

The future of VHEE  
medical applications:  
what simulations are  
telling us.

C. Panaino, F. Avella

*THE, Spoke 1, Milestones 1.1, 1.2, 1.6*



## 1. Introduction: VHEE in Radiotherapy—Why, Where, and How?

## 2. Particle In Cell (Pic) simulations

## 3. Monte Carlo simulations

### 3.1 VHEE PDDs database

### 3.2 VHEE focusing study

### 3.3 VHEE dosimetric assessment

### 3.4 OPTIMA: VHEE Treatment Planning System (TPS)

## 4. Conclusions



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# Very High Energy Electrons



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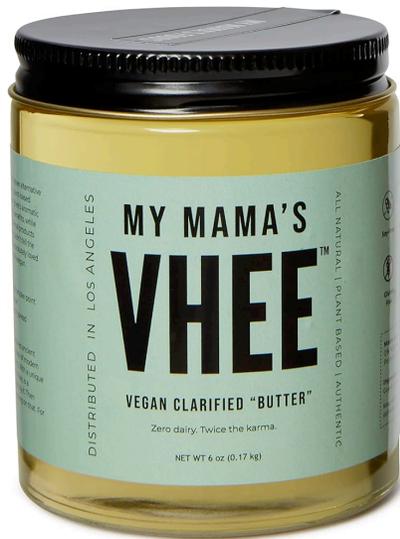
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There is a new ingredient on  
radiotherapy's shelves!



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There is a new ingredient on radiotherapy's shelves!



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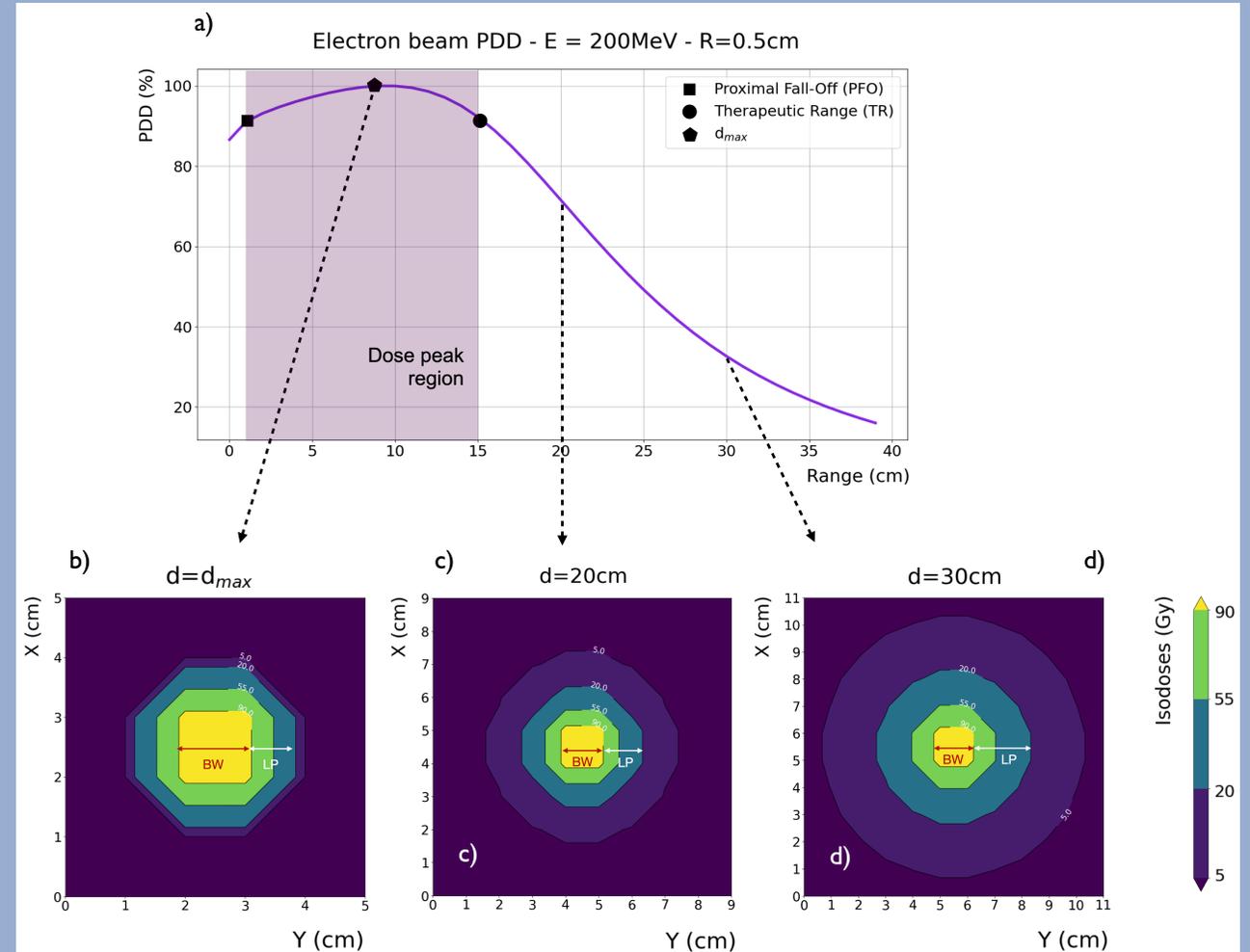
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# Very High Energy Electrons



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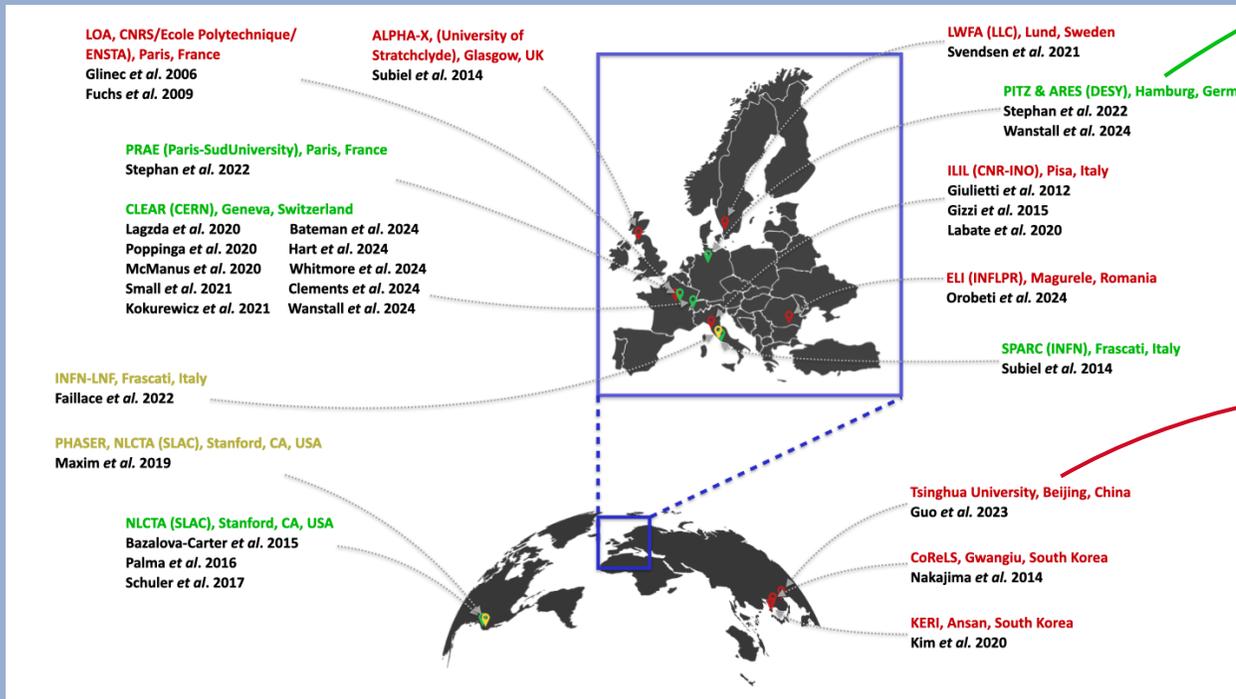


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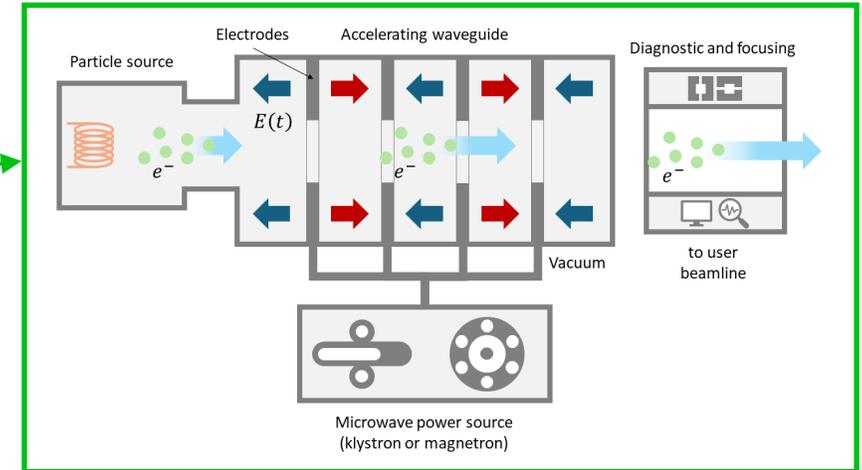


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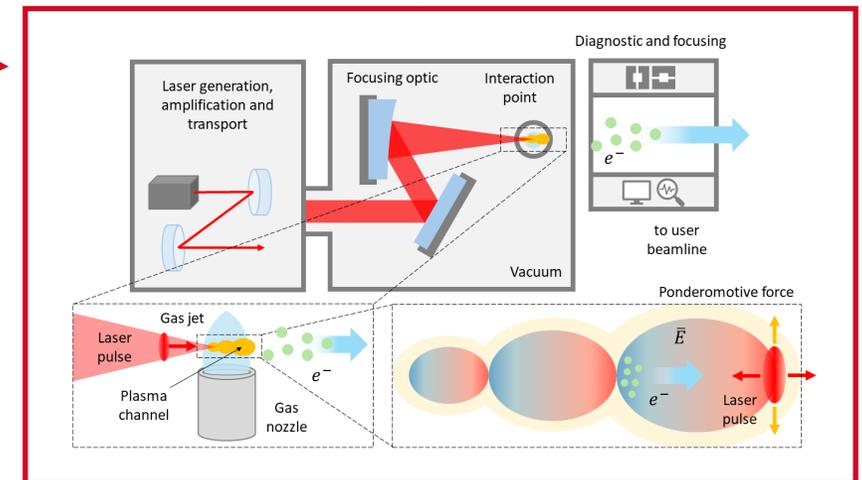
## Where VHEE research is taking place?



## RF-based VHEE systems



## LWFA-based VHEE systems



# Very High Energy Electrons



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Review

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## Very High-Energy Electron Therapy Toward Clinical Implementation: A Review Study

[Costanza Maria Vittoria Panaino](#)\*, [Simona Piccinini](#)\*, [Maria Grazia Andreassi](#), [Gabriele Bandini](#),  
[Andrea Borghini](#), Marzia Borgia, [Angelo Di Naro](#), [Luca Umberto Labate](#), Eleonora Maggiulli,  
[Maurizio Giovanni Agostino Portaluri](#), [Leonida Antonio Gizzi](#)

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Keywords: External beam radiotherapy; VHEE; FLASH radiotherapy



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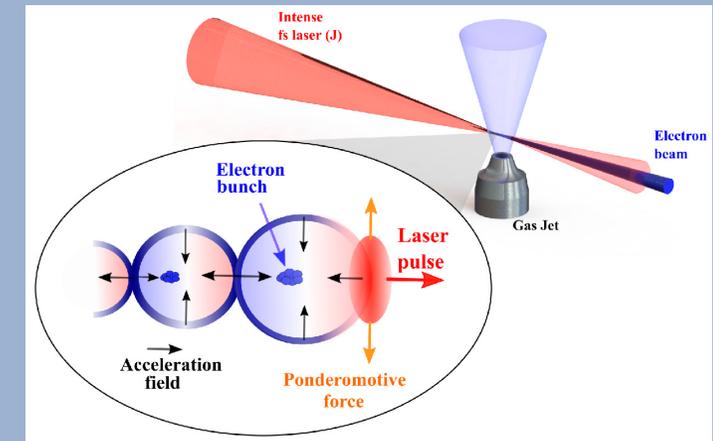
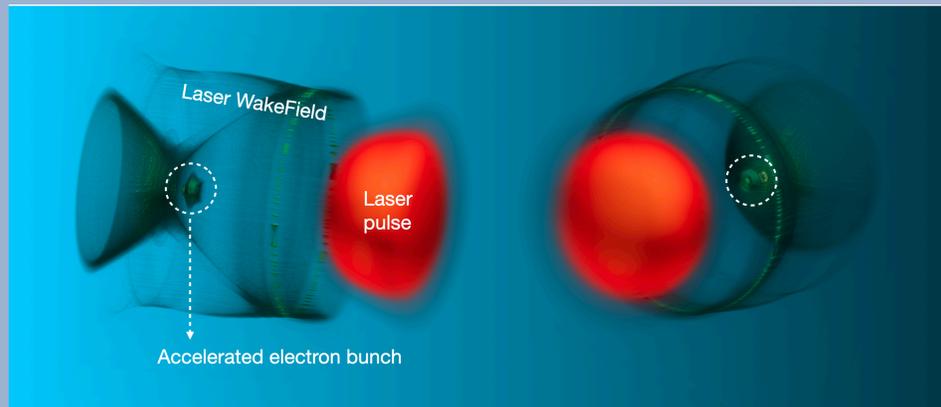
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In laser-plasma accelerators, VHEE beams are produced by focusing an intense and ultrashort laser on a target.

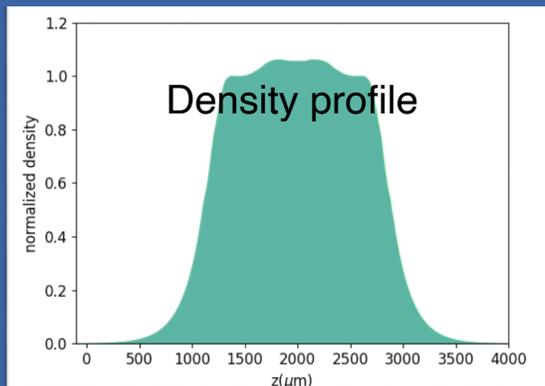
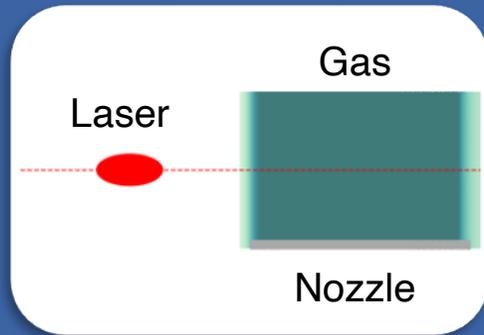
- **Target** = supersonic helium gas jet, superdense plasma, or "transparent" plasma through which the laser can propagate.



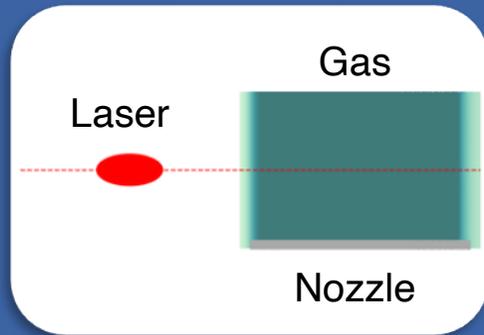
PIC (Particle-In-Cell) are a numerical technique allowing to simulate the dynamics of a large collection of charged particles (e.g, electrons or ions) interacting with electromagnetic fields *in a reduced description* (i.e, dynamics of macroparticles).



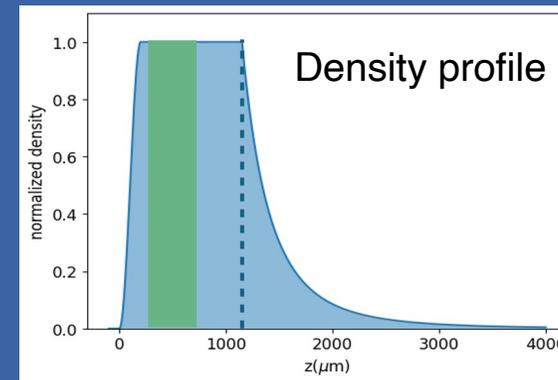
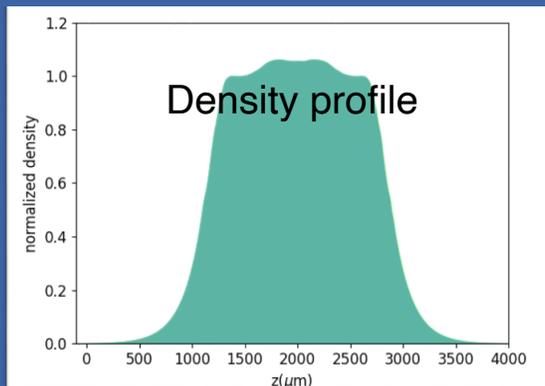
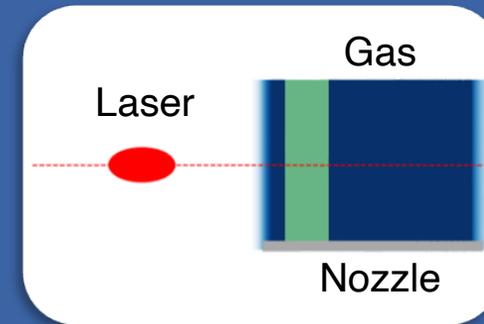
PIC simulations can handle scenarios of increasing complexity, starting from simple systems like a single nozzle.



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PIC simulations can also model complex systems that encompass all three stages of laser-plasma interactions: injection, acceleration, and extraction.



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*R. Buonpane,  
Università della  
Campania*



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# VHEE PDD database



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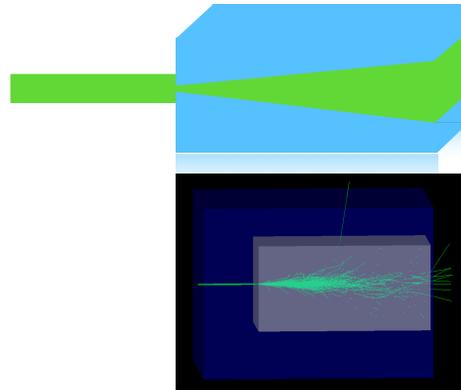


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50pm2_5.txt	200pm5.txt	300pm40.txt
50pm5.txt	200pm10.txt	300pm50.txt
50pm10.txt	200pm20.txt	300pm60.txt
50pm15.txt	200pm30.txt	300pm90.txt
50pm20.txt	200pm40.txt	300pm120.txt
50pm30.txt	200pm50.txt	350pm5.txt
100pm5.txt	200pm60.txt	350pm10.txt
100pm10.txt	200pm80.txt	350pm17_5.txt
100pm20.txt	250pm5.txt	350pm20.txt
100pm30.txt	250pm10.txt	350pm30.txt
100pm40.txt	250pm12_5.txt	350pm35.txt
150pm7_5.txt	250pm20.txt	350pm40.txt
150pm5.txt	250pm25.txt	350pm50.txt
150pm10.txt	250pm30.txt	350pm70.txt
150pm15.txt	250pm40.txt	350pm105.txt
150pm20.txt	150pm75.txt	350pm140.txt
150pm30.txt	150pm100.txt	400pm160.txt
150pm40.txt	300pm5.txt	400pm120.txt
150pm45.txt	300pm10.txt	400pm80.txt
150pm50.txt	300pm15.txt	400pm40.txt
150pm60.txt	300pm30.txt	400pm20.txt



PDD Calculator

## PDD Calculator

Select the option that you would like to work with:

Option1: PDD/PDDs from energy values

Option2: PDD from energy spectrum

Option3: PDD from energy spectrum components

Developed for scientific research

# VHEE PDD database



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PDD Calculator



## PDD Calculator

Select the option that you would like to work with:

- Option1: PDD/PDDs from energy values
- Option2: PDD from energy spectrum
- Option3: PDD from energy spectrum components

Developed for scientific research

Enter energy and sigma values [MeV] (one per line):

```
155 12  
101 34  
133 22.6  
141 16
```

Enter the depth value in water [cm]:

15

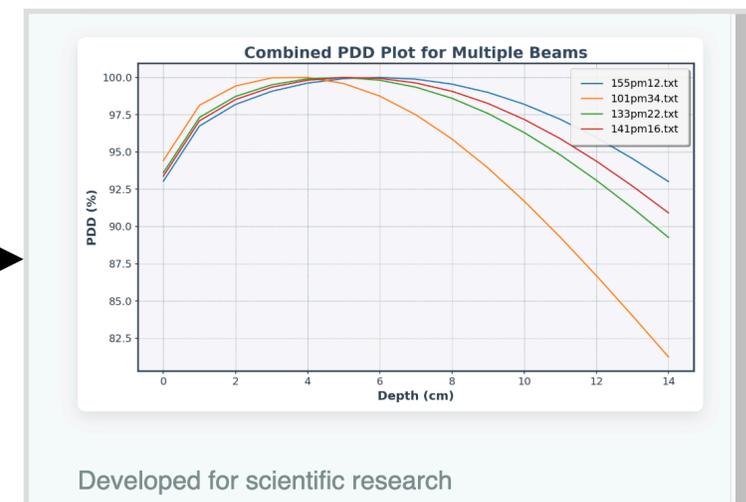
Select mode:

Integral New feature: Both

On-axis

Submit

Calculating...



# VHEE PDD database



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PDD Calculator

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- Option2: PDD from energy spectrum**
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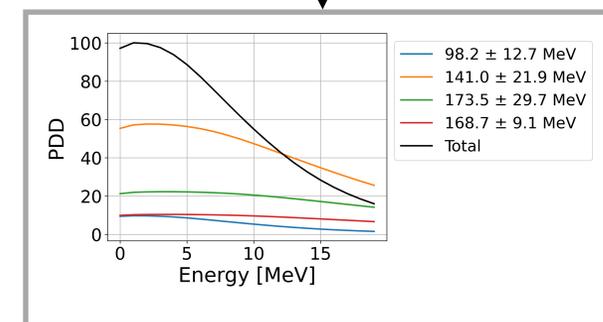
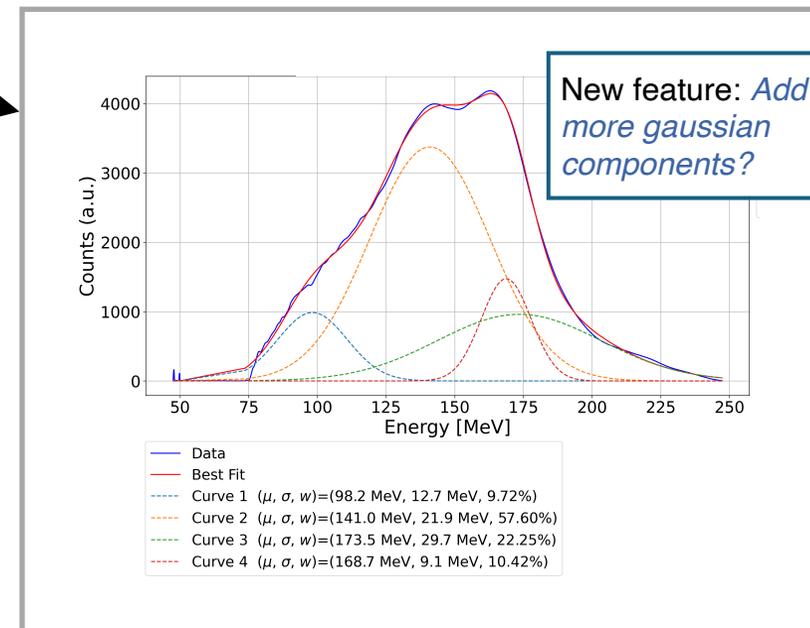
PDD Calculator

Select the energy file from your computer:  
Scegli file | spectrum\_BeamLine.txt

Processing file: spectrum\_BeamLine.txt

Energy Spectrum Plot

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# VHEE PDD database



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PDD Calculator

Select the option that you would like to work with:

- Option1: PDD/PDDs from energy values
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Enter energy, spread, and weight values [MeV] (one set per line):

e.g., 150 40 0.5

Submit



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# Beam Focusing



**a) Focusing quadrupole:**

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} \cos(\sqrt{K}L) & \frac{1}{\sqrt{K}} \sin(\sqrt{K}L) \\ \sqrt{K} \sin(\sqrt{K}L) & \cos(\sqrt{K}L) \end{pmatrix}$$

$K > 0$

**b) Defocusing quadrupole:**

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} \cosh(\sqrt{|K|}L) & \frac{1}{\sqrt{|K|}} \sinh(\sqrt{|K|}L) \\ \sqrt{|K|} \sinh(\sqrt{|K|}L) & \cosh(\sqrt{|K|}L) \end{pmatrix}$$

$K < 0$

**c) Drift:**

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & L \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

•  $K$  = Magnetic rigidity •  $L$  = Drift length

**d) Symmetric focusing**

**e) Asymmetric focusing**

From a clinical prospective offers several benefits such as:

- lowering entrance dose;
- reducing lateral scattering in depth;
- precisely targeting small 3D volumes

It also allows to improve the beam point stability!

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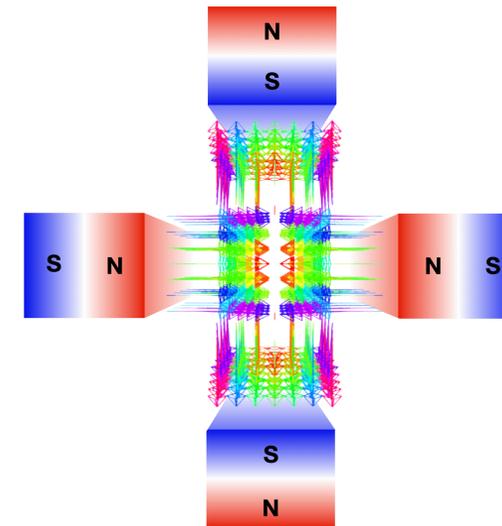
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# Beam Focusing

Defocusing quadrupole:  
Length  $L$ ,  $K < 0$

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} \cosh(\sqrt{|K|L}) & \frac{1}{\sqrt{|K|}} \sinh(\sqrt{|K|L}) \\ \sqrt{|K|} \sinh(\sqrt{|K|L}) & \cosh(\sqrt{|K|L}) \end{pmatrix}$$

Focusing quadrupole:  
Length  $L$ ,  $K > 0$

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} \cos(\sqrt{KL}) & \frac{1}{\sqrt{K}} \sin(\sqrt{KL}) \\ -\sqrt{K} \sin(\sqrt{KL}) & \cos(\sqrt{KL}) \end{pmatrix}$$

$\alpha$ ,  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$  are the Twiss parameters

$$\begin{pmatrix} x(s) \\ x'(s) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \sqrt{\frac{\beta_s}{\beta_0}} [\cos \varphi_s + \alpha_0 \sin \varphi_s] & \sqrt{\beta_s \beta_0} \sin \varphi_s \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{\beta_s \beta_0}} [(\alpha_0 - \alpha_s) \cos \varphi_s - (1 + \alpha_0 \alpha_s) \sin \varphi_s] & \sqrt{\frac{\beta_s}{\beta_0}} [\cos \varphi_s - \alpha_s \sin \varphi_s] \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x_0 \\ x'_0 \end{pmatrix}$$

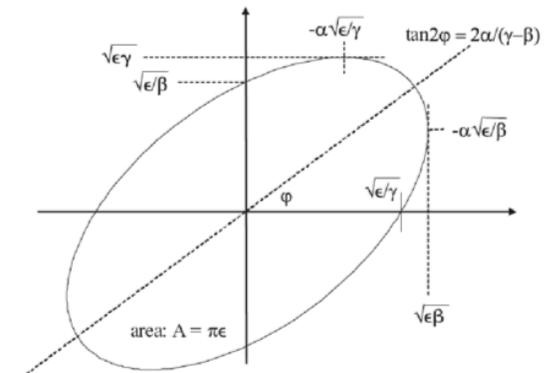
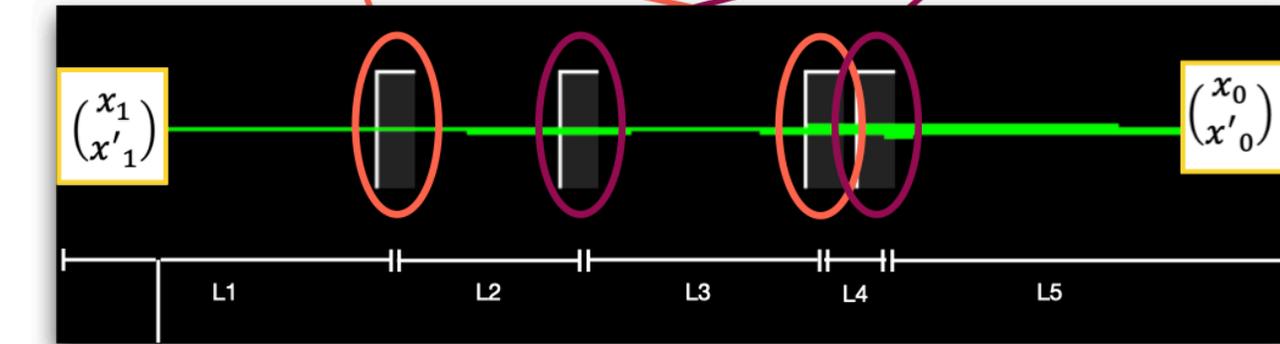


Fig. 5.2. Phase space ellipse



$$\begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ x'_1 \end{pmatrix} = M_{Dn} \cdot M_{Qn} \cdot M_{Dn-1} \cdots M_{B1} \cdot M_{D2} \cdot M_{Q1} \cdot M_{D1} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} x_0 \\ x'_0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ x'_1 \end{pmatrix} = M(s_1, s_0) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} x_0 \\ x'_0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$M_{Drift} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & L \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Development of an optimisation algorithm (Python) that identifies the optimal L1, L2, L3, L4 values







# Focusing



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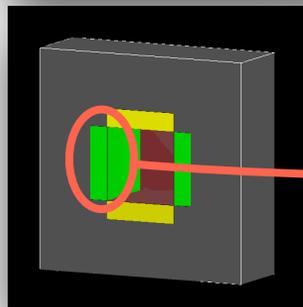
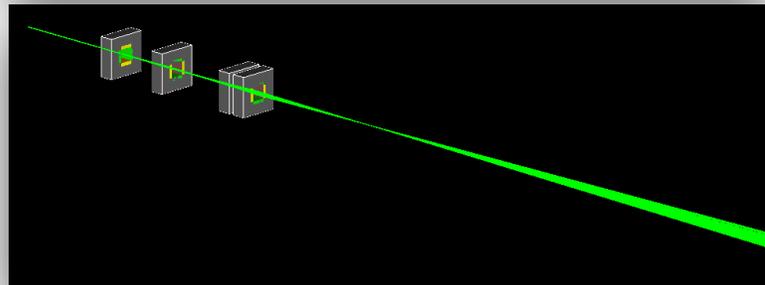
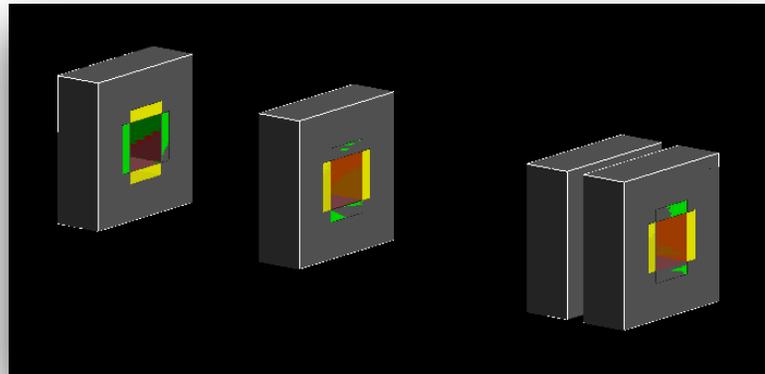
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**1. Technical Information**

Neodymium supermagnet - Black magnet 60 x 30 x 15 mm, holds approx. 56 kg

Article ID	Q-60-30-15-N
EAN	756015436521
Material	NdFeB
Shape	Block
Size	60 x 30 x 15 mm
Side 1	60 mm
Side 2	30 mm
Side 3	15 mm
Flat face	60 x 30 mm
Tolerance	± 0.1 mm
Direction of magnetization	Axis 15 mm
Coating	Neckle plated (Ni-Cu-Ni)
Manufacturing method	pressed
Magnetization	N40
Strength	approx. 56 kg (approx. 140 N)
Displacement force	approx. 11 kg (approx. 110 N)
Max. working temperature	80°C
Weight	25,2000 g
Cure temperature	175 °C
Residual magnetism Br	1,2000-12900 G, 1,26-1,26 T
Coercive field strength Hcb	10-1 120 kA/m, 800-855 kA/m
Coercive field strength Hcj	≥ 23 kA/m, 295 kA/m
Energy product (BH)max	38-40 MJ/m <sup>3</sup> , 303-316 kJ/m <sup>3</sup>

# Focusing



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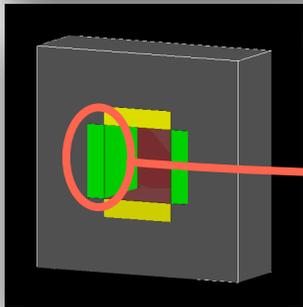
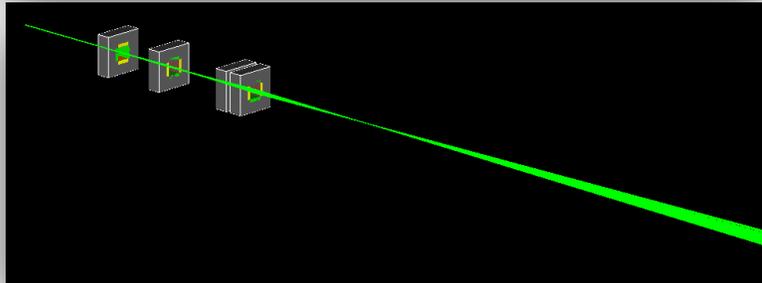
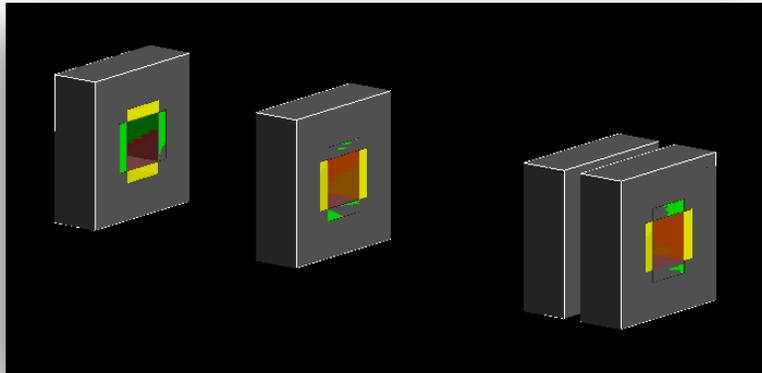
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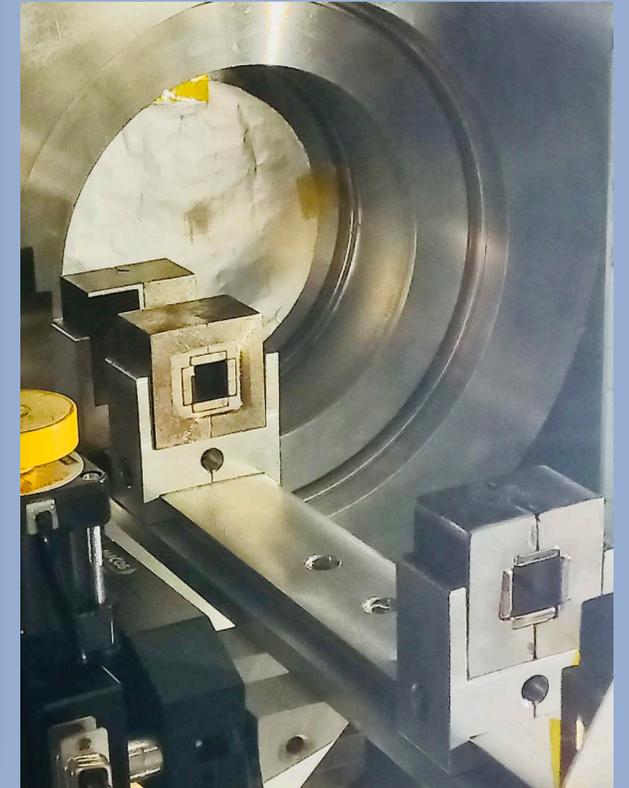
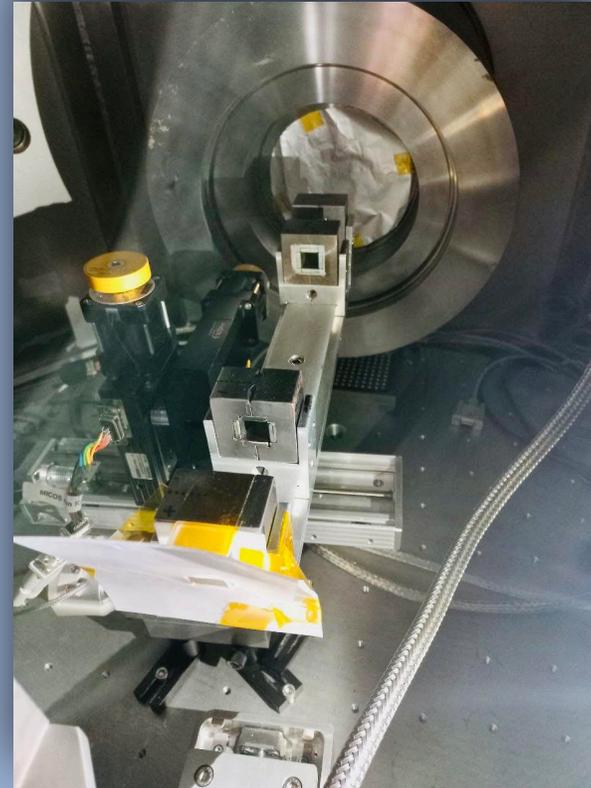


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Article ID	Q 60-30-15-N
EAN	756015436571
Material	NdFeB
Shape	Block
Side 1	60 ± 0.20 x 15 mm
Side 2	30 mm
Side 3	15 mm
Flank face	60 x 30 mm
Tolerance	± 0.1 mm
Direction of magnetization	Axis 15 mm
Coating	Nickel plated (Ni-Cu-Ni)
Manufacturing method	pressed
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Coercive field strength Hcb	10.1-12.0 kOe, 800-955 kA/m
Coercive field strength Hci	≥ 13.0 kOe, 950 kA/m
Energy product (BH)max	38-40 MGOe, 303-316 kJ/m³

In the lab...



With the MBL the point size is reduced from  $1.15 \times 0.90$  cm to  $0.60 \times 0.44$  cm, whereas the point stability deviation is reduced from 1.99 to 0.55 and from 2.81 to 0.44, for  $\sigma_x$  and  $\sigma_y$ , respectively.

# Focusing



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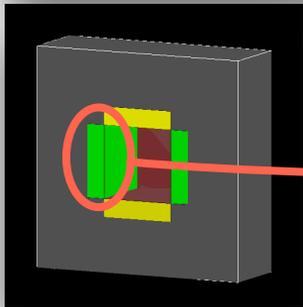
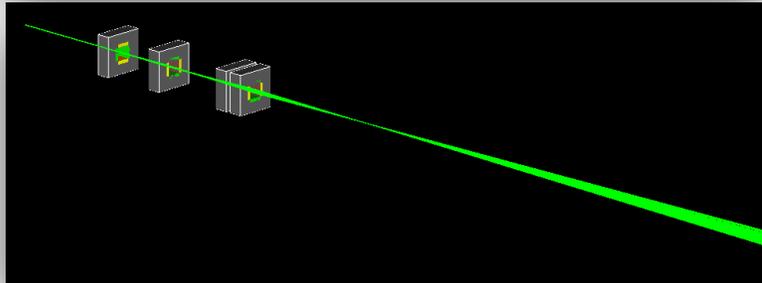
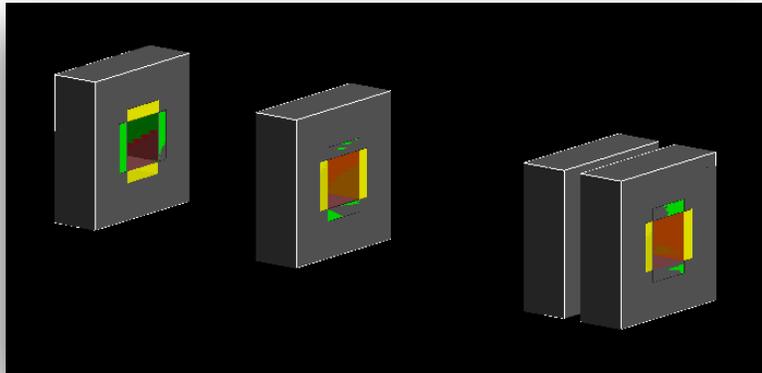
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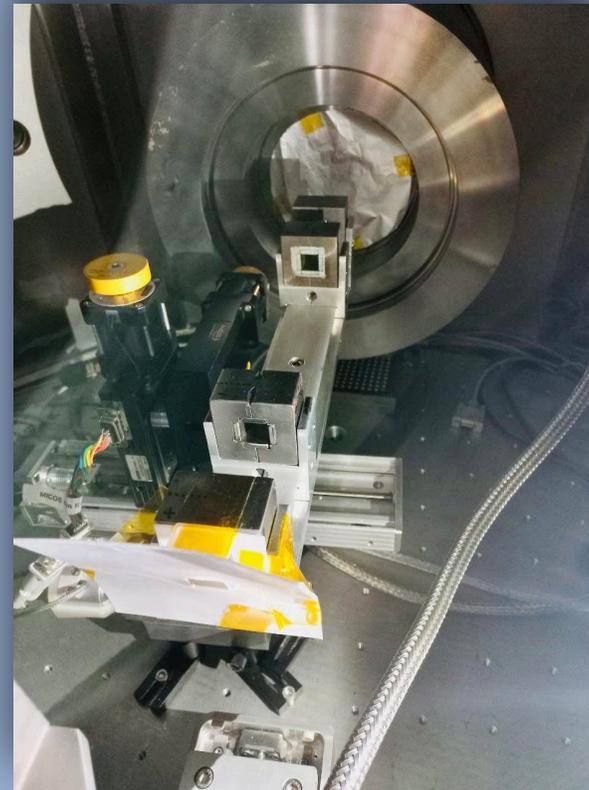


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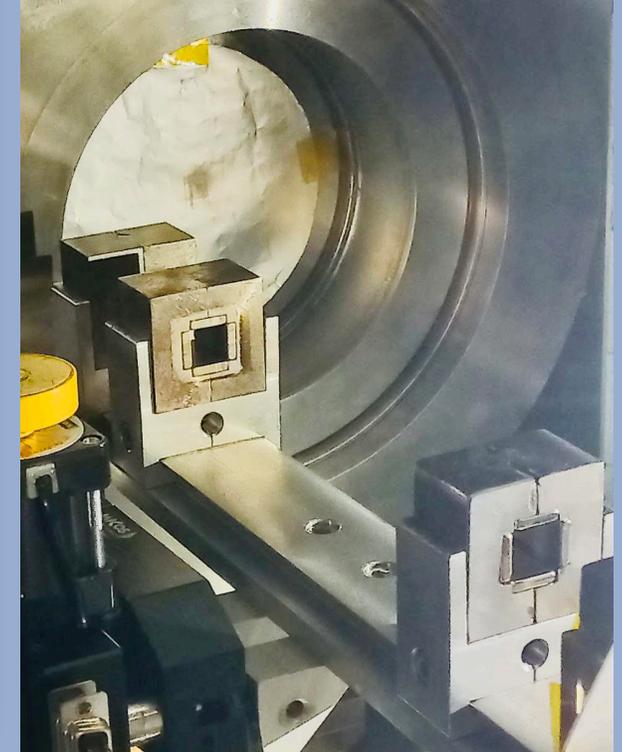
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Cure temperature	175 °C
Residual magnetism Br	1,2600-12900 G, 1,26-1,26 T
Coercive field strength Hcb	10,3-1120 kA/m, 800-855 kA/m
Coercive field strength Hcj	≥ 13,4 kA/m, ≥ 95,5 kA/m
Energy product (BH)max	38-40 MGOe, 303-316 kJ/m³

In the lab...



See Dr M. Salvadori talk...



With the MBL the point size is reduced from  $1.15 \times 0.90$  cm to  $0.60 \times 0.44$  cm, whereas the point stability deviation is reduced from 1.99 to 0.55 and from 2.81 to 0.44, for  $\sigma_x$  and  $\sigma_y$ , respectively.



1. Introduction: VHEE in Radiotherapy—Why, Where, and How?

2. Particle In Cell (Pic) simulations

**3. Monte Carlo simulations**

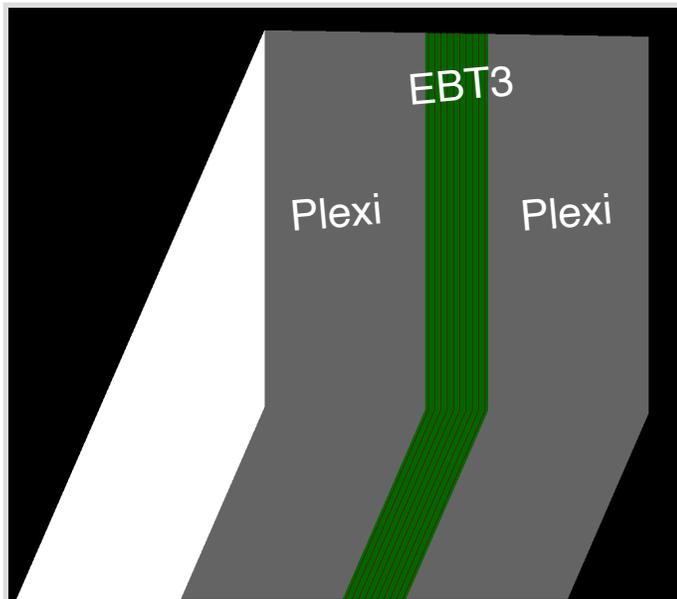
3.1 VHEE PDDs database

3.2 VHEE focusing study

**3.3 VHEE dosimetric assessment**

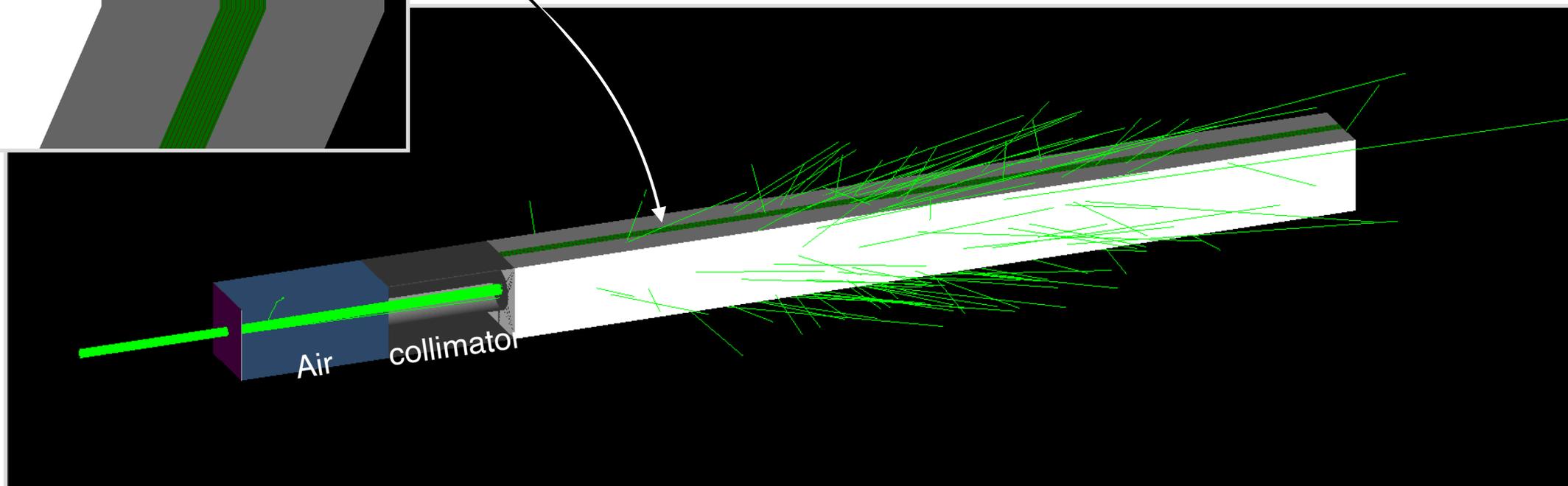
3.4 OPTIMA: VHEE Treatment Planning System (TPS)

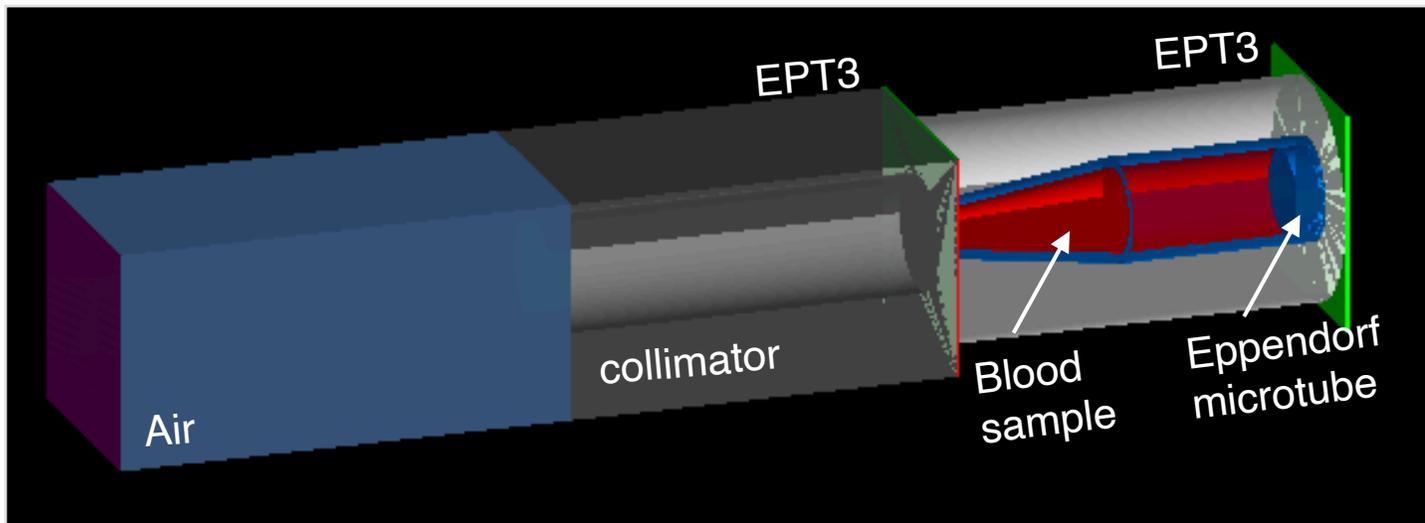
4. Conclusions



## VHEE Dosimetric assessment

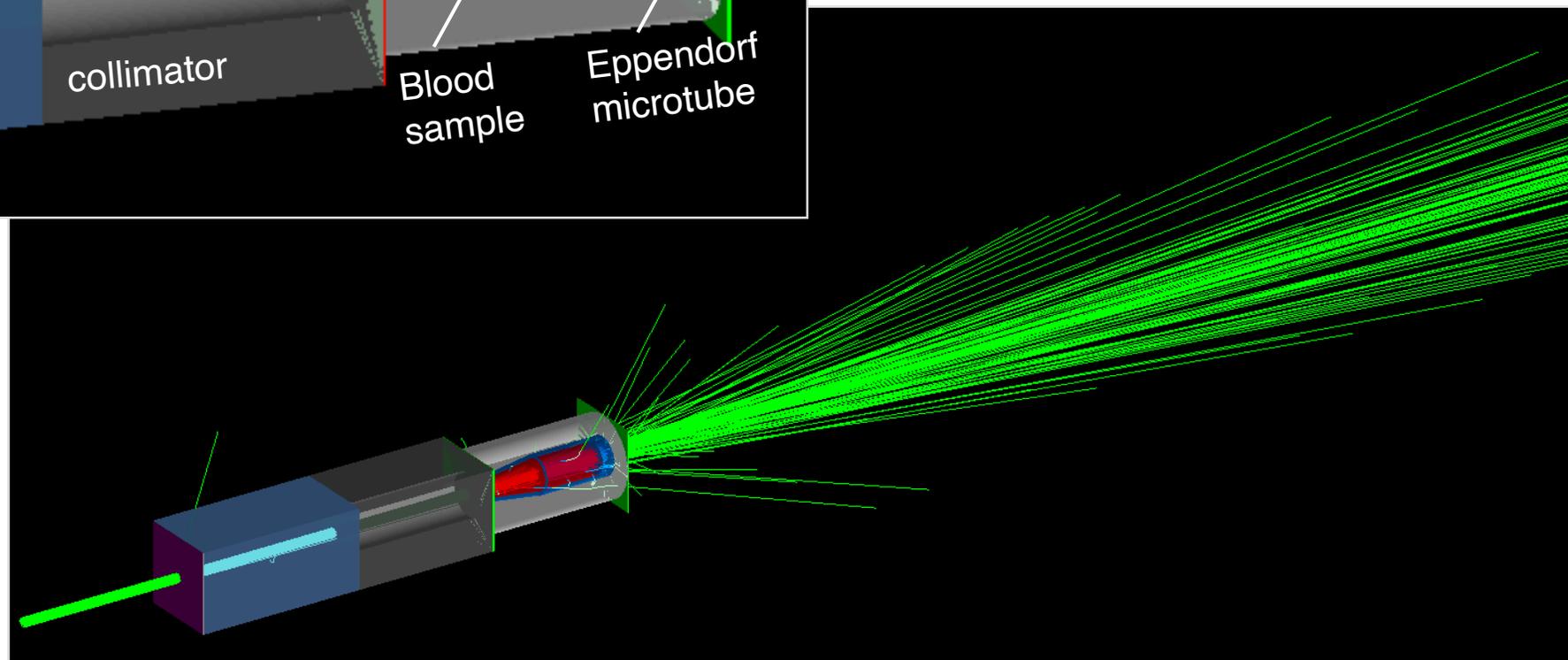
*Set-Up 1*

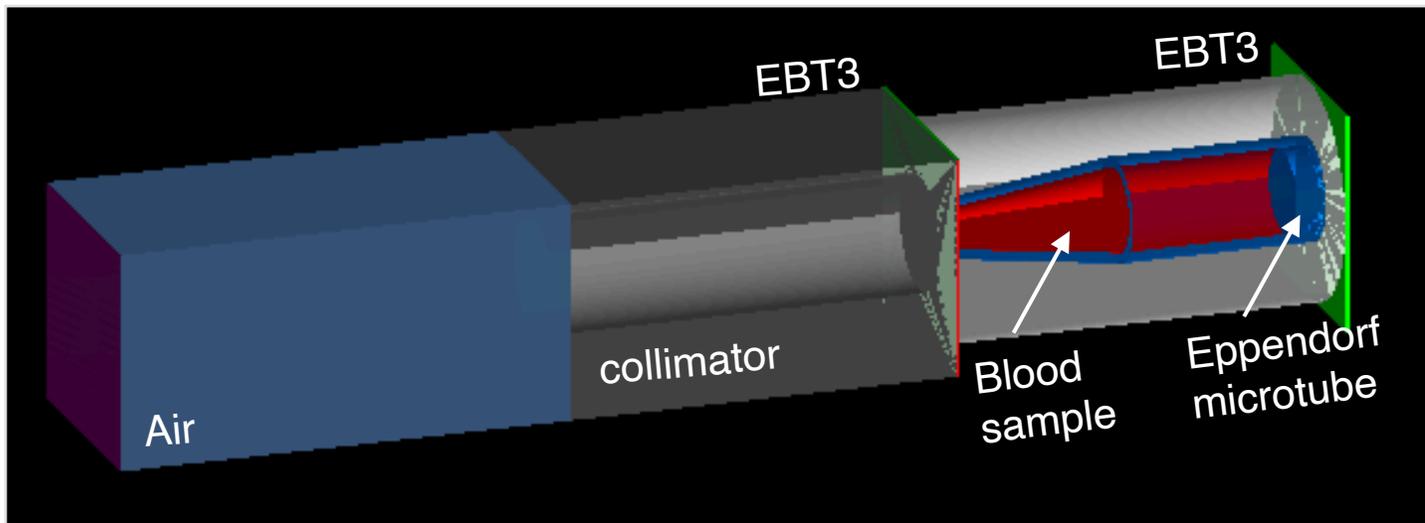




## VHEE Dosimetric assessment

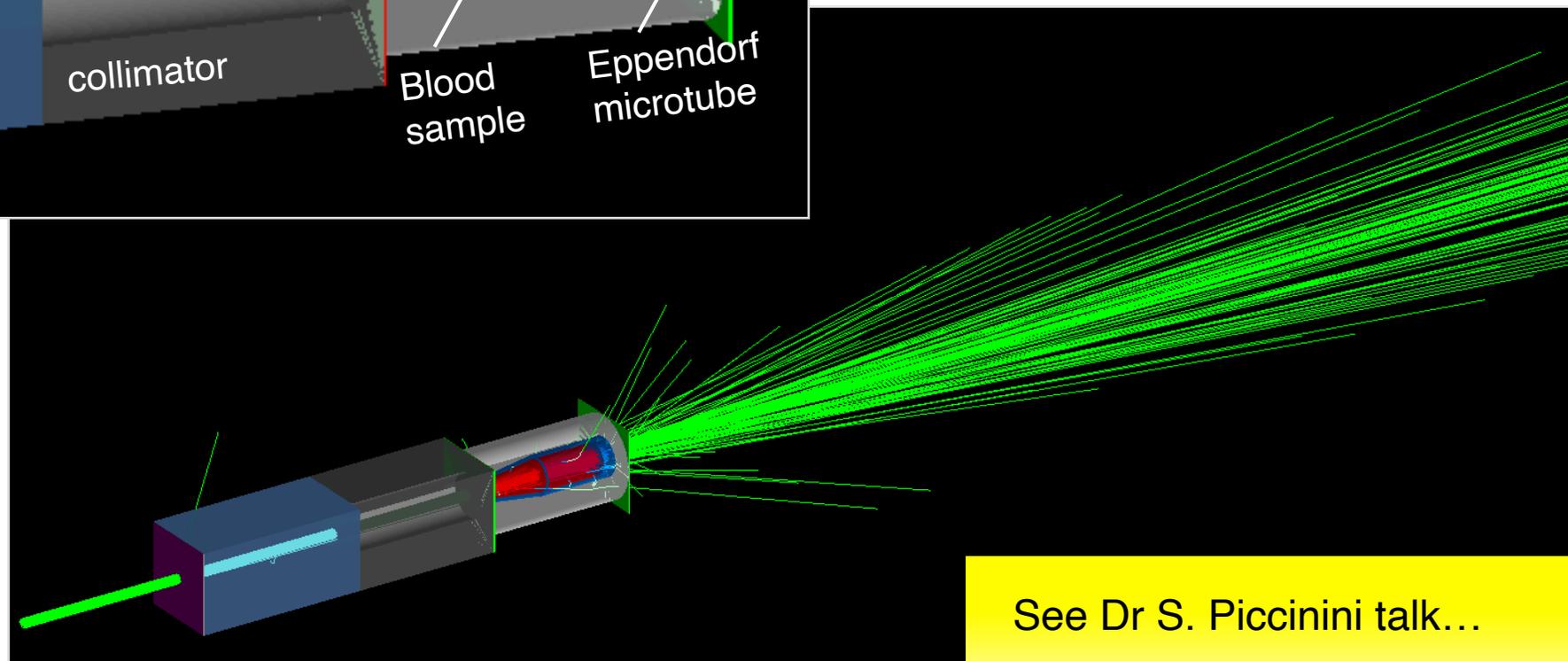
*Set-Up 2*





## VHEE Dosimetric assessment

*Set-Up 2*



See Dr S. Piccinini talk...



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4. Conclusions

# PiOneering Precision RadioTherapy - Inverse Monte Carlo-based Treatment Planning System for Very High Energy Electron Beams



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

Panaino

Part B2

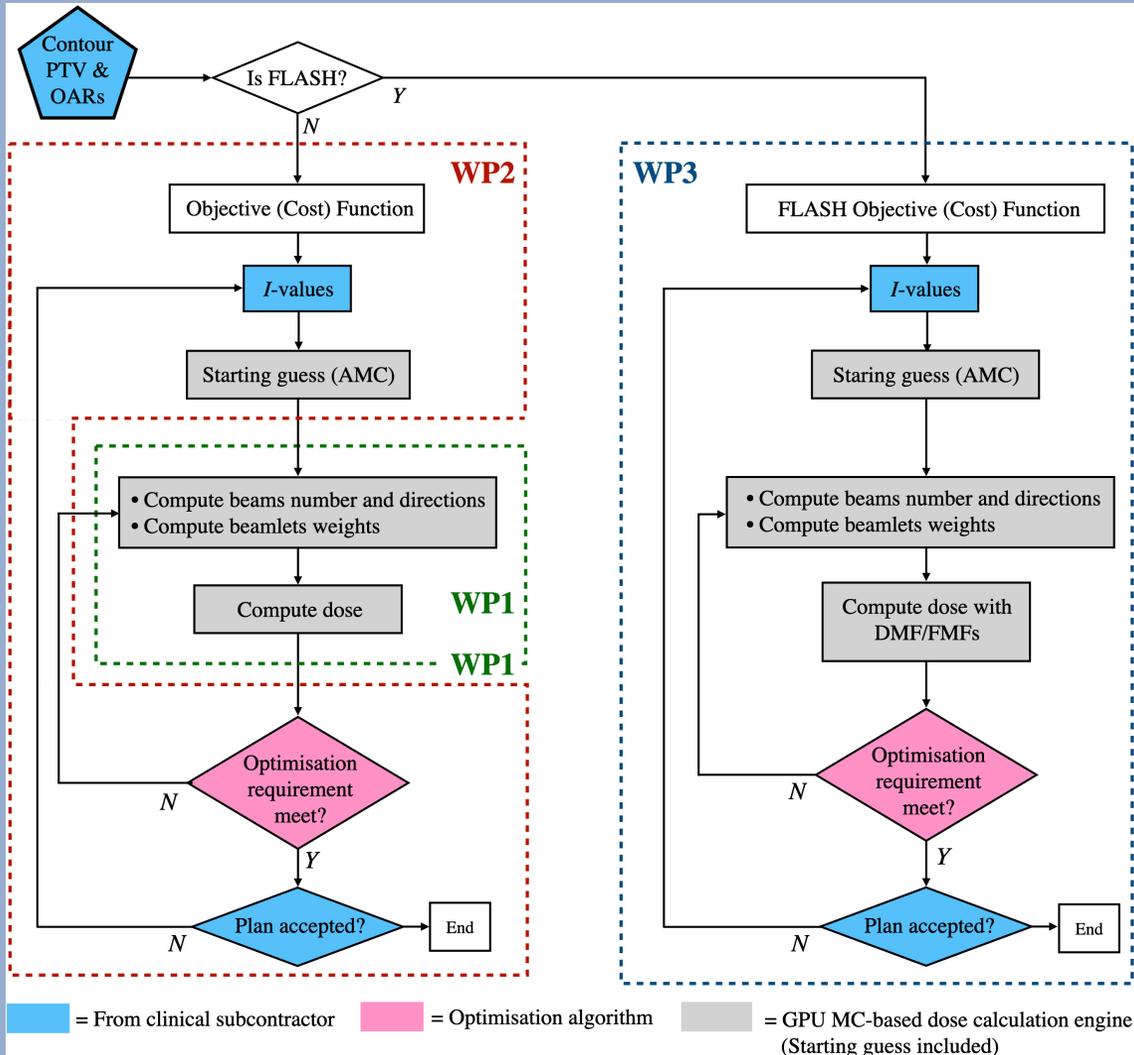
ERC Starting Grant  
Research Proposal [P

PiOneering Precision RadioTherapy - Inverse Monte Carlo-based Treatment Planning System for Very High Energy Electron Beams

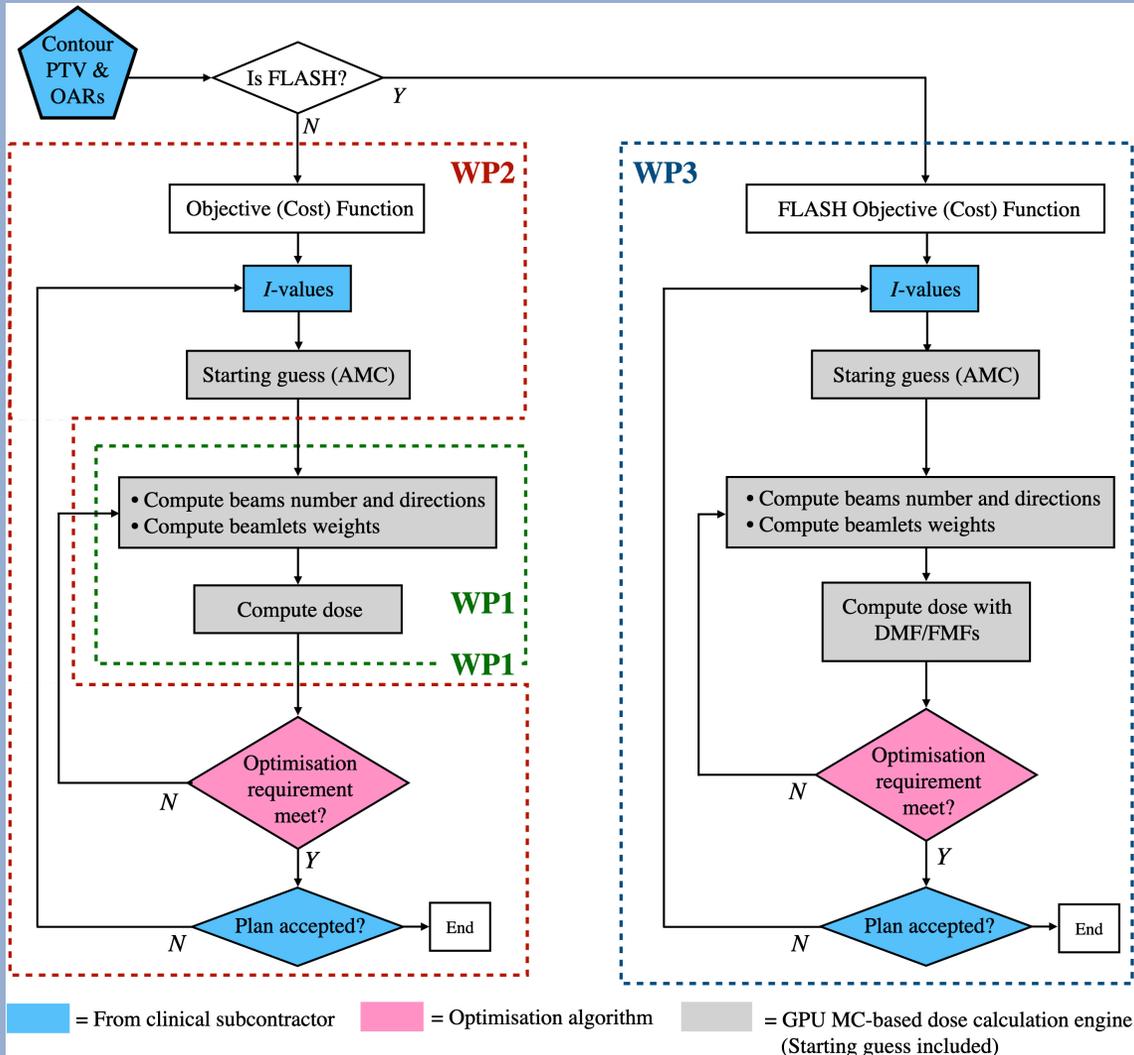
Part B2: The scientific proposal (max. 14 pages)

a. State-of-the-art and objectives

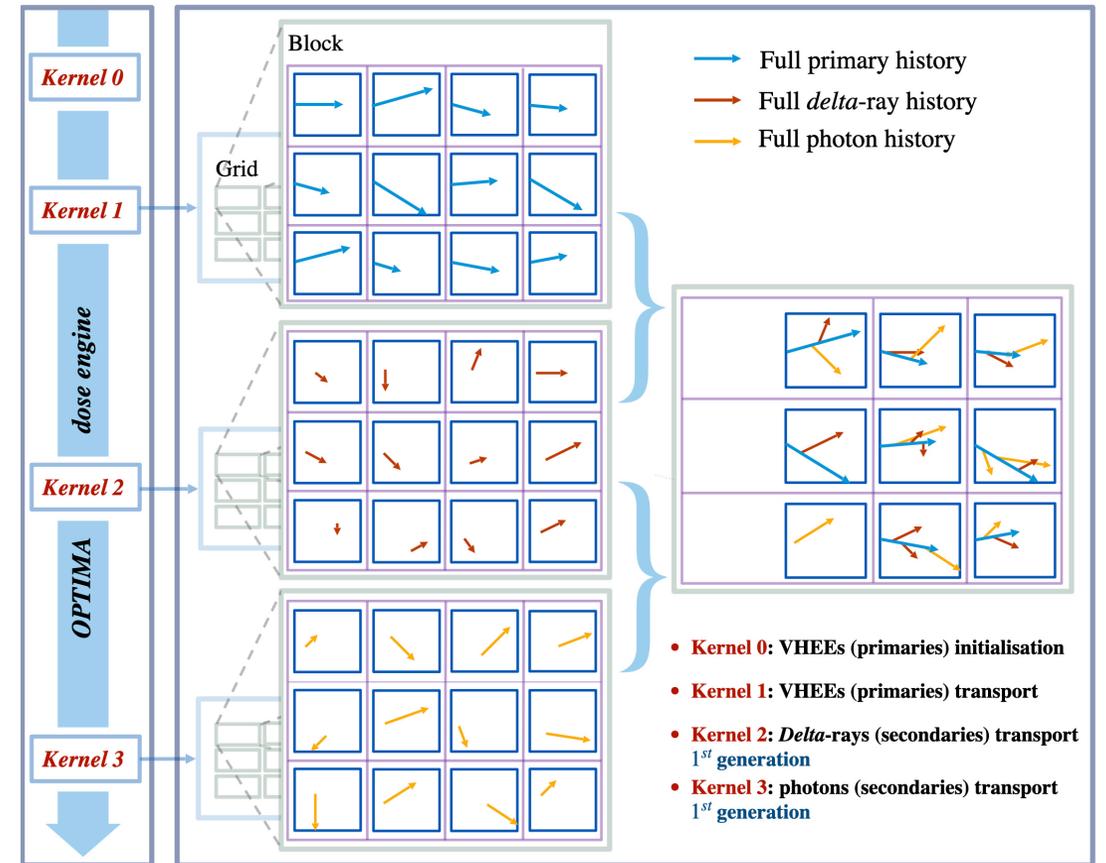
Over the past two decades, Very High Energy Electron (VHEE) beams (1-10 MeV), have gained significant attention for their potential in cancer treatment. They offer advantageous physical properties and represent a promising alternative to conventional radiotherapy. However, clinical implementation requires considerable advancements, particularly in Treatment Planning System (TPS) software suite used in clinical settings to design and deliver the treatment to a tumor, while minimising radiation exposure to adjacent healthy tissues. Monte Carlo (MC) methods is highly desirable due to their accuracy in simulating the dose distribution within the patient's body. This project aims to develop a TPS specifically designed for VHEE. OPTIMA will leverage advanced Monte Carlo simulations, ensuring high computational efficiency and accuracy.



Why GPU?



## Host (CPU) Device (GPU)



FASTEST-THE, Bando a cascata PNRR.

G. De Nunzio, Università del Salento



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4. Conclusions



## 1. Introduction: VHEE in Radiotherapy—Why, Where, and How?

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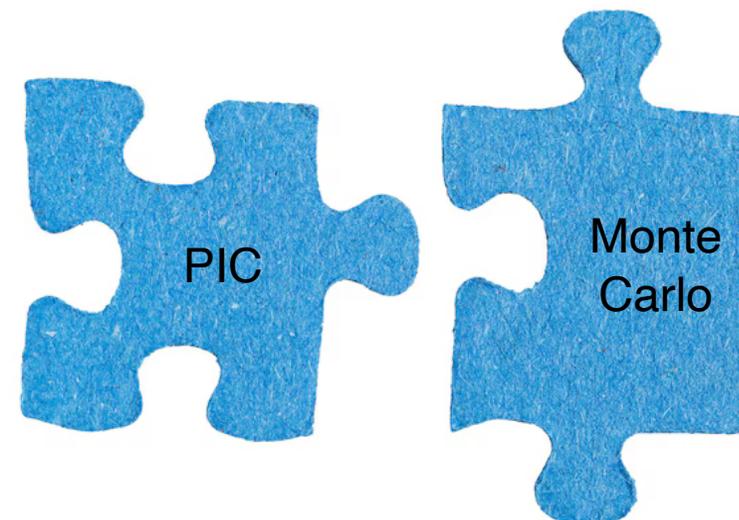
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3.3 VHEE dosimetric assessment

3.4 OPTIMA: VHEE Treatment Planning System (TPS)



## 4. Conclusions



1+2=3

What experimental physicists think I am doing

What my mum thinks I am doing

$\phi = BS \cos(Bn)$ ,  $\Delta = k\lambda - \max$ ,  $\omega_0 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{LC}}$ ,  $T = 2\pi\sqrt{LC}$ ,  $v = 2\pi Rn = \omega R$

$x = x_0 + v_x t$ ,  $v = \sqrt{\frac{3kT}{m_0}} = \sqrt{\frac{3RT}{M}}$ ,  $S_x = x - x_0$ ,  $\vec{v} = \frac{\vec{v}_0 - \vec{v}_0}{t}$

$A = FS \cos \alpha$ ,  $\omega = \frac{2\pi}{T} = 2\pi\nu$ ,  $V = \sqrt{\frac{RTC_p}{\mu C_v}}$ ,  $pV = \nu RT$ ,  $h_{\max} = \frac{v_0^2}{2g}$ ,  $\vec{a} = \frac{\vec{v} - \vec{v}_0}{t}$

$A = -F_{mp} S$ ,  $A = mgh$ ,  $V - V_0 = \beta V_0 (t - t_0)$ ,  $E_k = \frac{mv^2}{2} = eU$ ,  $v = \frac{m}{M} = \frac{N}{N_A}$ ,  $v_\varphi = \frac{S}{t}$

$A = -mgh$ ,  $R = \frac{m\nu}{qB}$ ,  $T = \frac{2\pi m}{qB}$ ,  $m = \frac{m_0}{\sqrt{1-\beta}}$ ,  $X_c = \frac{1}{\omega C}$ ,  $t = \frac{t_0}{\sqrt{1-\beta}}$ ,  $v_\varphi = \frac{v_0 + v}{2}$

$A = \frac{kx^2}{2}$ ,  $Q = cm(t_2 - t_1) = U + A$ ,  $S_y = h - h_0 = v_{0y}t + \frac{g_y t^2}{2}$

$N = \frac{A}{t}$ ,  $W = \frac{kq_1 q_2}{er}$ ,  $\vec{E}_n = \frac{3}{2} kT$ ,  $y = |3 \sin 2x| - 1$ ,  $X_L = \omega L$ ,  $\beta = \frac{v^2}{c^2}$ ,  $\vec{v} = \vec{v}_0 + \vec{a}t$

$N = Fv$ ,  $T = 2\pi\sqrt{\frac{l}{g}}$ ,  $\Delta = k\lambda + \frac{\lambda}{2} - \min$

$N = Fv$ ,  $E_k = \frac{mv^2}{2}$ ,  $\varphi = \frac{kq}{\epsilon r}$ ,  $V_x = V_0 - at$ ,  $S_x = V_{0x}t + \frac{a_x t^2}{2}$ ,  $F_A = \rho g V$ ,  $S_1 = \frac{v_1^2 - v_{0x}^2}{2a_x}$

$E_p = mgh$ ,  $E_p = mgh$ ,  $\vec{v} = \vec{v}_0 + \vec{g}t$

$E = \frac{kx^2}{2}$ ,  $v = \frac{\lambda}{T}$ ,  $\vec{p} = \frac{m_0 v}{\sqrt{1-\beta}}$ ,  $S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t^2 + 2 \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} t \right)$ ,  $F_2 = F_1 \frac{S_2}{S_1}$ ,  $\vec{v} = \frac{\vec{S}}{t}$

$E = E_k + E_p = \text{const}$ ,  $S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t^2 + 2 \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} t + \frac{V_{0x}^2}{a_x^2} - \frac{V_{0x}^2}{a_x^2} \right)$

$A = \frac{mv_2^2}{2} - \frac{mv_1^2}{2}$ ,  $S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t^2 + 2 \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} t + \frac{V_{0x}^2}{a_x^2} \right) - \frac{V_{0x}^2}{2a_x}$

$\eta = \frac{A_n}{A} = \frac{N_n}{N}$ ,  $S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t + \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} \right)^2 - \frac{V_{0x}^2}{2a_x}$

What I think I am doing



1+2=3

What my mum thinks I am doing

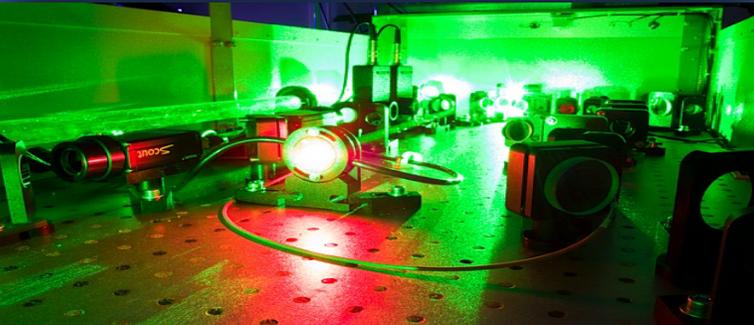
What my mum thinks I am doing



What I am actually doing

$\phi = BS \cos(Bn)$   $\Delta = k\lambda - m\lambda$   $\omega_0 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{LC}}$   $T = 2\pi\sqrt{LC}$   $v = 2\pi Rn = \omega R$   
 $A = FS \cos \alpha$   $\omega = \frac{2\pi}{T} = 2\pi\nu$   $V = \sqrt{\frac{RTC_p}{\mu C_v}}$   $v = \sqrt{\frac{3kT}{m_0}} = \sqrt{\frac{3RT}{M}}$   $x = x_0 + v_0 t$   
 $\rho V = \nu RT$   $h_{max} = \frac{v_0^2}{2g}$   $\vec{a} = \frac{\vec{v} - \vec{v}_0}{t}$   $S_x = x - x_0$   
 $t_0) E_k = \frac{mv_0^2}{2} = eU_s$   $v = \frac{m}{M} = \frac{N}{N_A}$   $v_\varphi = \frac{s}{t}$   
 $m = \frac{m_0}{\sqrt{1-\beta}}$   $X_c = \frac{1}{\omega C}$   $t = \frac{t_0}{\sqrt{1-\beta}}$   $v_\varphi = \frac{v_0 + v}{2}$   
 $1+A S_y = h - h_0 = v_{0y}t + \frac{g_y t^2}{2}$   $\vec{v} = \vec{v}_0 + \vec{a}t$   
 $\frac{3}{2}kT y = |3\sin 2x| - 1$   $X_L = \omega L$   $\beta = \frac{v^2}{c^2}$   $\vec{S} = \vec{v}_0 t + \frac{\vec{a}t^2}{2}$   
 $+\frac{a}{2} - \min$   $S_x = V_{0x}t + \frac{a_x t^2}{2}$   $F_A = \rho g V$   $S_y = \frac{v_x^2 - v_{0x}^2}{2a_x}$   
 $\cdot at$   $P_1 = P - F_A$   $\vec{v} = \vec{v}_0 + \vec{g}t$   
 $\frac{v_0 v}{-\beta} S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t^2 + 2 \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} t \right)$   $F_2 = F_1 \frac{S_2}{S_1}$   $\vec{v} = \frac{S}{t}$   
 $\rightarrow t$   $S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t^2 + 2 \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} t + \frac{V_{0x}^2}{a_x^2} - \frac{V_{0x}^2}{a_x^2} \right)$   $v_0$   
 $A = \frac{mv_2^2}{2} - \frac{mv_1^2}{2}$   $S_x = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t^2 + 2 \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} t + \frac{V_{0x}^2}{a_x^2} \right) - \frac{V_{0x}^2}{2a_x}$   
 $\eta = \frac{A_\eta}{A} = \frac{N_\eta}{N}$   $S_x(t) = \frac{a_x}{2} \left( t + \frac{V_{0x}}{a_x} \right)^2 - \frac{V_{0x}^2}{2a_x}$

What I think I am doing



## The Intense Laser Irradiation Laboratory INO-CNR, Istituto Nazionale di Ottica, Pisa

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- Alessandro FREGOSI
- Emma HUME
- Mohamed EZZIAT
- Federico AVELLA
- David GREGOCKI
- Simon VLACHOS
- Gianluca CELLAMARE