

Next-generation $0\nu\beta\beta$ searches with xenon gas TPCs

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Montreal, 14 November 2025

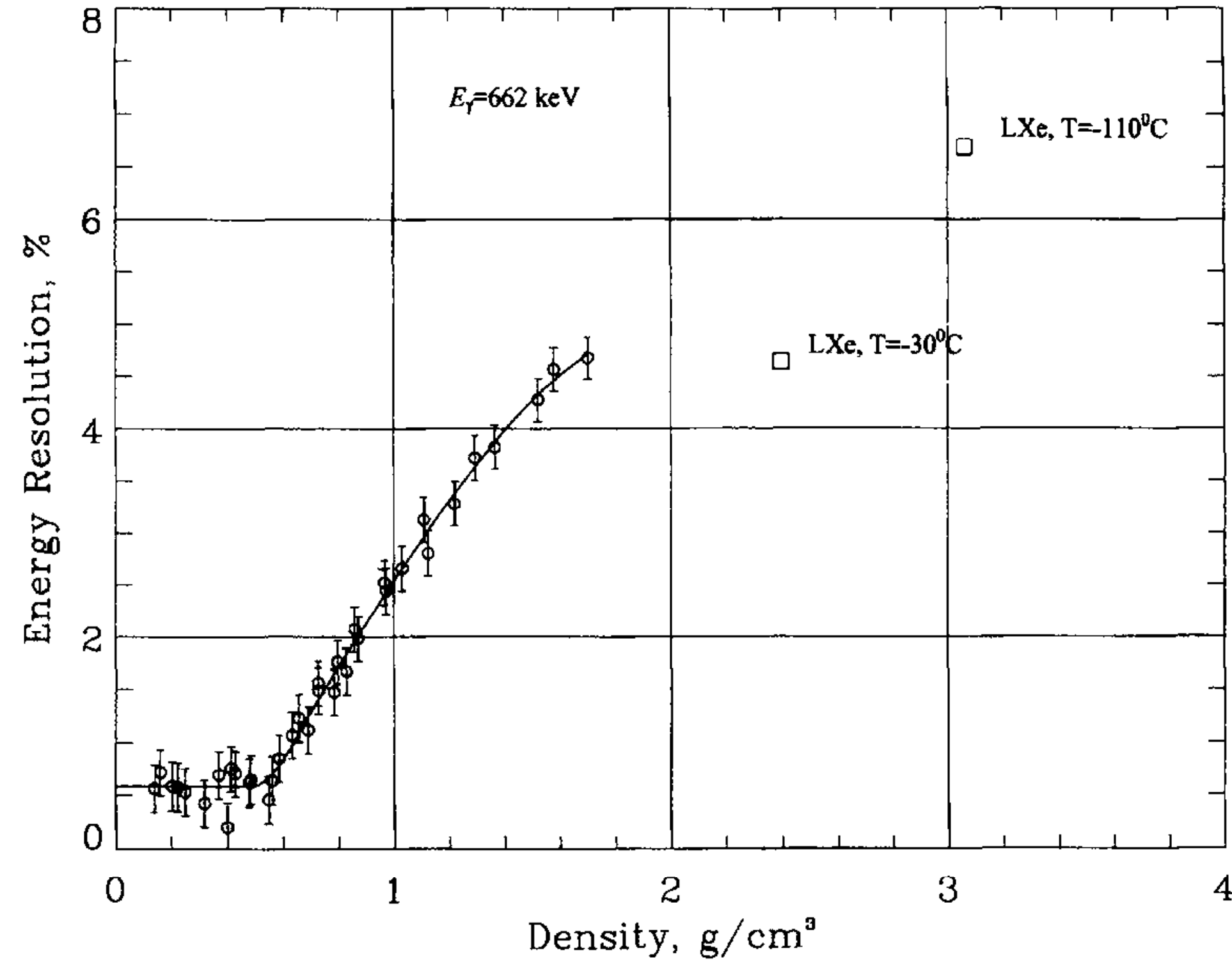


Why xenon gas?

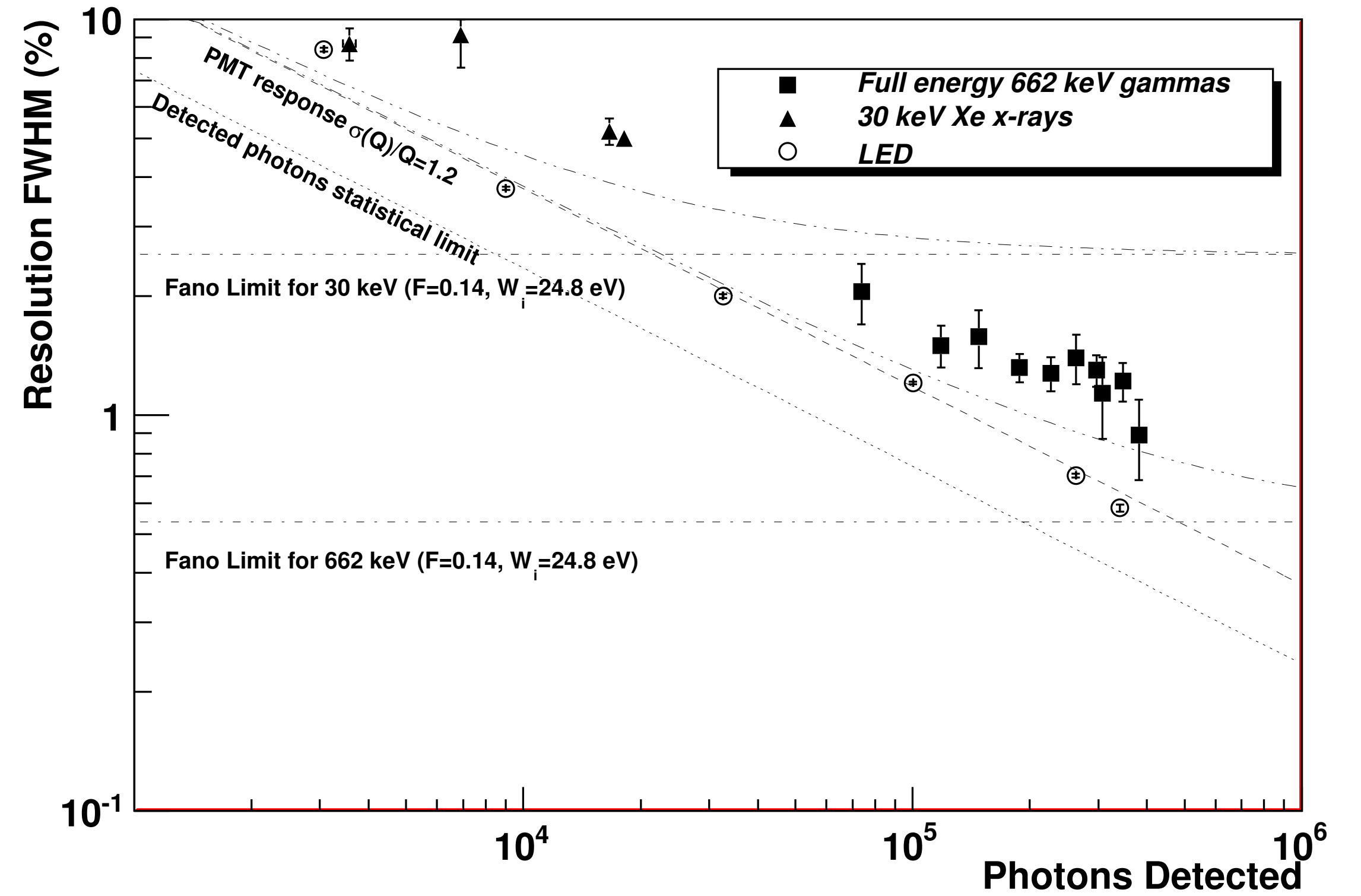
Key advantages for $0\nu\beta\beta$ searches

ENERGY RESOLUTION

Bolotnikov and Ramsey, NIM A **396** (1997) 360–370



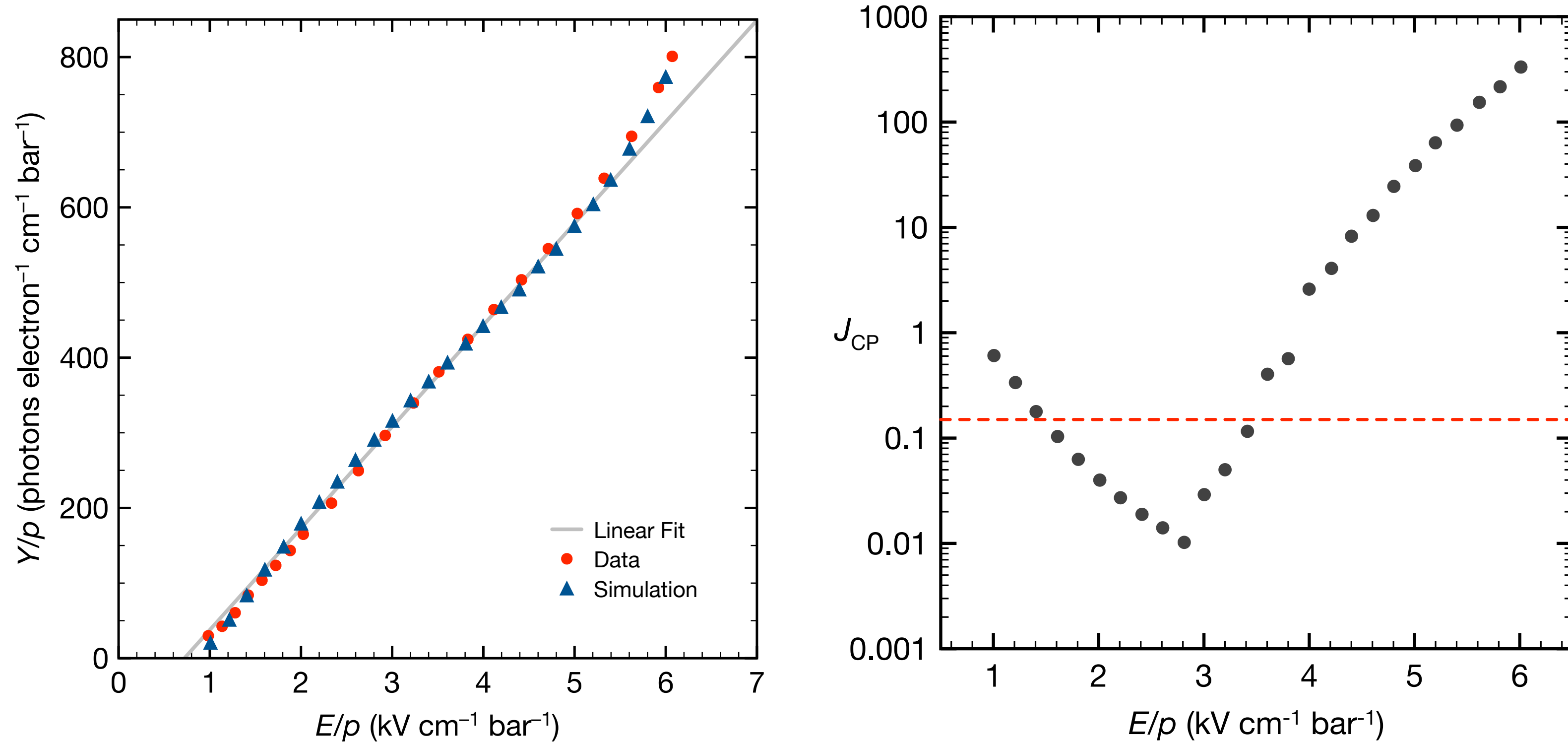
NEXT Collaboration, NIM A **708** (2013) 101-114



Intrinsic resolution of xenon gas close to **0.3% FWHM at 2.5 MeV**.

ENERGY RESOLUTION: ELECTROLUMINESCENCE

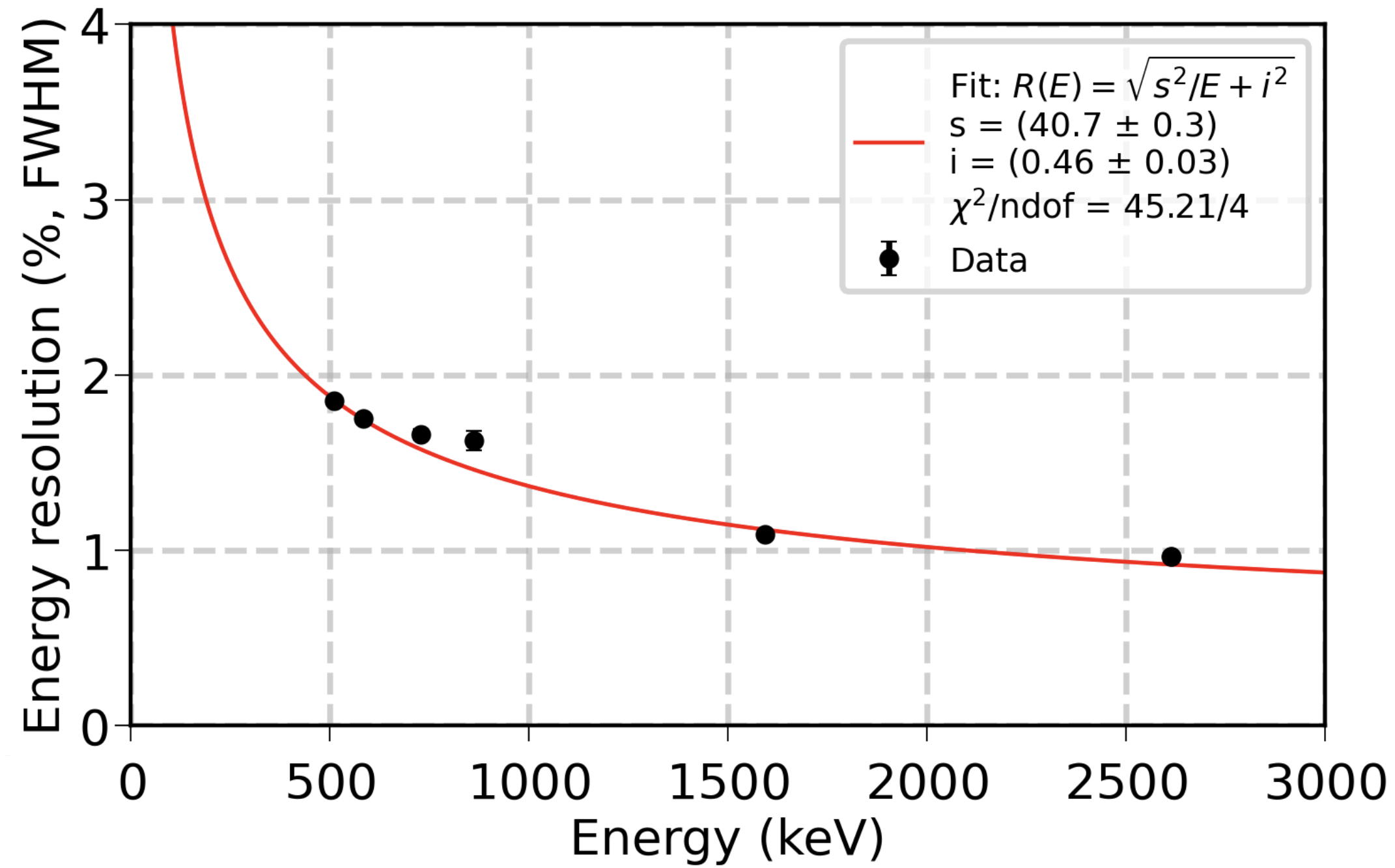
C. Oliveira et al., JINST **6** (2011) P05007



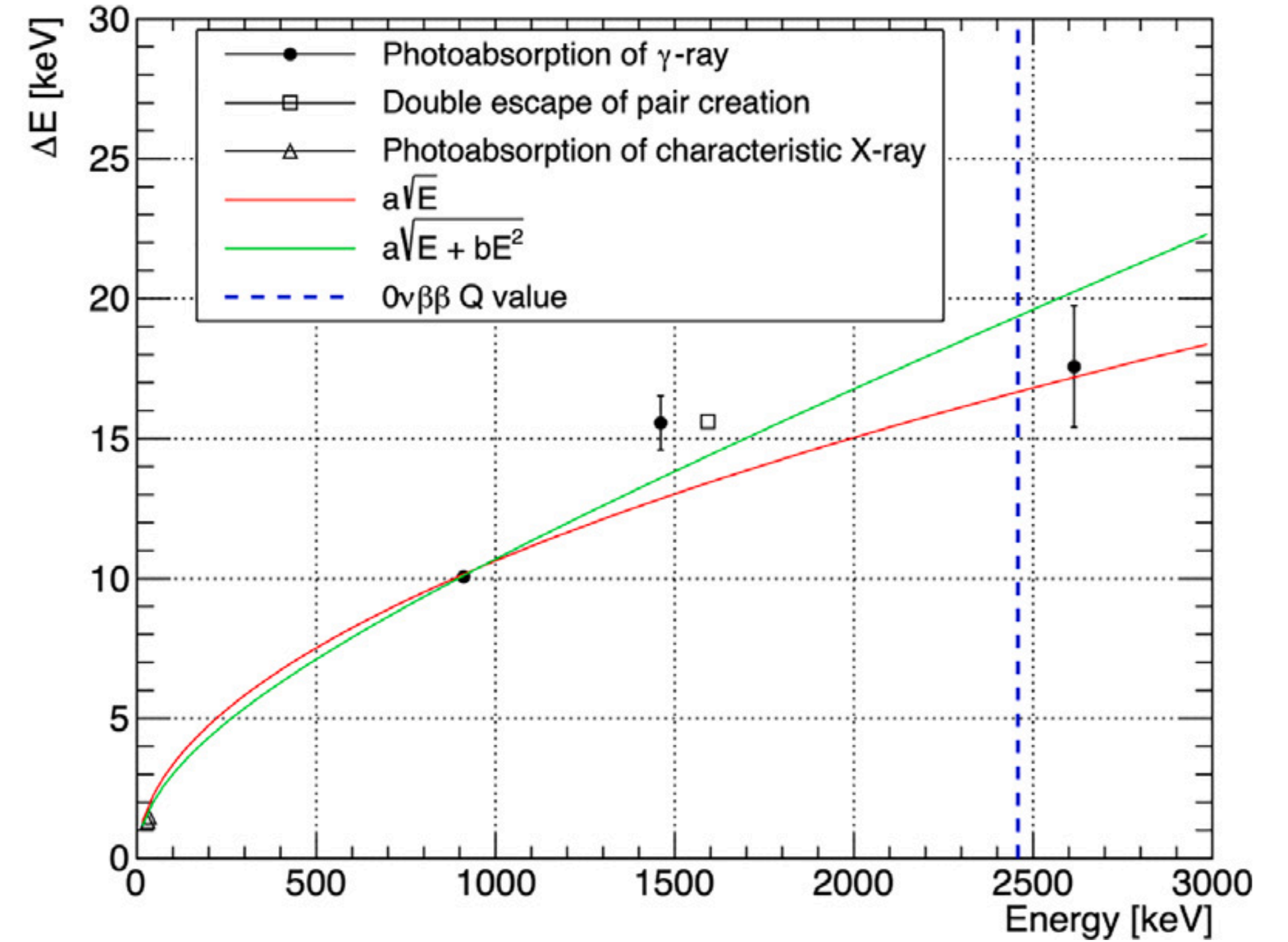
Electroluminescence (EL): ionization charge \rightarrow vacuum-ultraviolet photons
High-gain, low-noise amplification for optimal energy measurement.

ENERGY RESOLUTION: RECENT RESULTS

NEXT Collaboration, arXiv:2511.02467 (2025)



J. Hikida et al., NIM A **1080** (2025) 170706

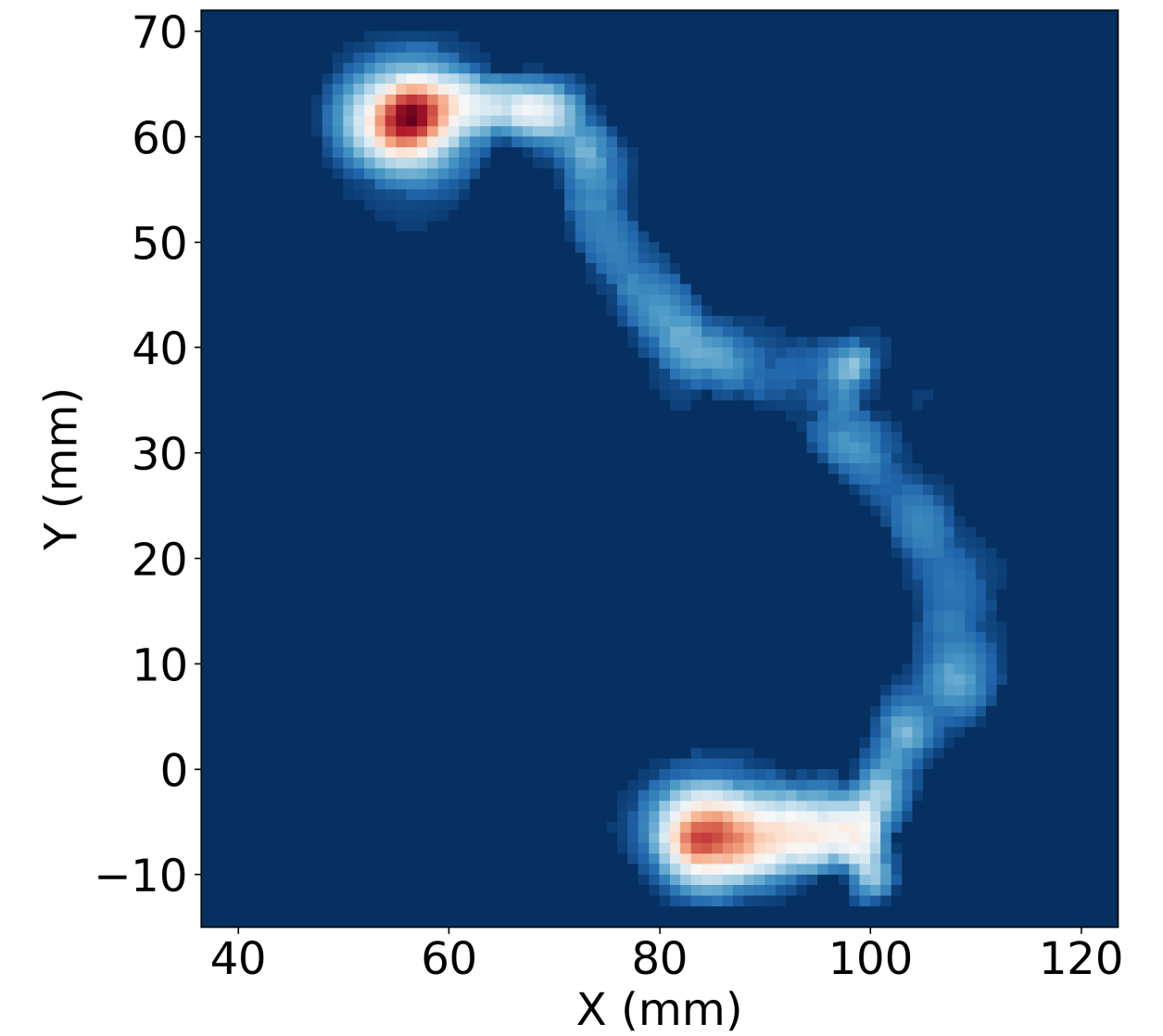
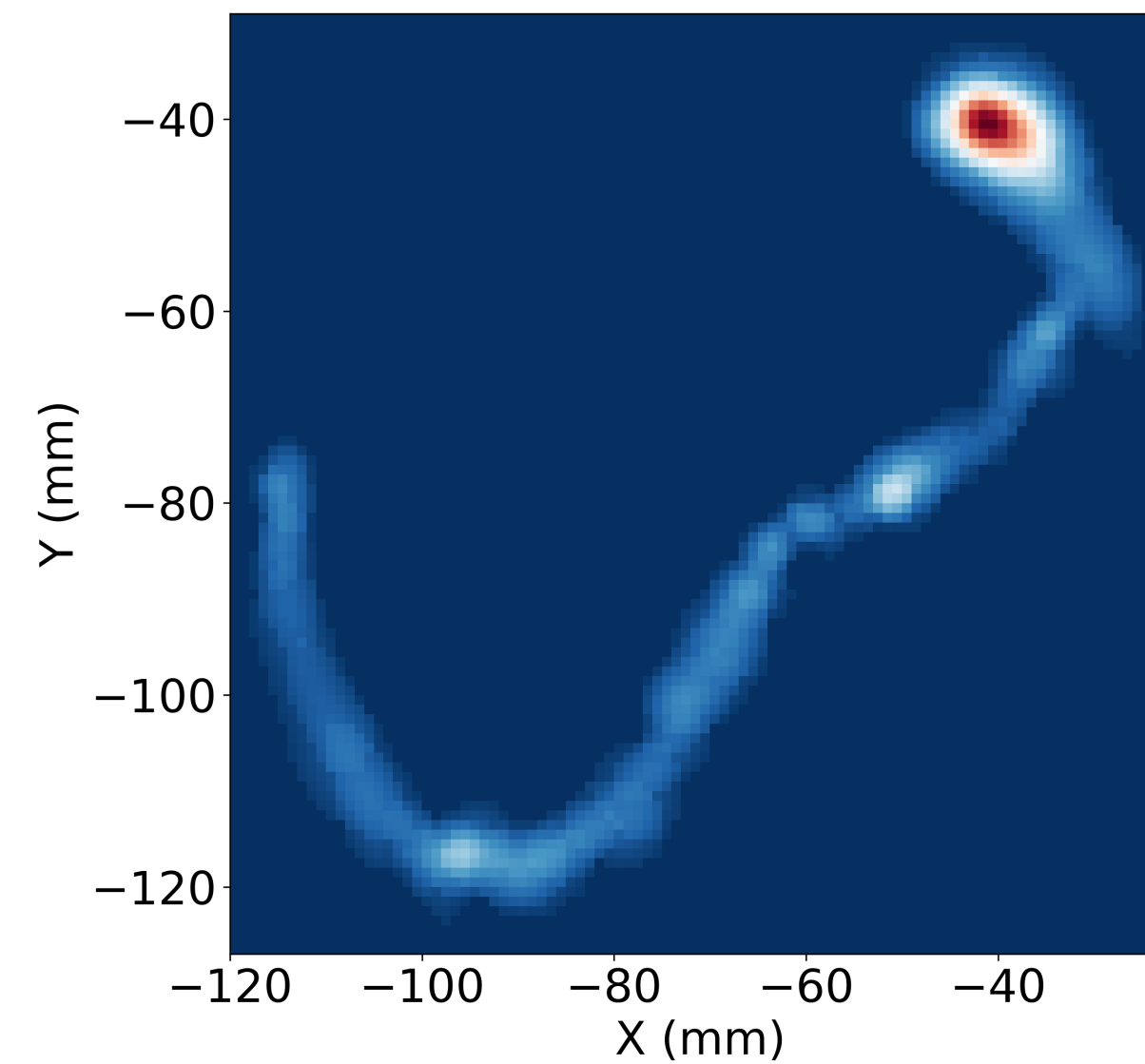
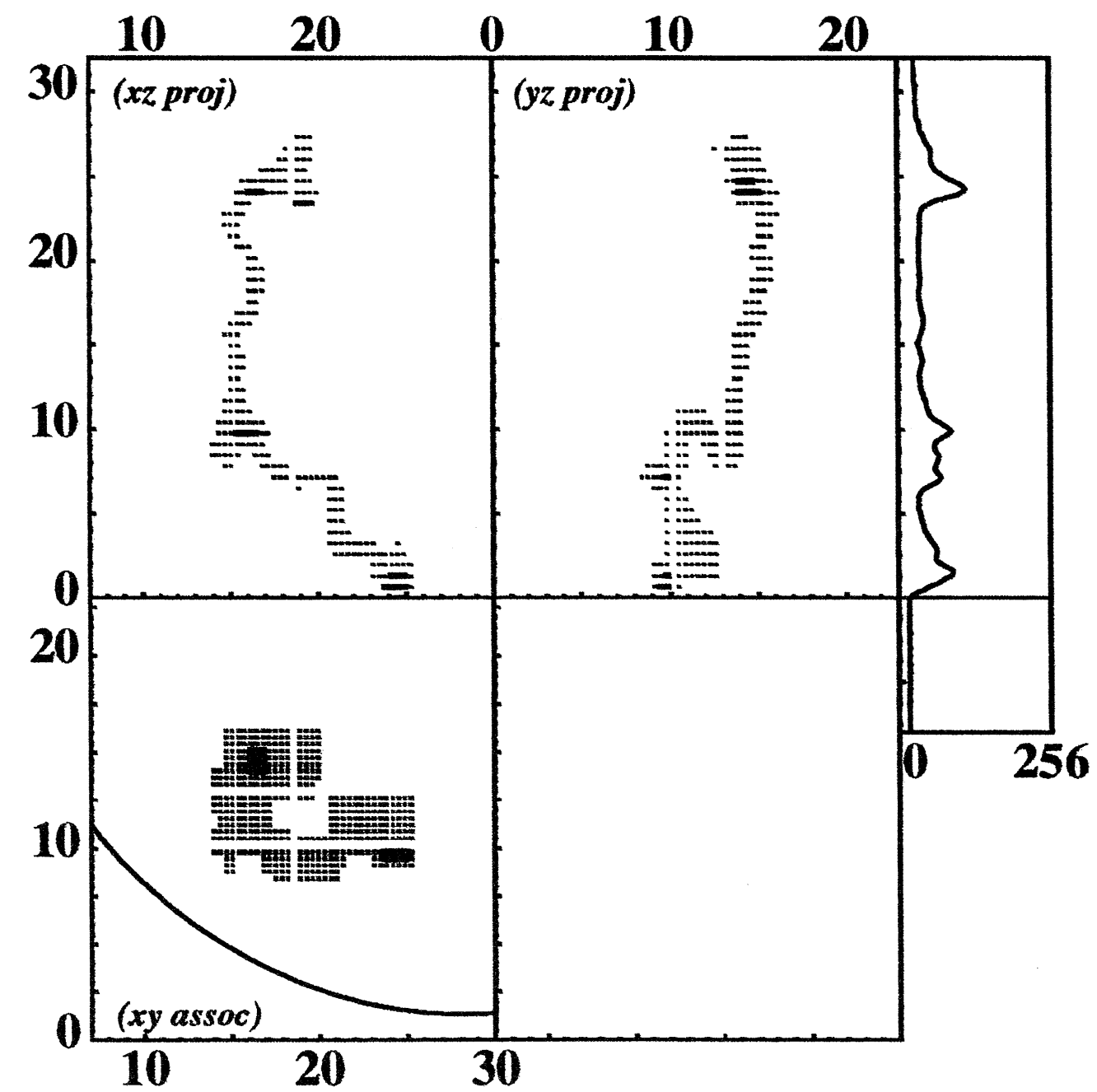


<1% FWHM at $Q_{\beta\beta}$ achieved in large detectors.
Performance validated across full energy range.

TRACKING: 1 ELECTRON VS 2 ELECTRONS

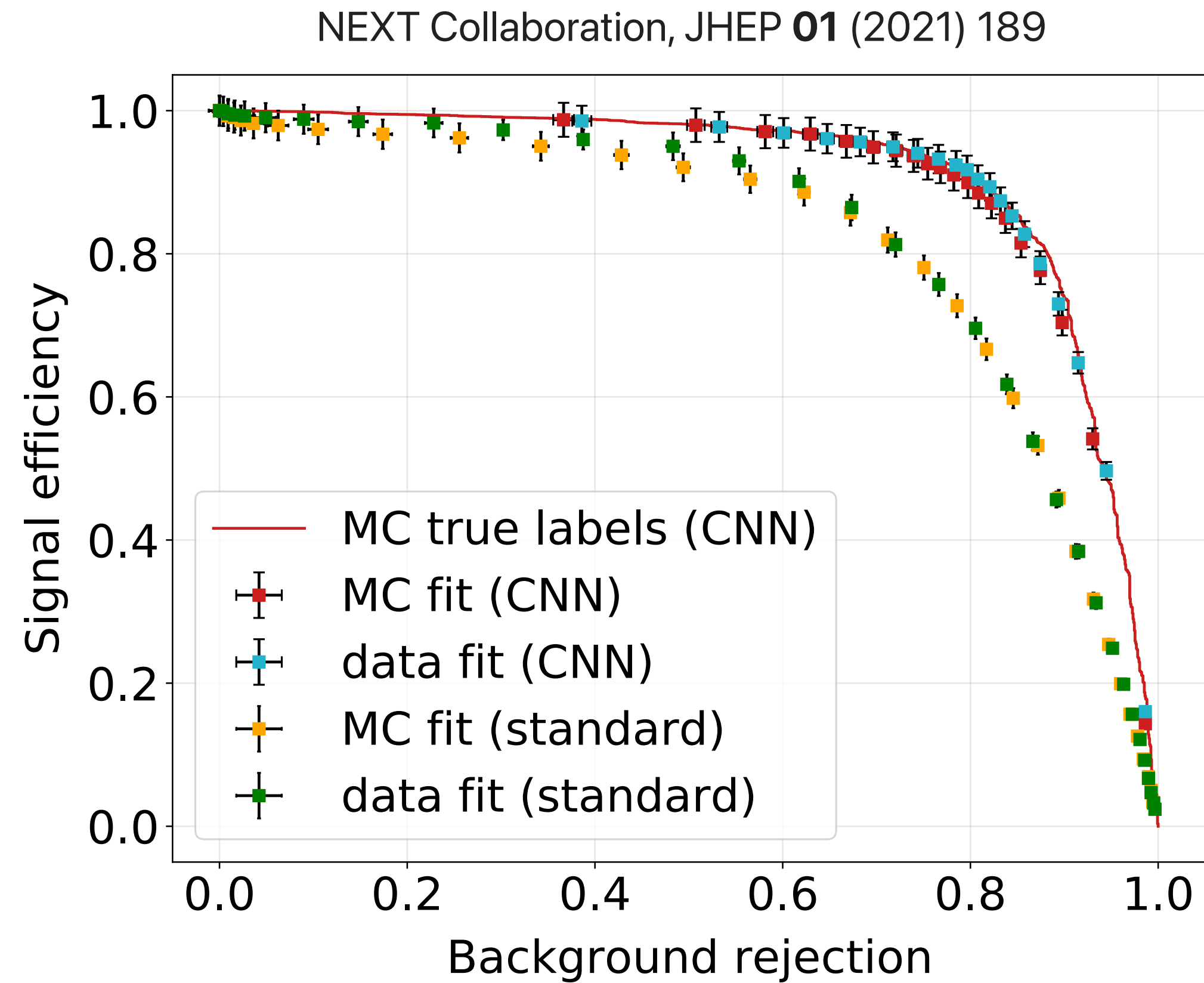
R. Luescher et al., Phys. Lett. B **434** (1998) 407–414

NEXT Collaboration, JHEP **07** (2021) 146



Track topology: two blobs vs one → powerful background rejection

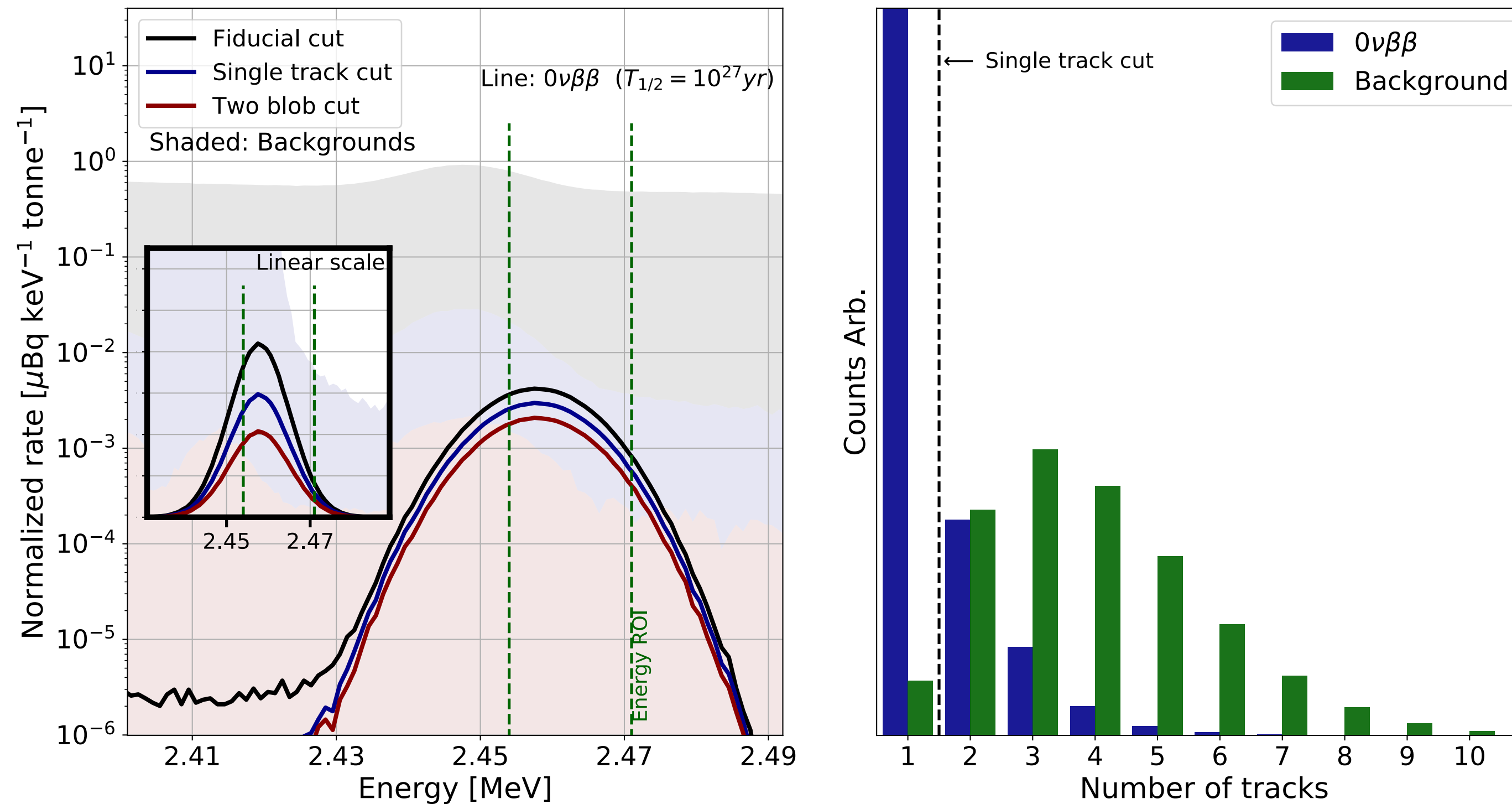
TRACKING: 1 ELECTRON VS 2 ELECTRONS



ML algorithms: **92% background rejection** at 80% signal efficiency

TRACKING: EVENT POSITION AND TRACK MULTIPLICITY

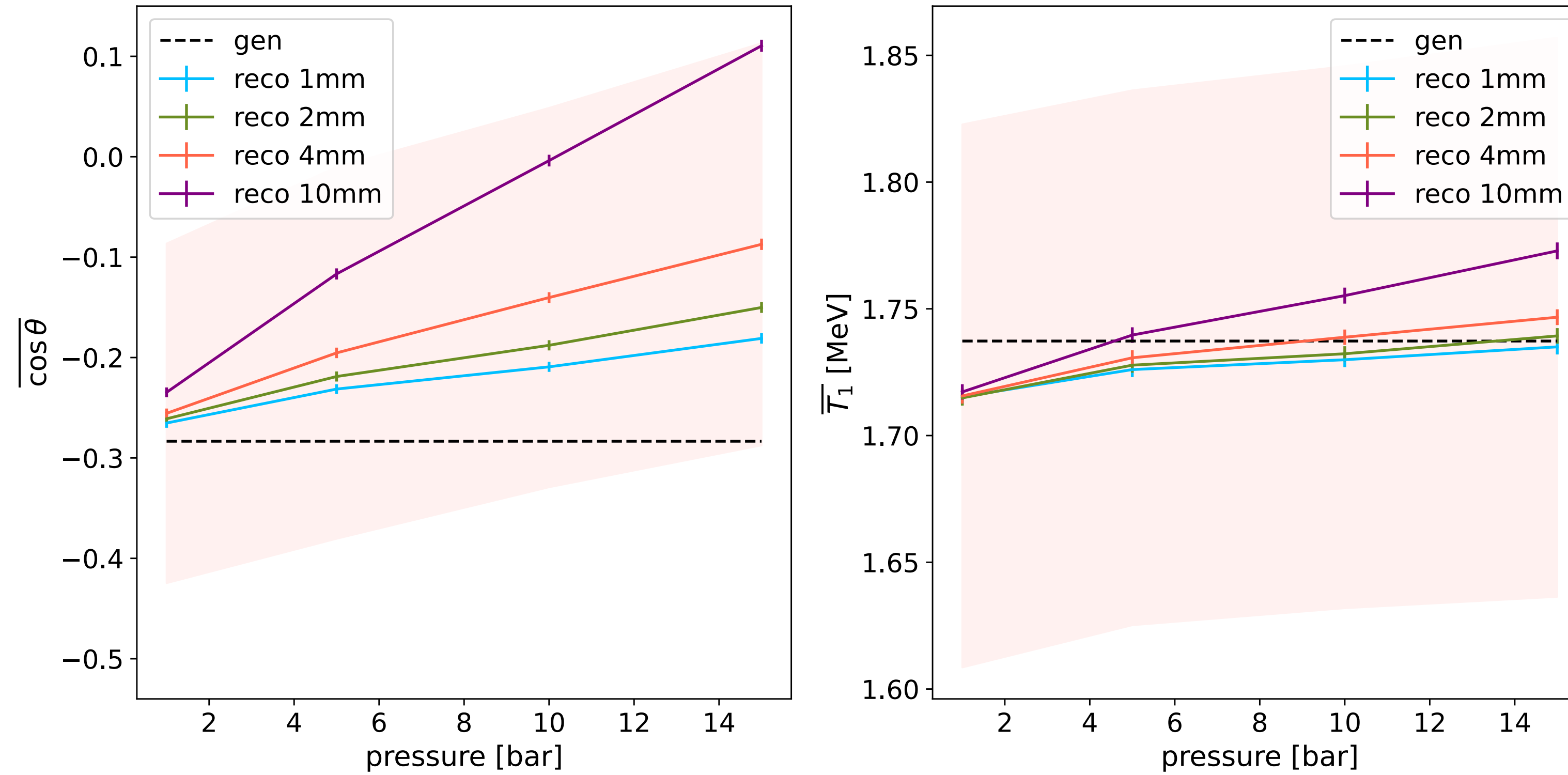
NEXT Collaboration, JHEP **2021** (2021) 08, 164



Tracking also enables background suppression through fiducialization and multiplicity cuts.

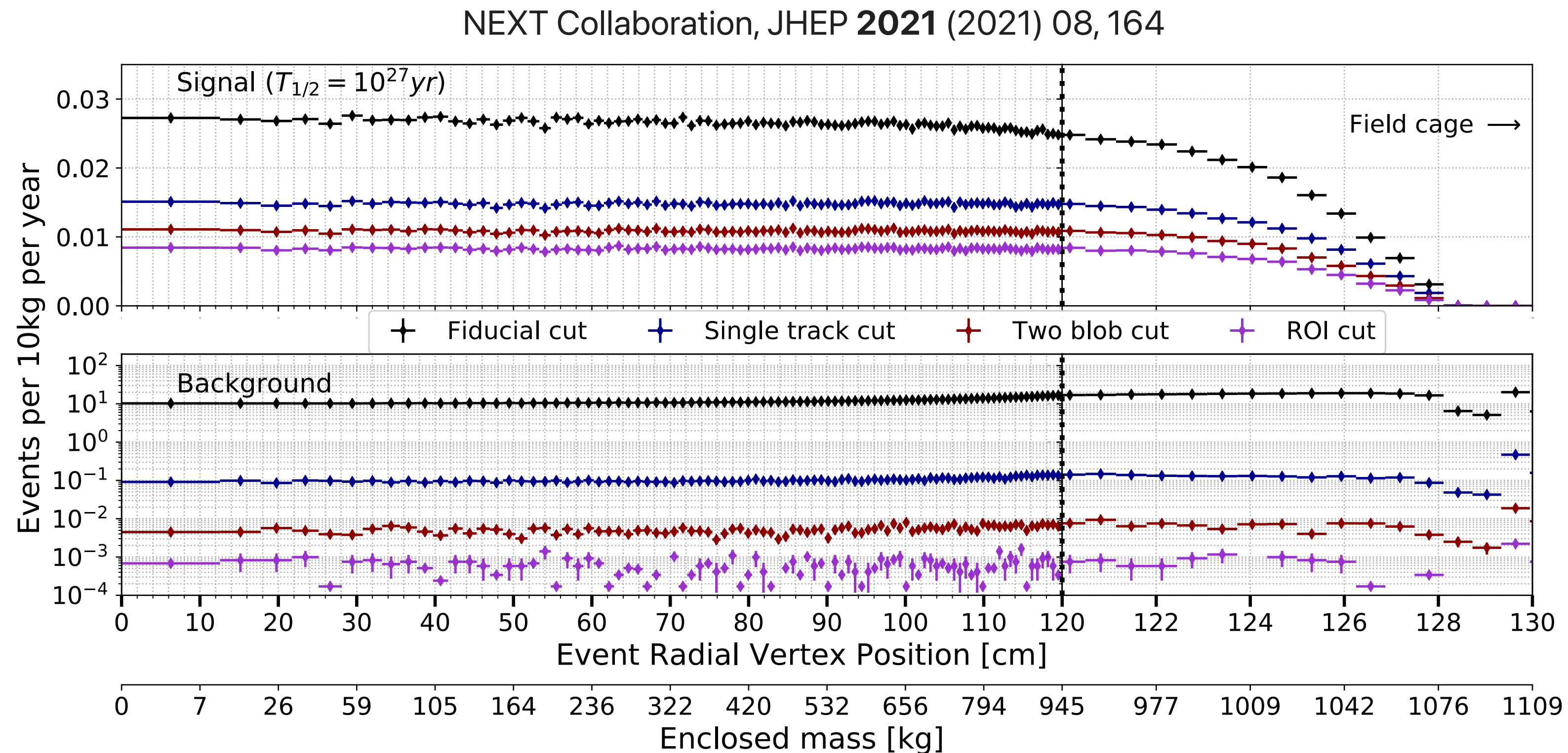
TRACKING: EVENT KINEMATICS

NEXT Collaboration, JHEP **07** (2025) 170



Gas TPCs reconstruct electron kinematics → probe decay mechanism in case of discovery

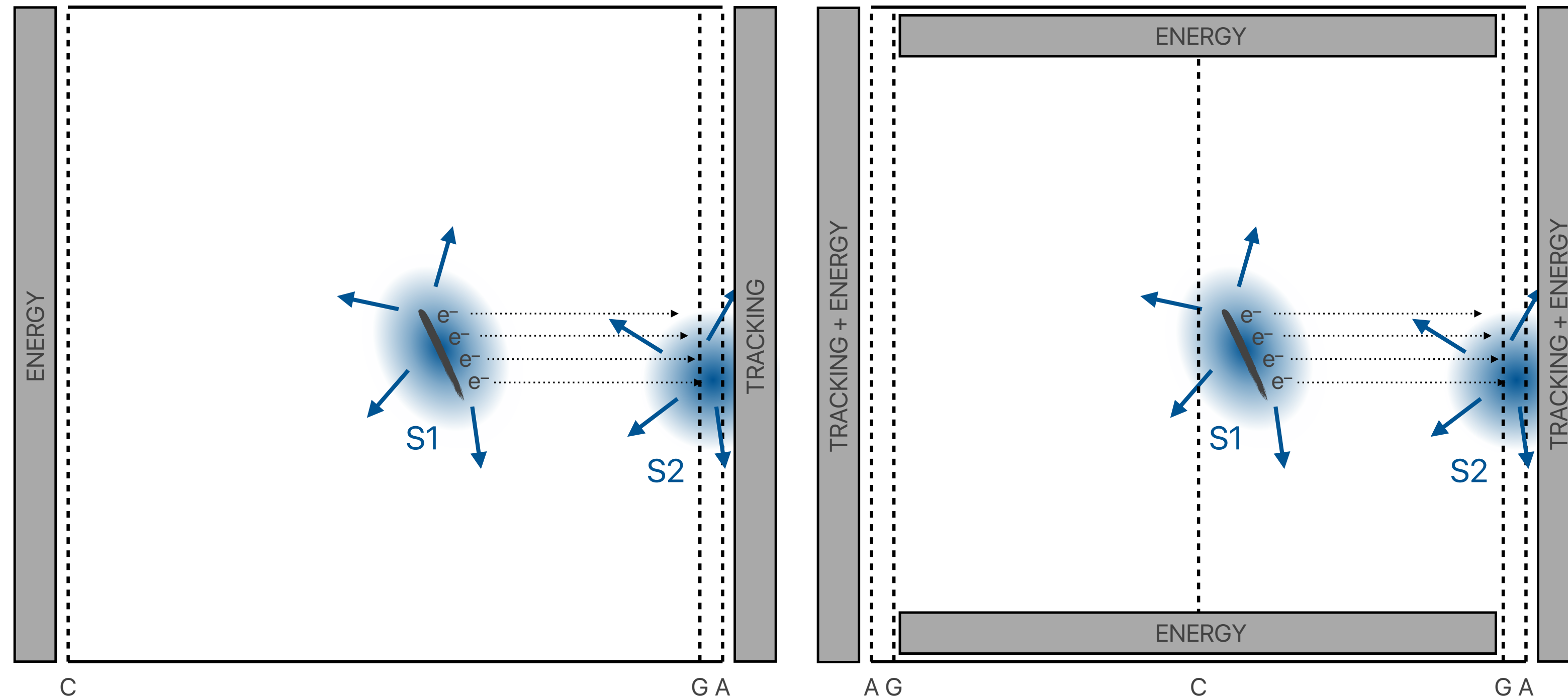
TRANSPARENCY TO HIGH-ENERGY GAMMA RAYS



Background rejection strategy does not rely on self-shielding → No dependence of background index on detector size. Allows a scalable/modular approach.

Technical aspects

DETECTOR CONCEPT



Current (left): asymmetric TPC with single drift volume.

Future (right): symmetric layout with central cathode and two drift volumes.

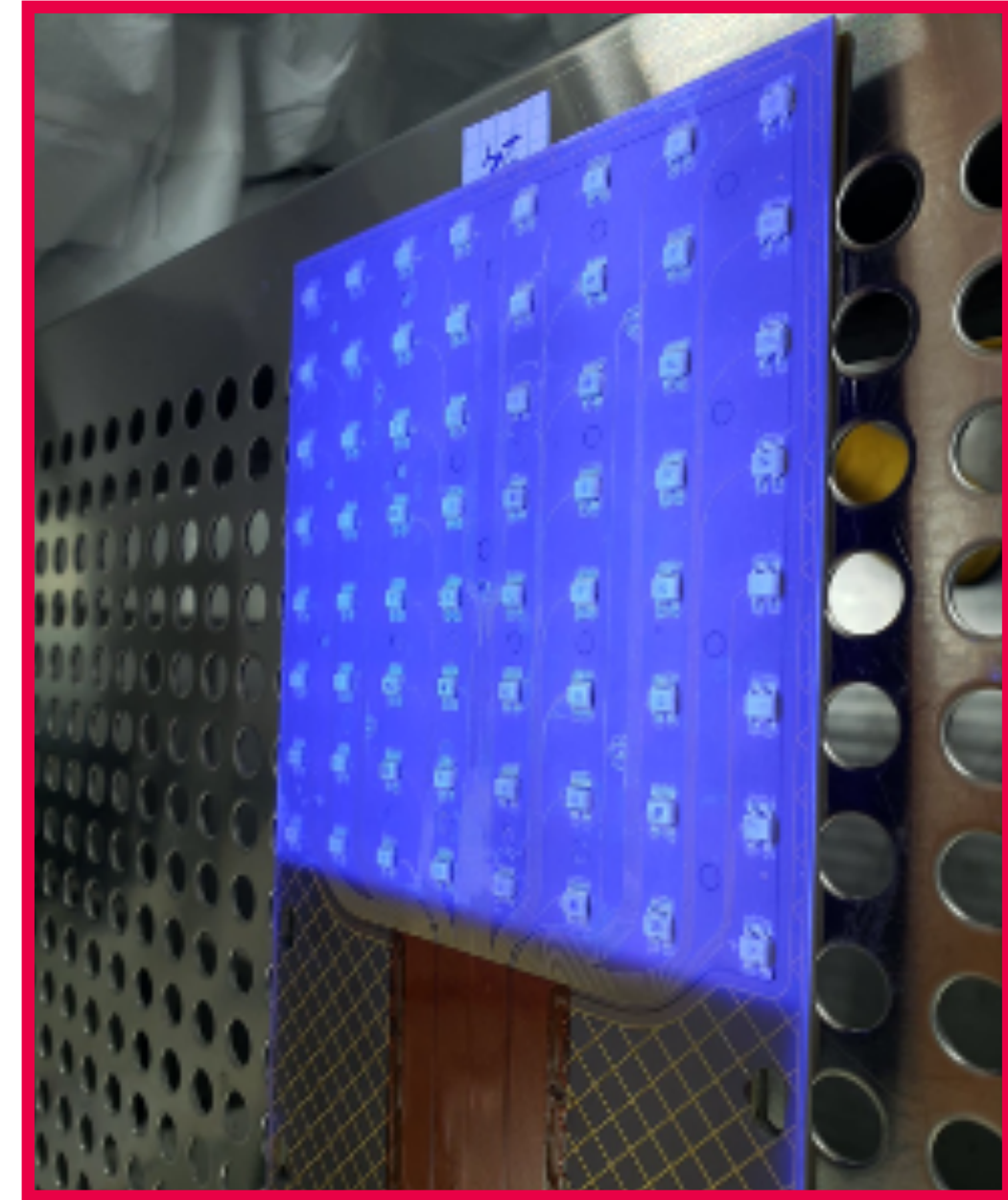
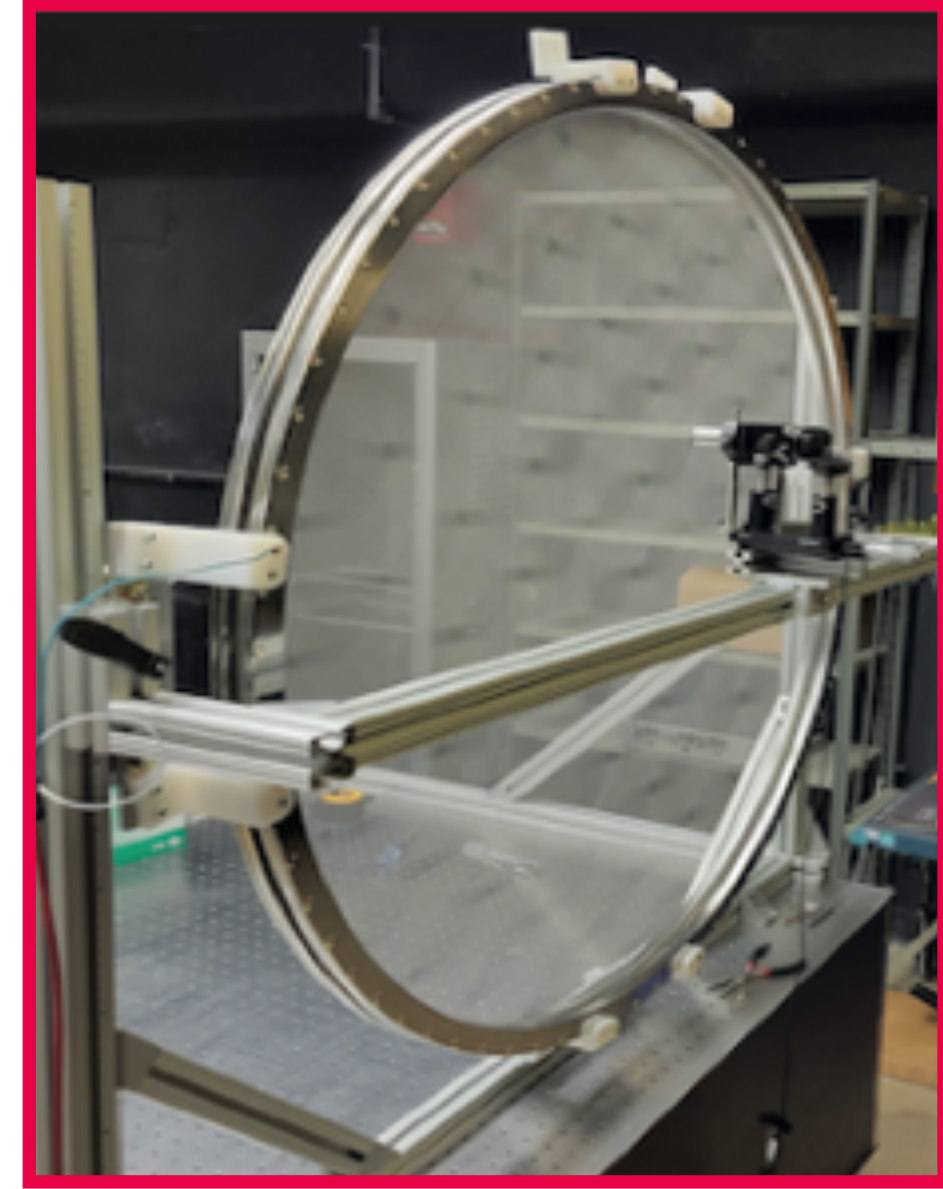
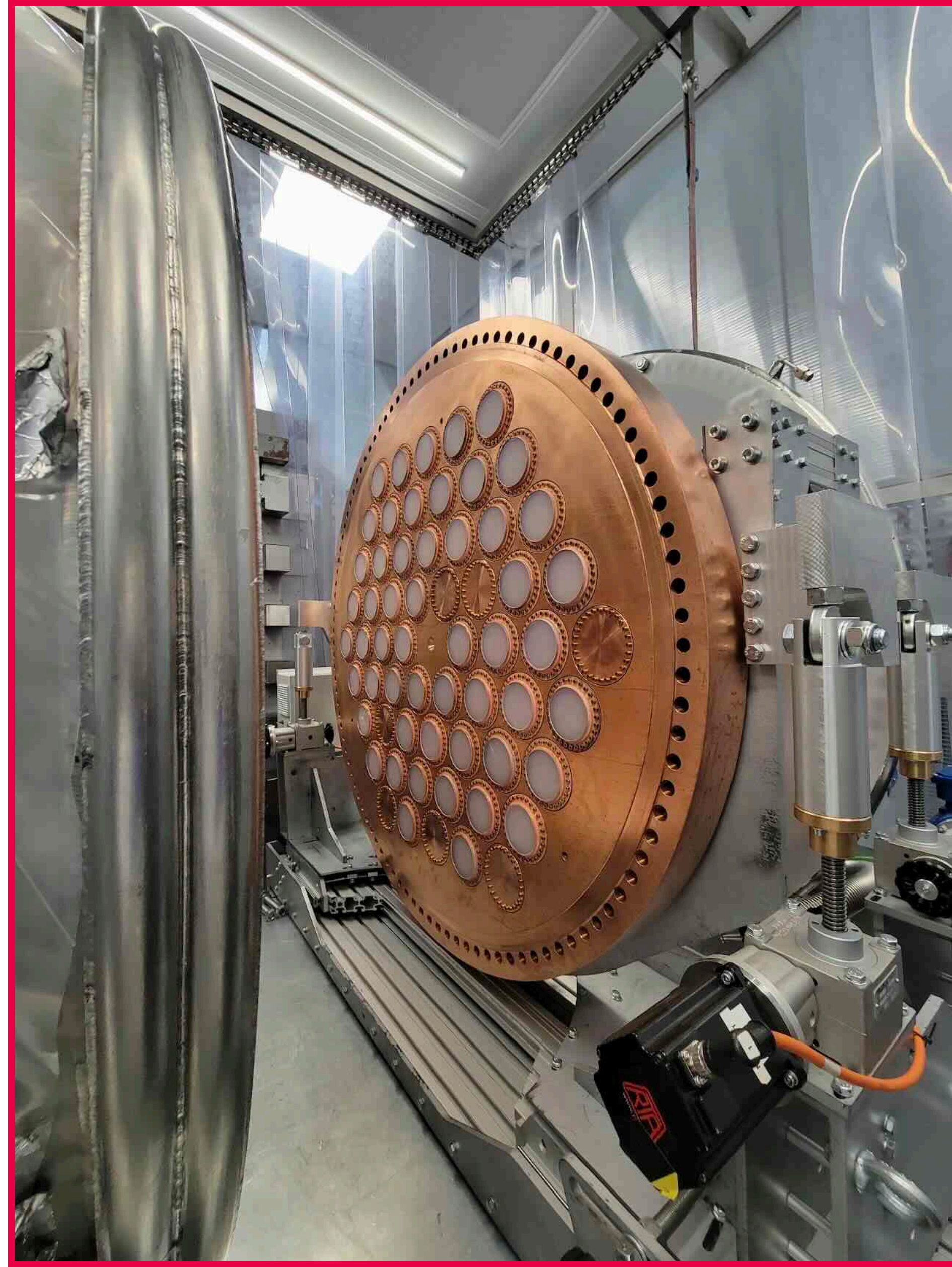
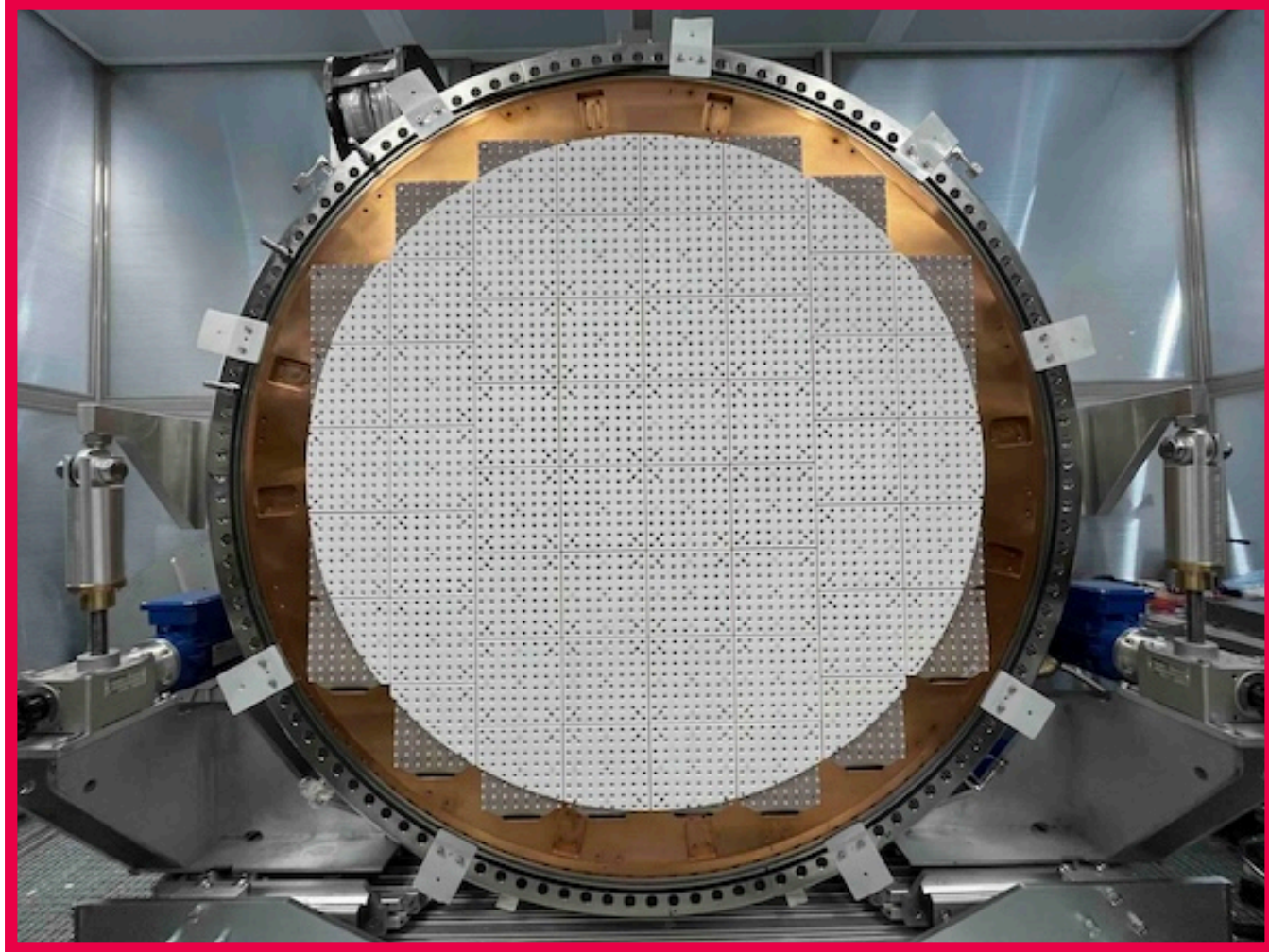
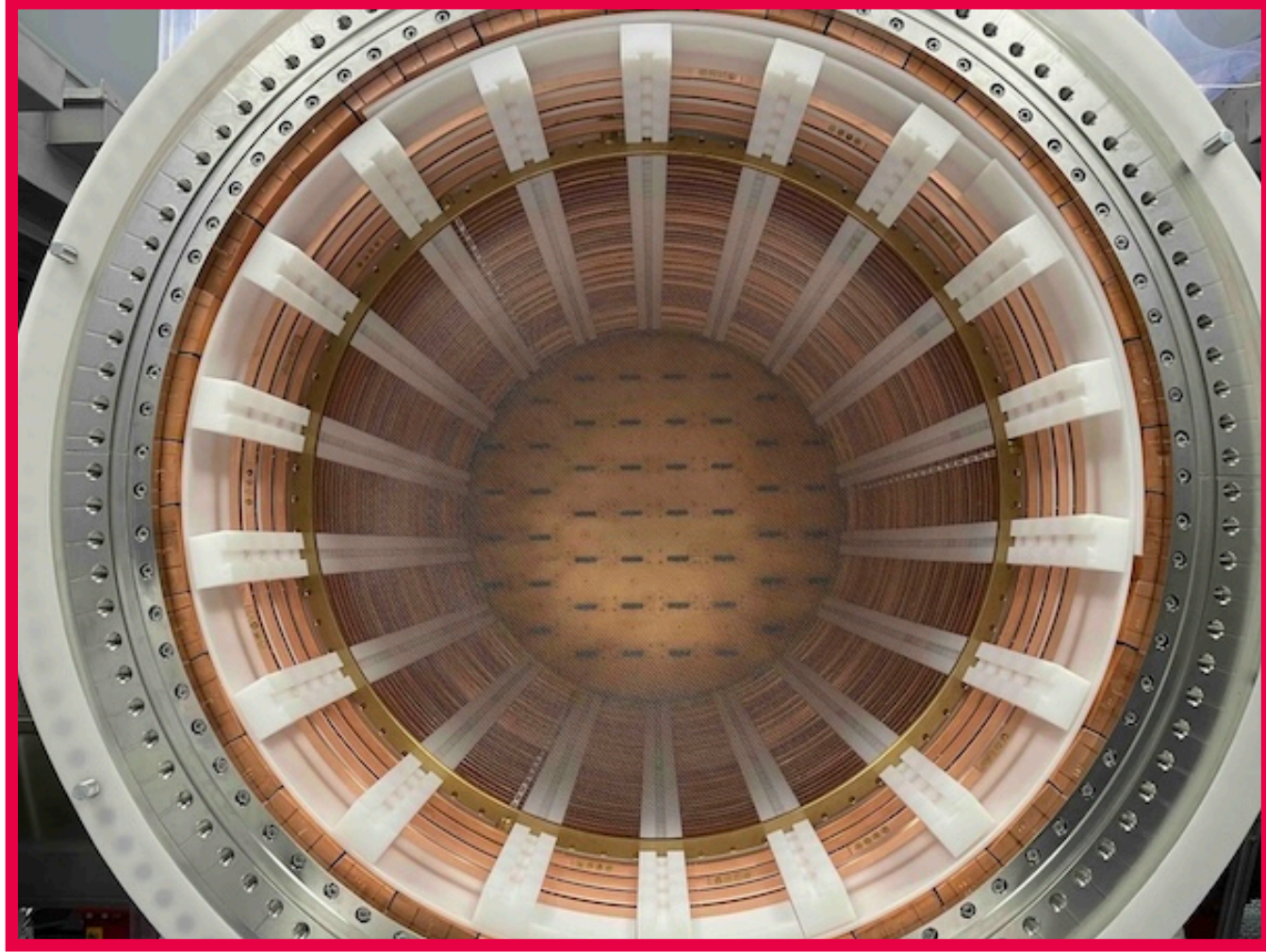
NEXT-100

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Operating at the Laboratorio Subterráneo de Canfranc since 2024.
Foundation for scaling to tonne scale.



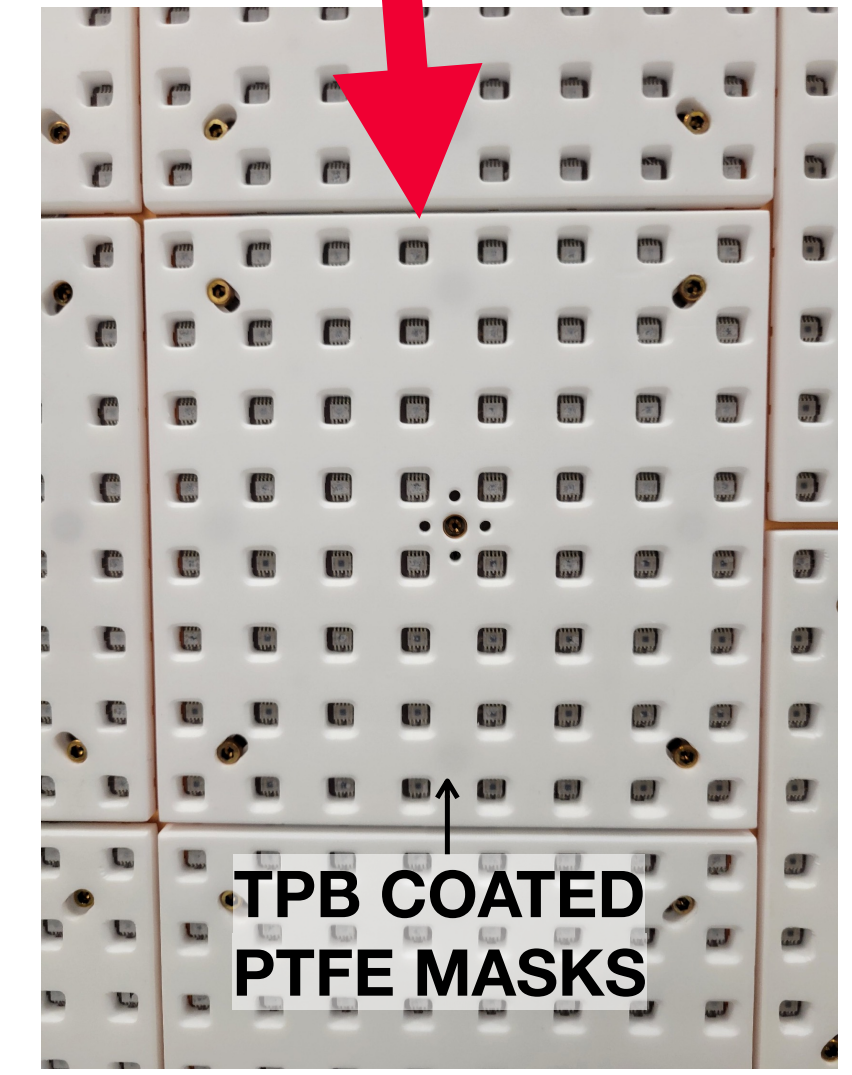
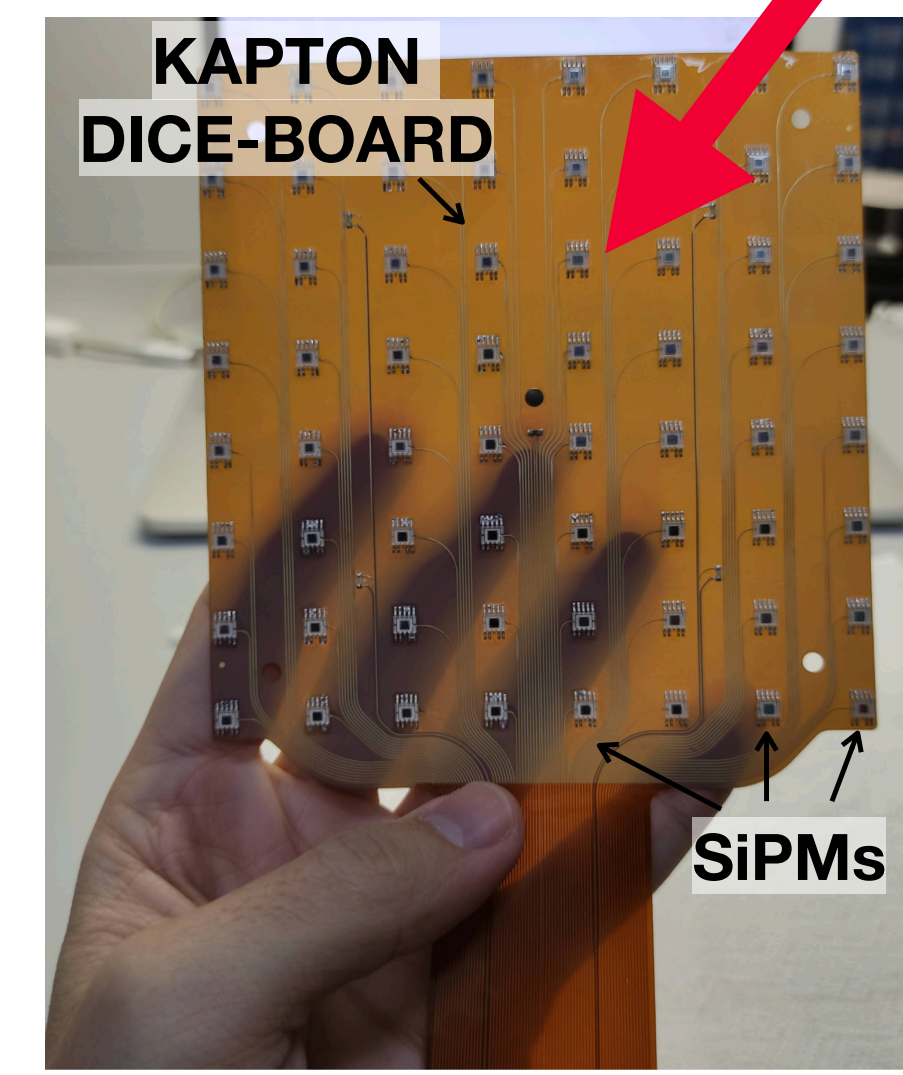
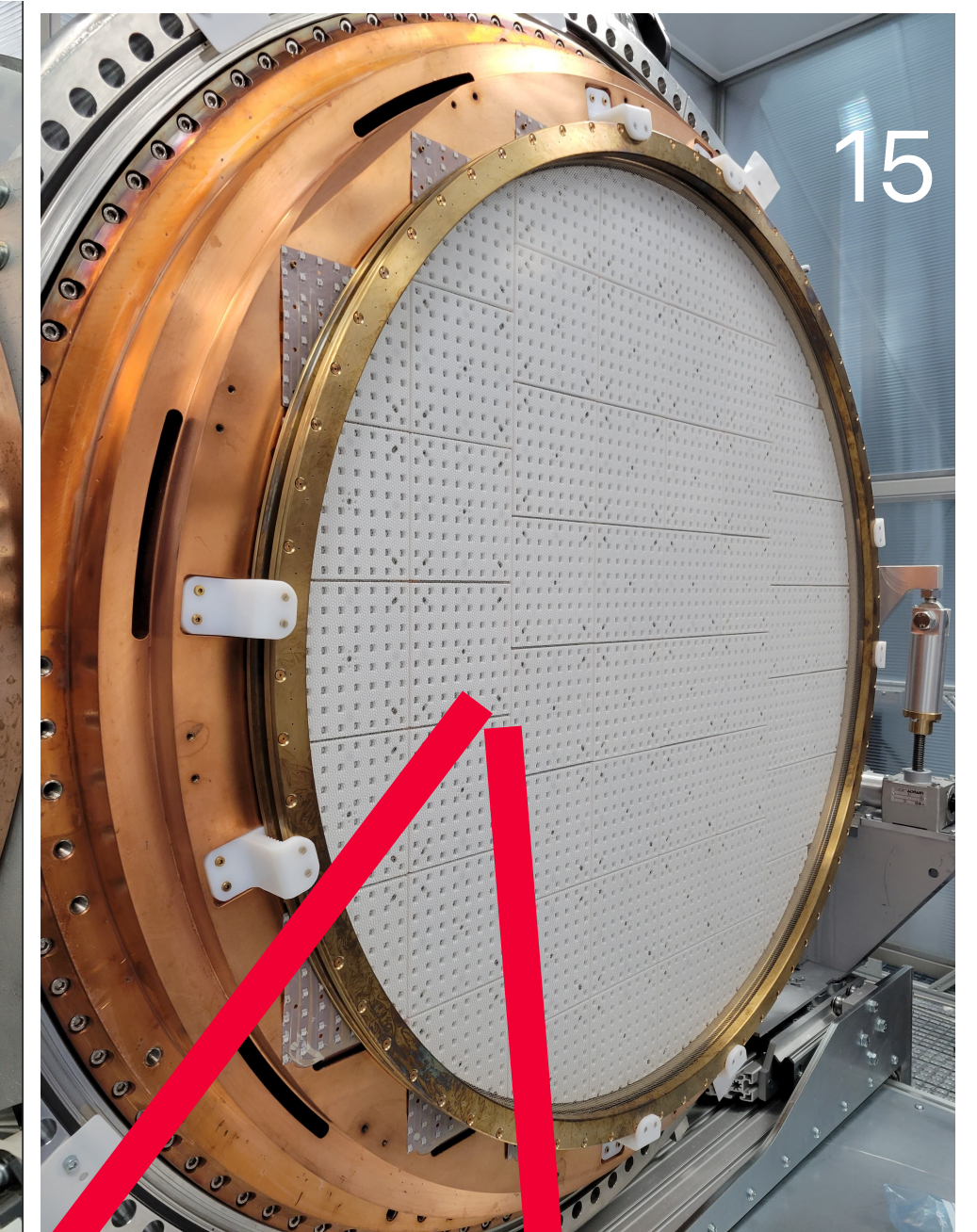
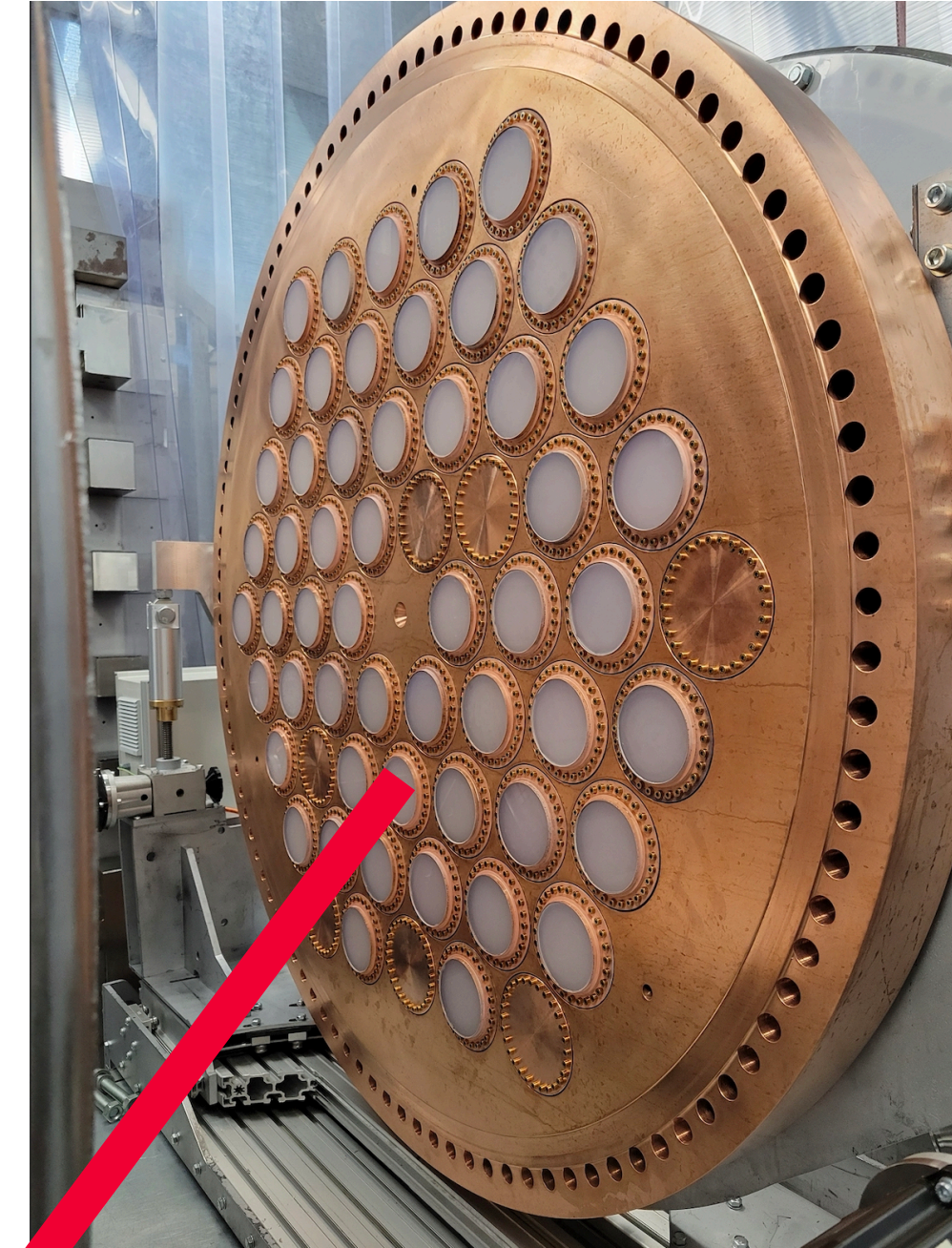
NEXT-100



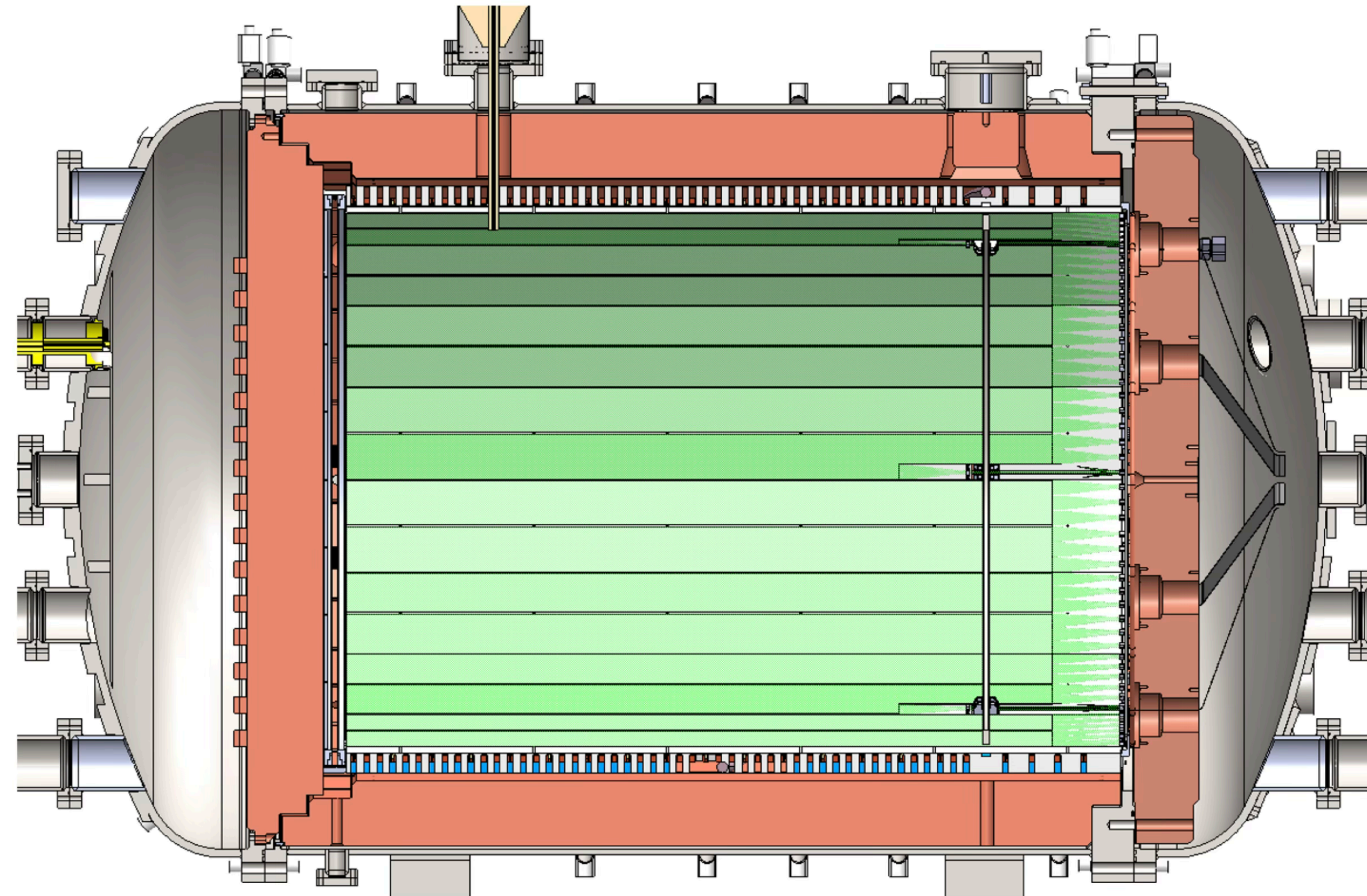
PHOTOSENSORS

PMTs behind cathode → currently used for t_0 and energy measurement; high radioactivity

SiPMs behind anode → track reconstruction; higher coverage would enable energy measurement

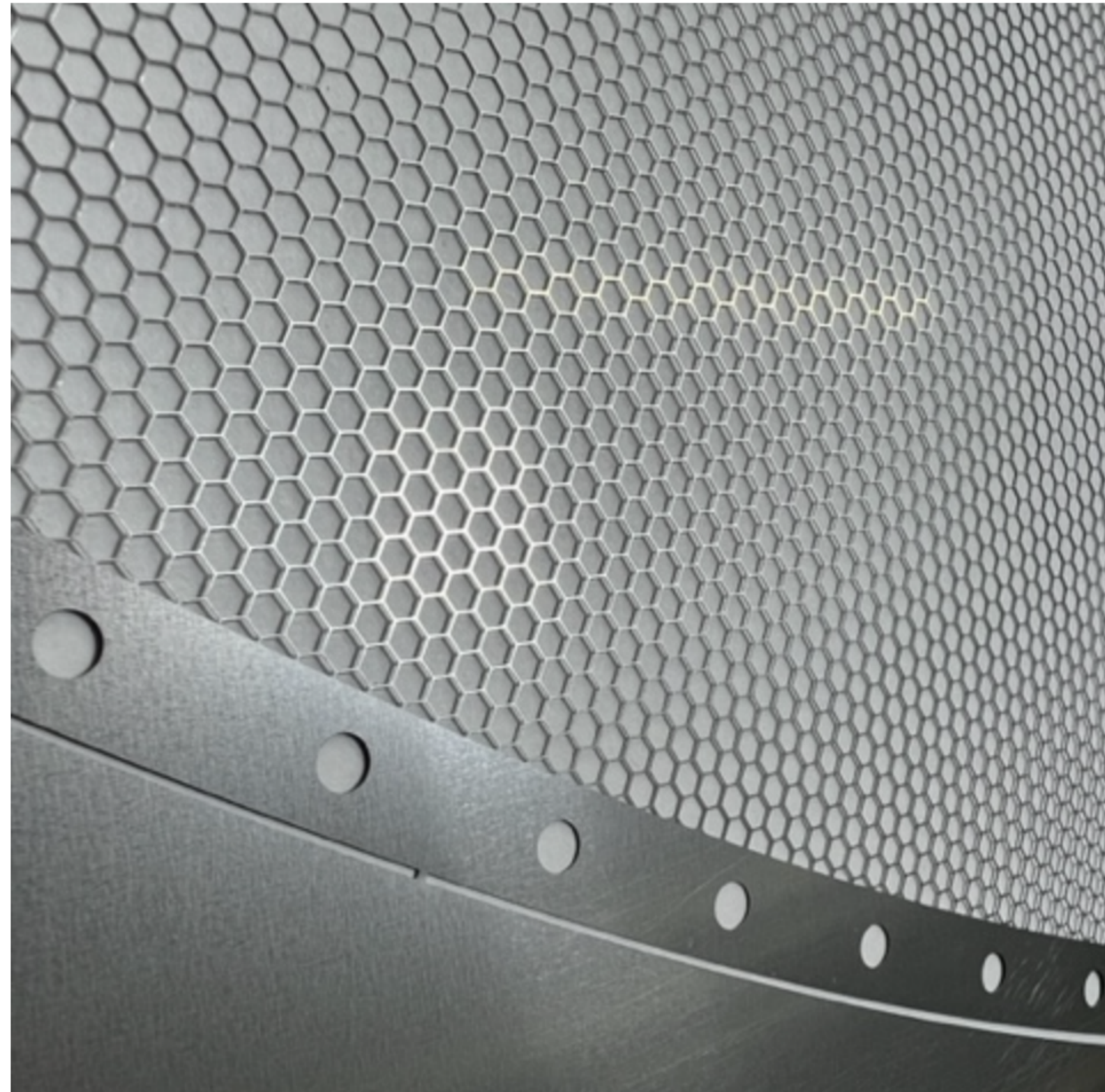


PHOTOSENSORS

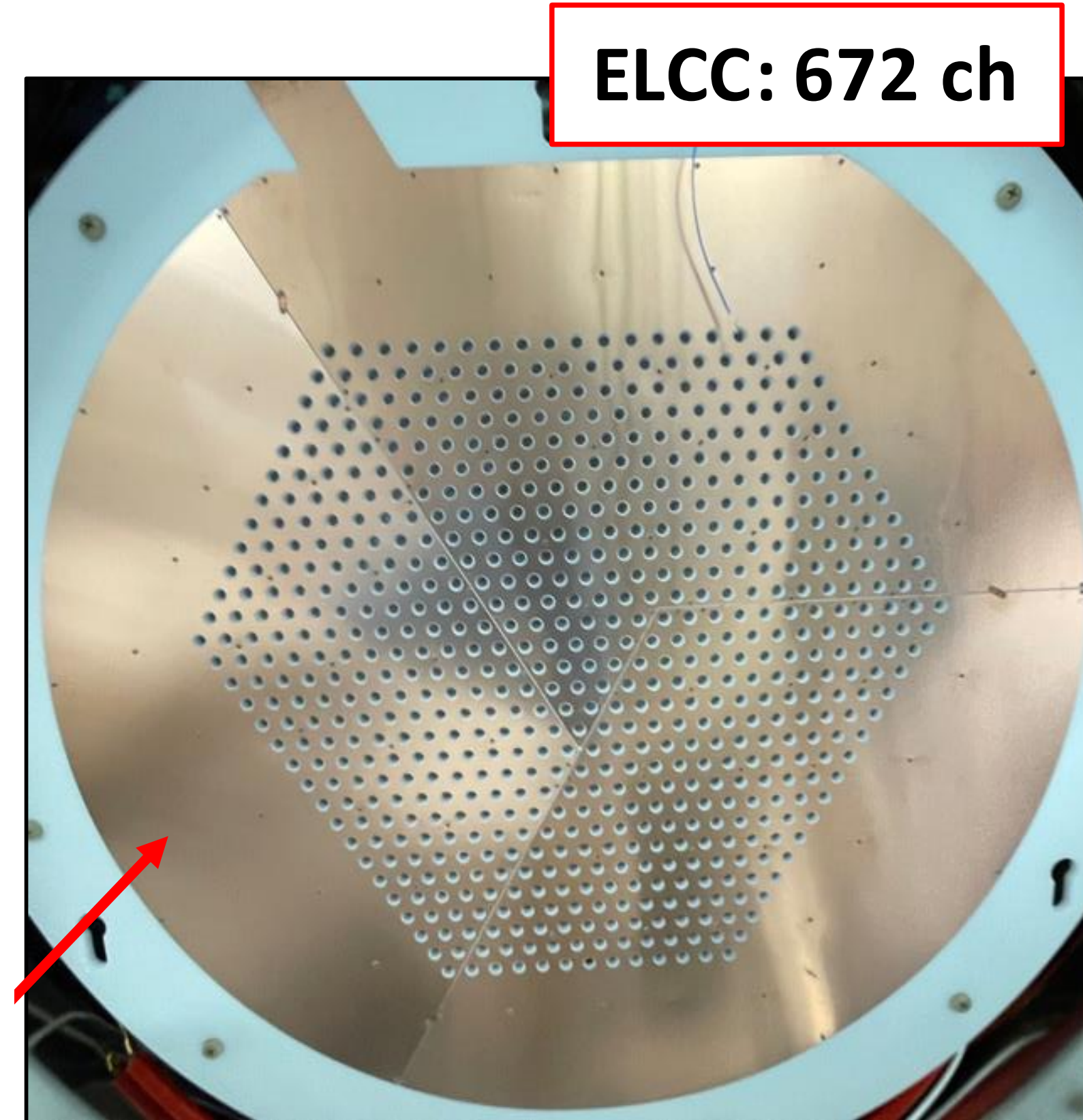


Replace PMTs with WLS fiber panels → reduce background
Increase SiPM coverage → dual energy + tracking capability

AMPLIFICATION STRUCTURES



NEXT Collaboration, JINST **19** (2024) 02, P02007

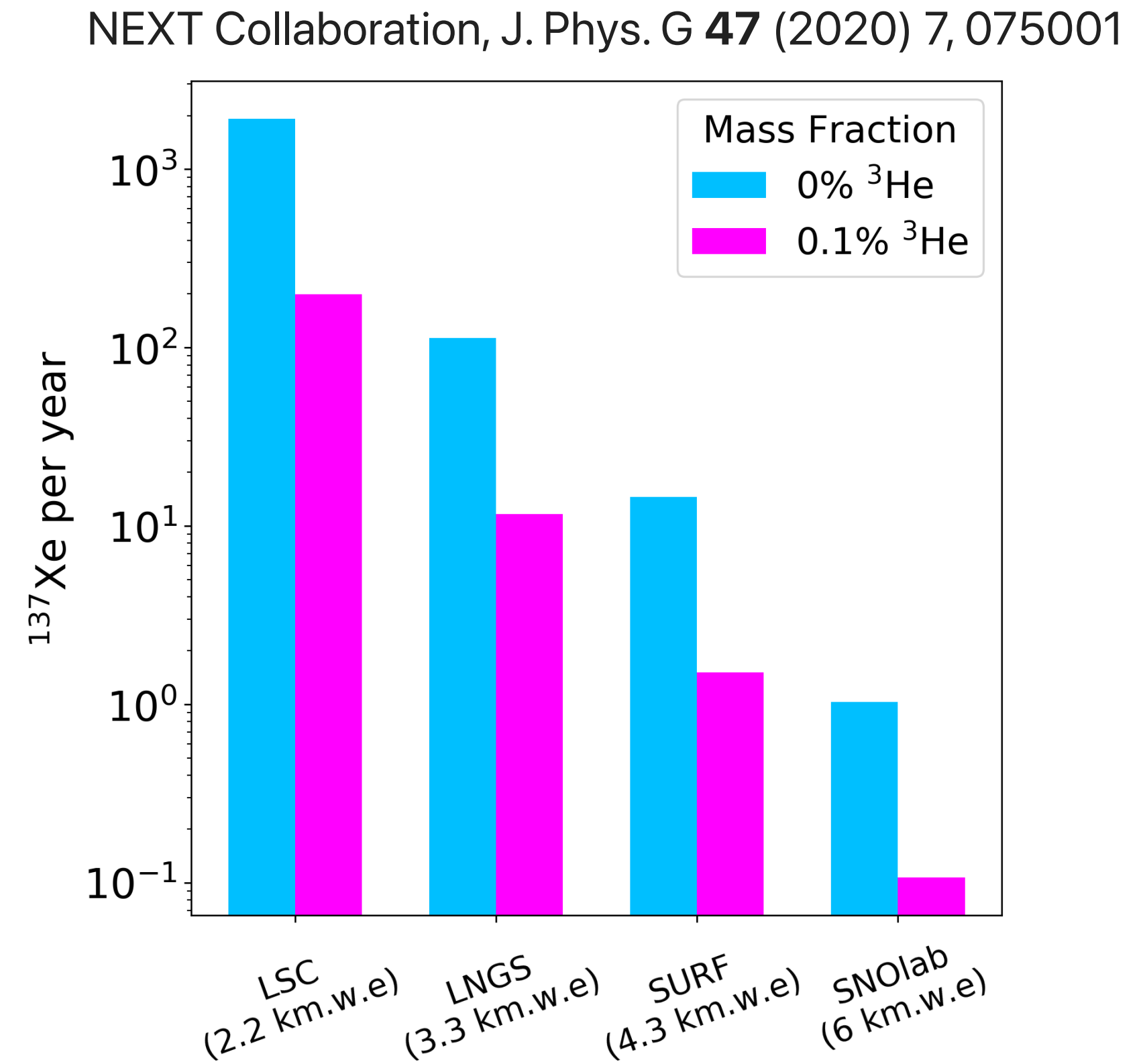
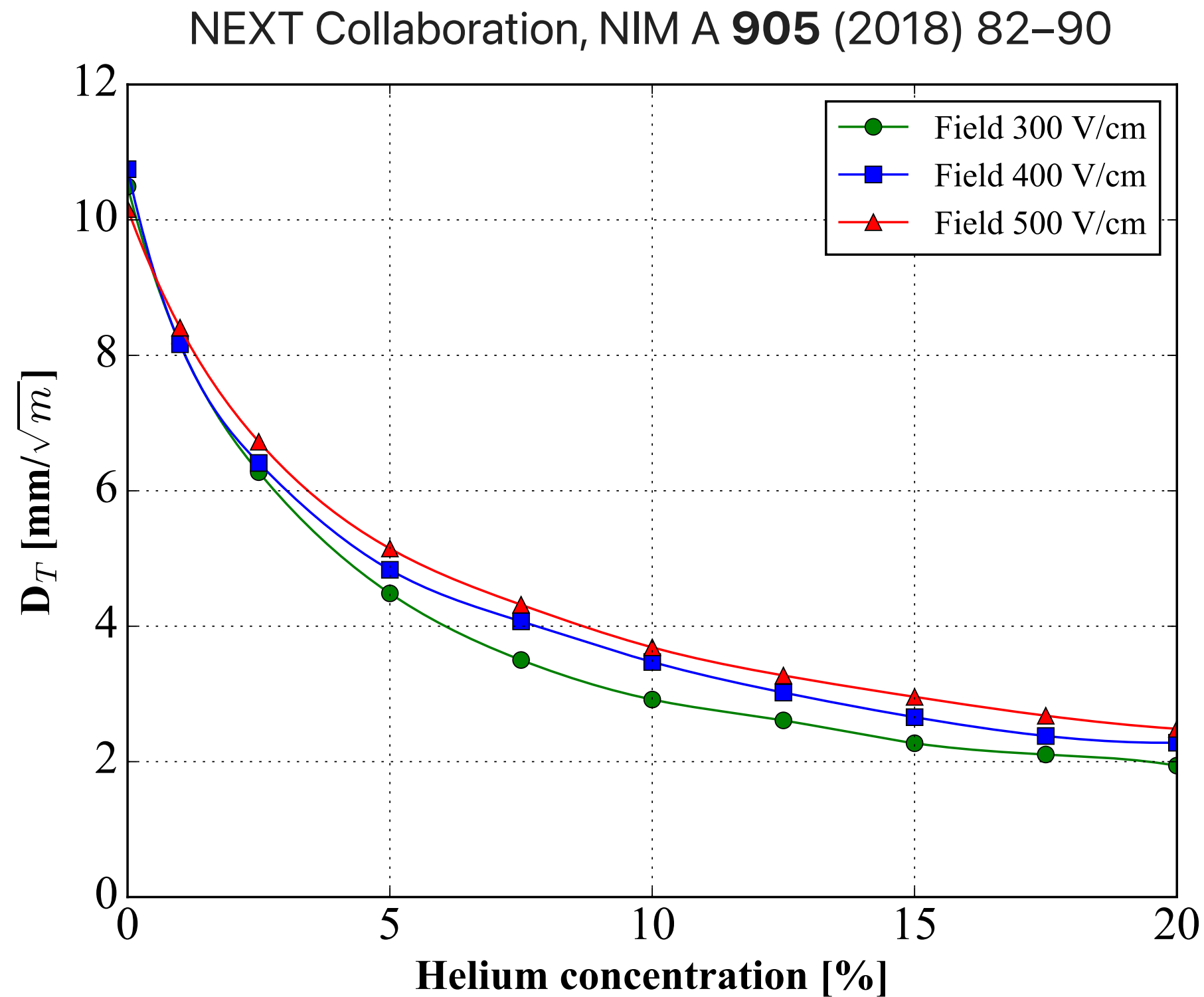


J. Hikida et al., NIM A **1080** (2025) 170706

NEXT-100 uses photo-etched hexagonal stainless steel meshes.

Large diameters require mechanically robust alternatives, such as the ELCC concept (AXEL).

GAS MIXTURES



Helium admixtures reduce diffusion → better tracking

³He offers potential to mitigate main cosmogenic background (¹³⁷Xe)

Key Takeaways

Gas TPCs: unmatched resolution + topology → powerful background rejection

Technical maturity supports next-generation sensitivity

Active R&D on scalability and background control:

- Photon detection
- Gas mixtures
- Ba tagging and ion track detection

Acknowledgments

FUNDING

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