

# The Stellar $^{72}\text{Ge}(n,g)$ Cross Section: A First Measurement at n\_TOF

*Tuesday, 26 June 2018 19:00 (1h 30m)*

The slow neutron capture process (s-process) is responsible for producing about half of the elemental abundances heavier than iron in the universe. Neutron capture cross sections on stable isotopes are a key nuclear physics input for s-process studies. The  $^{72}\text{Ge}(n,g)$  Maxwellian Average Cross Section (MACS) has an important influence on production of isotopes between Ge and Zr in the s-process in massive stars [1] and so far only theoretical estimations are available [2].

An experiment was carried out at the neutron time-of-flight facility n\_TOF [3] at CERN to measure the  $^{72}\text{Ge}(n,g)$  reaction for the first time at stellar neutron energies. At n\_TOF, neutrons over a large energy range (few meV to several GeV) are produced by spallation reactions of a highly energetic (20 GeV/c), pulsed proton beam impinging on a massive Pb target. The capture measurement was performed using an enriched  $^{72}\text{GeO}_2$  sample at a distance of 184 m from the spallation target (Experimental Area 1), which allows a measurement with high neutron energy resolution. The prompt gamma rays produced after neutron capture were detected with a set of liquid scintillation detectors (C6D6), which met the experimental requirements of low neutron sensitivity [4].

The neutron capture yield is derived from the counting spectra taking into account the neutron flux and the gamma-ray detection efficiency using the Pulse Height Weighting Technique [5]. The experiment, data analysis and preliminary results will be presented.

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**Session Classification:** Poster session