0 to 12 °C, followed by an additional charge of 0.1 eq of *t-*BuONO and 0.2 eq *t-*BuOK affords **A4.5** in > 96 A% (HPLC, 210 nm).



• Robust repeatability was observed; comparable results were obtained on a 50 g scale.

#### 2.1.1.2 Synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8**

Observing Gilead's baseline conditions, M4ALL found that hydrolysis of oxime **A4.6** with 50% glyoxylic acid (10V) provided aldehyde **A4.8** in 59 A% (LCAP), along with 28 A% (LCAP) residual **A4.6** (Table 2.1.3, Entry 1). Reaction volumes and the concentration of glyoxylic acid were investigated as key variables. The team posited that decreasing the volumes of glyoxylic acid – thereby increasing the concentration of **A4.6** in the reaction medium would favor higher conversion and faster kinetics. Experiments affirmed that decreasing volumes of glyoxylic acid increased the conversion of **A4.6** (Table 2.1.3, Entries 1-3). Notably, 60 A% (LCAP) of **A4.8** was observed using 7.5V of glyoxylic acid (50 wt%) and 68 A% using 5 V of glyoxylic acid (50 wt%).

Table 2.1.5. Screening volumes and concentrations of glyoxylic acid for the synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8**





<sup>1</sup>All these reactions were carried out with **A4.6** (0.2 to 5 g, 1eq), 5-8 h at 80 °C in glyoxylic acid as shown in the table unless otherwise stated; <sup>2</sup>The concentration was wt%, and the aqueous solution of glyoxylic acid was prepared by dissolving glyoxylic acid in water; <sup>3</sup>A% (LCAP) was obtained by HPLC at 210 nm, glyoxylic acid was cut off; <sup>4</sup>Several unknown impurities ( $\leq 2$  A%/each) were detected by HPLC at different retention time; <sup>5</sup>Reaction was performed with 20 g of **A4.6**, 5h, 80 °C.The precipitated solid was collected and washed by water to remove glyoxylic acid. **A4.8** (13 g) was obtained in 58% isolated yield with 82 wt% HPLC (210 nm) purity.

M4ALL further observed a direct correlation between glyoxylic acid concentration and **A4.6** conversion in the hydrolysis (Table 2.1.3, Entries 4-5). A 68 A% (LCAP) of **A4.8** was observed with the use of 60 wt% glyoxylic acid (10V), and 88 A% (LCAP) with 80 wt% glyoxylic acid



(5V). Ultimately, 5 volumes of 70 wt% glyoxylic acid proved optimal in the aldehyde-forming step, as indicated in Entry 6. Conversion of **A4.6** improved to >98 A% (LCAP). Optimal conditions were then examined on a 20 g-scale; 93 A% (LCAP) of **A4.8** was obtained with a conversion >98 A% (LCAP) (Table 2.1.3, Entry 7). Thus, optimized hydrolysis conditions are 70 wt% of glyoxylic acid (5V), 80 °C, 5 h, resulting in >98 A% (HPLC, 210 nm) of **A4.6**.

#### <span id="page-12-0"></span>2.1.2 Scale-up of aldehyde **A4.8** synthesis

Using the optimized 2-step process for the production of **A4.8**, M4ALL evaluated hundredgram (100-200 g) scale-up batches in a 2L ChemRxnHub reactor. Commencing with 3,6-dibromo-2-methyl-pyridine **A4.5** (Table 2.1.4), the optimized process generated oxime **A4.6** in 86-87 % overall isolated yield and 93-100 wt% chemical purity (by HPLC). Hydrolysis of **A4.6** produced the aldehyde **A4.8** in 64-68 % isolated yield with 84-94 wt% purity (by GCMS). Further details, particularly regarding isolated intermediate purity, are discussed in the following paragraphs.

As summarized in Table 2.1.4, treating 3,6-dibromo-2-methyl-pyridine **A4.5** with the portion-wise addition of *t-*BuONO and *t-*BuOK provided the desired oxime **A4.6** in good yields. A 100 g-scale batch furnished oxime **A4.6** as a light-yellow solid in 87.4% isolated yield with 100 wt% purity (HPLC) and a 200 g-scale campaign gave oxime **A4.6** in 86.5% isolated yield with 93 wt% purity (HPLC). M4ALL hypothesizes the low wt% in this batch was due to the presence of trace inorganic salts, as the material showed >99 A% (HPLC, 210 nm). The definition of the **A4.5** impurity profile - and associated critical process parameters - is the subject of future work.

Table 2.1.4 Synthesis of oxime **A4.6** on hundred-gram-scale







<sup>1</sup>Reaction was performed with **A4.5** (1 eq), *t-*BuONO (1.2 eq) and *t-*BuOK (1.3 eq) with an incremental addition, 2- MeTHF (10V),  $0 - 10$  °C,  $6 - 7$  h, see experimental part for details; <sup>2</sup>The reactions were monitored by HPLC A% (LCAP) at 210 nm; <sup>3</sup>Wt% purity was measured by HPLC with a known standard; <sup>4</sup>A% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm); <sup>5</sup>The yield was corrected isolated yield based on wt%; <sup>6</sup>M4ALL hypothesizes the low wt% in this batch is due to the presence of trace inorganic salts, as the material showed >99 A% (HPLC, 210 nm).

Table 2.1.5 summarizes outcomes from the application of optimal conditions for **A4.6** hydrolysis, performed in 50-100 gram-scale batches. With 70 wt% glyoxylic acid (5V) gave >97% conversion and in-process analysis of the crude showed 89-90 A% (HPLC, 210 nm) **A4.8**. After aqueous workup, the isolated assay yield of **A4.8** was 60-64%, and its purity >99 A% (HPLC). Wt% purity was lower, at 84-94%. Low wt% assay was attributable to residual glyoxylic acid, which could ultimately be purged during the racemic amine synthesis. Thus, A4.8 with 84–94 wt% purity was used for the next step without further purification.



Table 2.1.5 Synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8** on hundred-gram-scale

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<sup>1</sup>Reaction was performed with 1 eq of oxime A4.6, glyoxylic acid (5V, 70 w/w% in water) at 80 °C for 6-7 h; <sup>2</sup>A% was obtained by HPLC at 210 nm; <sup>3</sup>Several unknown impurities were observed  $(< 2 \text{ A}\%$  each); <sup>4</sup>Wt% purity was obtained by GCMS measurement with a known standard; <sup>5</sup>Corrected isolated yield based on wt% purity; <sup>6</sup>Low wt% assay was attributable to residual glyoxylic acid.

<sup>i</sup> Residual glyoxylic acid could be removed by extensive water wash, at the expense of accompanying **A4.8** material loss. **A4.8** loss notwithstanding, the water wash process was also very time consuming. Considering glyoxylic acid is orthogonal to the following chemistry and that it can also be purged during the racemic amine synthesis, **A4.8** was not subjected to further purification.



# <span id="page-14-0"></span>2.2 Milestone 2: Synthesis of racemic amine **A1.5**

#### <span id="page-14-1"></span>2.2.1 Optimization of racemic amine **A1.5** synthesis

With **A4.8** in hand, our focus shifted to the synthesis of racemic amine **A1.5**. A three-step telescoped protocol for the synthesis of **A1.5**, from aldehyde **A4.8**, is disclosed the public domain (Scheme 2.2.1). <sup>13</sup> Condensation of **A4.8** with diphenylmethanamine (**A4.9**) afforded the imine **A4.10**. The umpolung of imine **A4.10** allowed alkylation with 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide (**A4.4** in the presence of excess KOH, under phase transfer catalysis, to yield **A4.11**. Hydrolysis of the newly formed imine A4.11 with aqueous H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> gave amine A1.5. While the three-step protocol was described on a small scale in the literature,<sup>13</sup> the disclosure lacked sufficient procedural details (e.g., yields, purification methods, purity profiles, and safety assessment) to judge fitness for scaleup.



Scheme 2.2.1. Reported telescoped three-step synthesis of racemic amine **A1.5**

To deliver a practical process for the **A1.5** scale-up, key factors and parameters needed to be addressed through practical engagement with the chemistry depicted above. M4ALL would need to:

- Develop analytical standards for intermediates (**A10**, **A4.11**) (for reaction monitoring, in-process assays, development of in-process controls, etc.)
- Determine yields and purity profiles for each step before telescoping the process. The information will also allow us to allocate our efforts to optimization.
- Address the safe use of 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide (**A4.4**), a potent lachrymator that can present safe-handling concerns at scale.
- Address the use of excess KOH, which may cause issues when scaling up (in the alkylation step).



Address intensification opportunities in the use of excess  $H_2SO_4$ ; as currently defined, the process requires large volumes of aqueous base to quench during, thus reducing volume-time-output in the last step.<sup>19</sup>

#### *2.2.1.1 Step-wise synthesis of racemic amine A1.5*

To address the abovementioned issues, a stepwise synthesis of the racemic amine **A1.5** was launched. Synthesis of imine **A4.10** commenced with the condensation of **A4.8** (1.0 eq) and diphenylmethanamine (**A4.9**, 1.05 eq). Imination proceeded smoothly in toluene at 60 °C, providing a full conversion after 3h.<sup>j</sup> After removal of solvent, (removing toluene and adding IPA is difficult on scale which was solved by telescoping described below) the crude **A4.10** was obtained as a stable, tacky solid in >90% yield by qNMR; residual amine **A4.9** was the prevailing impurity. Trituration with iPrOH purged amine **A4.9** completely and gave **A4.10** as a white solid in 90% isolated yield with 99 wt% (qNMR) purity (Table 2.2.1). Thus, unknowns related to **A4.10** yield and purity profile were clarified, and analytical reference standards generated.

#### Table 2.2 Verification of imine **A4.10** synthesis





With the purified imine **A4.10** in hand, we evaluated its umpolung alkylation under the reported conditions. The reaction of **A4.10** (1.0 eq) with 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide (**A4.4**, 1.2 eq) in the presence of KOH (5 eq) and *n*-Bu<sub>4</sub>NBr (4 mol%) in toluene (6V) proceeded smoothly. **A4.11** was obtained in 83% yield with moderate purity (76 wt% by qNMR). During this investigation, the authors confronted 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide's highly potent lachrymatory

<sup>j</sup> The imination was also evaluated in 2-MeTHF. A lower purity profile was observed, so toluene was selected for telescoping process development.

<sup>k</sup> Purification by crystallization will be a time-bound priority during **Frag A** scale-up activities in Year 2. Trituration was pursued here to expedite timelines pursuant Year 1 milestone compliance.



properties.<sup>1</sup> By comparison, its halide congener 3.5-difluorobenzyl chloride<sup>m</sup> ( $\mathbf{A4.4a}$ ) is a much less potent lachrymator and easier to handle. Thus, treatment of imine **A4.10** with **A4.4a** under the above conditions provided **A4.11** in up to 95% yield with 76 wt% (qNMR) purity (Table 2.2.2, Entry 1). Further screening of base stoichiometry showed that 1.2 eq of KOH enabled complete conversion, delivering A4.11 in 94% yield and 87 wt% purity (Table 2.2.2, Entries 2-4).<sup>n</sup> Thus, scale-up concerns associated with materials compatibility (large additions of KOH) and EHS (benzyl bromide as a lachrymator) were mitigated. The unknown yields and purity profiles were also addressed.







<sup>1</sup>The reaction was conducted with **A4.10** (1g, 1eq), **A4.4a** (1.2 eq), *n*-Bu<sub>4</sub>NBr (4 mol%), KOH (50 wt% in water), toluene (6 mL, 6V) at 60 °C for 3h under the conditions shown in the table unless otherwise stated; <sup>2</sup>Conversion measured by qNMR; <sup>3</sup>The toluene layer was collected and evaporated to dryness for qNMR analysis; <sup>4</sup>Corrected yield based on qNMR purity; <sup>5</sup>Wt% was obtained by qNMR, and major impurity was unreacted **A4.4a**.

 $\overline{a}$ 

<sup>l</sup> Even small quantities have the potential to create challenging EHS conditions. SDS guidance for safe handling should be strictly observed.

m A two-step process was developed to synthesize 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride (Milestone 4). It was discussed in the Appendix 4.1.

n Identification of impurities in crude **A4.11** will be a time-bound priority during **Frag A** scale-up activities in Year 2. The crude with 87 wt% purity was pursued here to expedite timelines pursuant Year 1 milestone compliance.



Intensification of the **A4.11**'s hydrolysis to **A1.5** was then investigated. Hydrolysis of **A4.11** with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (5 eq) – as reported proceeded smoothly. Amine A1.5 and benzophenone were the major constituents in the crude. After an acid-base workup, benzophenone was purged and the racemic amine A1.5 was obtained as a white solid in >90% yield and >95 wt% purity (HPLC). The reported protocol invokes a large quantity of aq. KOH (7V, 50 wt%) to quench the reaction mixture, commensurate with the excess  $H_2SO_4$  (5 eq) used in the hydrolysis. Application of 1.2 eq H2SO<sup>4</sup> delivered complete hydrolysis and enabled materially reduced consumption of aq. KOH (3V, 50 wt%) during the workup, $\degree$  however, the use of 1.2 eq H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> generated precipitates that caused issues during the following acid-base workup, as a result,  $1.2$  -5 eq of  $H_2SO_4$  was used in the hydrolysis.

Thus, optimized conditions for each step, based on the chemistry done on a step-wise basis, are as follows:

- The imine formation from **A4.8** (1.0 eq) and **A4.9** (1.2 eq) afforded **A4.10** in >90% purity (yield) in toluene (6V), 60 °C for 3h. The major impurity was unreacted **A4.9** which won't impact the next alkylation step and also can be purged easily in downstream workup.
- The alkylation of **A4.10** (1.0 eq) with 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride (**A4.4a,** 1.2 eq) in the presence of KOH (1.2 eq) and  $n$ -Bu<sub>4</sub>NBr (4 mol%) afforded **A4.11** in >95% yield with >87 wt% purity.
- The hydrolysis of  $A4.11$  (1.0 eq) with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (1.2 -5eq) afforded racemic amine **A1.5** in > 90% yield with >95 wt% purity after an acid-base workup.

#### *2.2.1.2 Verification of telescoped synthesis of A1.5*

The above-optimized conditions were then applied to the telescoping of **A1.5** from **A4.8**. The reported protocol was initially tried on a 1g-scale, followed by 5- and 10-g refinement batches. **A4.8**, treated with **A4.9,** generated **A4.10** in quantitative yield (qNMR; in-solution yield). The resulting **A4.10** solution was submitted to alkylation with **A4.4a** (1.2 eq), KOH (1.2 eq), and catalytic *n*-Bu<sub>4</sub>NBr (4 mol%), rendering  $A4.11$  in 71% yield (qNMR; in-solution). The organic layer (toluene), containing **A4.11**, was retained for the final hydrolysis step. Complete conversion

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>o</sup> The hydrolysis of **A4.11** (1.0 eq) with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (1.2 -5eq) proceeds smoothly, parenthetically, the use of 1.2 eq H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> generated precipitates that caused issues during the acid-base workup. Optimization of equivalents of the H2SO<sup>4</sup> with a reliable purification process will be pursued in Frag A scale-up activities in Year 2.



(hydrolysis) of  $\mathbf{A4.11}$  was observed after 3 h in the presence of H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (5 eq). The aqueous layer was collected and the pH was adjusted to  $> 12$  with KOH (50 wt%, 7V). The precipitated solid, crude **A1.5**, obtained in an overall 67% assay yield (qNMR) with a purity of 76 wt% (qNMR) (Table 2.2.3, Entry 1). With a 5g-scale, **A1.5** was obtained in 78% overall yield (by qNMR) with a purity of 81 wt% (qNMR) (Table 2.2.3, Entry 2). Finally, the process was verified with a 10 gscale of **A4.8** with further purification. After imination, alkylation, and hydrolysis, the obtained solid (crude A1.5) was washed with toluene  $(2V \times 3)$  and heptanes  $(2V \times 3)$  to give A1.5 in 75% overall isolated yield (three-step) with 96 wt% purity (by qNMR) (Table 2.2.3, Entry 3).

Table 2.2.3 Telescoped synthesis of **A1.5** from **A4.8**



Entry <sup>1</sup>	Input A4.8	Assay yield $(\frac{6}{6})^2$		<i>Step-C</i> : Output $(A1.5)^3$			
		$Step-A$ A4.10	$Step-B$ A4.11	Three-step yield <sup>4</sup>	Mass $(g)$	$Wt\%^5$	
	1g	100	71	67%	1.3	76%	
2	5g	100	87	78%	6.3	81%	
$3^7$	10 <sub>g</sub>	100	$\mathbf{R}$	75%	11.6	96%	

<sup>1</sup>Reaction conditions: *Step-A*: **A4.8** (1 eq), A4.9 (1.05 eq), toluene (6V) at 60 °C for 3 h; *Step-B*: *n*-Bu<sub>4</sub>NBr (4 mol%), KOH (50 wt% in water, 1.2 eq), 60 °C, 3 h; *Step-C*: H2SO<sup>4</sup> (5 eq, 15 wt%), 60 °C, 3h; <sup>2</sup>Assay yield was obtained by qNMR; <sup>3</sup>After the reaction, the water layer was basified with KOH (50 wt%) to afford crude **A1.5** without further purification, unless otherwise stated, then an acid-base treatment, see experimental section for details; <sup>4</sup>Corrected isolated yield based on wt%; <sup>5</sup>Wt% purity was obtained by qNMR; <sup>6</sup>Low wt% of the crude was probably due to the impurities as shown in the scheme, the major impurity was byproduct benzophenone, all these impurities can be removed as shown in entry 3. <sup>7</sup>Crude **A1.5** was purified by toluene/heptane treatment, see experimental section (80 g scale) for details; <sup>8</sup>Known from Entries 1 and 2, this reaction was monitored by <sup>1</sup>HNMR/TLC (thin layer chromatography), and the formation of **A4.11** was not quantitated in this batch to save operating time.

#### <span id="page-18-0"></span>2.2.2 Scale-up of racemic amine **A1.5** synthesis

The telescoped synthesis of racemic amine **A1.5** was verified on a 53 g and 80 g scale. Both batches showed similar yields and purity profiles. **A1.5** was obtained in 80-81% overall yield (three-step) with 95-97 wt% purity (HPLC). The results are summarized in [Table 2.2..](#page-19-2)





#### <span id="page-19-2"></span>Table 2.2.4 Scaling up the telescoped synthesis of **A1.5**

<sup>1</sup>See experimental section for details; <sup>2</sup>H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (2 eq) was used in hydrolysis; <sup>3</sup>H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq) was used in hydrolysis; <sup>4</sup>A4.8 was made from Milestone 1; <sup>5</sup>A% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm); <sup>6</sup>Wt% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm), lower wt% might be due to solvent residues; <sup>7</sup>Corrected yield based on wt% purity.

#### <span id="page-19-0"></span>2.3 Milestone 3: Resolution approach to **Frag A**

#### <span id="page-19-1"></span>2.3.1 Optimization of **Frag A** synthesis

With the racemic amine **A1.5** in hand, our efforts were focused on dynamic kinetic resolution (DKR) to access Frag A.<sup>p</sup> DKR is also known as crystallization-induced stereoisomer transformation, which was emerged as an important tool in practical asymmetric synthesis.<sup>17,20</sup> More importantly, the DKR of a racemate allows for a theoretical yield of 100% rather than a theoretical yield of 50% in a classical resolution approach.

The DKR approach for resolution of  $A1.5$  was discovered by Gilead Sciences, Inc.,<sup>12</sup> however, the reported resolution was on a small scale and the lack of procedural details (i.e. purification, purity profiles) made it difficult to judge fitness for scale-up. Gram-scale reactions were conducted to familiarize ourselves with the DKR of **A1.5**. To our delight, using N-acetyl-Dleucine (NADL) as a resolving agent, the resolution of **A1.5** in the presence of 5 mol% pyridine-2-carboxaldehyde and 10 mol% ZnO afforded **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** in 61% yield with excellent diastereoselectivity (99.6 %de) (Table 2.3.1, Entry 1). Replacement with inexpensive (*R*)-(-) mandelic acid as the resolving agent, the resolution afforded **(***S***)-A1.5-Mandelate** in a much lower isolated yield (28%) but excellent enantioselectivity (100 %de) (Table 2.3.1, Entry 2). Thus, the

<sup>p</sup> Resolution of **A1.5** under traditional conditions with (*R*)-(-)-mandelic acid, L-(+)-tartaric acid, N-acetyl-D-leucine (NADL) and (1R)-(-)-10-camphorsulfonic acid was also investigated. It was found that (*R*)-(-)-mandelic acid was the best resolving agent, affording the enantiomer in 31% isolated yield with 100%de.



reaction with NADL was repeated in a 10g-scale of **A1.5 (**Table 2.3.1, Entry 3). After resolution, **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** salt was obtained in 63% corrected overall yield with 100%de. Notably, wt% of the obtained salt was 80% and careful <sup>1</sup>HNMR scrutiny of the salt found the presence of approximately 20 wt% of free NADL. To remove NADL, the salt was treated with aq. NaOH (1.3 eq, 1M). This treatment rejected NADL completely and free amine **(***S***)-A1.5** (**Frag A**) was obtained in 95% yield with 99% qNMR purity and 100%ee (Scheme 2.3.1). The X-ray structure of **(***S***)-A1.5** obtained by single crystal X-ray crystallography confirmed the (*S*)-absolute configuration of the enantiopure amine.<sup>q</sup>

Table 2.3.1 Chiral acids screen for DKR of **A1.5**





Entry	Scale	Chiral acid	Product (output)	de $(\frac{9}{0})^3$	Yield $(\%)^4$	$Wt\%$	$\lceil \alpha \rceil_D^{205}$
1 <sup>1</sup>	g	N-Acetyl-D-Leucine	$(S)$ -A1.5-NADL $(1.2 g)$	99.6	61	736	$+66.1$
2 <sup>2</sup>	$\mathbf{g}$	$(R)$ -Mandelic acid	$(S)$ -A1.5-Mandelate $(0.4 g)$	100	28	60 <sup>6</sup>	$+31.2$
	10 g	N-Acetyl-D-Leucine	$(S)$ -A1.5-NADL $(11.5 g)$	100	63	797	$+64.4$

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Dynamic Kinetic Resolution of A1.5 with N-Acetyl-D-Leucine (1.25 eq), 2-PyCHO (5 mol%), ZnO (10 mol%), toluene (10V), 60 °C, 6h, then 35 °C, 4 days; <sup>2</sup>Dynamic kinetic resolution of **A1.5** with R-(-)-Mandelic acid (1.25 eq), 2-PyCHO (5 mol%), ZnO (10 mol%), toluene (10V), 60 °C, 6h, then 35 °C, 4 days; <sup>3</sup>The diastereomeric excess (de) was measured by SFC (210 nm); <sup>4</sup>Corrected isolated yield based on wt% purity; <sup>5</sup>Specific rotation was recorded in MeOH (10mg/mL) at 20 °C under 589 nm; <sup>6</sup>Wt% was obtained by qNMR; <sup>7</sup>Wt% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm).



l <sup>q</sup> Notably, enantiomers resolved from NADL and (*R*)-(-)-mandelic acid showed 100%de and (+)-sign of optical rotation number as the free amine (*S*)-**A1.5**, it is assumed that the same (*S*)-absolute configuration was obtained.



Scheme 2.3.1. Synthesis of enantiopure free amine **Frag A**

Thus, the optimized DKR conditions are:

- Resolution of **A1.5** with N-acetyl-D-leucine (1.25 eq), 2-PyCHO (5 mol%), ZnO (10 mol%), toluene (10V), 35 °C, 4 days, gave **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** in 80 wt%, 99 A%, 100%de.
- The complex was treated with aq. NaOH  $(1.3 \text{ eq}, 1\text{M})$ ,  $25 \text{ °C}$ , 1h, and  $(S)$ -A1.5 was obtained in 95% isolated yield with 99 wt% (qNMR), 100%ee
- This two-step protocol showed robust repeatability and afforded 65-70% overall isolated yields on 1-10 g scales.

#### <span id="page-21-0"></span>2.3.2 Scale-up of **Frag A** synthesis

The above optimized DKR conditions for the synthesis of **Frag A** were demonstrated on two 25g-scale batches (Table 2.3.2).<sup>r</sup> Both batches showed similar isolated yield and purity profiles, affording **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** in 66-68% isolated assay yield with 76-80 wt% purity (HPLC) and 100%de. As expected, the main impurity in **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** was the remaining resolving agent NADL. To demonstrate the scalability of the de-NADL reaction, 10g of **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** was treated with aq NaOH using the above-developed condition. After completion of the reaction, a simple aqueous workup delivered **Frag A** as a white solid in 96% assay yield with 97 wt% purity and 100%ee. As a result, the overall isolated yield of **Frag A** from **A1.5** was expected to be 63- 65% under the current conditions.



Table 2.3.2 Demonstration of DKR approach to **Frag A** on decagram-scale

<sup>r</sup> Due to the timeline of the project, we just verified the DKR conditions on 25g-scale reactions for now. Several elements related to the scale-up of this approach, such as reduction of reaction time, demonstration of 100g-scale, etc. will be addressed when we work on the API project during the next year.





<sup>1</sup>See experimental section for details;  ${}^{2}$ After the reaction, the precipitates were collected and washed by cold toluene (10V  $\times$  2); <sup>3</sup>The de-NADL was carried out with (*S*)-A1.5-NADL (10 g, 1eq), aq NaOH (1.3) eq, 1M),  $H_2O$  (5V), 20 °C, 1h, after completion of the reaction, the precipitates were collected and dried for analysis; <sup>4</sup>Wt% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm); <sup>5</sup>Corrected yield based on wt% purity; <sup>6</sup>Ee was measured by SFC; <sup>7</sup>Specific rotation was recorded in MeOH (10mg/mL) at 20 °C under 589 nm.

# <span id="page-22-0"></span>3 Experimental sections

### <span id="page-22-1"></span>3.1 Analytical report for lenacapavir **Frag A**

Based on the 7-step process plus an additional 2 steps for **A4.4a** starting material synthesis developed by M4All for lenacapavir **Frag A** [\(Scheme 3.1.1\)](#page-22-3), the M4All analytical team developed achiral LC-UV and chiral SFC-UV detection methods for it, its intermediates and starting materials.



#### <span id="page-22-3"></span><span id="page-22-2"></span>3.1.1 Pharmacopoeia methods

Monographs from the United States Pharmacopoeia and the European Pharmacopeia are not available for lenacapavir **Frag A**.



#### <span id="page-23-0"></span>3.1.2 Method development

#### *3.1.2.1 3.1.2.1 Chromatographic conditions*

Initially, method development work was performed using a GC-MS. GC-MS was chosen due to the nature of some of the initial route scouting work. As the project progressed, a LC-UV method was adopted which utilized an Agilent ZORBAX RR Eclipse Plus C18, 4.6 x 100 mm, 3.5  $\mu$ m with gradient elution (0.1% phosphoric acid in water: acetonitrile) in order to allow for easier in process testing. It was later discovered this method was problematic for intermediates **A4.8** and **A4.10** as the acidic nature of the mobile phase caused degradation of these molecules.

The on-column degradation of **A4.8** and **A4.10** was solved by increasing the mobile phase buffer pH. This necessitated a change in column to comfortably accommodate a more basic mobile phase without shortening the column lifetime. The final method adopted an Agilent ZORBAX Extend-C18, 4.6 x 250 mm, 5 µm with gradient elution using 25 mM potassium phosphate buffer, pH 8.5 and methanol as mobile phases. Methanol was chosen for mobile phase B as potassium phosphate solubility in acetonitrile is low. Initial conditions were set to 60:40 (phosphate: methanol) and held for 0.5 min. At this time the mobile phase B was increased to 90% over 9.5 min and held for 15 min. Column temperature was set to 30 °C and a flow rate of 1 mL/min was used. Injection volume was  $1 \mu$ L and chromatograms were collected at  $210 \text{ nm}$  and  $225 \text{ nm}$  (Figure [3.1.1\)](#page-23-1). Details for LenA-1 can be found in Section [4.4.](#page-65-0)



<span id="page-23-1"></span>Figure 3.1.1. Chromatogram for all starting materials, intermediates and product in the synthesis of **Frag A**.



Chiral separation was needed for **A1.5** [\(Figure 3.1.2\)](#page-24-0). This was achieved using an SFC-DAD with a Chiral Technologies CHIRALPAK IA SFC, 4.6 x 250 mm, 3 µm column. Flow rate was set to 2 mL/min with an injection volume of 5  $\mu$ L. Column temperature was 25 °C. Isomers were separated isocratically with  $90:10 \text{ CO}_2$ : methanol over 10 min. Details for LenA-2 can be found in Section [4.4.](#page-65-0)



<span id="page-24-0"></span>Figure 3.1.2. Chiral separation of **A1.5** after resolution (**Frag A**).

#### *3.1.2.2 Wavelength selection and relative response factors*

Ideal detection wavelengths were determined isosbestically on a stepwise basis. Starting material steps for **A4.4a** [\(Figure 3.1.3\)](#page-25-0) and **Frag A** steps 1 and 2 (**A4.5** through **A4.8**) have the most similar responses using 210 nm [\(Figure 3.1.4,](#page-25-1) [Figure 3.1.5\)](#page-25-2). The remaining steps to **Frag A** (**A4.8** through **A4.12** and **A1.5**) have the most similar responses when 225 nm is used [\(Figure 3.1.6,](#page-26-0) [Figure 3.1.7,](#page-26-1) [Figure 3.1.8\)](#page-26-2). Relative response factors [\(Table 3.1.1\)](#page-26-3) for each step were determined stepwise using both mass concentration and molar concentrations (Eqn 3.1.2.1).





<span id="page-25-0"></span>Figure 3.1.3. Isosbestic plots for synthesis of the chloride starting material **A4.4a**.



<span id="page-25-1"></span>Figure 3.1.4. Isosbestic plots for synthesis of the **A4.6**.



<span id="page-25-2"></span>Figure 3.1.5. Isosbestic plots for synthesis of the **A4.8**.







<span id="page-26-0"></span>Figure 3.1.6. Isosbestic plots for synthesis of the **A4.10**.

<span id="page-26-1"></span>



<span id="page-26-2"></span>Figure 3.1.8. Isosbestic plots for synthesis of the racemic and enantiopure **A1.5**.

$$
Relative \, RF = \frac{\begin{pmatrix} Analyte \, 2 \, Peak \, Area \end{pmatrix}_{Analyte \, 2 \, Conc.} \end{pmatrix}}{\begin{pmatrix} Analyte \, 1 \, Peak \, Area \end{pmatrix}_{Analyte \, 1 \, Conc.}} \tag{3.1.2.1}
$$

<span id="page-26-3"></span>Table 3.1.1. Retention Times and Relative Response Factors for Starting Materials, Synthetic Impurities and **Frag A** at 210 and 225 nm











\*RRT = relative retention time

#### *3.1.2.3 UV spectra*

UV spectra of each compound can be found in Section [4.4.](#page-65-0)

#### *3.1.2.4 Linearity*

**A1.5**, which corresponds to **Frag A**, was tested over the range of 0.07 mg/mL to 1.1 mg/mL. A 1/x weighted, 7-level curve over this range was linear with an  $R^2 > 0.99$  [\(Figure 3.1.9\)](#page-29-3).





<span id="page-29-3"></span>Figure 3.1.9. 7-Level calibration curve for **A1.5**.

#### *3.1.2.5 Limit of detection (LOD) and limit of quantitation (LOQ)*

Limits were not determined for the starting materials, intermediates, impurities or product.

#### <span id="page-29-0"></span>3.1.3 Impurities

#### *3.1.3.1 Starting material impurities*

Impurities were not specified nor determined for lenacapavir **Frag A** (salt of **A1.5**) starting materials.

#### *3.1.3.2 Synthesis impurities*

Impurities were not isolated and characterized for lenacapavir **Frag A** (salt of **A1.5**) or for the intermediates en route to **A1.5**.

#### <span id="page-29-1"></span>3.1.4 Forced degradation studies

Forced degradation studies were not performed for lenacapavir **Frag A** (salt of **A1.5**) nor its starting materials, intermediates and impurities.

#### <span id="page-29-2"></span>3.1.5 Methods

Analytical methods used to support the synthesis of lenacapavir **Frag A** (salt of **A1.5**) are appended to this report (Section [4.4\)](#page-65-0).

#### *3.1.5.1 Key starting materials*

**A4.2**, **A4.3**, **A4.4a**, **A4.5**, **A4.7**, **A4.9**, and **A4.12** are analyzed via LC-UV using the method "LenA-1".



#### *3.1.5.2 Reagent and solvents*

Toluene, dichloromethane (DCM) and heptane were analyzed using the GC-MSD method "GC Solvents".

#### *3.1.5.3 Intermediates*

The **A4.6**, **A4.8**, **A4.10** and **A4.11** are synthetic intermediates in this process. These intermediates as well as crude and isolated **A1.5** are analyzed via LC-UV using "LenA-1".

#### *3.1.5.4 In-process controls (IPC)*

Requirements for IPCs were not set on this process. However, when IPCs were collected, they were analyzed via LC-UV using the "LenA-1" method.

#### *3.1.5.5 Final product analysis*

Isolated **Frag A** (enantiopure **A1.5**) was assayed using the "LenA-1" method on LC-UV. This material was also subjected to chiral SFC-UV analysis (LenA-2), KF titration of water content and residual solvent analysis by GC-MS for toluene, dichloromethane (DCM) and heptane ("GC Solvents").

#### *3.1.5.6 Method appropriateness*

During development of the "LenA-1" certain performance characteristics were evaluated to select analytical conditions. These results are described above and include linearity and limits of detection. This method was not tested for specificity. Method validation was not performed.

#### <span id="page-30-0"></span>3.2 Detailed experimental procedure

#### <span id="page-30-1"></span>3.2.1 General method

Reagents and solvents were obtained from commercial suppliers and used as received unless otherwise indicated. Where applicable, reactions were conducted in oven-dried (120 °C) glassware, which was assembled while hot, and cooled to ambient temperature under an inert atmosphere. Reactors were pre-rinsed with reaction solvent and subjected to evacuation/back-fill cycles  $(3\times)$  as necessary. Reactions were monitored by TLC (precoated silica gel 60 F254 plates, EMD Chemicals), Agilent GCMS or crude  ${}^{1}H$  NMR. HRMS was recorded using Perkin Elmer Axion 2 ToF MS, ionization mode: positive with scan range: 100 - 1000 m/z, flight tube voltage: 8 kV, spray voltage: 3.5 kV, solvent: methanol. TLC was visualized with UV light. The proton  $(^{1}H NMR)$ , carbon  $(^{13}C NMR)$  and 2-DNMR spectra of the compounds were recorded on Bruker Avance III HD Ascend 600 MHz spectrometer. The NMR solvents used were  $DMSO-d_6$ ,  $CDCl<sub>3</sub>$ and CD3OD. The chemical shifts were reported in parts per million (ppm). Coupling constants J



are reported in hertz (Hz). The abbreviations used to designate signal multiplicity were: s, singlet; d, doublet; t, triplet; q, quartet, p, pentet; dd, doublet of doublets; ddd, doublet of doublet of doublets; dt, double of triplets; ddt, doublet of doublet of triplets; m, multiplet; br, broad.

# <span id="page-31-0"></span>3.2.2 Experimental section Synthesis of oxime **A4.6**



A 5L jacketed reactor equipped with an overhead stirrer and thermocouple for internal temperature monitoring was charged with 2-MeTHF (2L, 10V) and 2,5-dibromomethylpyridine **A4.5** (200 g, 797 mmol). The mixture was stirred for 10 min at 210 rpm, then cooled to 0-5 °C. *t-*BuONO (116 mL, 876.8 mmol, 1.1 eq) was added slowly over 20 min, then followed by the addition of *t-*BuOK (98.38 g, 876.8 mmol, 1.1 eq) in 2-MeTHF (878 mL) over 30 min, maintaining the internal temperature below 10 °C. After addition, the reaction mixture was stirred at 0-5 °C. During the course, the reaction was monitored by HPLC every 1 h. About 2 h later, HPLC showed 16 A% **A4.5** remaining. Additional *t-*BuONO (5.3 mL, 39.85 mmol, 0.1 eq) and *t-*BuOK (6.70 g, 59.78 mmol, 0.15 eq) in 2-MeTHF (59.8 mL) were added at 0-5 °C then the mixture was stirred for another 5 h. The A% of  $A4.5$  was  $\leq 1\%$ . The mixture was diluted with 2-MeTHF (200 mL), then 10% sat. NH4Cl (5V) was added slowly over 30 min (temperature was slightly increased +2 °C). The mixture was concentrated until 2-MeTHF (400 mL, 2V) remained. The obtained heterogeneous mixture was diluted with DI water (1 L, 5V). The precipitate was filtered and washed with DI water (600 mL, 3V). The solid was dried at 45 °C under 25 mmHg to afford 207 g of light-yellowish oxime **A4.6** in 86.5% of yield (93.1 wt% purity by HPLC, KF: 0.26 wt%).

**<sup>1</sup>HNMR (600 MHz, DMSO-d6):** δ 11.70 (d, *J* = 3.5 Hz, 1H), 8.15 – 7.97 (m, 1H), 7.67 (s,1H),  $7.64 - 7.55$  (m, 1H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, DMSO):** δ 151.74, 143.22, 143.03, 139.15, 129.35, 119.44.

**Melting Point:** 191 °C

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax** = 3309, 1587, 1388, 1140, 892.

**HRMS**  $m/z$ :  $[M+H]^+$  calcd for  $C_6H_4Br_2N_2O \cdot H^+$ , 278.8763; found: 278.8743.





Figure 3.2.1. Pictures of scale-up synthesis of oxime **A4.6** 

Synthesis of 3,6-dibromopicolinaldehyde **A4.8**



To a 2 L jacketed glass reactor equipped with an overhead stirrer and thermocouple was charged with 70% (w/w) glyoxylic acid (467 g) in water (200 mL) and stirred for 5 min at 370 rpm. The solution was warmed to 80-85 °C, and oxime **A4.6** (100 g, 332.60 mmol) was added in one portion *via* an addition funnel. The reaction mixture was stirred at 80-85 °C for 7-8 h. After completion of the reaction (monitored by HPLC), the mixture was cooled to  $0-5^{\circ}$ C and stirred for 30 min. The suspension was drained and the reactor was washed with cold water (300 mL, 3V). Suspensions



were combined and filtered. The filter cake was washed with cold water (100 mL, 1V) (pH of the filtrate was found to be 2-3). The wet solid (85g) was taken back into the reactor and suspended in water (250 mL, 2.5V) and stirred for 30 min at 20 °C. The precipitate was collected by filtration and washed cold water (250 mL, 2.5V) (filtrate showed pH 3-4). The washing process was repeated until the pH of the filtrate was 5-6. The resulting solid was dried at 55 °C under vacuum to afford 60 g of **A4.8** (86 wt% by GCMS, KF: 0.2%, corrected assay yield: 60%).

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, DMSO-d6)**: δ 9.95 (s, 1H), 8.21 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.86 – 7.82 (m, 1H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, DMSO)**: δ 189.45, 148.70, 145.74, 140.22, 133.24, 120.34.

**Melting Point:125 °C.** 

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax** = 2877, 1694, 1543, 1412, 1382.

**HRMS**  $m/z$ :  $[M+H]^+$  calcd for  $C_6H_3Br_2NO \cdot H^+$ , 263.8654; found: 263.8637.



Figure 3.2.2. Pictures of scale-up synthesis of aldehyde **A4.8** 

Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl alcohol **A4.3**



A 2 L round bottle flask equipped with an overhead stirrer was charged NaBH<sup>4</sup> (28.7 g, 759.0 mmol) in THF (400 mL, 4V), followed by the addition of 3,5-difluorobenzoic acid **A4.2** (100 g, 632.5 mmol) in THF (300 mL, 3V) at 0 ºC. To the mixture, iodine (80.2 g, 316.2 mmol) in THF (300 mL, 3V) was added slowly. After addition, the mixture was heated at 65  $\degree$ C and stirred for 24 h. After completion of the reaction, the mixture was cooled to 0-5 °C. Ice-cold water (1 L, 10V)



was added and the mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate (1 L  $(10V) \times 2$ ). The combined organic layer was washed with 10% *aq.* NaCl solution (1L, 10V). The organic layer was evaporated under reduced pressure to obtain the desired alcohol **A4.3** as colorless liquid (104.12 g, corrected assay yield: 89.9 %, purity: 93.7 A% by HPLC).

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 7.25 (dq, *J* = 8.3, 6.6 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 4.76 (d, *J*  $= 5.4$  Hz, 2H), 2.21 (s, 1H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 163.11 (dd, *J* = 249.1 Hz, 12.6 Hz), 144.80 (t, *J* = 8.6 Hz), 109.10 (dd, *J* = 20.2, 5.1 Hz), 102.69 (t, *J* = 25.6 Hz), 63.91.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR (564 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ -108.5.

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax**: 3400, 1627, 1595, 1554, 1459, 1414, 1187.



Addition of 3,5-difluorobenzoic Addition of  $I_2$  to the reaction mixture acid A4.2



Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a**



3,5-Difluorobenzyl alcohol **A4.3** (40.9 g, 284.14 mmol) and DMF (0.944 g, 1.0 mL, 4 mol%) dissolved in  $CH_2Cl_2(20 \text{ mL})$ . To the mixture thionyl chloride (58.95 g, 35.7 mL, 1.7 eq) was added slowly at  $0^{\circ}$ C (internal temperature was maintained between 2-5  $^{\circ}$  C during the time of addition). After addition, the mixture was refluxed at 39 °C for 16 h. After the completion of the reaction (confirmed by TLC monitoring and HPLC analysis), the reaction mixture was subject to



distillation. The distillate at 89.3 °C under 22-88 mmHg was collected (38.4 g, containing trace amount of SOCl<sub>2</sub>). The collected fraction was washed with aq. saturated solution of NaHCO<sub>3</sub> (50) mL) and ice-cold water (100 mL). The organic layer was concentrated under reduced pressure to obtain the product as a pale-yellow liquid (See [Figure 3.2.4\)](#page-35-0) (33 g, isolated yield: 71.4%, purity: 100 wt% by HPLC).

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)**:  $\delta$  6.93 (dd, *J* = 7.8 Hz, J = 1.8 Hz, 2H), 6.77 (tt, *J* = 8.9 Hz, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H), 4.53 (s, 2H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 162.97 (dd, *J* = 249.5, 12.7 Hz), 140.92 (t, *J* = 9.3 Hz), 111.38 (dd, *J* = 20.4, 5.4 Hz), 103.81 (t, *J* = 25.2 Hz), 44.64 (t, *J* = 2.1 Hz).

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR (564 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ -109.8.

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax**: 1627, 1600, 1461, 1442, 1326, 1269, 1120. **MS-EI (***m/z***)**: 162 and 127



Distillation setup for the purification of 3,5-Difluorobenzyl chloride A4.4a

Isolated 3,5-Difluorobenzyl chloride A4.4a

<span id="page-35-0"></span>Figure 3.2.4. Purification of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a**

Synthesis of racemic amine **A1.5**




Step A: To a 2 L RB reactor was charged 3,6-dibromopicolinaldehyde A4.10 (80.0 g, 87 wt%, 1) eq, 262.7 mmol), toluene (480.0 mL, 6V, Sigma, anhydrous) and diphenylmethanamine **A4.9** (50.55 g, 1.05 eq, 275.90 mmol). The reaction mixture was heated to 60 °C and stirred for 1 h. HPLC showed completion of the reaction.

Step B: To the above reaction mixture tetrabutylammonium bromide (3.39 g, 0.04 eq, 10.51) mmol), 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a** (51.25 g, 1.2 eq, 317 mmol) and 25% aqueous KOH (20.81 g, 85 wt%, 1.2 eq, 315.3 mmol in 46 mL water) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred for 3 h at 60 °C. After 3 h (<sup>1</sup>HNMR showed completion of the reaction), 160 mL of toluene (2V) and 160 mL of water (2V) were added and stirred for 10 min. The toluene layer was collected and washed with water two times (240 mL (3V) and 160 mL (2V)). The combined water layer was extracted with toluene two times (160 mL  $(2V) \times 2$ ). The combined toluene layers were charged to the reactor for the next step (Step C).

Step C: The above toluene solution was heated to 60 °C. Sulfuric acid (31.53 g, 98% wt, 1.2 eq, 315.3 mmol) was dissolved in 127 mL water and this resulting solution was added to the warm toluene solution. The reaction mixture was stirred at 60  $\degree$ C for 2 h. After 2 h, the reaction mixture was cooled to 20 °C. The toluene layer was separated, and washed with water 3 times (160 mL, 240 mL, and 160 mL, 7V in total). The combined water layers were washed with heptane 2 times (240 mL, 160 mL, 5V in total). During the heptane wash, pale-yellowish solids were precipitated. The heptane layer was discarded and both solids and water layer were collected for further purification. The solid (~30 g) was dissolved in methanol (105 mL, 3.5V) at 60 °C, stirred for 10 min, and cold water (300 mL, 10V) was added slowly at 20 °C to obtain the 1<sup>st</sup> crop of A1.5 as a beige solid (30 g). The aqueous layer was further washed with toluene 3 times (160 mL, 240 mL, and 160 mL, 7V in total). The colorless aqueous layer was basified with 35 mL (50% KOH) solution. The precipitate was filtered and dried to afford the 2<sup>nd</sup> crop A1.5 as a beige solid (56.5) g). After combined two crops of solids, 86.5 g of **A1.5** was obtained, 81% assay corrected yield; wt%: 97% by HPLC; A%: 99% by HPLC.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 7.64 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.33 – 7.17 (m, 1H), 6.74 (d, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 2H), 6.67 (t, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 1H), 4.67 – 4.41 (m, 1H), 3.06 (dd, *J* = 13.5, 5.1 Hz, 1H), 2.84 – 2.67 (m, 1H); 1.80 (bs, 2H)



**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 163.0 (dd, *J* = 248.0, 13.0 Hz), 162.7, 142.7, 142.5 (t, *J* = 8.9 Hz), 140.6, 128.2, 119.1, 112.3 (dd, *J* = 19.7, 4.7 Hz), 102.2 (t, *J* = 25.4 Hz), 56.1, 43.7. **<sup>19</sup>F NMR (565 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ -110.3.

**Melting point**: 92 °C.

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax** = 3360, 3030, 3060, 1590, 1490, 1120, 1000, 830.

**HRMS** *m/z*: [M+H]+ calcd for C13H10Br2F2N2·H+, 390.9252; found: 390.9253.



Figure 3.2.5. Pictures of scale-up of synthesis of *racemic* amine **A1.5**

Synthesis of **(S)-A1.5-NADL** *via* DKR reaction



A 1 L three-necked round bottom flask was equipped with an overhead stirrer and a  $N_2$  bubbler. **A1.5** (25 g, 63.76 mmol, 1 eq), N-acetyl-D-leucine (13.80 g, 79.71 mmol, 1.25 eq) and ZnO (519.1 mg, 6.37 mmol, 0.1 eq) in anhydrous toluene (625 mL, 25V) was charged to the flask, followed by addition of pyridine-2-carboxaldehyde (341.51 mg, 3.18 mmol, 0.05 eq) under  $N_2$  atmosphere. The reaction mixture was heated to 60 °C and stirred for 6 h, then cooled to 35 °C and stirred for 4 days. The mixture was cooled to 20 °C. The resulting solid product was collected by filtration and the filter cake was washed with cold toluene (250 mL (10V)  $\times$  2). The solid was dried under



vacuum at 25 °C overnight to afford **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** as a white solid in 68% yield (30.6 g, 100% ee, 80 wt% purity by HPLC).

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, DMSO-d6)**: δ 8.02 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.02 (t, *J* = 9.4 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 2H), 4.52 – 4.37 (m, 1H), 4.18 (q, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 2.94 (dd, *J* = 13.3, 5.9 Hz, 1H), 2.87 (dd, *J* = 13.2, 7.9 Hz, 1H), 1.83 (s, 3H), 1.65 – 1.57 (m, 1H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H), 0.88 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 0.83 (d, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, DMSO-d6)**: δ 174.9, 169.6, 163.3 (d, *J* = 13.4 Hz), 162.9, 161.7 (d, *J* = 13.4 Hz), 143.9, 143.6 (t, *J* = 9.4 Hz), 140.2, 128.7, 119.7, 112.9 (dd, *J* = 19.7, 4.6 Hz), 102.1 (t, *J* = 25.7 Hz), 55.9, 50.9, 42.5, 40.8, 24.8, 23.4, 22.8, 21.9.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR (565 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ -110.9.

**Melting Point:164 °C** 

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax** = 3360, 3030, 3060, 1590, 1490, 1120, 1000, 830.

**Diastereomeric excess (***de***)**: 100%, desired (SFC)

**Specific rotation**:  $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +64.4$  (deg·mL·g<sup>-1</sup>·dm<sup>-1</sup>) (measured in MeOH (10mg/mL) at 20 °C under 589nm)



Figure 3.2.6. Representative pictures of scale-up synthesis of **(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** on 10 g scale

Synthesis of Frag A



**(***S***)-A1.5-NADL** (10 g, 12.2 mmol, 1 eq, 80 wt% purity) and water (50 mL, 5V) were charged to a 250 mL three-necked round bottom flask equipped with overhead stirrer under  $N_2$  atmosphere.



To this slurry aq. NaOH (16 mmol, 630 mg, 1.3 eq in 30 mL water, 3V) was added at 20 °C. The reaction mixture was stirred at the same temperature for 1 h. After 1 h, the solid obtained was filtered and dried under vacuum at 25 °C for overnight to afford white free amine **Frag A** (5.5 g, 96% isolated yield, 97% wt% by HPLC).

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 7.65 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.27 (t, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 6.3 Hz, 2H), 6.68 (dd, *J* = 12.5, 5.5 Hz, 1H), 4.56 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 5.3 Hz, 1H), 3.08 (dd, *J* = 13.5, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 2.78 (dd, *J* = 13.5, 8.6 Hz, 1H), 1.80 (s, 2H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ 162.9 (dd, *J* = 248.3, 12.9 Hz), 162.5 (s), 142.6 (s), 142.4 (t, *J* = 9.1 Hz), 140.5 (s), 128.1 (s), 118.9 (s), 112.2 (dd, *J* = 19.6, 5.1 Hz), 102.1 (t, *J* = 25.3 Hz), 56.0, 43.6.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR (565 MHz, CDCl3)**: δ -110.2.

**Melting Point:114°C** 

**IR (ATR, DCM) νmax** = 3360, 3030, 3060, 1623, 1453, 1123, 998, 857.

**Enantiomeric excess (***ee***)**: 100% (SFC)

**Optical rotation**:  $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +91.19$  (deg·mL·g<sup>-1</sup>·dm<sup>-1</sup>) (measured in MeOH (10mg/mL) at 20 °C under 589nm)



Figure 3.2.7. Isolated enantiopure free amine **(S)-A1.5**



### 3.3 Copies of NMR spectra and analytical reports



























Figure 3.3.10 HPLC wt% analysis for isolated alcohol **A4.3**



















































## 4 Appendix

- 4.1 Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a** (Milestone 4 in LenA 4)
- 4.1.1 Optimization of the synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a**
- *4.1.1.1 2.2.1.1 Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl alcohol A4.3*

3,5-Difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a**, an alkylating reagent in the **A4.11** synthesis, was expensive and one of the cost drivers in LenA 4 route. To achieve a more cost-effective route for **Frag A**, we developed a two-step route to synthesize 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride from commercially available 3,5-difluorobenzoic acid **A4.2** (Scheme 4.1.1). The key transformation was NaBH4/I2-based carboxylic acid reduction to afford alcohol **A4.3** and the subsequent



chlorination with SOCl $\alpha$ /DMF. Herein, we describe detailed results of the synthesis of 3.5difluorobenzyl chloride.



Scheme 4.1.1 Two-step approach for synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride (**A4.4a**)

The synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl alcohol (**A4.3**) is imperative to access **A4.4a**. Our initial efforts to make **A4.3** focused on the reaction of 1-bromo-3,5-difluorobenzene (**A1.1**) with paraformaldehyde. Commencing from the halo-exchange reaction of A1.1 (1 eq) and Mg (5 eq) in THF, the resulting Grignard reagent reacted with paraformaldehyde (3.3 eq) to afford **A4.3** in 40 A% (LCAP, 210 nm), and debromination was the major side-product (Table 4.1.1, Entry 1). Attempts to improve the yield failed. We envisioned that reduction of 3,5-difluorobenzoic acid would provide an effective way to access **A4.3**. The reduction proceeded smoothly with NaAlH<sub>4</sub> as the reducing reagent. The reaction of A4.2 with NaAlH<sub>4</sub> (1.1 eq) in THF (10V) at 0 °C afforded **A4.3** in 99 A% (LCAP, 210 nm) (Table 4.1.1, Entry 2). Unexpectedly, the cost of NaAlH<sup>4</sup> increased dramatically in recent years due to its low market volumes. Thus, we screened other cheap reducing reagent for the reduction. Red-Al was tried but only 74 A% (LCAP, 210 nm) of **A4.3** was obtained (Table 4.1.1, Entry 3). To our delight, initial results showed that **A4.3** was obtained in 86 A% (LCAP, 210 nm) with NaBH<sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq)  $\frac{1}{2}$  (0.5 eq)<sup>21</sup> as the reducing reagent in THF (60V) at 25 °C (Table 2.2.1, Entry 4). Thus, NaBH<sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq)  $/I_2$  (0.5 eq) was chosen for further optimization to improve the yield at scale. Concentration of the reaction mixture and the reaction temperature were critical to afford a full conversion of the reaction. Increase of the reaction temperature to 65 °C enabled the formation of **A4.3** up to 96 A% (LCAP, 210 nm) in THF (5V) (Table 4.1.1, Entry 5). Among various solvent screening, it was found that the solvent volume from 5V to 15V afforded a similar yield of **A4.3** (93-96 A%) when the reactions were carried out at 65 °C (Table 4.1.1, Entries 6-8). It should be noted that an exotherm was observed in the reaction with 5V of THF as solvent during the addition of NaBH<sub>4</sub>. No obvious exotherm was observed in a more dilute reaction medium (i.e. THF (10V)).

Table 4.1.1 Initial screen of synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl alcohol **A4.3**





Entry <sup>1</sup>	SM(g)	Condition	A4.3 $(A\%)^2$
$\mathbf{1}$	A1.1(40)	Mg (5 eq), HCHO (3.3 eq), THF (10V), 25 °C, 8 h	40
2	A4.2(2)	Red Al (60% in toluene, 1 eq), THF (10V), 0 °C to 25 °C, 1 h	74
3	A4.2(50)	NaAlH <sub>4</sub> (1.1 eq), THF (10V) 0 °C to 25 °C, 2 h	99
4	A4.2(1)	NaBH <sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I <sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq), THF (60V), 0 to 25 °C, 21 h	86
5	A4.2(2)	NaBH <sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I <sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq), THF (5V), 0 °C to 65 °C, 18 h	96
6	A4.2(2)	NaBH <sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I <sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq), THF (7.5V), 0 °C to 65 °C, 18 h	93
$7^{\circ}$	A4.2(2)	NaBH <sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I <sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq), THF (10V), 0 °C to 65 °C, 15 h	94
8	A4.2(2)	NaBH <sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I <sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq), THF (15V), 0 °C to 65 °C, 16 h	94
9	A4.2(25)	NaBH <sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I <sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq), THF (10V), 0 °C to 65 °C, 17 h	91

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Typical reduction with NaBH<sub>4</sub>/I<sub>2</sub>: reactions conducted with **A4.2** (1 eq), NaBH<sub>4</sub> (1.2 eq), I<sub>2</sub> (0.5 eq) at 0 °C then heated to 65 °C in THF under conditions as shown in the table unless otherwise stated. <sup>2</sup>A% of **A4.3** was obtained by HPLC (210 nm).

Optimal reduction conditions were identified as: NaBH<sup>4</sup> (1.2 eq), I<sup>2</sup> (0.5 eq), THF (10V), 0 °C to 65 °C, 15-18 h. This optimized condition was verified with a 25g-scale reaction, and 91 A% (LCAP, 210 nm) of **A4.3** was obtained (Table 4.1.1, Entry 9).

#### *4.1.1.2 Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride A4.4a*

To complete the synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride (**A4.4a**), alcohol **A4.3** was subject to the traditional chlorination condition [oxalyl chloride  $(COCI)_2$ , cat. DMF].<sup>22</sup> Unexpectedly, the reaction of **A4.3** with (COCl)<sup>2</sup> resulted in a complex mixture and no significant amount of **A4.4a** was observed (Table 4.1.2, Entry 1). The chlorination of **A4.3** with conc HCl afforded **A4.4a** in 63 A% (LCAP) and main starting material **A4.3** remained (26 A%) (Table 4.1.2, Entry 2). Chlorination with conc. HCl provided a cleaner reaction profile compared to  $(COCI)_2$ , unfortunately, further attempts (increase temperature, increase eq of conc. HCl, elongation of reaction time, etc.) to improve the yield resulted in poorer reaction profiles. To our delight, chlorination with thionyl chloride  $23$  afforded better conversion and cleaner reaction profiles. Initially, the reaction of the alcohol **A4.3** with thionyl chloride without DMF afforded



incompletion of the chlorination. The addition of catalytic amount of DMF (5 mol%) is critical to afford a full conversion of the chlorination. For example, **A4.3** with thionyl chloride (1.5 eq) and DMF (0.05 eq) in DCM (6V) at 25 °C afforded **A4.4a** in 100 A% (LCAP) (Table 4.1.2, Entry 3). The screen of equivalents of thionyl chloride showed that the chlorination proceeded smoothly with thionyl chloride from 1.2 eq to 1.5 eq (Table 4.1.2, Entries 4-5). Thus, 1.2 eq of thionyl chloride was used for scale-up in this chlorination. The condition was verified with a 29g-scale reaction and the conversion was >98 A%, however A% of **A4.4a** in the crude was 82 A% (LCAP). After distillation (80 °C/42 mmHg) the product **A4.4a** was obtained in 59% isolated yield with 81wt% (HPLC) (Table 4.1.2, Entry 6).<sup>s</sup>

Table 4.1.2 Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a**





<sup>1</sup>All reactions conducted with **A4.3** (1 eq) under conditions as shown in the table unless otherwise stated; <sup>2</sup>HPLC A% measured at 210 nm; <sup>3</sup>Product **A4.4a** was isolated using distillation at 80 °C with 42 mmHg; <sup>4</sup>Purity measured by HPLC wt% compared to a known standard.

 $\overline{a}$ 

<sup>s</sup> The chlorination with SOCl2 was used for scale-up without further optimization due to the limited timeline of the project.



## 4.1.2 Scale-up of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a** *4.1.2.1 Scaleup synthesis of alcohol A4.3*

The optimized condition of reduction of 3,5-difluorobenzoic acid **A4.2** to afford alcohol **A4.3** was conducted on 100 g-scale (Table 4.1.3). Firstly, NaBH<sup>4</sup> was dissolved in THF (4V), 3,5 difluorobenzoic acid **A4.2** was dissolved in THF (3V) and iodine was dissolved in THF (3V). The solution of NaBH<sup>4</sup> was then added to the solution of **A4.2** at 0º C followed by addition of the iodine solution. The reaction mixture was heated at 65 °C for 18h and the IPC showed 97 A% **A4.3** (LCAP, 210 nm). After workup (see experimental section for details section 3.), **A4.3** was obtained in 90% isolated yield with 94 wt% (HPLC). The obtained alcohol **A4.3** was used for next step without further purification.

Table 4.1.3 Scale up synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl alcohol **A4.3**





<sup>1</sup>See experimental section for details; <sup>2</sup>A% was obtained by LCAP (210 nm); wt% with reference to known standard; <sup>2</sup>Corrected yield based on HPLC wt% purity; <sup>3</sup>Corrected yield based on wt%;  $4Wt\%$  was measured by HPLC (210) nm) with a known standard.

#### *4.1.2.2 Scale-up synthesis of chloride A4.4a*

The scale-up of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a** was demonstrated on a 40 g-scale of 3,5 difluorobenzyl alcohol **A4.3** under the optimized condition (Table 4.1.4). The reaction of alcohol **A4.3** and thionyl chloride with a catalytic amount of DMF (5 mol%) afforded **A4.4a** in 99 A% (LCAP, 210 nm). After distillation 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a** was obtained in 71% isolated yield with >99 wt% purity (HPLC, 210 nm).

Table 4.1.4 Scale-up of 3,5-difluorobenzyl chloride **A4.4a**







#### 4.1.3 Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide **A4.4**

Similarly, 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide **A4.4** was also prepared by bromination of 3,5 difluorobenzyl alcohol **A4.3**. To identify a reliable bromination, various conditions such as TMSBr,<sup>24</sup> aq. HBr/acetic acid,<sup>25</sup> aq. HBr/H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and PBr<sub>3</sub><sup>26</sup> were investigated (Table 4.1.5).

Table 4.1.5 Synthesis of 3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide **A4.4**





<sup>1</sup>The bromination was conducted with: **A4.3** (1 eq), brominating reagent under the condition as shown in the table unless otherwise stated; <sup>2</sup>A% was obtained by HPLC (210 nm); <sup>3</sup>3,5-difluorobenzyl bromide **A4.4** (52.8 g) was obtained after purification in 87% isolated yield with ~80 wt% purity (HPLC).

Among all these screened conditions, bromination with 48% HBr (1.2 eq) in acetic acid (1.2V) afforded **A4.4** in >95 A% (HPLC). This approach was chosen for bromination and it was verified with a 42 g-scale of **A4.3**. Thus, the reaction of **A4.3** with 48% HBr (3 eq) afforded **A4.4** in 87% isolated yield with  $\sim 80$  wt% purity (HPLC).<sup>t</sup>

 $\overline{a}$ 

t It was found that excess (3 eq) of 48% HBr was required to afford a full conversion of the **A4.3**. It should be noted that **A4.4** is extremely lachrymatory and all the bromination must be done in fume-hood with proper PPE.



#### 4.2 Route scouting of **LenA 1**

LenA 1 is a 7-step approach to prepare **Frag A.**<sup>27</sup> The key step in the sequence is the Weinreb amide-based ketone synthesis, which provides an alternative entry point to the core structural component. Starting from the inexpensive 2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)acetic acid, the Weinreb amide synthesis and the followed nucleophilic substitution afford the ketone in 47% yield. The subsequent functional group manipulation delivers the racemic amine which was then resolved with N-acetyl-D-leucine (NADL) under the DKR approach as discussed in section 2.3. This synthetic route was demonstrated on decagram scale and affords the enantiopure amine in an overall isolated yield of  $15{\text -}20\%$  (Scheme  $4.2.1$ ).<sup>u</sup>



Scheme 4.2.1. Route LenA 1 for the synthesis of **LenA**

To initiate the synthesis of LenA 1, effort was focused on the ketone **A1.4** synthesis. The reaction of 3,5-difluorophenylacetonitrile (**A1.2a**) with **A1.3** with different organometallic reagents failed to generate the desired product [\(Table 4.2.1,](#page-61-0) Entries 1-4). We assumed that the lower pKa  $(\sim 19)^{28}$  of **A1.2a** mainly caused the protonation of Grignard reagent (quenching) rather than addition to nitrile. We envisioned that decreased acidity of the benzylic C-H bonds of the electrophile might mitigate deprotonation and thus favor the addition reaction. In this regard, the reaction of **A1.3-Mg** with ester **A1.2b** (pKa  $\sim$  22 -23)<sup>28</sup> afforded the desired product in 15% isolated yield [\(Table 4.2.1,](#page-61-0) Entry 5). The positive results inspired us to investigate other electrophiles. Weinreb amide  $A1.2c$  ( $pKa \sim 26$ ) was identified as the optimal electrophile to afford ketone **A1.4** [\(Table 4.2.1,](#page-61-0) Entry 6). Among all condition tested for Weinreb amide, the condition using 1 eq of each Knochel-Hauser base and Weinreb amide **A1.2c** at -20 °C delivered the best

 $\overline{a}$ 

<sup>u</sup> This route was not chosen for scale-up because of its high RMC.



result of ketone **A1.4** [\(Table 4.2.1,](#page-61-0) Entries 7-8). The protocol was demonstrated on a 30 g scale, affording **A1.4** in 50% of isolated yield with 93% purity (qNMR) after a process of an extractive workup and subsequent trituration [\(Table 4.2.1,](#page-61-0) Entry 9). Weinreb amide **A1.2c** was readily synthesized from commercial acid **A1.1** in a one-pot process as shown in **Error! Reference source n ot found.**.

<span id="page-61-0"></span>Table 4.2.1 Optimizations for the synthesis of ketone **A1.4**





<sup>1</sup>All reactions were carried out with **A1.3** (0.25 g, 1 eq) and organometallic reagent in THF (10V) for 30 min, followed by addition of electrophile and stirring at the same temperature for 2 h under the condition shown in the table unless otherwise stated, solvent volume  $(V) = mL/g$  of A1.3; <sup>2</sup>All these data were IPC of crude reaction mixtures obtained



by GC-MS total ion chromatogram (TIC) and reported as A% unless otherwise stated; <sup>3</sup>Impurity with m/z 179 was observed in 42A%; <sup>4</sup>4 h <sup>5</sup>Reaction was conducted on 30 g scale; <sup>6</sup>Extractive workup and sub sequential trituration for purification, 50% yield of the product was obtained with 93% purity (qNMR) after trituration from 5% ethyl acetate in heptane. ND: the desired product was not detected.



With ketone **A1.4** in hand, our effort was shifted to the synthesis of racemic amine **A1.5**. Leuckart amination of  $A1.4$  with NH<sub>4</sub>HCO<sub>2</sub> was conducted,<sup>29</sup> but resulted in decomposition. Other amines, such as Boc-NH<sub>2</sub><sup>30</sup>/t-BuS(O)NH<sub>2</sub><sup>31</sup> also failed to react with ketone **A1.4**. Ultimately, the reduction of ketone **A1.4**, mesylation of the incipient alcohol, then amination of mesylate **A1.7** successfully afforded **A1.5** in overall ~51% yield over 3 steps with 99% purity [\(Scheme 4.2.3\)](#page-62-0).



<span id="page-62-0"></span>Scheme 4.2.3. Synthesis racemic amine **A1.5** from **A1.4**

To finish up the synthesis of **Frag A**, the obtained racemic amine **A1.5** was then subject to DKR with N-Acetyl-D-Leucine in the presence of 2-PyCHO (5 mol%) and ZnO (10 mol%), and the salt of the desired Frag A enantiomer with N-Acetyl-D-Leucine was obtained in 70-80% isolated yield. The treatment of the salt with aq NaOH afforded the free enantiopure amine in >97% isolated yield. In summary, this strategy (LenA 1) featured ketone synthesis, nucleophilic amination and dynamic kinetic resolution as key steps. These findings provide an efficient approach to make ketone **A1.4** from inexpensive raw materials. This route also provides an alternative way to prepare enantiopure amine  $(S)$ -4 in the synthesis of lenacapavir. However, two steps with  $\sim$ 50% yield (synthesis of **A1.4** and **A1.5**) resulted in a high RMC of LenA 1 and make this route less



competitive compared to the route LenA 4. Thus, this route was not considered for further scaleup.

#### 4.3 Route scouting of **LenA 3**

LenA 3 involves a 4-5-step route to **Frag A** (Scheme 4.3.1). The proposed sequence commences with formylation of **A1.3** with TMPMgCl·LiCl/DMF. The resulting aldehyde **A3.2** is subject to asymmetric epoxidation to form epoxide **A3.3**. Alternatively, **A3.2** can be converted to olefin **A3.3a** through a Wittig reaction, followed by epoxidation to afford **A3.3**. The epoxide **A3.3** reacts with 3,5-difluorophenylmagnesium bromide then MsCl to give **A3.4**. Finally, amination of **A3.4** affords **Frag A**. The key step is the asymmetric synthesis of epoxide **A3.3**. There are two possible pathways to prepare the epoxide: 1) asymmetric Corey-Chaykovsky epoxidation <sup>32</sup> of aldehyde **A3.2** or 2) asymmetric- or biocatalytic-epoxidation of olefin.<sup>33</sup>



Scheme 4.3.1. Epoxide approach to **Frag A**

Initially, in accord with the literature,<sup>13</sup> aldehyde  $A3.2$  was prepared by formylation of 2,3dibromopyridine **A1.3** (1.0 eq) with TMPMgCl.LiCl (1.5 eq) and DMF (4.8 eq) in 45% yield (**Error! Reference source not found.**).





Scheme 4.3.2 Synthesis of aldehyde **A3.2**

With aldehyde **A3.2** in hand, Corey-Chaykovsky epoxidation was first tried to obtain racemic epoxide *rac-***A3.3** (Scheme 4.3.3). Under a typical Corey-Chaykovsky condition, the reaction of **A3.2** with trimethylsulfoxonium iodide (1.1 eq) in the presence of NaH (1.1 eq) afforded the epoxide *rac-***A3.3** in < 17% yield. Attempts to improve the yield failed. With the *rac*-**A3.3** in hand, the ring-opening reaction with 3,5-difluorophenylmagnesium bromide was tried and it failed to produce any desired product.



We also tried the alternative two-step route to access **A3.3** (from aldehyde to olefin then epoxide). It turned out the methylenation of aldehyde **A3.2** was problematic. The Witting reaction with various bases such as *n*-BuLi, LiHMDS or *t-*BuOK failed to afford olefin **A3.3a** (**Error! R eference source not found.**).





All the failed results indicated the challenges for the LenA 3 route. Considering the limited timeline of the project, this approach was abandoned and our focus turned to LenA 4.



# 4.4 Acquisition Methods, Retention Times, Chromatograms, and Spectra
































#### 4.4.2 LenA-4 (SFC, Chiral)







## 4.4.3 GC Solvents (GC-MS)

**Instrument Type:** Agilent 6890 gas chromatograph (GC) with a 5977 mass spectrometer detector (MSD)





### Temperature Program:





MS Parameters:

Sample preparation: Prepare samples at 5-10 mg/mL in acetonitrile or other suitable solvent.











### 4.5 Single X-ray crystal structure of **Frag A**

Figure 4.5.1 Single-crystal X-ray structure of **Frag A** (**(***S***)-A1.5)** with thermal ellipsoids drawn at 50% probability.

Table 4.5.1 Crystal data for **Frag A**



	Bond precision: C-C = 0.0198 A Wavelength=1.54184		
Cell:	$a=4.4017(1)$ $b=35.5653(6)$ $c=17.0644(3)$ alpha=90 beta=90 gamma=90		
Temperature: 100 K			
	Calculated	Reported	
Volume	2671.39(9)	2671.39(9)	
	Space group P 21 21 21	P 21 21 21	
	Hall group P 2ac 2ab	P 2ac 2ab	
	Moiety formula C13 H10 Br2 F2 N2 2 (C13 H10 Br2 F2 N2)		
392.03 Мr		784.10	
$DX, g cm-3$ 1.949		1.950	
8 <sup>1</sup> z		$\overline{4}$	
Mu (mm-1) 7.821		7.821	
F000 1520.0		1520.0	
F000' 1512.60			
h, k, 1max 5, 43, 21		5, 43, 21	
Nref	5292 [ 3130]	5256	
	Tmin, Tmax 0.363, 0.661	0.561, 1.000	
Tmin'	0.059		
AbsCorr = MULTI-SCAN	Correction method= # Reported T Limits: Tmin=0.561 Tmax=1.000		
	Data completeness= 1.68/0.99 Theta(max)= 72.098		
$R(reflections) = 0.0685(5139)$			$WR2$ (reflections) = 0.1556(5256)
$S = 1.092$	$Npar = 356$		

Table 4.5.2 Fractional Atomic Coordinates ( $\times 10^4$ ) and Equivalent Isotropic Displacement Parameters ( $\AA^2\times 10^3$ ) for **Frag A**.  $U_{eq}$  is defined as 1/3 of the trace of the orthogonalised  $U_{ij}$ .







Table  $0.3$  Anisotropic Displacement Parameters ( $\times 10^4$ ) Frag A. The anisotropic displacement factor exponent takes the form:  $-2\Box^2/h^2 a^{*2} \times U_{11} + ... + 2hka^* \times b^* \times U_{12}$ 

Atom	$U_{II}$	$U_{22}$	$U_{33}$	$U_{23}$	$U_{13}$	$U_{12}$
Br <sub>4</sub>	30.9(8)	32.1(7)	19.2(7)	0.5(5)	1.5(7)	$-2.3(7)$
Br <sub>3</sub>	33.2(9)	27.1(7)	26.0(7)	3.2(6)	1.6(7)	$-0.9(7)$
Br1	31.1(9)	36.7(8)	22.0(7)	1.8(6)	$-0.7(7)$	$-1.2(7)$
Br <sub>2</sub>	43.7(10)	33.7(8)	27.5(8)	5.5(6)	0.9(8)	11.8(7)
F <sub>2</sub>	44(5)	33(4)	22(4)	$-9(3)$	$-9(4)$	$-3(4)$
F4	46(6)	36(5)	22(4)	1(4)	10(4)	$-2(4)$
F1	39(5)	36(5)	28(4)	4(3)	$-7(4)$	12(4)
F3	69(7)	24(4)	39(5)	$-7(4)$	9(6)	11(5)
N <sub>1</sub>	24(6)	25(6)	19(6)	1(5)	5(5)	$-2(5)$
N <sub>2</sub>	21(7)	29(6)	30(7)	$-3(5)$	1(6)	$-3(5)$
N <sub>3</sub>	18(6)	32(6)	15(5)	$-3(5)$	$-1(5)$	$-2(5)$
N <sub>4</sub>	39(8)	28(6)	20(6)	$-4(5)$	$-7(6)$	8(6)
C <sub>23</sub>	43(9)	25(7)	10(6)	$-4(5)$	$-7(6)$	6(6)
C <sub>1</sub>	23(7)	21(6)	25(7)	0(5)	$-1(6)$	2(6)
C <sub>6</sub>	20(7)	28(7)	16(6)	$-3(5)$	0(6)	1(6)
C <sub>20</sub>	21(7)	33(7)	17(6)	$-2(5)$	6(6)	$-2(6)$
C19	24(7)	29(7)	14(6)	$-2(5)$	4(6)	1(6)
C10	37(9)	23(7)	30(8)	6(6)	$-5(8)$	4(7)
C <sub>25</sub>	27(8)	29(7)	28(7)	2(6)	$-6(7)$	$-3(6)$





Table 0.4 Bond Lengths in Å for **Frag A**.

Atom	Atom	Length/ $\AA$	Atom	Atom	Length/ $\AA$
Br4	C18	1.904(16)	C20	C <sub>21</sub>	1.503(18)
Br3	C15	1.897(15)	C19	C14	1.515(17)
Br1	C <sub>2</sub>	1.884(15)	C10	C11	1.37(2)
Br2	C <sub>5</sub>	1.896(16)	C10	C9	1.38(2)
F <sub>2</sub>	C12	1.375(14)	C <sub>25</sub>	C <sub>24</sub>	1.387(19)
F4	C <sub>25</sub>	1.367(16)	C <sub>25</sub>	C <sub>26</sub>	1.36(2)
F1	C10	1.371(18)	C13	C12	1.36(2)
F3	C <sub>23</sub>	1.367(15)	C13	C8	1.383(19)
N1	C1	1.340(18)	C12	C11	1.38(2)
N <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>5</sub>	1.323(19)	C14	C15	1.371(19)
N2	C <sub>6</sub>	1.481(18)	C17	C18	1.379(19)
N <sub>3</sub>	C14	1.367(17)	C17	C16	1.38(2)
N <sub>3</sub>	C18	1.329(19)	C22	C <sub>21</sub>	1.391(18)
N <sub>4</sub>	C19	1.455(17)	C2	C <sub>3</sub>	1.41(2)
C <sub>23</sub>	C22	1.37(2)	C15	C16	1.39(2)
C <sub>23</sub>	C <sub>24</sub>	1.39(2)	C <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>4</sub>	1.38(2)
C <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>6</sub>	1.534(18)	C <sub>21</sub>	C <sub>26</sub>	1.410(19)
C1	C <sub>2</sub>	1.395(19)	C8	C7	1.519(18)
C6	C7	1.541(18)	C8	C9	1.40(2)
C20	C19	1.550(19)	C4	C <sub>5</sub>	1.40(2)

#### Table 0.5 Bond Angles for **Frag A**.





Table 0.6 Torsion Angles in ° for **Frag A**.

Atom	Atom	Atom	Atom	Angle $\int$ <sup>o</sup>
Br3	C15	C16	C17	178.6(12)
Br1	C <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>4</sub>	$-179.2(11)$
F <sub>2</sub>	C12	C11	C10	178.4(13)
F4	C <sub>25</sub>	C <sub>24</sub>	C <sub>23</sub>	178.6(13)
F4	C <sub>25</sub>	C <sub>26</sub>	C21	$-179.2(13)$
F1	C10	C11	C12	179.5(13)
F1	C10	C9	C8	$-178.7(13)$
F <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>23</sub>	C22	C <sub>21</sub>	$-179.3(13)$
F <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>23</sub>	C <sub>24</sub>	C <sub>25</sub>	$-179.9(13)$
N1	C1	C <sub>6</sub>	N2	$-25.3(18)$
N <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>1</sub>	C6	C7	95.7(14)
N <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>2</sub>	Br1	$-178.8(11)$
N1	C <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>3</sub>	$-2(2)$
N <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>6</sub>	C7	C8	$-62.9(16)$
N <sub>3</sub>	C14	C15	Br3	$-176.6(10)$
N <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>14</sub>	C15	C16	3(2)
N <sub>4</sub>	C19	C14	N <sub>3</sub>	$-32.3(18)$
81				





Table 0.7 Hydrogen Fractional Atomic Coordinates (×10<sup>4</sup>) and Equivalent Isotropic Displacement Parameters  $(A<sup>2</sup>×10<sup>3</sup>)$  for **Frag A**.  $U_{eq}$  is defined as 1/3 of the trace of the orthogonalised  $U_{ij}$ .











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