SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Reversible electrochemical charging of n-type conjugated polymer electrodes in aqueous electrolytes

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1 Experimental Section

Synthesis of the polymers: The synthesis of \( p([75:25]\text{NDI-g3T2}), p([90:10]\text{NDI-g3T2}), p([100:0]\text{NDI-g3T2}) \) is reported in the section 2 of the supporting information, following a previously reported procedure.\(^1\,^2\) Polymers \( p([100:0]\text{NDI-T2}) \) and \( p([90:10]\text{NDI-T2}) \) were synthesized as previously reported.\(^1\) The synthesis of monomer (bg4N) and polymers \( p(\text{bg4Ng3N}) \) and \( p(\text{bg4NC16N}) \) are also reported in section 2 of the supporting information. Poly(benzimidazobenzophenanthroline) (BBL) was purchased from Sigma Aldrich.

Thickness measurements using AFM:

Atomic force microscopy (AFM) images were taken using an Asylum Research Cypher-ES. The thicknesses of the dry films were measured by imaging across a razor blade scratch in tapping mode using 325 kHz AFM probes (HQ:NSC15/Pt, µMasch). Hydrated thickness was determined by depositing 100 µL of degassed 100 mM NaCl solution onto the sample and imaging over the same scratch in contact mode using ContGB-G tips (BudgetSensors) with a force set point of 6 nN. Line profiles (4 µm wide) were taken perpendicular to the scratch for plotting. All thicknesses were averaged from at least 6 locations on at least 2 different films.

Electrochemical quartz crystal microbalance with dissipation of energy (eQCM-D) measurements:

eQCM-D measurements were performed using a Q-sense analyzer (QE401, Biolin Scientific). Swelling measurements were performed as follows. First, we recorded the QCM-D response of the bare Au sensors in the air, followed by injection of a 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution into the chamber. This resulted in large shifts in the frequency \( (f) \) and dissipation of energy \( (D) \), due to the density differences between air and electrolyte, which must be excluded from the swelling percentage calculation. The measurements were then stopped, the sensors were removed, and the polymer layers were spin-coated directly on the same sensors from 4 mg/mL solutions in chloroform at 1000 rpm. The absolute \( f \) value for each polymer coated sensor was obtained both in air and in a 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution, after the \( f \) signal was perfectly flat (i.e., \( \Delta f <0.5 \text{ Hz/2 min} \)), assuring that the system is in equilibrium. We then compared the absolute difference in \( f \) for multiple overtones between the bare sensor and the polymer coated sensors, both in air and in the electrolyte, by using the function “stitched
data” of Q-soft software. This function compares the selected datasets based on the raw frequencies measured and excludes the effect of the different densities between the two media. Thus, the difference of the $f$ values of the stitched data is directly analogous to the mass absorbed by the polymer ($m$) in both media, which is calculated by using the Sauerbrey equation:

$$\Delta m = \frac{-17.7}{n} \Delta f_n$$ (1)

The thickness of the films in air and the electrolyte is calculated accordingly (Figure S6). For eQCM-D measurements, we coupled the Q-sense electrochemistry module, comprising a three-electrode setup, with an Autolab PGstat128N potentiostat. Since the films become soft and take up a significant amount of water under applied potential, we used the Kelvin-Voigt viscoelastic model to fit the data and to quantify the mass, as described in detail elsewhere. For eQCM-D measurements with low O$_2$ concentrations, the electrolyte solution was purged with N$_2$ within a custom-made chamber, equipped with microtubes for N$_2$ inlet and electrolyte solution outlet. After intense purging with N$_2$ for more than 1.5 hours, a 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution was pumped into the eQCM-D chamber, using a peristaltic pump at a constant flow of 50 μl/min and without exposure to ambient air. Throughout the measurements, the solution was kept under light N$_2$ purging to avoid dilution of ambient O$_2$ during the measurements.

**Electrochemical characterization:**

Electrochemical measurements were carried out using a potentiostat (IviumStat or Biologic SP-300 Potentiostat) with a three-electrode setup, using a Ag/AgCl reference electrode (BASi, 3 M NaCl or eDAQ leakless Ag/AgCl reference electrode) and a Pt mesh as the counter electrode. Thin thin films were prepared by spin coating on indium-doped tin oxide (ITO) glass substrates. The films were immersed in the electrolyte that contains 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution where the concentration of oxygen was lowered by sparging the electrolyte with inert gases (Ar or N$_2$). NDI-T2/g3T2, p(bg$_3$NCi$_6$N) and p(bg$_4$Ng$_3$N) polymer electrodes on conductive paper were prepared by dissolving the polymers in chloroform and drop-casting on conductive paper substrates (AvCarb P50T). Electrodes with BBL were prepared by dissolving BBL in methanesulfonic acid (10 mg/mL) and drop casting 100 μL of the polymer solution on the paper electrode, followed by the addition of 500 μL of deionized (DI) water.
The polymer gel was first washed with DI water, followed by drying the electrode at 100 °C for 4 h while applying vacuum. A paper electrode was fabricated with pg2T-TT4 (polymer loading of 5 mg) that acted as the counter electrode for the three-electrode measurements to limit side reactions with the electrolyte and formation of reactive intermediates during continuous charging of the paper electrodes in 0.1 M NaCl aqueous electrolyte. Cyclic voltammetry (CV) measurements were carried out at the indicated scan rates (50 mV/s for polymer thin film electrodes, 5 mV/s for paper electrodes) for 5 or 100 scans. Chronopotentiometry (CP) measurements were carried out at various current densities to measure the gravimetric capacity of the polymers where the gravimetric capacity was calculated by measuring the charge during the discharging of the polymer electrode, accounting for the total mass of the polymer that has been drop casted onto the paper electrode. We note that the reported gravimetric capacities are only accounting for the mass loading of the polymer and do not account for the mass changes of the polymer electrodes due to swelling.

The theoretical capacity was calculated according to

\[ C_{\text{theoretical}} = \frac{nF \times 1000}{M \times 3600} \]

with M being the molecular weight of one repeat unit and \( n = 2 \).

**Spectroelectrochemical measurements:**

The electrochemical cell was a quartz cuvette with transparent windows which enabled simultaneous optical spectra acquisition through a UV-vis spectrometer (OceanOptics USB 2000+) which collected the transmitted light through the sample from a tungsten lamp used as probe light source. The electrochemical measurements were carried out with an IviumStat potentiostat, using a three electrode setup with a Ag/AgCl reference electrode (eDAQ leakless Ag/AgCl reference electrode) and a Pt-mesh as the counter electrode.

**OECT measurements**

OECT test chips were prepared following previously reported microfabrication techniques. The OECT channels containing the p((g7:a)NDI-g3T2) series were fabricated by drop casting from chloroform (5 mg/mL) at room temperature, while the p((g7:a)NDI-T2) series were spin-coated. This was followed by patterning via peeling a sacrificial parylene layer and a rinse in deionized water. OECTs were gated with aqueous 0.1 M NaCl using an Ag/AgCl pellet as the
gate electrode. Electrical characterization (output, transfer, and pulsed stability) of the OECTs were carried out using NI source-measure units controlled by custom LabView code. $\mu C^*$ was calculated from the slope of the transfer curves, which is the gate transconductance ($g_m = \frac{\partial I_d}{\partial V_g}$), using the relation $g_m = \frac{Wd}{L} \times \mu C^* \times (V_t - V_g)$.

**Density functional theory calculations**

All quantum chemical calculations (Density functional theory (DFT) and time-dependent DFT (TDDFT)) in this study were performed using Gaussian16.\(^6\) p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) and p([g7:a]NDI-T2) polymers were modelled with dimers of the respective polymers to simulate optical spectra of the neutral and negatively charged polymers while monomers were used for the electrostatic potential calculations. To save computational power, we replaced long side chains with short counterparts that preserved the main differences in chemical structure: the glycol side chain was represented as $-(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4\text{-O-CH}_3)$, the alkyl side chain as $-(\text{C}_4\text{H}_9)$ and alkoxy side chain on g3T2 as $-(\text{O-CH}_3)$. Dimers and monomers in their neutral, polaron and bipolaron states were first optimized using DFT with the (B3LYP/6-31G(d,p)) functional / basis set combination. Excited-state TDDFT calculations were then performed on the optimized geometries of the neutral and reduced structures. The effect of aqueous environment was modelled by calculating optical spectra using the polarizable continuum model (PCM). Redox potentials in water were calculated using the solvation model based on density (SMD). Further computational details are included in the Supporting Information, section 9.
2 Synthesis and characterization

2.1 General synthesis

4,9-Dibromo-2,7-di(2,5,8,11,14,17,20-heptaoxadocosanyl)benzo[ilmn][3,8]phenanthroline-1,3,6,8(2H,7H)-tetraone (g7-Br2)\(^1\), N,N’-bis(2-octyldodecyl)-2,6-dibromonaphthalene -1,4,5,8-bis(dicarboximide) (a-Br2)\(^9\) and (3,3’-bis(2-(2-(methoxyethoxy)ethoxy)ethoxy)-[2,2’-bithiophene]-5,5’-diyl)bis(trimethylstannane) (g3T2)\(^2\) were synthesized according to previously reported protocols. Polymers p([100:0]NDI-T2) and p([90:10]NDI-T2) were synthesized as previously reported\(^1\). Monomers (g3N) and (C\(_{16}\)N) were synthesized as previously reported\(^10\), the synthesis is summarised in Figure S4. \(^1\)H-NMR spectra were recorded on 400 MHz Bruker spectrometers at ambient temperature. Chemical shifts are reported in units of parts per million (ppm, \(\delta\)) for solutions in chloroform-\(d\) and coupling constants (\(J\)) are given in Hz. The chemical shifts were referenced using the residual chloroform peak as an internal standard (\(^1\)H NMR: 7.26 ppm). Number-average (\(M_n\)) and weight-average (\(M_w\)) molecular weights were determined using an Agilent Technologies 1260 infinity GPC at 40 °C in chloroform, using two PLgel 10 micrometer Mixed-B columns in series (300 × 7.5 mm), and calibrated against narrow dispersity (\(D < 1.10\)) polystyrene standards.

2.2 Monomer and polymer synthesis

p([100:0]NDI-g3T2). A mixture of g7-Br2 (30.94 mg, 28.95 µmol), g3T2 (23.63 mg, 28.95 µmol), tris(dibenzylideneacetone)-dipalladium(0) (0.53 mg, 0.58 µmol) and tri(o-tolyl)phosphine (0.70 mg, 2.30 µmol) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (1.5 mL) was heated to 135 °C for 16 h. A solution (0.1 mL) of 2-(tributylstannyl)thiophene (0.1 mL) and Pd\(_2\)(dba)\(_3\) (1.05 mg, 1.15 µmol) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (0.5 mL) was added and the resulting mixture was stirred for 1 h at 135 °C. A solution (0.1 mL) of 2-bromothiophene (0.1 mL) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (0.5 mL) was subsequently added and stirring at 135 °C was maintained for a further 1 h. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature and precipitated in ethyl acetate, followed by addition of hexane. The solid was collected in a glass thimble and subjected to Soxhlet extractions with hexane, ethyl acetate, MeOH, acetone, THF and chloroform. After the final extraction with chloroform, the polymer solution was concentrated \textit{in vacuo} and precipitated in ethyl acetate, followed by the addition of hexane. The polymer was collected by filtration and dried under reduced pressure to afford the product as a green solid in a yield of 53% (21.3 mg,
15.24 µmol). $^1$H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl$_3$) δ 8.83 (br s, 2H), 7.31-7.17 (m, 2H), 4.44-4.33 (m, 8H), 4.01-3.95 (m, 4H), 3.86-3.51 (m, 64H), 3.51-3.45 (m, 4H), 3.39-3.28 (m, 12H). GPC (chloroform, 40 °C): $M_n = 6.6$ kDa, $M_w = 10.4$ kDa.

Figure S1. $^1$H-NMR spectrum of p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) in CDCl$_3$.

**p([90:10]NDI-g3T2).** A mixture of $g_7$-Br$_2$ (27.33 mg, 25.57 µmol), a-Br$_2$ (2.79 mg, 2.83 µmol), g3T2 (23.19 mg, 28.41 µmol), tris(dibenzylideneacetone)-dipalladium(0) (0.52 mg, 0.57 µmol) and tri(o-tolyl)phosphine (0.69 mg, 2.27 µmol) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (1.5 mL) was heated to 135 °C for 16 h. A solution (0.1 mL) of 2-(tributylstannyl)thiophene (0.1 mL) and Pd$_2$(dba)$_3$ (1.06 mg, 1.16 µmol) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (0.5 mL) was added and the resulting mixture was stirred for 1 h at 135 °C. A solution (0.1 mL) of 2-bromothiophene (0.1 mL) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (0.5 mL) was subsequently added and stirring at 135 °C was maintained for a further 1 h. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature and precipitated in ethyl acetate, followed by addition of hexane. The solid was collected in a glass thimble and subjected to Soxhlet extractions with
hexane, ethyl acetate, MeOH, acetone, THF and chloroform. After the final extraction with chloroform, the polymer solution was concentrated in vacuo and precipitated in ethyl acetate, followed by the addition of hexane. The polymer was collected by filtration and dried under reduced pressure to afford the product as a green solid in a yield of 47% (18.6 mg, 13.39 µmol).\textsuperscript{1}H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl\textsubscript{3}) \(\delta\) 8.83 (br s, 2 H), 7.31-7.16 (m, 2 H), 4.49-4.24 (m, 7.6 H), 4.11 (m, 0.4 H), 4.01-3.95 (m, 3.6 H), 3.89-3.51 (m, 59.6 H), 3.51-3.43 (m, 3.6 H), 3.40-3.27 (m, 11.4 H), 1.98 (br s, 0.2 H), 1.38-1.18 (m, 6.4 H), 0.84 (m, 1.2 H). GPC (chloroform, 40 °C): \(M_n = 13.6\) kDa, \(M_w = 27.3\) kDa.

Figure S2. \textsuperscript{1}H-NMR spectrum of p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) in CDCl\textsubscript{3}.

p([75:25]NDI-g3T2). A mixture of \textit{g7-Br}_2 (44.53 mg, 41.66 µmol), \textit{a-Br}_2 (13.68 mg, 13.89 µmol), \textit{g3T2} (45.35 mg, 55.56 µmol), tris(dibenzylideneacetone)-dipalladium(0) (1.02 mg, 1.11 µmol) and tri(o-tolyl)phosphine (1.35 mg, 4.44 µmol) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (1.5 mL) was heated to 135 °C for 16 h. A solution (0.1 mL) of 2-(tributylstannyl)thiophene (0.1 mL) and Pd\textsubscript{2}(dba)\textsubscript{3} (1.14 mg, 1.24 µmol) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (0.5 mL) was added and the resulting mixture was stirred for 1 h at 135 °C. A solution (0.1 mL) of 2-bromothiophene (0.1 mL) in anhydrous, degassed chlorobenzene (0.5 mL) was subsequently added and stirring at 135 °C was maintained for a
further 1 h. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature and precipitated in ethyl acetate, followed by addition of hexane. The solid was collected in a glass thimble and subjected to Soxhlet extractions with hexane, ethyl acetate, MeOH, acetone, THF and chloroform. After the final extraction with chloroform, the polymer solution was concentrated in vacuo and precipitated in ethyl acetate, followed by the addition of hexane. The polymer was collected by filtration and dried under reduced pressure to afford the product as a green solid in a yield of 46% (35.2 mg, 25.57 µmol).\[^1\]H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl\(_3\)) \(\delta\) 8.83 (br s, 2 H), 7.31-7.21 (m, 2 H), 4.45-4.36 (m, 7 H), 4.11 (m, 1 H), 4.00-3.95 (m, 3 H), 3.89-3.52 (m, 53 H), 3.51-3.46 (m, 3 H), 3.40-3.29 (m, 8.5 H), 2.00 (br s, 0.5 H), 1.38-1.18 (m, 16 H), 0.86 (m, 3 H). GPC (chloroform, 40 °C): \(M_n = 12.5\) kDa, \(M_w = 25.6\) kDa.

Figure S3. \(^1\)H-NMR spectrum of p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) in CDCl\(_3\).
2.3 Summary of the synthesis of monomer bg₄N and polymers p(bg₄NC₁₆N) and p(bg₄Ng₃N)

13-(2,5,8,11-tetraoxadodecyl)-2,5,8,11-tetraoxatetradecan-14-yl-4-methylbenzenesulfonate was synthesised according to previously reported protocols.¹¹ Briefly, a Finkelstein reaction, with sodium iodide in acetone afforded 13-(iodomethyl)-2,5,8,11,15,18,21,24-octaoxapentacosane. Next, the side chains were attached to 3,8-dihydroindolo[7,6-g]indole-1,2,6,7-tetraone¹², affording the monomer bg₄N via nucleophilic substitution in alkaline solution. Both C₁₆N and g₃N monomers were synthesized according to previously reported protocols¹⁰ and were reacted with bg₄N to afford p(bg₄NC₁₆N) and p(bg₄Ng₃N), respectively.

Figure S4. Reaction scheme for the synthesis of polymers p(bg₄NC₁₆N) and p(bg₄Ng₃N).
13-(iodomethyl)-2,5,8,11,15,18,21,24-octaoxapentacosane. A 2-neck oven dried 250 mL RBF was charged with NaI (4.88 g, 32.6 mmol, 2.0 eq.) and dispersed in acetone (100 mL) under a nitrogen atmosphere. 13-(2,5,8,11-tetraoxadodecyl)-2,5,8,11-tetraoxatetradecan-14-yl 4-methylbenzenesulfonate (which was synthesized according to previously reported protocols)\textsuperscript{11} (9 g, 16.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was added dropwise via a syringe. The reaction was heated to 55 °C and stirred overnight. Upon cooling to room temperature, the mixture was poured into water, washed with brine, and extracted with DCM. The organic layer was separated, dried over MgSO\textsubscript{4} and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure to yield a crude pale-yellow oil. The crude was purified by column chromatography on silica using a solvent mixture of ethyl acetate:methanol (9:1) as the eluent to afford the title compound as a colorless viscous oil (7.9 g, 95%).

\textsuperscript{1}H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl\textsubscript{3}) δ 3.68 – 3.57 (m, 20H), 3.61 – 3.45 (m, 8H), 3.38 (s, 6H), 3.36 (d, $J = $ 5.6 Hz, 2H), 1.93 (qd, $J = $ 6.7, 5.3 Hz, 1H). \textsuperscript{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl\textsubscript{3}) δ 72.07, 71.53, 70.78, 70.75, 70.69, 70.60, 59.20, 40.83, 8.48.

![Figure S5. \textsuperscript{1}H NMR spectrum of 13-(iodomethyl)-2,5,8,11,15,18,21,24-octaoxapentacosane.](image-url)
Oven dried potassium carbonate (1.75 g, 12.66 mmol, 5.0 eq.) and 3,8-dihydroindolo[7,6-\(\text{g}\)]indole-1,2,6,7-tetraone (674 mg, 2.53 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was dissolved in 10 mL of dry DMF inside a 2-neck 50 mL RBF, under a Nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was heated to 70 °C for one hour. 13-(iodomethyl)-2,5,8,11,15,18,21,24-octaoxapentacosane (5.6 g, 10.13 mmol, 4.0 eq.) was injected into the reaction in a single portion and the mixture was left to stir for an additional 4 hours. Upon cooling to room temperature, the reaction was poured into water and acidified to pH using aqueous 2M HCl. A saturated ammonium chloride solution was added to help separate the organic layer upon the addition of DCM. Once separated the organic phase was dried over MgSO\(_4\) and solvent removed to yield a deep purple sticky solid. The crude product was columned on silica twice with a DCM:Acetone (9:1) eluent system and a third time using DCM:Acetone (8:2) to isolate the desired blue product. The title compound was isolated as a blue solid (347 mg, 13%).

\(^{1}\text{H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl}_3\) \(\delta 8.43 \text{ (d, } J = 8.8 \text{ Hz, 2H)}, 7.64 \text{ (d, } J = 8.7 \text{ Hz, 2H)}, 4.41 \text{ (d, } J = 6.8 \text{ Hz, 4H)}, 3.67 – 3.54 \text{ (m, 38H)}, 3.58 – 3.49 \text{ (m, 14H)}, 3.47 \text{ (dd, } J = 9.6, 7.4 \text{ Hz, 4H)}, 3.35 \text{ (s, 12H)}, 2.52 \text{ (s, 2H)}. \(^{13}\text{C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl}_3\) \(\delta 183.23, 159.89, 152.25, 127.56, 121.52, 120.24, 115.89, 112.59, 104.86, 101.62, 99.39, 97.84, 97.84, 94.98, 94.98, 86.05, 86.05, 80.22, 80.22, 75.12, 75.12, 72.62, 72.62, 68.69, 68.69, 65.59, 65.59, 61.32, 61.32, 55.28, 55.28, 50.13, 50.13, 45.45, 45.45, 43.22, 43.22, 40.86, 40.86, 37.72, 37.72, 26.70, 26.70, 22.72, 22.72, 21.80, 21.80, 20.16, 20.16, 18.09, 18.09, 14.98, 14.98).
116.46, 72.07, 70.95, 70.88, 70.76, 70.67, 59.16, 43.36, 40.24. Mass (MALDI-ToF): 531.2 [M+H]^+ (calc. 530.3 C_{50}H_{78}N_{20}O_{20}).

Figure S7. ^1^H-NMR spectrum of bgN in CDCl_3.
Figure S8. $^{13}$C NMR spectrum of bg$_4$N in CDCl$_3$.

p(bg$_4$Ng$_3$N). An oven dried 5 mL microwave vial was charged with bg$_4$N (84 mg, 0.08 mmol, 1.0 eq.), g$_3$N (43.4 mg, 0.08 mmol, 1.0 eq.) and $p$-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (4.7 mg, 0.025 mmol, 0.3 eq.). The cap was sealed and the vial was degassed with nitrogen for 10 minutes prior to the addition of 1 mL anhydrous toluene. The reaction mixture was stirred for 48 hours at 120 °C. A color change to deep purple was observed and the reaction mixture formed a gel upon cooling to room temperature. The crude polymer was precipitated into 100 mL of methanol and subsequently filtered into a Soxhlet thimble. Purification via Soxhlet extraction was carried out with hexane, methanol, toluene, acetone and chloroform (in that order). The main fraction of the polymer was dissolved in chloroform. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the product was precipitated into methanol and filtered to yield a purple solid (84 mg, 66%).

GPC (chloroform, 40 °C): $M_n$ = 17.2 kDa, $M_w$ = 64.5 kDa.

$^1$H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ 9.23 – 8.68 (m, 4H), 8.43 – 7.55 (m, 4H), 4.67 – 4.34 (m, 4H), 4.23 – 2.94 (m, 102H), 2.78 – 2.32 (m, 2H).
Figure S9. $^1$H-NMR spectrum of $p$(bg$_4$Ng$_3$N) in CDCl$_3$, measured at 45 °C.

$p$(bg$_4$NC$_{16}$N). An oven dried 5 mL microwave vial was charged with bg$_4$N (92 mg, 0.09 mmol, 1.0 eq.), C$_{16}$N (61.5 mg, 0.09 mmol, 1.0 eq.) and $p$-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (5.11 mg, 0.03 mmol, 0.3 eq.). The cap was sealed and the vial was degassed with nitrogen for 10 minutes prior to the addition of 1 mL anhydrous toluene. The reaction mixture was stirred overnight at 120 °C. A color change to deep purple was observed and the reaction mixture formed a gel upon cooling to room temperature. The crude polymer was precipitated into 100 mL of methanol and subsequently filtered into a Soxhlet thimble. Purification via Soxhlet extraction was carried out with hexane, methanol, toluene, acetone and chloroform (in that order). The main fraction of the polymer was dissolved in chloroform. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the product was precipitated into methanol and filtered to yield a purple solid (99 mg, 65%). GPC (chloroform, 40 °C): $M_n = 13.5$ kDa, $M_w = 20.8$ kDa.

$^1$H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ 9.09 – 8.65 (m, 4H), 8.16 – 7.33 (m, 4H), 4.54 – 4.10 (m, 4H), 3.93 – 3.12 (m, 68H), 2.01 – 1.72 (m, 4H), 1.70 – 1.04 (m, 56H), 0.95 – 0.81 (s, 6H).
Figure S10. $^1$H-NMR spectrum of p(bg$_4$NC$_{16}$N) in CDCl$_3$, measured at 45 °C.
3 GPC measurements

Figure S11. GPC traces of a) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2), b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) and c) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) measured in chloroform at 40 °C.

4 Optical measurements

Figure S12. UV Vis-absorption spectrum of the polymer p([75:25]NDI-g3T2), p([90:10]NDI-g3T2), p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) a) in solution (chloroform) and b) as thin films on glass substrates.
5 Swelling analysis

5.1 AFM analysis

Figure S13. Illustration of the Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM) thickness measurement on dry and hydrated films. a) Image over a scratch measured in N₂ flow. b) Image over a scratch while under degassed 100 mM NaCl aqueous solution. c) Representative line profiles extracted from images a, b showing significant expansion of the polymer in contact with electrolyte.

5.1.1 Summary of AFM measurements

Figure S14. Plots show representative line profiles used to calculate the thickness in both N₂ (dashed gray lines) and in 100 mM NaCl(aq.) (solid black lines). The noted percent increase in thickness when immersed in electrolyte is the averaged from at least 5 separate line profiles and the error is the standard deviation of these line profiles. a) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) shows an average swelling of 27 % ± 11 %, b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) has an average swelling of 89 % ± 31 %, c) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) shows an average swelling of 106 % ± 48 %, d) p([90:10]NDI-T2) shows an average swelling of 59 % ±7 %, and e) p([100:0]NDI-T2) shows an average swelling of 157 % ± 46 %.
5.1.2 Redrying of the p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) series

Figure S15. Redrying of the p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) polymer films. Line profiles taken of the initial dry film (grey), the NaCl(aq) swollen films, and after extended drying in air showing that the films return to their original dry thickness. a) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2), b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) and c) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2).

5.2 QCM-D analysis

Figure S16. Swelling of the polymers under study calculated with QCM-D measurements. The thickness is calculated based on the 5th overtone of the raw data (not shown), in both air (dashed lines) and in 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution (solid lines). The percentage of increase in thickness when each polymer is immersed in 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution (i.e., swelling) is noted on each graph. a) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2), b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2), c) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2), d) p([90:10]NDI-T2) and e) p([100:0]NDI-T2).
6 Electrochemical and spectroelectrochemical measurements

6.1 CV measurements in organic electrolytes

The electron affinity (EA) was calculated by:

\[
EA = \text{IP}(\text{Fc/Fc}^+) - E_{1/2}(\text{Fc/Fc}^+ \text{ vs. Ag/AgCl}) + E_{\text{Red, onset}} \text{ (Polymers)}
\]

\[
EA = 4.8 \text{ eV} - 0.38 \text{ V} + E_{\text{Red, onset}} \text{ (Polymers)}
\]

---

Figure S17. CV measurements in 0.1 M NBu₄PF₆ with a scan rate of 100 mV/s shown three scans of a) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) [EA = 4.1 eV], b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) [EA = 4.1], c) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) [EA = 4.1] and d) Ferrocene.
6.2 CV measurements in aqueous electrolytes

6.2.1 Thin films on ITO coated glass substrates

Figure S18. CV measurements of polymer thin films on ITO coated glass substrates in 0.1 M NaCl aqueous electrolytes with a scan rate of 50 mV/s at low O₂ concentration, showing a) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2), b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2), c) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2), d) p([100:0]NDI-T2) and e) p([90:10]NDI-T2). The first cycle is highlighted (dashed line) and every 20th cycle is shown to compare the redox-stability of the polymers. Note: The polymer p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) shows a poor redox-stability, probably due to delamination of the polymer film after 5 cycles.
6.2.2  Thick electrodes on conductive paper electrodes

Figure S19. CV measurements of polymer electrodes on conductive paper, charging the electrode between 0.2 V to −1.0 V vs. Ag/AgCl for 100 scans with a scan rate of 5 mV/s for a) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) (2.22 mg), b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) (1.30 mg), c) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) (2.16 mg), d) p([100:0]NDI-T2) (1.7 mg) and e) p([90:10]NDI-T2) (2.03 mg) in 0.1 M NaCl solution with low oxygen concentrations. The first cycle of the measurement is highlighted (dashed line). C-rate analysis of the polymer electrodes employing chronopotentiometry (CP) measurements between 0.2 V and −1.0 V vs. Ag/AgCl.

Figure S20. Monitoring of the charging of a polymer electrode with p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) and sign of dissolution of the polymer when charged to the electron bipolaron.
6.3 Performance of other conjugated polymers

6.4 Evaluating the concept across other polymer backbones

Figure S21: Electrochemical performance of other n-type polymers. a) Chemical structure of p(bg₄Ng₃N) with hydrophilic side chains only, CV measurements of p(bg₄Ng₃N) in 0.1 M NaCl at a scan rate of 5 mV/s to b) -0.5 V (electron polaron) vs. Ag/AgCl and c) -1.0 V vs. Ag/AgCl (electron bipolaron), d) picture of the electrolyte after charging to the electron polaron, the coloring of the electrolyte is a result of the polymer dissolution during the charging, e) chemical structure of p(bg₃NC₁₆N) with mixed hydrophilic and hydrophobic side chains. CV measurements of p(bg₃NC₁₆N) in 0.1 M NaCl at a scan rate of 5 mV/s to f) -0.5 V vs. Ag/AgCl (electron polaron) and g) -1.0 V vs. Ag/AgCl (electron bipolaron) and h) picture of the electrolyte after charging to the polaron, showing no coloring due to the low-solubility of the charged polymer in the aqueous electrolyte.
6.4.1 Poly(benzimidazobenzophenanthroline) (BBL)

Figure S22. Electrochemical properties of a single-phase electrode with BBL. a) Chemical structure of one repeat unit of BBL, b) Paper electrode with BBL (single-phase electrode, mass loading of 1.04 mg), c) CV measurements of the BBL polymer electrode with a scan rate of 5 mV/s in 0.1 M NaCl with low O$_2$ concentration when charging the electrode to between -0.5 V to +0.5 V vs. Ag/AgCl (electron polaron, orange line, three cycles)) and -1.0 V to 0.5 V vs. Ag/AgCl (electron bipolaron, 100 scans, black to gray). Scan #1 (black dashed line) and scan #100 (blue dotted line) are highlighted and red arrows are added to indicate the degradation of the electrode. d) Gravimetric capacity vs. C-Rate plot, comparing the performance of BBL (blue line) to NDI-T2/g3T2 polymers and e) comparison of the utilized theoretical capacity of BBL and NDI-T2/g3T2 polymers.
6.5 Calculation of the theoretical capacity of the polymers

The theoretical capacity was calculated by assuming that two electrons can be added per repeat unit. \( C_{\text{theoretical}} = \frac{nF \times 1000}{M \times 3600} \) with M being the molecular weight of one repeat unit as shown in Table S1.

Table S1: Summary of the theoretical and measured capacities of the polymers

| Polymer         | Electrons/repeat unit | M (repeat unit) [g/mol] | Theoretical capacity [mAh/g] | Measured capacity [mAh/g] | Utilization of theoretical capacity (%) |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) | 2                     | 1398.61                 | 38.3                         | 2.2                       | 5.7                                     |
| p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) | 2                     | 1390.24                 | 38.6                         | 21.7                      | 56.3                                    |
| p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) | 2                     | 1377.68                 | 38.9                         | 27.7                      | 71.2                                    |
| p([100:0]NDI-T2) | 2                     | 1074.24                 | 49.9                         | 8.1                       | 16.2                                    |
| p([90:10]NDI-T2) | 2                     | 1065.87                 | 50.3                         | 34.5                      | 68.6                                    |
| BBL             | 1                     | 334.29                  | 80.2                         | 26.6                      | 16.6                                    |
| BBL             | 2                     | 334.29                  | 160.3                        | 26.6                      | 33.2                                    |
6.5.1 Spectroelectrochemical measurements of p([90:10]NDI-g3T2)

Figure S23. Spectroelectrochemical measurements of p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) monitoring the evolution of the absorption spectrum during the first charging scan of thin film polymers from 0.2 V to –1.0 V vs. Ag/AgCl with a scan rate of 50 mV/s. (1) and (2) refer to the spectral changes associated with the polaron and bipolaron states, respectively.
6.5.2 Spectroelectrochemical measurements of the p([g7:a]NDI-T2) series

Figure S24. a) CV measurements of the polymers p([100:0]NDI-T2) (orange line) and p([90:10]NDI-T2) (green line) in 0.1 M NaCl aqueous electrolytes with a scan rate of 50 mV/s vs. Ag/AgCl, showing 5 cycles (first cycle is highlighted (dashed line)). The electrolyte was degassed with argon for 15 min prior to the recording of the voltammograms. b) Summary of the spectroelectrochemical measurements, monitoring of the bipolaron absorption peak at $\lambda_{\text{max, bipolaron}} = 624$ nm. The time during which the bipolaron is formed is highlighted in blue. Changes of the absorption spectrum of polymer thin films on ITO substrates during the first charging cycle of c) p([100:0]NDI-T2) and d) p([75:25]NDI-T2), between 0.2 V to –1.0 V vs. Ag/AgCl with a scan rate of 50 mV/s. (1) and (2) refer to the spectral changes associated with the polaron and bipolaron states, respectively.
6.5.3 Difference of the absorption spectrum of $p([100:0] \text{NDI-g3T2})$, $p([90:10] \text{NDI-g3T2})$ and $p([75:25] \text{NDI-g3T2})$ during continuous charging

Figure S25: Changes of the absorption spectrum of a) $p([100:0] \text{NDI-g3T2})$, c) $p([90:10] \text{NDI-g3T2})$ and e) $p([75:25] \text{NDI-g3T2})$ and the corresponding changes of the absorption spectra during each charging cycle (when the polymer is in its discharged state at 0 V vs. Ag/AgCl) for b) $p([100:0] \text{NDI-g3T2})$, d) $p([90:10] \text{NDI-g3T2})$ and f) $p([75:25] \text{NDI-g3T2})$ Stability of the polymer electrodes during continuous charging/discharging in aqueous electrolytes.
6.5.4 Difference of the absorption spectrum of p([100:0]NDI-T2) and p([90:10]NDI-T2) during continuous charging

Figure S26: Changes of the absorption spectrum of a) p([100:0]NDI-T2) and c) p([90:10]NDI-T2) and the corresponding changes of the absorption spectra during each charging cycle (when the polymer is in its discharged state at 0 V vs. Ag/AgCl) for b) p([100:0]NDI-T2) and d) p([90:10]NDI-T2).
6.5.5 Comparison of charging of a neat and pre-cycled polymer thin film

To investigate the changes of the cyclic voltammogram and absorption spectrum during the first and second charging/discharging cycle, the electrochemical and spectroelectrochemical properties of a freshly prepared polymer thin film were compared to the same film after pre-cycling. The pre-cycled polymer film was washed with DI water and dried in ambient conditions (no heating). A similar response between the first and second scan was observed for the pristine polymer and the pre-cycled polymer.

Figure S27. CV and spectroelectrochemical measurements of p(75:25)NDI-g3T2) showing a) the cyclic voltammogram of five scans with a scan rate of 50 mV/s, b) absorption spectrum of the discharged polymer (spectra reported at 0 V vs/Ag/AgCl), c) changes of the absorption spectrum during each charging/discharging cycle, d) CV of the pre-cycled film, e) absorption spectrum of the discharged polymer (pre-cycled polymer film), and f) changes of the absorption spectrum during each charging/discharging cycle (discharged polymer film).
6.6 Retention experiments of the reduced polymer with low and high O\textsubscript{2} concentrations

Figure S28.: Spectroelectrochemical measurements of p([75:25]NDI-g3T2) monitoring the changes of the bipolaronic absorbance peak (622 nm) in 0.1 M NaCl at low O\textsubscript{2} conc. and after the addition of O\textsubscript{2}. 
7 eQCM-D measurements

We attempted conducting measurements at low oxygen concentrations to limit faradaic side reactions between the charged polymer and molecular oxygen, however only with limited success, as only low coulombic efficiencies are observed during the cycling (Figure S24 and Figure S25).

7.1 eQCM-D measurements of the p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) series charging to −0.4 V vs. Ag/AgCl

Figure S29. The top panel shows the current recorded during the cyclic voltammetry for p([75:25]NDI-g3T2), p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) and p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) in a 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution with low O\textsubscript{2} conc. and a scan rate of 10 mV/s. The corresponding, in-situ, mass changes calculated from the eQCM-D data (frequency and dissipation of energy – not shown) using viscoelastic modelling are shown at the bottom.
7.2 eQCM-D measurements of the p([g7:a]NDI-T2) series charging to −0.4 V vs. Ag/AgCl

Figure S30. The top panel shows the current recorded during the cyclic voltammetry for p([90:10]NDI-T2) and p([100:0]NDI-T2) in a 0.1 M NaCl aqueous solution with low O₂ conc. and a scan rate of 10 mV/s. The corresponding, in-situ, mass changes calculated from the eQCM-D data (frequency and dissipation of energy – not shown) using viscoelastic modelling are shown at the bottom.
7.3 eQCM-D measurements of the p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) series to \(-0.4\) V vs. Ag/AgCl

We also conducted measurements at potential \(<-0.4\) V vs. Ag/AgCl and observed a large dissipation of energy values of more than \(1500 \times 10^{-6}\) J for the low glycol content polymer, indicative of the formation of a hydrogel-like state of the polymer under high degree of charging. We believe these changes are more drastic for the polymers containing more glycolated side chains and one reason why irreversible changes in the eQCM-D signal are observed at high degree of charging.

Figure S31. eQCM-D measurements of the p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) series when applying potentials \(<-0.4\) V vs. Ag/AgCl. The frequency (top row) and dissipation of energy (bottom row) are shown for three cycles of charging/discharging cycles, where potentials between 0.3 V and \(-0.9\) V are applied for a) p([75:25]NDI-g3T2), b) p([90:10]NDI-g3T2) and c) p([100:0]NDI-g3T2) with a scan rate of 10 mV/s in 0.1 M NaCl with low concentration.
8 Organic electrochemical transistor (OECT) measurements

Figure S32. OECT operation in 0.1 M NaCl with a scan rate of 200 mV/s at low O\textsubscript{2} concentration showing the transfer curves for a) \(p([90:10]\text{NDI-g3T2})\), b) \(p([90:10]\text{NDI-T2})\) and c) \(p([100:0]\text{NDI-T2})\). The output curves include data beyond potentials of the stable regime d) \(p([90:10]\text{NDI-g3T2})\), e) \(p([90:10]\text{NDI-T2})\) and f) \(p([100:0]\text{NDI-T2})\).

Figure S33. OECT operation in 0.1 M NaCl with a scan rate of 200 mV/s at low O\textsubscript{2} concentration showing the transfer curves for when charging the polymers to the bipolaronic state a) \(p([75:25]\text{NDI-g3T2})\), b) \(p([90:10]\text{NDI-g3T2})\), c) \(p([100:0]\text{NDI-g3T2})\), d) \(p([90:10]\text{NDI-T2})\) and e) \(p([100:0]\text{NDI-T2})\).
Figure S34. OECT hysteresis of the \(p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2)\) series shown with sweep rate dependent transfer curves in the saturation regime in 0.1 M NaCl with low oxygen concentrations.

Figure S35. OECT hysteresis: average sweep rate dependent voltage hysteresis of the \(p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2)\) series in drop cast OECTs measured at 1/2 \(I_{d,max}\). Error bars represent one standard deviation.

Table S2. OECT parameters

| Polymer               | \(V_t\) (mV) | \(\mu C^*\) (F cm\(^{-1}\) V\(^{-1}\) s\(^{-1}\)) |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| \(p([75:25]NDI-g3T2)\) | 357 ± 3      | 0.023 ± 0.005                                 |
| \(p([90:10]NDI-g3T2)\) | 321 ± 5      | 0.046 ± 0.023                                 |
| \(p([100:0]NDI-g3T2)\) | 327 ± 10     | 0.012 ± 0.009                                 |
| \(p([90:10]NDI-T2)\)   | ~270         | ~0.04                                         |
| \(p([100:0]NDI-T2)\)   | ~290         | ~0.04                                         |
9 DFT and TDDFT simulations

9.1 Method

Molecules in their neutral, singly and doubly reduced states were optimized at the DFT level (B3LYP/6-31g(p,d)). Excited stated TD-DFT calculations were performed on optimized geometries of neutral and charged (reduced) molecules. All calculations shown in this study were performed using Gaussian16. For the polymer series p([g7:a]NDI-g3T2) and p([g7:a]NDI-T2), we approximated the polymer chain to be dimers (spectroscopy calculations) and the calculated structures are shown in Figure S36 and S37.

9.2 Results

The calculated spectra of the charged species supported the interpretation of the changes of the absorption spectrum of the polymers during polaron and bipolaron formation. We also present calculations for the excited states of (aNDI-gT2)₂ and (aNDI-T2)₂ as a comparison to (gNDI-gT2)₂ and (gNDI-T2)₂ to demonstrate that replacing glycol side chain with alkyl side chains on the NDI unit has a little impact on the calculated absorption spectra.
Figure S38. Calculated absorbance spectra (normalized) for a (gNDI-T2)$_2$ dimer in the neutral (blue line), electron polaron (pink line, one electron per NDI-T2 repeat unit) and electron bipolaron (red line, two electrons per NDI-T2 repeat unit). Linear combinations of the absorption spectra are shown to illustrate the color changes of the absorption spectra.

Figure S39. Calculated absorbance spectra (normalized) for a (aNDI-T2)$_2$ dimer in the neutral (blue line), electron polaron (pink line, one electron per NDI-T2 repeat unit) and electron bipolaron (red line, two electrons per NDI-T2 repeat unit). Linear combinations of the absorption spectra are shown to illustrate the color changes of the absorption spectra.
Figure S40. Calculated absorbance spectra (normalized) for a \((\text{aNDI-gT2})_2\) dimer in the neutral (blue line), electron polaron (pink line, one electron per NDI-T2 repeat unit) and electron bipolaron (red line, two electrons per NDI-T2 repeat unit). Linear combinations of the absorption spectra are shown to illustrate the color changes of the absorption spectra.
9.3 Summary of the calculations

Table S3. Energies and oscillator strengths calculated for (gNDI-gT2)\(_2\), (gNDI-gT2)\(^2\) and (gNDI-gT2)\(^4\) in water (PCM) up to 3eV (400nm). The collective entry in the columns indicates group of states in the given energy interval and sum of oscillator strengths of these states.

| Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1.25 (991)       | 1.20                | 0.74 (1672)      | 1.4                 | 1.68 (737)       | 1.11                |
| 1.46 (847)       | 0.004               | 1.34 (925)       | 0.006               | 1.79 (694)       | 0.003               |
| 1.53 (810)       | 0.007               | 1.56 (792)       | 0.01                | 1.89 (655)       | 0.19                |
| 1.69 (733)       | 0.04                | 1.71 (724)       | 0.006               | 1.96 (634)       | 0.06                |
| 2.65 (468) –     | 0.59                | 1.97 (630)       | 0.25                | 2.27 (546)       | 0.008               |
| 2.74 (453)       | 0.32                | 2.16 (573) –     | 0.14                | 2.34 (529)       | 0.14                |
| 2.79 (444)       | 0.24                | 2.46 (503)       | 0.26                | 2.42 (512) –     | 0.06                |
| 2.83 (439)       | 0.21                | 2.65 (467)       | 0.39                | 2.72 (457)       | 0.11                |
| 2.90 (427) –     | 0.21                | 2.70 (459) –     | 0.65                | 2.91 (426)       | 0.28                |
| 3.10 (400)       |                     | 3.03 (409)       |                     | 2.95 (421)       | 0.28                |

Table S4. Energies and oscillator strengths calculated for (aNDI-gT2), (aNDI-gT2)\(^2\) and (aNDI-gT2)\(^4\) in water (PCM) up to 3eV (400nm). The collective entry in the columns indicates group of states in the given energy interval and sum of oscillator strengths of these states.

| Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1.27 (991)       | 1.18                | 0.74 (1676)      | 1.4                 | 1.65 (752)       | 1.12                |
| 1.49 (834)       | 0.002               | 1.34 (920)       | 0.007               | 1.75 (709)       | 0.0006              |
| 1.55 (799)       | 0.005               | 1.57 (788)       | 0.01                | 1.86 (665)       | 0.20                |
| 1.72 (723)       | 0.03                | 1.73 (716)       | 0.008               | 1.92 (647)       | 0.05                |
| 2.68 (463) –     | 0.66                | 1.95 (636)       | 0.25                | 2.27 (545)       | 0.003               |
| 2.76 (449)       | 0.33                | 2.17 (571) –     | 0.14                | 2.35 (527)       | 0.15                |
| 2.82 (440)       | 0.18                | 2.46 (503)       |                     | 2.43 (511) –     | 0.06                |
| 2.86 (434)       | 0.18                | 2.59 (477)       | 0.25                | 2.71 (458)       |                     |
| 2.93 (423) –     | 0.18                | 2.66 (467)       | 0.41                | 2.89 (429)       | 0.11                |
| 3.09 (402)       |                     | 2.71 (457) –     | 0.67                | 2.93 (422)       | 0.32                |
|                  |                     | 3.04 (408)       |                     | 3.00 (413)       | 0.75                |
|                  |                     | 3.02 (410)       |                     | 3.02 (410)       | 0.04                |
|                  |                     | 3.05 (406)       |                     | 3.05 (406)       | 0.13                |
Table S5. Energies and oscillator strengths calculated for (gNDI-T2-g)$_2$, (gNDI-T2-g)$_2^2$ and (gNDI-T2-g)$_2^4$ in water (PCM) up to 3.1 eV (400 nm). The collective entry in the columns indicates group of states in the given energy interval and sum of oscillator strengths of these states.

| Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1.65 (752)       | 0.87               | 0.65 (1900)      | 1.11               | 1.52 (814)       | 0.96               |
| 1.81 (685)       | 0.001              | 1.40 (889)       | 0.01               | 1.61 (767)       | 0.001              |
| 1.92 (646)       | 0.001              | 1.67 (743)       | 0.0003             | 1.72 (720)       | 0.23               |
| 2.12 (584)       | 0.02               | 1.80 (688)       | 0.18               | 1.76 (705)       | 0.0004             |
| 2.98 (416)       | 0.001              | 2.02 (612) –     | 0.20               | 2.27 (546)       | 0.002              |
| 3.05 (407)       | 0.10               | 2.39 (518)       |                   | 2.34 (531)       | 0.22               |
| 3.07 (404)       | 0.04               | 2.61 (475) –     | 0.07               | 2.40 (518)       | 0.03               |
| 3.12 (397)       | 0.83               | 2.70 (458)       |                   | 2.52 (493)       | 0.01               |
|                  |                    | 2.81 (441)       | 0.14               | 2.59 (479)       | 0.01               |
|                  |                    | 2.84 (436)       | 0.44               | 2.64 (469)       | 0.006              |
|                  |                    | 2.87 (431)       | 0.48               | 2.88 (430)       | 0.11               |
|                  |                    | 2.99 (415)       | 0.22               | 2.97 (416)       | 0.07               |
|                  |                    | 3.05 (407)       | 0.10               | 3.01 (412)       | 0.12               |
|                  |                    | 3.07 (404)       | 0.01               | 3.02 (410)       | 0.42               |
|                  |                    |                   |                    | 3.06 (405)       | 0.72               |

Table S6. Energies and oscillator strengths calculated for (aNDI-T2)$_2$, (aNDI-T2)$_2^2$ and (aNDI-T2)$_2^4$ in water (PCM) up to 3.1 eV (400 nm). The collective entry in the columns indicates group of states in the given energy interval and sum of oscillator strengths of these states.

| Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength | Energy [eV (nm)] | Oscillator strength |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1.66 (747)       | 0.91               | 0.66 (1869)      | 1.12               | 1.50 (825)       | 0.94               |
| 1.83 (676)       | 0.002              | 1.39 (892)       | 0.02               | 1.59 (778)       | 0.002              |
| 1.93 (644)       | 0.007              | 1.69 (736)       | 0.001              | 1.69 (732)       | 0.23               |
| 2.15 (575)       | 0.02               | 1.78 (696)       | 0.17               | 1.74 (712)       | 0.01               |
| 2.98 (415)       | 0.006              | 2.05 (604) –     | 0.20               | 2.27 (545)       | 0.002              |
| 3.05 (406)       | 0.18               | 2.38 (519)       |                   | 2.34 (529)       | 0.23               |
| 3.08 (403)       | 0.09               | 2.61 (475) –     | 0.06               | 2.40 (516)       | 0.03               |
| 3.12 (398)       | 0.80               | 2.70 (459)       |                   | 2.51 (494)       | 0.01               |
|                  |                    | 2.81 (441)       | 0.11               | 2.58 (481)       | 0.01               |
|                  |                    | 2.84 (436)       | 0.30               | 2.64 (469)       | 0.001              |
|                  |                    | 2.87 (432)       | 0.63               | 2.87 (431)       | 0.10               |
|                  |                    | 2.98 (414)       | 0.22               | 2.96 (419)       | 0.07               |
|                  |                    | 3.05 (407)       | 0.06               | 2.99 (415)       | 0.03               |
|                  |                    | 3.06 (405)       | 0.06               | 3.02 (410)       | 0.32               |
|                  |                    |                   |                    | 3.05 (406)       | 0.90               |
### 9.4 Coordinates of optimized structures

#### 9.4.1 (gNDI-gT2)_2 Neutral optimized structure in water (PCM)

| Atom | x       | y       | z       |
|------|---------|---------|---------|
| C    | -5.05513600 | -3.19008000 | -0.37862900 |
| C    | -5.37957500 | -1.75748400 | -0.19736300 |
| C    | -4.35378000 | -0.78802600 | -0.05174100 |
| C    | -2.98201000 | -1.16345300 | -0.07597300 |
| C    | -2.65778600 | -2.61841000 | -0.05258800 |
| C    | -6.70446600 | -1.39355500 | -0.13809200 |
| C    | -4.76016700 | 0.56946800  | 0.10354000  |
| C    | -6.13482400 | 0.94502800  | 0.12888000  |
| C    | -7.13740000 | -0.05464300 | 0.06424400  |
| C    | -6.45473100 | 2.39845200  | 0.09981100  |
| C    | -4.05428100 | 2.97023100  | 0.41507800  |
| C    | -3.73318500 | 1.53684600  | 0.24254300  |
| C    | -2.40574800 | 1.17139900  | 0.18132800  |
| C    | -1.98050800 | -0.16684100 | -0.01130700 |
| H    | -1.66778200 | 1.96222100  | 0.24464700  |
| H    | -7.43953500 | -2.18649600 | -0.20785900 |
| N    | -5.40299800 | 3.30580700  | 0.34106500  |
| N    | -3.70512600 | -3.52051100 | -0.30637800 |
| O    | -5.91237500 | -4.04872200 | -0.56201400 |
| O    | -1.54316500 | -3.06247300 | 0.18990000  |
| O    | -3.19460100 | 3.82856000  | 0.59218900  |
| O    | -7.56867600 | 2.84897600  | -0.13811400 |
| C    | -5.75170000 | 4.73232600  | 0.43569500  |
| H    | -6.75270800 | 4.80452300  | 0.85817500  |
| H    | -5.03306000 | 5.20069700  | 1.10739400  |
| C    | -3.35396800 | -4.95051600 | -0.40952500 |
| H    | -4.06780800 | -5.41477100 | -1.08893900 |
| C    | -2.35062000 | -5.01789100 | -0.82734300 |
| C    | -8.57237300 | 0.13940600  | 0.25684700  |
| S    | -9.23758600 | 0.96246900  | 1.14325300  |
| C    | -9.71519300 | -0.88386300 | -0.60623300 |
| H    | -10.63727700 | 0.78277400 | 1.13327300 |
| H    | -8.72917900 | 1.66657800  | 1.78439000  |
| O    | -11.08889100 | -0.18317200 | 0.22707400  |
| O    | -11.54266400 | 1.44066600  | 1.90365400  |
| C    | -12.44428600 | -0.57169700 | -0.04574400 |
| C    | -11.05430800 | 2.46288200  | 2.77653500  |
| C    | -12.88942500 | -1.54407500 | -0.94059600 |
| S    | -13.83419400 | 0.16521500  | 0.75339900  |
| H    | -11.93205500 | 2.88092700  | 3.26849300  |
| H    | -10.37686600 | 2.04677700  | 3.52997900  |
| H    | -10.53956000 | 3.24859300  | 2.21310600  |
| C    | -14.30687650 | -1.93158800 | -0.93282400 |
| O    | -11.98286600 | -2.24014800 | -1.67202700 |
| C    | -14.93862300 | -0.83724500 | -0.12346000 |
| C    | -14.82864500 | -2.39802300 | -1.61607200 |
| C    | -12.47349500 | -3.23550600 | -2.57563200 |
| H    | -16.00145700 | 0.73941400  | 0.04856100  |
| H    | -13.11939200 | -2.78906400 | -3.33884800 |
| H    | -11.59317200 | -3.66756800 | -3.05042900 |
| H    | -12.32155400 | -4.01723700 | -2.03946800 |
| H    | -5.71327500  | 5.42421000  | -0.92615900 |
| H    | -4.70752600  | 5.33853100  | -1.36546400 |
| H    | -6.42688000  | 4.94523900  | -1.61307200 |
| C    | -3.39865500  | -5.65286500 | 0.94683200  |
| H    | -4.04679600  | -5.57194800 | 1.38144300  |
| H    | -2.68935500  | -5.17833300 | 1.64127300  |
| O    | -6.05407000  | 6.78126400  | -0.70619100 |
| O    | -6.05477800  | -7.00752400 | 0.71776600  |
| C    | -6.05734000  | 7.54196600  | -1.90283700 |
| H    | -6.78933400  | 7.15454900  | -2.62681100 |
| H    | -6.32953300  | 8.56563600  | -1.63613800 |
| H    | -5.06726200  | 7.54835300  | -2.38151200 |
9.4.2 (aNDI-gT2) Neutral optimized structure in water (PCM)

| H     | 12.62326900 | -7.08631600 | 1.89182700 |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| H     | 10.90216500 | -7.54479600 | 1.79659100 |

| C     | -5.05038700 | -3.19224400 | -0.40270600 |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| C     | -5.37793900 | -1.76108800 | -0.20915100 |
| C     | -4.35387700 | -0.79168400 | -0.05564500 |
| C     | -2.98251500 | -1.16671500 | -0.08253700 |
| C     | -2.65758900 | -2.62303300 | -0.07143900 |
| C     | -6.70300400 | -1.39794000 | -0.14675900 |
| C     | -6.76078400 | 0.56420100  | 0.10974100  |
| C     | -6.13512400 | 0.93951700  | 0.13659700  |
| C     | -7.13612300 | -0.06037900 | 0.06466900  |
| C     | -6.45478600 | 2.39478100  | 0.11719900  |
| C     | -4.05986400 | 2.96335100  | 0.44482700  |
| C     | -3.73552600 | 1.53153600  | 0.25853300  |
| C     | -2.40802700 | 1.16690200  | 0.19541600  |
| C     | -1.98243900 | -0.19681200 | -0.00096200 |
| C     | -1.66997800 | 1.95696700  | 0.26705600  |
| C     | -1.43805500 | -2.19037900 | -0.22247300 |
| C     | -5.40655900 | 3.30011900  | 0.36904900  |
| N     | -3.70217900 | -3.52797800 | -0.33182200 |
| O     | -5.90969500 | -4.04796800 | -0.59487400 |
| C     | -1.54030000 | -3.06420300 | 0.16738800  |
| O     | -3.19851800 | 3.81842800  | 0.63411200  |
| O     | -7.57015000 | 2.84246100  | 0.12127000  |
| C     | -5.71939300 | 0.13225200  | 0.25839200  |
| C     | -3.23660600 | 0.94454300  | 1.15440000  |
| S     | -9.71483800 | -0.87920700 | -0.61765600 |
| C     | -10.63967600| 0.76619100  | 1.14143200  |
| C     | -8.72762000 | 1.64066600  | 1.80385700  |
| C     | -11.08866000| -0.18799000 | 0.22381100  |
| C     | -11.54206000| 1.41599400  | 1.91966100  |
| C     | -12.44468100| -0.57330000 | -0.05398700 |
| C     | -11.05249800| 2.42631900  | 2.80540000  |
| C     | -12.89022800| -1.53426400 | -0.96040300 |
| C     | -13.83424700| 0.15383300  | 0.75462500  |
| H     | -11.92971300| 2.83911900  | 3.30276900  |
| H     | -10.37544200| 2.00005500  | 3.55352500  |
| C     | -10.53691200| 3.21872500  | 2.25218900  |
| C     | -14.30780300| -1.68265300 | -1.00403100 |
| C     | -11.98408500| -2.22183300 | -1.70102700 |
| C     | -14.93943900| -0.83747400 | -0.13490200 |
| C     | -12.62984500| 2.37965400  | 1.15458200  |
| C     | -12.47581700| 3.20577000  | -2.61672000 |
| H     | -16.00223600| -0.74155800 | 0.03949600  |
| H     | -13.12268000| -2.75001600 | -3.37345100 |
| H     | -11.59612300| -3.63241500 | -3.09706300 |
| H     | -13.02374700| -3.99394900 | -2.08930600 |
| C     | -5.75357600 | 4.73387000  | 0.45305100  |
| C     | -3.69646200 | 5.44103700  | -0.90484300 |
| C     | -5.04559400 | 5.18497100  | 1.14903200  |
| C     | -6.75698300 | 4.79381400  | 0.87439500  |
| C     | -6.05702900 | 6.92754700  | -0.79469300 |
| C     | -4.68713500 | 5.33533200  | -1.32057300 |
| C     | -6.38532400 | 4.94168400  | -1.59608900 |
| C     | -6.00257500 | 7.65324100  | -2.14234900 |
| H     | -7.06304800 | 7.02640800  | -0.36559200 |
| H     | -5.37326800 | 7.41598000  | -0.08757200 |
| H     | -6.26435900 | 8.71075800  | -2.03522500 |
| H     | -4.99916000 | 7.60019500  | 2.57951500  |
| H     | -6.70060900 | 7.20737200  | 2.85977700  |
| C     | -3.35249100 | -4.96068600 | -0.42482900 |
| C     | -3.40945900 | -5.67702400 | 0.92824400  |
| H     | -2.34858500 | -5.01565900 | -0.84578600 |
| H     | -4.05873100 | -5.40833600 | -1.12477900 |
| C     | -3.04629000 | -7.16214700 | 0.80804000  |
| C     | -2.72190700 | -5.18136000 | 1.62345700  |
9.4.3 \((g\text{NDI-T2})_2\) Neutral optimized structure in water (PCM)

|        |       |       |       |       |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|        | 5.42620300 | -3.10386900 | 1.02008500 | 1.02008500 |
|        | 5.81248000 | -1.75588500 | 0.54216300 | 0.54216300 |
|        | 4.83185300 | -0.77215100 | 0.26143200 | 0.26143200 |
|        | 3.44533400 | -1.05234100 | 0.42211800 | 0.42211800 |
|        | 3.04443700 | -2.46108500 | 0.71485500 | 0.71485500 |
|        | 1.71491710 | -1.48992000 | 0.34859700 | 0.34859700 |
|        | 5.29045400 | 0.50366800 | -0.17594700 | -0.17594700 |
|        | 6.67762400 | 0.78192500 | -0.34219800 | -0.34219800 |
|        | 7.07858000 | 2.19055300 | -0.63258200 | -0.63258200 |
|        | 4.69556800 | 2.83846100 | -0.92300800 | -0.92300800 |
|        | 4.30971200 | 1.48792400 | -0.45283900 | -0.45283900 |
|        | 2.97172600 | 1.21953900 | -0.26493700 | -0.26493700 |
|        | 2.49730100 | -0.03339200 | 0.20039700 | 0.20039700 |
|        | 2.26607200 | 2.01975600 | -0.45436800 | -0.45436800 |
|        | 7.85379500 | -2.29082900 | 0.53650900 | 0.53650900 |
|        | 6.06249400 | 3.09524100 | -0.99580200 | -0.99580200 |
|        | 5.29045400 | 0.50366800 | -0.17594700 | -0.17594700 |
|        | 6.67762400 | 0.78192500 | -0.34219800 | -0.34219800 |
|        | 4.69556800 | 2.83846100 | -0.92300800 | -0.92300800 |
|        | 4.30971200 | 1.48792400 | -0.45283900 | -0.45283900 |
|        | 2.97172600 | 1.21953900 | -0.26493700 | -0.26493700 |
|        | 2.49730100 | -0.03339200 | 0.20039700 | 0.20039700 |
|        | 2.26607200 | 2.01975600 | -0.45436800 | -0.45436800 |
|        | 7.85379500 | -2.29082900 | 0.53650900 | 0.53650900 |
|        | 6.06249400 | 3.09524100 | -0.99580200 | -0.99580200 |
|        | 5.29045400 | 0.50366800 | -0.17594700 | -0.17594700 |
|        | 6.67762400 | 0.78192500 | -0.34219800 | -0.34219800 |
|        | 4.69556800 | 2.83846100 | -0.92300800 | -0.92300800 |
|        | 4.30971200 | 1.48792400 | -0.45283900 | -0.45283900 |
| H  | O    | C    | S    | C    | H    | C    | C    | C    | C    | H    | C    | C    |
|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| H  | 4.01022200 | -8.08407800 | -0.69474000 |
| O  | 3.16946700 | -6.93116000 | 0.83237600 |
| O  | 6.95604600 | 6.66234500 | -0.71645700 |
| C  | 1.05550400 | -0.13261800 | 0.46768500 |
| S  | -0.09874900 | 0.52199900 | -0.68273900 |
| C  | 0.40257200 | -0.58194700 | 1.59413600 |
| C  | -1.44902000 | 0.17435500 | 0.37778400 |
| C  | -0.99223300 | -0.40922200 | 1.54842200 |
| H  | 0.92265400 | -1.01293200 | 2.43987000 |
| C  | -2.80439500 | 0.47464000 | -0.02723900 |
| H  | -1.66023300 | -0.68886700 | 2.36090300 |
| C  | -4.17322900 | -0.20032400 | 0.83429500 |
| C  | -3.24276000 | 1.27435700 | -1.06764000 |
| C  | -5.31749900 | 0.63081000 | -0.20505300 |
| C  | -4.65012000 | 1.36149700 | -1.16279300 |
| H  | -2.56750000 | 1.79324300 | -1.73845600 |
| C  | -6.76125100 | 0.38246600 | -0.06840500 |
| H  | -5.16251800 | 1.94311900 | -1.91856400 |
| C  | -7.15964100 | -0.97949500 | 0.28051000 |
| C  | -7.76190000 | 1.37358200 | -0.09802800 |
| H  | -8.48231900 | -1.36071600 | 0.03882400 |
| C  | -6.40249400 | -1.75417900 | 0.05870400 |
| C  | -9.13373300 | 0.98784200 | -1.28666000 |
| C  | -8.44850000 | 2.48298800 | 0.00764000 |
| C  | -8.82753400 | -2.80377800 | 0.11870100 |
| C  | -9.49928400 | -0.38494700 | -0.06301000 |
| C  | -10.17351400 | 1.94825700 | -0.22963900 |
| N  | -8.50782200 | 3.73564000 | -0.18903000 |
| O  | -6.33762400 | 3.26758700 | 0.27237800 |
| N  | -10.19030000 | -3.12840300 | 0.10867600 |
| O  | -7.97441900 | -3.67938800 | 0.19229800 |
| C  | -10.86078600 | -0.76560600 | -0.09692100 |
| C  | -9.85638000 | 3.92386000 | -0.29712600 |
| C  | -11.50250900 | 1.55436900 | -0.26892300 |
| C  | -8.17360900 | 5.16937200 | -0.19384800 |
| C  | -11.23491700 | -2.20107900 | -0.02256800 |
| C  | -10.55179300 | -4.55132600 | 0.21078300 |
| C  | -11.85178600 | 0.19657500 | -0.20232400 |
| O  | -10.71931000 | 4.25440600 | -0.42325600 |
| H  | -12.26720600 | 2.31767500 | -1.82632000 |
| C  | -8.22487800 | 5.77501300 | 1.20810500 |
| C  | -8.89386900 | 5.67099800 | -0.83884400 |
| H  | -7.17187900 | 5.27716500 | -0.60720700 |
| O  | -12.39939300 | -2.57742600 | -0.06807400 |
| C  | -10.63878700 | -5.21467900 | -1.16317900 |
| H  | -11.51598000 | -4.61300100 | -0.71362700 |
| H  | -9.79054400 | -5.04459400 | 0.81362700 |
| H  | -12.89007400 | -0.11206600 | -0.23071000 |
| H  | -9.23024900 | 5.64848500 | 1.63839100 |
| H  | -7.50637200 | 5.26464800 | 1.86682700 |
| O  | -7.90283000 | 7.14731500 | 1.07269900 |
| H  | -11.39241300 | -4.70407600 | -1.78209800 |
| H  | -9.66980900 | -5.14204300 | -1.68042700 |
| O  | -10.99562800 | -6.56666500 | -0.94295400 |
| C  | -7.91580300 | 7.83377000 | 2.31353200 |
| C  | -11.11728300 | -7.30121900 | 2.15007800 |
| H  | -7.56019800 | 8.87609700 | 2.11062000 |
| H  | -8.90764700 | 7.79431800 | 2.78730200 |
| H  | -7.17990300 | 7.41500000 | 3.01550800 |
| H  | -11.39208800 | -8.32350800 | -1.88122700 |
| H  | -11.89655800 | -6.88106000 | -2.80261800 |
| H  | -10.17051300 | -7.32074500 | -2.70937200 |
9.4.4  (aNDI-T2)₂ Neutral optimized structure in water (PCM)

C  5.44868600  -3.32347600  -0.56974700
C  5.81849600  -1.91093400  -0.31595200
C  4.82456700  -0.91387200  -0.15922200
C  3.44158000  -1.24163900  -0.23941300
C  3.06878700  -2.62183500  -0.67549400
C  7.15431500  -1.58315600  -0.26372100
C  5.26560800  0.41586300  0.09816600
C  6.59462400  0.74359100  0.17897200
C  7.02014400  2.12380600  0.61573500
C  4.63909200  2.82397200  0.51102000
C  4.27084100  1.41164400  0.25594900
C  2.93416300  1.08305300  0.20548000
C  2.47537500  -0.24743700  -0.00427200
H  2.21476800  1.87614900  0.37164700
H  7.87302600  -2.37718900  -0.42794900
N  5.99024800  3.07653900  0.72227100
N  4.09679700  -3.57582300  -0.77968900
O  6.28143900  -4.22311500  -0.62091100
O  1.92579600  -2.94959000  -0.96407900
O  3.80532900  3.72294300  0.56223300
O  8.16220600  2.45548200  0.90379000
S  9.06594100  -0.04697100  -0.16651900
S  10.18249700  -1.19690700  0.55809600
S  9.76207100  0.88754100  -0.90608500
C  11.57083600  -0.39614300  -0.14894000
C  11.16224700  0.69280800  -0.89670500
H  9.27377000  1.68517600  -1.44558000
C  12.91261200  -0.87842600  0.10104400
C  11.85331400  1.32342800  -1.44434400
C  13.31852200  -2.10855400  0.57697200
S  14.31024900  0.14747800  -0.19421700
C  14.73111600  -2.23335200  0.69775800
H  12.62407400  -2.90609800  0.81027600
H  15.40066700  -1.10311400  0.31387600
H  15.22814000  -3.13032000  1.04798200
H  16.46658300  -0.92365100  0.29573400
C  7.61624800  -0.25672800  -0.05483100
C  1.02545700  -0.45929500  0.11221000
S  -0.06947900  0.65930800  -0.64583200
C  0.33869300  -1.37940400  0.87319200
C  -1.48132100  -0.14599200  0.06597100
C  -1.06308300  -1.20563200  0.85165600
C  0.83445600  -2.15710400  1.43969800
C  -2.82555300  0.30689500  -0.20639800
S  -1.74903700  -1.84114900  1.40025900
C  -4.20748200  -0.47010300  0.54145700
C  -3.24548400  1.34779800  -1.01599200
C  -5.33061000  0.63370800  -0.23649000
C  -4.64629300  1.52936200  -1.02817100
C  -2.56166900  1.96218900  -1.59063900
C  -6.78098100  0.43205700  -0.10056500
H  -5.14343700  2.93943300  -1.61182800
C  -7.24829600  -0.90136500  -0.27055800
C  -7.72961900  1.45205500  0.11787700
C  -8.58767300  -1.21673900  -0.29207500
H  -6.53242900  -1.70011400  -0.42490500
C  -9.11954500  1.14932300  0.05497000
C  -7.33975400  2.83737500  0.52037700
C  -9.00660300  -2.62942700  -0.49153200
C  -9.55440600  -0.19544700  -0.15569200
C  -10.11048700  2.14840000  0.19053800
C  -8.36166100  3.79897200  0.61721000
C  -6.19516000  3.16295500  0.79130500
C  -10.38113200  -2.87641500  -0.56998500
C  -8.19552100  -3.54318600  -0.58767900
C  -10.93353400  -0.49980800  -0.21896600

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