

Supporting Information

Majority Charge Carrier Transport in Particle-Based Photoelectrodes

Yannick K. Gaudy¹, Stefan Dilger², Simone Pokrant³ and Sophia Haussener^{1,*}

¹ École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Institute of Mechanical Engineering, Laboratory of Renewable Energy Science and Engineering, 1015 Lausanne, Switzerland. * E-mail address: sophia.haussener@epfl.ch, tel.: +41 21 693 38 78.

² Empa Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology, Laboratory Materials for Energy Conversion, Überlandstrasse 129, 8600 Dübendorf, Switzerland

³ University of Salzburg, Functional Materials, Jakob-Haringer-Strasse 2a, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria

S1. Numerical Inter-Particle Charge Transfer Mechanisms

The numerical I - V curves of case 3 for varying inter-particle electron transfer velocities are depicted in Figure S1. The inter-particle potential barrier was fixed to 0.0762 V to ensure flat bands at the inter-particle contact. The contributions of the second particle below 0.8 V_{RHE} are not relevant since the onset potential is at ~ 0.8 V_{RHE} as depicted in Figure S1.a) and b).

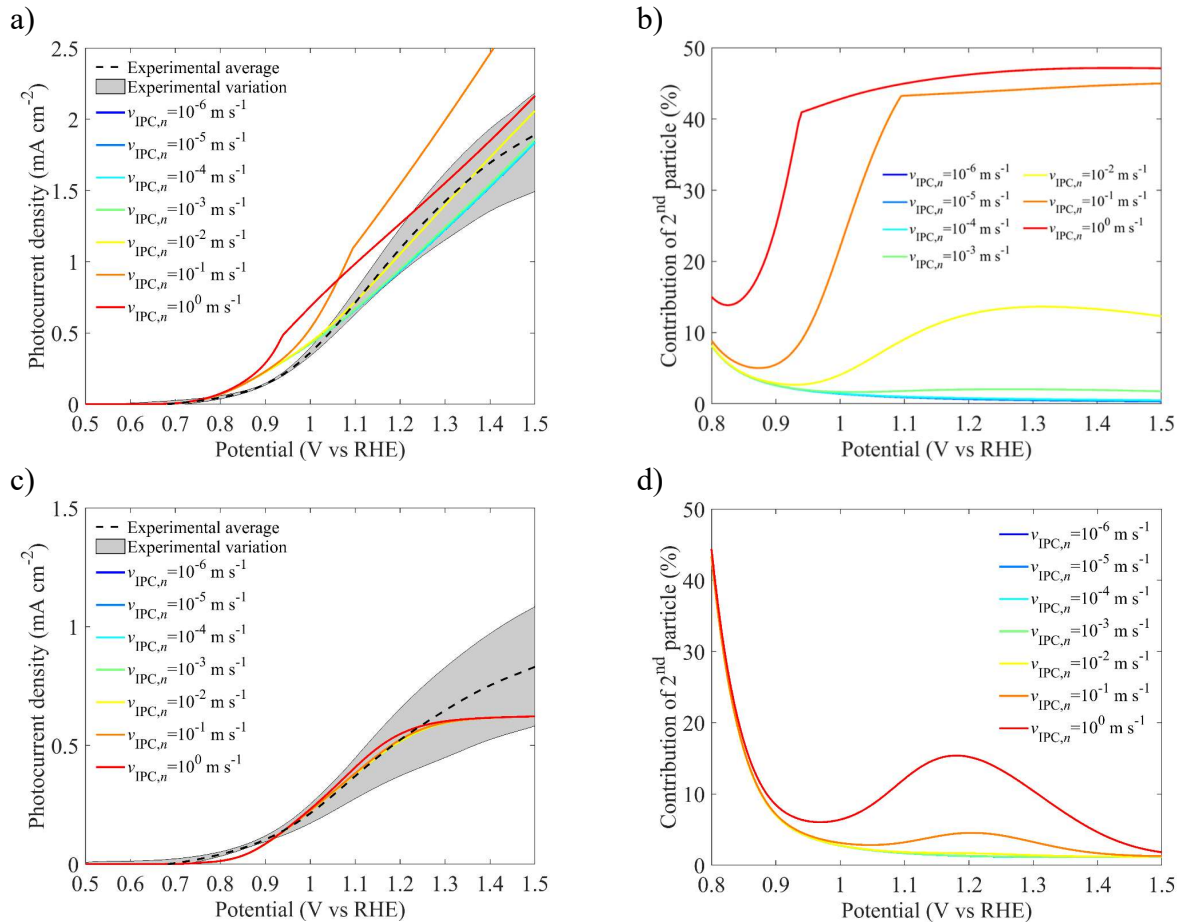


Figure S1. Experimental I - V curves of best-LTON PBPE with an average film thickness of 8.43 μm taken from Gaudy et al.¹. The corresponding numerical I - V curves of case 3) for varying inter-particle electron transfer velocities under a) back-side illumination and c) front-side illumination, and the corresponding contribution of the 2nd particle on the right side in b) and d).

S2. Best-LTON Photoelectrodes with 50 nm IrO_x

50 nm of IrO_x were deposited on a best-LTON PE¹ by sputtering at ambient temperature (Alliance-Concept DP 650). The LTON PE with 50 nm IrO_x on top were tested under back illumination only since the IrO_x blocks almost completely the light. Figure S2 compares the photocurrent of the same LTON PE before and after IrO_x deposition. As it can be seen, the photocurrent is highly improved, i.e. a relative increase of 67 % at 1.23 V_{RHE}. The LTON PE without IrO_x was freshly prepared when measured. The same LTON PE was then modified with IrO_x to enable direct comparison. However, the performance of LTON PE with IrO_x might be underestimated, since aging effects between the two measurements cannot be excluded. The onset potential is also slightly lowered with IrO_x similar to the numerical prediction¹.

The photoelectrochemical measurements were conducted in a three electrode setup with the LTON PE as working electrode, a Ag/AgCl reference electrode (sat. KCl) and Pt as counter electrode. The electrolytes used was 0.1 M Na₂SO₄ as a buffer solution with pH=13.0±0.2 by adding NaOH. The potential was controlled with a potentiostat (Bio-Logic VSP-300) controlled by EC-lab software and the scan rate for the cyclic voltammetry was 10 mV s⁻¹ from 0 V_{RHE} to 1.5 V_{RHE}. The sample was illuminated by the solar simulator VeraSol-2 from Oriel corresponding to AM1.5G¹. The current density was averaged between forward and backward swept voltage of one sample because of the presence of a hysteresis.

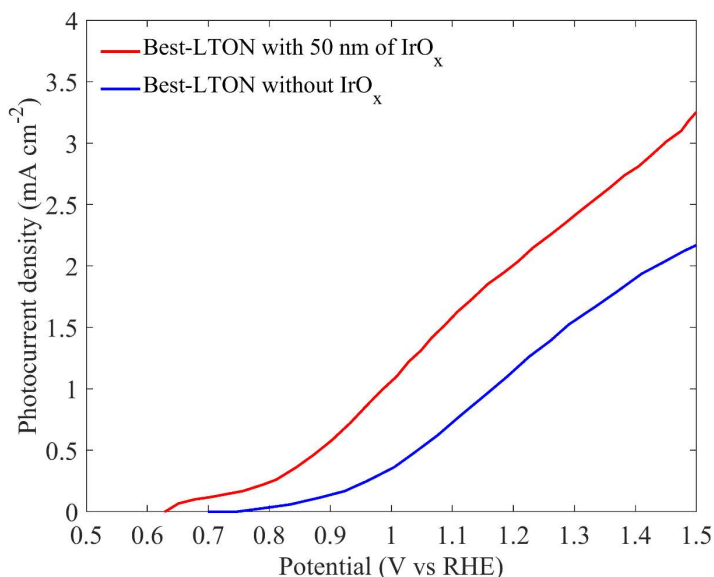


Figure S2. Experimental *I-V* curves of best-LTON PE with and without a 50 nm layer of IrO_x in 0.1 M Na₂SO₄ at pH=13.0±0.2 by adding NaOH.

References

- (1) Gaudy, Y. K.; Dilger, S.; Landsmann, S.; Aschauer, U.; Pokrant, S.; Haussener, S. Determination and Optimization of Material Parameters of Particle-Based LaTiO₂N Photoelectrodes. *J. Mater. Chem. A* **2018**, *6*, 17337–17352.