## Efficient recycling of polylactic acid nanoparticle templates for the synthesis of hollow silica spheres

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Hollow silica spheres can be obtained in a recycling process using bio-derived polylactic acid as a template, thus avoiding  $CO_2$  emissions compared to standard processes using calcination for template removal.<sup>[1]</sup>



Herein, we present the first successful silica coating of polylactic acid nanoparticles, resulting in fully coated polylactic acid-silica core-shell nanoparticles. Subsequent dissolution treatment efficiently dissolved the polylactic acid core template and exclusively yielded hollow silica spheres with a shell thickness of  $16 \pm 1$  nm. The collected polylactic acid could then be directly recycled from the template removal solution and re-used to synthesize polylactic acid nanoparticles for a next batch of hollow silica nanospheres. Such hollow particles are of interest in next generation insulation materials and as light weight fillers in polymers for fuel efficient mobility.



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