

Supporting information

Highly defective ultra-small tetravalent MOF nanocrystals

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Materials and instruments

All chemicals were purchased from commercial suppliers (Fisher, Acros, Sigma, and TCI), and used as received without further purification.

Room temperature Powder X-ray Diffraction (PXRD) data were recorded on a high-throughput Bruker D8 Advance diffractometer working on transmission mode and equipped with a focusing Göbel mirror producing CuK α radiation ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) and a LynxEye detector. Temperature dependent PXRD data were recorded with sample closely packed in quartz capillary on a PANalytical EMPYREAN diffractometer with CuK α radiation ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) and equipped with a HTK-1200N (Anton Parr) high-temperature chamber and a GaliPIX^{3D} detector. ¹H NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker Avance 300 or 400 spectrometer. Nitrogen porosimetry data were collected on a Micromeritics Tristar/ Triflex instrument at 77 K (pre-activating samples at 70 °C under vacuum, 10 hours). Scanning Electron Microscopy coupled with energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (SEM-EDX) results were recorded with FEI Magellan 400 scanning electron microscope. Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) data were collected on Mettler Toledo TGA/DSC 2, STAR System apparatus with a heating rate of 5 °C/min under the oxygen flow (40 mL/min). To be noted, for the sake of comparison, the TGA data in main text is normalized with the residual ZrO₂ at 600 °C. Routine infrared spectra were measured with a Nicolet iS5 FTIR ThermoFisher spectrometer. Zeta potential and DLS size measurements of hydrodynamic radii were made on a Malvern Zetasizer Nano-ZS (Malvern Instruments). High resolution TEM images (HRTEM) were acquired on a Titan Themis 200 microscope operating at 200 kV. This microscope was equipped with a Ceta 16M hybrid camera from ThermoFischer Scientific capable of working under low electron irradiation conditions. The HRTEM images were obtained in low dose condition with an irradiation current between 100 and 250 electrons per square angstroms. For the TEM grid preparation, a 2 μ L drop of the solution was placed on a 200 mesh copper grid covered with a pure carbon membrane (from Ted Pella).

Synthesis of Zr₆ oxoclusters

Following the previous protocol,¹ ZrCl₄ (2 g, 8.4 mmol) was added into a mixture of 3 mL of glacial acetic acid and 5 mL of isopropanol under stirring at 500 rpm and heated at 120 °C for 60 min. The product was collected either through suction filtration or centrifugation at 10,000 rpm. The collected white solid was subsequently washed with acetone twice and dried under vacuum at RT. The synthesized Zr₆ oxoclusters could be stored in ambient condition for at least 12 months without properties change. The prepared Zr₆ oxoclusters have the following formula: Zr₆O₄(OH)₄(C₂H₃O₂)₈(H₂O)₂Cl₃.

Synthesis of Hf₆ oxoclusters

HfCl₄ (0.7 g, 2.2 mmol) was added into a mixture of 4 mL of glacial acetic acid and 18 mL of isopropanol under stirring at 500 rpm and heated at 100 °C for 60 min. The product was collected either through suction filtration or centrifugation at 10,000 rpm. The collected white solid was subsequently washed with acetone twice and dried under vacuum at RT.

Synthesis of 40 nm UiO-66

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL, 8.75 mmol) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 10 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed

by the immediate addition of 1,4-benzenedicarboxylic acid (BDC, 50 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 3h at room temperature. The resulting solution was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 45 min and then washed twice with ethanol (14,500 rpm, 45 min). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

Synthesis of MI-US-UiO-66 (5 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.025 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 10 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 1,4-benzenedicarboxylic acid (BDC, 50 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 1h at room temperature. The resulting solution was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 45 min and then washed twice with ethanol (14,500 rpm, 45 min). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications. Modulator induced size control can be applied with different amount of acetic acid used in the synthesis batch.

Synthesis of HD-US-UiO-66 (5 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 80 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 1,4-benzenedicarboxylic acid (BDC, 50 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 2h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 10 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 60 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications. The size control approach here can be applied with different amount of ethanol used in the synthesis batch.

Synthesis of HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ (4 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 80 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 2-aminobenzene-1,4-dicarboxylic acid (BDC-NH₂, 55 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 1h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 10 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 60 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

Synthesis of HD-US-UiO-66-Br (4 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 20 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 2-bromo-1,4-dicarboxylic acid (BDC-Br, 72 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 2h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 5 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 60 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL

of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

Synthesis of HD-US-UiO-66-NO₂ (5 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 20 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 2-nitrobenzene-1,4-dicarboxylic acid (BDC-NO₂, 62 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 2h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 5 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 60 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

Synthesis of HD-US-UiO-66-(OH)₂ (4 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 15 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 2,5-dihydroxy-1,4-dicarboxylic acid (BDC-(OH)₂, 60 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 1h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 2-5 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 45 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

Synthesis of HD-US-MOF-801 (4 nm)

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 20 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of fumaric acid (35 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 1h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 5 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 45 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

Synthesis of HD-US-UiO-66(Hf) (5 nm)

Hf₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 85 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (0.5 mL) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 80 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 1,4-benzenedicarboxylic acid (BDC, 50 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 2h at room temperature. The resulting solution was evaporated by rotary evaporation at room temperature until approximately 10 mL volume was left. The colloidal suspension was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 60 min and then washed twice with the mixture of 20 mL of acetone and 20 mL of ethanol (14,500 rpm, 1.5h). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for

characterizations and applications. The size control approach here can be applied with different amount of ethanol used in the synthesis batch.

Synthesis of HD-200-UiO-66-NH₂

Zr₆ oxoclusters (0.06 mmol, 75 mg) were dispersed in acetic acid (2.5 mL, 44 mmol) under stirring at 600 rpm. H₂O (1.25 mL) was subsequently added, and the reaction mixture was stirred until it became completely colorless. 7.5 mL of ethanol was introduced into the solution followed by the immediate addition of 2-aminobenzene-1,4-dicarboxylic acid (BDC-NH₂, 55 mg, 1.2 mmol), and the reaction was stirred for 3 h at room temperature. The resulting solution was centrifuged at 14,500 rpm for 45 min and then washed twice with ethanol (14,500 rpm, 45 min). The collected solid was dried under vacuum for 3 h for characterizations and applications.

FTIR spectroscopy with probe molecules

The samples (22 mg) were pressed into self-supporting discs of 2 cm² area. The sample disc was placed in an IR quartz cell equipped with KBr windows. A movable quartz sample holder allowed us to put the sample in the infrared beam for IR measurements or into the furnace for thermal activation. The cell is connected to a vacuum line for evacuation, calcination, and introduction of doses of gases. Spectra were all recorded at room temperature. Prior to CD₃CN adsorption, the compounds were pretreated in vacuum at 373 K for 10 h. Transmission spectra were recorded in the 500–4000 cm⁻¹ range at 4 cm⁻¹ resolution on a Nicolet Nexus spectrometer equipped with an extended KBr beam splitting device and a MCT detector. By subtracting the spectrum of the pure UiO-66 from those of CD₃CN adsorbed onto the supported samples, we collected the spectra shown in the main text.

¹H NMR spectroscopy

30 mg of MOF were dissolved with ca. 0.5 g KOH in 1 mL D₂O in a centrifuge tube. After shaking the tube, the tube was kept at 60 °C for 16 hours to fully digest the MOF. The mixtures were centrifuged and the supernatant was transferred into an NMR tube for measurement.

Glycylglycine Hydrolysis

Prior to hydrolysis, MOFs were activated at 120 °C for 20 h. To a 1 mL glass vial was added 2 μmoles of MOF and 950 μl D₂O. Next, 50 μl of a 40 mM solution of Glycylglycine in D₂O was added, the mixture pH was adjusted to 7.4 and incubated at 60 °C with stirring. Vessel was prepared per time point in triplicate. Reactions were stopped at 1 h, 2 h, 5 h, 20 h, 24 h and 48 h and centrifuged at 14,000 rpm for 10 minutes. 500 μl of supernatant was analyzed with ¹H-NMR using 3 μl of 0.1 M TMSP_{d4} internal standard. MOFs were washed in acetone and analyzed with PXRD after reaction to check their structure integrity.

For recycling experiments, after reaction, the MOFs were washed in D₂O overnight to remove adsorbed substrate and product, followed by washing in acetone and drying in the oven for 8 h at 110 °C. After which the reaction was repeated.

For reactions at different concentrations of glycylglycine, the reaction was performed as above, but with 200 mM and 500 mM glycylglycine.

The MOF underwent thermal activation at 120 °C for 20 h before being incubated in a solution of GG in D₂O, pH = 7.4, 60 °C for 24 h. ¹H-NMR was used to determine the amount of Glycylglycine, Glycine (G) and cyclic glycylglycine (cGG) in the reaction supernatant after different time points,

and rates determined using pseudo 1st order kinetics (Figures S30, S31). After reaction, the MOF was analyzed with PXRD, confirming that the MOF remained intact (Figure 41).

We started from the pristine HD-US-UiO-66 as it has the largest pore size among the MOFs synthesized in this work. Interestingly, the HD-US-UiO-66 showed a significantly greater (4.6 times) hydrolysis rate compared to the rate of large-sized (above 200nm) UiO-66 reported by some of us under identical conditions (Figure 8b).²

Table S1. Connectivity and porosity information of a series of highly defective ultrasmall MOFs synthesized in this work.

Materials	BET Surface area (m ² /g)	Total Pore volume (cm ³ / g)	Connectivity* (linker per metal node)
UiO-66	1040	0.51	3.9
UiO-66-NH ₂	878	0.42	4.0
UiO-66-NO ₂	428	0.21	4.2
UiO-66-(OH) ₂	637	0.31	3.9
UiO-66-Br	535	0.28	3.3
UiO-66(Hf)	594	0.28	3.9
MOF-801	595	0.28	4.1

*: Theoretical connectivity of linker per metal node is 6.

Table S2. Summary of reported works that dealt with defect-engineering on UiO-66.

MOF	Missing linker/ %	Size	Reference
UiO-66	27%	7 μ m	3
UiO-66	16%	300-600 nm	4
UiO-66	29%	300 nm	5
UiO-66	5%	10 nm	5
UiO-66	10%	120 nm	6
UiO-66	17%	250 nm	6
UiO-66	29%	1000 nm	6
UiO-66	16%	200 nm	7
UiO-66-NDC	0.3%	100 nm	8
UiO-66-NDC	12.6%	740 nm	8
UiO-66	5%	10 nm	9
UiO-66	4%	20nm	10

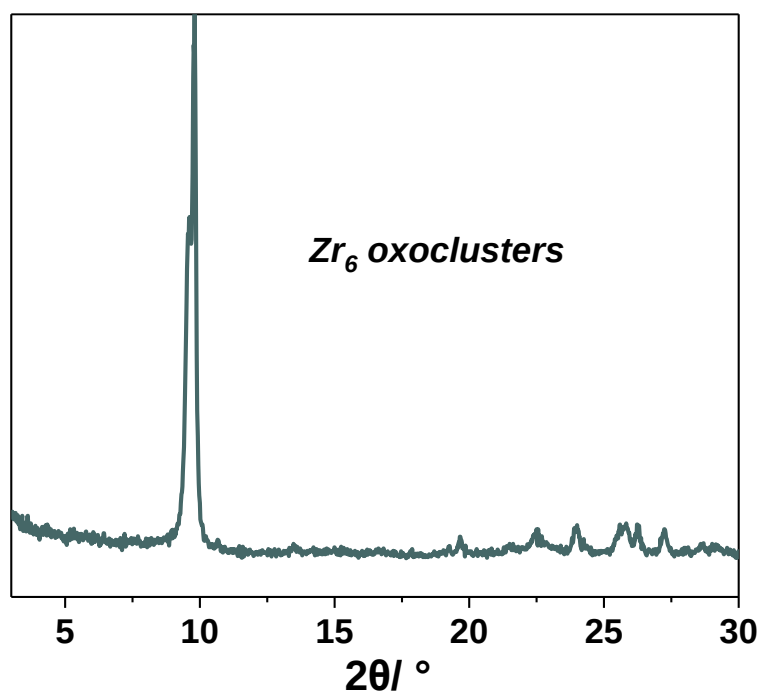


Figure S1. PXRD pattern ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) of the synthesized Zr_6 oxoclusters.

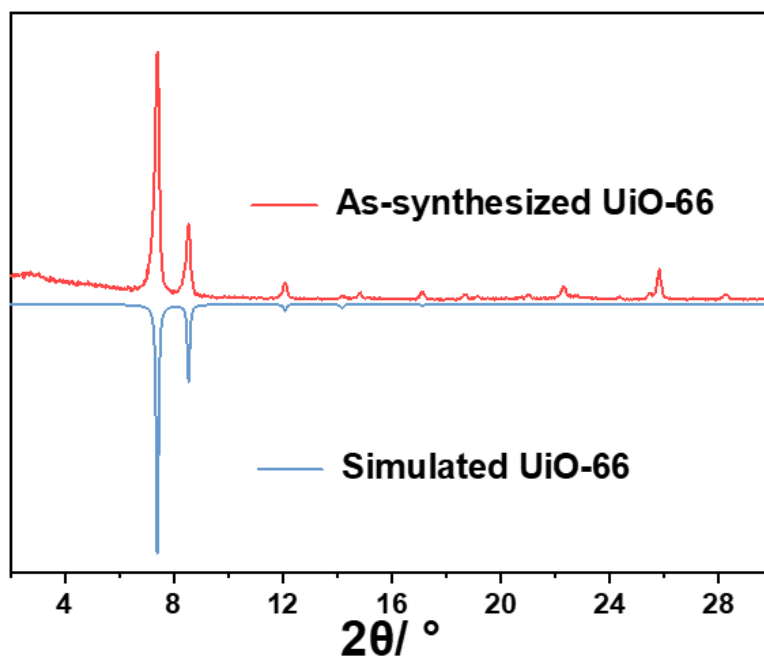


Figure S2. PXRD pattern ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) of the synthesized UiO-66 compared to the simulated UiO-66.

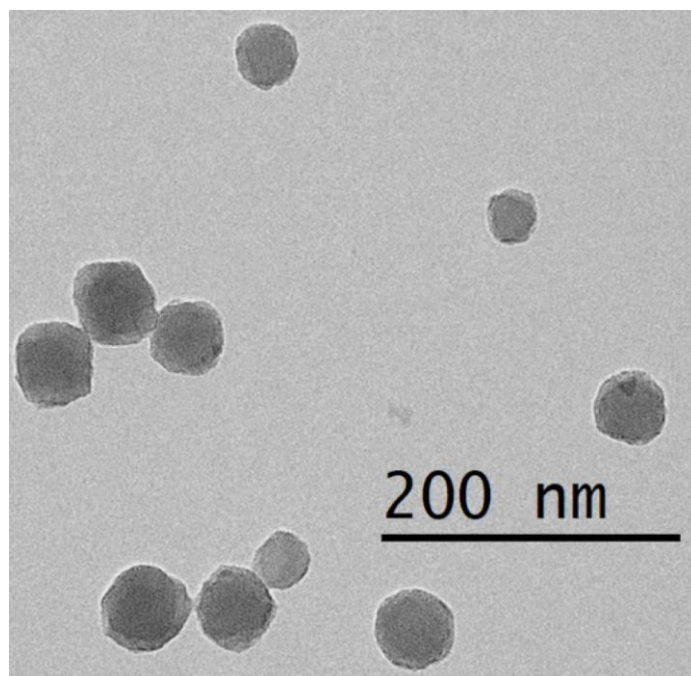


Figure S3. TEM image of the synthesized UiO-66 (ca. 40 nm).

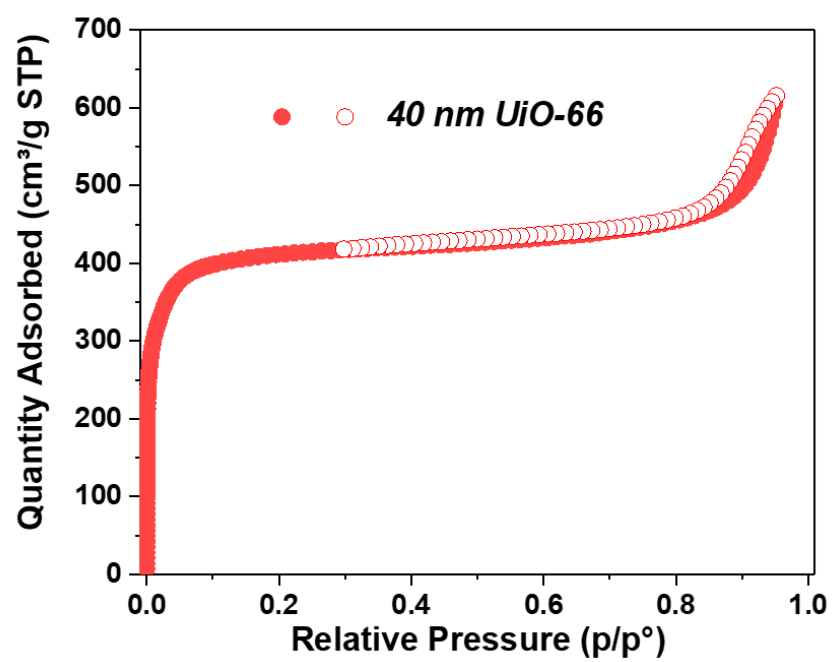


Figure S4. 77K N₂ sorption isotherm of 40 nm UiO-66.

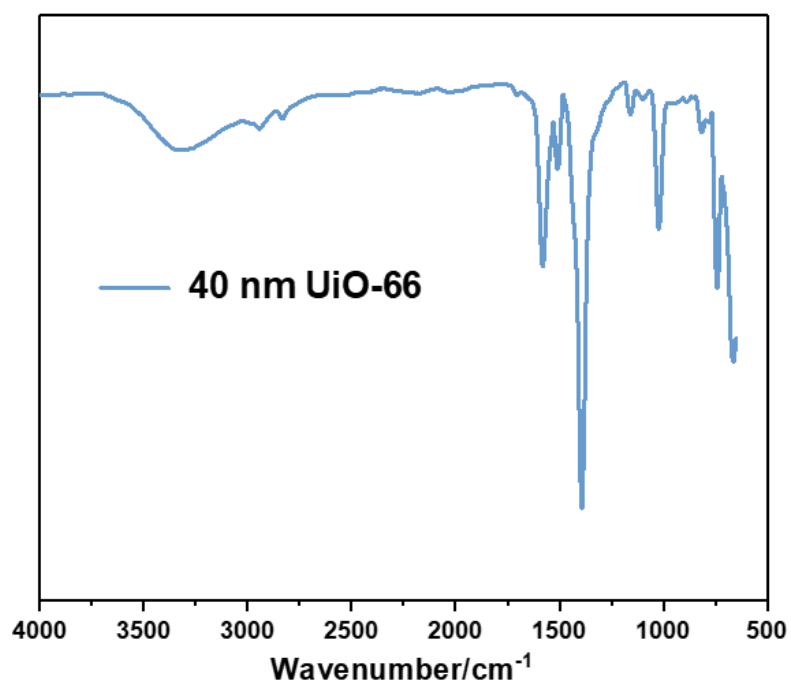


Figure S5. FTIR spectrum of 40 nm UiO-66.

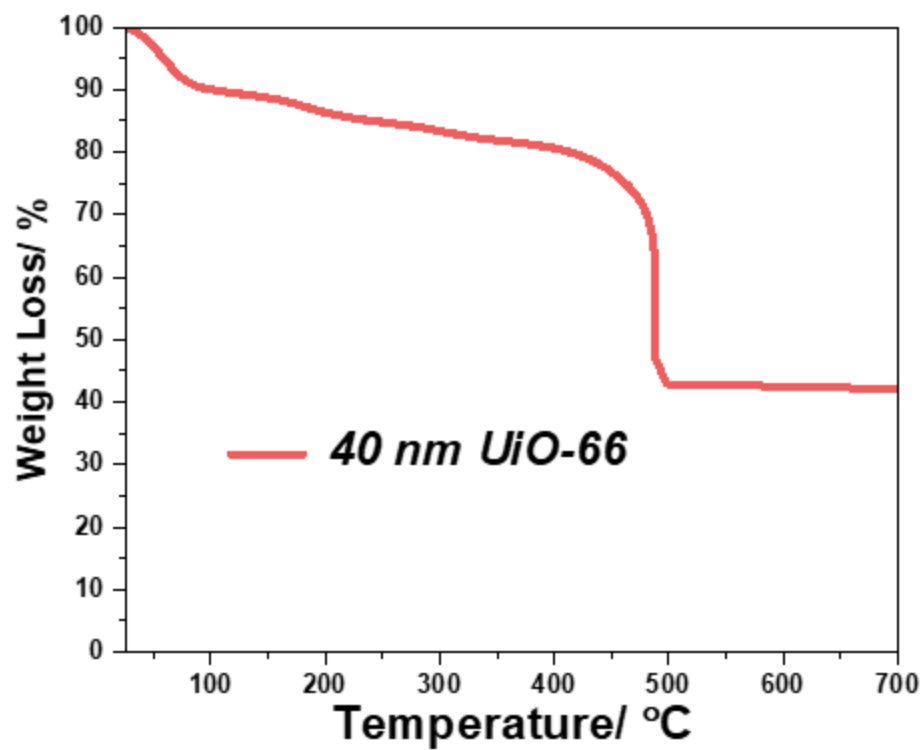


Figure S6. TGA of 40 nm UiO-66, ran under oxygen flow, 70 mL/min, 5 °C/min.

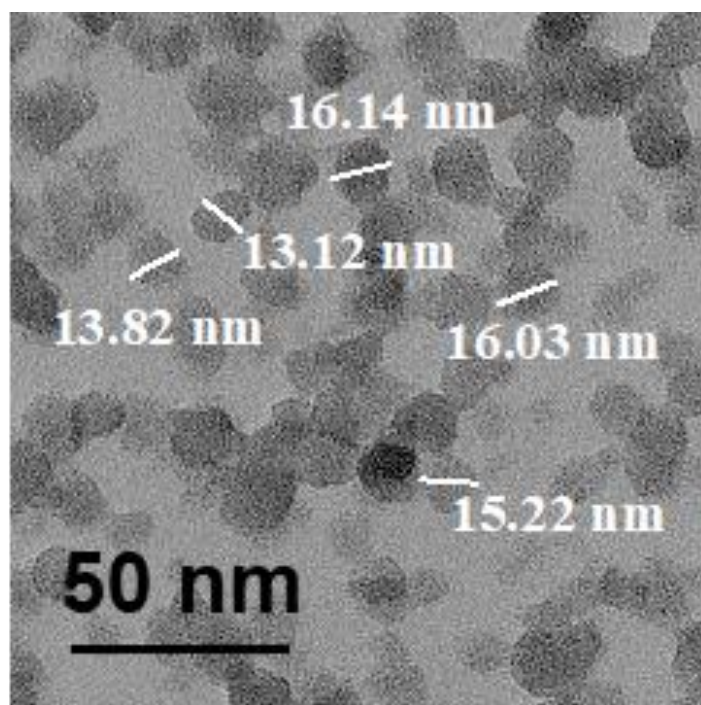


Figure S7. TEM image of 14 nm UiO-66 (synthesized with 20 mL EtOH).

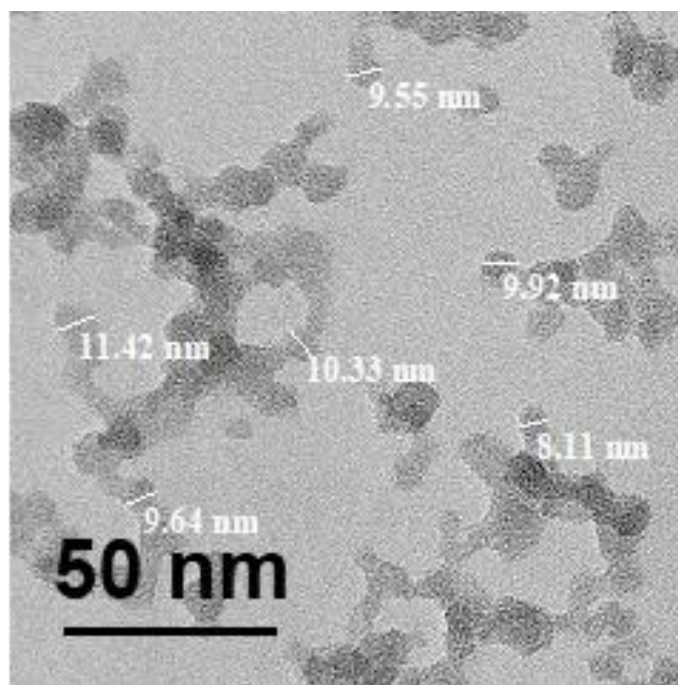


Figure S8. TEM image of 9 nm UiO-66 (synthesized with 40 mL EtOH).

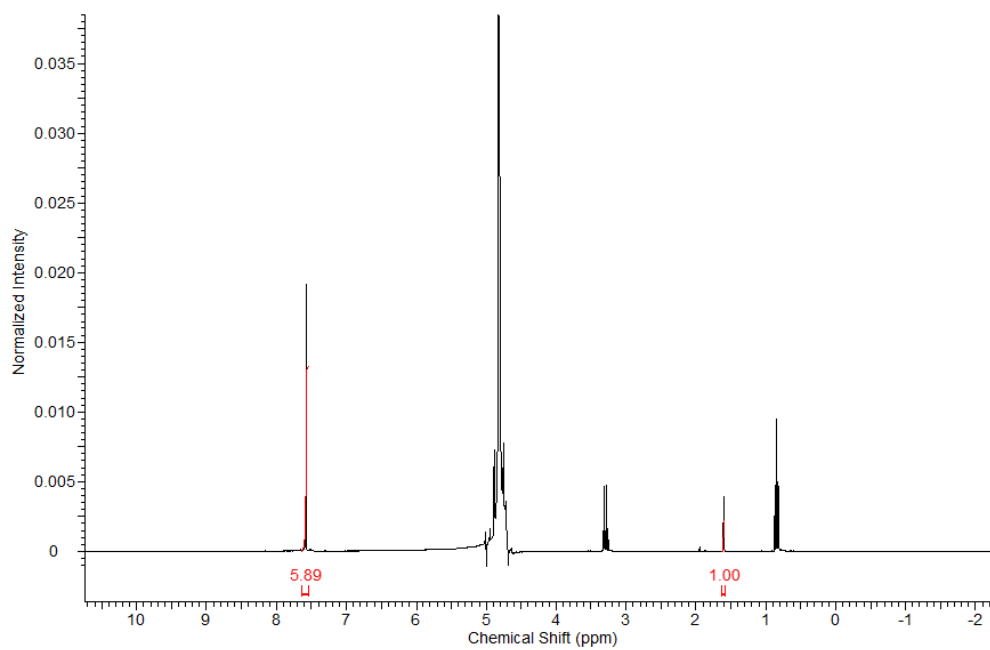
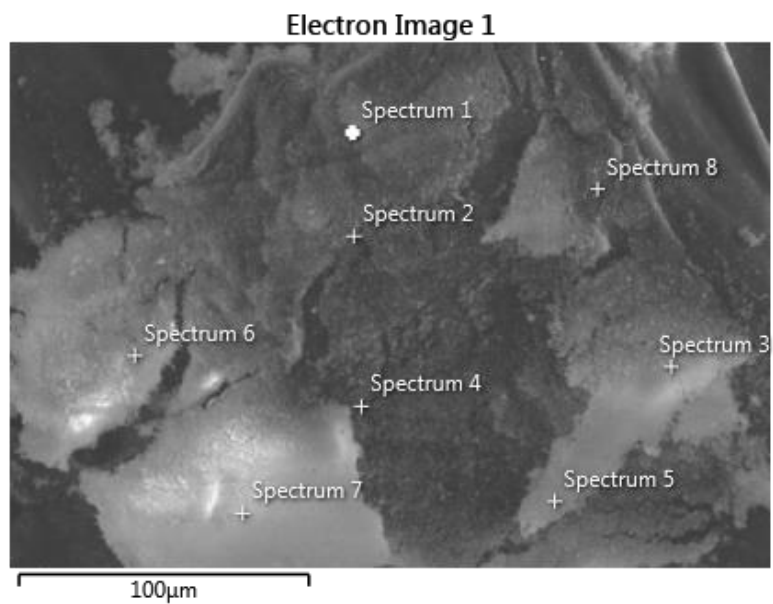


Figure S9. ¹H-NMR spectra of HD-US-UiO-66.



Statistics	Cl (at%)	Zr (at%)
Max	8.02	91.98
Min	6.25	93.75
Average	7.30	92.70

Figure S10. EDX analysis of 40 nm UiO-66 and the corresponding normalized atomic ratio of Cl and Zr.

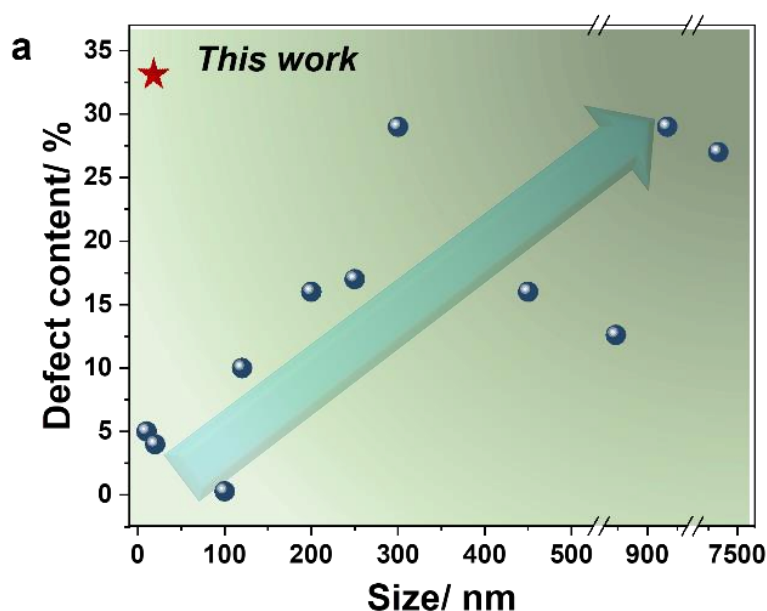


Figure S11. Plots of defect content versus the size of MOF of the published articles (adapted from Table S2) and the result from this work.

Modulator-induced defect approach (MIDA)

We followed the conventional MIDA, as well as the synthetic parameters of 40 nm UiO-66 and carried out a set of synthetic experiments by reducing the amount of acetic acid by 50% and 84%, respectively. Noteworthy, this conventional strategy also resulted in the generation of very small nanoparticles denoted as MI-US-UiO-66 (MI: modulator induced, US: ultrasmall) of average size close to 5 nm (HRTEM, Figure S12). The PXRD measurements suggested the correlation between the nanoparticle size and the quantity of modulator (Figure S13) due to the clear peak broadening. However, TGA analysis (Figure S14) revealed a strong dependence of the defect number on the quantity of acetic acid applied in the synthesis. More specifically, MI-US-UiO-66 exhibited the lowest defect content (linker: Zr_6 =4.7:1). This value was very close to the initial ratio of the precursors, where linker: Zr_6 =4.73:1. When, keeping all other conditions equal, one further tuned the ratio of linker: Zr_6 to 6, in line with the theoretical stoichiometry for non-defective UiO-66, the resulted nanoMOF showed an even higher linker to metal node ratio (4.9 :1), indicating only 1.1 linker per formula was missing (TGA, Figure S15). These results aligned very well with previous findings where the missing linker defect content strongly depended on the modulator quantity. Notably, when adding even more acetic acid no change in the final stoichiometry occurred most likely due to the inhibited deprotonation of acetic acid at higher concentration (Figure S16). The comparison of the pore size distributions (Figure S17) between the 40 nm UiO-66 and MI-US-UiO-66, distinct from HD-US-UiO-66, revealed the slightly reduced pore size of MI-US-UiO-66, further implying that the modulator-induced size reduction leads to less defective UiO-66.

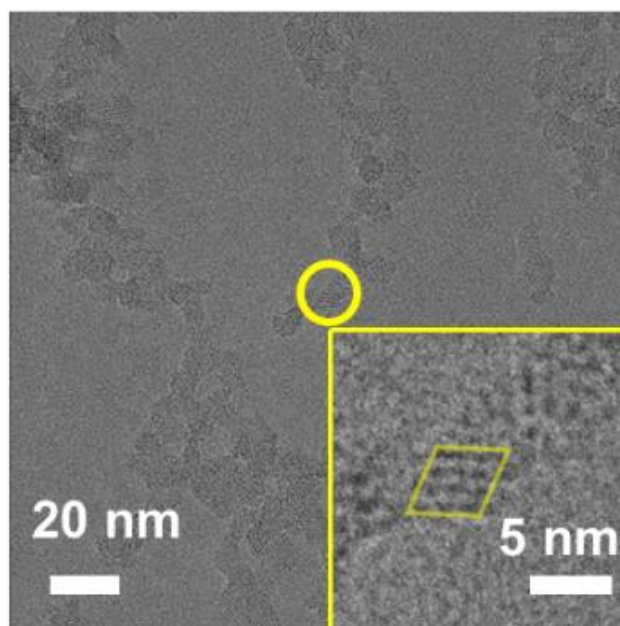


Figure S12. HRTEM image of the ultra-small UiO-66 synthesized using 0.08 mL acetic acid.

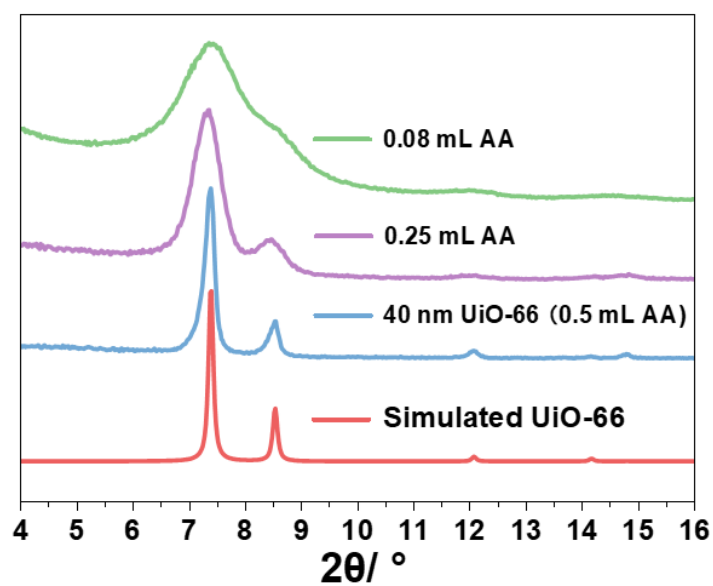


Figure S13. PXRD patterns of UiO-66 after the reduction of the quantity of acetic acid (AA) in comparison to the calculated pattern.

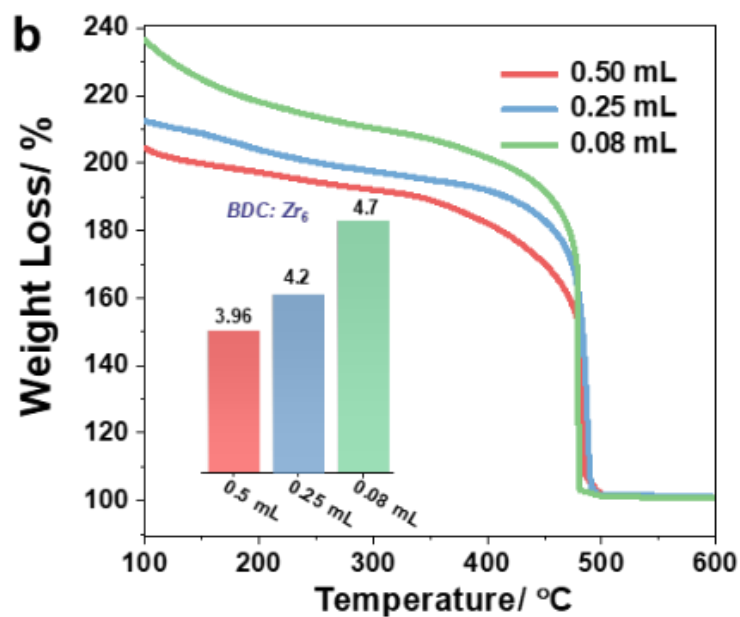


Figure S14. TGA results of the UiO-66 samples synthesized with different amounts of acetic acid (0.5, 0.25, 0.08 mL), ran under oxygen flow, 70 mL/min, 5 °C/min.

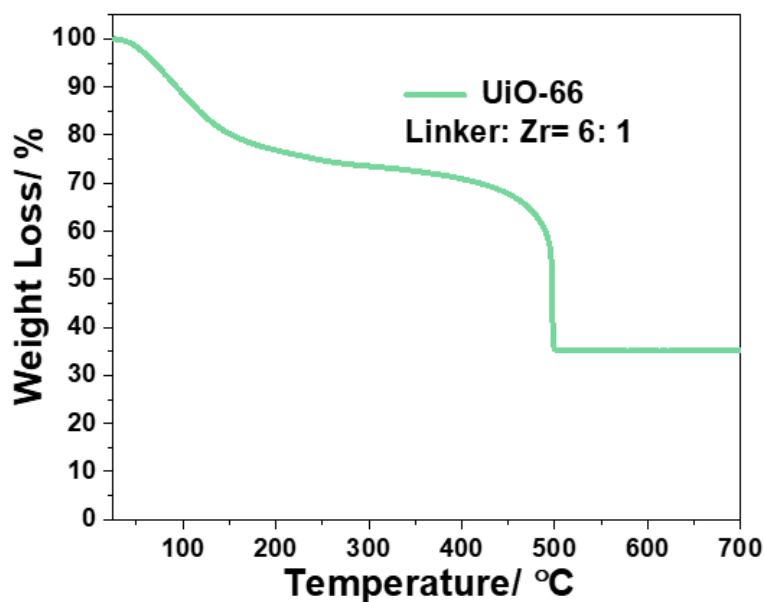


Figure S15. TGA of MI-US-UiO-66 synthesized with more linker (Linker:Zr₆=6:1), ran under oxygen flow, 70 mL/min, 5 °C/min.

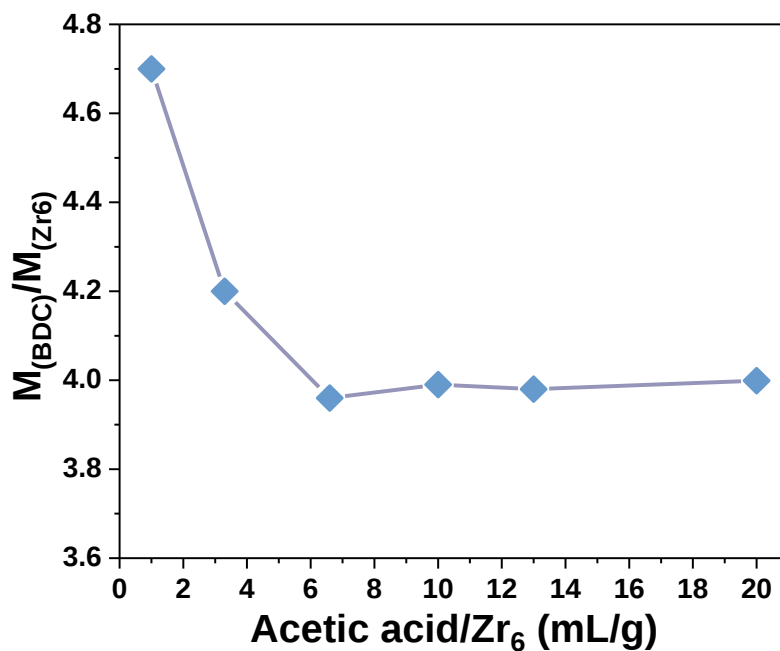


Figure S16. Defect content of different UiO-66 particles synthesized using different amount of acetic acid.

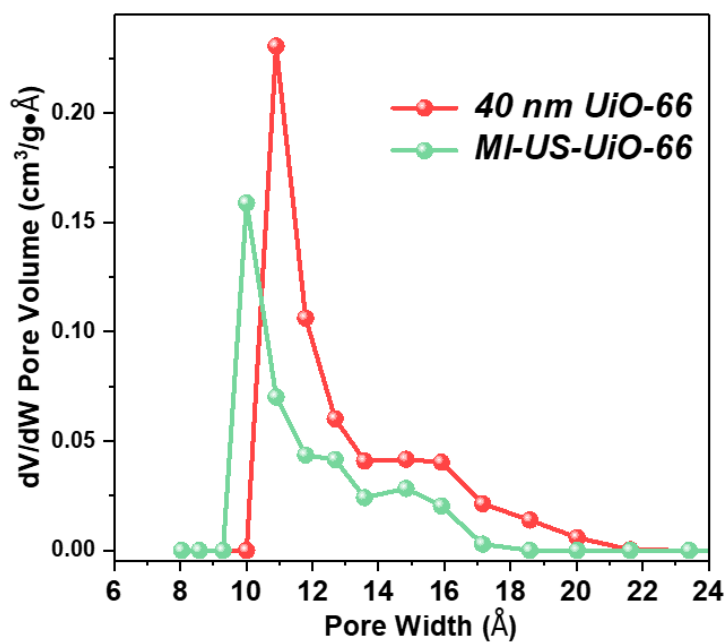


Figure S17. Pore size distribution comparison between 40 nm UiO-66 and MI-US-UiO-66 (DFT model).

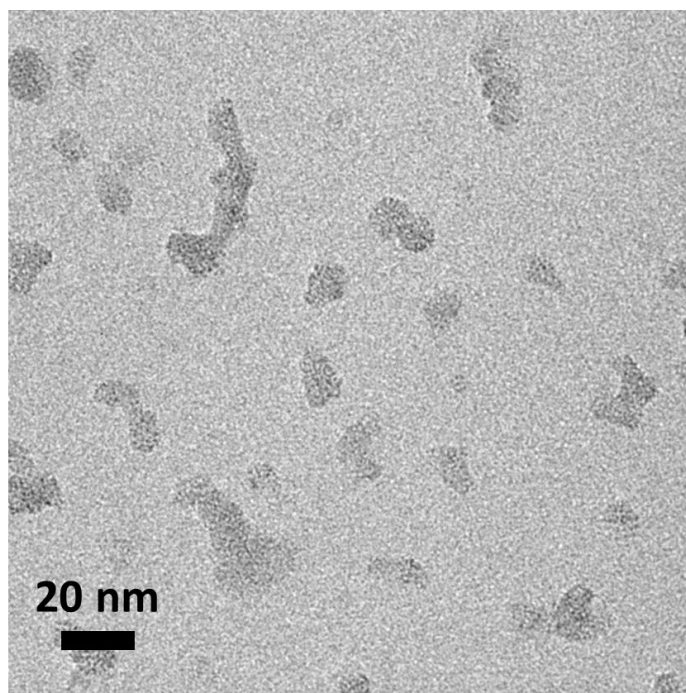


Figure S18. TEM image of the particles synthesized using 50% DMF and 50% ethanol as solvent.

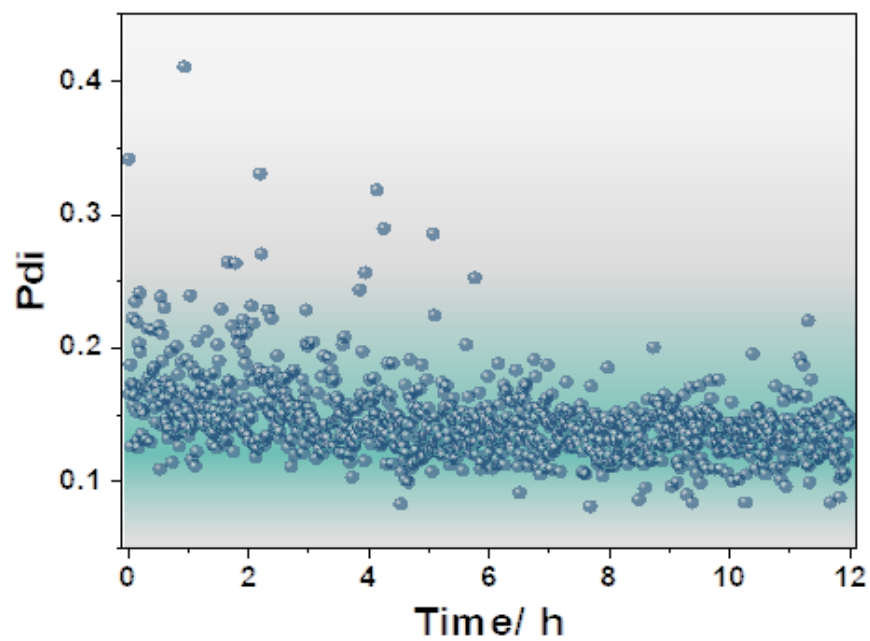


Figure S19. Polydispersity index (Pdi) of the TD-DLS of HD-US-Uio-66 colloids ($T = 25\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$).

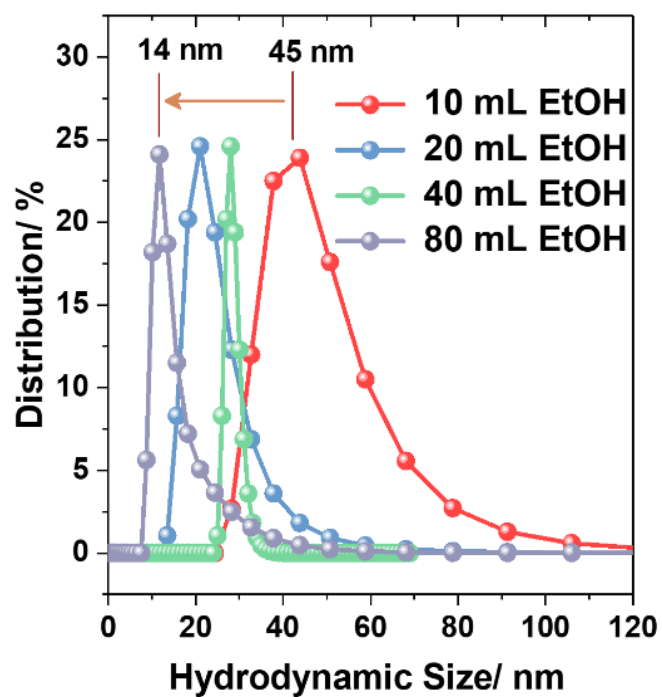


Figure S20. The size distribution of different sized UiO-66 in water (concentration: 1 mg/ mL).

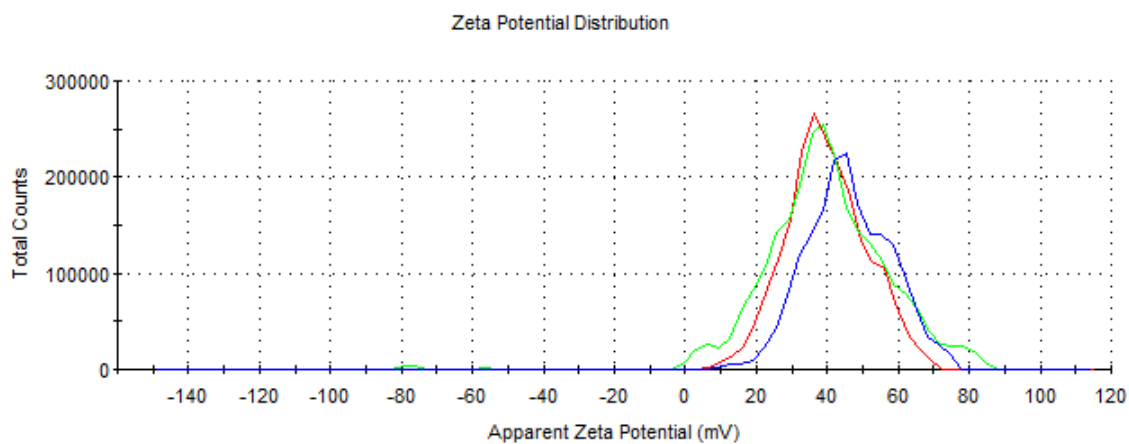


Figure S21. Zeta potential measurements of HD-US-UiO-66 (three parallel scans).

Thermal stability of highly defective ultrasmall UiO-66

It is difficult to monitor the thermal stability of ultrasmall MOF nanoparticles via *in situ* thermal PXRD due to the absence of Bragg diffractions. Thus, to analyse the impact of the downsizing over the thermal stability of HD-US-UiO-66, we prepared slightly larger (~7 nm) nanoparticles through our controllable strategy to carry out a variable temperature PXRD experiments. Noteworthy, the nanomaterial remained crystalline up to 300 °C (Figure S22), against typically 450°C for the bulk UiO-66(Zr). However, such a stability is acceptable for that small and defective MOF nanoparticles, and hence can be potentially promising for many applications requiring high temperature.

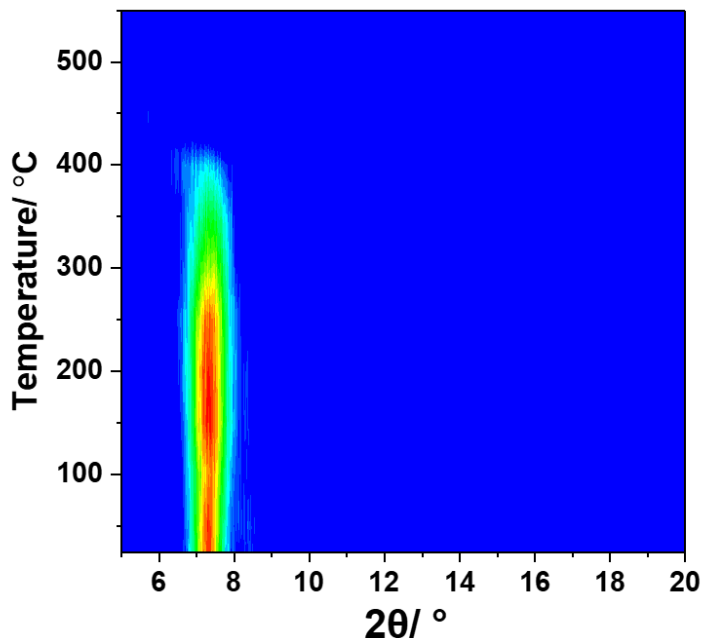


Figure S22. In situ variable temperature PXRD patterns ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) of highly defective 7 nm UiO-66.

Synthesis extension to other functional MOFs.

We explored the synthesis of ultra-small UiO-66-X derivatives ($X = \text{NH}_2, \text{NO}_2, (\text{OH})_2, \text{Br}$). As shown in Figure S23a-d, very similar sizes from 4 to 6 nm were obtained with broad PXRD patterns (Figure S25), and clear diffraction rings from SAED (Figure S26). To produce these derivatives with similar size, less EtOH was needed compared to the parent UiO-66, especially in the case of UiO-66-(OH)₂, due to the better solubility of these functionalized ligands. Remarkably, TGA analysis in Figure S27 (summarized in Table S1) indicated that all nanoMOFs exhibited very similar connectivity (4 linkers per formula) as the pristine UiO-66 except for UiO-66-Br (3.3 linkers per formula). The EDX mapping of UiO-66-Br in Figure S28 revealed a linker to Zr₆ ratio of 3.4, in agreement with TGA result. For this latter, one can tentatively assume that the stronger steric hindrance of Br atoms further promotes the formation of ligand defects. Nitrogen porosimetry of the synthesized derivatives also showed enhanced sorption capacities (see Figures S29, Table 1), confirming the high quality of these HD-US-UiO-66-X. Afterwards, to check if our new method could be extended to other MOFs, we explored the synthesis of the Zr-fumarate/MOF-801 as well as replacing Zr₆ by Hf₆ oxocluster as inorganic node. Interestingly, the change in size, solubility of the linker and/or the metal(IV) species did not affect the formation of ultra-small highly defective nanoMOFs as evidenced by HRTEM (Figure S23e, f), PXRD (Figure S30), and TGA (Figure S31, summarized in Table 1) (denoted as HD-US-UiO-66(Hf) and HD-US-MOF-801). The enlargement in Figure S23f present a nanoparticle built with a single unit cell single crystal. This fits well with excellent solubility of fumaric acid in EtOH, again demonstrating the versatility of our method in producing diverse ultra-small UiO-type frameworks with high defect content.

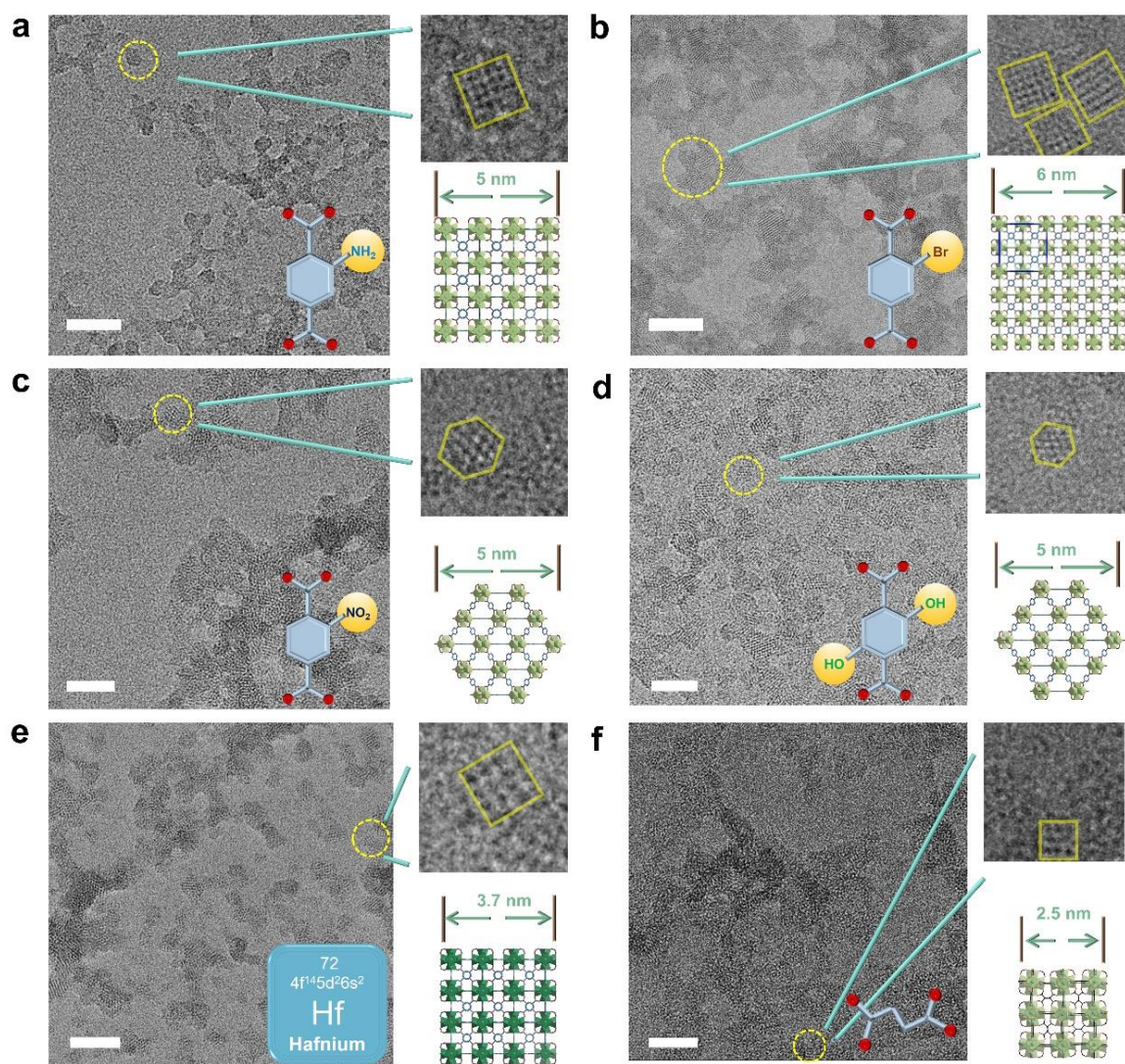


Figure S23. Highly defective ultra-small MOFs synthesized. Low dose HRTEM images of a) HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂, b) HD-US-UiO-66-Br, c) HD-US-UiO-66-NO₂, d) HD-US-UiO-66-(OH)₂, e) HD-US-UiO-66(Hf), f) HD-US-MOF-801, and the zoomed-in images of individual crystals and the corresponding schematic diagram of the structures. Scale bar: 20 nm.

Photoluminescence properties of HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂

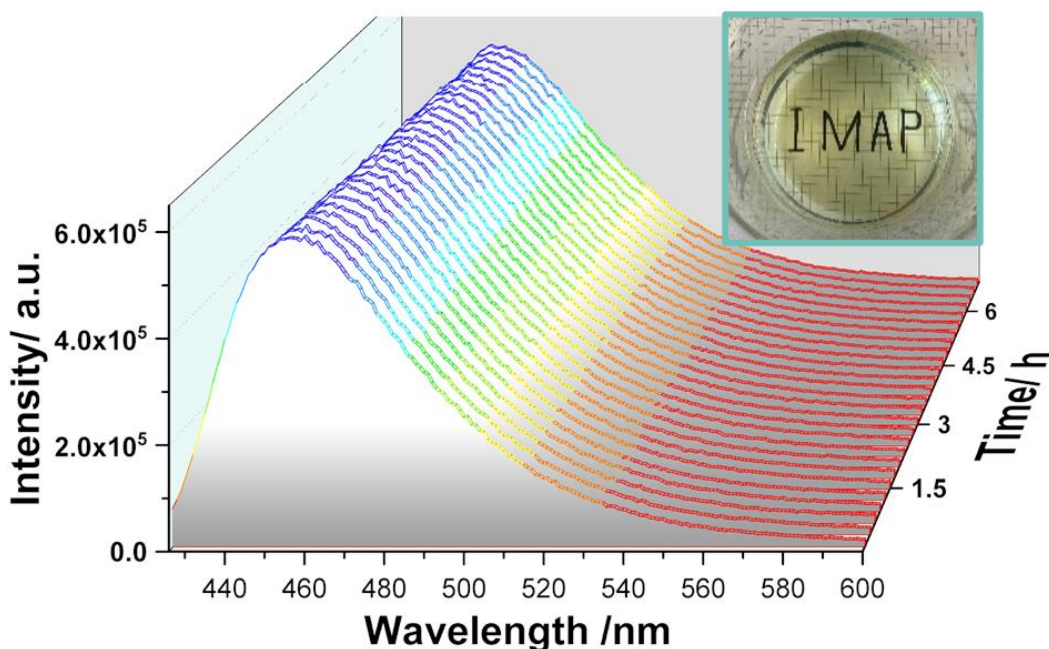


Figure S24. Time-dependent fluorescence spectra of HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ in water, (λ =360 nm, 5mg/mL) the insert image: transparency of the MOF, photography of a beaker with aqueous 5mg/mL HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ on the paper with “IMAP” handwriting.

Luminescence sensing using MOFs is one widely investigated application that takes the advantages of MOFs, such as high surface area, and tunable properties/selectivity.¹¹ However, as vast majority of sensing applications are in liquid phase,¹¹ the light scattering along the optical pathway shall be minimized as much as possible. In some cases, the precipitation of luminescent MOFs in solution can result in irreproducible measurements. Accordingly, it is of critical importance to have porous solids that are optically stable. UiO-66-NH₂ is one benchmark luminescent MOF used in the sensing thanks to its inherent luminescence and high chemical stability. The HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ synthesized in this work was evaluated as a case study. As shown in Figure S24, the time-dependent fluorescence measurements revealed the emission of HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ was entirely constant for 6h, manifesting very excellent optical stability. The transparency of the MOF suspension was evidenced by both the low signal-to-noise from the spectra and the photography shown in Figure S24. In a nutshell, the above results evidenced the unprecedented advantage of HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ nanoparticles in reproducible sensing applications.

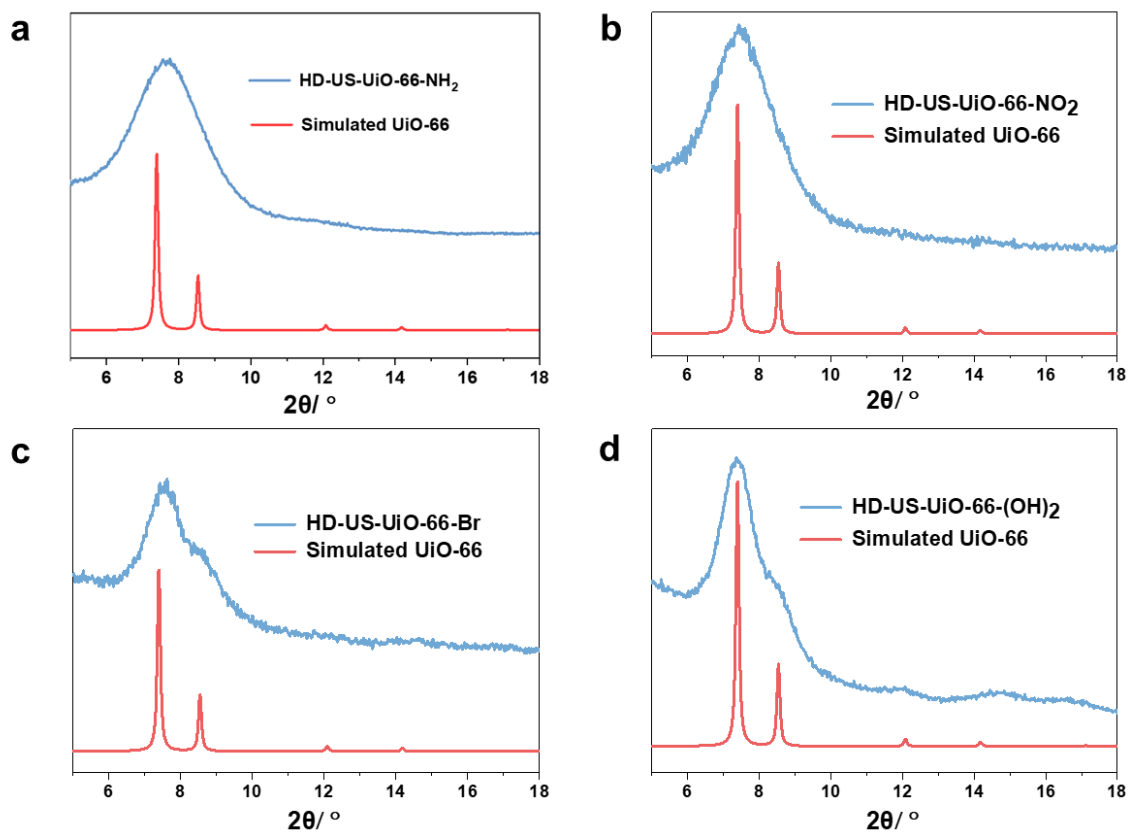


Figure S25. PXRD patterns ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) of a) HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂, b) HD-US-UiO-66-NO₂, c) HD-US-UiO-66-Br, d) HD-US-UiO-66-(OH)₂, compared to the calculated pattern of UiO-66.

HD-US-UiO-66-X

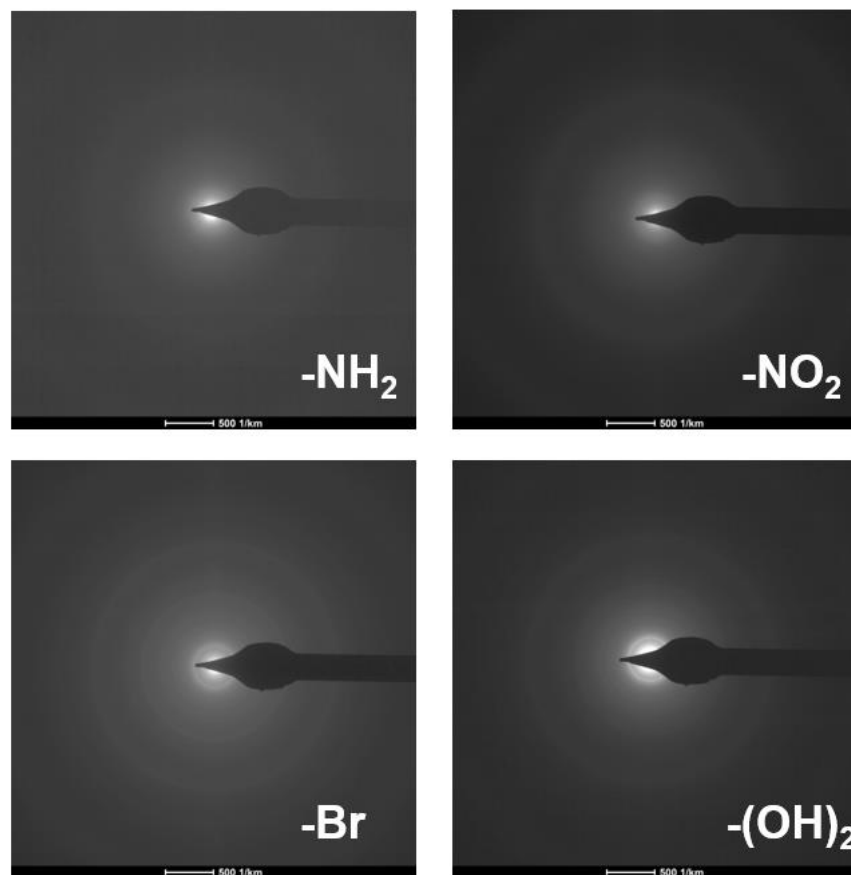


Figure S26. SAED pattern of the 5 nm HD-US-UiO-66-X ($\text{X}=\text{NH}_2$, NO_2 , (OH)_2 , Br).

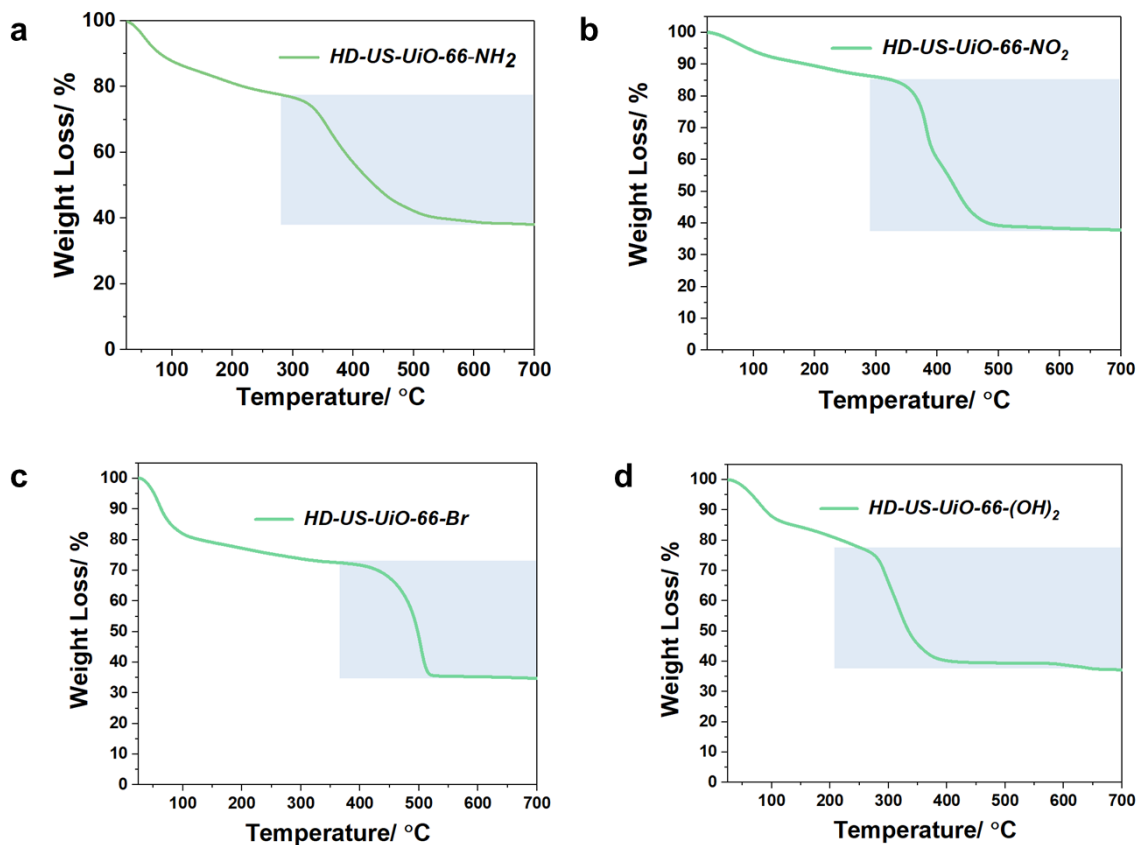


Figure S27. TGA of a) HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂, b) HD-US-UiO-66-NO₂, c) HD-US-UiO-66-Br, d) HD-US-UiO-66-(OH)₂ under oxygen flow, 70 mL/min, 5 °C/min.

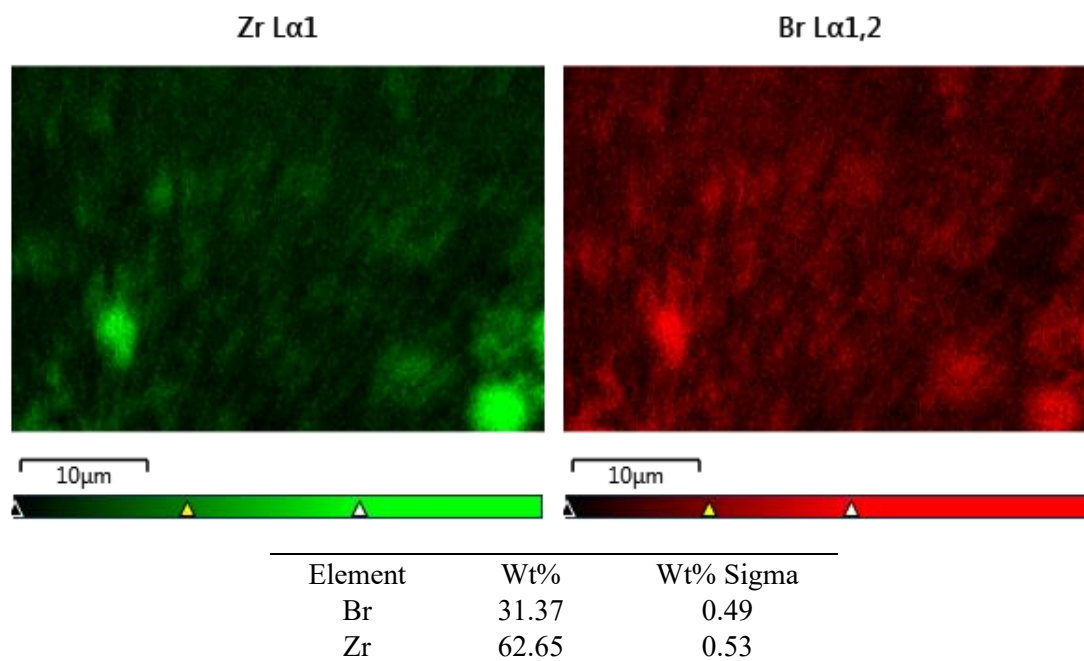


Figure S28. EDX global mapping of HD-US-UiO-66-Br and the calculated content of Zr and Br.

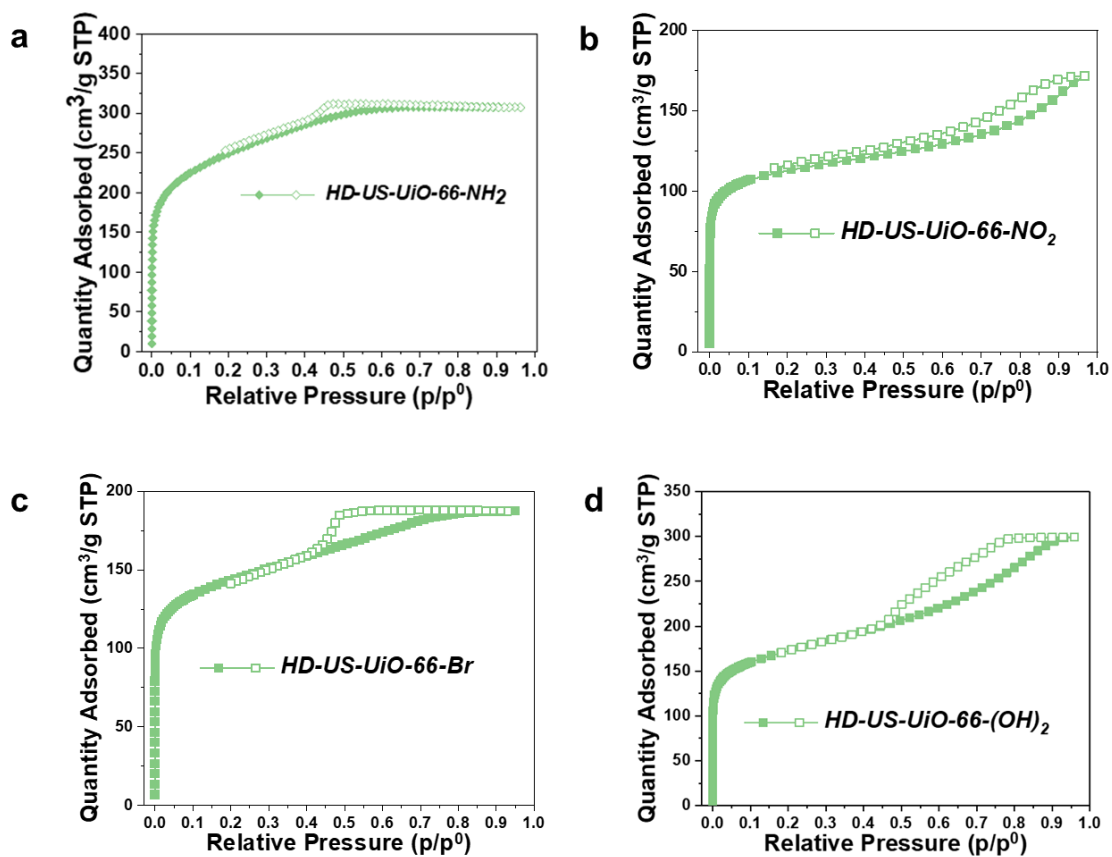


Figure S29. 77K N_2 sorption isotherm of a) HD-US-UiO-66- NH_2 , b) HD-US-UiO-66- NO_2 , c) HD-US-UiO-66-Br, d) HD-US-UiO-66- $(\text{OH})_2$, filled square for adsorption and empty square for desorption.

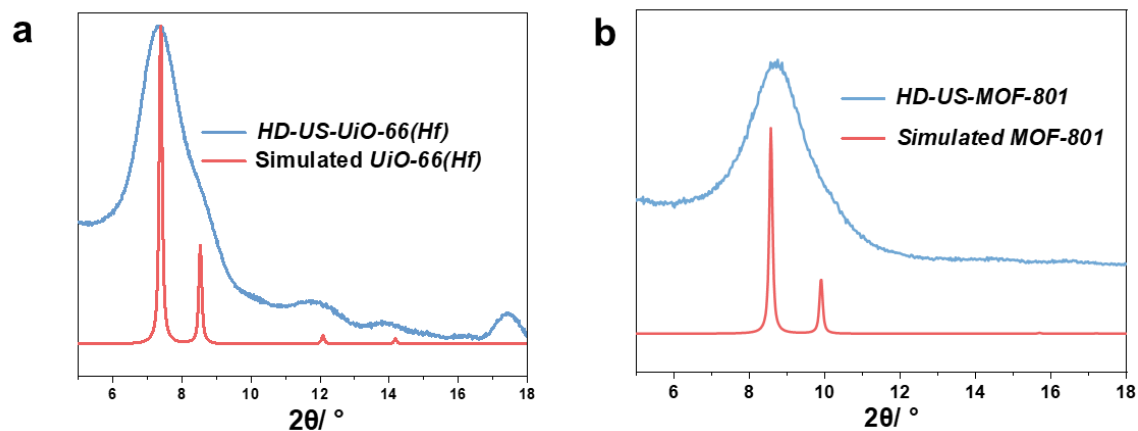


Figure S30. PXRD patterns ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) of HD-US-Uio-66(Hf) and HD-US-MOF-801 compared to the corresponding calculated patterns from structures.

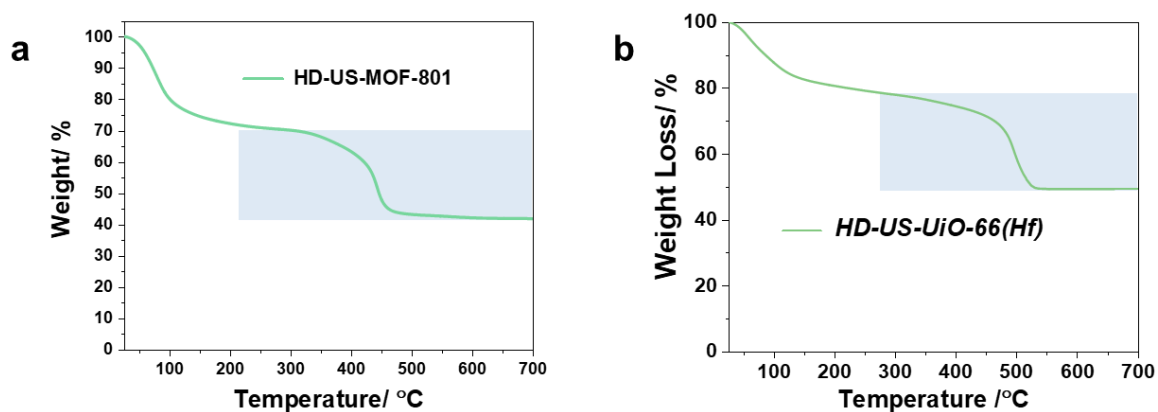


Figure S31. TGA of HD-US-MOF-801 and HD-US-Uio-66(Hf) under oxygen flow, 70 mL/min, 5 $^\circ\text{C}/\text{min}$.

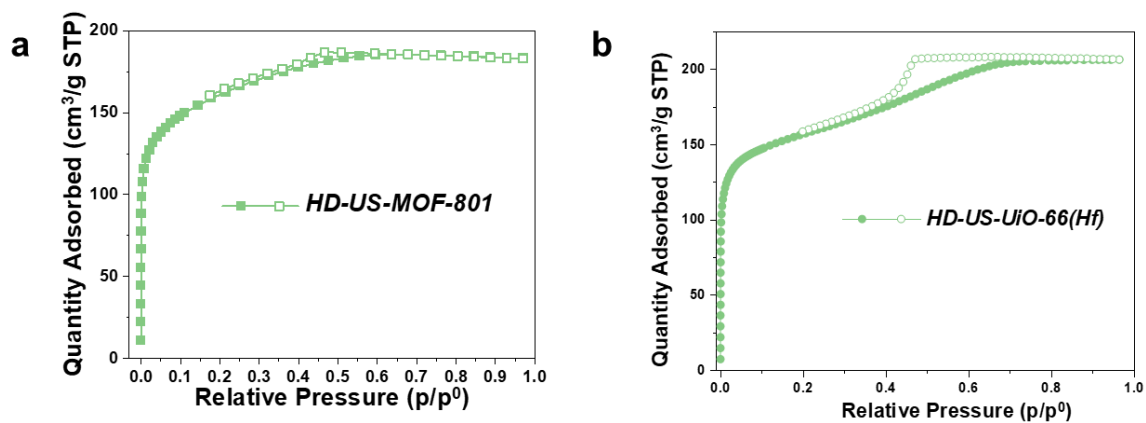


Figure S32. 77K N₂ sorption isotherm of a) HD-US-MOF-801, b) HD-US-Uio-66(Hf), filled square for adsorption and empty square for desorption.

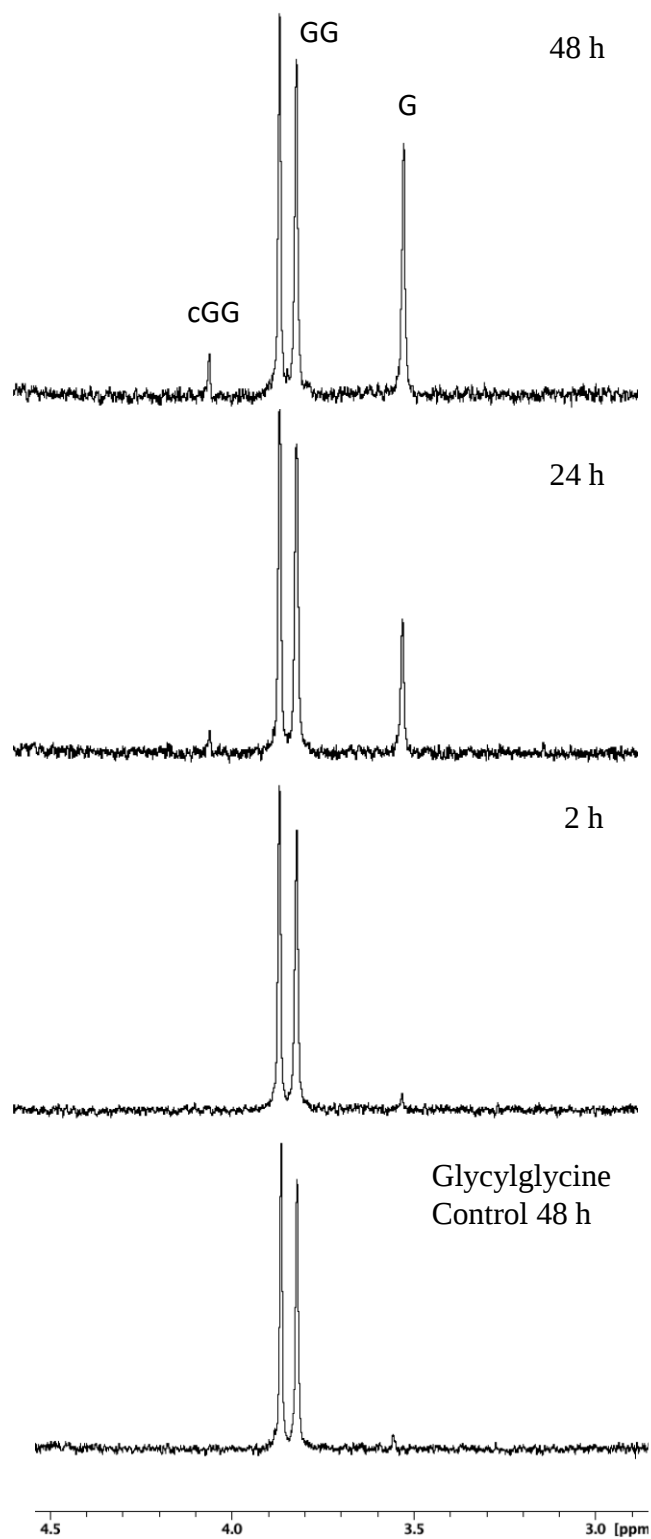


Figure S33. ^1H NMR of 2 mM glycylglycine (GG) hydrolysed to glycine (G) and cyclic glycylglycine (cGG) over time in the presence of HD-US-UiO-66 D_2O , $\text{pD} = 7.4$, 60°C

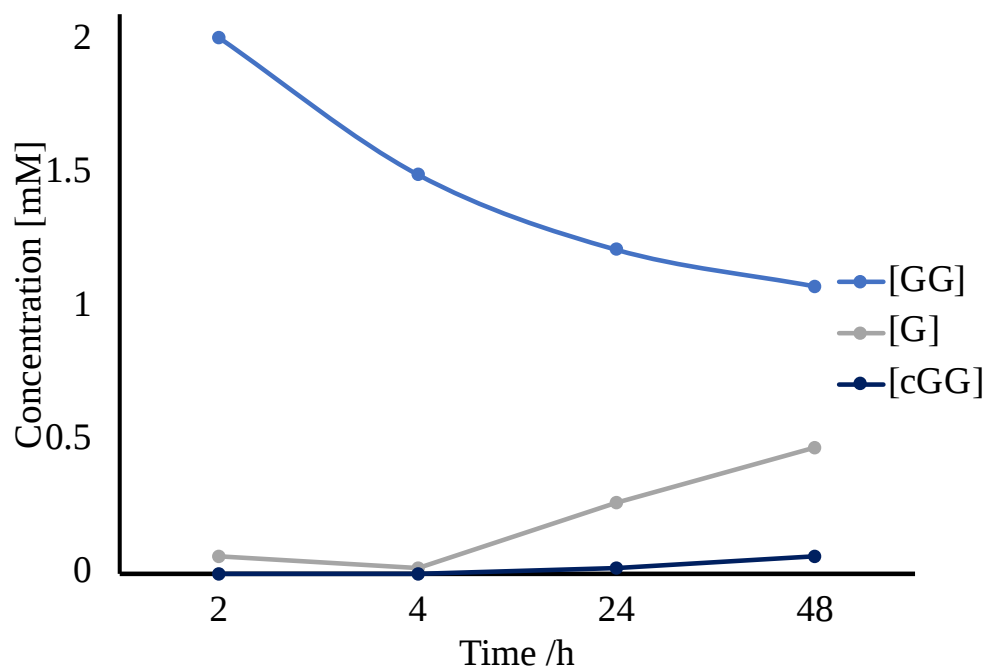


Figure S34. Change in concentration of GG, G and cGG over time in the presence of HD-US-UiO-66, D₂O, pD = 7.4, 60 °C.

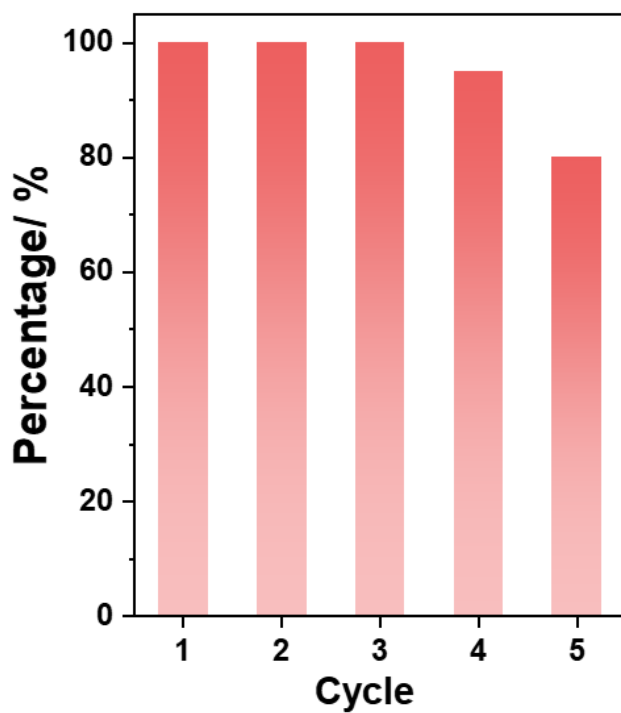


Figure S35. Activity of HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ towards GlyGly hydrolysis for 5 reaction cycles, percentage taken compared to rate of cycle 1.

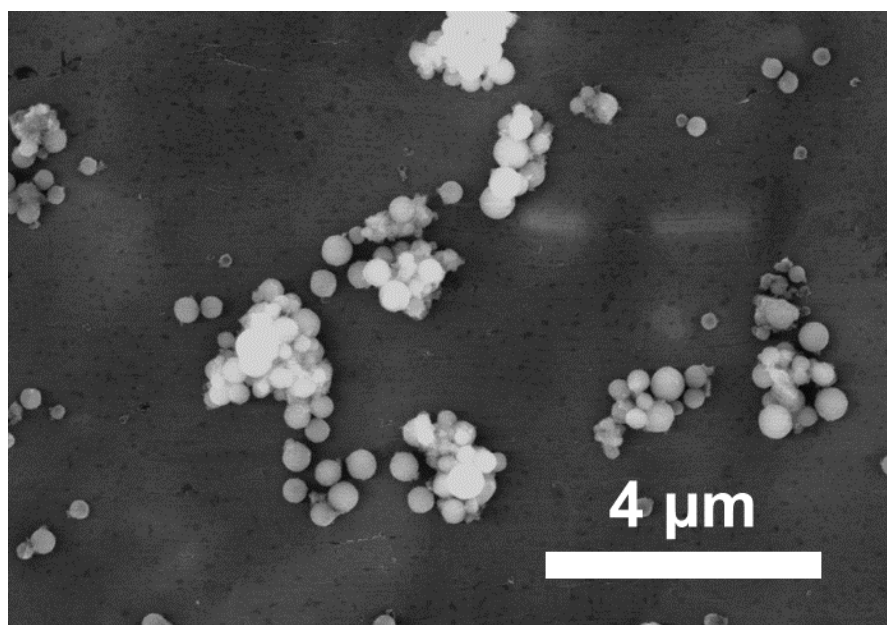


Figure S36. SEM image of HD-200-Uio-66-NH₂.

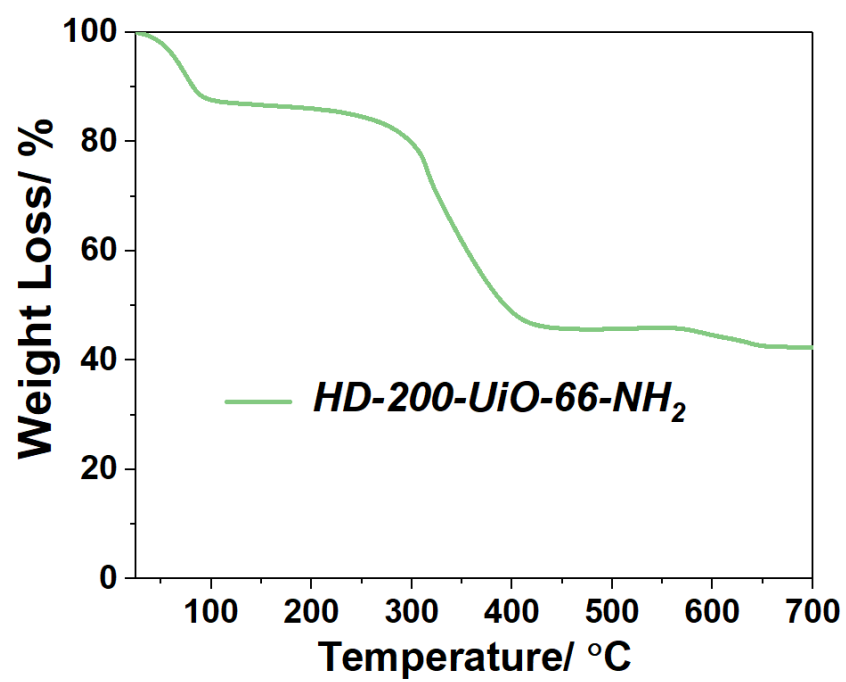


Figure S37. TGA of HD-200-Uio-66-NH₂ under oxygen flow, 70 mL/min, 5 °C/min.

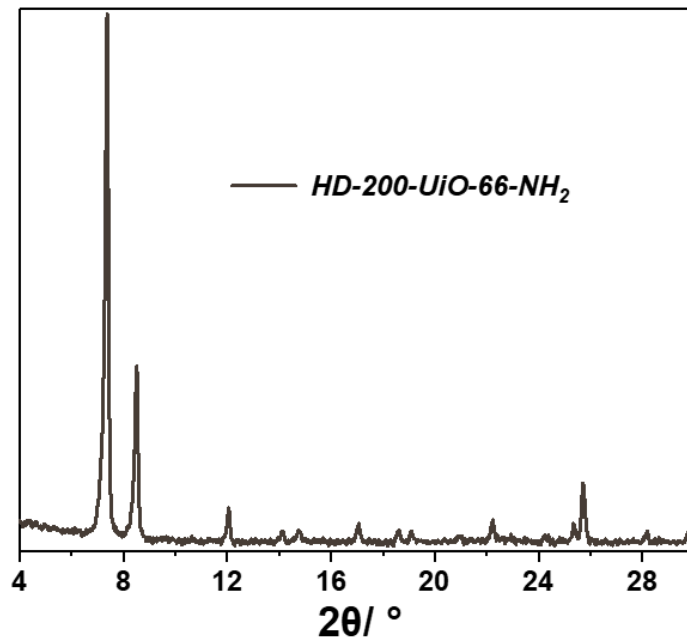


Figure S38. PXRD pattern ($\lambda = 1.5418 \text{ \AA}$) of HD-200-UiO-66-NH₂.

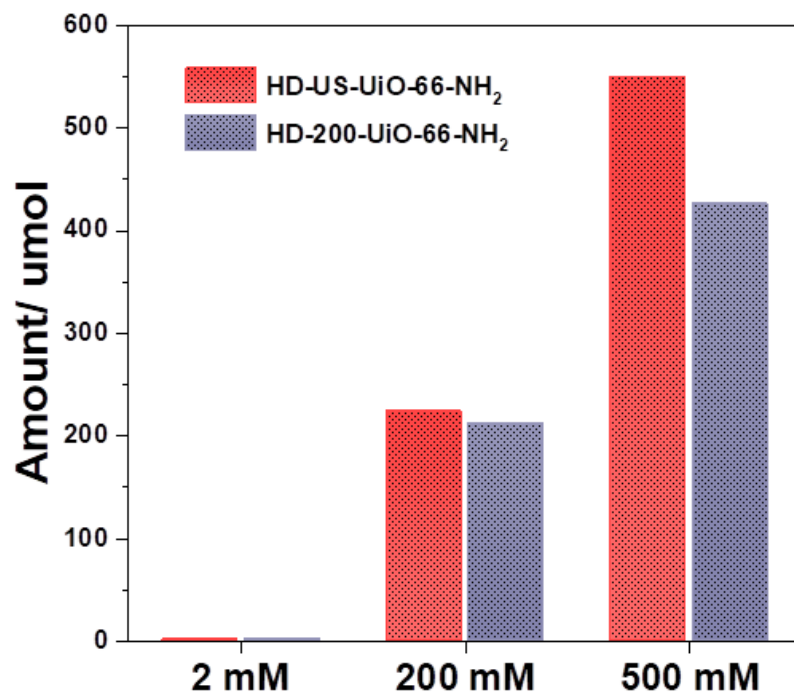


Figure S39. Total recovery of the GG and G from different batches of GG concentration with HD-US-UiO-66-NH₂ and HD-200-UiO-66-NH₂.

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