Xe
XENON
Dark Matter Project

DARWIN

GERDA

LEGEND
Large Enriched
Germanium Experiment
for Neutrinoless ββ Decay

# ELUCIDATING THE NATURE OF NEUTRINOS:

## THE STATE-OF-THE ART IN SEARCHES FOR NEUTRINOLESS DOUBLE BETA DECAY

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**LAURA BAUDIS**
**UNIVERSITÄT ZÜRICH**

University of Zurich$^{UZH}$

**MAINZ PHYSICS COLLOQUIUM**
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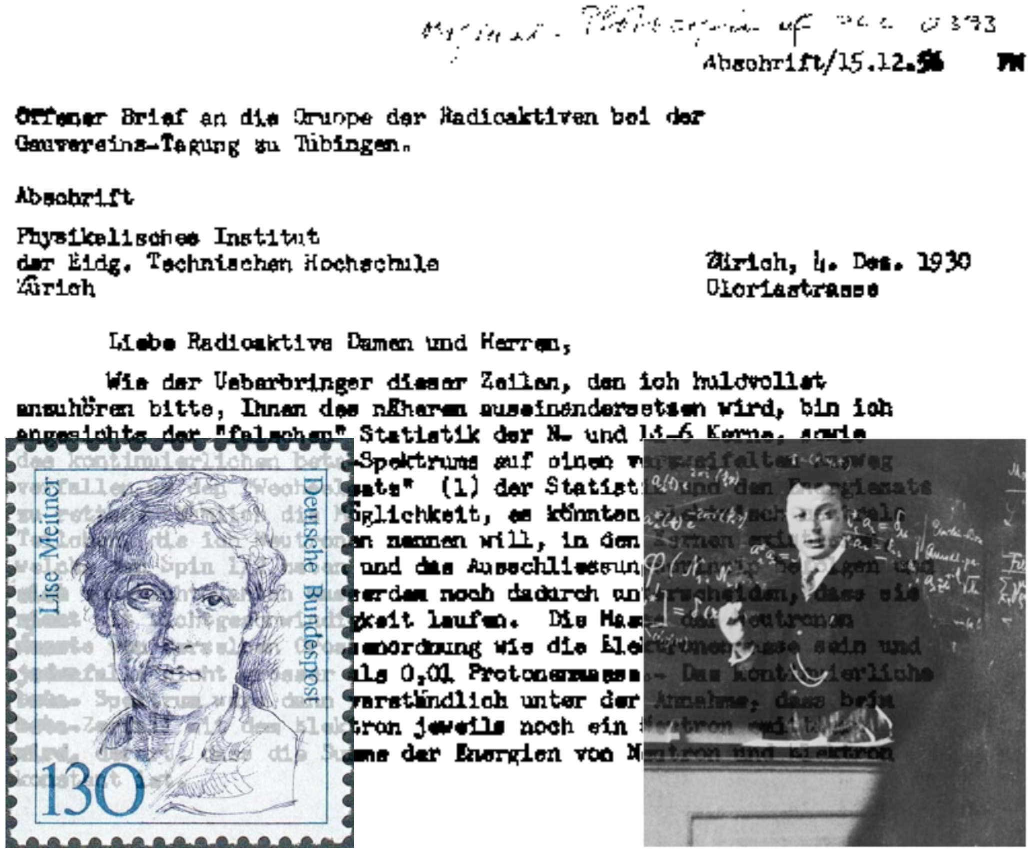
# FIRST, SOME HISTORY

- Zürich, December 4, 1930: Wolfgang Pauli, a 30 years old professor at the ETH, writes perhaps one of the most famous letters in modern physics: “Dear radioactive ladies and gentlemen…”
- The letter was addressed mainly to Lise Meitner*, who had been working on radioactivity since 1907 and was attending a meeting in Tübingen (Pauli could not attend, because “a ball which takes place in Zürich the night of the sixth to sevenths of December makes my presence here indispensable”)

- Pauli was suggesting “a desperate way out” of some paradox that had arisen in the nascent field of nuclear physics
- He was proposing “a terrible thing” - a new subatomic particle, the neutrino, a particle “which can not be detected”
- In 1930, only the electron, the proton and the photon were known, and Pauli’s idea  was quite radical



Abschrift/15.12.56 PM

Offener Brief an die Gruppe der Radioaktiven bei der
Gauvereins-Tagung zu Tübingen.

Abschrift

Physikalisches Institut
der Eidg. Technischen Hochschule
Zürich

Zürich, 4. Dez. 1930
Gloriastrasse

Liebe Radioaktive Damen und Herren,

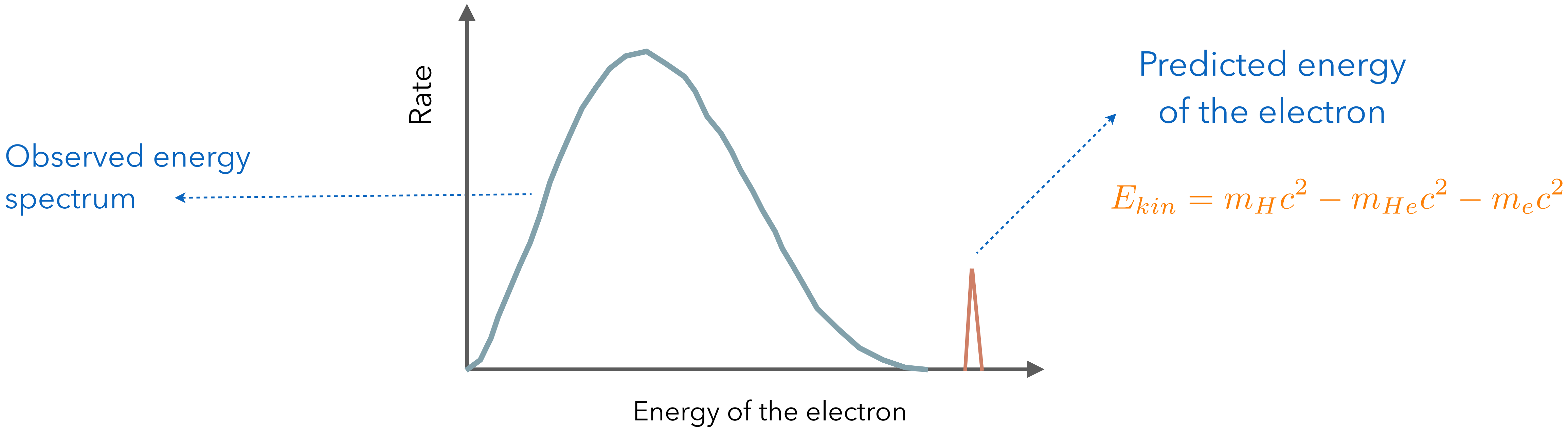
Wie der Ueberbringer dieser Zeilen, den ich huldvollst anzuhören bitte, Ihnen des näheren auseinandersetzen wird, bin ich angesichts der "falschen" Statistik der N- und Li-6 Kerne, sowie

*Lise Meitner had made Pauli aware of the b-decay problem

# THE PARADOX WAS… “THE ENERGY CRISIS”

- It had been observed by experimental physicists that some nuclei are not stable, but decay under the emission of “beta rays” (electrons)
- The energy of the emitted electrons could be measured - the spectrum was continuous
- This seemed to violate a well respected law in physics: the conservation of energy

$${}^{3}_{1}\mathrm{H} \longrightarrow {}^{3}_{2}\,\mathrm{He} + e^{-}$$



Observed energy spectrum

Predicted energy of the electron

$$E_{kin} = m_H c^2 - m_{He} c^2 - m_e c^2$$

# ONLY ONE REASONABLE WAY OUT…

- A new particle: the neutrino (Pauli: “my foolish child”). It would share the energy with the electron, but would not be observed because of its incredible weak interaction with matter

$$ {}^{3}_{1}\mathrm{H} \longrightarrow {}^{3}_{2}\,\mathrm{He} + e^{-} + \bar{\nu}_e $$

- Niels Bohr, 1934: *“I must confess that I don’t really feel fully convinced of the physical existence of the neutrino”*

- Arthur Eddington, 1939: *“I am not much impressed by the neutrino theory…. Dare I say that physicists will not have sufficient ingenuity to make neutrinos?”*

- *Thus,* while the idea was considered by many as a very useful hypothesis, few* believed it is a real particle (or that it can ever be detected**), until…

*Enrico Fermi did take the idea seriously and formulated a theoretical basis for the interaction between a neutrino, an electron, a proton and a neutron (1934, Z. Phys. 88)

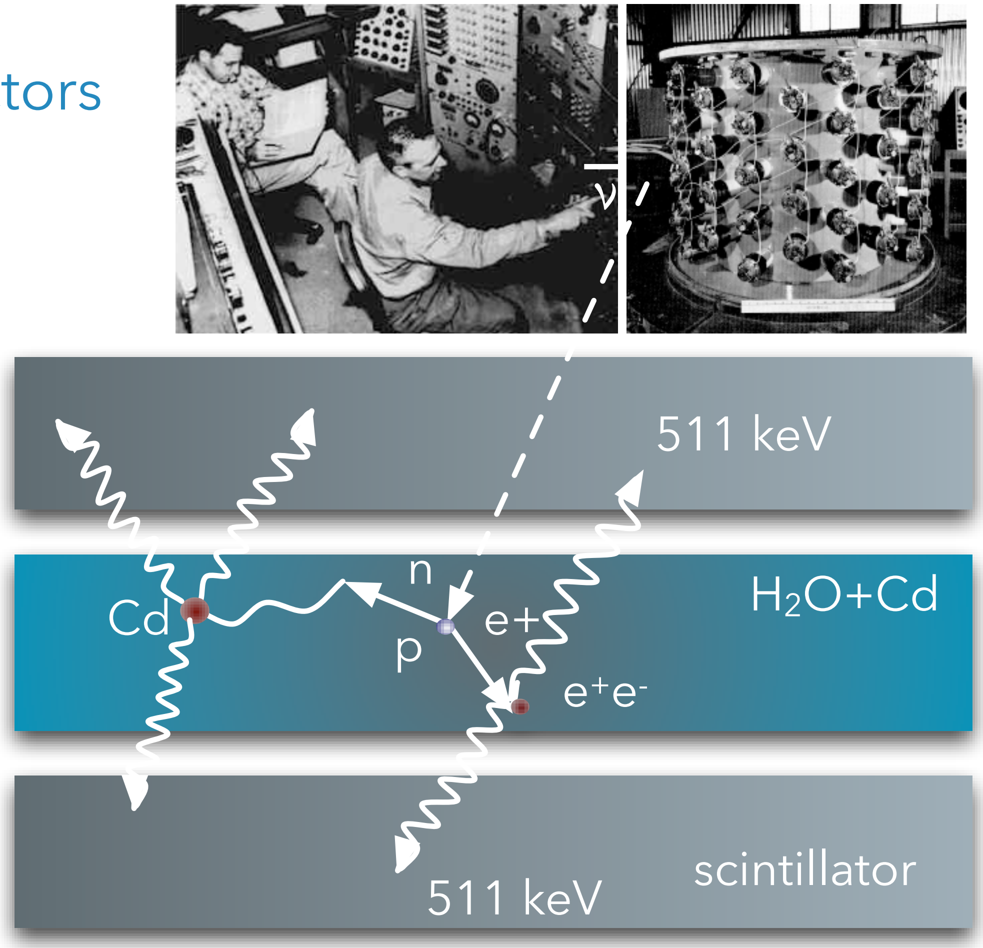
** Hans Bethe: “there is a considerable evidence for the neutrino hypothesis. Unfortunately, all this evidence is indirect; and more unfortunately, there seems at present to be no way of getting any direct evidence. “

# NEUTRINO DETECTION

- … some 30 years later in 1956, when Clyde Cowan and Fred Reines started the “Project Poltergeist” and finally detected (anti)neutrinos at the Savannah River Reactor in South Carolina

$$p + \bar{\nu}_e \longrightarrow n + e^+$$

- Detector: 400 l water + $CdCl_2$ seen by 90 photodetectors



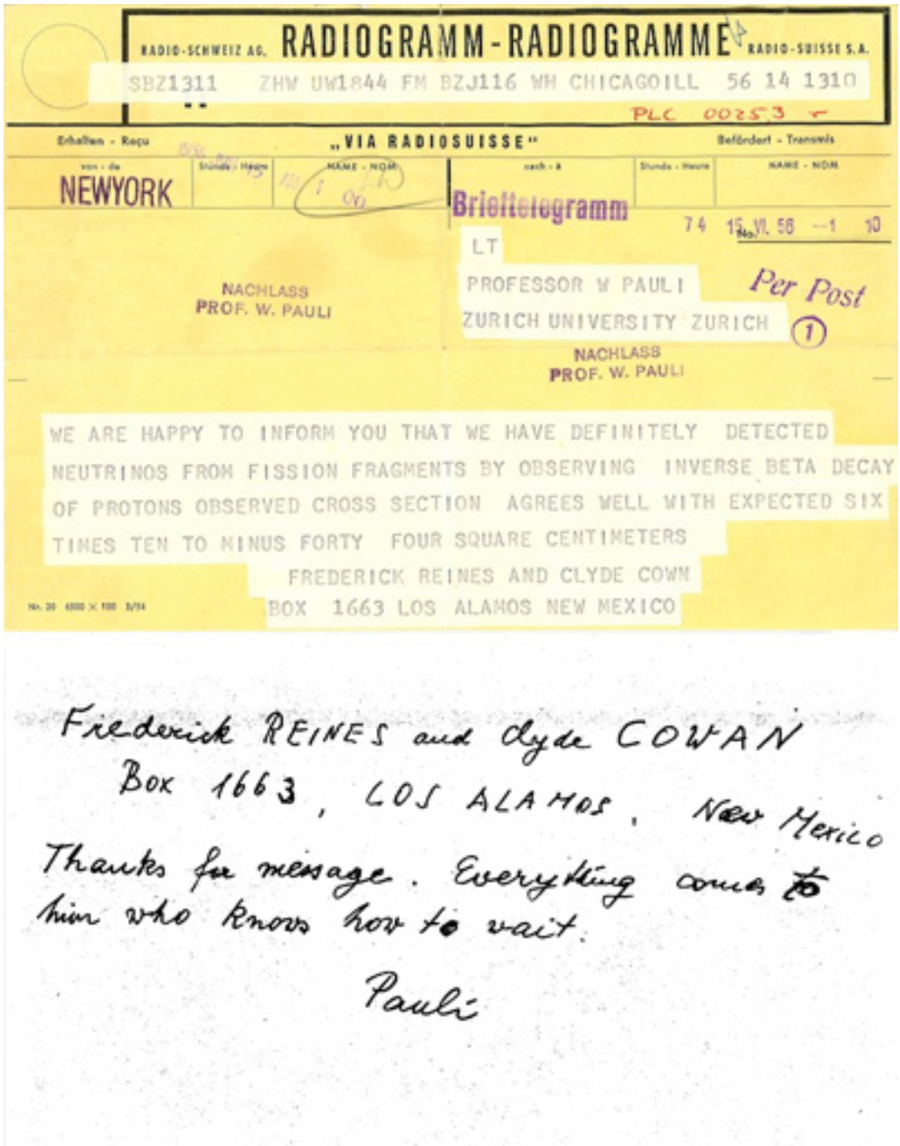
Detection via delayed (a few μs) coincidence reaction:

prompt: $e^+ + e^- \rightarrow \gamma + \gamma$

delayed: $n + Cd \rightarrow \gamma' s$

# A RADIOGRAMME TO PAULI, A SHORT ANSWER…

- June 1956: Pauli was at a CERN Symposium, and announced the most exciting news of the meeting* - he had just received a telegram from Cowan & Reines
    - "We are happy to inform you that we have definitely detected neutrinos…"
- Pauli's reply: "Thanks for message. Everything comes to him who knows how to wait."



RADIO-SCHWEIZ AG. RADIOGRAMM-RADIOGRAMME RADIO-SUISSE S.A.

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Erhalten - Reçu „VIA RADIOSUISSE" Befördert - Transmis

NEWYORK

Briefltelegramm

74 15.VI.56 --1 10

LT

PROFESSOR W PAULI

ZURICH UNIVERSITY ZURICH

Per Post

NACHLASS
PROF. W. PAULI

WE ARE HAPPY TO INFORM YOU THAT WE HAVE DEFINITELY DETECTED NEUTRINOS FROM FISSION FRAGMENTS BY OBSERVING INVERSE BETA DECAY OF PROTONS OBSERVED CROSS SECTION AGREES WELL WITH EXPECTED SIX TIMES TEN TO MINUS FORTY FOUR SQUARE CENTIMETERS

FREDERICK REINES AND CLYDE COWN
BOX 1663 LOS ALAMOS NEW MEXICO

Frederick REINES and Clyde COWAN
Box 1663, LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico

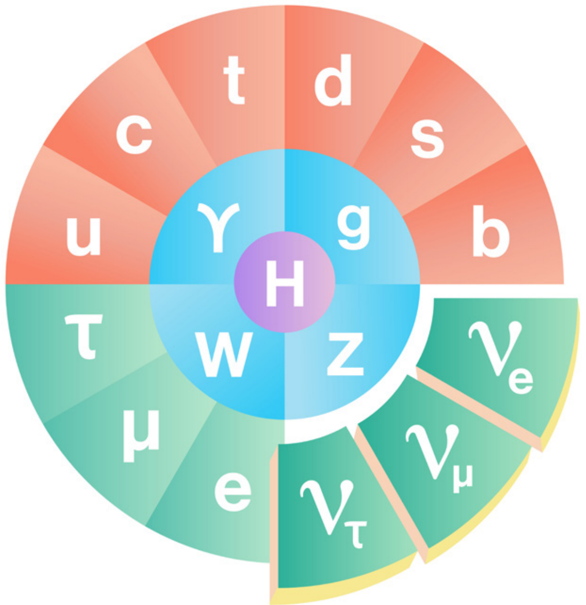
Thanks for message. Everything comes to him who knows how to wait.

Pauli

*See also: Cecilia Jarlskog, "Birth of the neutrinos, from Pauli to the Reines-Cowan experiment", 2019 - International Conference of the History of the Neutrino

# WHAT ARE NEUTRINOS?

- Elementary particles in the Standard Model which only interact via the weak interaction (they participate in charged current interactions other with the corresponding charged lepton)
  - The interactions are of "V-A" type: neutrinos are left-handed, anti-neutrinos are right-handed
- In the SM: flavour lepton number is conserved and neutrinos are exactly massless
  - Today many known sources of neutrinos

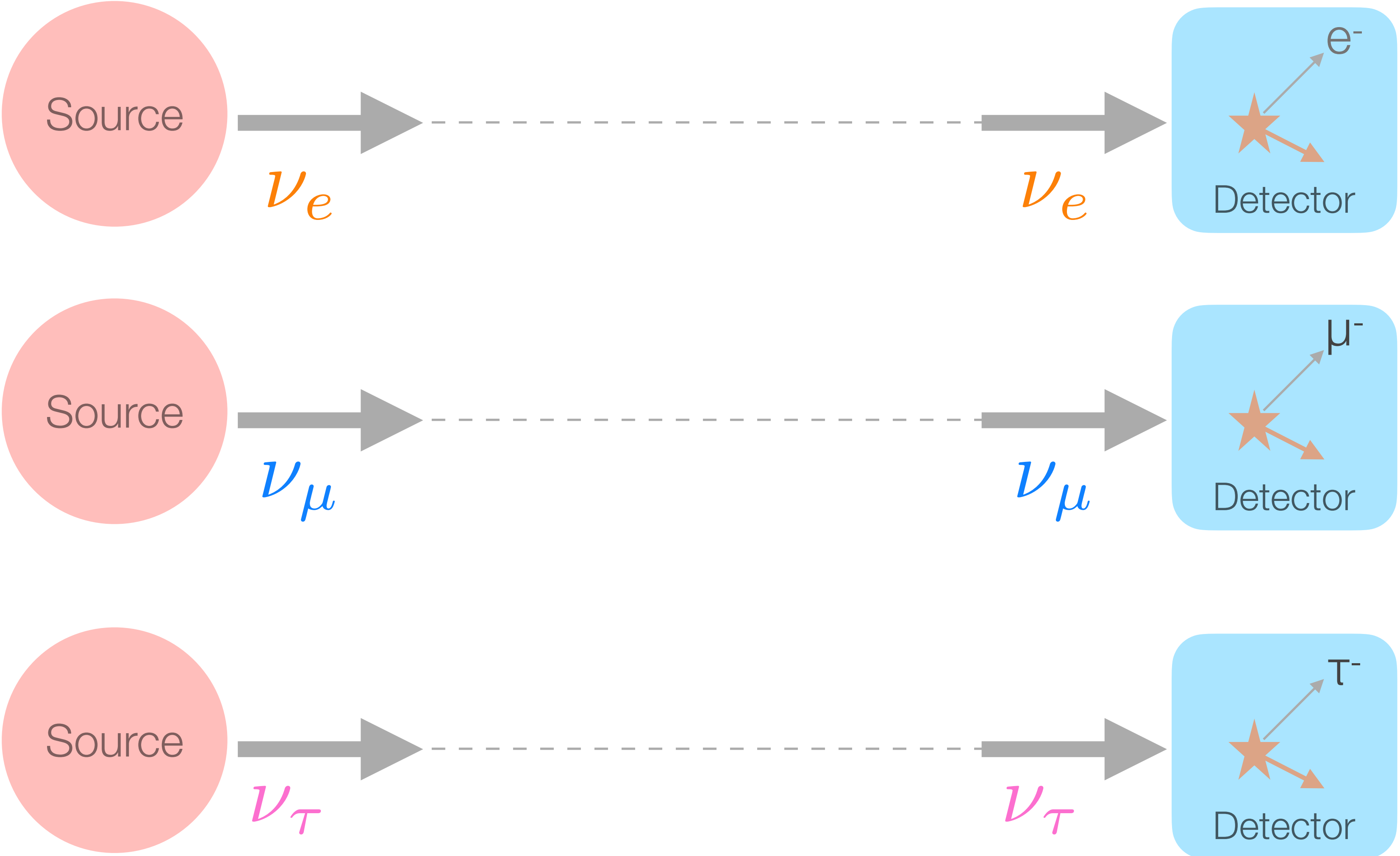


$$\begin{pmatrix} u \\ d \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \nu_e \\ e^- \end{pmatrix}$$

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT NEUTRINOS?

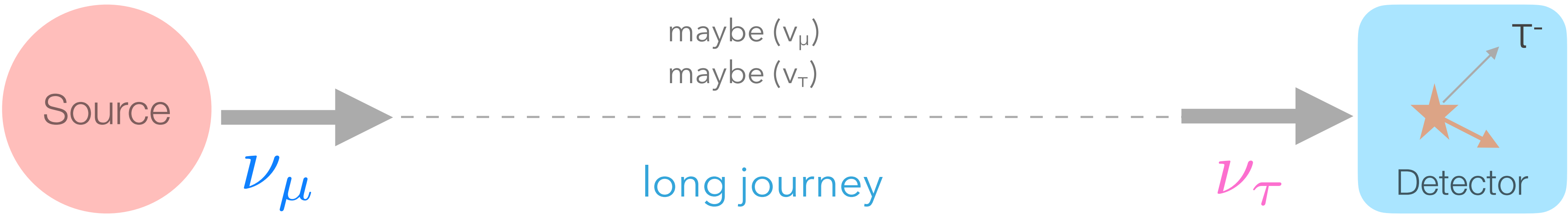
- They come in 3 flavours

| $\nu_e$ | $\nu_\mu$ | $\nu_\tau$ |
|---|---|---|
| electron | muon | tau |



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT NEUTRINOS?

- However when they propagate over macroscopic distances, they oscillate between flavours



Source

$\nu_\mu$

maybe ($\nu_\mu$)
maybe ($\nu_\tau$)

long journey

$\nu_\tau$

$\tau^-$

Detector

- This is a well-studied effect in quantum mechanics
- It means that flavour is not conserved over macroscopic distances (ν states with different flavours $\nu_\alpha$ mix with ν states with different masses $\nu_i$)

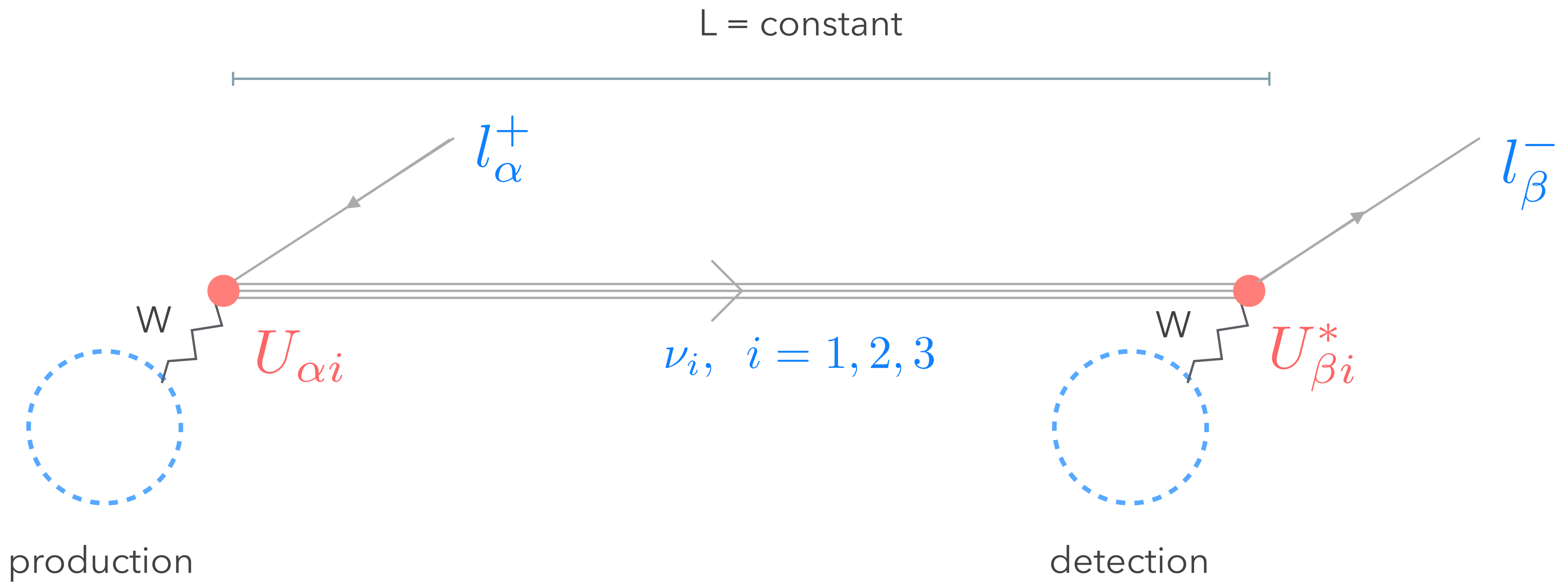
Unitary neutrino mixing matrix (PMNS matrix)

$$P(\nu_\alpha \to \nu_\beta) = \sum_{i,j=1}^{3} U_{\alpha i} U^*_{\beta i} U^*_{\alpha j} U_{\beta j} \exp\left(-i \frac{m^2_{\nu_i} - m^2_{\nu_j}}{2E} x\right)$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} \nu_e \\ \nu_\mu \\ \nu_\tau \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} U_{e1} & U_{e2} & U_{e3} \\ U_{\mu 1} & U_{\mu 2} & U_{\mu 3} \\ U_{\tau 1} & U_{\tau 2} & U_{\tau 3} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \nu_1 \\ \nu_2 \\ \nu_3 \end{pmatrix}$$

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT NEUTRINOS?

- From oscillation experiments: non-zero masses and non-trivial mixing



Nobel Prize 2015: to Takaaki Kajita and Arthur McDonald *"for the discovery of neutrino oscillations, which shows that neutrinos have mass"*

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT NEUTRINOS?

- In general: 3 mixing angles, 1 CP violating phase, 2 independent $\Delta m^2$

$$U = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & c_{23} & s_{23} \\ 0 & -s_{23} & c_{23} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_{13} & 0 & s_{13}e^{-i\delta} \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ -s_{13}e^{i\delta} & 0 & c_{13} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_{12} & s_{12} & 0 \\ -s_{12} & c_{12} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

| Data from atmospheric ν's and accelerators | Data from reactors and accelerators | Data from solar and reactor neutrinos |
|---|---|---|
| $\theta_{23} \approx 48$ deg | $\theta_{13} \approx 8.6$ deg | $\theta_{12} \approx 34$ deg |

$$\delta \simeq 3\pi/2$$

NuFIT 4.1 2019

$$c_{ij} = cos\theta_{ij}$$

$$s_{ij} = sin\theta_{ij}$$

$$0 \leq \delta < 2\pi$$

*Very different than the CKM mixing angles:

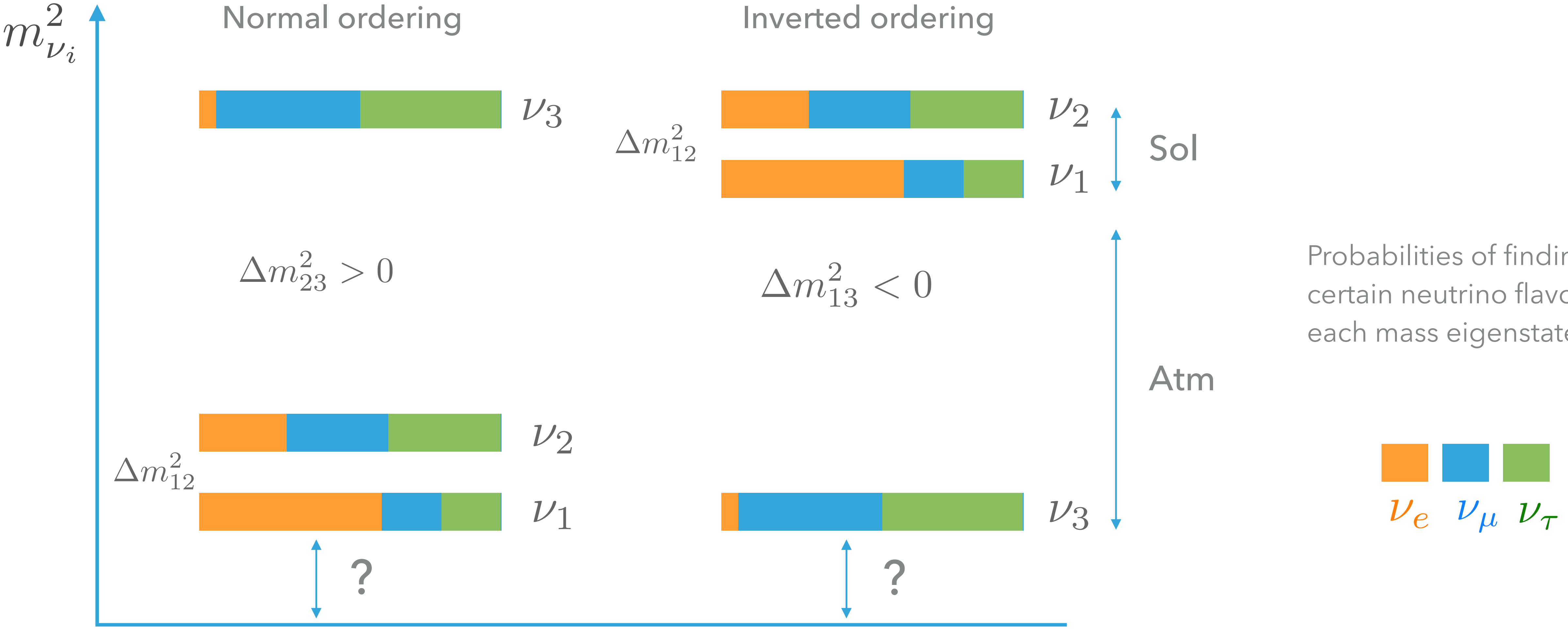
$$\theta_{12} \approx 13^\circ, \quad \theta_{23} \approx 2.4^\circ, \quad \theta_{13} \approx 0.2^\circ$$

# OPEN QUESTIONS IN NEUTRINO PHYSICS

- From oscillation experiments: we know the mixing angles (or the $U_{\alpha i}$) and the $\Delta m^2$

$$\Delta m^2_{atm} \approx 2.5 \times 10^{-3}\,\mathrm{eV}^2$$
$$\Delta m^2_{sol} \approx 8 \times 10^{-5}\,\mathrm{eV}^2$$

- However: 2 possible mass orderings and no information on the mass scale



Probabilities of finding a certain neutrino flavour in each mass eigenstate ~ $|U_{\alpha i}|^2$

# OPEN QUESTIONS IN NEUTRINO PHYSICS

- Many questions remain open:
  - What are the absolute values of neutrino masses, and the mass ordering?
  - What is the nature of neutrinos? Are they Dirac or Majorana particles?
  - What is the origin of small neutrino masses?
  - What are the precise values of the mixing angles, and the origin of the large ν mixing?
  - Is the standard three-neutrino picture correct, to do other, sterile neutrinos exist?
  - What is the precise value of the CP violating phase δ?
  - …

# NEUTRINO MASSES

- Three main methods: direct mass measurements, 0νββ-decay, cosmology
  - the observation of flavour oscillations imply *a lower bound on the mass of the heavier neutrino*
  - depending on the mass ordering, this lower bound is ≈ 0.05 eV

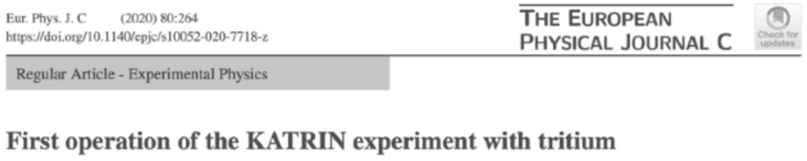
- The most direct probe: precision measurements of β-decays

$$^3_1\mathrm{H} \longrightarrow ^3_2\mathrm{He} + e^- + \bar{\nu}_e$$

- The effect of a non-zero neutrino masses is observed kinematically: when a ν is produced, some of the energy exchanged in the process is spent by the non-zero neutrino mass

- The effects are however very small & difficult to observe

- KATRIN will probe the eff. $\nu_e$ mass down to 0.2 eV



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https://doi.org/10.1140/epjc/s10052-020-7718-z

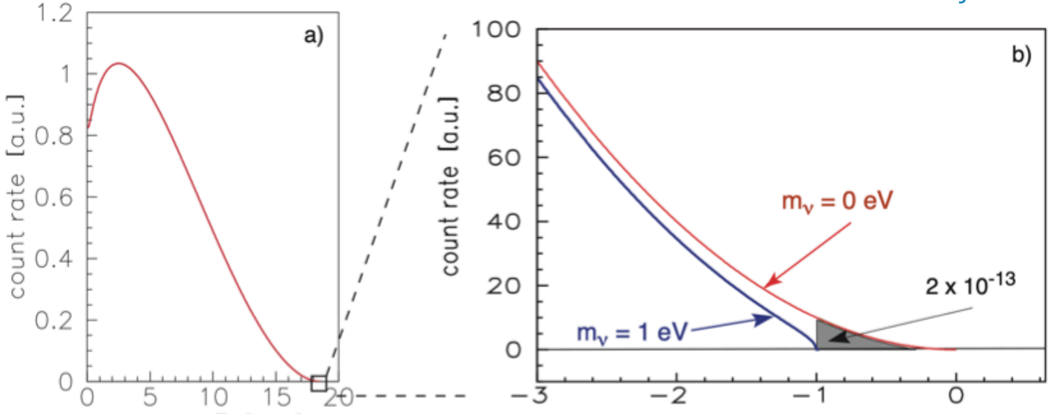
THE EUROPEAN PHYSICAL JOURNAL C

Regular Article - Experimental Physics

**First operation of the KATRIN experiment with tritium**

$$m^2_{\nu_e} = \sum_i |U_{ei}|^2 m_i^2$$

$E_0$= 18.6 keV, $T_{1/2}$ = 12.3 y



hep-ex/0109033

# NEUTRINO MASSES

- Three main methods: direct mass measurements, 0νββ-decay, cosmology
  - the observation of flavour oscillations imply *a lower bound on the mass of the heavier neutrino*
  - depending on the mass ordering, this lower bound is ≈ 0.05 eV

- Cosmology: neutrinos influence the LSS and the CMB (with the ν density ratio):

$$\frac{\rho_\nu}{\rho_\gamma} = \frac{7}{8} N_{eff} \left(\frac{4}{11}\right)^{4/3}$$

$N_{\mathrm{eff}} = 3$ ~ number of active neutrinos

- The constraints are on the sum of neutrino masses

$$\sum_i m_i$$

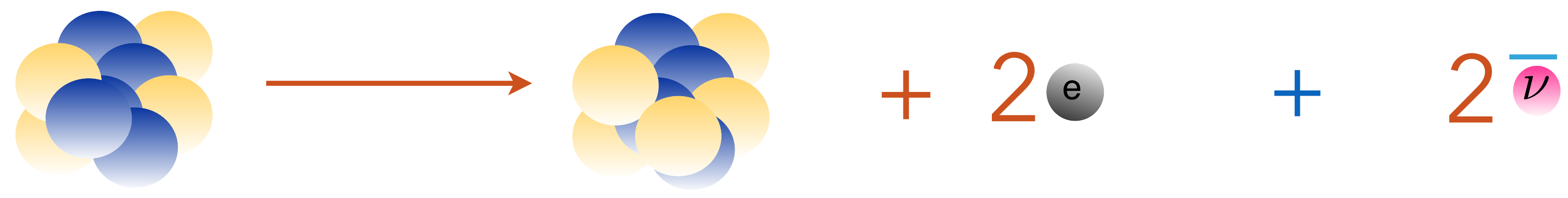
- Dependent on the parameters of the cosmological model (ΛCDM)

- In general, depending on which data is included (see e.g., review in PDG2019)

$$\sum_i m_i < (0.11 - 0.54)\,\mathrm{eV}$$

# DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- Some of the open questions in neutrino physics can be addressed with an extremely rare nuclear decay process: the double beta decay
  - What is the nature of neutrinos? Are they Dirac or Majorana particles?
  - What are the absolute values of neutrino masses, and the mass ordering?
  - What is the origin of small neutrino masses?



+ 2 e + 2 $\bar{\nu}$

Nucleus A Nucleus B Elektrons (Anti)Neutrinos

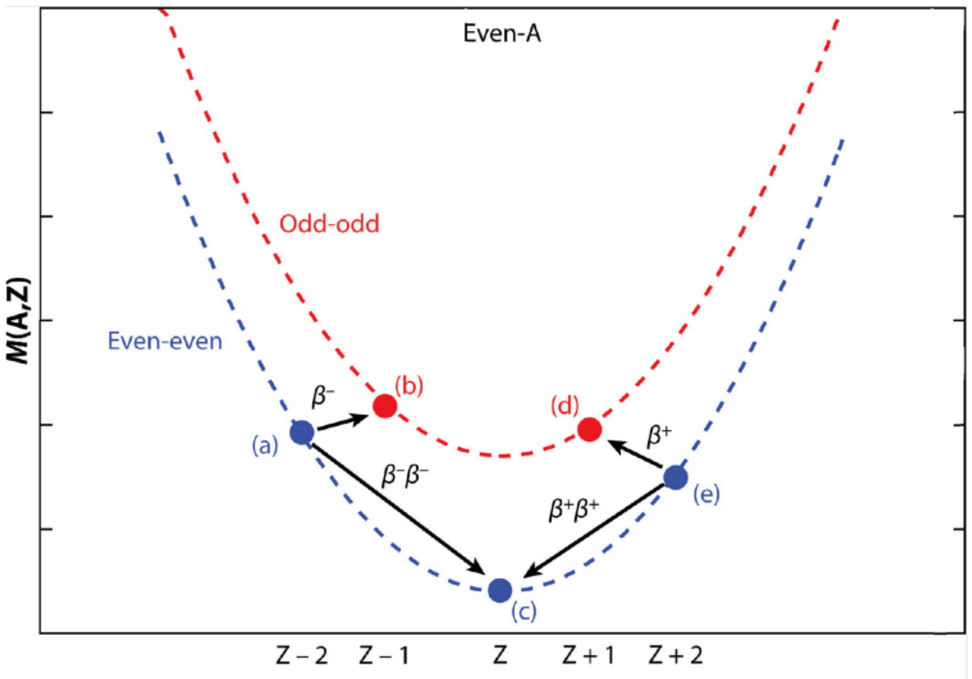
# THE DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- If simple $\beta^-$ or $\beta^+$-decay is forbidden on energetic grounds
- Predicted by Maria-Goeppert Mayer in 1935
- The probability for a decay is very small, the mean lifetime of a nucleus is much larger than the age of the universe ($\tau_U \sim 1.4\times10^{10}$ a)

$$\tau_{2\nu} \approx 10^{20} y$$

- Thus: a very rare process
- However, if a large amount of nuclei is used, the process can be observed experimentally

mass parabola of isobars with even A

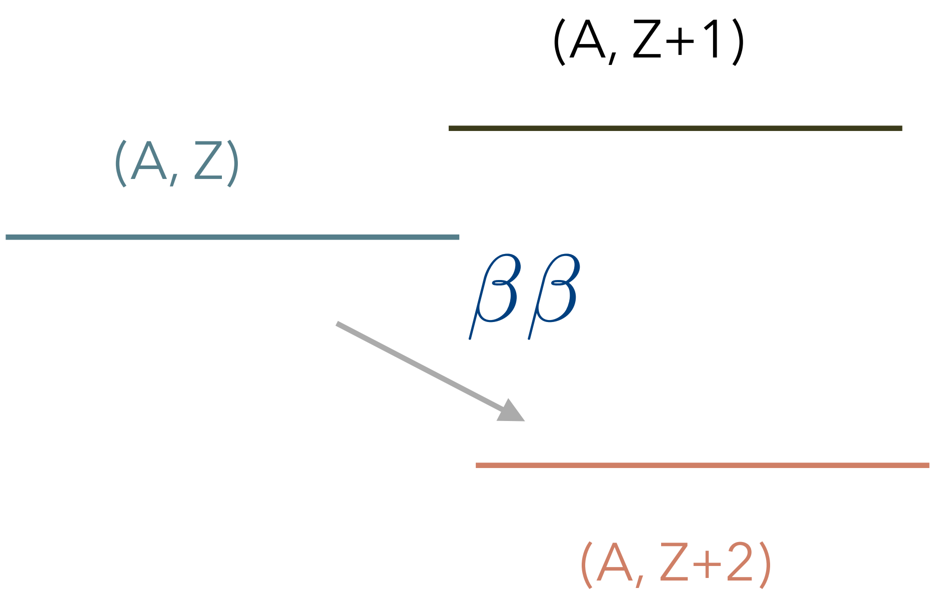


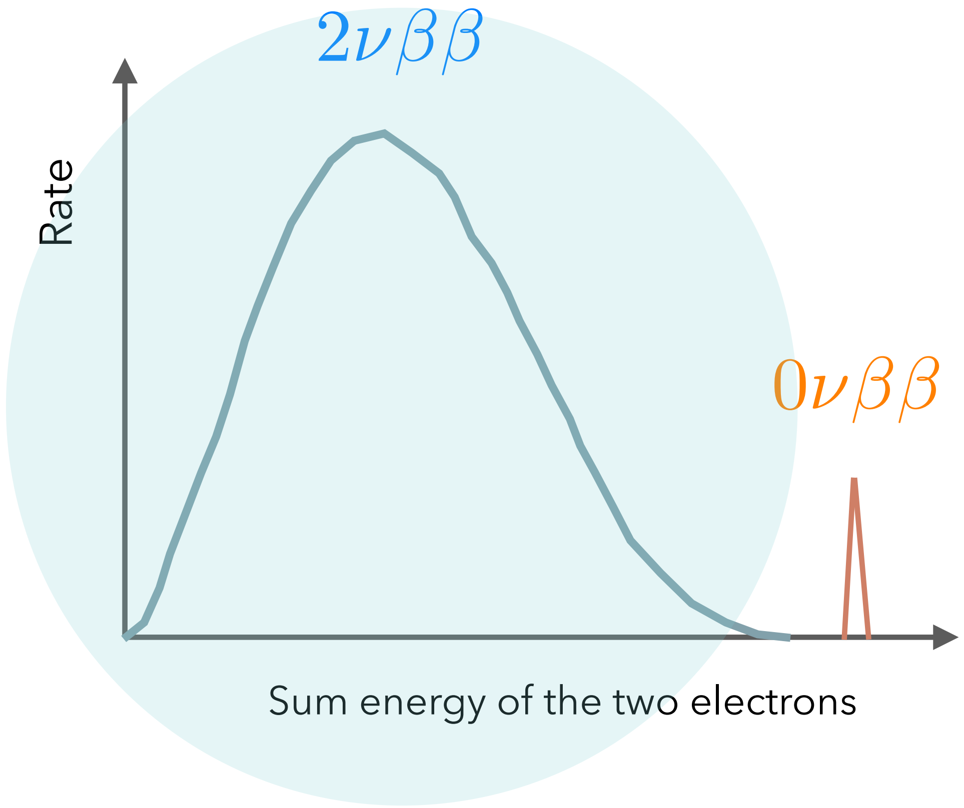
Ruben Saakyan, Annu. Rev. Nucl. Part. Sci. 63 (2013)

Nobel Prize in physics, 1963 for her discoveries concerning the nuclear shell structure

# THE DOUBLE BETA DECAY

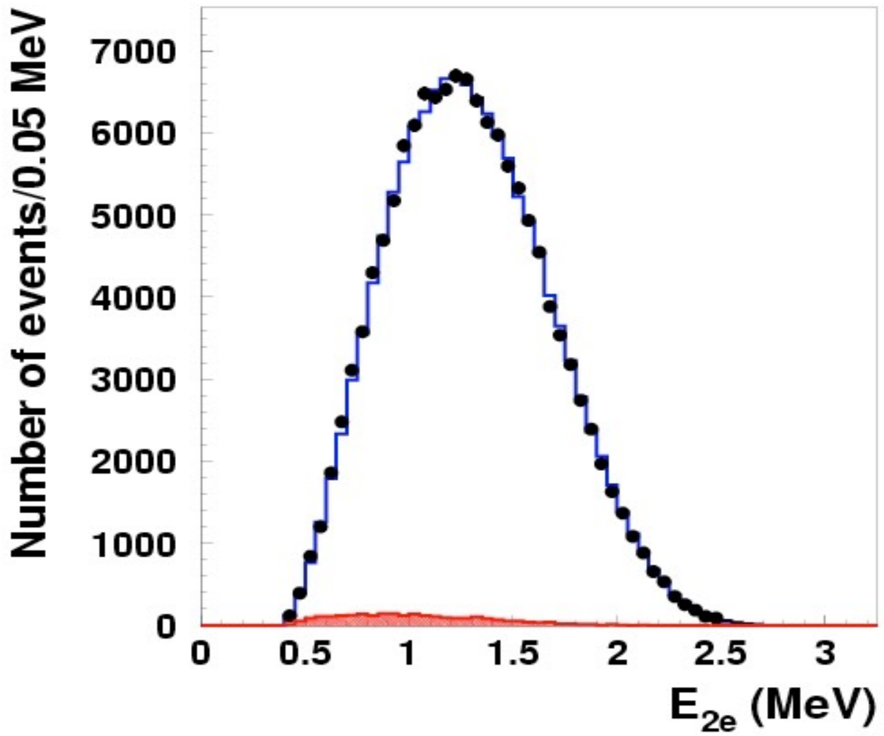
- The Standard Model decay, with 2 neutrinos, was observed in 14 nuclei
- $T_{1/2} > 10^{18}$ y: $^{48}$Ca, $^{76}$Ge, $^{82}$Se, $^{96}$Zr, $^{100}$Mo, $^{116}$Cd, $^{128}$Te, $^{130}$Te, $^{136}$Xe, $^{150}$Nd, $^{238}$U





$^{100}$Mo: $T_{1/2}=7.15\times10^{18}$ a

NEMO Experiment in Modane/Frejus



# THE DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- The decay rate $\Gamma^{2\nu}$ depends on the matrix element $M^{2\nu}$ and on the phase space factor $G^{2\nu}$ (which determines the energy spectrum):

$$\Gamma^{2\nu} = \frac{\ln 2}{T_{1/2}^{2\nu}} = G^{2\nu}(Q,Z)|M^{2\nu}|^2$$

- The phase space factor (Z= charge of daughter nucleus) from the leptonic degrees of freedom:

$$G^{2\nu} \propto (G_F \cos\theta_C)^4 Q^7 \cdot \left(\frac{Q^4}{1980} + \frac{Q^3}{90} + \frac{Q^2}{9} + \frac{Q}{2} + 1\right) \propto (G_F \cos\theta_C)^4 \cdot Q^{11}$$

◉ The decay rate scales with $Q^{11}$ x $(G_F)^4$ => we expect indeed very long $T_{1/2}$ of ~$10^{20}$ y

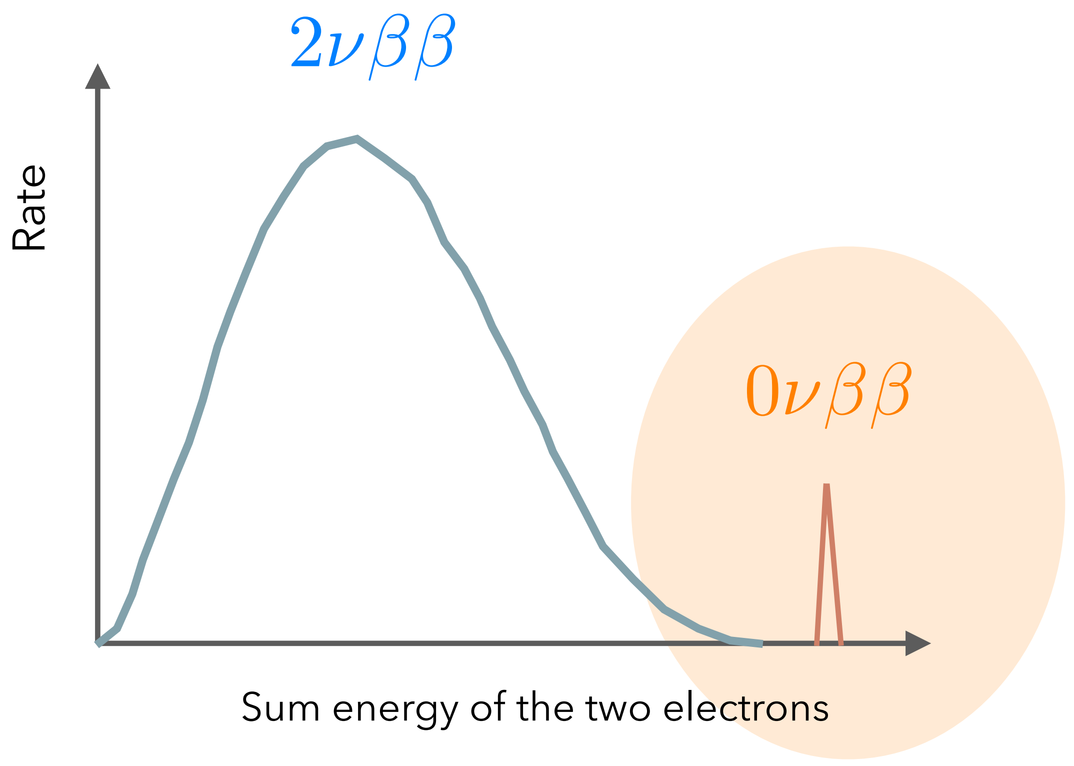
# THE NEUTRINOLESS DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- More interesting: the decay *without* emission of neutrinos => $\Delta L = 2$

$$T_{1/2}^{0\nu\beta\beta} > 10^{24}\,\mathrm{y}$$

- Expected signature: *sharp peak at the Q-value of the decay*

$$Q = E_{e1} + E_{e2} - 2m_e$$

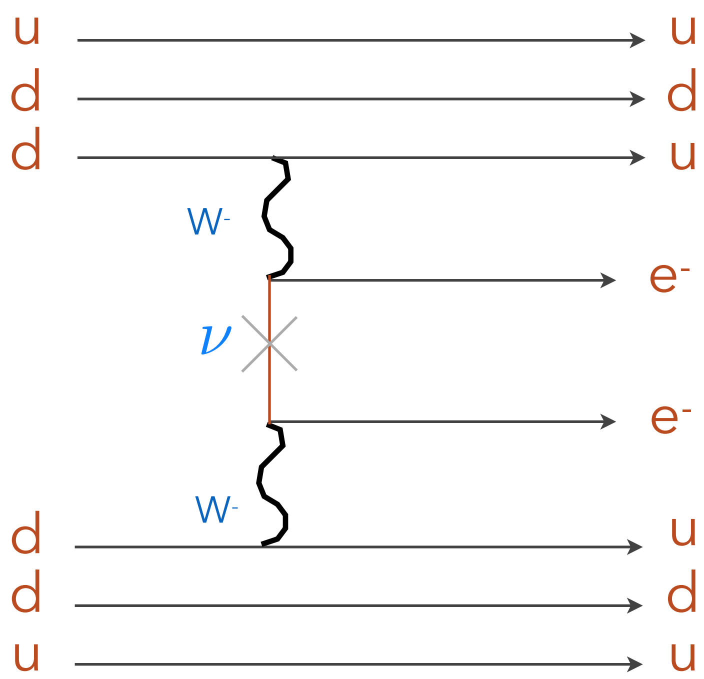


The double beta decay without neutrinos: first discussed by Wendell H. Fury in 1939

Ettore Majorana had proposed in 1937 that neutrinos could be their own antiparticles

# THE NEUTRINOLESS DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- In this decay, a light virtual neutrino could be exchanged



Charge conjugate spinor

$$\psi^c = C\bar{\psi}^T$$

A Majorana field

$$\psi = \psi^c$$

$$\psi = \psi_L + \psi_L^c$$

has 2 spin d.o.f.

- The neutron decays under emission of a right handed 'anti-neutrino' $\nu_L^c$
    - the $\nu_L^c$ has to be absorbed at the second vertex as left handed 'neutrino' $\nu_L$
    - for the decay to happen: neutrinos and anti-neutrinos must be identical, thus Majorana particles
    - & the helicity must change

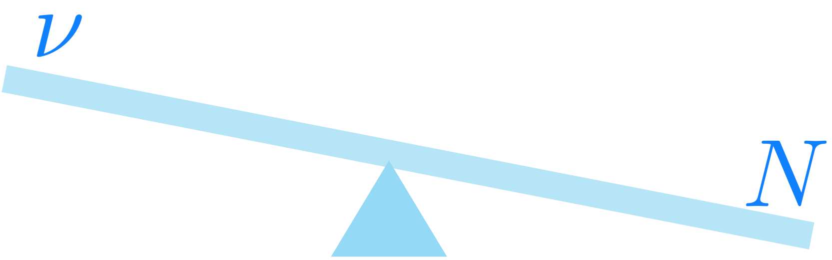
# MAJORANA AND DIRAC NEUTRINOS

- Most general Lagrangian: both type of neutrinos masses

$$\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{M}_\nu} = -\frac{1}{2}\left[m_D(\overline{\psi^c_R}\psi^c_L + \overline{\psi}_R\psi_L) + M\overline{\psi^c_L}\psi_L\right] + h.c.$$

- Dirac term: generated after SSB from Yukawa interactions; Majorana term: singlet of the SM gauge group and can appear as bare mass term
- Masses of physical neutrinos: from the eigenvalues of the mass matrix. In the "see saw" mechanism: M >> $m_D$ => a very light neutrinos state ν and a heavy state N with masses:

$$m_\nu \approx \frac{m_D^2}{M} \qquad m_N \approx M$$



- If Dirac mass term $m_D$: of similar size as of other fermions & M at the GUT scale (~$10^{14}$ GeV) => explanation of the smallness of neutrino masses

# THE NEUTRINOLESS DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- The expected rate can be calculated as:

$$\Gamma^{0\nu} = \frac{\ln 2}{T^{0\nu}_{1/2}} = G^{0\nu}(Q, Z)\underbrace{|M^{0\nu}|^2}_{\text{the matrix element of the nuclear transition}} \frac{|m_{\beta\beta}|^2}{m_e^2} \longleftarrow \text{from the leptonic part of the matrix element}$$

- with the phase space integral (now spanned only by 2 electrons):

$$G^{0\nu} \propto (G_F \cos\theta_C)^4 \cdot \left(\frac{Q^5}{30} - \frac{2Q^2}{3} + Q - \frac{2}{5}\right) \propto (G_F \cos\theta_C)^4 \cdot Q^5$$

# THE EFFECTIVE MAJORANA NEUTRINO MASS

- The effective Majorana neutrino mass parameter: embeds all the dependance on neutrino quantities

$$|m_{\beta\beta}| = |m_1 U_{e1}^2 + m_2 U_{e2}^2 e^{2\phi_1} + m_3 U_{e3}^2 e^{2i(\phi_2 - \delta)}|$$

- A mixture of $m_1$, $m_2$, $m_3$ ~ to the $U_{ei}^2$ ($U_{ei}$ - the complex entries in the PMNS matrix)

$$\begin{pmatrix} U_{e1} & U_{e2} & U_{e3} \\ U_{\mu 1} & U_{\mu 2} & U_{\mu 3} \\ U_{\tau 1} & U_{\tau 2} & U_{\tau 3} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} c_{12}c_{13} & s_{12}c_{13} & s_{13}e^{-i\delta} \\ -s_{12}c_{23} - c_{12}s_{23}s_{13}e^{i\delta} & c_{12}c_{23} - s_{12}s_{23}s_{13}e^{i\delta} & s_{23}c_{13} \\ s_{12}s_{23} - c_{12}c_{23}s_{13}e^{i\delta} & -c_{12}s_{23} - s_{12}c_{23}s_{13}e^{i\delta} & c_{23}c_{13} \end{pmatrix} \times \begin{pmatrix} e^{i\phi_1} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & e^{i\phi_2} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

- $\varphi_1,\varphi_2$ = Majorana phases and $|U_{e1}|^2$ is for instance the probability that $\nu_e$ has the mass $m_1$
    - fewer phases can be removed by redefining the fields

# THE EFFECTIVE MAJORANA NEUTRINO MASS

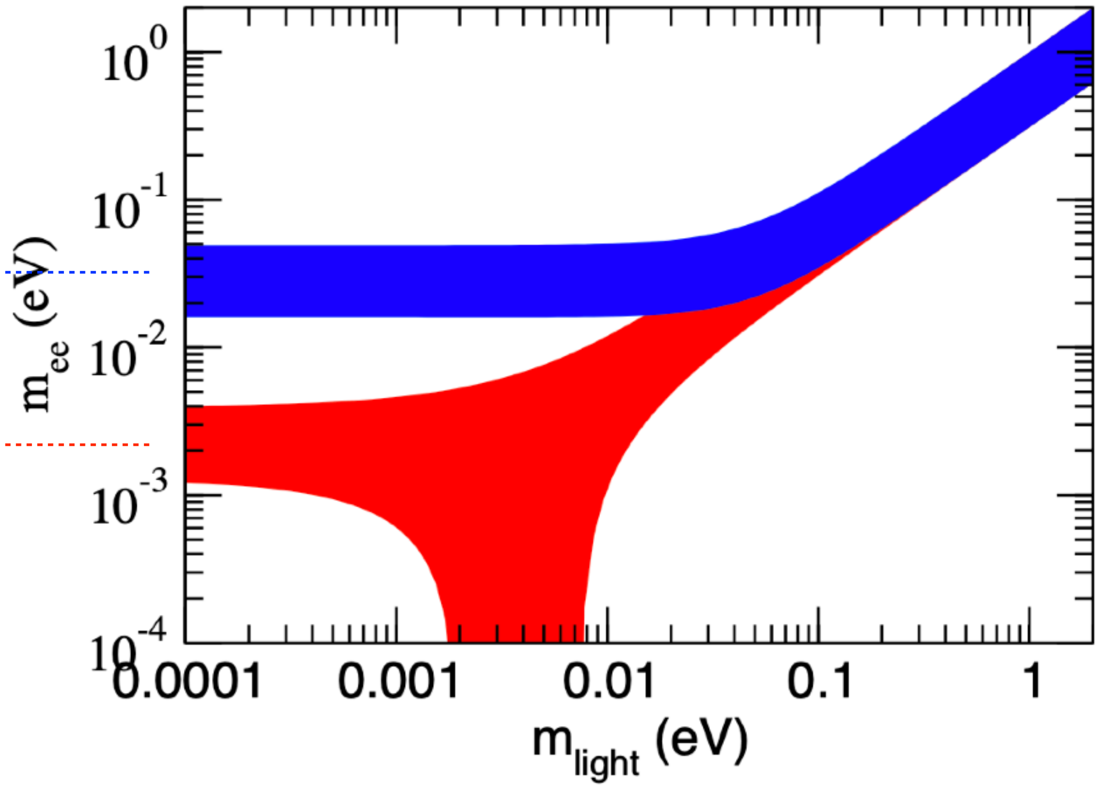
- The values depend critically on the neutrino mass spectrum and on the values of the two Majorana phases in the PMNS matrix
- One can express $m_{\beta\beta}$ as a function of the lightest ($m_{\text{lightest}}$) mass state for the two mass orderings and obtain the allowed ranges

Inverted mass ordering

$m_3 \ll m_1 < m_2$

Normal mass ordering

$m_1 < m_2 \ll m_3$



Degenerate region

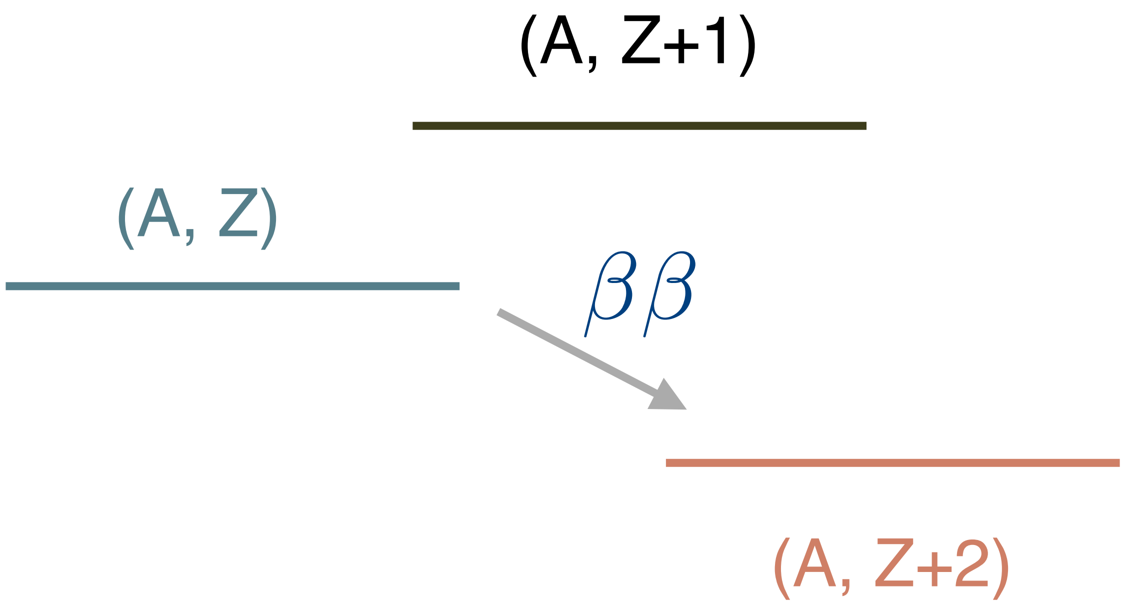
$m_{\text{lightest}} \simeq m_1 \simeq m_2 \simeq m_3 \gg \sqrt{|\Delta m^2_{32}|}$

Widths: mainly from the unknown Majorana phases $\varphi_1$, $\varphi_2$

Figure from PDG2019 review

# EMPLOYED NUCLEI

- Even-even nuclei
- Natural abundance is low (except $^{130}$Te)
- Must use enriched material



| Candidate* | Q [MeV] | Abund [%] |
|---|---|---|
| $^{48}$Ca -> $^{48}$Ti | 4.271 | 0.187 |
| $^{76}$Ge -> $^{76}$Se | 2.039 | 7.8 |
| $^{82}$Se -> $^{82}$Kr | 2.995 | 9.2 |
| $^{96}$Zr -> $^{96}$Mo | 3.350 | 2.8 |
| $^{100}$Mo -> $^{100}$Ru | 3.034 | 9.6 |
| $^{110}$Pd -> $^{110}$Cd | 2.013 | 11.8 |
| $^{116}$Cd -> $^{116}$Sn | 2.802 | 7.5 |
| $^{124}$Sn -> $^{124}$Te | 2.228 | 5.64 |
| $^{130}$Te -> $^{130}$Xe | 2.530 | **34.5** |
| $^{136}$Xe -> $^{136}$Ba | 2.479 | 8.9 |
| $^{150}$Nd -> $^{150}$Sm | 3.367 | 5.6 |

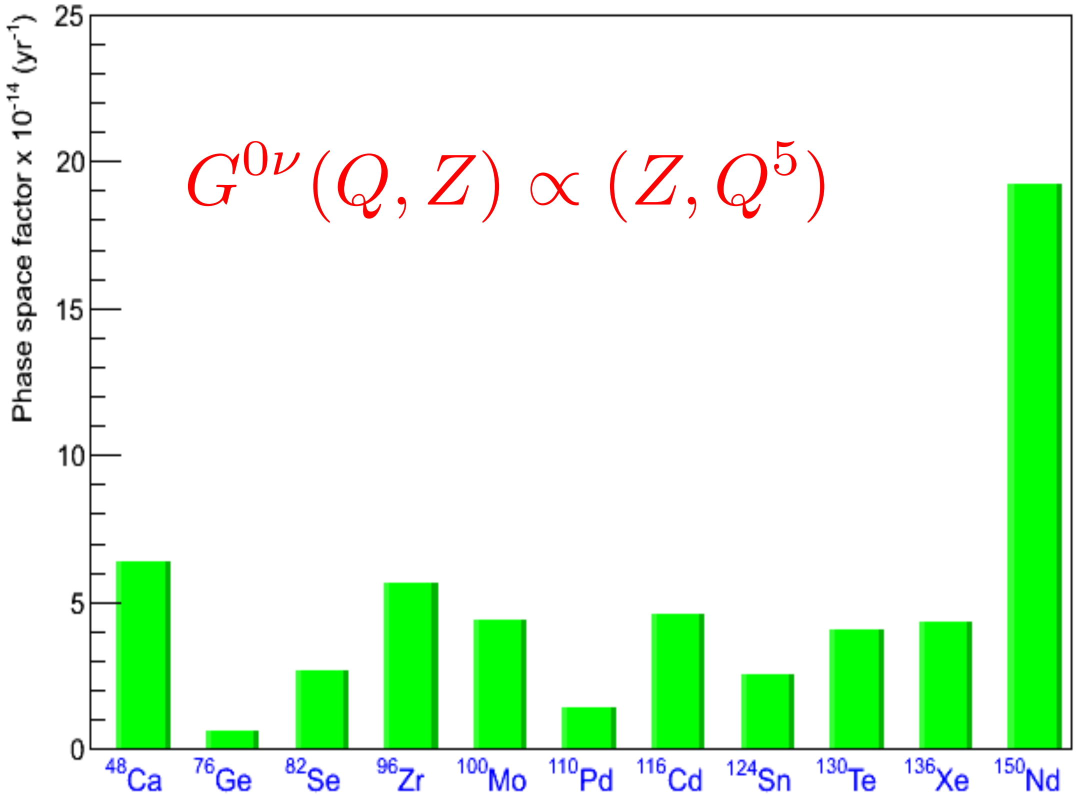
* Q-value > 2 MeV

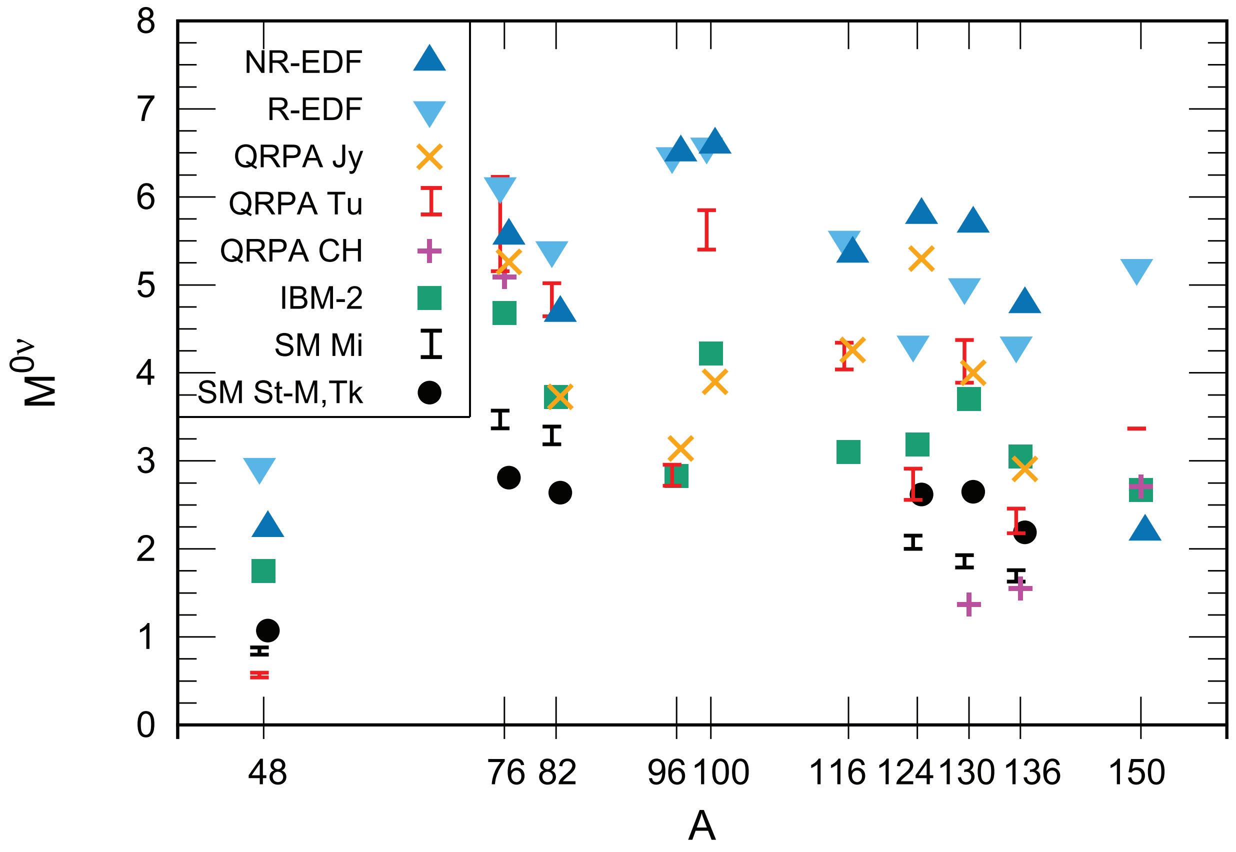
# PHASE SPACE AND MATRIX ELEMENTS

Matrix elements: vary by a factor of 2- 3 for a given A

$$\Gamma^{0\nu} = \frac{\ln 2}{T^{0\nu}_{1/2}} = G^{0\nu}(Q,Z)|M^{0\nu}|^2 \frac{|m_{\beta\beta}|^2}{m_e^2}$$

$$\Gamma^{0\nu} = \frac{\ln 2}{T^{0\nu}_{1/2}} = G^{0\nu}(Q,Z)|M^{0\nu}|^2 \frac{|m_{\beta\beta}|^2}{m_e^2}$$





Jonathan Engel and Javier Menéndez 2017 *Rep. Prog. Phys.* **80** 046301

*See also Vergados, Ejiri, Simkovoc, Int. Journal of Modern Physics E, Vol 25 (2016)

# EXPRIMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

- Experiments measure the half-life, with a sensitivity (for non-zero background)

$$T_{1/2}^{0\nu} \propto a \cdot \epsilon \cdot \sqrt{\frac{M \cdot t}{B \cdot \Delta E}}$$

$$\langle m_{\beta\beta} \rangle \propto \frac{1}{\sqrt{T_{1/2}^{0\nu}}}$$

Minimal requirements:

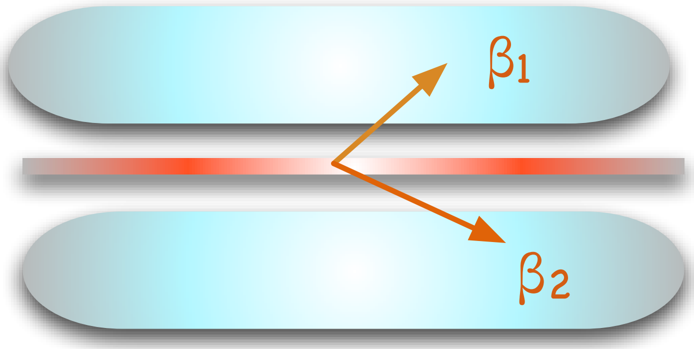
large detector masses
high isotopic abundance
ultra-low background noise
good energy resolution

Additional tools to distinguish signal from background:

event topology
pulse shape discrimination
particle identification

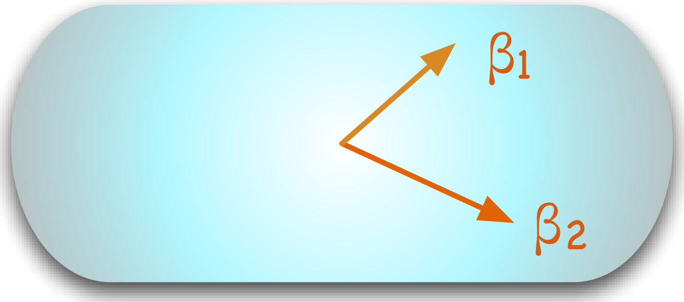
# EXPERIMENTS: MAIN APPROACHES

## Source ≠ Detector

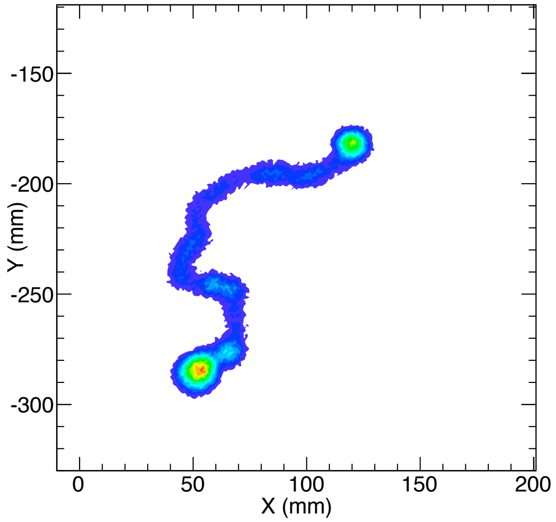


Source as thin foil
Electrons detected with: scintillator, TPC, drift chamber, semiconductor detectors
Event topology
Low energy resolution and detection efficiency

## Source = Detector (calorimeters)



The sum of the energy of the two electrons is measured
Signature: peak at the Q-value of the decay
Scintillators, semiconductors, bolometers
High resolution + detection efficiency
No event topology



## Source = Detector = Tracker

Source is the (high-pressure) gas of a TPC
Charge and light detected with electron multipliers and/or photosensors
Good energy and position resolution, high efficiency
Event topology very helpful in reducing the background and *in identifying the potential signal*

# DOUBLE BETA DECAY: EXPERIMENTAL TECHNIQUES*

Heat

CUORE
CUPID

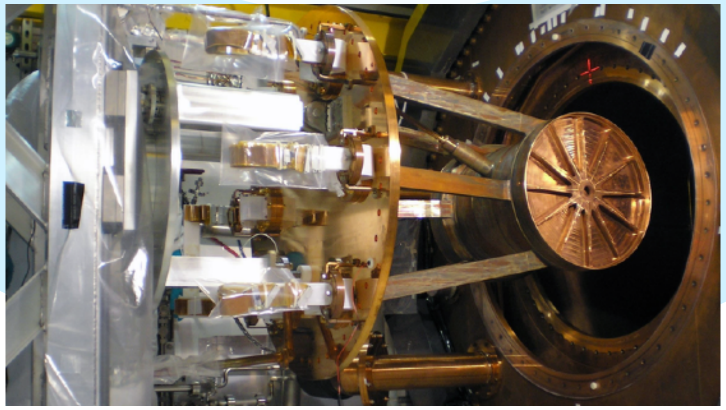
Energy of the two electrons

Charge

GERDA
MAJORANA
LEGEND
SuperNEMO

Light

KAMLAND-Zen
SNO+



nEXO, NEXT
DARWIN, PandaX-III

(*not a complete list)

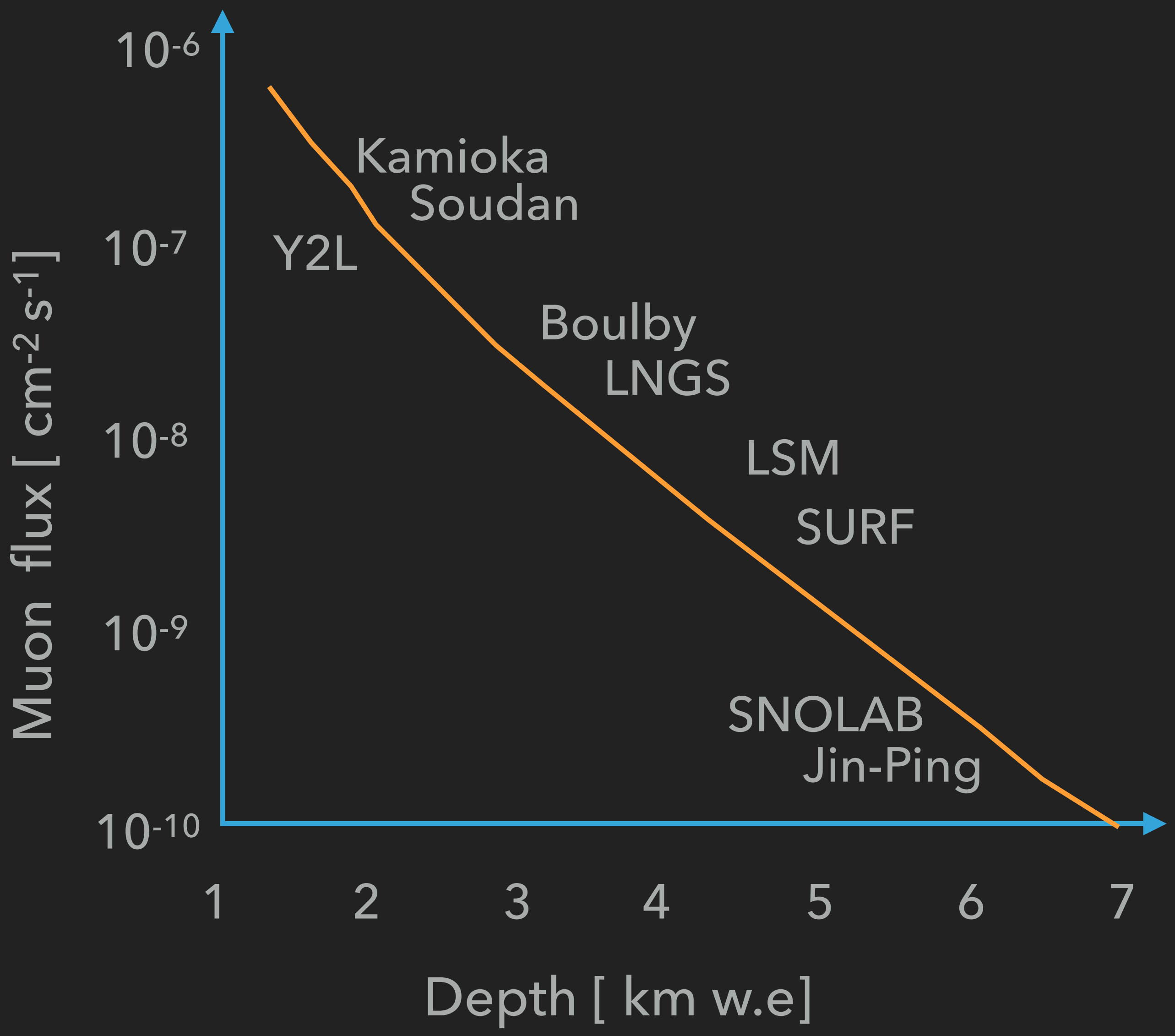
# MAIN CHALLENGES

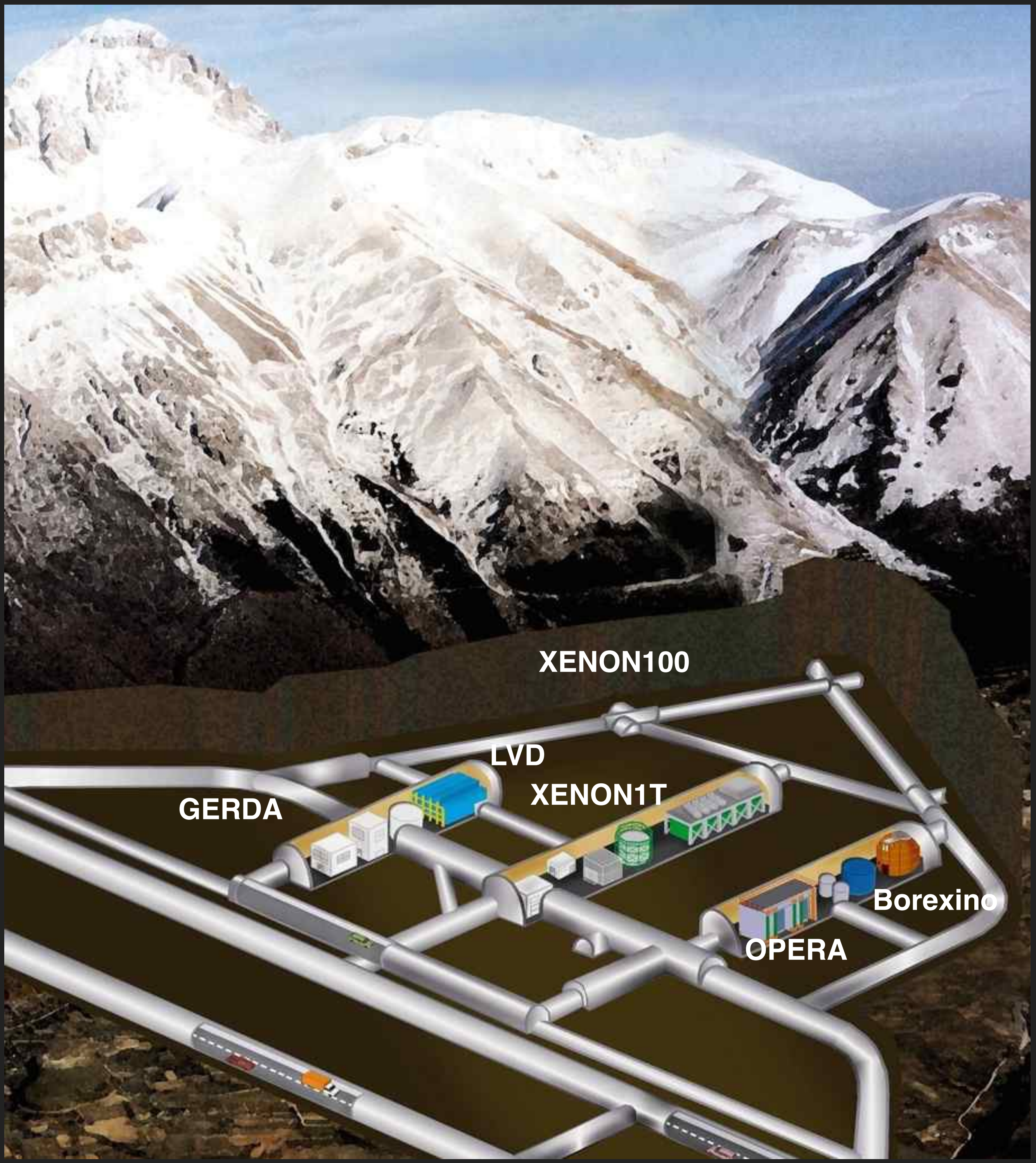
- Energy resolution (ultimate background from 2νββ-decay)
- Backgrounds
  - cosmic rays & cosmogenic activation (including *in situ*, e.g., $^{77}$Ge, $^{137}$Xe)
  - radioactivity of detector materials ($^{238}$U, $^{232}$Th, $^{40}$K, $^{60}$Co, etc: α, β, γ-radiation)
  - anthropogenic (e.g., $^{137}$Cs, $^{110m}$Ag)
  - neutrinos (e.g., $^{8}$B from the Sun):

$$\nu + e^- \rightarrow \nu + e^-$$

# GO UNDERGROUND

- Network of underground laboratories

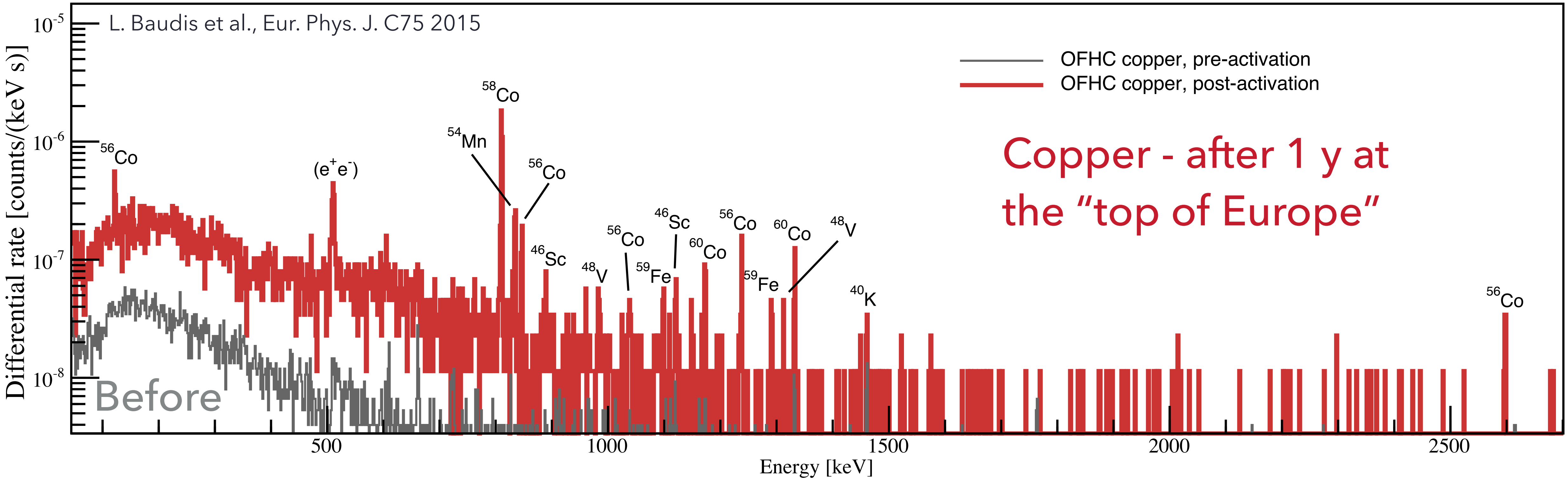




# AVOID EXPOSURE TO COSMIC RAYS

- Spallation reactions can produce long-lived isotopes
- Activate and compare with predictions (Activia, Cosmo, etc)
- Minimise time that detectors materials spend above ground

Jungfraujoch, 3454 m



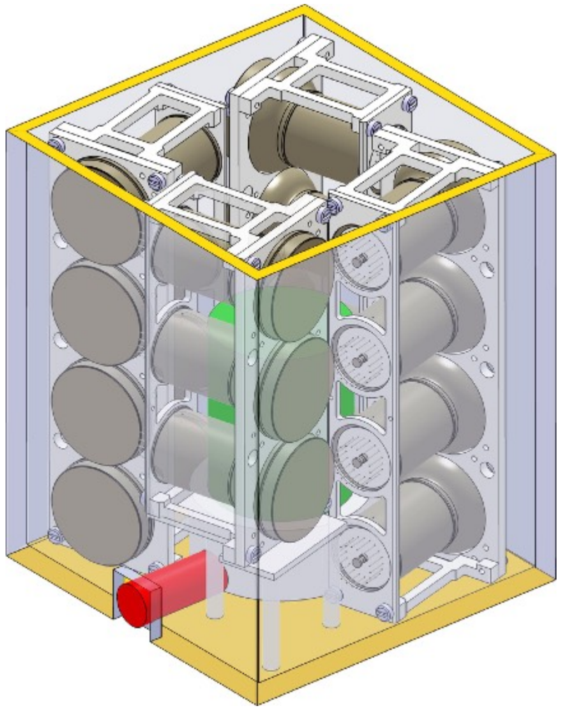
L. Baudis et al., Eur. Phys. J. C75 2015

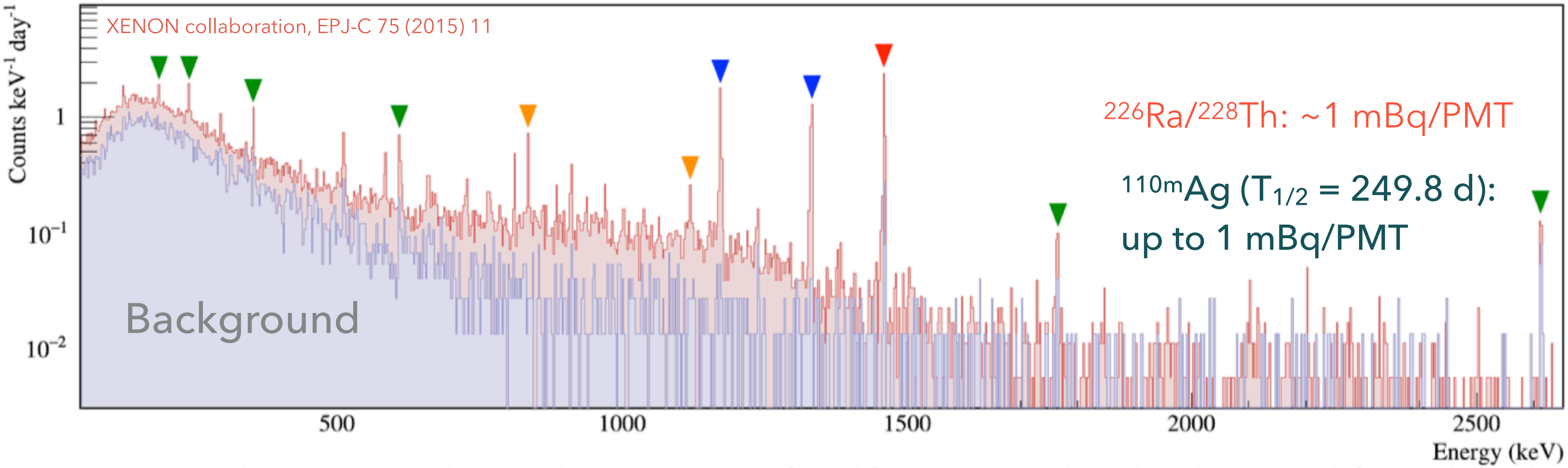
Copper - after 1 y at the “top of Europe”

# MATERIAL SCREENING AND SELECTION

- Ultra-low background, HPGe detectors
- Mass spectroscopy
- Radon emanation facilities

Gator HPGe detector at LNGS





XENON collaboration, EPJ-C 75 (2015) 11

$^{226}$Ra/$^{228}$Th: ~1 mBq/PMT

$^{110m}$Ag ($T_{1/2}$ = 249.8 d): up to 1 mBq/PMT

# CURRENT STATUS OF THE FIELD

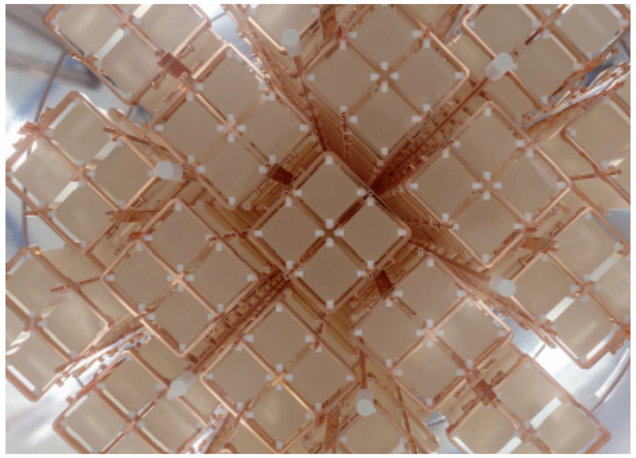
- No observation of this extremely rare nuclear decay (so far)
- Best lower limits on $T_{1/2}$: $1.07\text{x}10^{26}$ y ($^{136}$Xe), $0.9\text{x}10^{26}$ y ($^{76}$Ge), $1.5\text{x}10^{25}$ y ($^{130}$Te)

$$\langle m_{\beta\beta} \rangle < (0.06 - 0.26)\,\mathrm{eV}$$

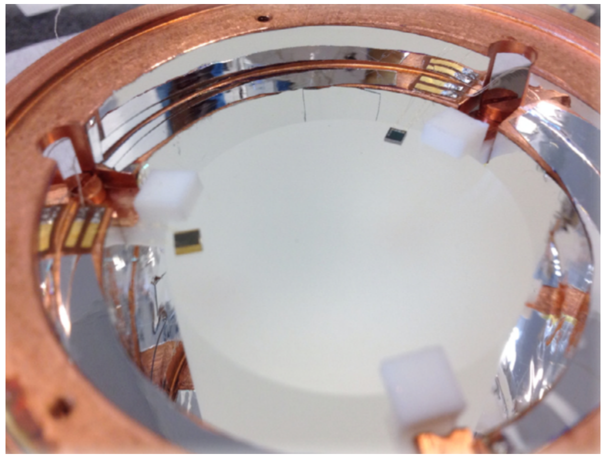
- Running and upcoming experiments (a selection)
  - $^{130}$Te: CUORE, SNO+
  - $^{136}$Xe: KAMLAND-Zen, KAMLAND2-Zen, EXO-200, nEXO, NEXT, DARWIN, PandaX-III
  - $^{76}$Ge: GERDA Phase-II, Majorana, LEGEND (GERDA & Majorana + new groups)
  - $^{82}$Se: CUPID = CUORE with light read-out
  - $^{82}$Se ($^{150}$Nd, $^{48}$Ca): SuperNEMO
  - $^{100}$Mo NEMO-3, AMoRE

# CUORE AND CUPID

- CUORE: 988 crystals (206 kg $^{130}$Te assembled in towers) at LNGS
- Background level: 14 events/(keV t y); energy resolution: 0.3% FWHM (7.7 keV in ROI)
  - Results: $T_{1/2} > 1.5 \times 10^{25}$ y for $^{130}$Te
- CUPID: R&D for ton-scale detector using $Li_2{}^{100}MoO_4$ and $Zn^{82}Se$ crystals as scintillating bolometers (to identify major α-particle background)
- CUPID-0: pilot project at LNGS, 24 $Zn^{82}Se$ crystals, best limit on $T_{1/2}$ of $^{82}$Se

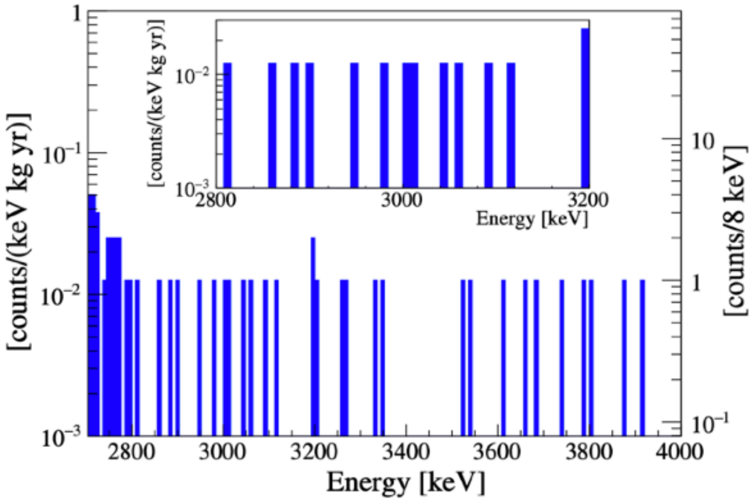


CUORE: PRL 120, 2018



Q value of $^{82}$Se (2997.9 ±0.3 keV)

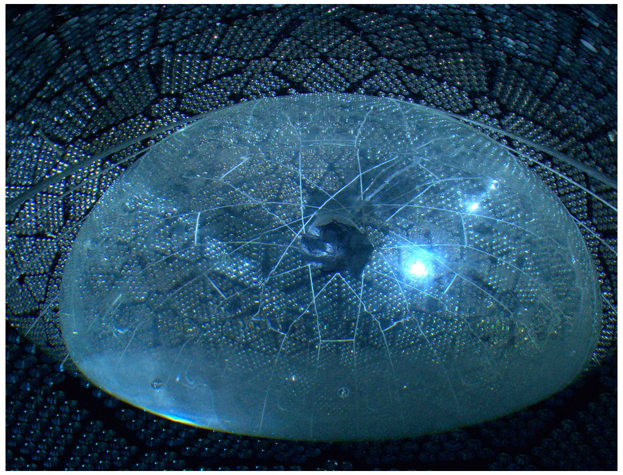
CUPID-0: PRL 123, 2019



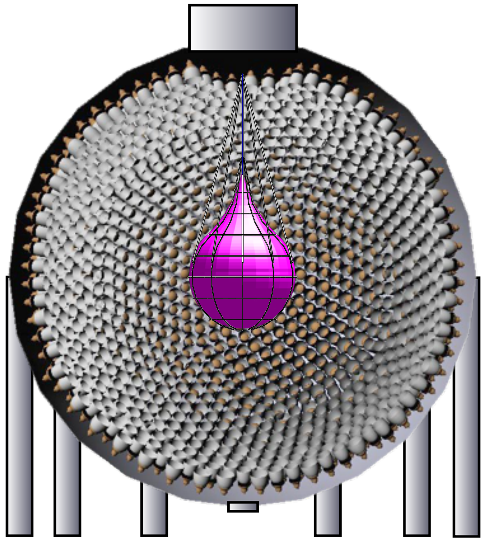
$T_{1/2} > 3.5 \times 10^{24}$ y

# SNO+ AND KAMLAND-ZEN

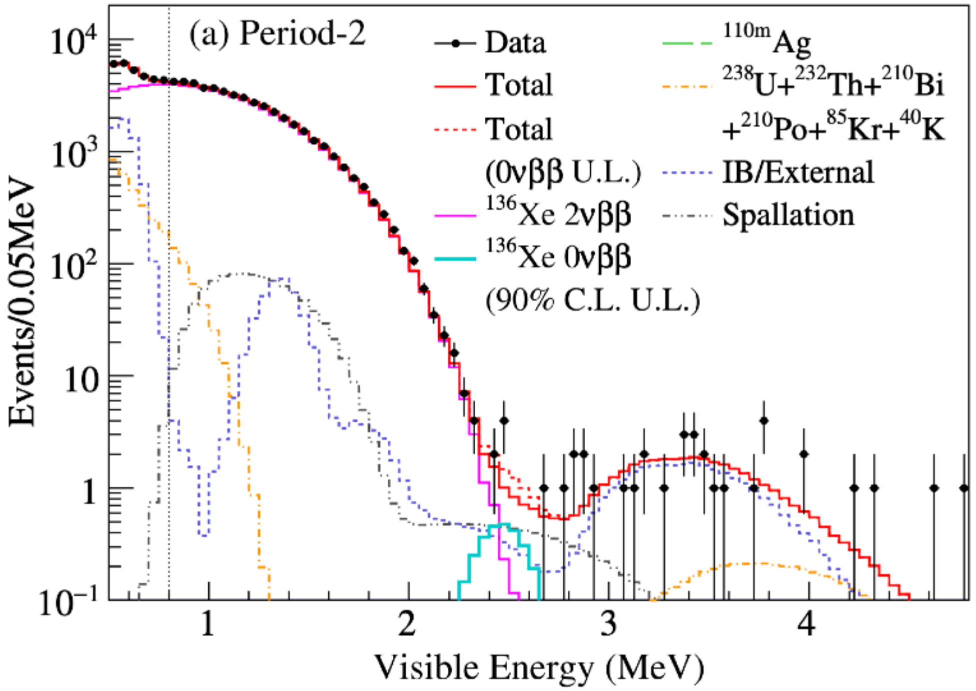
- SNO+: 0.5% $^{nat}$Te ~1330 kg $^{130}$Te in liquid scintillator at SNOLAB
  - Scintillator fill in 2019; Te loading and ββ-decay phase to start in 2020
- KamLAND-Zen: 745 kg $^{136}$Xe in liquid scintillator at Kamioka, ongoing since 2019
  - Previous results (phase I + II): $T_{1/2} > 1.07 \times 10^{26}$ y ($5.6 \times 10^{25}$ y sensitivity)
- KamLAND2-Zen: 1t enr. Xe, higher light collection efficiency: $\sigma/E(2.6\,\mathrm{MeV}) = 4\% \longrightarrow < 2.5\%$



SNO+ J.Phys.Conf.Ser. 1137 (2019)
$T_{1/2} > 1.9 \times 10^{26}$ y, 5 y of data

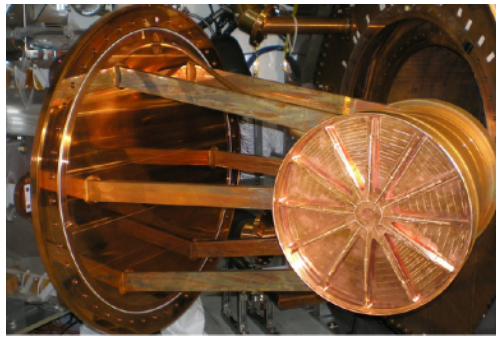


KamLAND-Zen: PRL 117, 2016



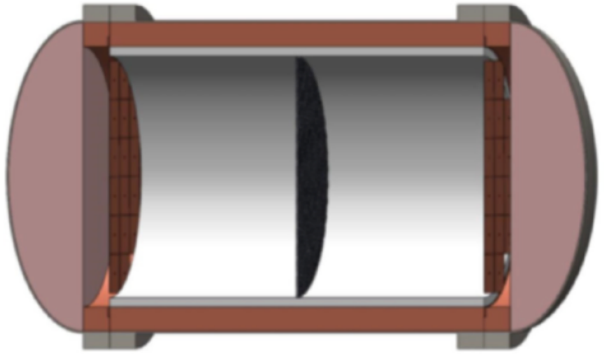
# EXO-200, NEXO, NEXT, PANDAX-III

- EXO-200: TPC with 75 kg $^{136}$Xe in fiducial region, $\sigma/E = 1.1\%$; $T_{1/2} > 3.5 \times 10^{25}$ y
- nEXO: TPC with 5 t of LXe enriched in $^{136}$Xe, goal $T_{1/2} \sim 9.2 \times 10^{27}$ y after 10 y of data
- NEXT: high-pressure (15 bar) $^{136}$Xe gas TPC: $e^-$ track reconstruction
  - Demonstrated: $\sigma/E = 0.43\%$; NEXT-100: operation in 2021, $T_{1/2} \sim 6 \times 10^{25}$ y after 3 y
  - R&D on Ba ion tagging ongoing (e.g., NEXT-BOLD, for ton-scale detector)
- PandaX-III: high-pressure (10 bar) $^{136}$Xe gas TPC, multiple modules with 200 kg each

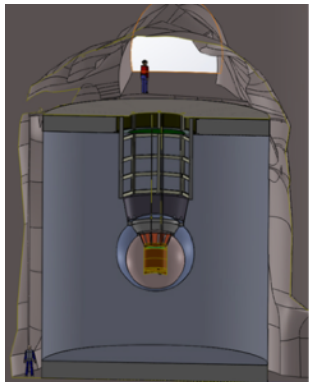


EXO-200: PRL 123, 2019

NEXT arXiv:1910.07314



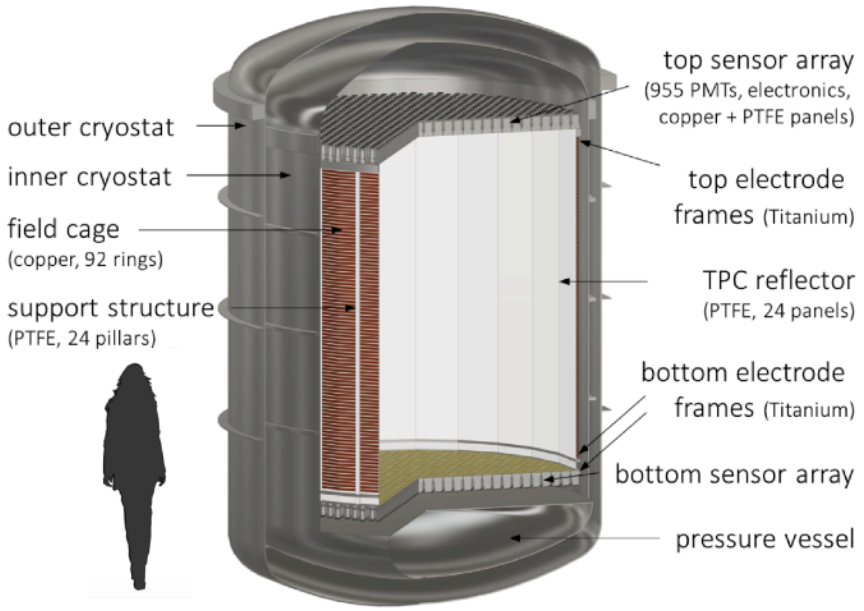
PandaX-III NIM-A 958, 2020



nEXO arXiv:1805.11142

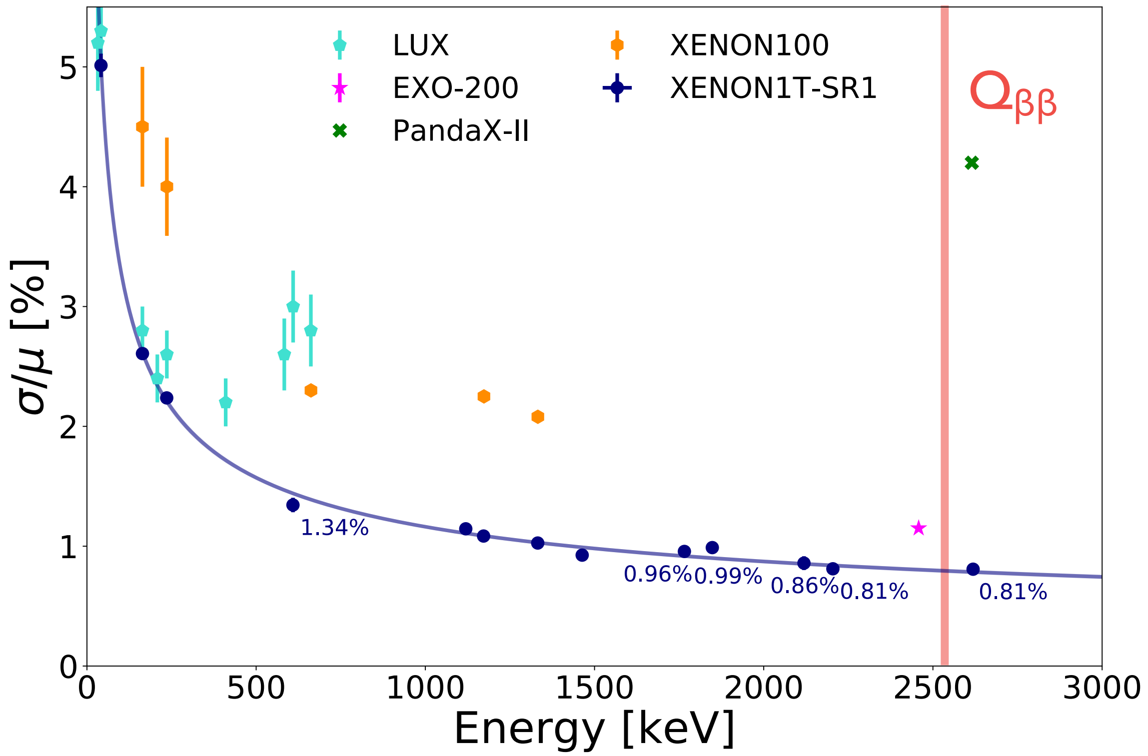
# DARWIN

- TPC with 40 t $^{\mathrm{nat}}$Xe (50 t in total) for DM searches; 8.9% $^{136}$Xe ≈ 3.6 t of $^{136}$Xe
- Goal: $T_{1/2}$ ~ few x $10^{27}$ y, with background rate < 0.2 events/(t y) in ROI
- Energy resolution: $\sigma/E = 0.8\%$ (achieved in XENON1T)
- Detailed ββ-sensitivity study: arXiv:2003.13407 (DARWIN collaboration)



DARWIN Collaboration, JCAP 1611 (2016) 017

XENON1T: σ/E=0.8% at 2.5 MeV

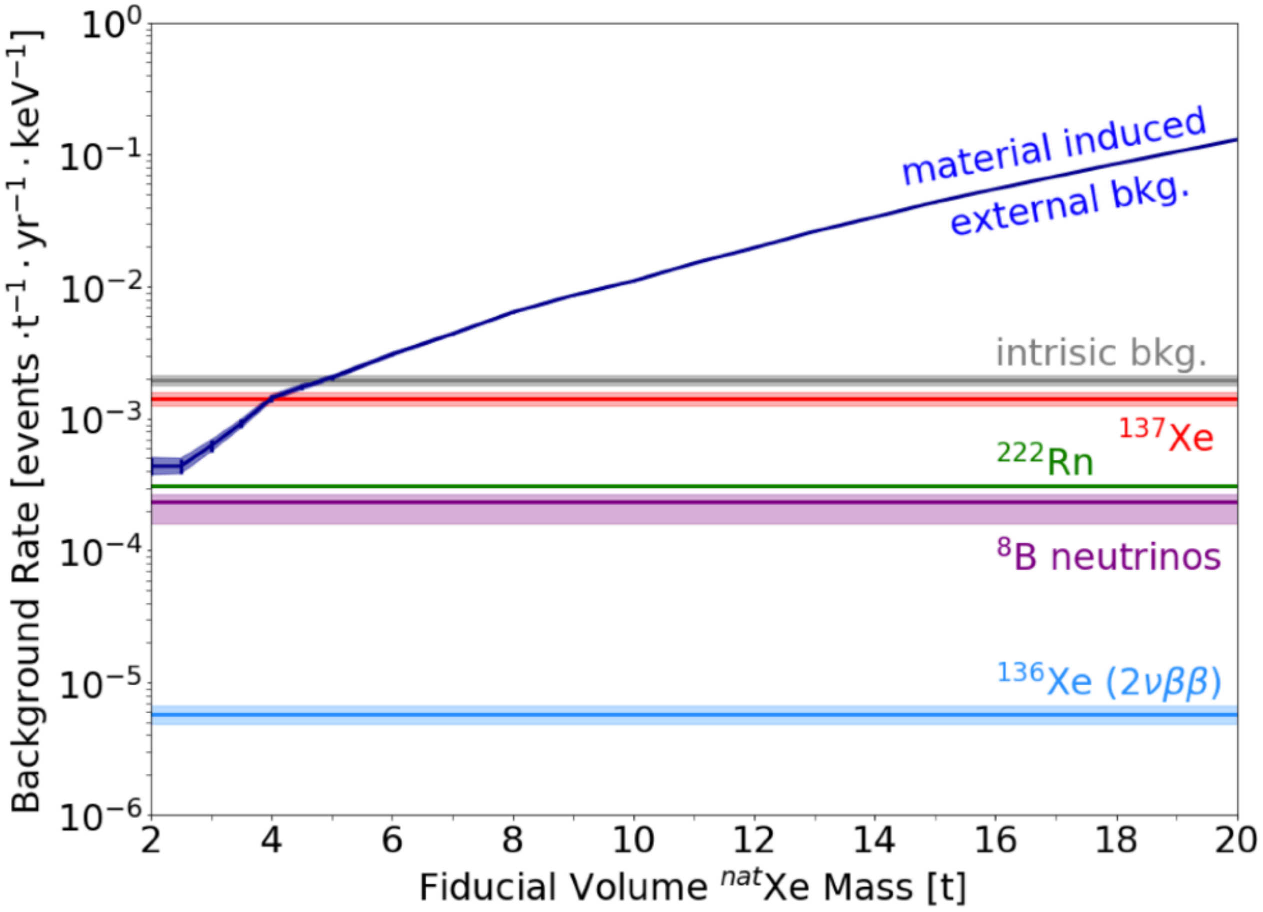


XENON Collaboration, arXiv:2003.03825

# DARWIN BACKGROUNDS

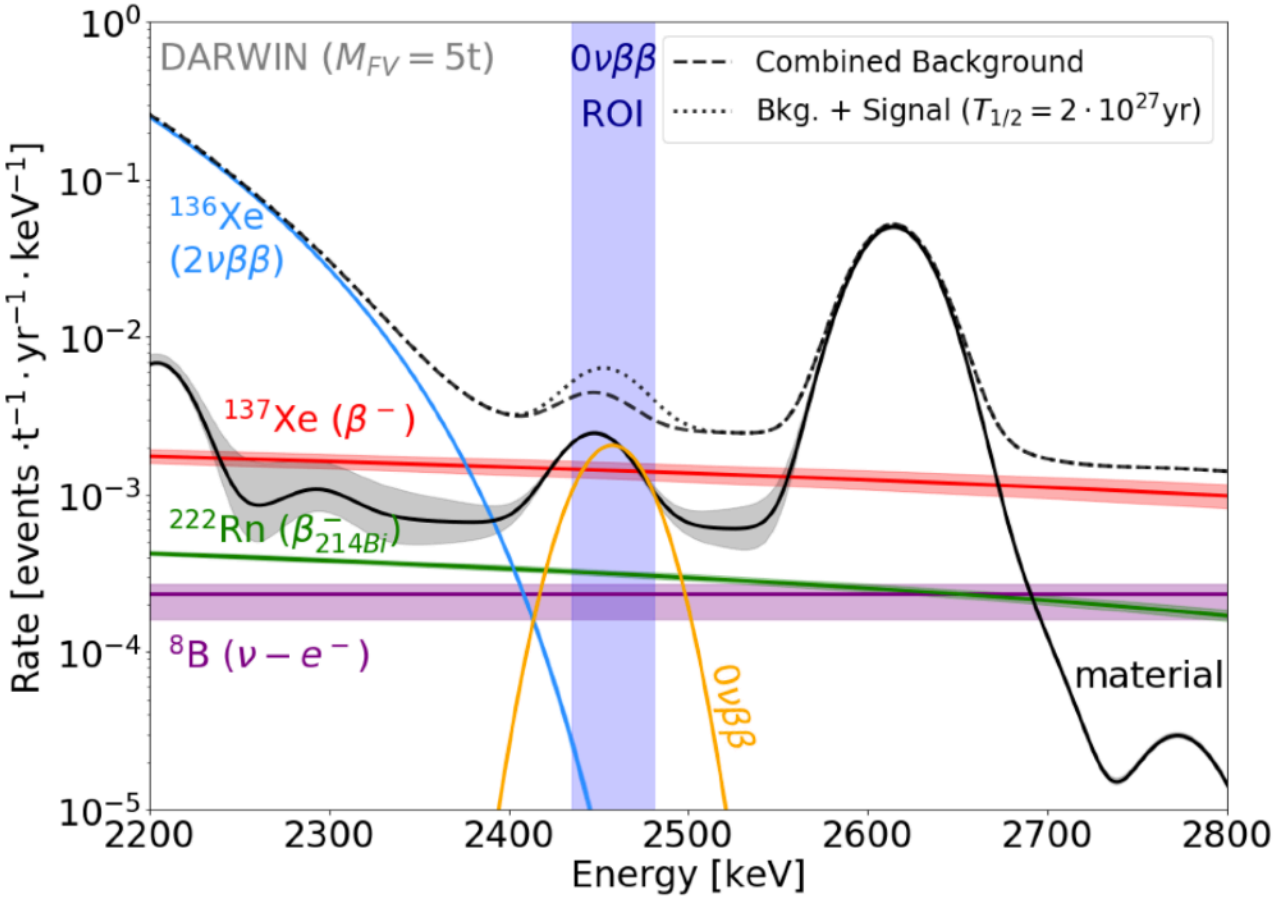
- ROI: [2435-2481] keV = FHWM around $Q_{\beta\beta}$
- $^{137}$Xe: β-decay with Q=4173 keV, $T_{1/2}$=3.82 min (via n-capture on $^{136}$Xe)

DARWIN collaboration, arXiv:2003.13407



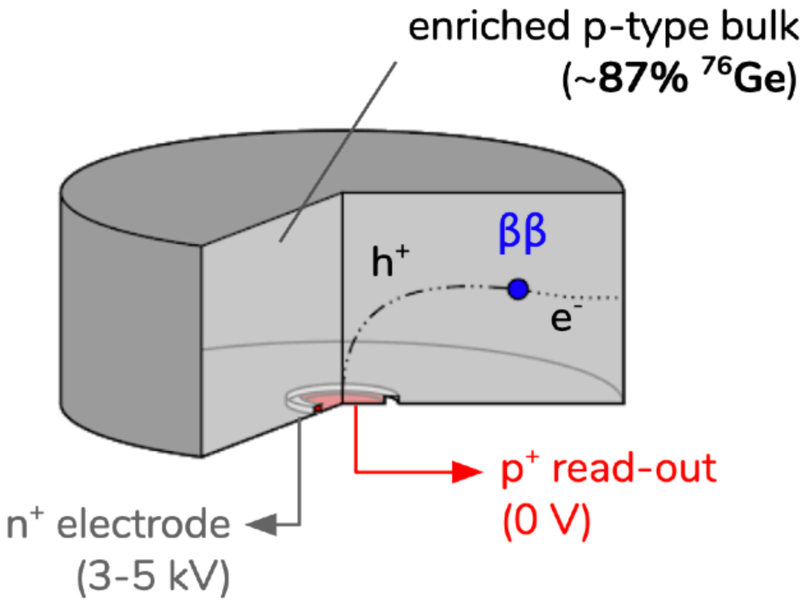
Rate versus fiducial mass

Signal: $T_{1/2}$ = 2 x $10^{27}$ y



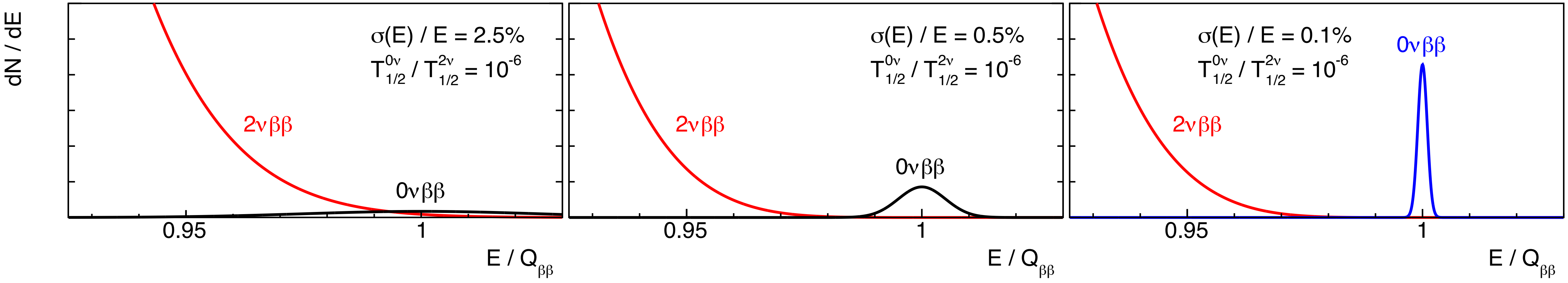
Rate in 5 tonnes fiducial region (0.45 t $^{136}$Xe)

# GERMANIUM IONISATION DETECTORS

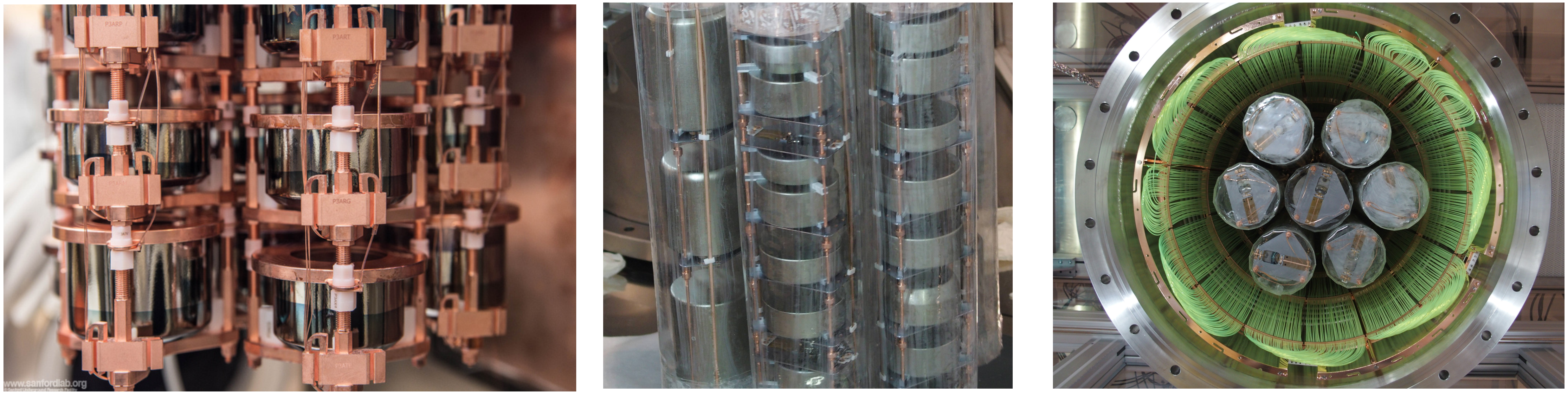


- HPGe detectors enriched in $^{76}$Ge
  - ◉ Source = detector: high detection efficiency
  - ◉ High-purity material: no intrinsic backgrounds
  - ◉ Semiconductor: $\sigma/E < 0.1\%$ at $Q_{\beta\beta}$ =2039.061 keV
  - ◉ High stopping power: β absorbed within O(1) mm

$\sigma/E = 2.5\%$ $\sigma/E = 0.5\%$ $\sigma/E = 0.1\%$



# EXISTING GERMANIUM EXPERIMENTS



MAJORANA at SURF

29.7 kg of 88% enriched $^{76}$Ge crystals

2.5 keV FWHM at 2039 keV

26 kg y exposure; PRL 120 (2018)

$T_{1/2} > 2.7 \times 10^{25}$ y (90% CL)

GERDA at LNGS

35.6 kg of 86% enriched $^{76}$Ge crystals in LAr

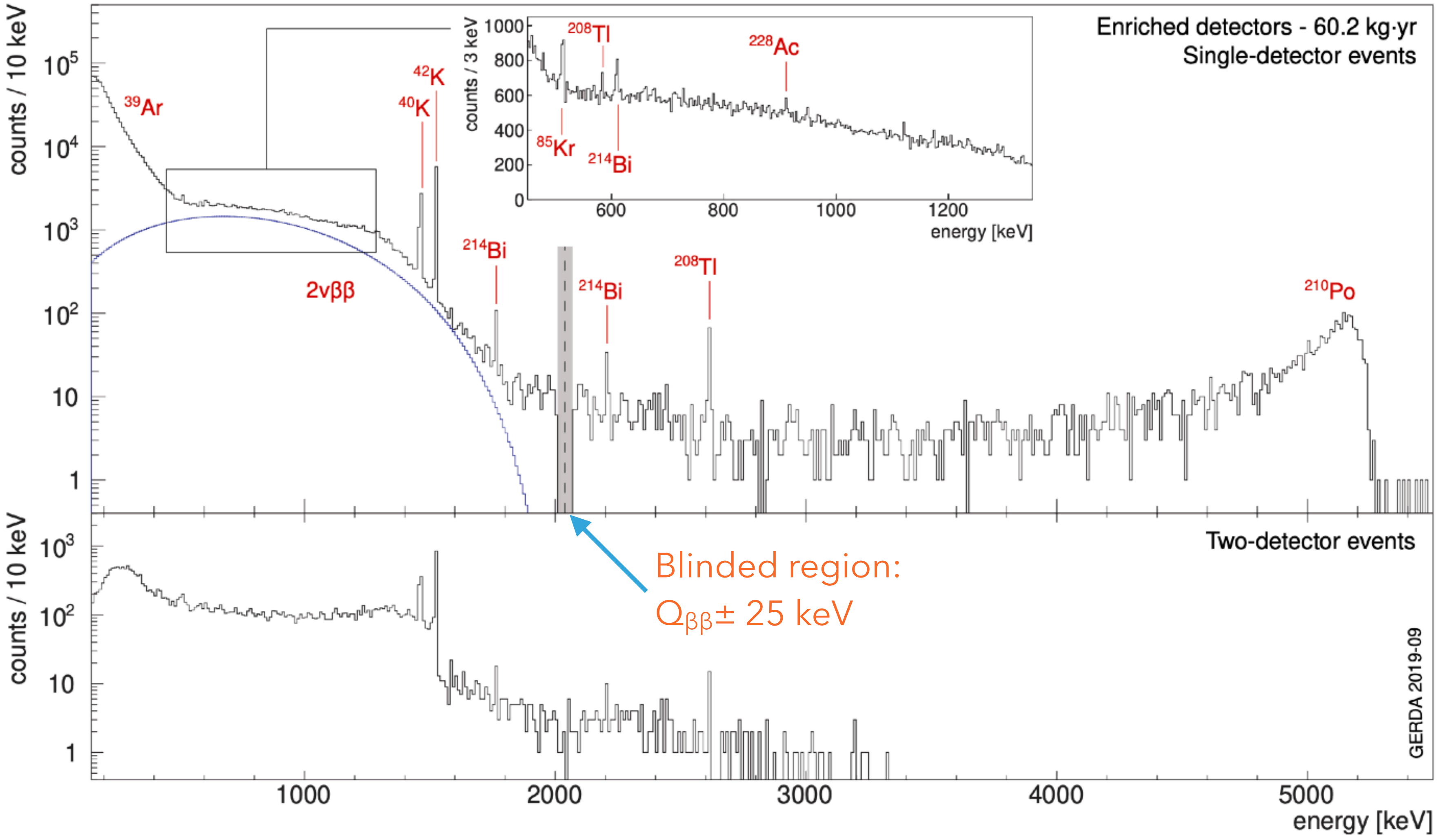
3.0 keV FWHM at 2039 keV

58.9 kg y exposure; Science 365 (2019)

$T_{1/2} > 0.9 \times 10^{26}$ y (90% CL)

# BACKGROUND MODEL IN GERDA

- Intrinsic 2νββ-events, $^{39}$Ar ($T_{1/2}$ = 269 y), $^{42}$Ar ($T_{1/2}$ = 33 y) and $^{85}$Kr ($T_{1/2}$ = 11 y) in liquid argon
- $^{60}$Co, $^{40}$K, $^{232}$Th, $^{238}$U in materials, α-decays ($^{210}$Po) on the thin p$^{+}$ contact



Blinded region: $Q_{\beta\beta}$± 25 keV

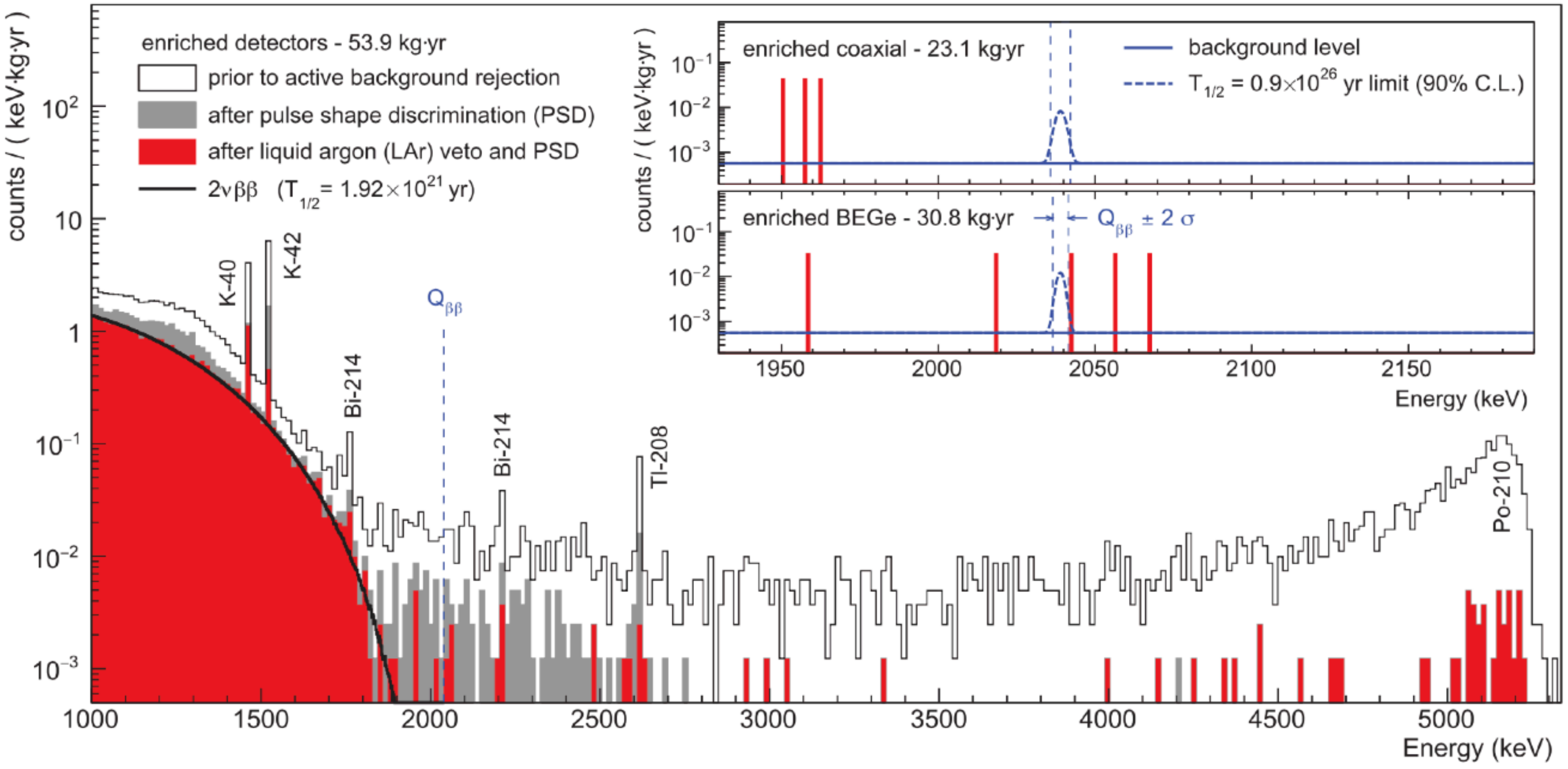
Sum spectrum, single-detector events

Sum spectrum, two-detector events

GERDA collaboration, JHEP 03 (2020)

# DOUBLE BETA DECAY RESULTS

- Measured $T_{1/2}$ of the 2νββ-decay: $1.92 \times 10^{21}$ y
- Liquid argon veto: factor 5 background suppression at 1525 keV ($^{42}$K line)
- Background level: $5.6 \times 10^{-4}$ events/(keV kg y) in 230 keV window around Q-value



GERDA collaboration, Science 365, Sept 2019

Constraints on the $^{76}$Ge 0νββ-decay

$$T_{1/2}^{0\nu} > 0.9 \times 10^{26}\,\mathrm{y}\ (90\%\mathrm{C.L.})$$

$$m_{\beta\beta} < 0.11 - 0.26\,\mathrm{eV}\ (90\%\mathrm{C.L.})$$

Median sensitivity

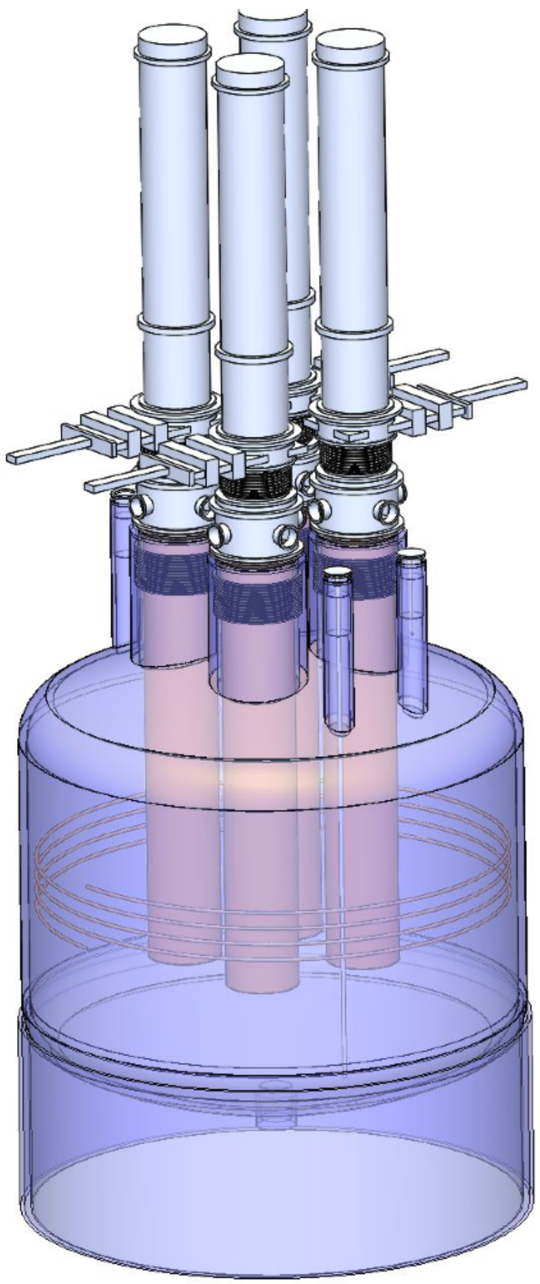
$$T_{1/2}^{0\nu} > 1.1 \times 10^{26}\,\mathrm{y}\ (90\%\mathrm{C.L.})$$

# THE FUTURE: LEGEND

LEGEND

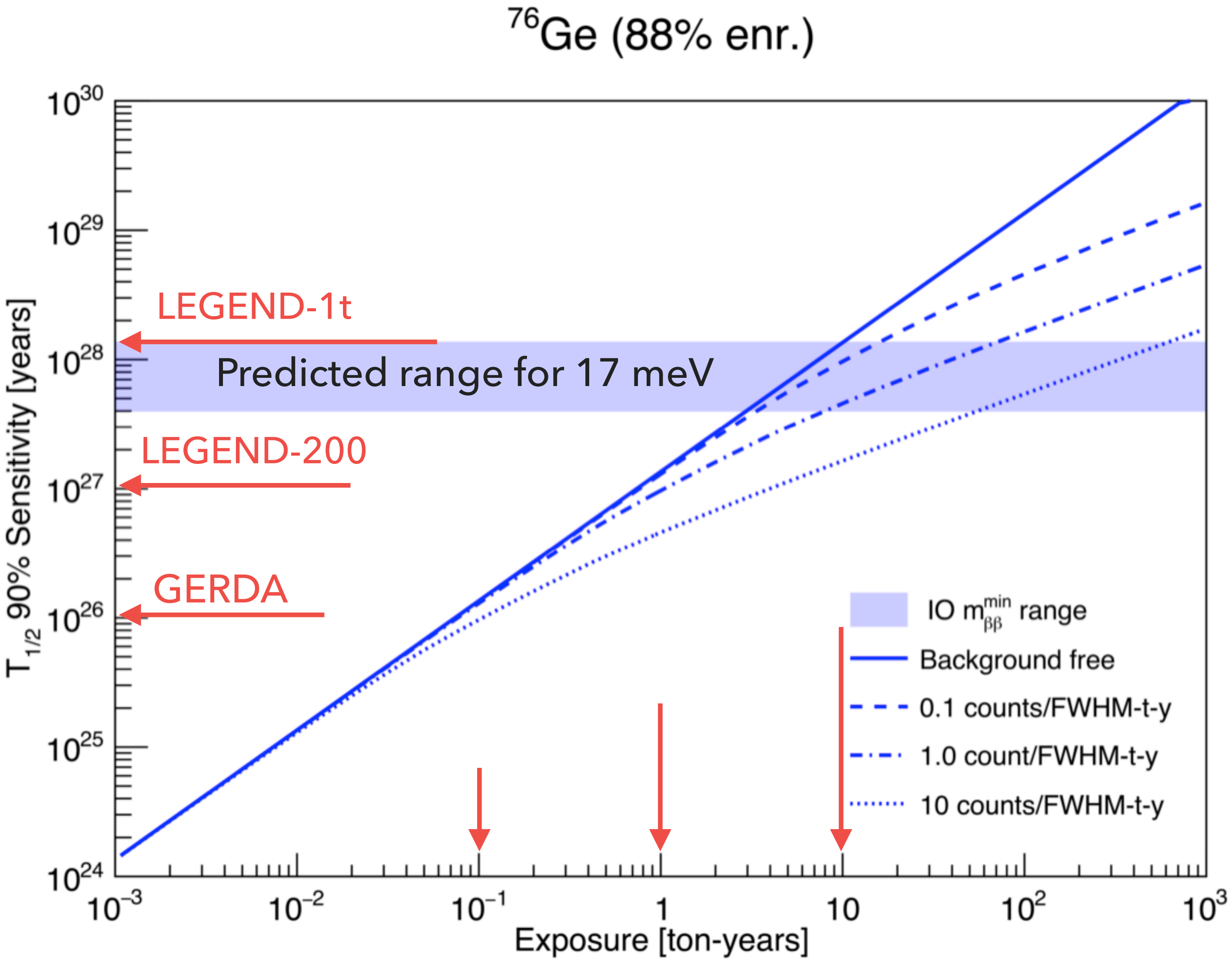
Large Enriched
Germanium Experiment
for Neutrinoless ββ Decay

- Large enriched germanium experiment for neutrinoless double beta decay
- Collaboration formed in October 2016
- 219 members, 48 institutions, 16 countries
  - LEGEND-200: 200 kg in existing (upgraded) infrastructure at LNGS, start in 2021
  - Background goal: 0.6 events/(FWHM t y)
  - LEGEND-1t: 1000 kg, staged
  - Background goal: 0.1 events/(FWHM t y)



# EXPECTED SENSITIVITY

- LEGEND-200: $10^{27}$y
- LEGEND-1t: $10^{28}$ y
- $m_{\beta\beta}$ = 17 meV (for worst case NME = 3.5)



Background

| | |
|---|---|
| GERDA: | 3 events/(ROI t y) |
| LEGEND-200: | 0.6 events/(ROI t y) |
| LEGEND-1t: | 0.1/(ROI t y) |

Abgrall et al., The large enriched germanium experiment for neutrinoless double beta decay. AIP Conf. Proc. 1894(1), 020027 (2017)

# LEADING RESULTS: OVERVIEW

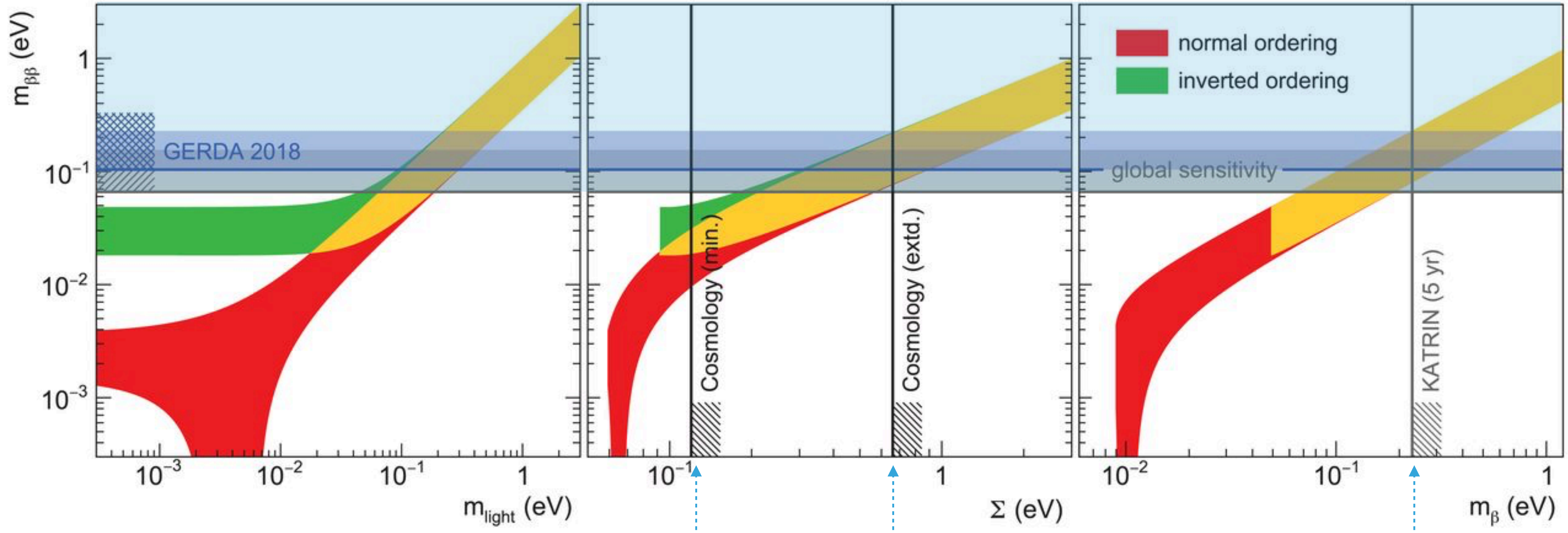
| Experiment | Isotope | FWHM [keV] | $T_{1/2}$ [$10^{26}$ y] | $m_{\beta\beta}$ [meV] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CUORE | $^{130}$Te | 7.4 | 0.15 | 162-757 |
| CUPID-0 | $^{82}$Se | 23 | 0.024 | 394-810 |
| EXO-200 | $^{136}$Xe | 71 | 0.18 | 93-287 |
| KamLAND-Zen | $^{136}$Xe | 270 | 1.1 | 76-234 |
| GERDA | $^{76}$Ge | 3.3 | 0.9 | 104-228 |
| Majorana | $^{76}$Ge | 2.5 | 0.27 | 157-346 |

Table adapted from: GERDA collaboration, Science 365, Sept 2019

# MASS OBSERVABLES

- Constraints in the $m_{\beta\beta}$ parameters space in the 3 light ν scenario
- Global sensitivity from 0νββ-experiments & constraints from direct searches & cosmology

$$m_{\beta\beta} = \left|\sum_{i=1}^{3} U_{ei}^2 m_i\right|$$



$$\Sigma = \sum_i m_i$$

$$m_\beta = \sqrt{\sum_i |U_{ei}^2| m_i^2}$$

0.12 eV

0.66 eV

0.23 eV

GERDA collaboration, Science 365, Sept 2019

# FUTURE PROJECTS: A SELECTION

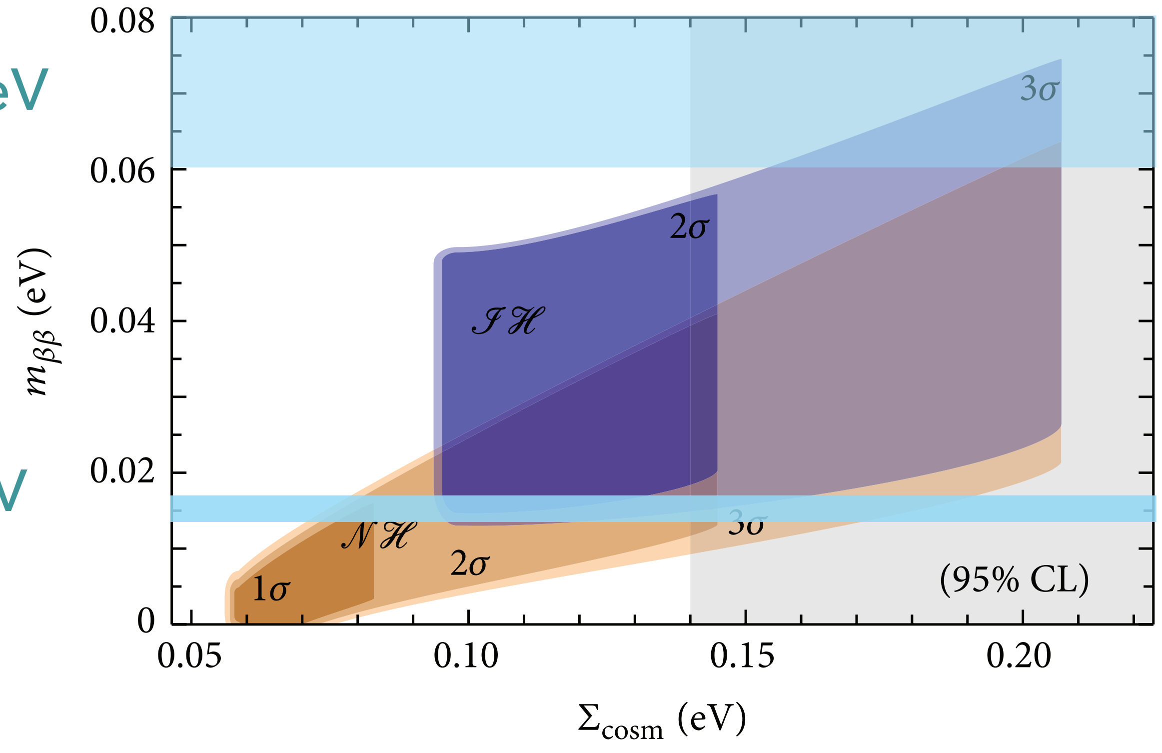
| Experiment | Isotope | Iso mass [kg] | FWHM [keV] | $T_{1/2}$ [$10^{27}$ y] | $m_{\beta\beta}$ [meV] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CUPID | $^{130}Te$ | 543 | 5 | 2.1 | 13-31 |
| CUPID | $^{82}Se$ | 336 | 5 | 2.6 | 8-38 |
| nEXO | $^{136}Xe$ | 4500 | 59 | 9 | 7-21 |
| KamLAND2-Zen | $^{136}Xe$ | 1000 | 141 | 0.6 | 25-70 |
| DARWIN | $^{136}Xe$ | 1068 | 20 | 2.4 | 11-46 |
| PandaX-III | $^{136}Xe$ | 901 | 24 | 1.0 | 20-55 |
| LEGEND-200 | $^{76}Ge$ | 175 | 3 | 1 | 34-74 |
| LEGEND-1t | $^{76}Ge$ | 873 | 3 | 6 | 11-28 |
| SuperNEMO | $^{82}Se$ | 100 | 120 | 0.1 | 58-144 |

# SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

- Ninety years after Pauli postulated his *"silly child"*: many open questions in neutrino physics
- Neutrinoless double beta decay: excellent tool to test LNV and the nature of neutrinos (Dirac vs Majorana)
- Existing experiments probe $T_{1/2}$ up to ~ $10^{26}$ years, with $T_{1/2} \sim (0.1\ \mathrm{eV}/m_\nu)^2 \times 10^{26}$ y
- Ton-scale experiments are required to cover the *inverted mass ordering scenario*
    - Several technologies move into this direction
- Much larger experiments required to probe the *normal mass ordering*

~70 meV

~10 meV



Current experiments

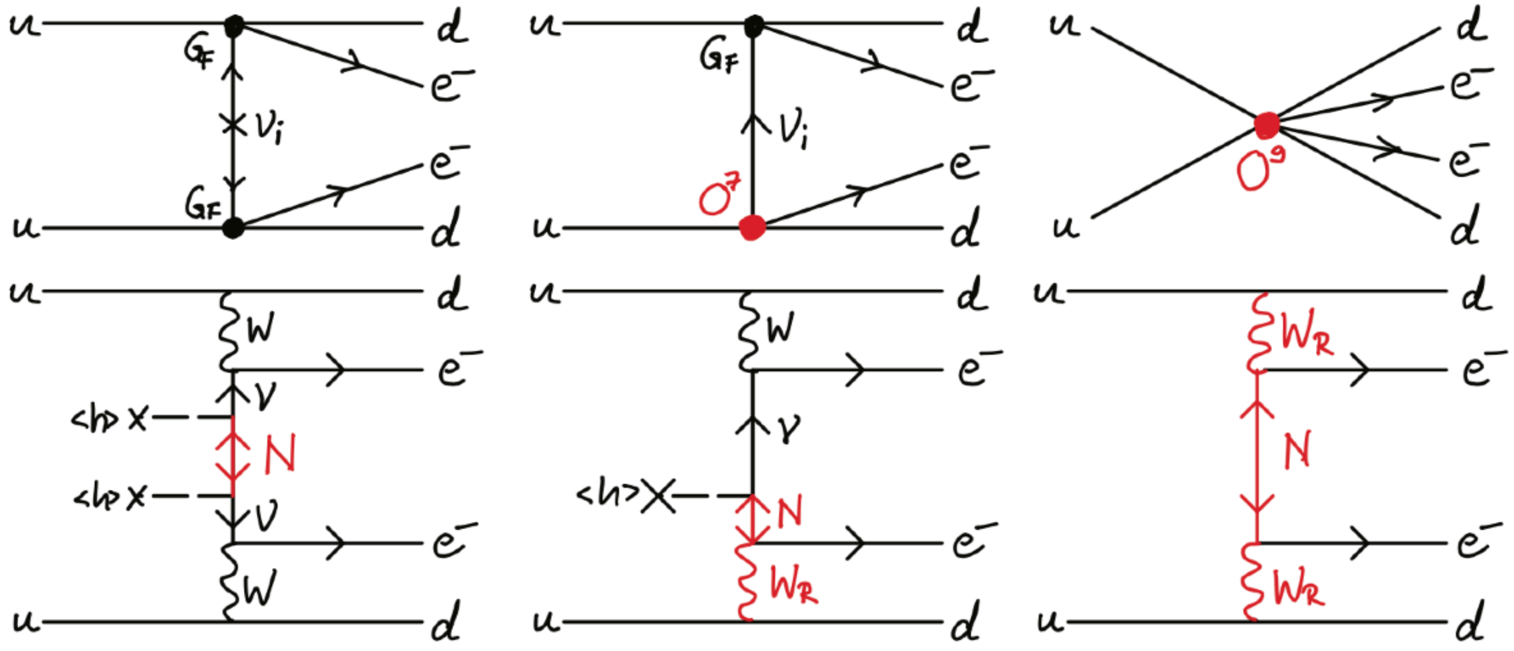
Future, ton-scale experiments

Dell'Oro, Marcocci, Viel, Vissani, Adv. High Energy Phys. (2016) 2162659

# THANK YOU

# OTHER MECHANISMS FOR DOUBLE BETA DECAY

- LNV processes in extensions of the Standard Model generically contribute to 0νββ-decay (light or heavy sterile neutrinos, LR symmetric models, R-parity violating SUSY, leptoquarks, etc)
- Often classified as short- and long range processes, depending on the mass of the particles mediating the process (whether lighter or heavier than the momentum exchange scale ~ O(100 MeV))
- In the effective Lagrangian picture, the effects at low energies can be summarised in terms of higher order operators, added to the SM Lagrangian



5-dim Weinberg operator, standard mechanism

7-dim operator, long-range contributions

9-dim operator, short-range contributions

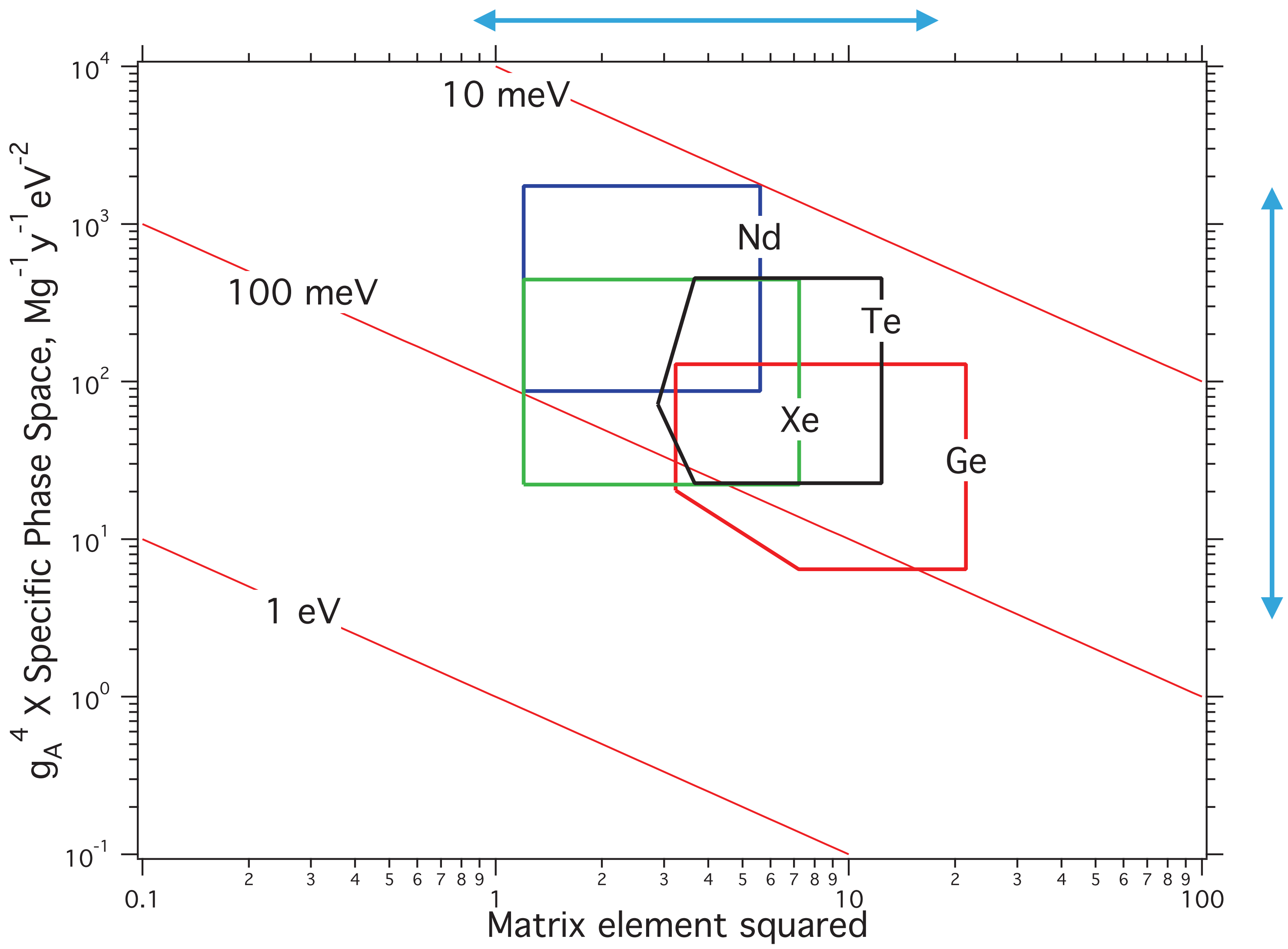
Examples from F. Deppisch, A modern introduction to neutrino physics: the lowest-order contributions beyond the standard mechanism

# ISOTOPES AND SENSITIVITY TO THE DECAY

- Isotopes have comparable sensitivities in terms of rates per unit mass

|M|$^2$ uncertainty

$$g_A^4 \ln(2) \frac{N_A}{A m_e^2} G^{0\nu}$$



$g_A$$^4$ uncertainty

effective value for the axial vector coupling constant $g_A$: ~ 0.6 - 1.269 (free nucleon value)

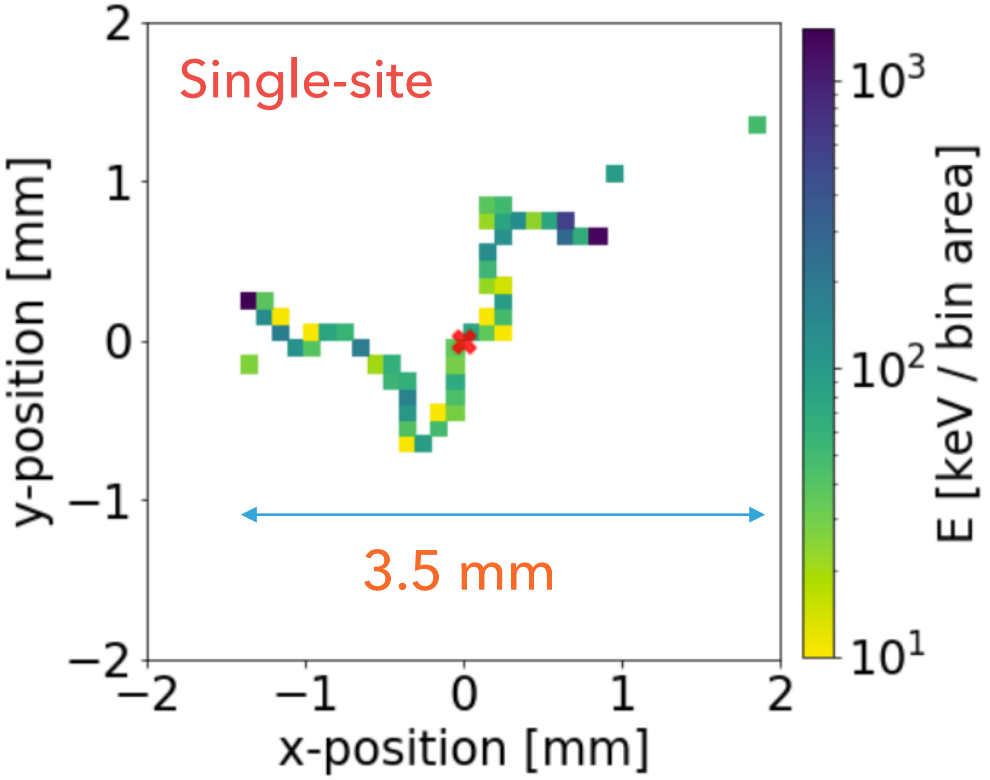
R. G. H. Robertson, Mod. Phys. Lett. A28 (2013) 1350021

# SIGNAL EVENTS IN LIQUID XENON

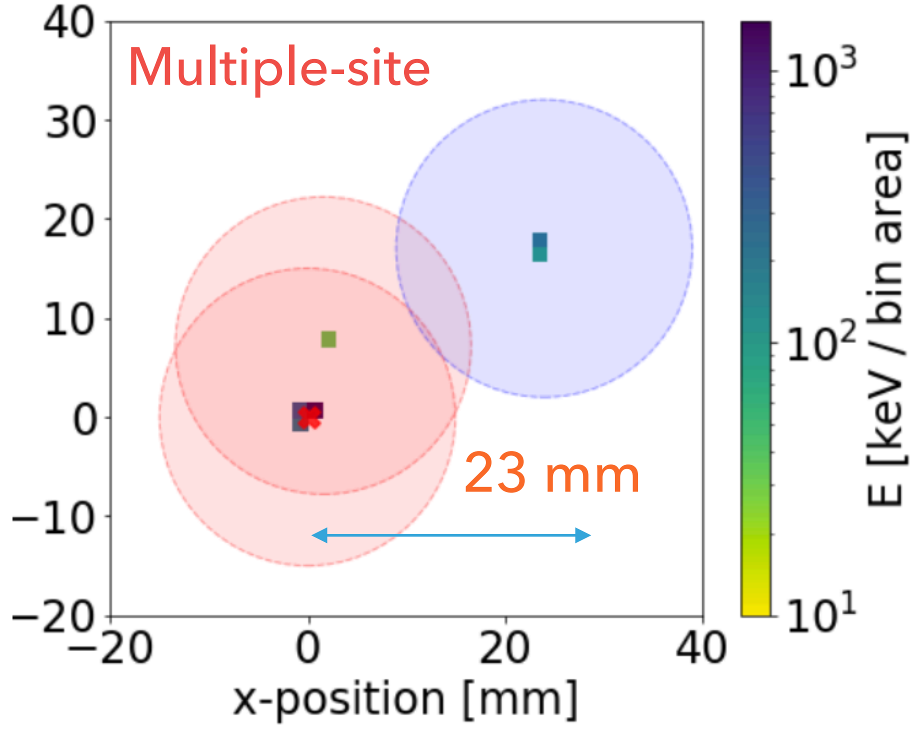
- Electrons thermalise within O(mm) => single-site topology
- Bremsstrahlung photons: may travel > 15 mm (E>300 keV) => multi-site event
- Energy depositions: spatially grouped using density-based spatial clustering algorithm
    - New cluster, if distance to any previous $E_{dep} > \varepsilon$ (separation threshold)

Assumption: ε = 15 mm; 90% efficiency for ββ-events

2 e⁻ back-to-back



3.5 mm



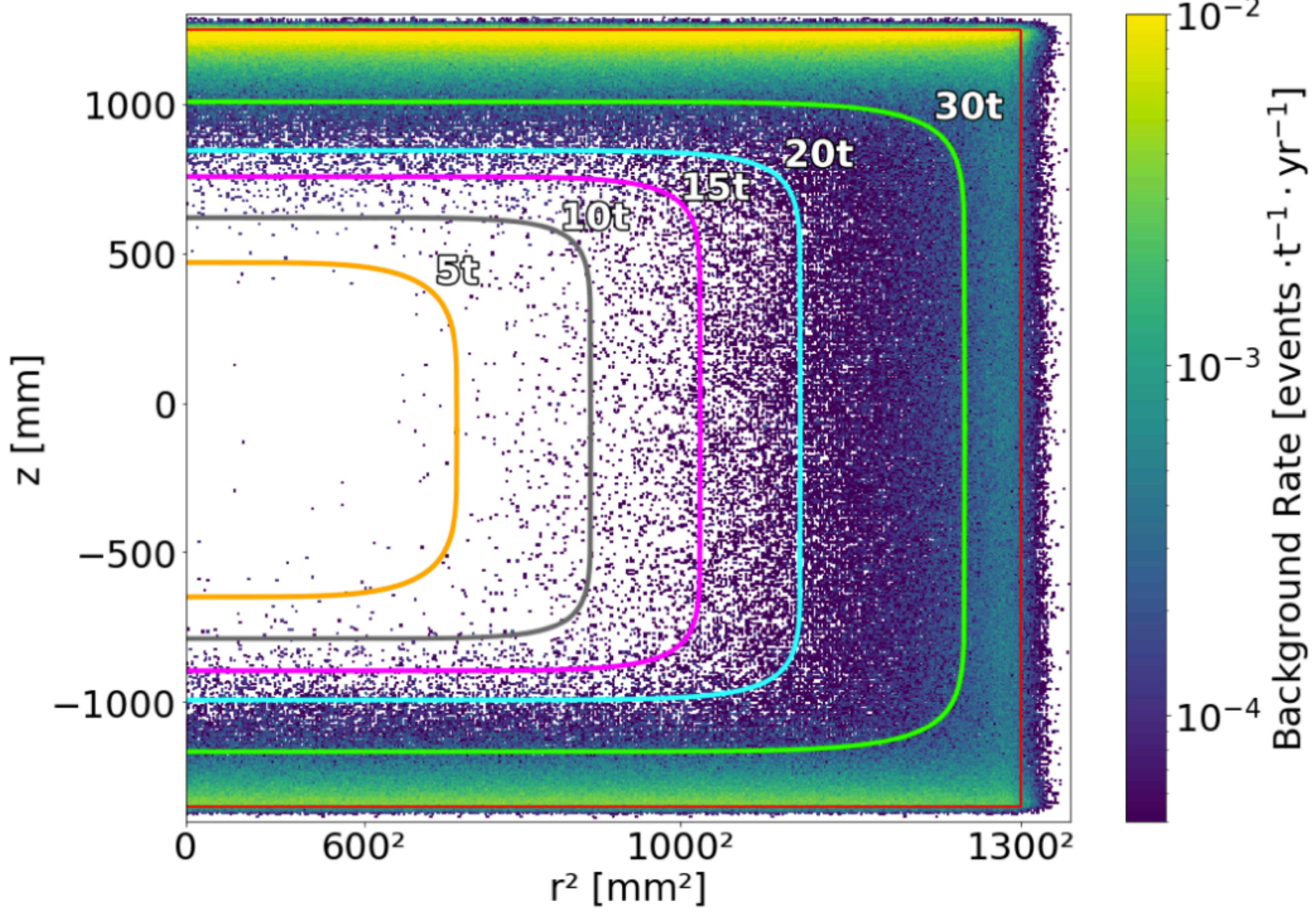
23 mm

# MAIN BACKGROUND COMPONENTS

- Intrinsic:
  - $^{8}$B ν's, $^{137}$Xe, 2νββ, $^{222}$Rn
- Materials:
  - $^{238}$U, $^{232}$Th, $^{60}$Co, $^{44}$Ti
- FV cut: super-ellipsoidal

$$\left(\frac{z+z_0}{z_{max}}\right)^t + \left(\frac{r}{r_{max}}\right)^t < 1$$

100 y of DARWIN run time, event with energy deposits in the ROI [$Q_{\beta\beta} \pm$ FWHM/2]



| Material | Unit | $^{238}$U | $^{226}$Ra | $^{232}$Th | $^{228}$Th | $^{60}$Co | $^{44}$Ti |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Titanium | mBq/kg | <1.6 | <0.09 | 0.28 | 0.25 | <0.02 | <1.16 |
| PTFE | mBq/kg | <1.2 | 0.07 | <0.07 | 0.06 | 0.027 | - |
| Copper | mBq/kg | <1.0 | <0.035 | <0.033 | <0.026 | <0.019 | - |
| PMT | mBq/unit | 8.0 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.84 | - |
| Electronics | mBq/unit | 1.10 | 0.34 | 0.16 | 0.16 | <0.008 | - |

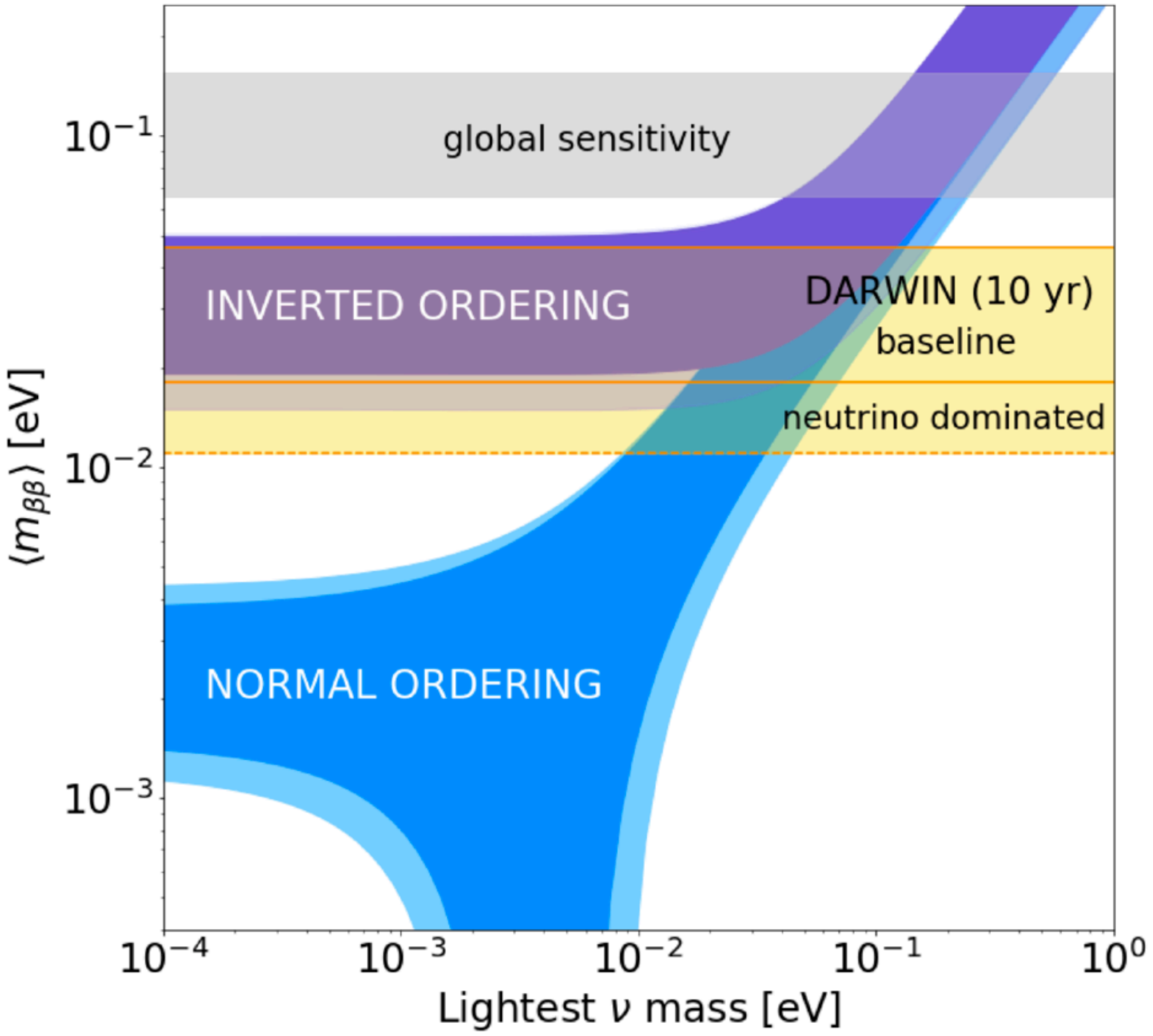
$^{44}$Ti: $T_{1/2}$ = 59 y, cosmogenic

Ti: LZ, Astrop. Phys., 96 (2017)

Other: XENON, EPJ-C 77 (2017)

# ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Reduce external backgrounds
  - SiPMs, cleaner materials & electronics
- Reduce internal background
  - Time veto for $^{137}$Xe, deeper lab, BiPo tagging
- Improve signal/background discrimination; resolution…

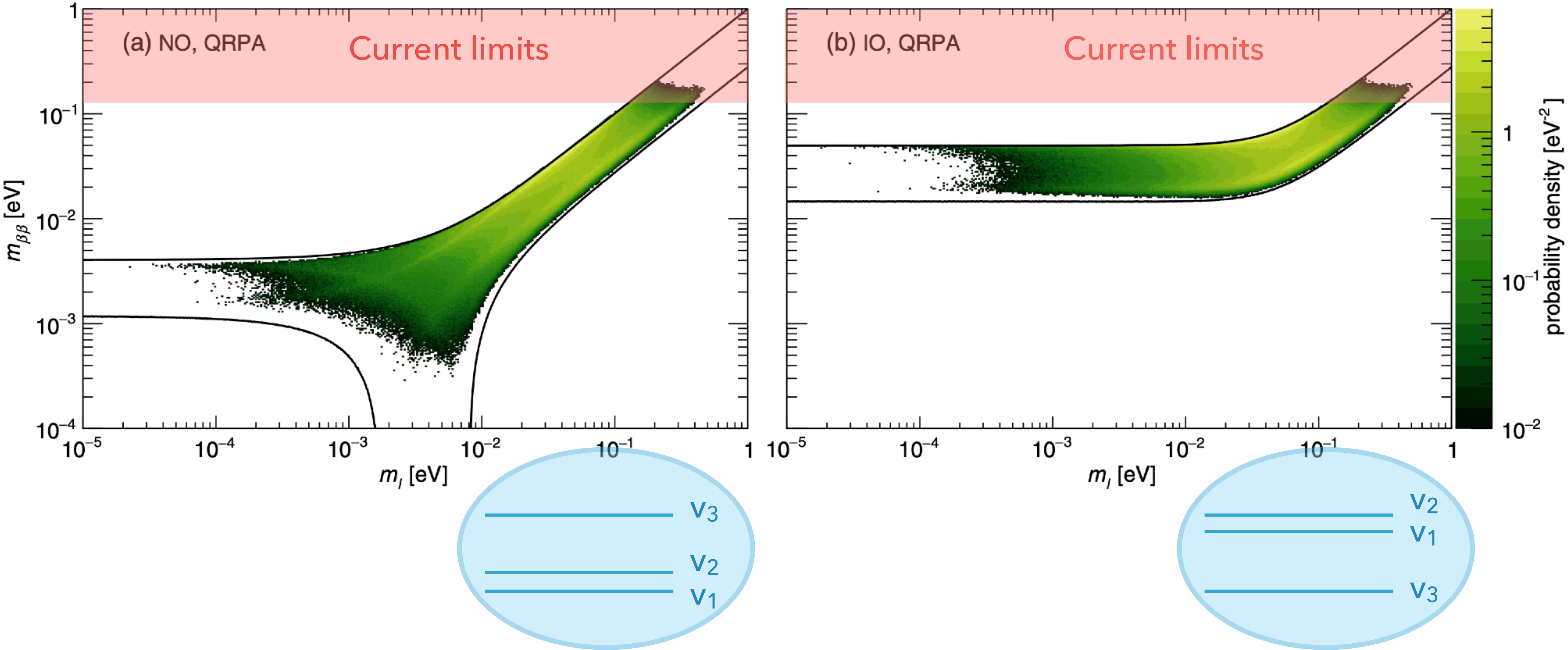


Baseline: $m_{\beta\beta}$ = (18 – 46) meV

Neutrino dominated: $m_{\beta\beta}$= (11– 28) meV

# THE EFFECTIVE MAJORANA NEUTRINO MASS

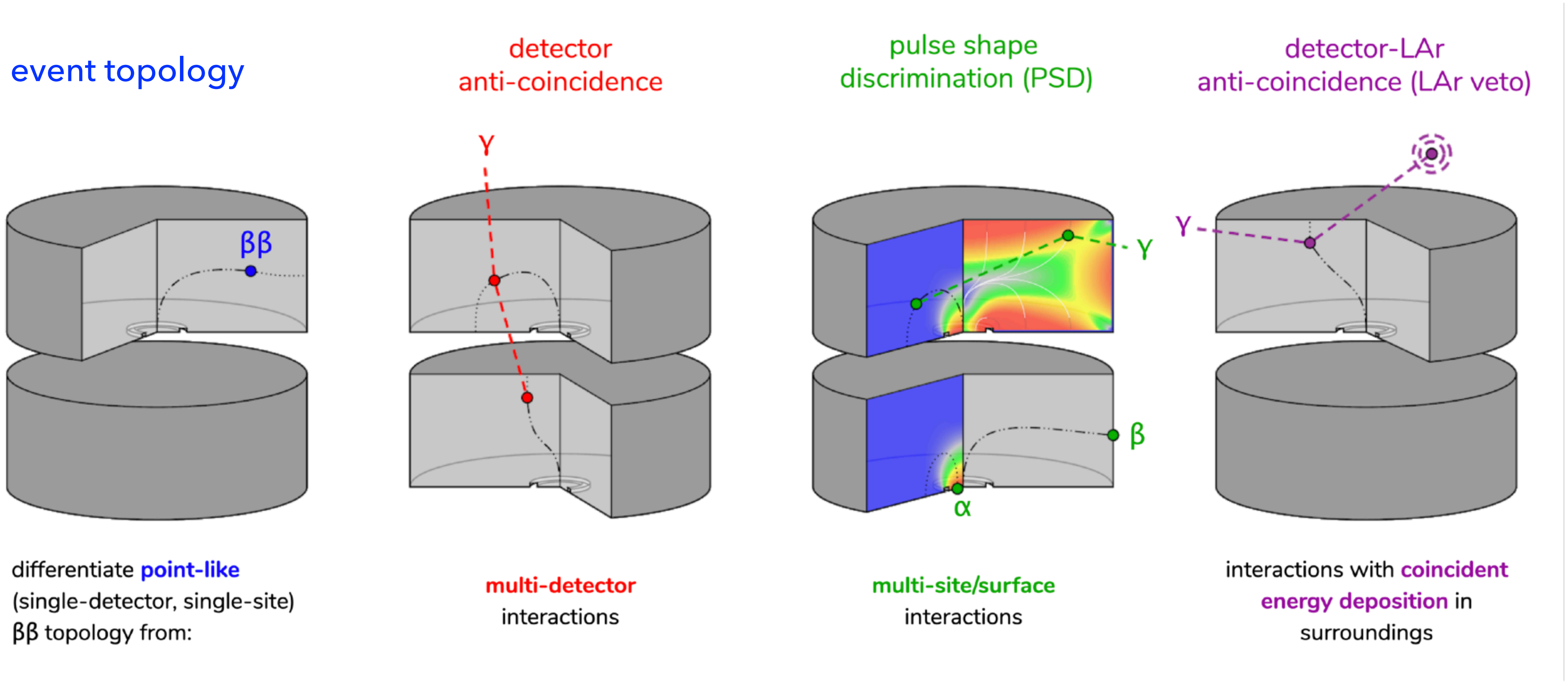
- Probability distribution of $m_{\beta\beta}$ via random sampling from the distributions of mixing angles and $\Delta m^2$
- Flat priors for the Majorana phases



Agostini, Benato, Detwiler, PRD 96, 2017

# BACKGROUND SUPPRESSION

- Event topology + anti-coincidence between HPGe detectors + pulse shape discrimination + liquid argon veto



event topology

detector anti-coincidence

pulse shape discrimination (PSD)

detector-LAr anti-coincidence (LAr veto)

differentiate **point-like** (single-detector, single-site) ββ topology from:

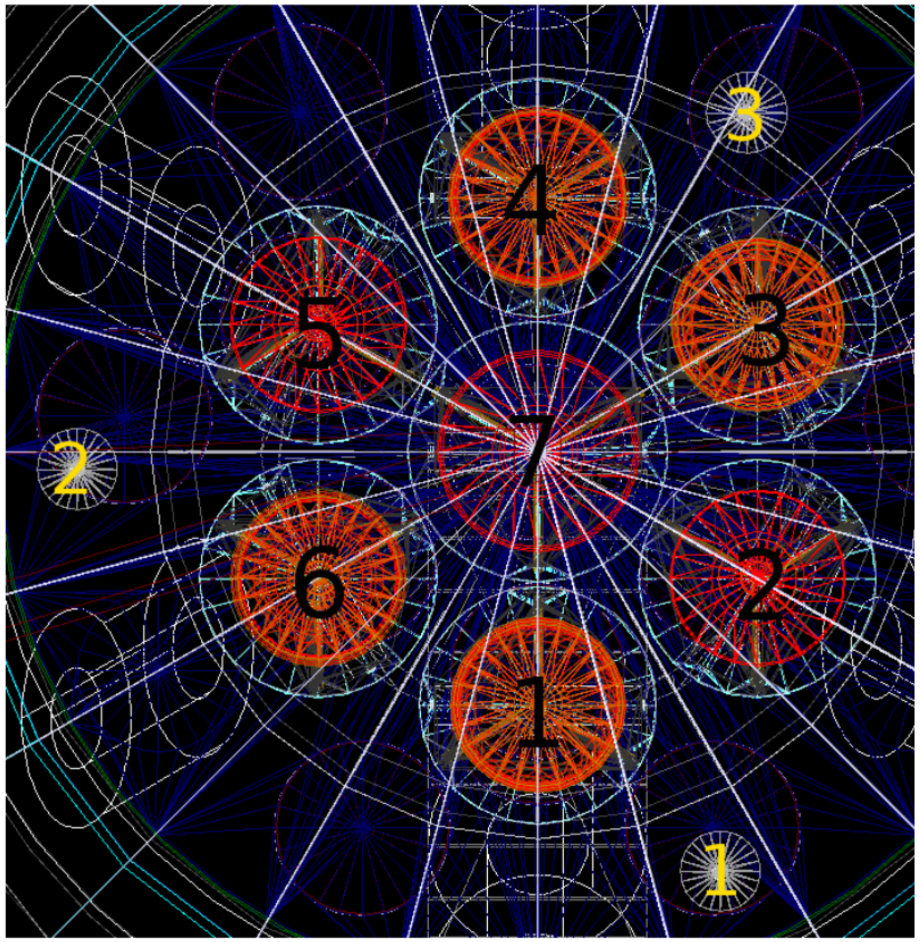
**multi-detector** interactions

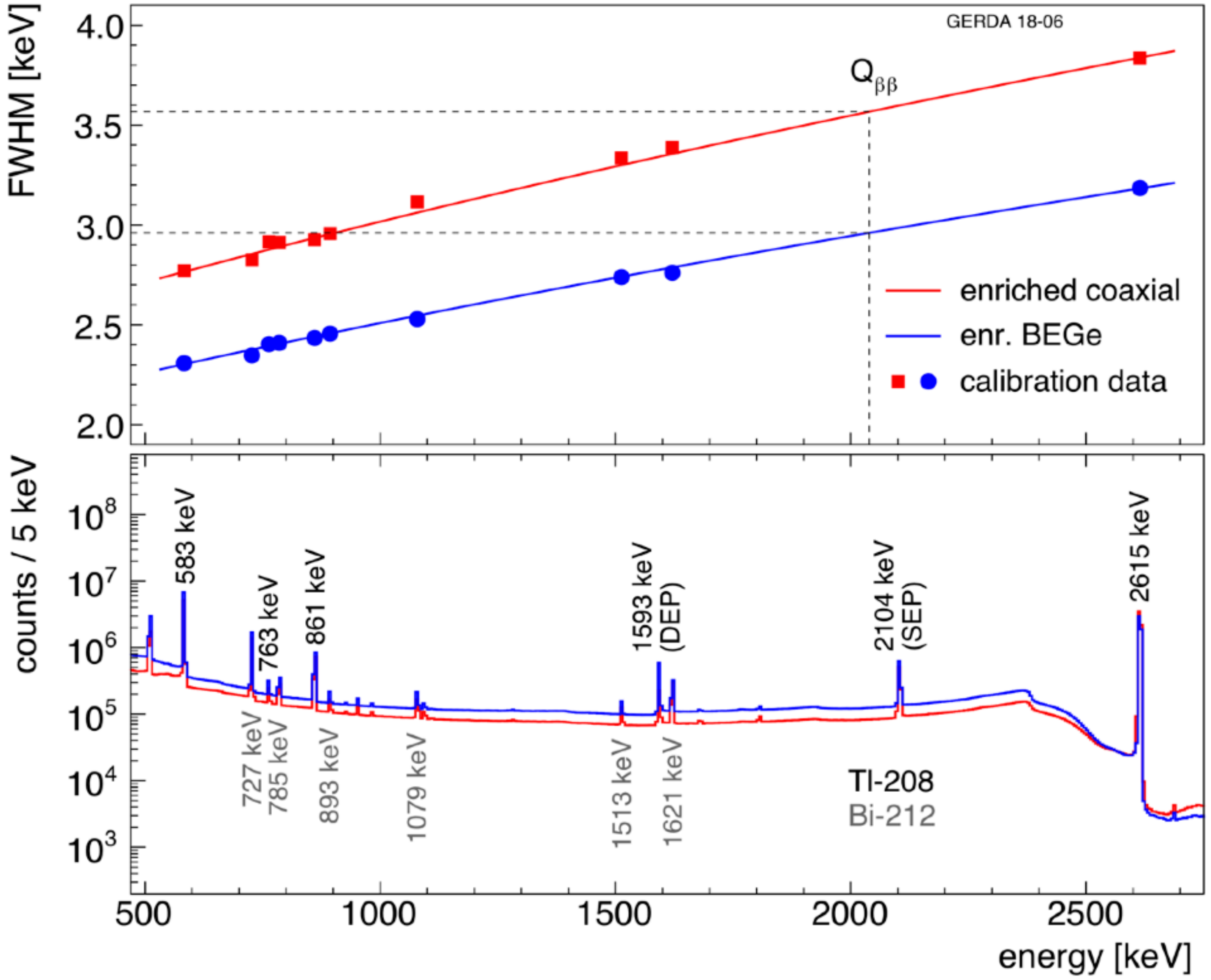
**multi-site/surface** interactions

interactions with **coincident energy deposition** in surroundings

# ENERGY CALIBRATION

- Three low neutron-emission $^{228}$Th sources in SIS, deployed once every week
- FWHM at $Q_{\beta\beta}$: (3.0 ± 0.1) keV for BEGe, (3.6 ± 0.1) keV for coaxial detectors

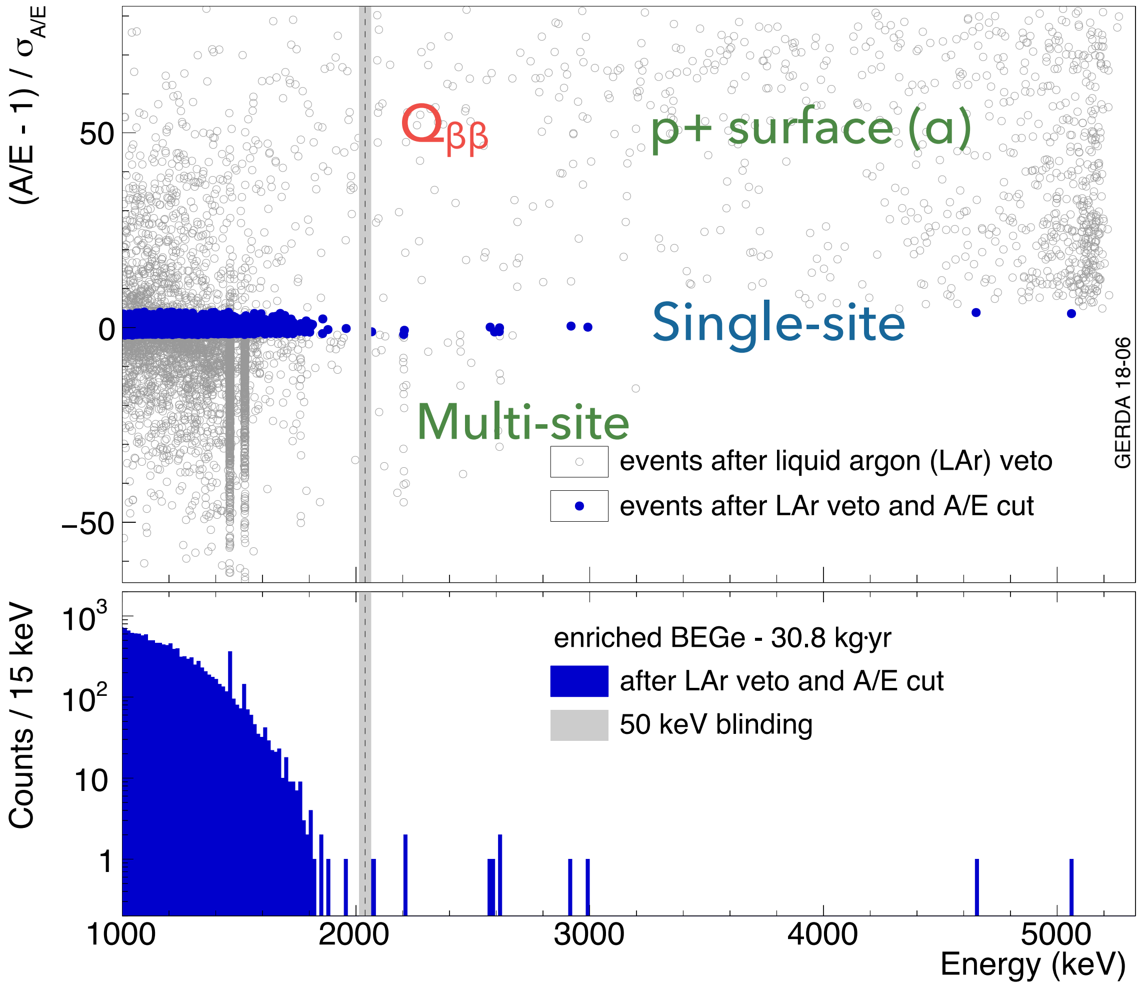


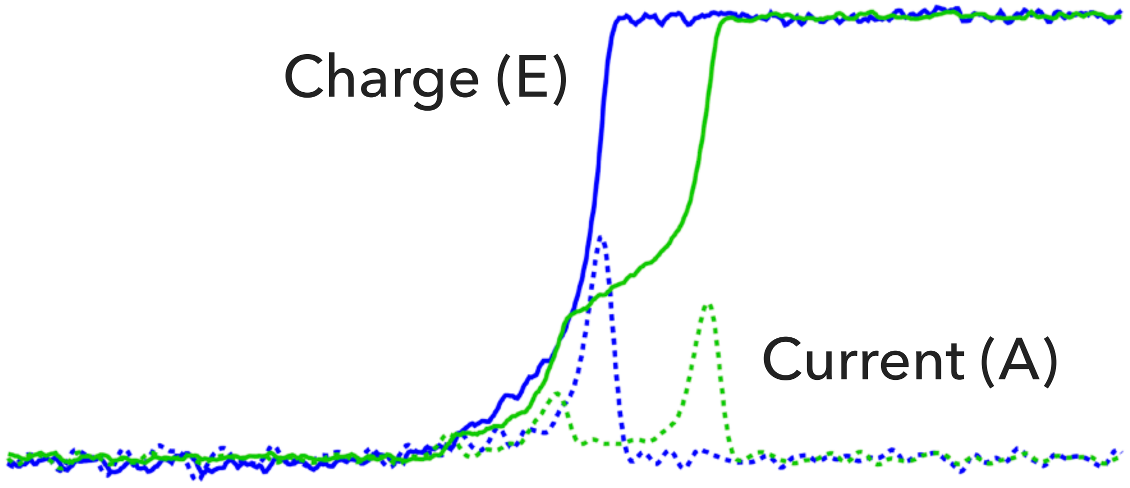


GERDA collaboration, Nature 544 (2017) 47

# PULSE SHAPE DISCRIMINATION

- Cut based on 1 parameter: max of current pulse (A) normalised to total energy (E) (BEGe)
- Tuned on calibration data (90% $^{208}$Tl DEP acceptance)
- Acceptance at 0νββ: (87.6±2.5)%





PSD parameter: (A/E -1)/$\sigma_{A/E}$

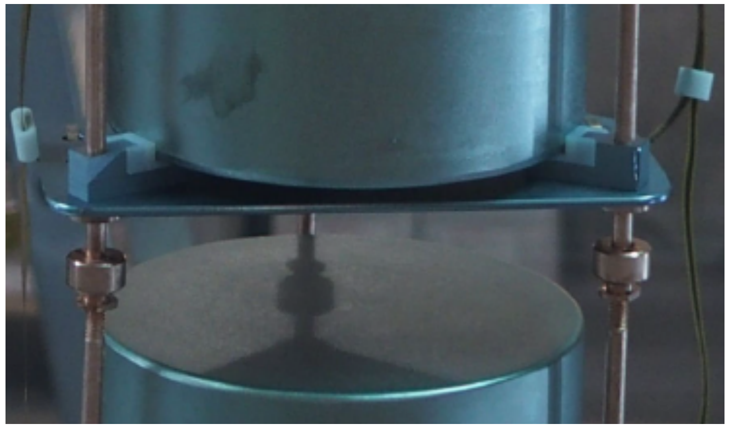
Mean and resolution corrected for E-dependance

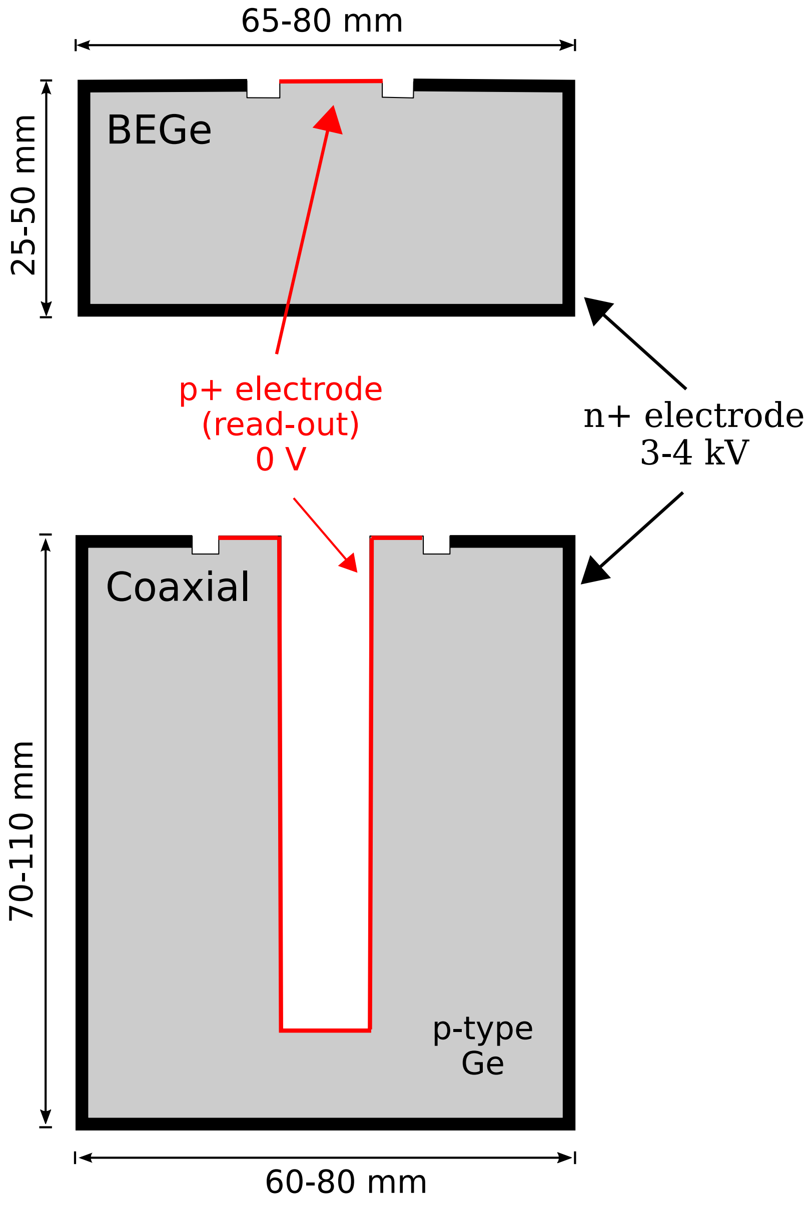
A/E normalised to 1

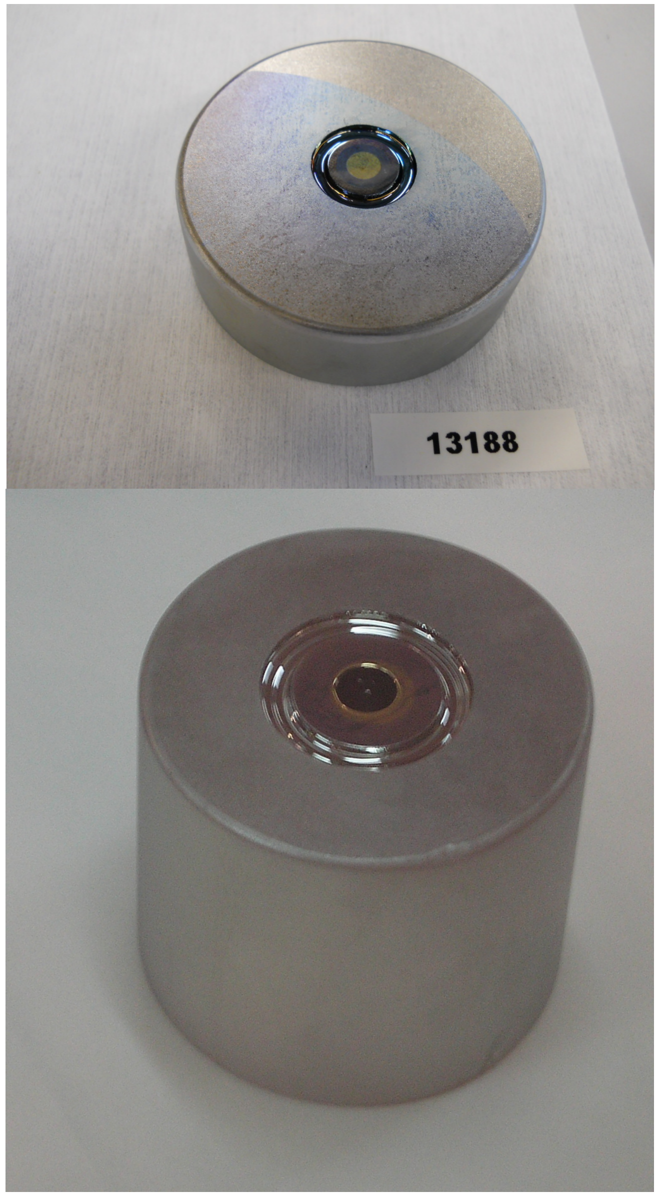
Accept events around (A/E -1)/$\sigma_{A/E}$ =0

# GERDA PHASE-II DETECTORS

- BEGe and coaxial
- p+ electrodes:
  - 0.3 μm boron implantation
- n+ electrodes:
  - 1-2 mm lithium layer (biased up to +4.5 kV)
- Low-mass detector holders (Si, Cu, PTFE)

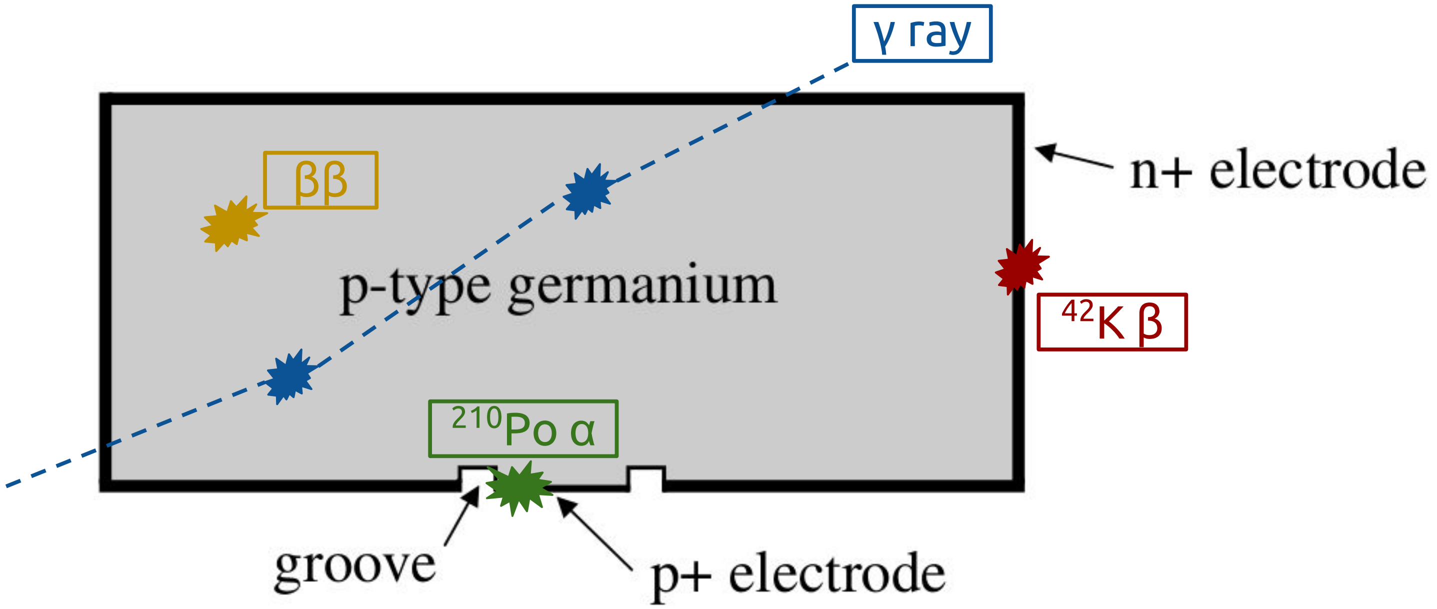


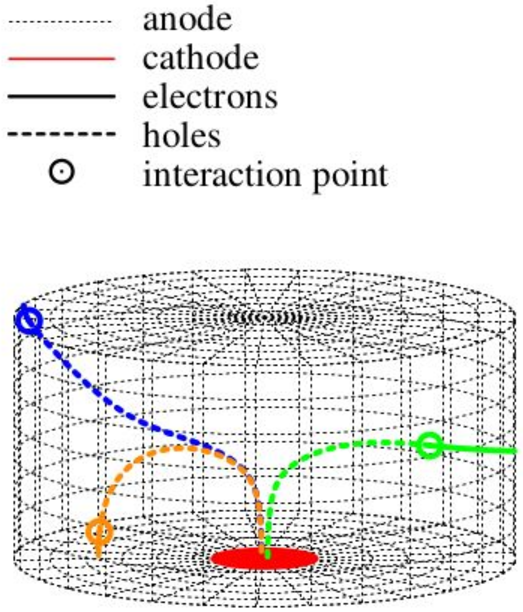


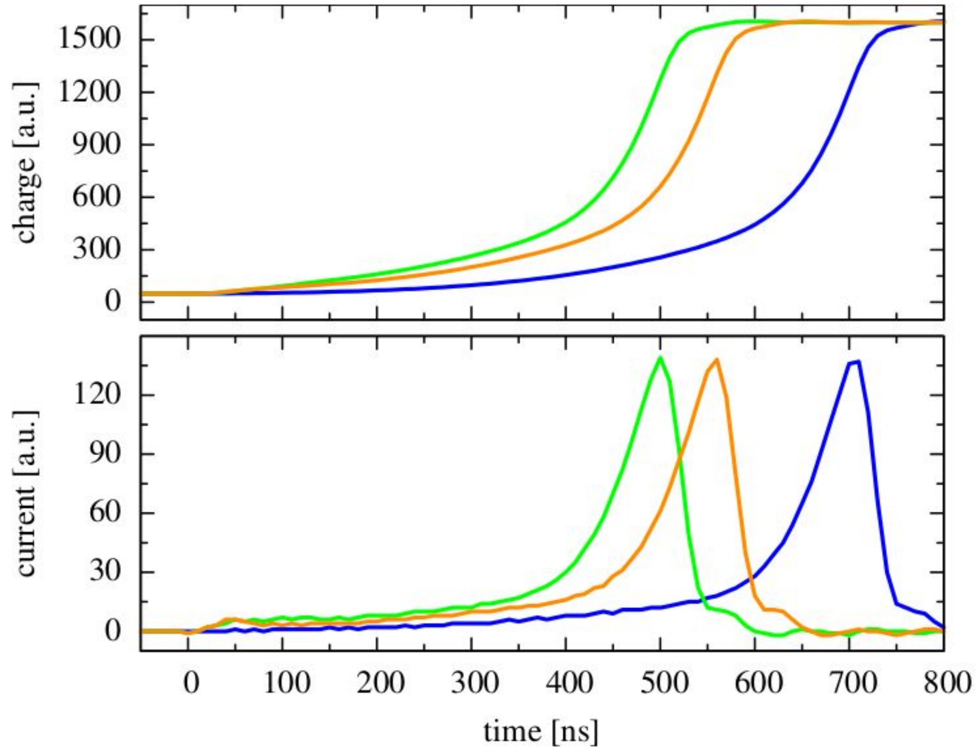


# GERDA PULSE SHAPE DISCRIMINATION

- Signal-like: Single Site Events (SSE)
- Background-like: Multiple Site Events (MSE)
- BEGe detectors: E-field and weighting potential has special shape: pulse-height nearly independent of position

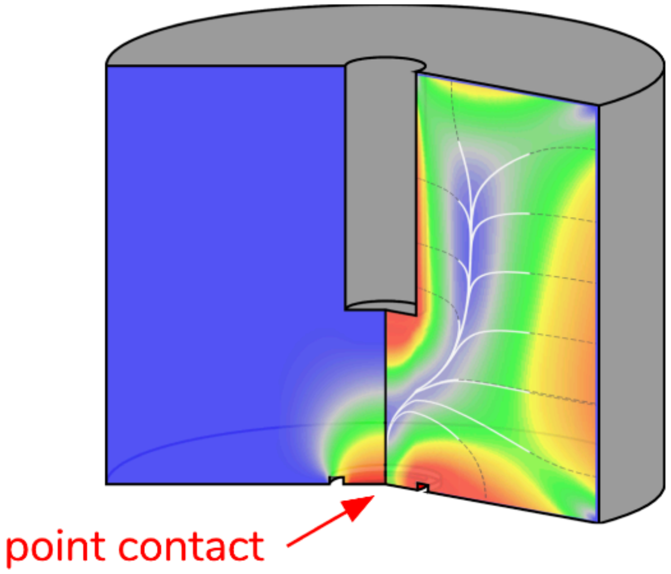




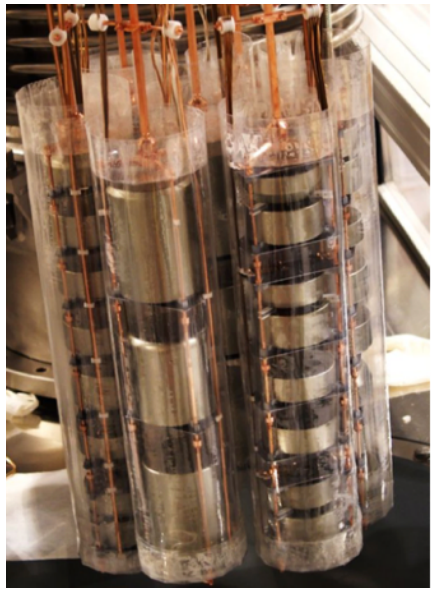


# UPGRADE: INVERTED COAXIAL DETECTORS

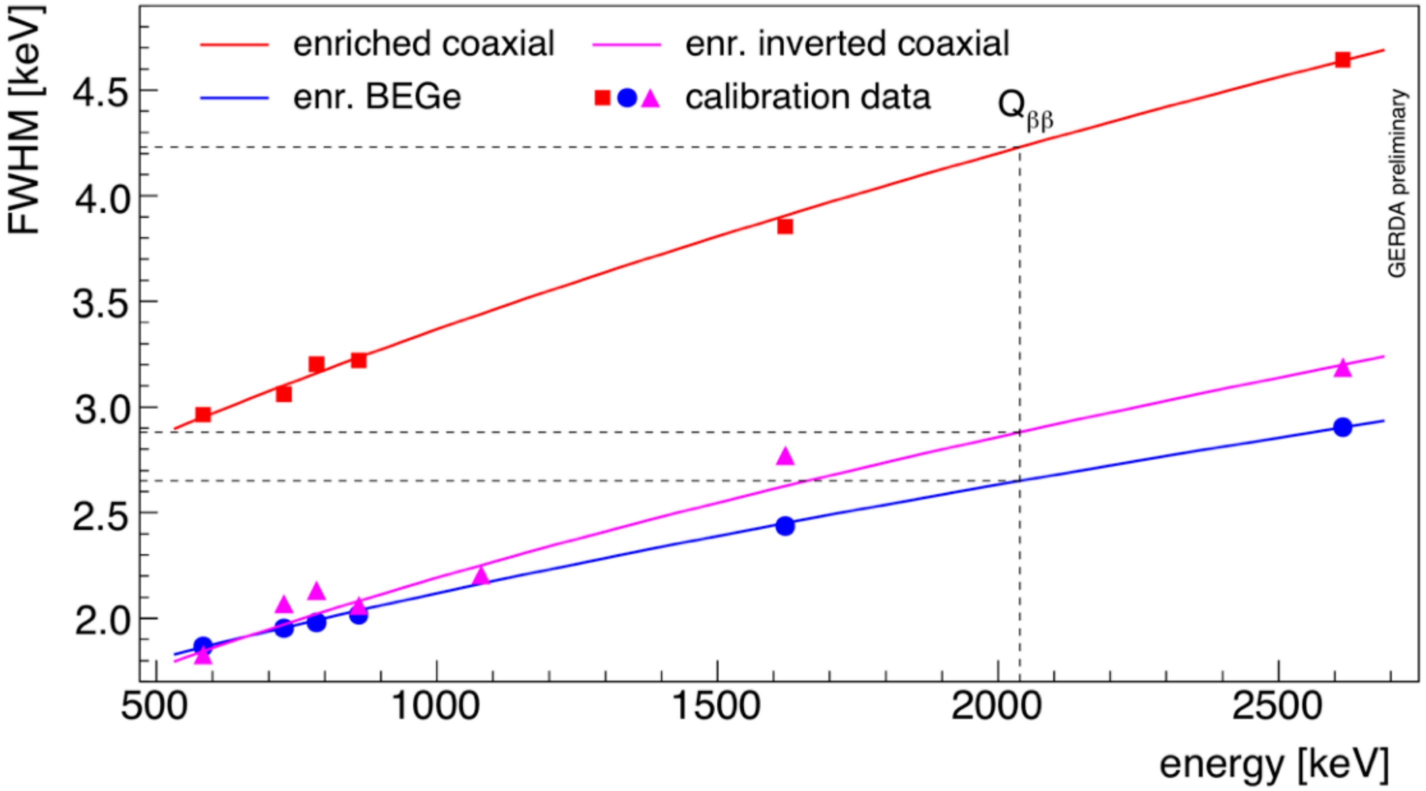
- Large point-contact detectors with ~ 3 kg mass, excellent PSD performance
- First 5 enriched IC detectors installed in spring 2018; baseline for LEGEND



R.J Cooper et al.,
NIM A 665 (2011) 25

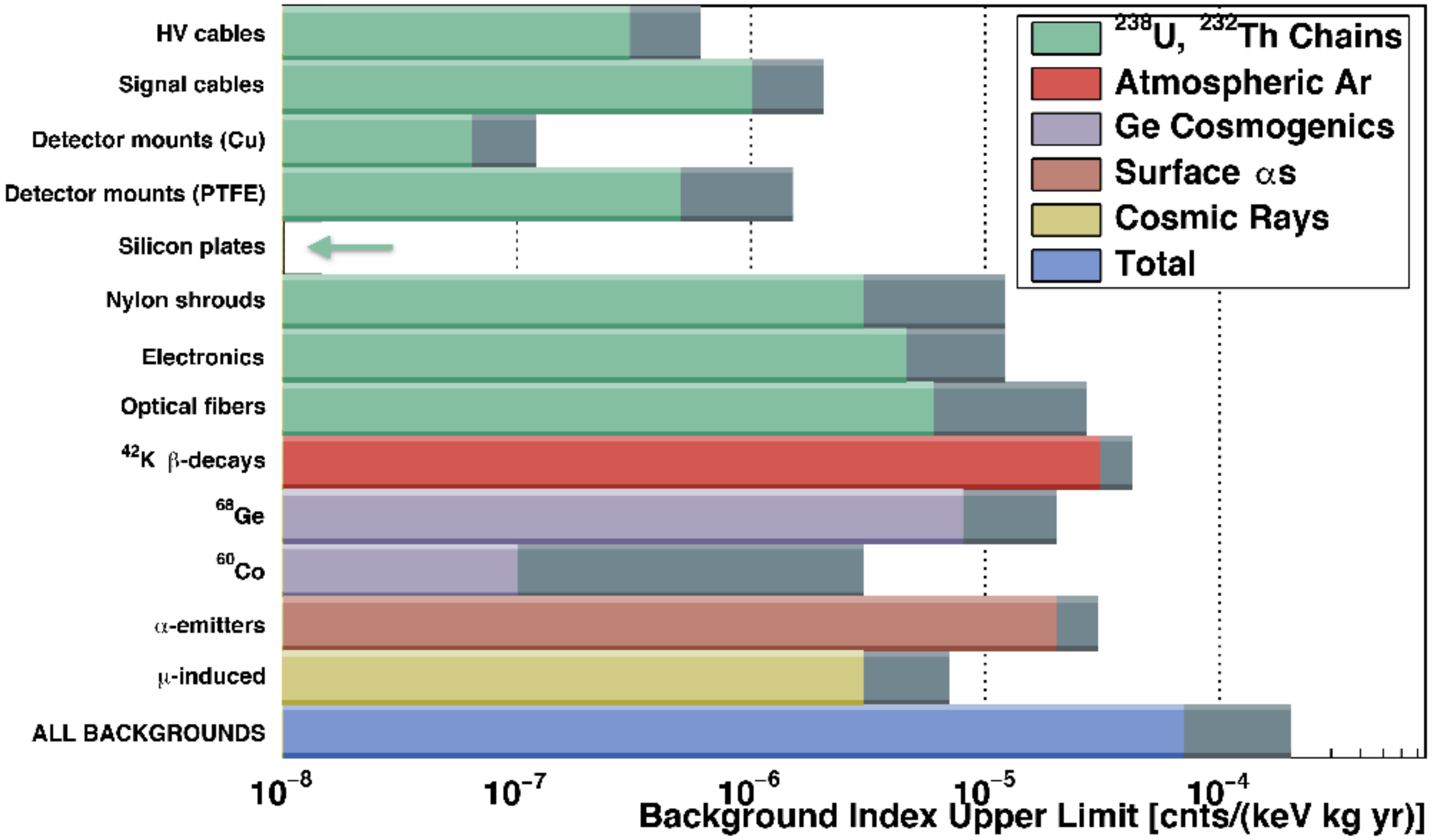


Detector mass increase: 35.6 kg -> 44.2 kg



FWHM at $Q_{\beta\beta}$ [keV]: 4.2±0.1 coax; 2.7 ± 0.1 BEGe; 2.9±0.1 IC

# BACKGROUND EXPECTATION



Monte Carlo simulations based on experimental data and material assays. Background rate after anti-coin., PSD, LAr veto cuts.

Assay limits correspond to the 90% CL upper limit. Grey bands indicate uncertainties in overall background rejection efficiency

$Q_{\beta\beta}$ BI ≤ (0.7–2.)x$10^{-4}$ events/(keV kg yr) = 0.2-0.5 events/(FWHM t yr)