

Team Members:

A Pappalardo
D Oliva
J Suarez
F Abubaker
A Hassan
R Catalano
G Cuttone
F Farokhi
S Fattori
M Guarrera
A Kurmanova
G Petringa
A Sciuto
GAP Cirrone
A Amato
C Manna
F Vinciguerra
D Mascali
G Mauro
A Pidotella

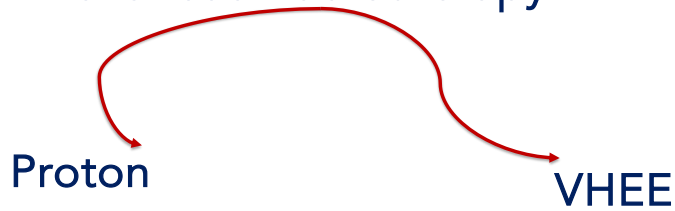


Implementing Capillary Design for Reliable VHEE Beam Delivery

Dr. Sahar Arjmand
Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (INFN)
Laboratori Nazionali del Sud (LNS)

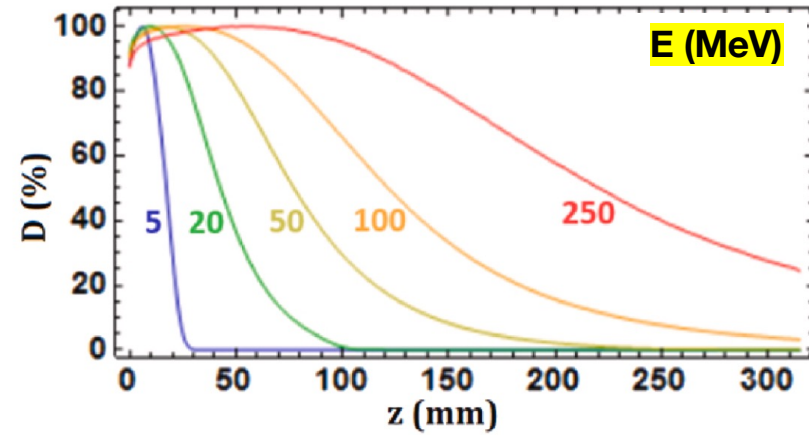
- Very High Energy Electron (VHEE) for Radiotherapy
- Laser-plasma Acceleration (LPA) for VHEE
- Introducing I-LUCE Facility
- Plasma Module & Plasma Diagnostic
- Plasma Modelling in COMSOL Multiphysics

Advanced Radiotherapy

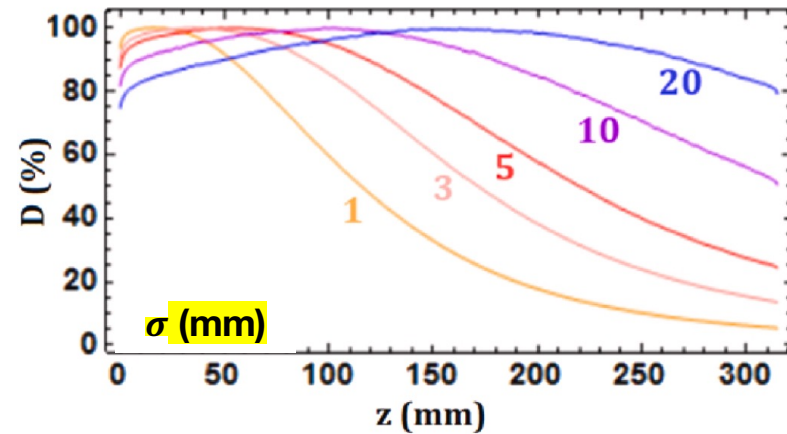


Energy Range	~ 250 MeV	~ 250 MeV
Penetration Depth	High (deep-seated tumors)	High (deep-seated tumors)
Dose Distribution	Sharp dose fall-off (Bragg Peak)	Favorable dose distribution
Radiobiological Effectiveness	High due to dense ionization	Comparable to proton/ions in high energy range
Normal Tissue Sparing	Excellent, minimal damage	Good, small penumbra, minimal secondary products
Cost and Infrastructure	High cost, large area	Low cost, ready to implement
Clinical Evidence	Growing (partially established)	Emerging (early studies)
Technology Availability	Limited centers	Increasing with e-accelerators
Treatment Flexibility	High precision, less flexible sparing	Flexible (combination of electron & photon therapy)

Several Electron Beam Energies (all in MeV)



Several Electron Beam Widths (all in mm) at an Electron Energy of 250 MeV

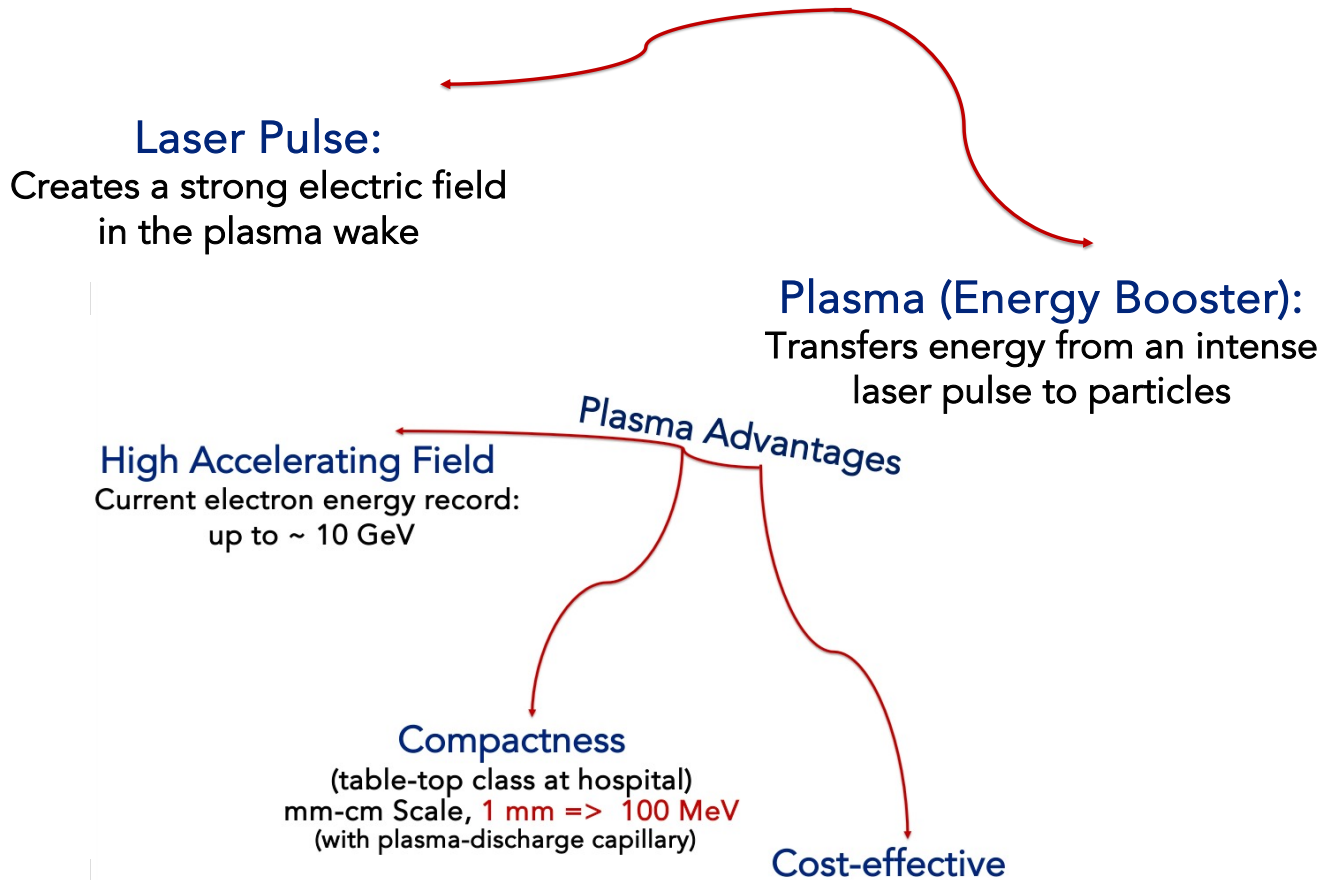


A. Lagzda et al., VHEE Beams, 2020
Bohlen et al., Front. Psychol., Sec. Health Psychology, 2021

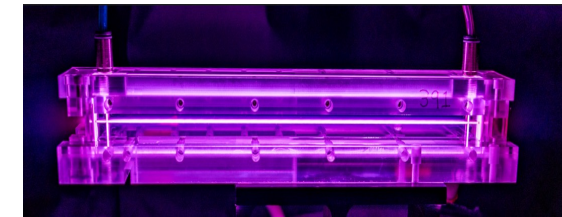
VHEE: Toward Experimental Implementation via LPAs

4

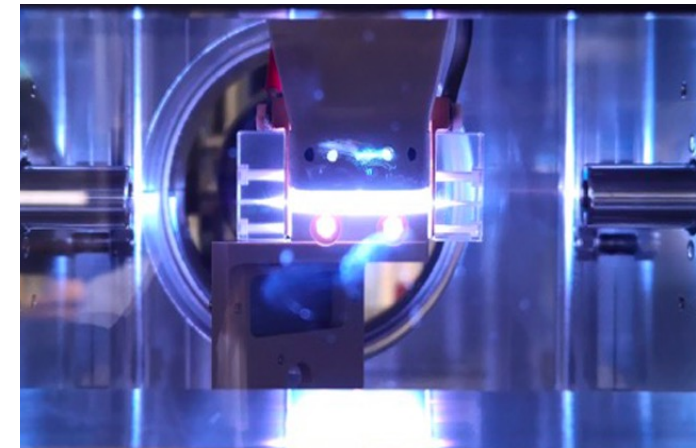
VHEE can be generated using LPAs, which leverage plasma technology and intense laser pulses to propel charged particles to very high energies over short distances (via gas jets or discharge capillaries).



Plasma capillary at BELLA (USA)



Plasma capillary at INFN-LNF (Italy)



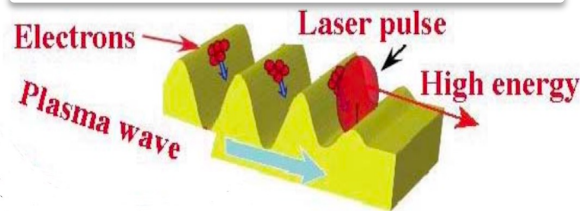
LPAs: Laser Wakefield Acceleration (LWFA)

5

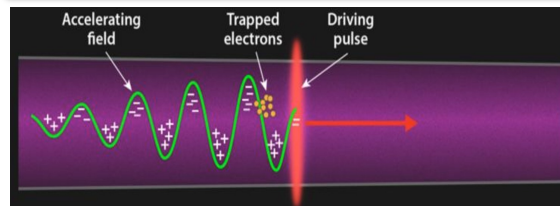
LWFA Mechanism

- **Laser Pulse Injection:**
A powerful laser pulse is directed into a plasma.
- **Creation of Plasma Wake:**
The high-intensity laser pulse generates a strong electric field in the plasma, known as the **plasma wake**.
- **Electron Displacement:**
This **electric field** from the laser pulse **pushes** electrons away from their original positions in the plasma.
- **Formation of Positive Charge Region:**
This **movement of electrons** creates a **region of positive charge** because the heavier ions remain relatively stationary while the lighter electrons move away.
- **Electron Acceleration:**
Electrons are accelerated as they ride the wake created by laser and gain energy as they move through these waves.

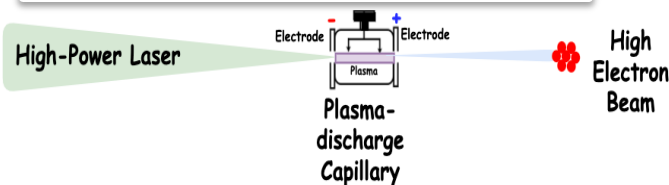
Principal Acceleration Diagram



Electron Acceleration



An Experimental Setup Diagram



T. Tajima, J. Dawson, *Phys. Rev. Lett.*, 43 (1979)

Laser Electron Accelerator

T. Tajima and J. M. Dawson

Department of Physics, University of California, Los Angeles, California 90024

(Received 9 March 1979)

An intense electromagnetic pulse can create a weak of plasma oscillations through the action of the nonlinear ponderomotive force. Electrons trapped in the wake can be accelerated to high energy. Existing glass lasers of power density 10^{16} W/cm² shone on plasmas of densities 10^{18} cm⁻³ can yield gigaelectronvolts of electron energy per centimeter of acceleration distance. This acceleration mechanism is demonstrated through computer simulation. Applications to accelerators and pulsers are examined.

W.P. Leemans et al., *Phys. Rev. Lett.*, 113 (2014)

Selected for a Viewpoint in *Physics*
PRL 113, 245002 (2014) PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS week ending 12 DECEMBER 2014

Multi-GeV Electron Beams from Capillary-Discharge-Guided Subpetawatt Laser Pulses in the Self-Trapping Regime

W. P. Leemans,^{1,2*} A. J. Gonsalves,¹ H.-S. Mao,¹ K. Nakamura,¹ C. Benedetti,¹ C. B. Schroeder,¹ Cs. Tóth,¹ J. Daniels,¹ D. E. Mittelberger,^{2,1} S. S. Bulanov,^{2,1} J.-L. Vay,¹ C. G. R. Geddes,¹ and E. Esarey¹

¹*Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, California 94720, USA*

²*Department of Physics, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720, USA*

(Received 3 July 2014; revised manuscript received 11 September 2014; published 8 December 2014)

Multi-GeV electron beams with energy up to 4.2 GeV, 6% rms energy spread, 6 pC charge, and 0.3 mrad rms divergence have been produced from a 9-cm-long capillary discharge waveguide with a plasma density of $\approx 7 \times 10^{17}$ cm⁻³, powered by laser pulses with peak power up to 0.3 PW. Preformed plasma waveguides allow the use of lower laser power compared to unguided plasma structures to achieve the same electron beam energy. A detailed comparison between experiment and simulation indicates the sensitivity in this regime of the guiding and acceleration in the plasma structure to input intensity, density, and near-field laser mode profile.

DOI: [10.1103/PhysRevLett.113.245002](https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevLett.113.245002)

PACS numbers: 52.38.Kd

Acceleration Scheme: Laser Wakefield Acceleration (LWFA)

6

Wave Amplitude and Laser Pulse Length:

- The amplitude of the wakefield (the electric field generated behind the laser pulse) depends on the **length** (very short) and **intensity** of the laser pulse.
- **Longer pulses** generally excite **larger wakefields**.

Dependency on Plasma Wavelength:

- The **maximum accelerating field** that can be achieved is **influenced** by the **plasma wavelength** (λ_p), which is related to the plasma density (n_e).

Dependency on Plasma Density:

- A **higher plasma density** results in a **shorter plasma wavelength**.
- Higher plasma density leads to **stronger collective effects**, enhancing the wakefield amplitude and the accelerating field.
- Higher density plasmas **support stronger wakefields**, leading to more **efficient acceleration**.

Regulation by Background Plasma Density:

- The background plasma density effectively **regulates the accelerating field**.
- The density determines the plasma wavelength, which affects the strength of the wakefield and the efficiency of electron acceleration.

«Plasma density controls the strength of the accelerating field»

S. Arjmand, PhD – sahar.arjmand@ins.infn.it

10th International Conference, Charged & Neutral Particles Channeling Phenomena
September 8-13, 2024, Riccione (Rimini), Italy

Accelerating field:

$$E \text{ [GV/m]} \approx 96 (n_e \text{ [cm}^{-3}\text{]})^{1/2}$$

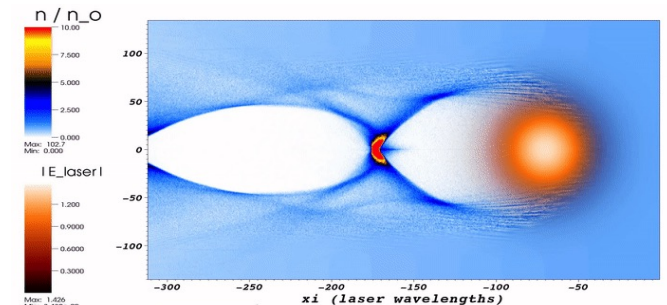
$$E_0 = \frac{cm_e \omega_p}{e}, n_e = 2 \times 10^{17} \text{ cm}^{-3} \Rightarrow \boxed{E_0 \approx 40 \text{ GV/m}}$$

Plasma wavelength:

$$\lambda_p \equiv \frac{2\pi c}{\omega_p} \approx 100 \mu\text{m} \quad T_{pulse} \approx \frac{\lambda_p}{2\pi c} \approx 50 \text{ fs}$$

Plasma frequency:

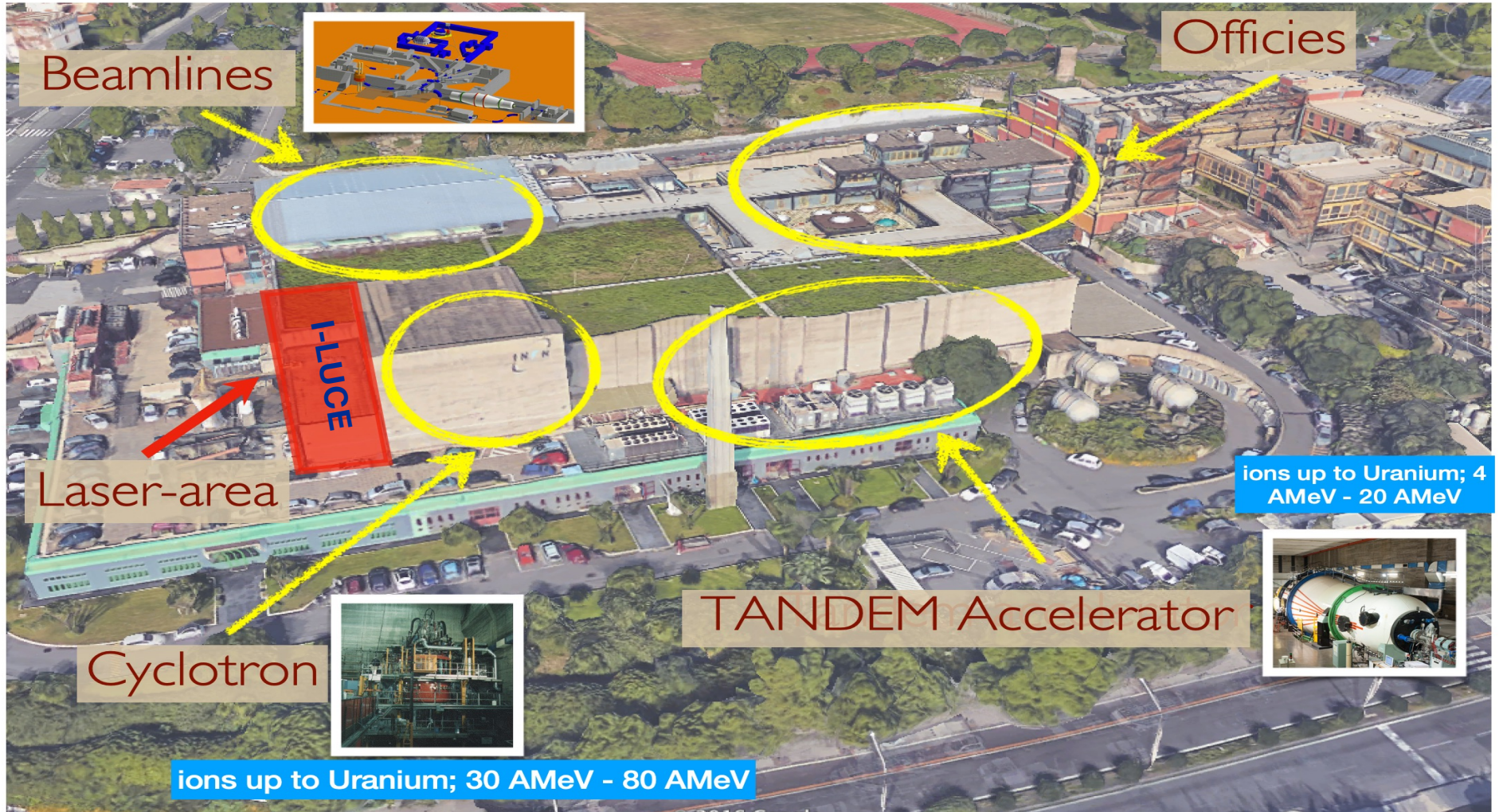
$$\omega_p = \sqrt{\frac{n_e e^2}{m_e \epsilon_0}}$$



CHANNELING 2024

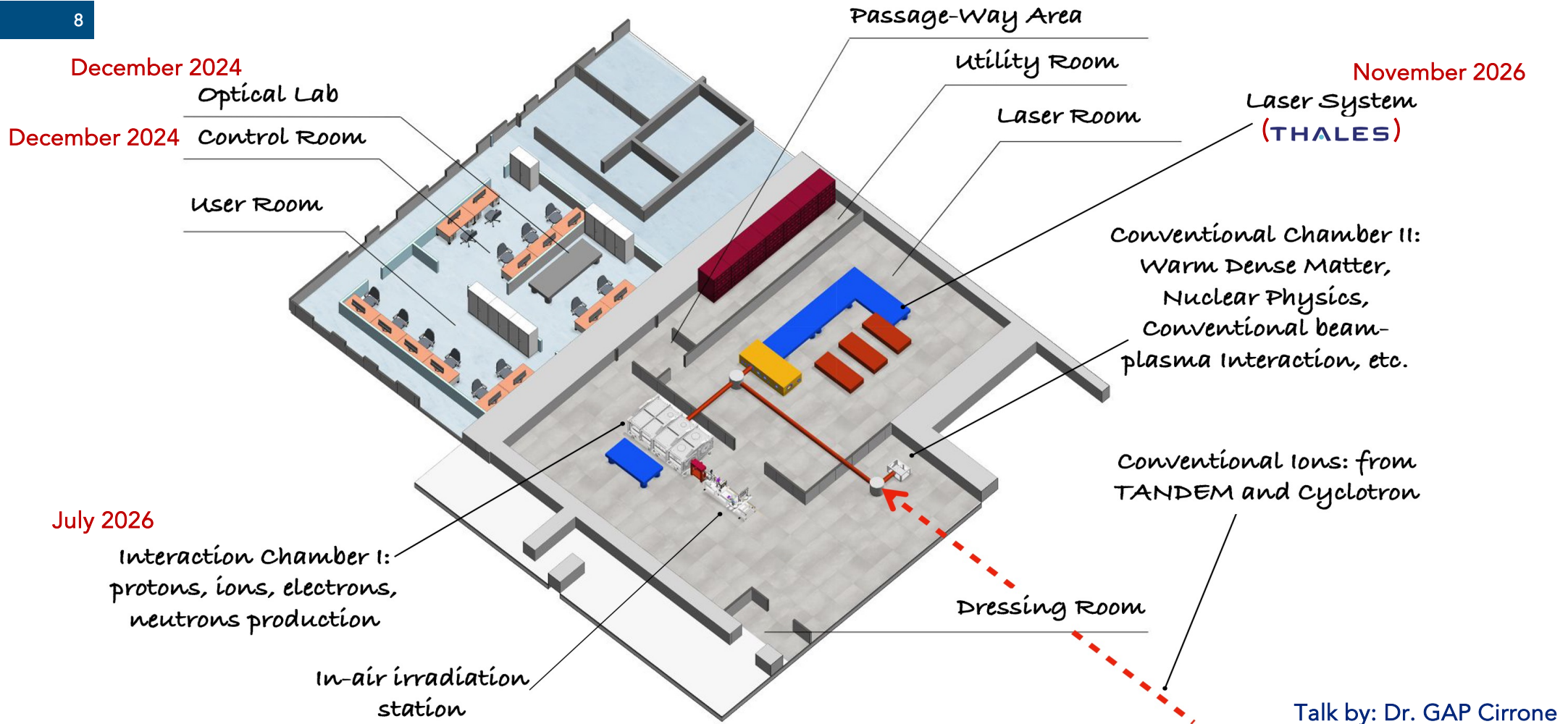
I-LUCE at INFN-LNS (Laboratori Nazionali del Sud)

7



I-LUCE (INFN - Laser induced radiation production) Facility

8



I-LUCE Facility: Plasma Source (Plasma-discharge Capillary)

9

A capillary is a small, narrow tube, often made of dielectric materials such as quartz, **non-commercial plastic (VeroClear)**, sapphire, glass, or etc. that confines the plasma.

Capillary Advantages

Stable Plasma Channel:

Provides a more **stable** and **uniform plasma column** over longer distances

Guidance and Focusing:

Reducing beam divergence and improving acceleration efficiency

Beam Quality:

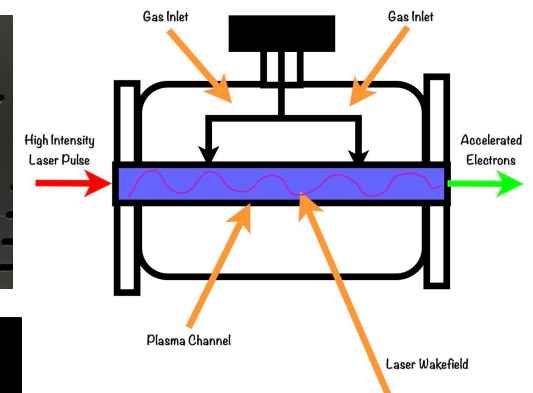
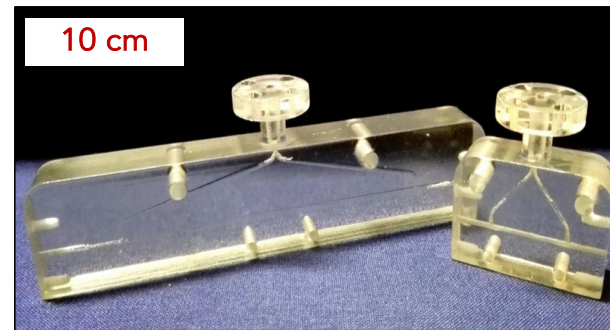
High beam quality with **narrow energy spreads** and **low emittance**

Flexible Geometry:

mm-m/length, μm -mm/diameter

Enhanced Acceleration Length:

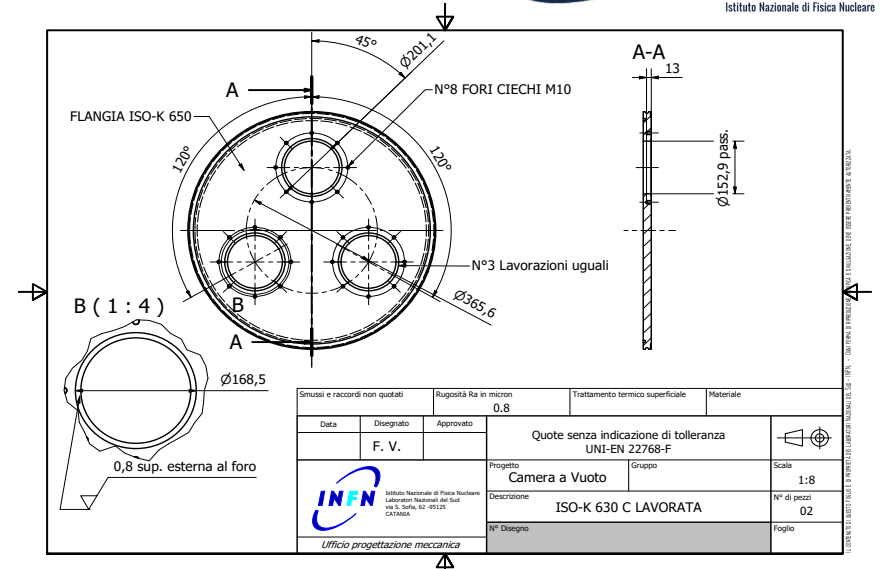
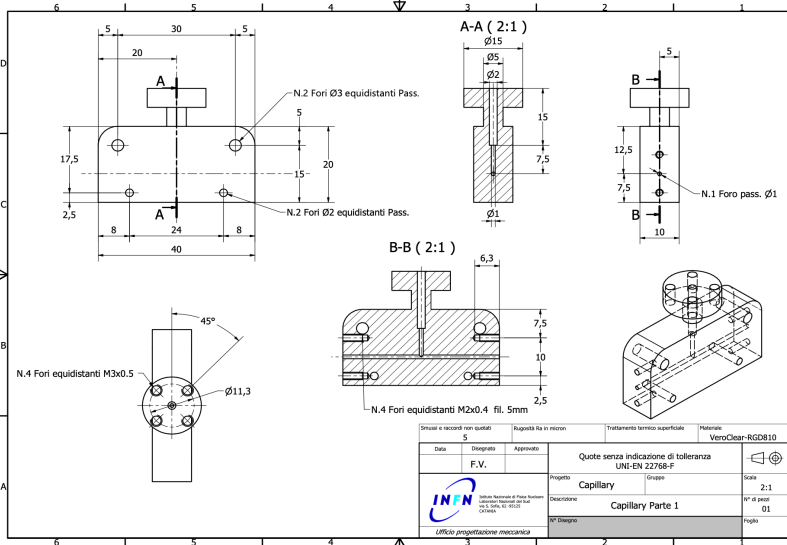
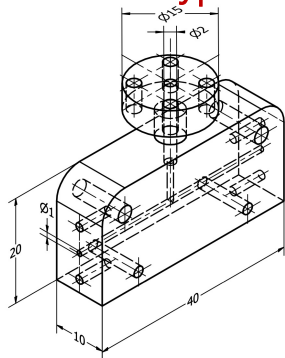
Extend the effective acceleration length, **allowing electrons to gain more energy**



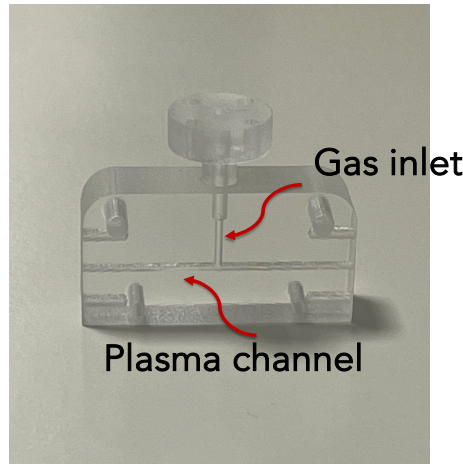
I-LUCE Facility: Plasma LAB

10

CAD Design of first Prototype



3D Printed
VeroClear ($C_2O_2H_8$)
Plasma Discharge Capillary
(4 cm/long-1 mm/diameter)



April 2025

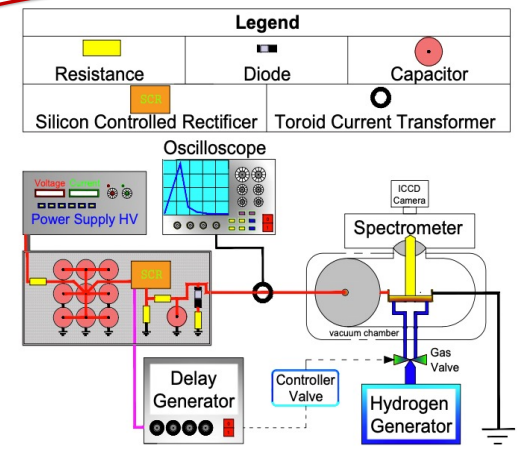
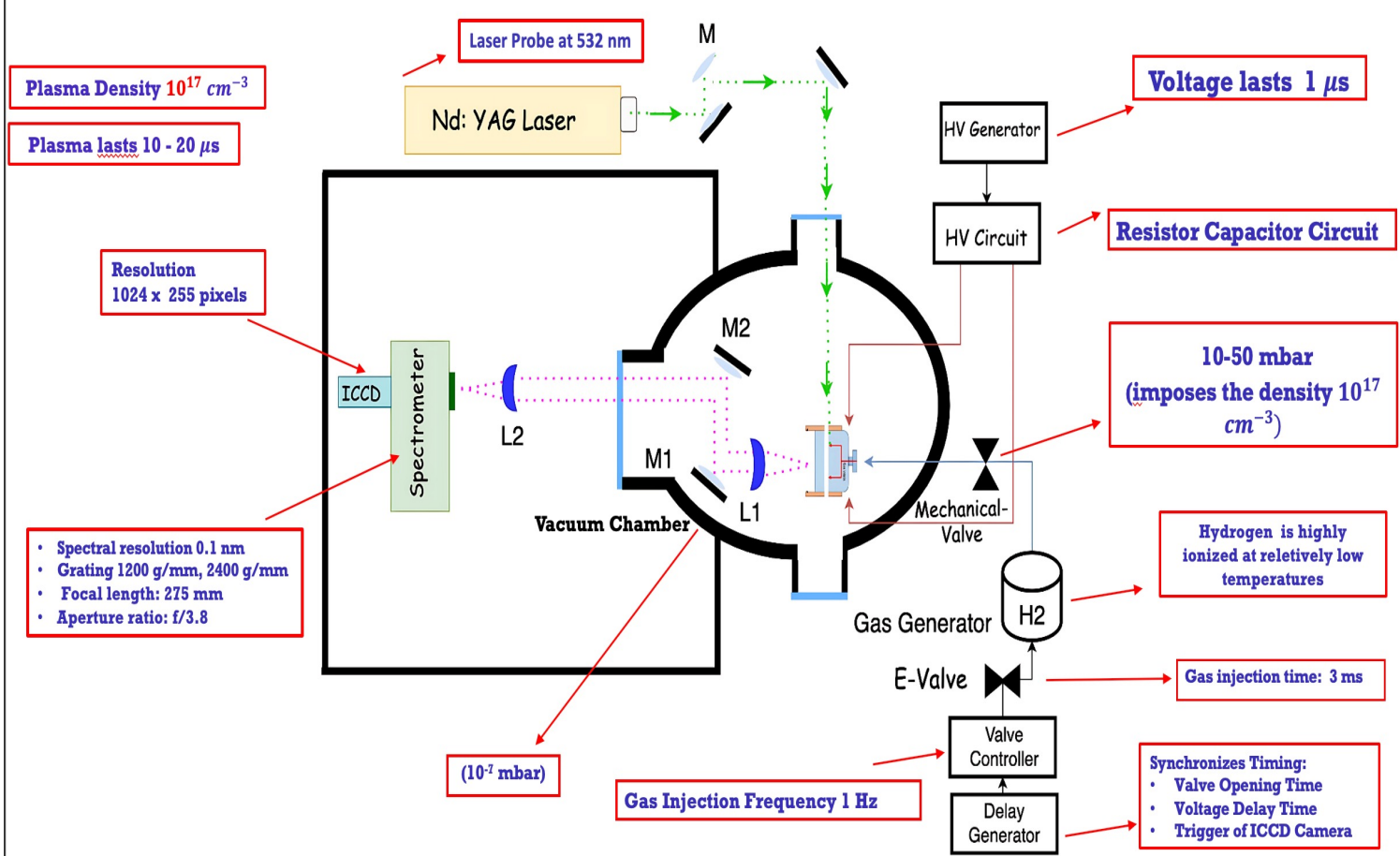


Testing Vacuum Chamber (82x60 cm) for Capillaries up to 10 cm/long capillaries

I-LUCE Facility: Plasma LAB (Direct Current Plasma Discharge)

11

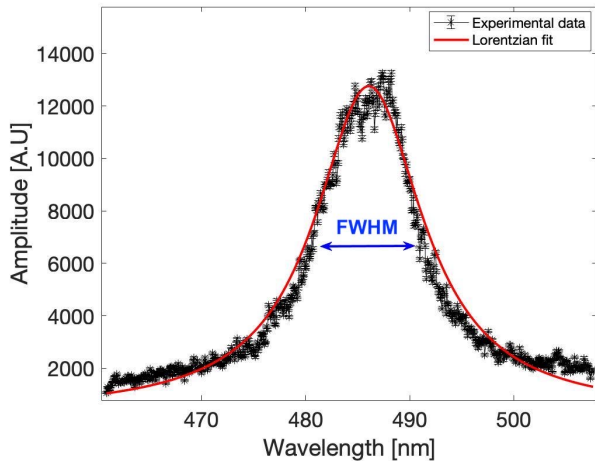
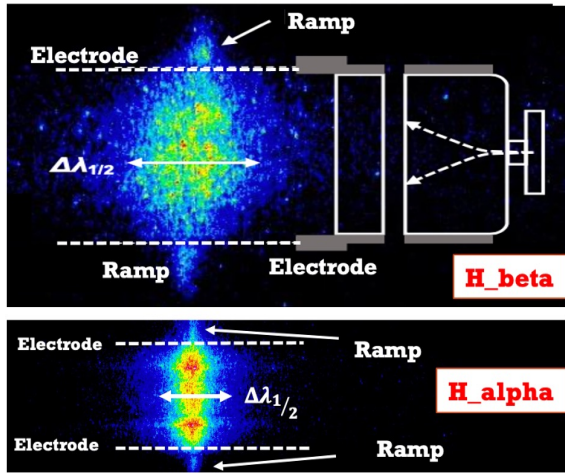
Ideal gas law:
 $P = n_m k_B T$



Plasma Diagnostic: Density Measurements

- **Emission Spectroscopy:** Studies the light emitted by atoms, etc. during transitions from higher to lower energy states.
- **Broadening Mechanism:** Natural, Doppler, and **Collisional (Stark) broadenings**, that can allow us to measure the **electron density**.

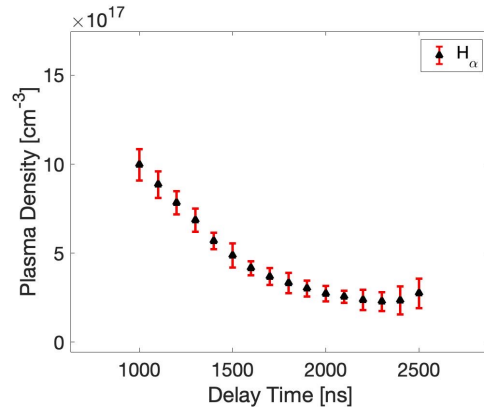
Balmer Spectral Lines



S. Arjmand, PhD – sahar.arjmand@ins.infn.it

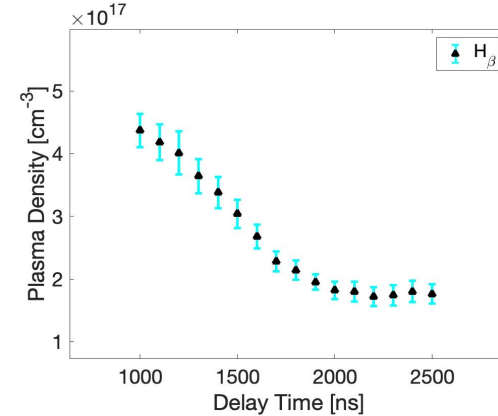
HR Griem, Academic Press Inc, App. III (1974)

$$n_e = 8.02 \times 10^{12} \left(\frac{\Delta\lambda_{Stark_{1/2}}}{\alpha_{1/2}} \right)^{3/2} \text{ cm}^{-3}$$



- Balmer α (H_alpha):**
- Lower excitation energy
 - Higher probability of being emitted
 - Higher sensitivity to light
 - Self-absorption effect

S. Arjmand et al., JINST, 18, C05007 (2023)



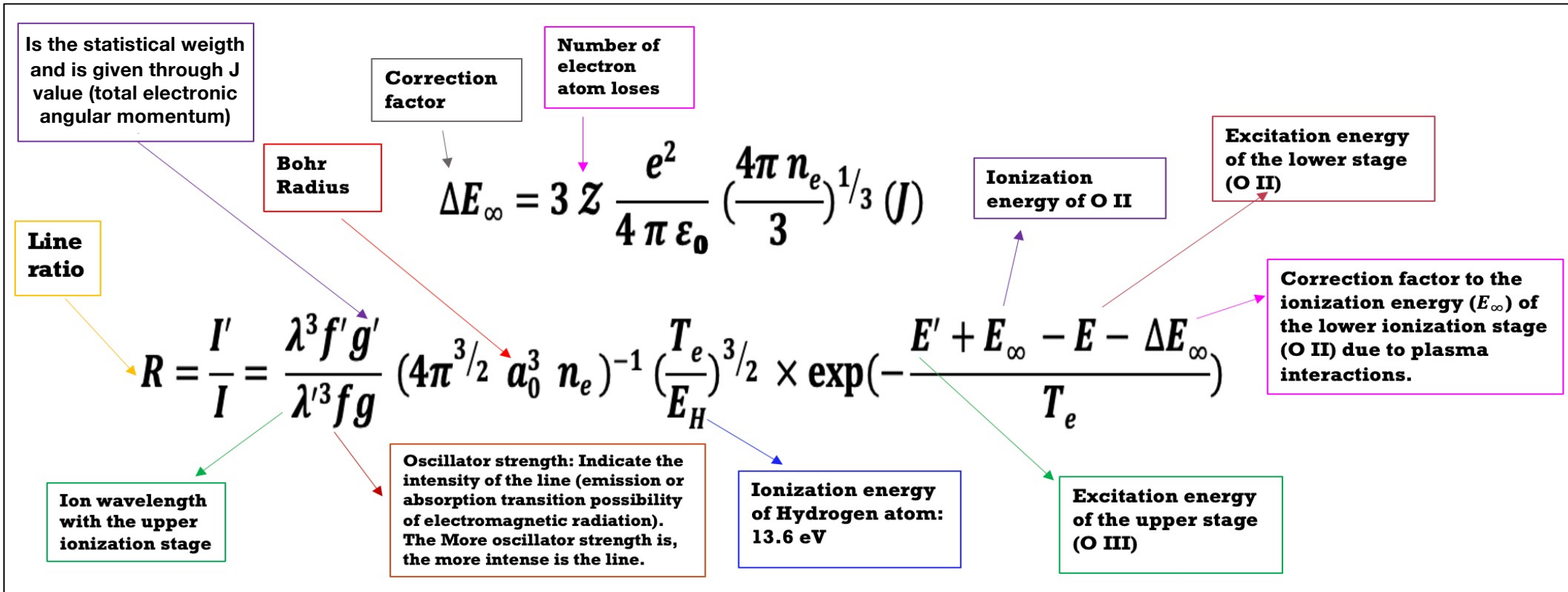
- Balmer β (H_beta):**
- Higher excitation energy
 - Lower probability of being emitted
 - Less sensitive to light
 - Less self-absorption

S. Arjmand et al., JINST, 18, P08003 (2023)

Plasma Diagnostic: Temperature Measurements

- Lower ionization stage: I, g, f, λ
- Higher ionization stage: I', g', f', λ'

13 **Intensity Ratios:** Using the intensity ratios of different spectral lines to infer the **electron temperature**.



S. S. Harilal et al., 52, 3 (1998)

S. Arjmand et al., JINST, 18, P08003 (2023)

Plasma Diagnostic: Temperature Measurements

14 Plasma Density: 10^{17} cm^{-3} Temperature: 1 - 4 eV

Two mechanisms:

- **Ablation:** Typically generated by intense laser pulse focused on solid target (in our case small amount of surface ablation), causing material to be ejected/melted from the surface.
- **Desorption:** Refers to when atoms or molecules leave the surface of material without fully vaporizing the surface (the most dominant mechanism).

VeroClear ($C_5O_2H_8$):

82.92% Carbon

16.50% Oxygen

0.57% Nitrogen due to impurity (78% in the air)

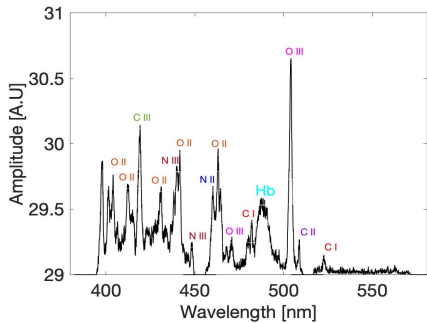
↳ **Emitted**

O I, O II, O III, N I, N II, N III, C I, C II, C III

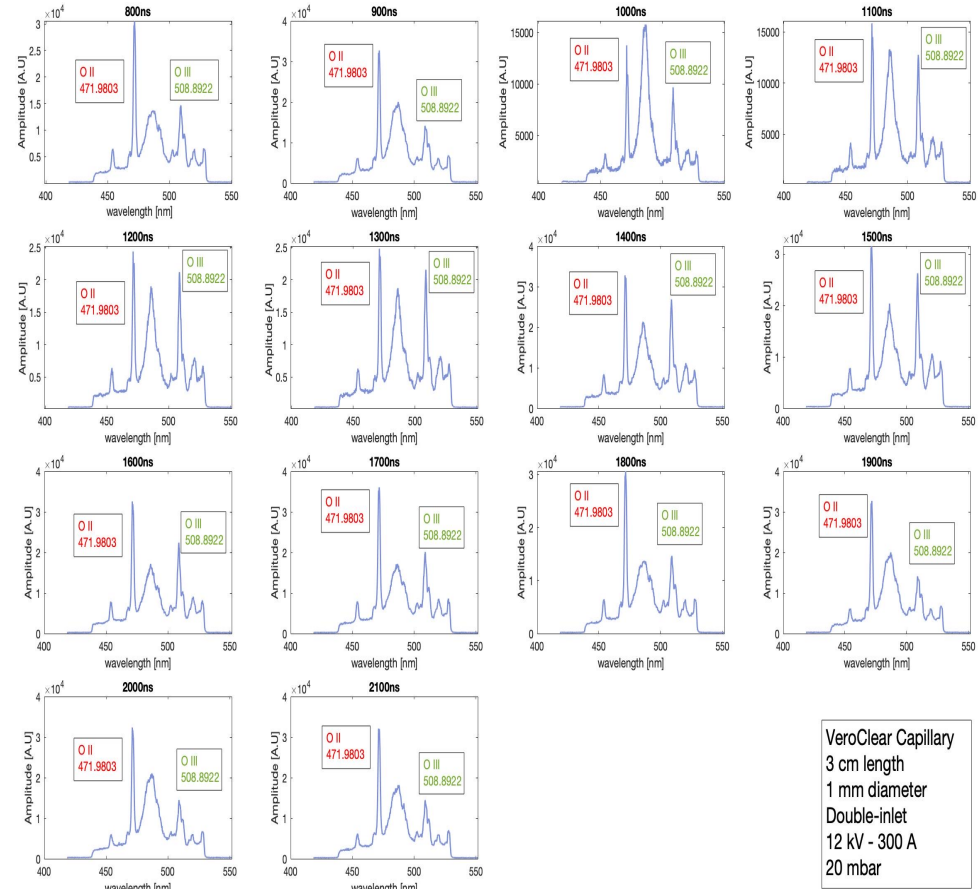
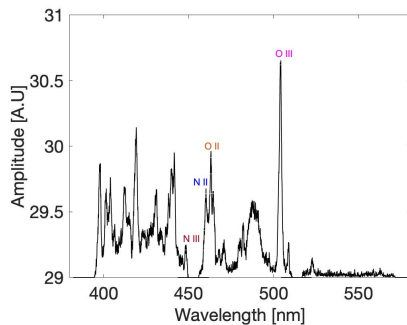
↳ **Considered**

- O II (471.9803 nm) or N II (471.8377 nm)
- O III (508.8922 nm) or N III (454.970 nm)

Emitted Spectral Lines



Considered Spectral Lines



VeroClear Capillary
3 cm length
1 mm diameter
Double-inlet
12 kV - 300 A
20 mbar

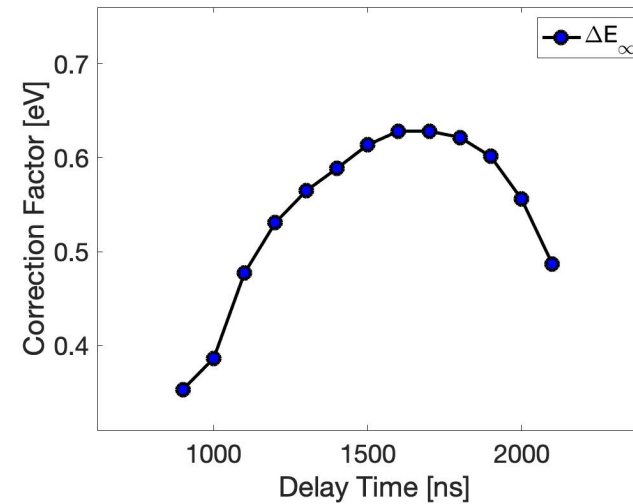
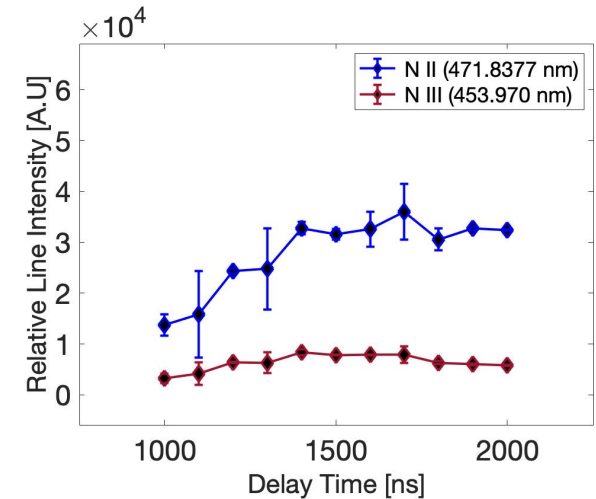
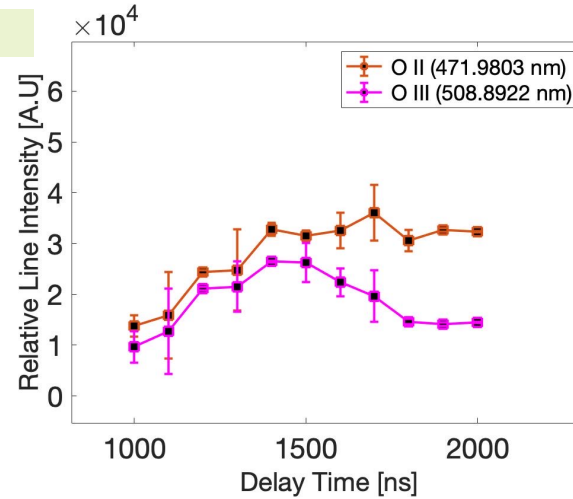
Evolution of the Oxygen Ions (800-2100 ns)

Plasma Diagnostic: Temperature Measurements

15

NIST Database (https://physics.nist.gov/PhysRefData/ASD/levels_form.html)

Oxygen Element Spectroscopic Data	
Parameter	Value
λ_1 : Wavelength of O II	471.9803 (nm)
λ_2 : Wavelength of O III	508.492 (nm)
g_1 : Statistical Weight of O II	1
g_2 : Statistical Weight of O III	1
f_1 : Oscillator Strength of O II	8.57×10^4 (DI)
f_2 : Oscillator Strength of O III	6.15×10^6 (DI)
J_1 : Lower-level and Upper-level Angular Momentum Quantum Number of O II	$\frac{3}{2}, \frac{3}{2}$
J_2 : Lower-level and Upper-level Angular Momentum Quantum Number of O III	2, 2
E_1 : Excitation Energy of O II	2.62 (eV)
E_2 : Excitation Energy of O III	2.43 (eV)
E_∞ : Ionization Energy of Lower State of O II	35.11730 (eV)
Z: Number of Electrons Lost by O II	1
Nitrogen Element Spectroscopic Data	
Parameter	Value
λ_1 : Wavelength of N II	471.8377 (nm)
λ_2 : Wavelength of N III	453.970 (nm)
g_1 : Statistical Weight of N II	1
g_2 : Statistical Weight of N III	1
f_1 : Oscillator Strength of N II	3.02×10^7 (DI)
f_2 : Oscillator Strength of N III	5.71×10^7 (DI)
J_1 : Lower-level and Upper-level Angular Momentum Quantum Number of N II	4, 4
J_2 : Lower-level and Upper-level Angular Momentum Quantum Number of N III	$\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}$
E_1 : Excitation Energy of N II	2.62 (eV)
E_2 : Excitation Energy of N III	2.77 (eV)
E_∞ : Ionization Energy of Lower State of N II	29.6013 (eV)
Z: Number of Electrons Lost by N II	1
Physical Constants	
Parameter	Value
E_H : Hydrogen Ionization Energy	13.6 (eV)
ϵ_0 : Vacuum Permittivity	8.85×10^{-12} (F m ⁻¹)
a_0 : Bohr Radius	$5.2917724 \times 10^{-11}$ (m)
m_e : Electron Mass	9.10938×10^{-31} (kg)
e : Electron Charge	1.602×10^{-19} (C)
\hbar : Reduced Planck Constant	1.05457×10^{-34} (J s)



Plasma Diagnostic: Temperature Measurements (Oxygen Ions)

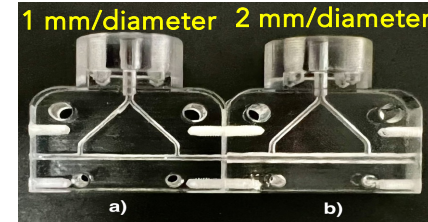
A. J. Gonsalves et al., Journal of Applied Physics, 119, 033302 (2016)

S. Arjmand et al., JINST, 18, P08003 (2023)

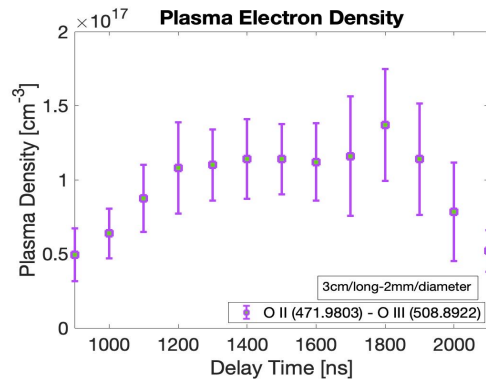
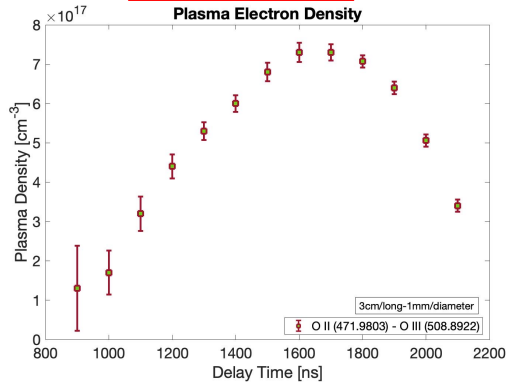
16

3 cm length
1 mm diameter
Double-inlets
20 mbar
12 kV – 400 A

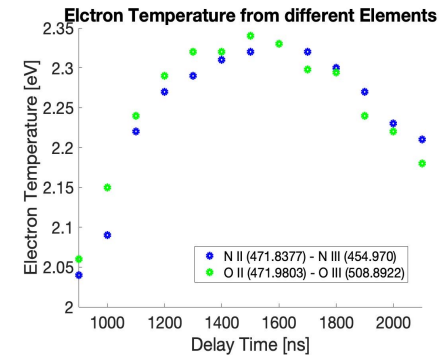
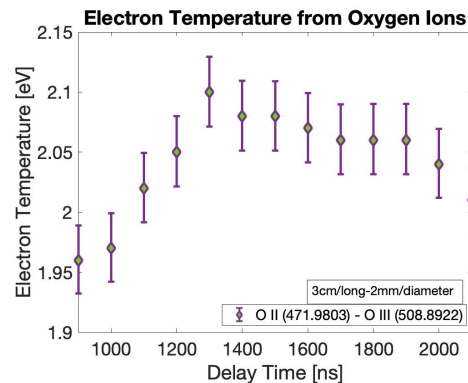
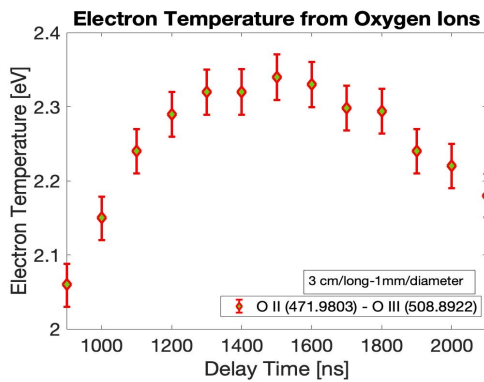
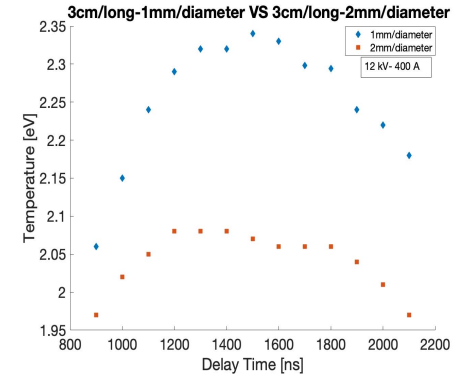
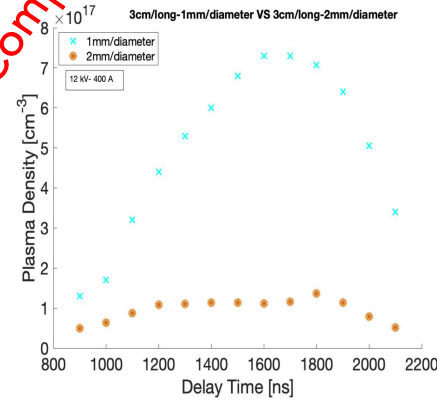
3 cm length
2 mm diameter
Double-inlets
20 mbar
12 kV – 400 A



- 3 cm long
- 1/2 mm diameter
- 20 mbar
- 12 kV – 400 A



Comparison



S. Arjmand, PhD – sahar.arjmand@ins.infn.it

10th International Conference, Charged & Neutral Particles Channeling Phenomena
September 8-13, 2024, Riccione (Rimini), Italy

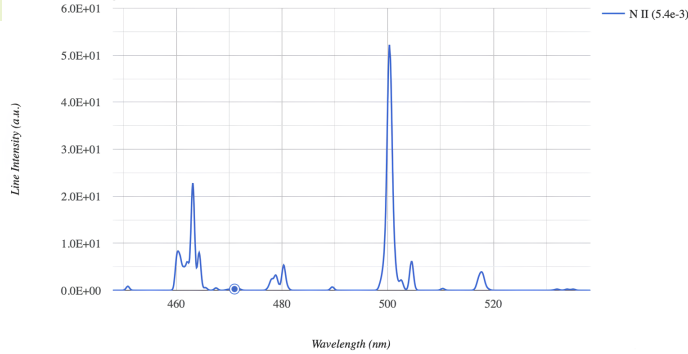
Plasma Diagnostic: Temperature Simulation (O & N Ions)

VeroClear (C₅O₂H₈):
82.92% Carbon
16.50% Oxygen
0.57% Nitrogen due to impurity

NIST Database (https://physics.nist.gov/PhysRefData/ASD/levels_form.html)

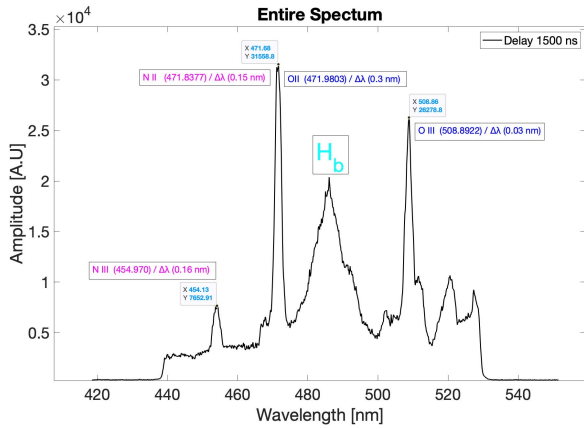
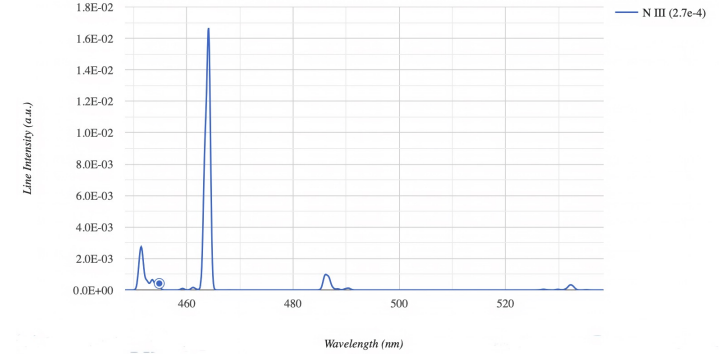
Nitrogen II

Saha/LTE Spectrum for mixture C:82.92%+N:0.579999999999983%+O:16.50%
T_e = 2.32 eV, N_e = 6.8e+17 cm⁻³, Resolution = 1000. Total of 365 lines; ion abundances are given in parentheses



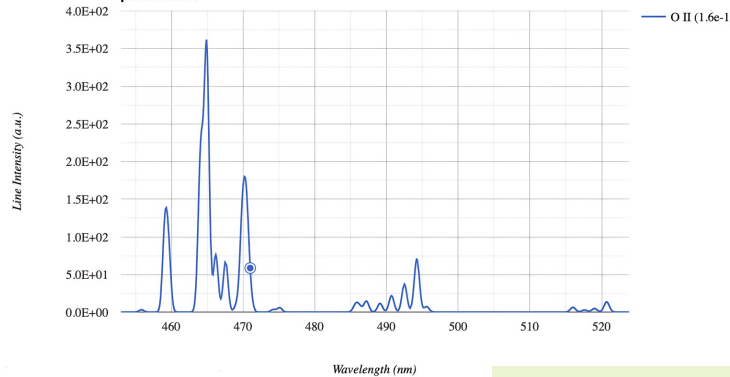
Nitrogen III

Saha/LTE Spectrum for mixture C:82.92%+N:0.579999999999983%+O:16.50%
T_e = 2.32 eV, N_e = 6.8e+17 cm⁻³, Resolution = 1000. Total of 365 lines; ion abundances are given in parentheses



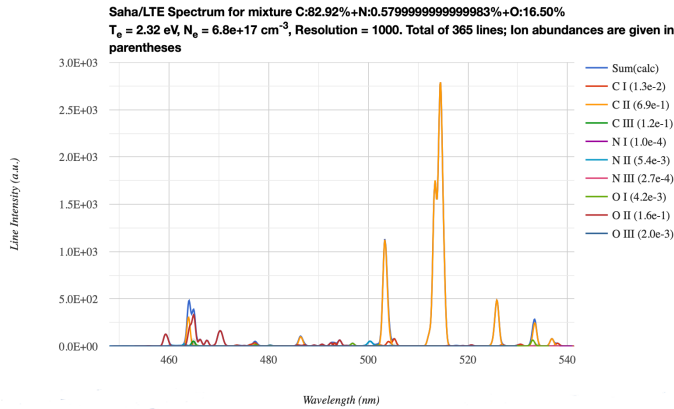
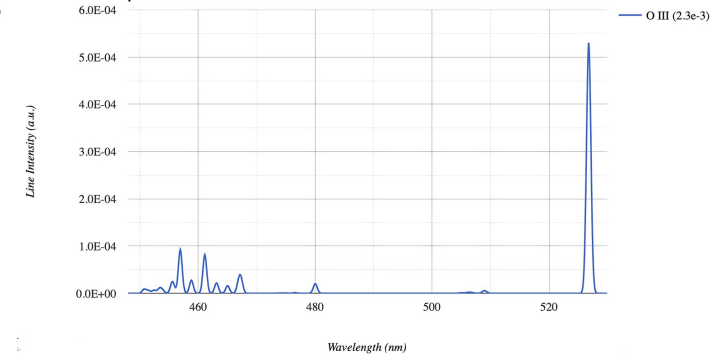
Oxygen II

Saha/LTE Spectrum for mixture C:82.92%+N:0.579999999999983%+O:16.50%
T_e = 2.34 eV, N_e = 6.8e+17 cm⁻³, Resolution = 1000. Total of 365 lines; ion abundances are given in parentheses



Oxygen III

Saha/LTE Spectrum for mixture C:82.92%+N:0.579999999999983%+O:16.50%
T_e = 2.34 eV, N_e = 6.8e+17 cm⁻³, Resolution = 1000. Total of 365 lines; ion abundances are given in parentheses

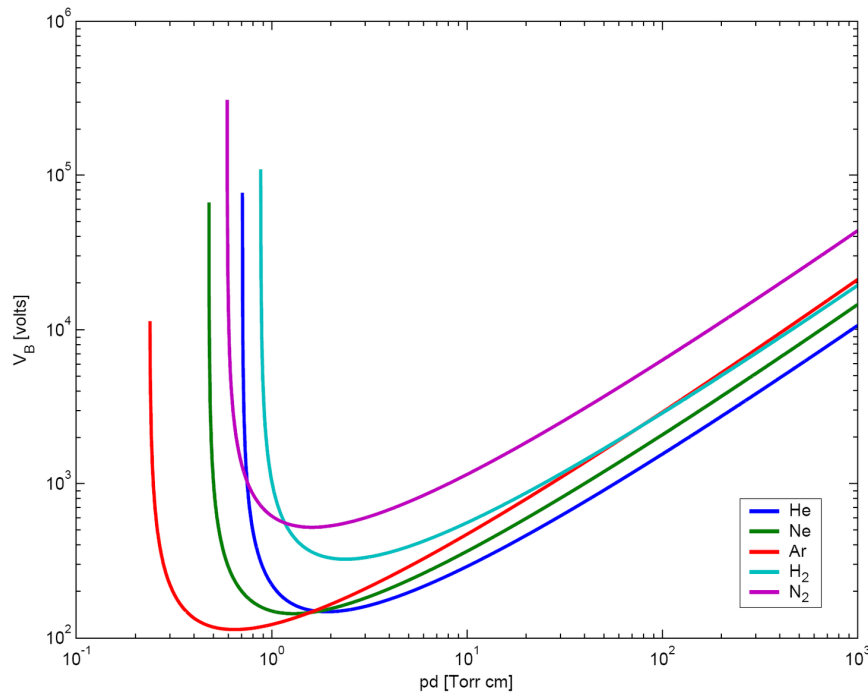


S. Arjmand et al., JINST, 18, P08003 (2023)

B. Radjenovic et al., Acta Physica Slovaca 63(3):105-205

Paschen curve for different gases in electrical discharge

$$V_{volt} = f(p_{Torr} \times d_{cm})$$



Particle-particle reaction (excitations, ionisations, charge exchange)
Reactions (ionisations, recombinations) on cathode and capillary surface.

Ar collision processes

Ar: Atom, Ar*: Excited Argon, Ar+: Ionized Argon

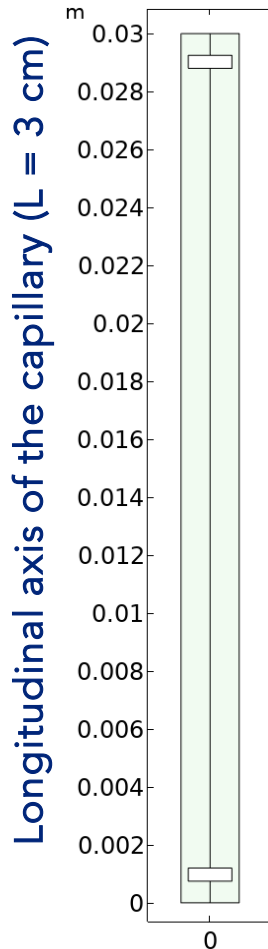
- 1) $e + Ar \Rightarrow e + Ar^*$ (Elastic Scattering)
- 2) $e + Ar \Rightarrow e + Ar^* \Rightarrow e + Ar + \text{photon}$ (Excitation)
- 3) $e + Ar^* \Rightarrow e + Ar$ (Superelastic)
- 4) $e + Ar \Rightarrow 2e + Ar^+$ (Ionization)
- 5) $e + Ar^* \Rightarrow 2e + Ar^+$ (Ionization)
- 6) $Ar^* + Ar^* \Rightarrow e + Ar + Ar^+$ (Penning Ionization)
- 7) $Ar^* + Ar \Rightarrow Ar + Ar$ (Metastable Quenching)

Surface Reactions:

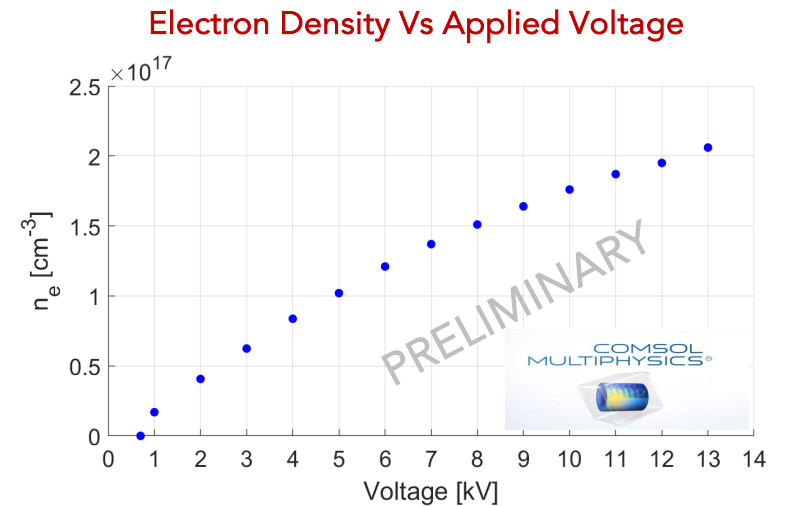
Ar atoms or metastable atoms interact with the wall and transition back to ground state

- 1) $Ar^+ \Rightarrow Ar$
- 2) $Ar^* \Rightarrow Ar$

<https://www.comsol.com/>



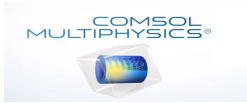
- A capillary of length $L = 3$ cm and diameter of $d = 1$ and 2 mm, filled with Argon at the pressure $p = 7.5$ Torr (10 mbar) is considered, to generate a plasma in the range of 10^{17} cm^{-3} .
- From the Argon Paschen curve, the minimum voltage required to initiate gas breakdown results $V_0 \sim 800$ V for a capillary of length $L = 3$ cm, at the pressure $p = 7.5$ Torr (10 mbar).
- At voltage lower than the one needed to initiate the breakdown, no discharge occurs (the electron density is lower than the initial one, fixed at $n_{ei} = 10^7 \text{ cm}^{-3}$).
- When the applied voltage is higher than the breakdown one, the electron density starts to increase.
- All values taken in the simulation time $t = 2 \mu\text{s}$, at which the density results almost stationary.



<https://www.comsol.com/>

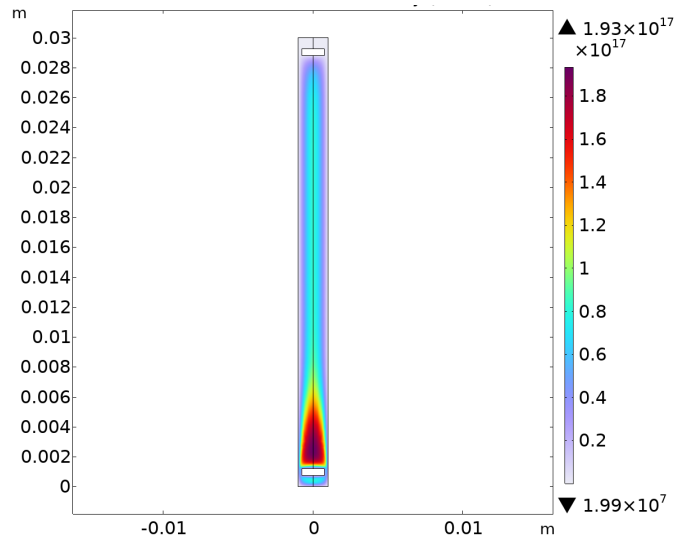
Plasma Diagnostic: 2D Modelling in COMSOL Multiphysics

20

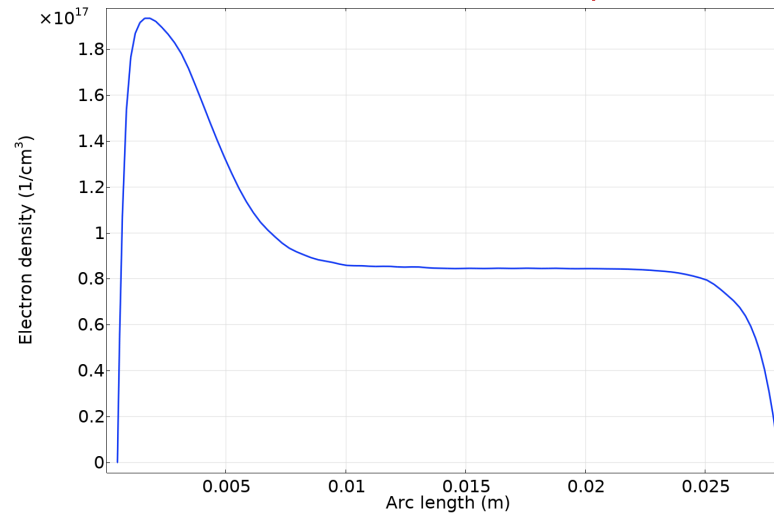


3cm/long-2mm/diameter
10 mbar, 10 kV, 2 μ s
With Argon gas

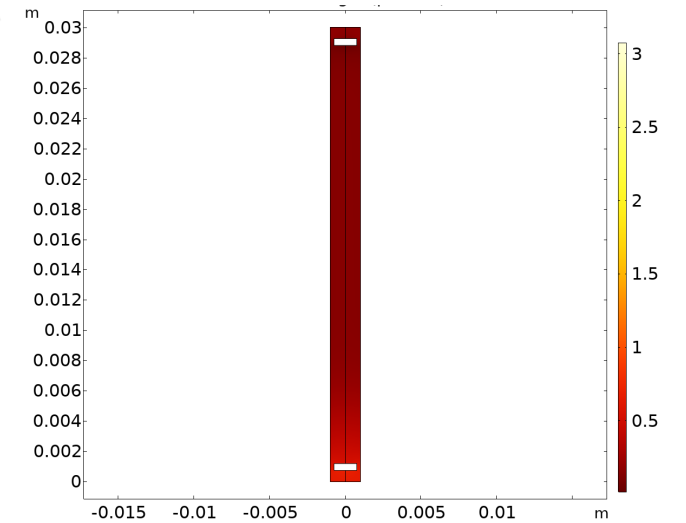
Electron Density inside Capillary



Electron Density along Capillary



Electron Temperature inside Capillary



PRILIMINARY

Plasma Diagnostic: 2D Modelling in COMSOL Multiphysics

21

3cm/long-2mm/diameter
10 mbar, 15 kV

3cm/long-1mm/diameter
10 mbar, 15 kV

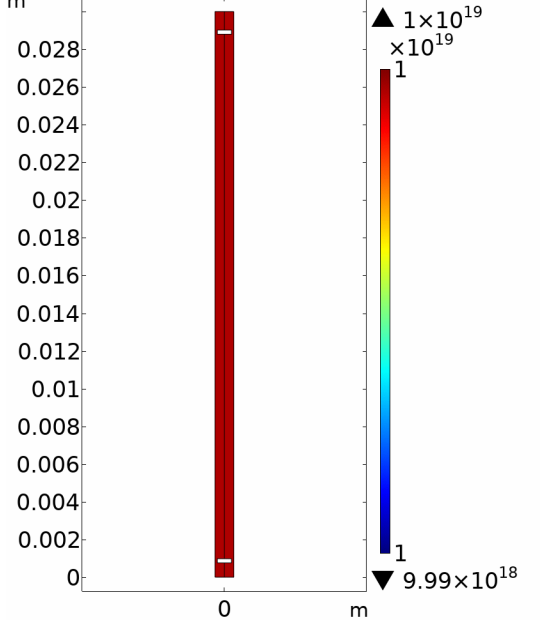
Density
 m^{-3}

Temperature

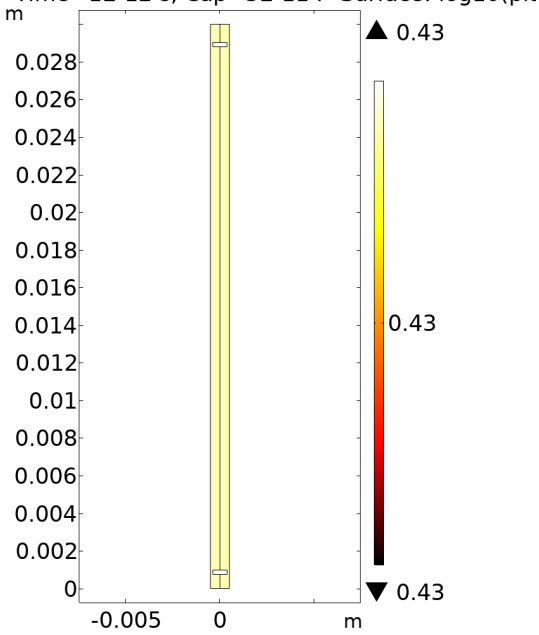
Density
 m^{-3}

Temperature

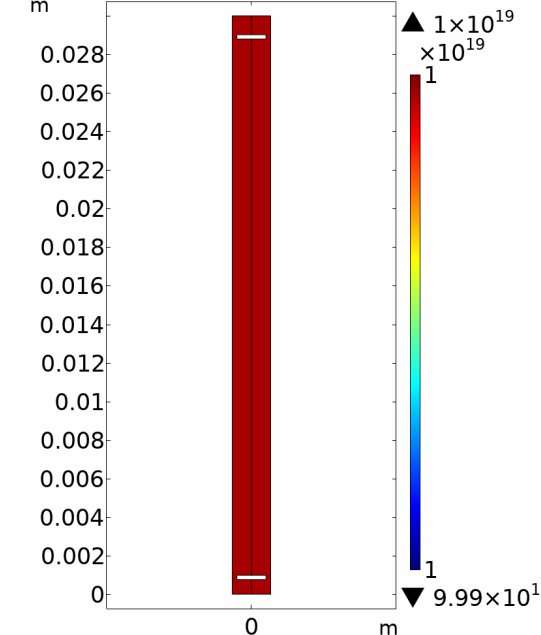
Time=1E-12 s, Cap=5E-11 F Surface: Electron



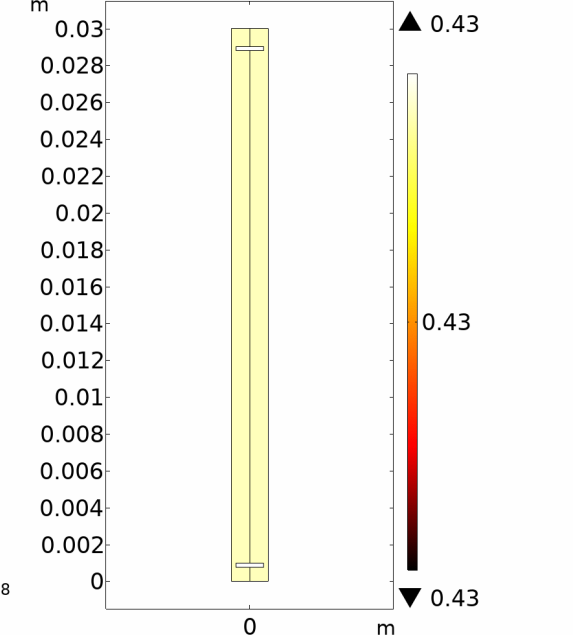
Time=1E-12 s, Cap=5E-11 F Surface: log10(pla



Time=1E-12 s, Cap=5E-11 F Surface: Electron



Time=1E-12 s, Cap=5E-11 F Surface: log10(pla



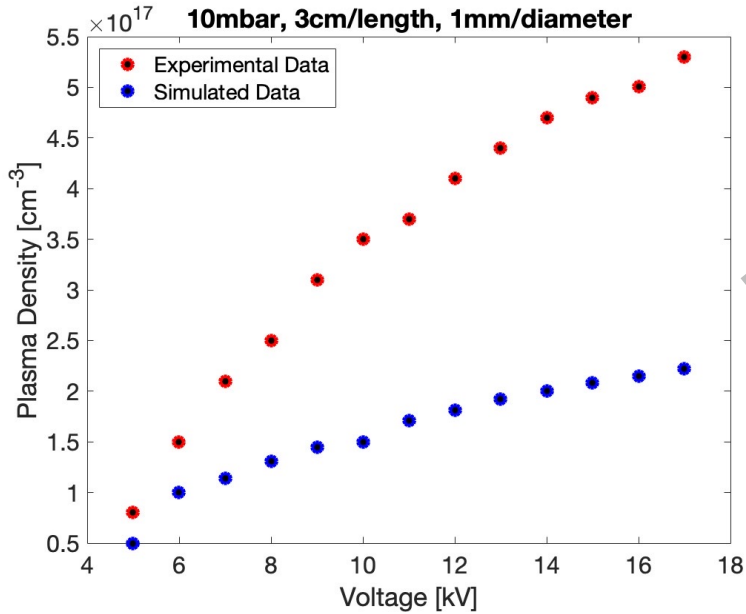
PRELIMINARY

Plasma Diagnostic: 2D Modelling in COMSOL Multiphysics

22

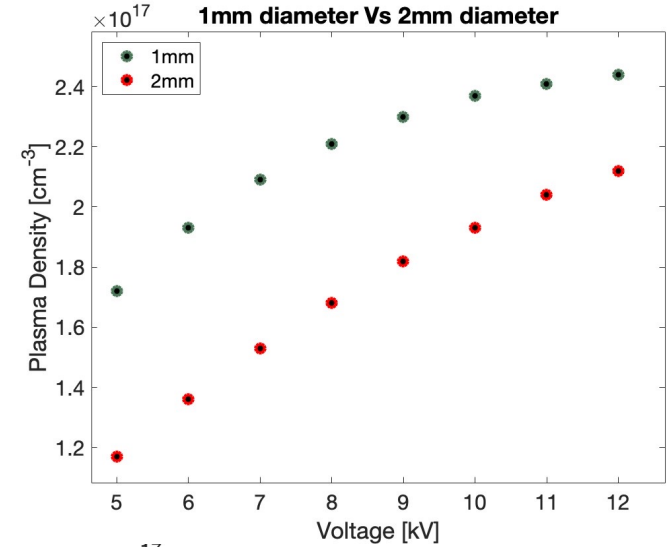
Comparison of experimental & simulated Data

3cm/long
1mm/diameter
7.5 Torr (10 mbar)
With Argon gas (Simulation)
With Hydrogen gas (Experimental)



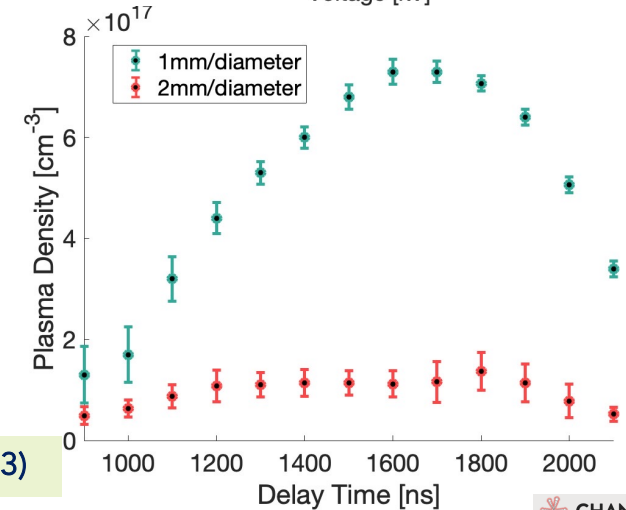
Simulated Data

3cm/long
1mm and 2mm/diameter
7.5 Torr (10 mbar)
With Argon gas



Experimental Data

3cm/long
1mm and 2mm/diameter
7.5 Torr (10 mbar)
With Hydrogen gas
12 kV



S. Arjmand et al., JINST 18, C04016 (2023)

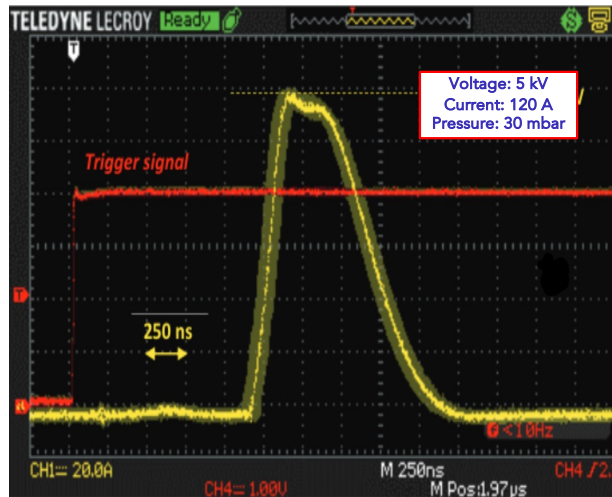
10th International Conference, Charged & Neutral Particles Channeling Phenomena
September 8-13, 2024, Riccione (Rimini), Italy

CHANNELING 2024

Plasma Stability: Shot-to-shot Stability

23

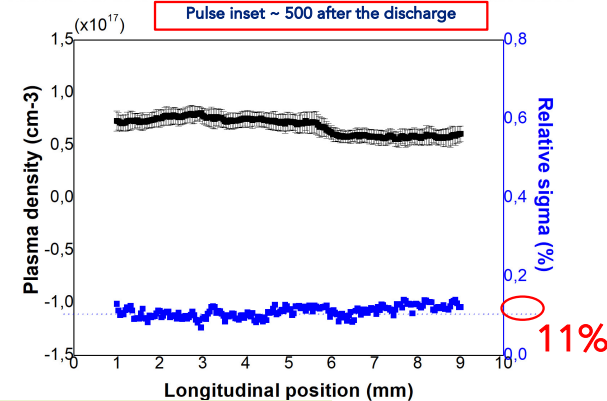
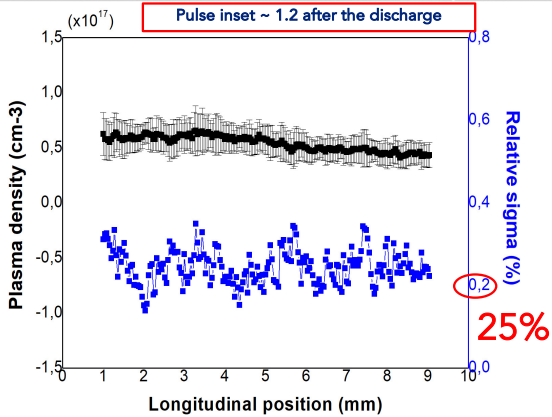
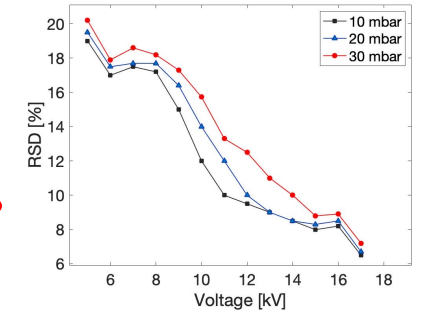
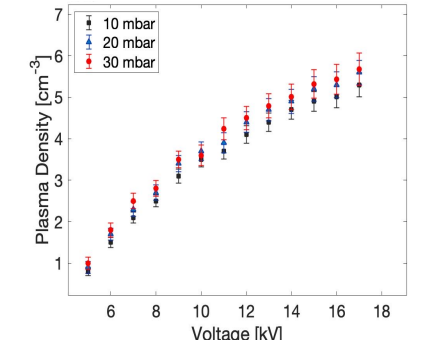
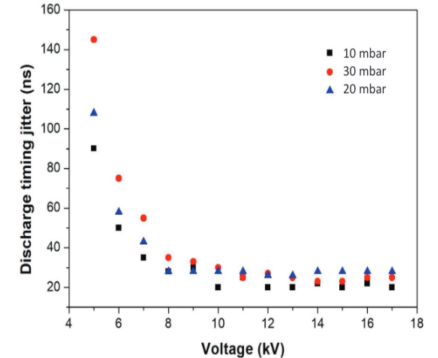
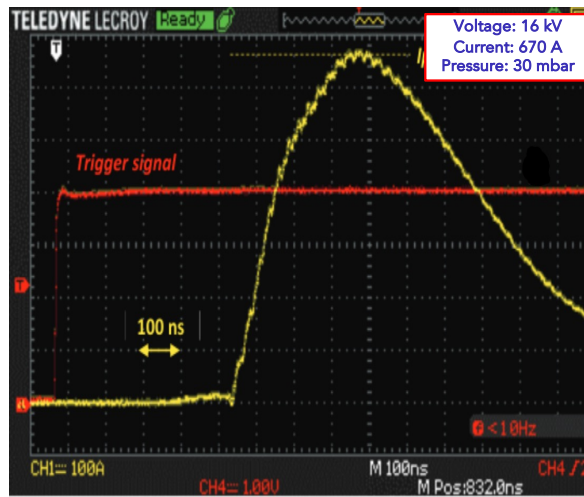
~ 150 ns timing jitter



100 consecutive current pulse waveforms acquired by an oscilloscope at a 1~Hz repetition rate.

Timing jitter: measuring the enlargement of the current pulse waveforms by setting the infinitive persistence on the oscilloscope

~ 20 ns timing jitter

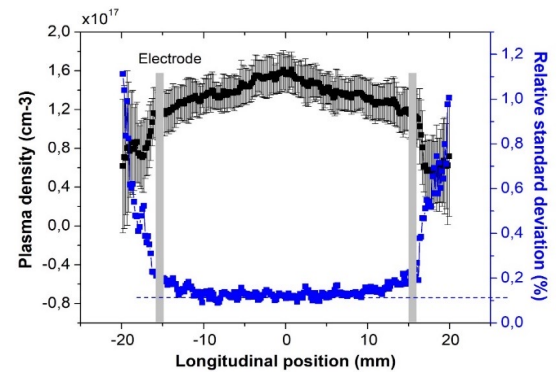
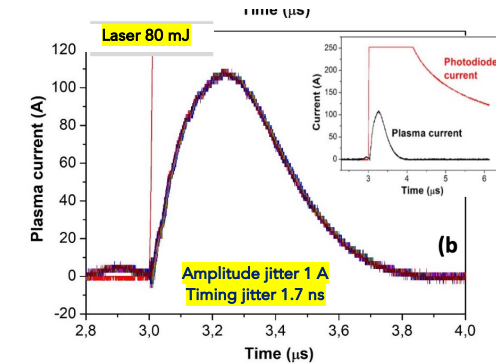
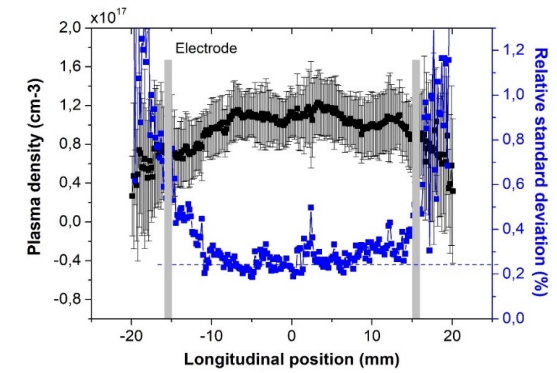
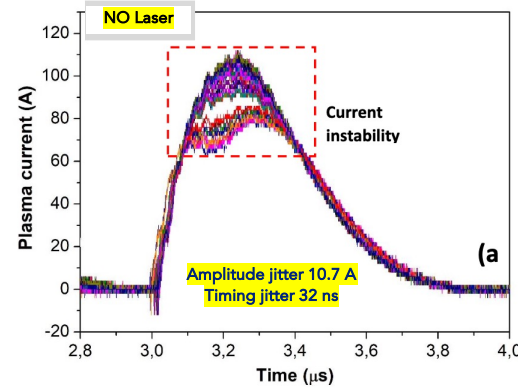
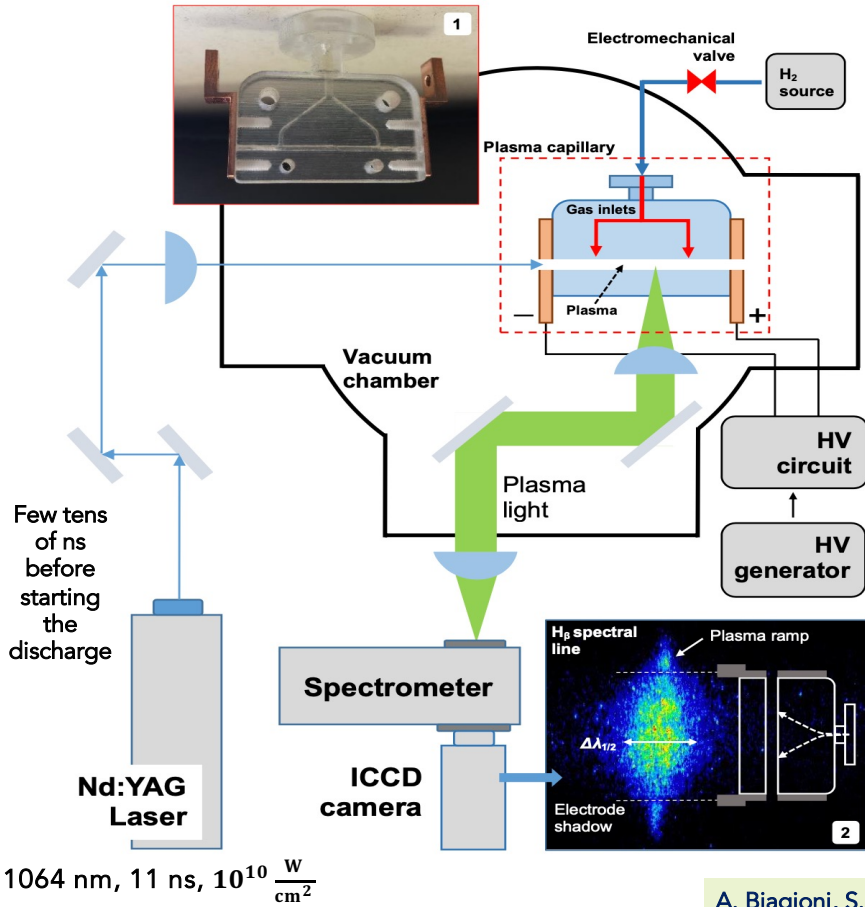


S. Arjmand et al., JINST 18, C04016 (2023)

Plasma Stability: Stabilization by a Laser Technique

3 cmx1mm
2 inlets
20 mbar
Voltage: 5 kV
Laser: 80 mJ
Current: 110 A

24



A. Biagioni, S. Arjmand et al., Plasma Phys. Control Fusion, 63 115013 (2021)

10th International Conference, Charged & Neutral Particles Channeling Phenomena
September 8-13, 2024, Riccione (Rimini), Italy

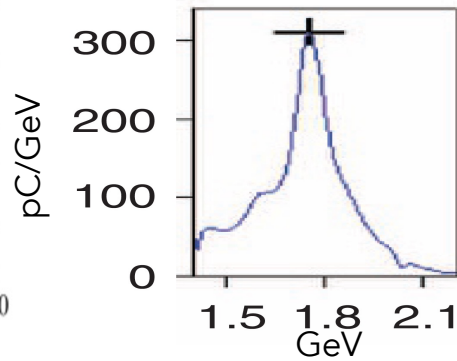
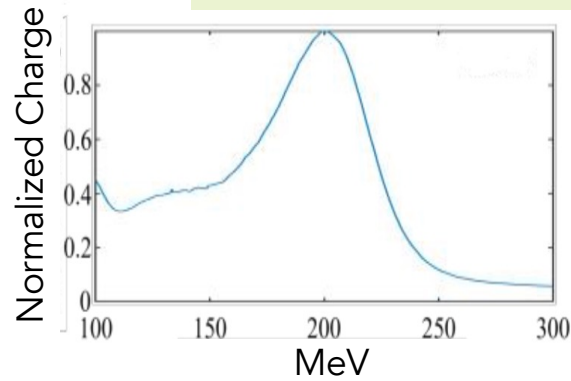
I-LUCE Facility: Electron Beam Expectation

25

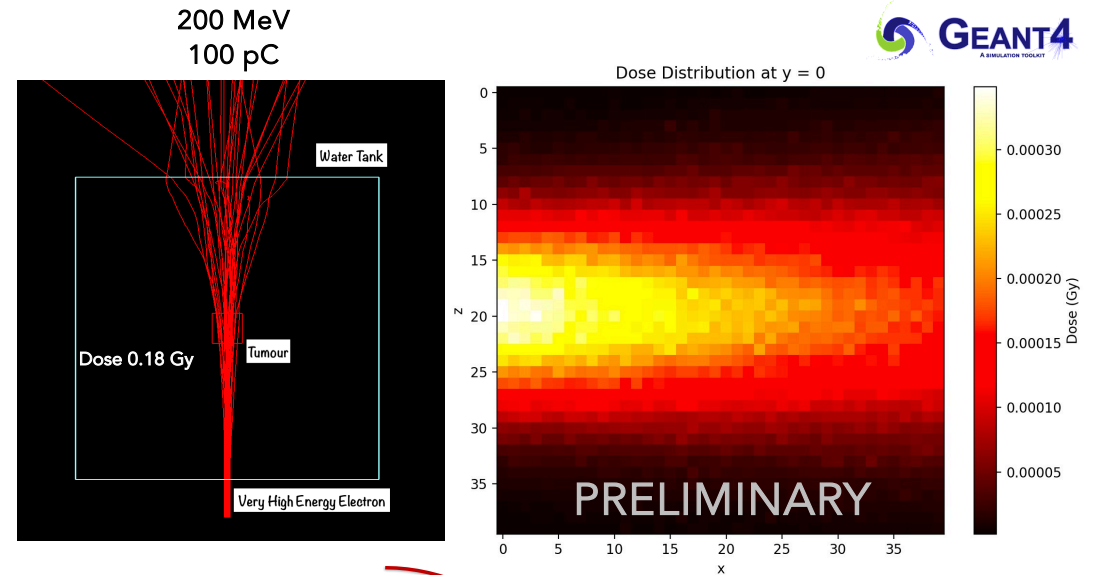
W.P. Leemans et al., Nature physics, 2 (2006)

X. Wang et al., Nature Communications, (2017)

S. Lee et al., Appl. Sci. 133, 2564, (2022)



Laser Power	50 – 350 TW
Laser Energy per pulse	1 – 7 J
Laser Pulse Duration	23 – 150 fs
Laser Intensity	$10^{17} - 10^{19} \frac{W}{cm^2}$
Repetition Rate	1 – 10 Hz
Plasma Density	$10^{17} - 10^{19} cm^{-3}$
Capillary Length	3 – 9 cm
Capillary Radius	500 μm – 0.5 mm
Beam Energy	100 MeV – 3 GeV
Beam Charge	30 – 400 pC
Particle per Pulse	$10^8 - 10^9$



At 10 Hz: 1.8 gray at one second

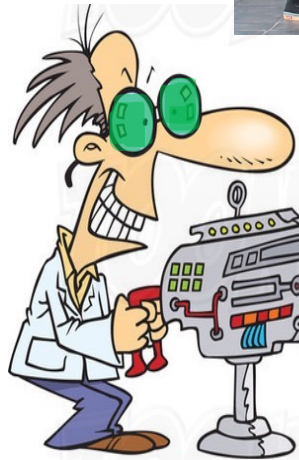
At 100 Hz: 18 gray at one second

FLASH-RT: Ultra high dose rate region (8-9 Gy in less than one second)

Medical Physics and Laser Group at LNS



Scan me 😊



Thanks for listening 😊