

MAPS for Soft X-rays and Timing detectors

Lorenzo Rota – TID-ID Integrated Circuits, SLAC
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On behalf of SLAC Detectors R&D team

Note for future readers:
I've taken some liberty with the chronological order of events

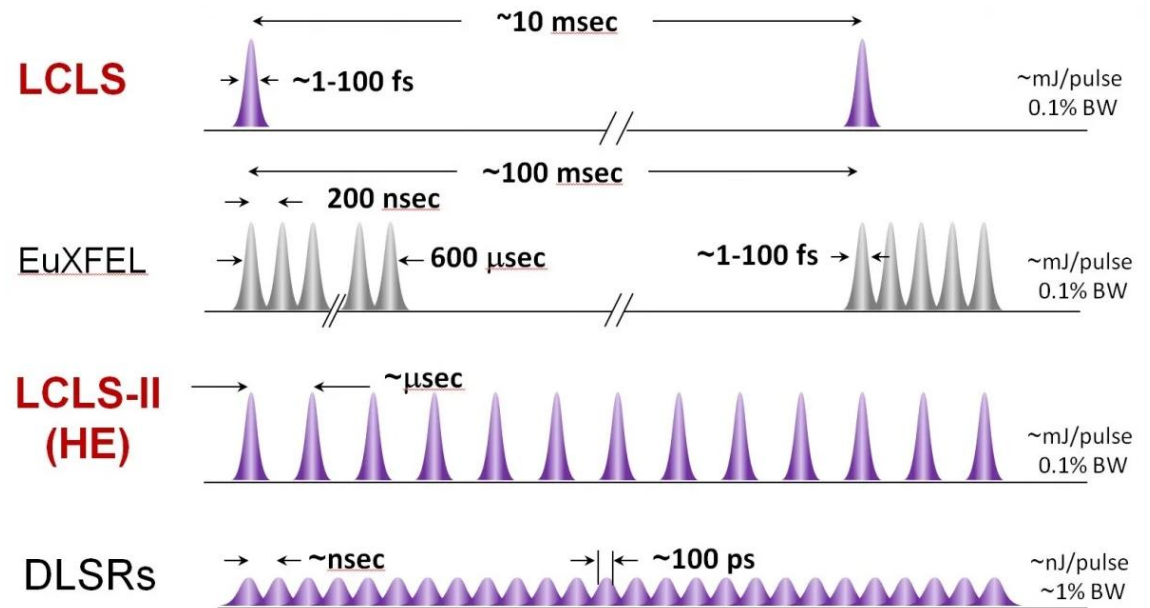
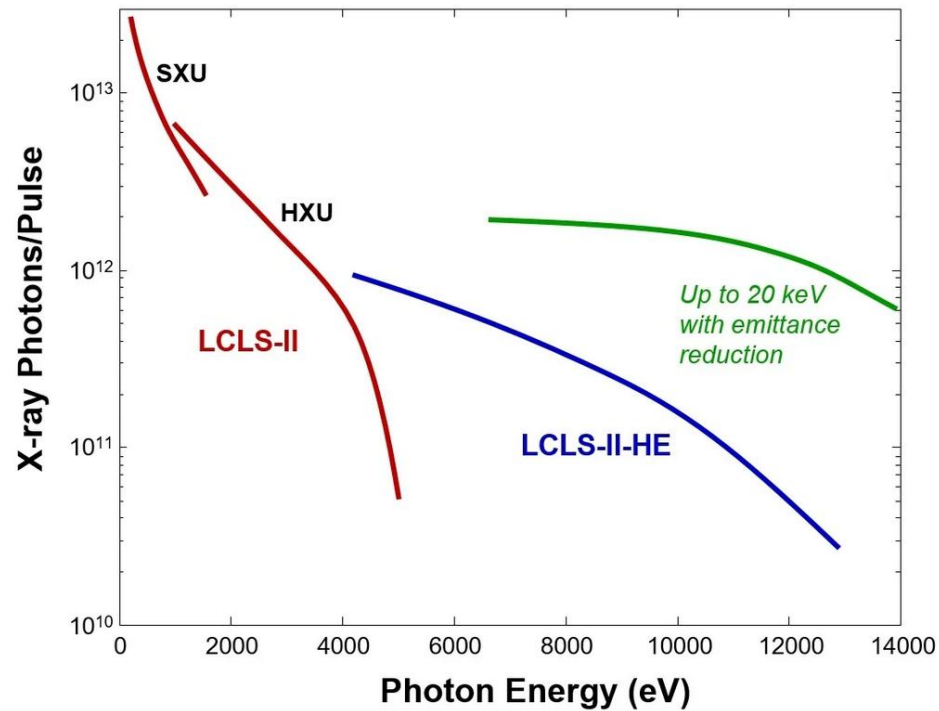
LCLS-II & LCLS-II-HE: revolutionary tools for X-ray science

- LCLS-II will be the first XFEL to be based on continuous-wave superconducting accelerator technology
- Continuous repetition rate of 1 MHz, with photon energies between 250 eV and 12 keV

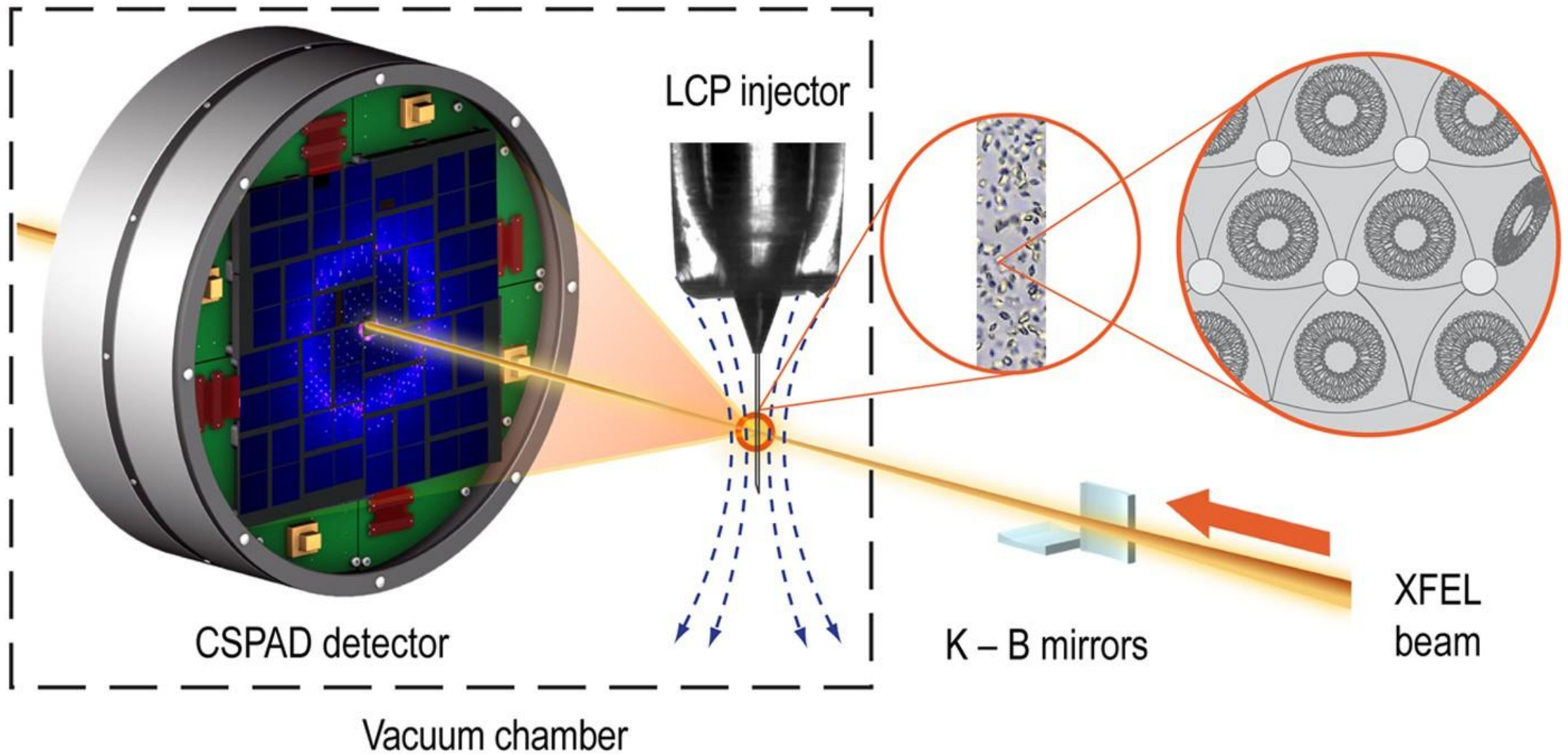


LCLS-II & LCLS-II-HE: revolutionary tools for X-ray science

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X-ray detectors



X-ray detectors for light sources

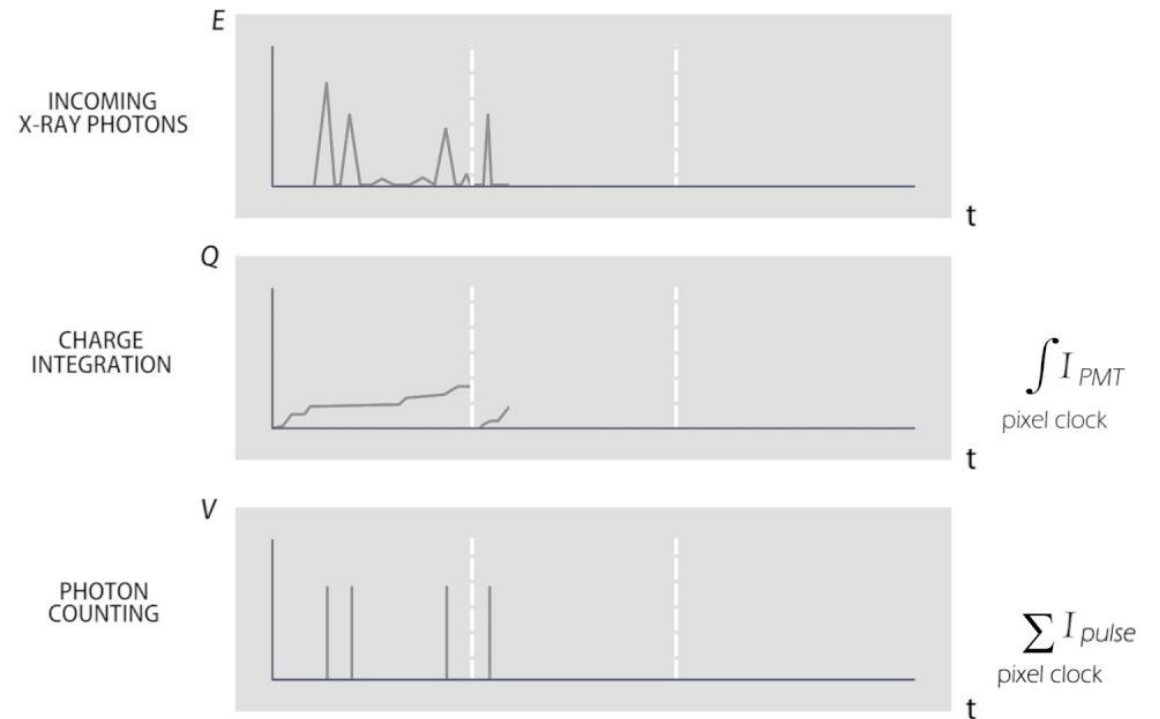
Two main classes of X-ray detectors for light sources:

- **Charge integrating:**
Integrate Q over C , convert with an A/D
→ *Similar to CMOS image sensors*
- **Photon counting:** count how many times the signal crosses a threshold, single-photon counting
→ *Similar to HEP tracking detectors, but with counter*

PC have been the main technology used in synchrotrons:
easier to design, use and calibrate.

However, PC do not perform well at XFELs and 4th gen synchrotrons:

- XFEL produces photons with $\sim$ fs spatial separation
- More photons = higher chances of pile-up



For more information on PC detectors:

<https://www.dectris.com/en/landing-pages/transforming-x-ray-detection/>

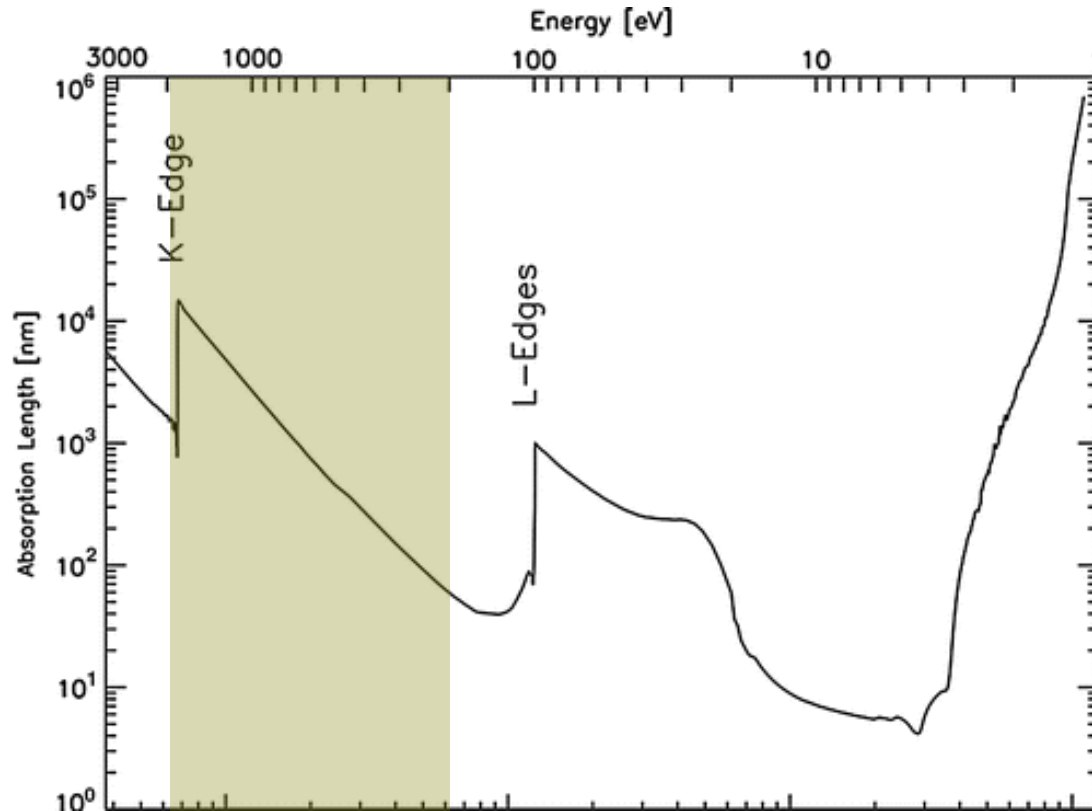
Designing ePixM: a monolithic detector for soft X-rays

ePixM detector: specifications

Parameter	Objective
Quantum efficiency [%, 275eV-2000eV]	90
Pixel Pitch [um]	50
Readout Noise [e ⁻ rms]	15
Well Depth [# photons @ 530eV]	3000
Frame Rate [kHz]	5
Power/pixel [uW]	20

X-ray detectors

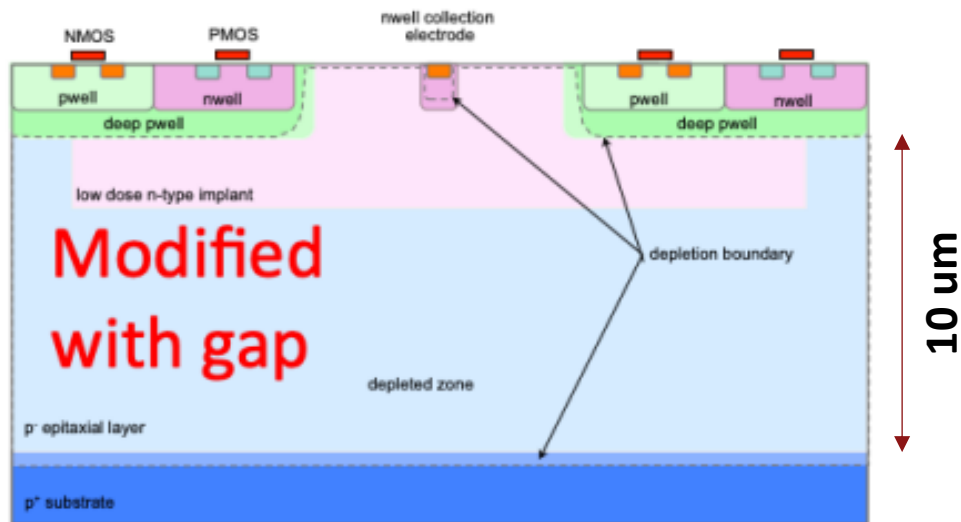
Specification: QE > 90% for energies between 250 and 2000 keV



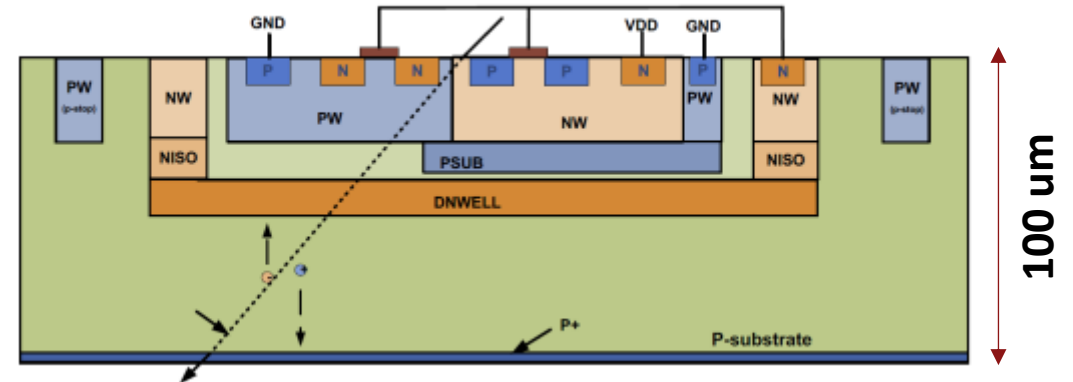
The **absorption length** is the distance over which the optical intensity in a medium decays to $1/e$ (approximately 37%) of its initial value due to absorption

X-ray detectors

Which technology do you choose to detect 250 to 2keV X-rays?



CMOS imaging process,
partially depleted

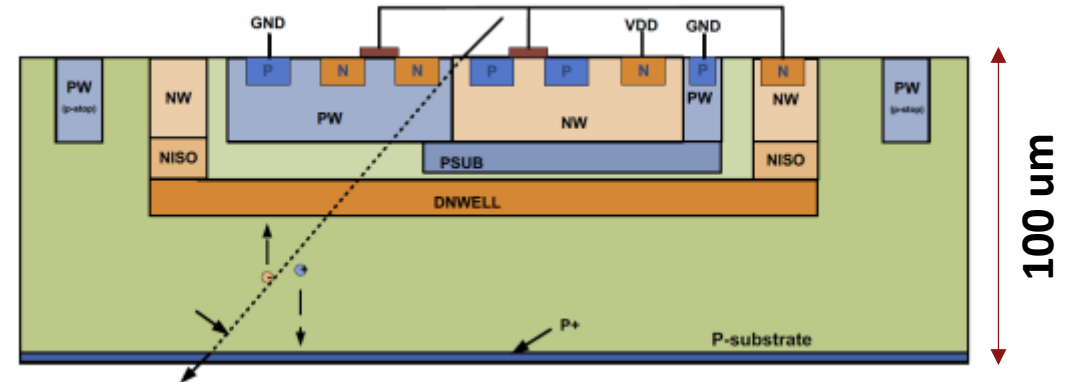


HV-MAPS,
fully depleted

X-ray detectors

Which technology do you choose to detect 250 to 2keV X-rays?

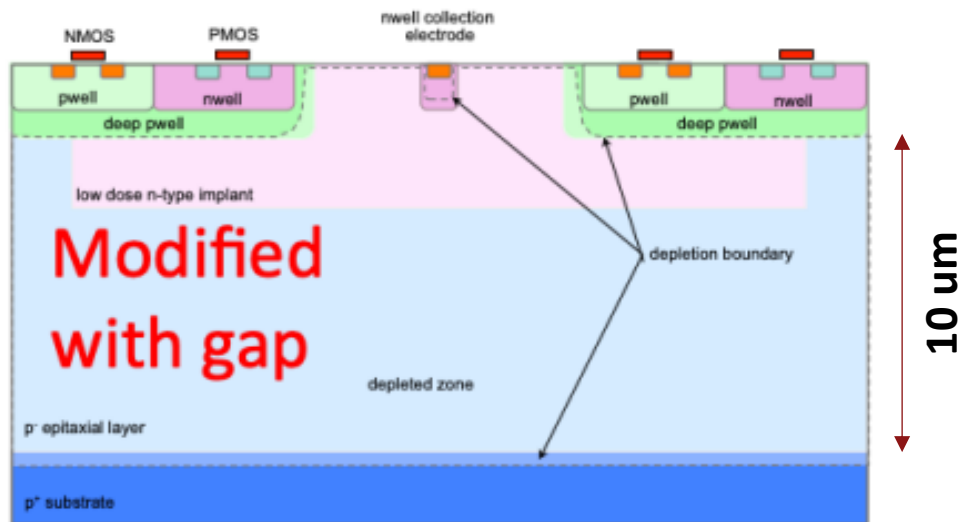
- Large electrode $\rightarrow$ more uniform E-field, better charge collection and full depletion
- X-ray fully absorbed, electronics shielded from radiation damage
- Requires high-resistivity substrate, special wafer
- Trade-off between area to implement electronics (functionality) & C_D
- Large $C_D \rightarrow$ worse noise performance



HV-MAPS,
fully depleted

X-ray detectors

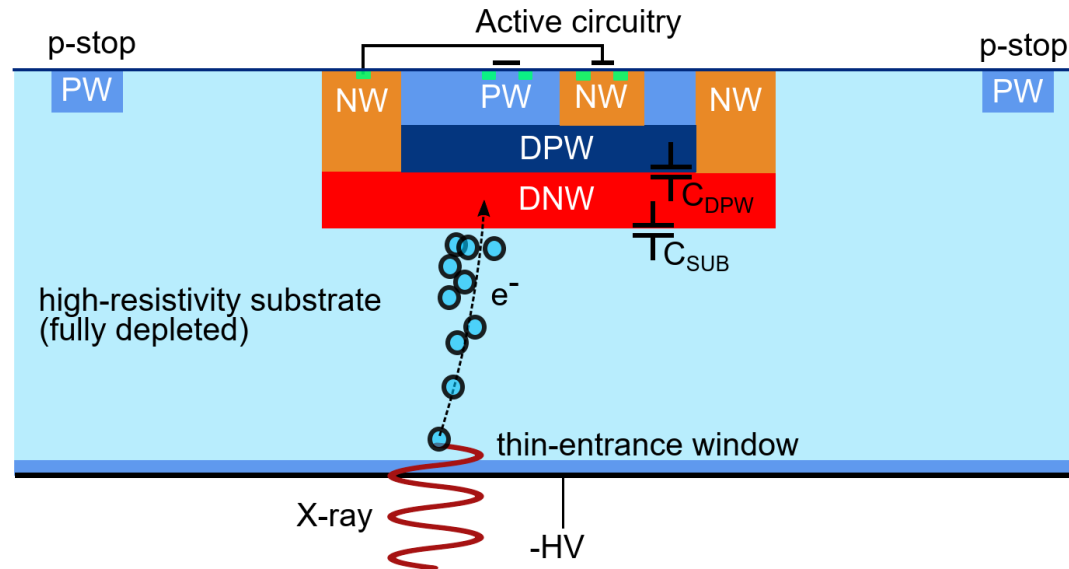
Which technology do you choose to detect 250 to 2keV X-rays?



CMOS imaging process,
partially depleted

- Small $C_D \rightarrow$ better noise with same power budget
- Electronic circuit sits outside of collection node
- Charge collection times need to be simulated: < 100 ns
- Radiation hardness
- Requires thinning to 10um for back-side illumination

ePixM cross-section: fully depleted HV MAPS



$$C_d = C_{DNW-SUB} + C_{DNW-PSUB}$$

$$ENC \propto g_m / C_d \text{ (thermal)}$$

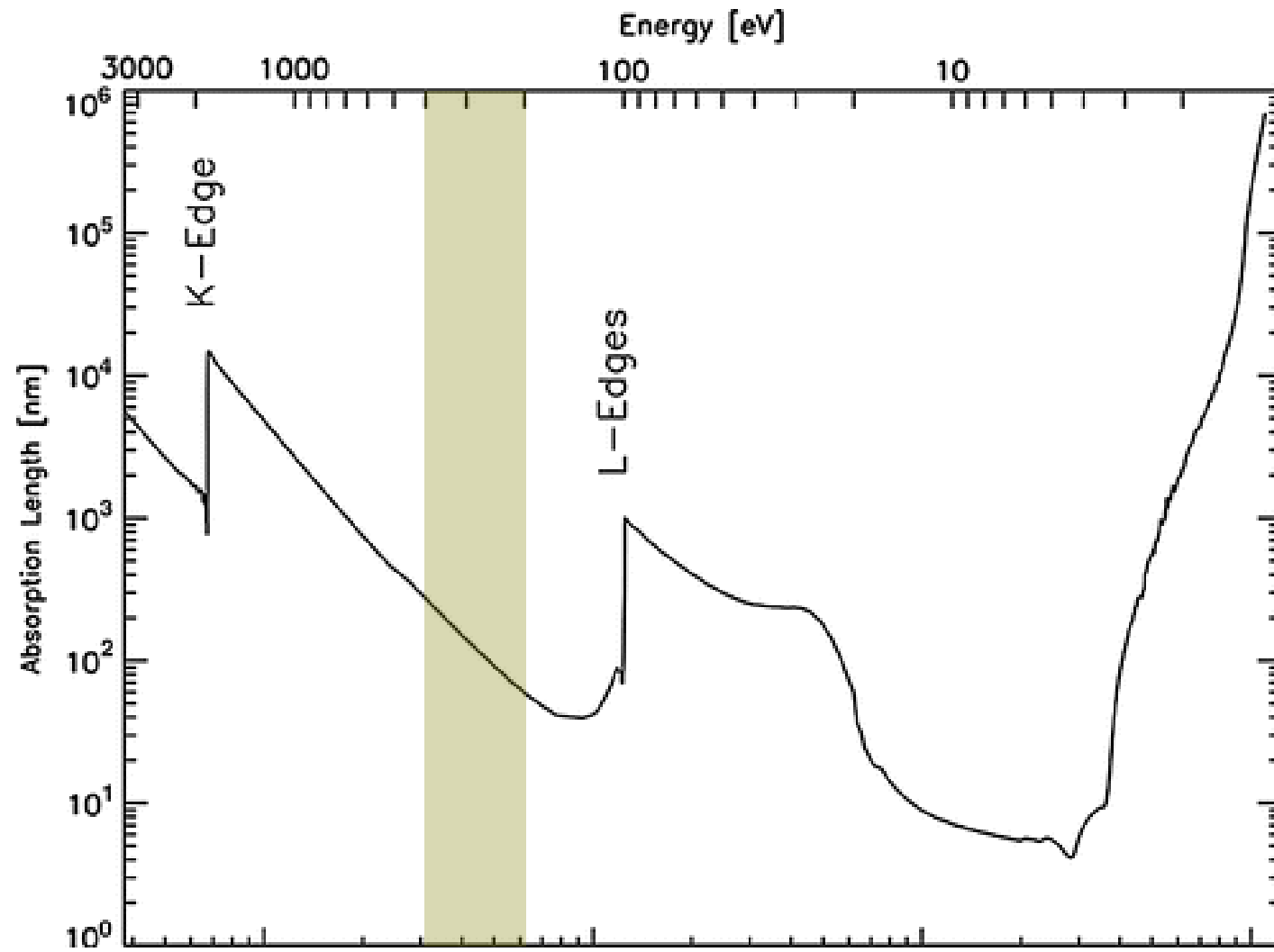
Trade-off:

C_D (noise) - Area (complexity)

- HV applied on backside: full-depletion, charge collected by drift
- Electronics sits in deep n-well (DNW), which also acts as collection node
- Additional deep p implant (PSUB) isolates NW (PMOS transistors) from DNW
- Wafers thinned and back-processed with thin entrance window

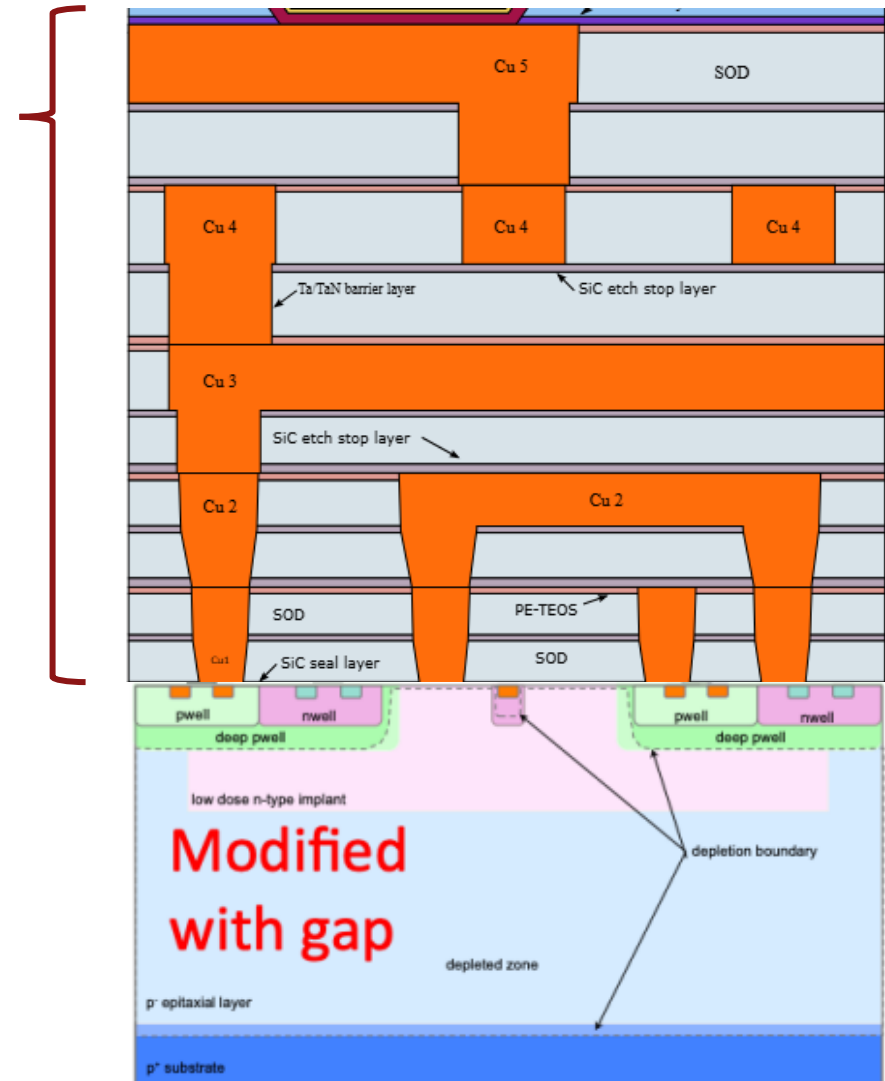
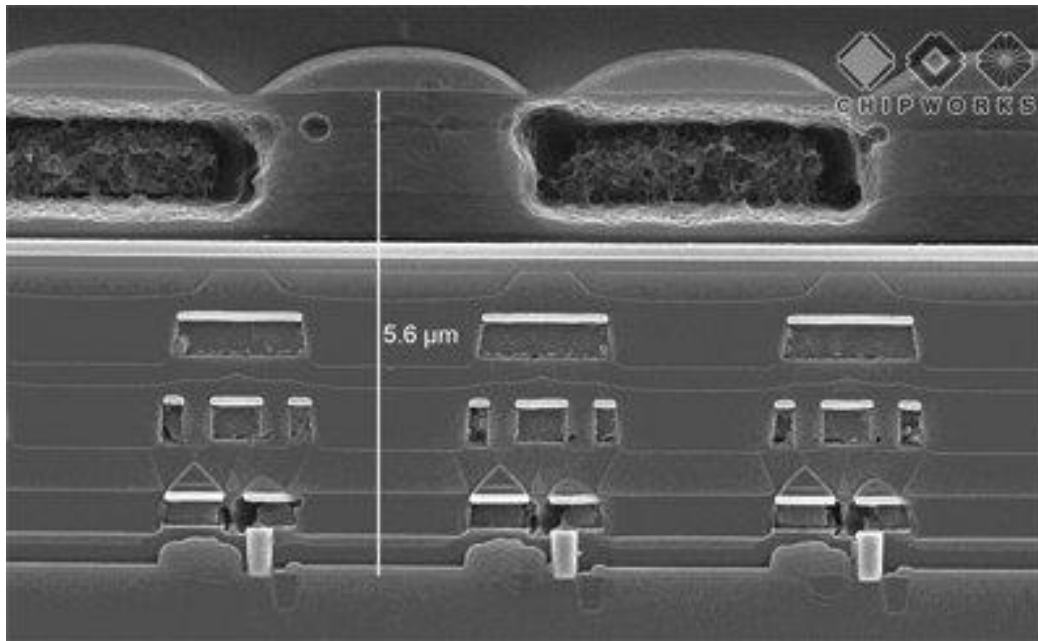
Why back-side illumination with a thin entrance window?

ePixM: thin entrance window



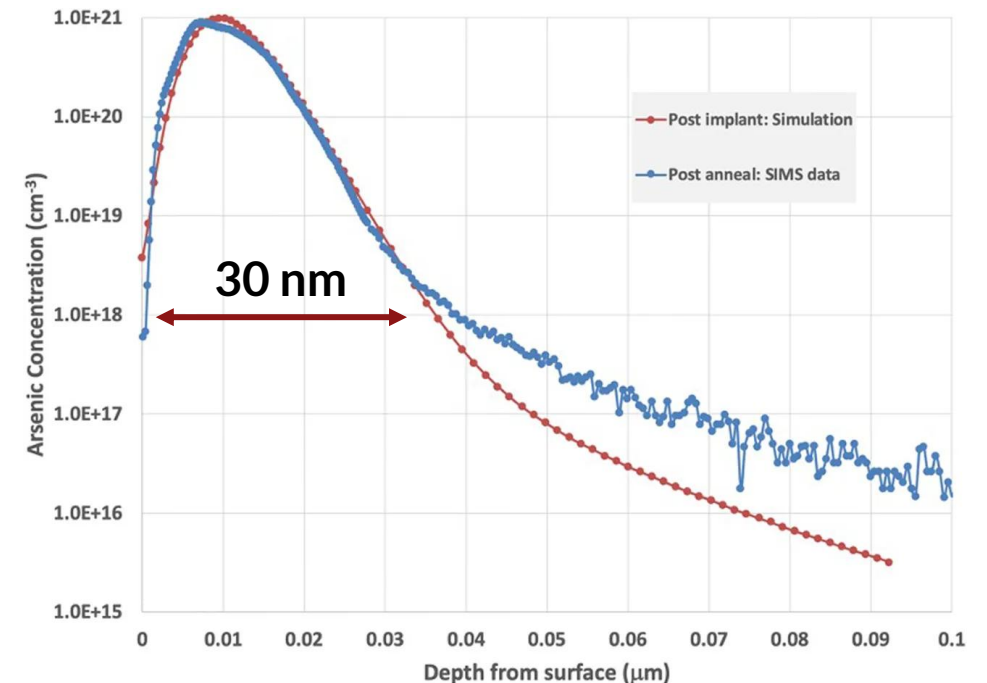
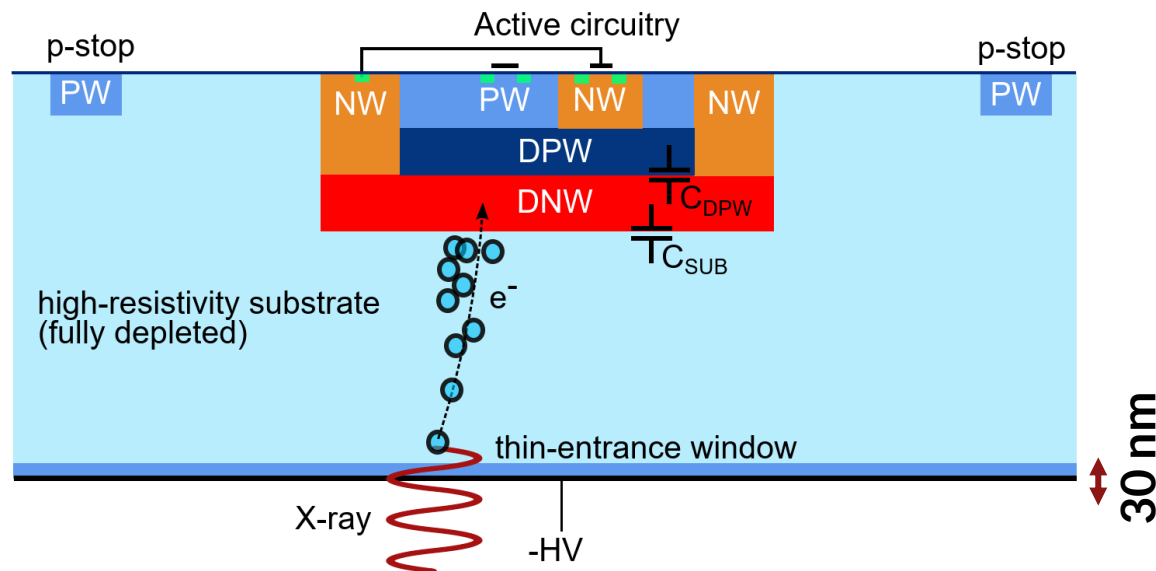
Why back-side illumination?

Metal stack: ~6 metals, typically Cu in modern CMOS processes, plus dielectric layers...



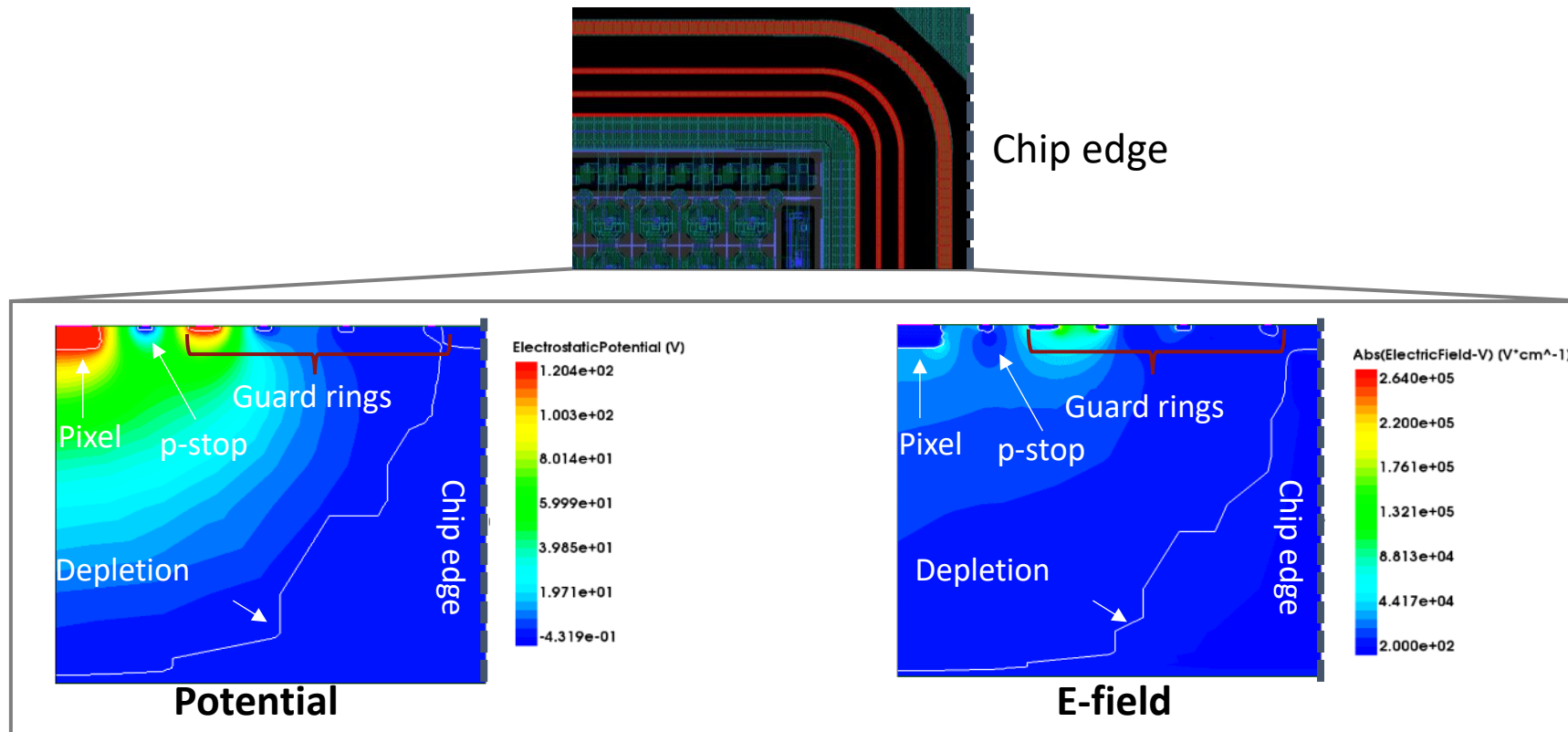
ePixM: thin entrance window

- Need doping on the backside to apply -HV and deplete the sensor
- Depth of the doped region need to be small to avoid degrading QE at lowest energies
- Shallow entrance windows is challenging: the high Temp anneal needed to activate the dopant also drives the dopant profile deeper, growing the region that is insensitive to soft X-rays
- Also *nice-to-have*: do not destroy the CMOS side already (if already done by fab)
- Novel technique based on microwave annealing developed by J. Segal, C. Kenney



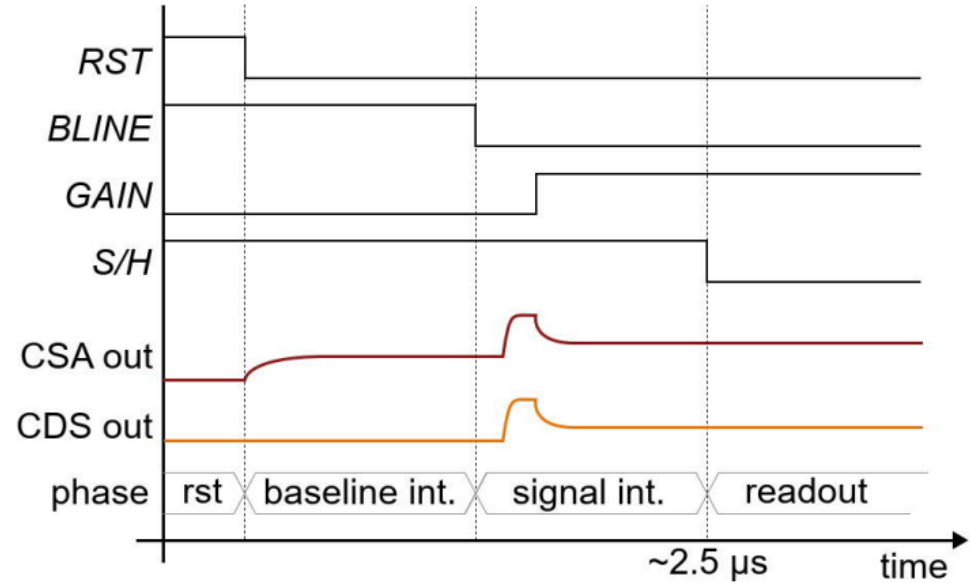
ePixM: guard-rings

- Guard rings at chip boundaries to limit I_{leak}
- p-stop structures with metal overhangs to isolate each pixel
- Rounded edges at corners to reduce peak E-field and enable 100-200V bias applied



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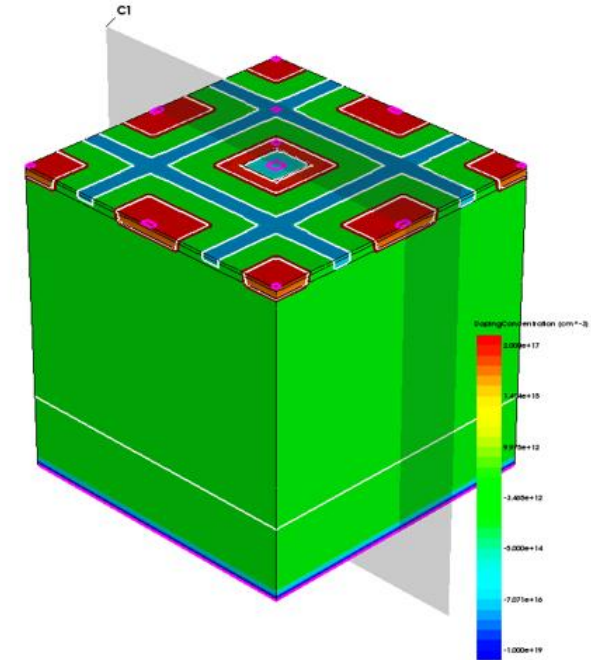
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- SLAC TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION DIRECTORATE

ePixM: capacitances

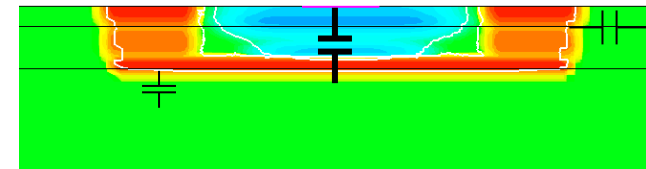
Performed TCAD simulations to characterize detector capacitance:

- TCAD design kit from foundry with doping profiles
- Many iterations between circuit and device simulations:
TCAD to sim C_D → Schematics → Layout → Noise sims →
TCAD to sim C_D → Schematics → Layout → Noise sims ...

	Capacitance [fF]
adjacent pixel (x 4)	0.16
internal p-well	45
p-guard ring	8.6
backside	2.2
Total (summed)	56.4552



Pixel doping profile:



ePixM v1: pixel layout

Trade-off:
 C_D (noise) - Area (complexity)

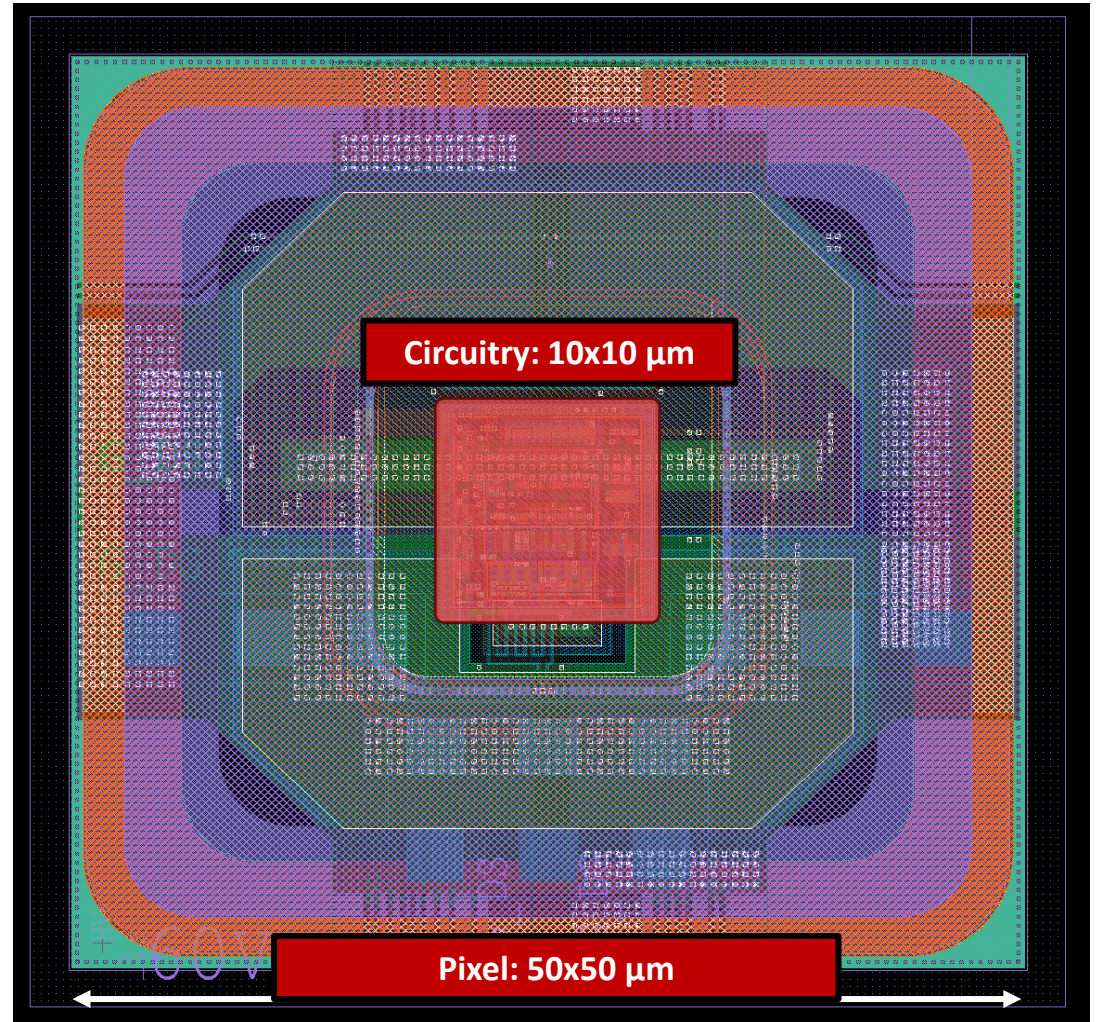
Design strategies:

- Full custom layout:
minimum spacing/distance of every DRC rule
- Minimize size of transistors
- Reduce area of DNW & DNW/PW overlap

Post-layout noise simulations:

- ENC ~11 el. ✓
- Dynamic range 600 keV ✓

Layout of one pixel

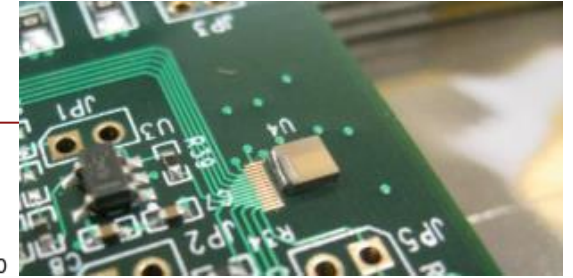


ePixM detector: specifications

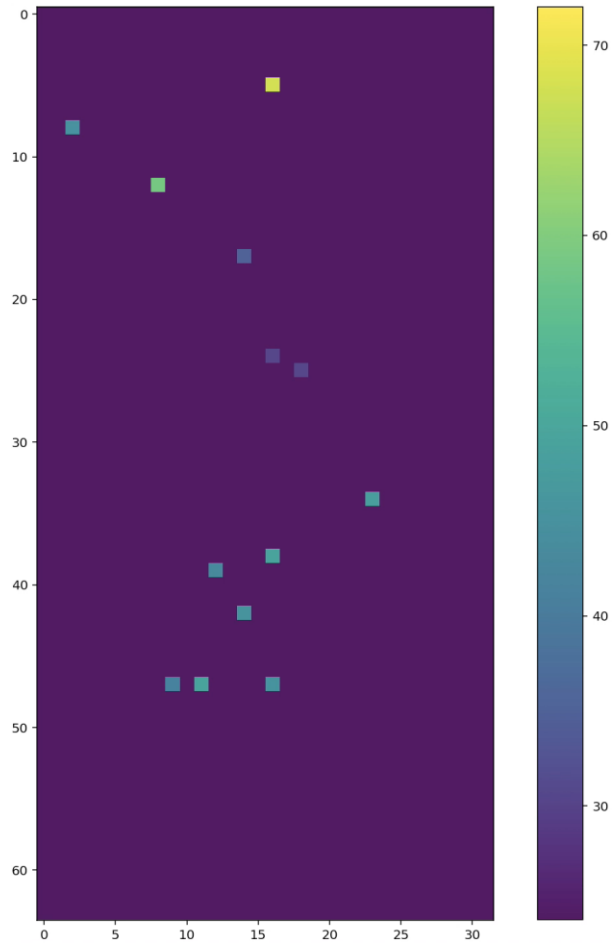
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ePixM first measurements

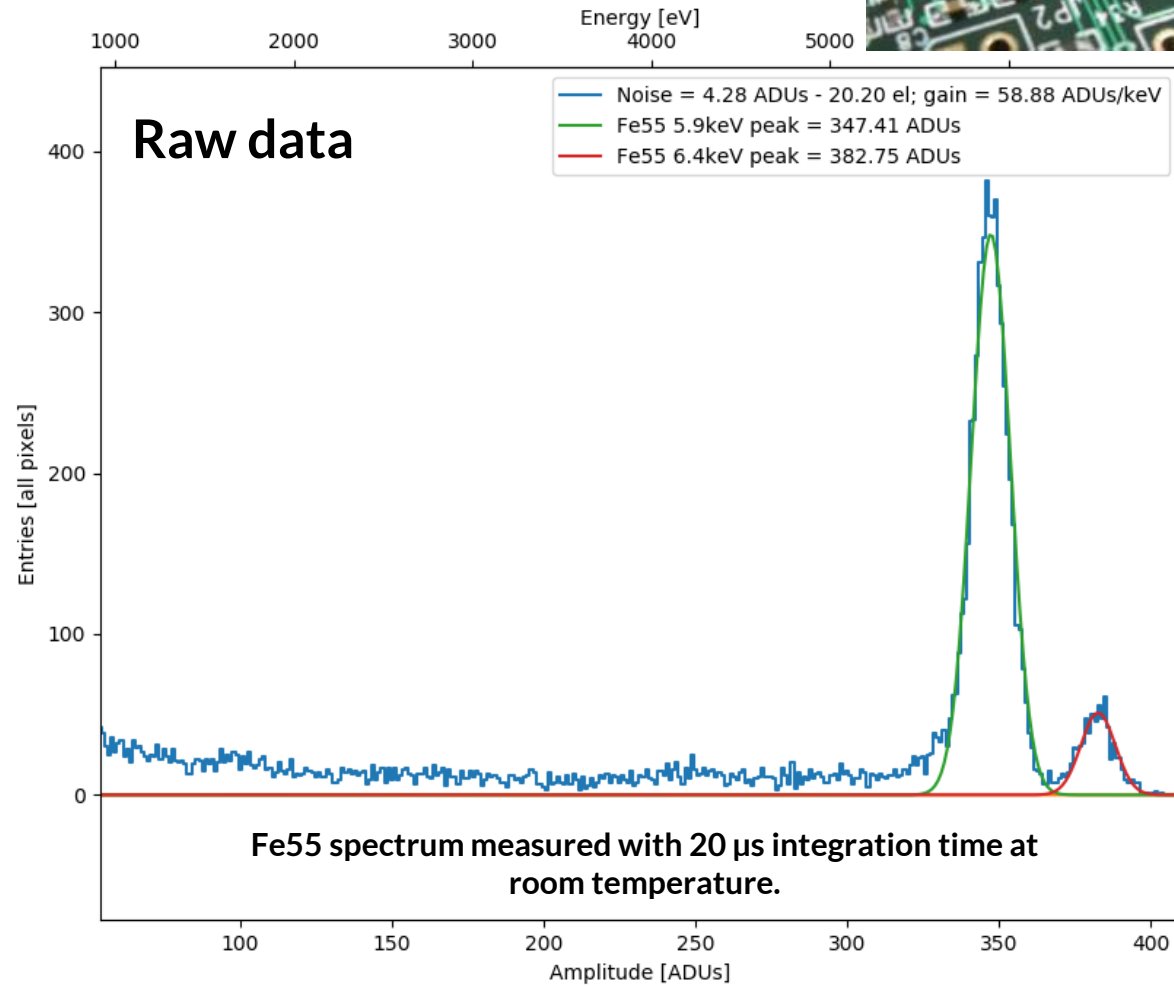
Small pixel matrix prototype



Fe55 live acquisition

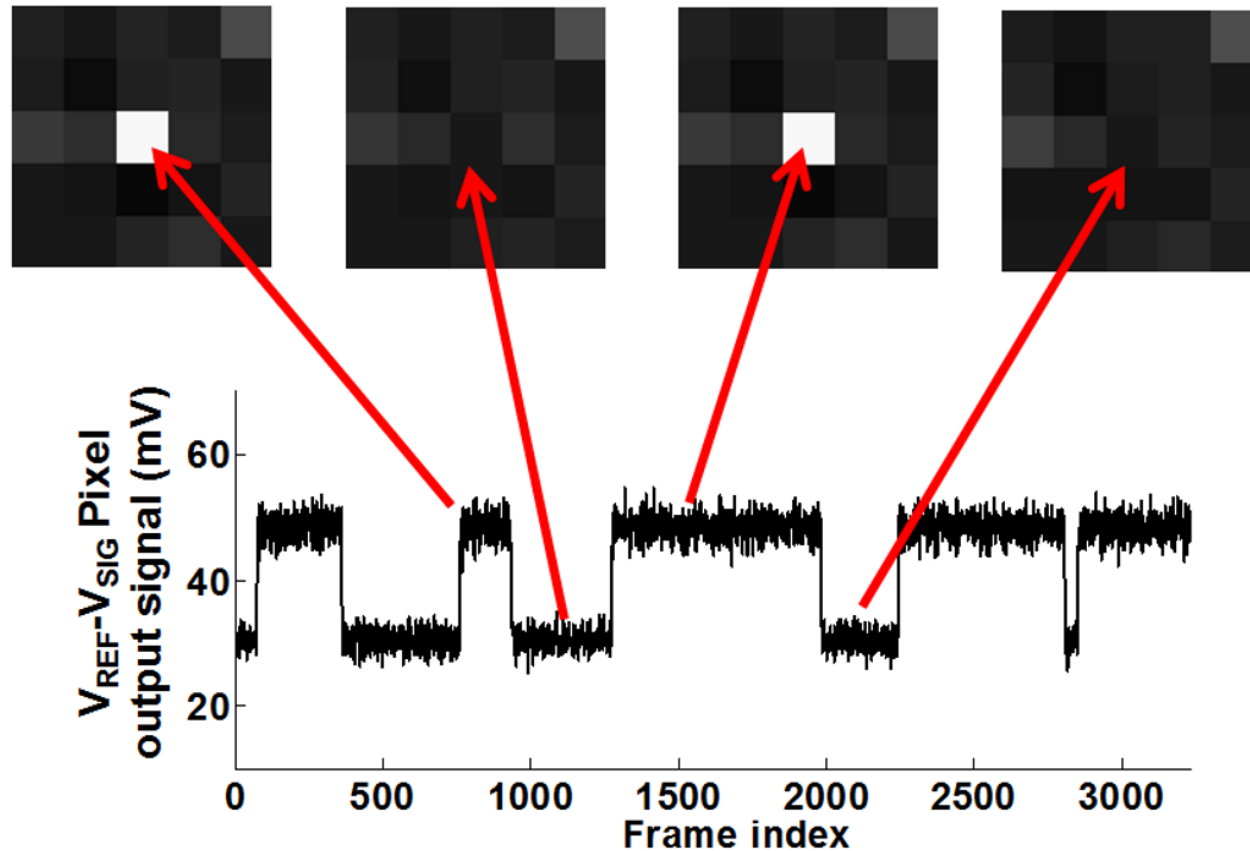


Raw data



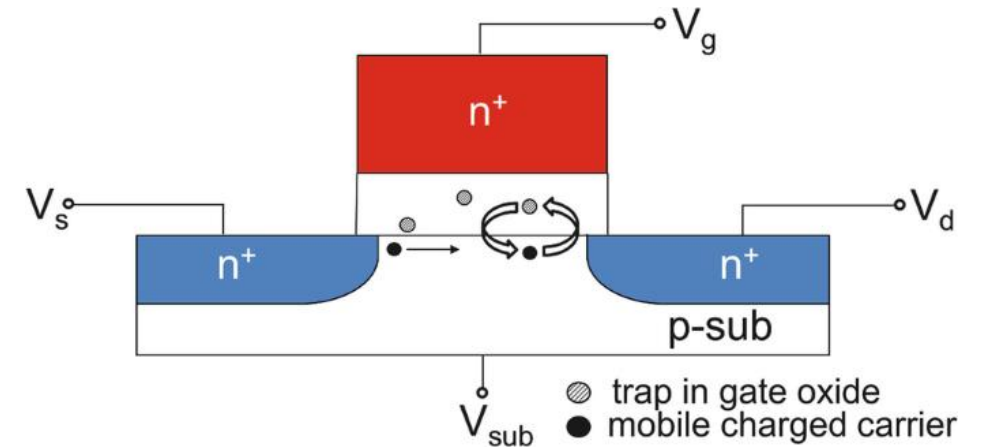
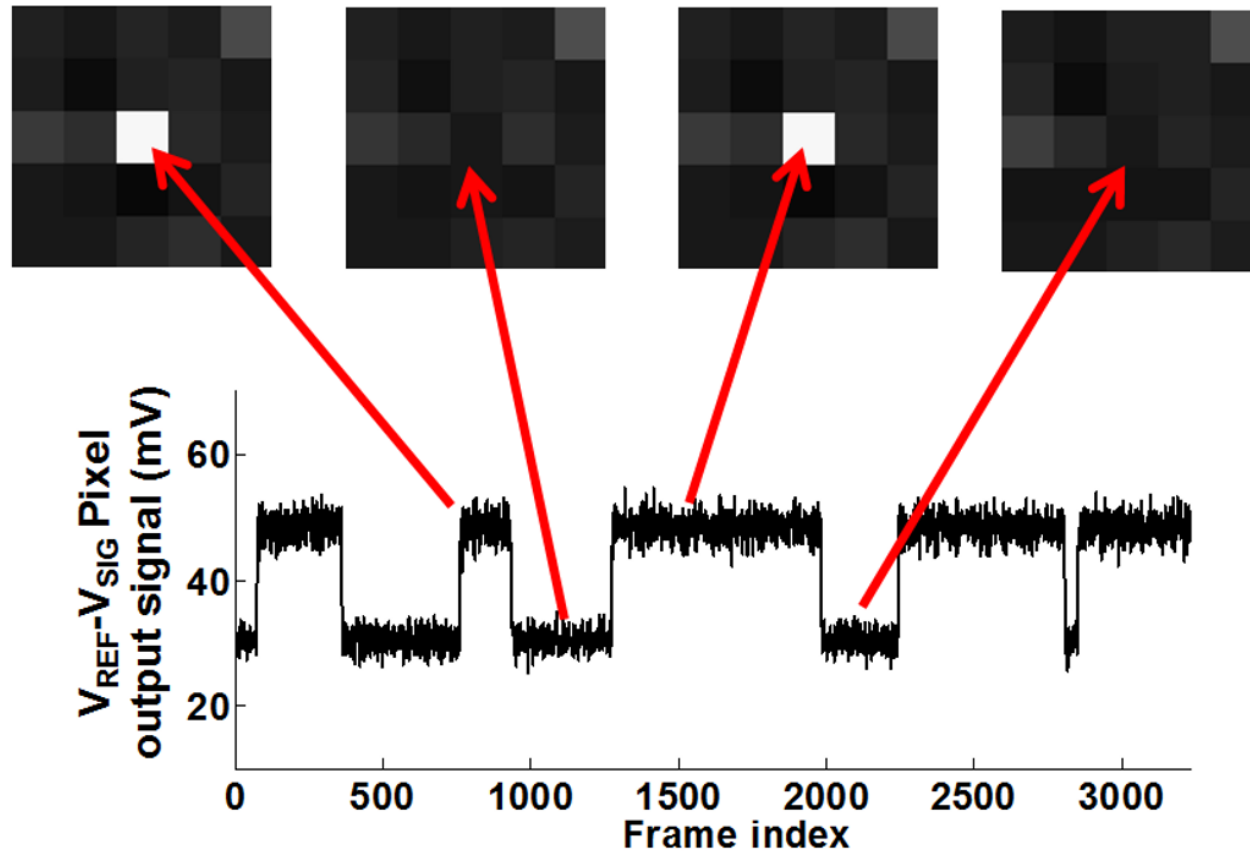
ePixM first measurements

- A good number of pixels showed an excess of noise...
- Upon further investigation, data looked like the following plot...



ePixM first measurements

- A good number of pixels showed an excess of noise...
- Upon further investigation, data looked like the following plot...



MAPS & RTS

Avoid minimum sized transistors in amplification stages!

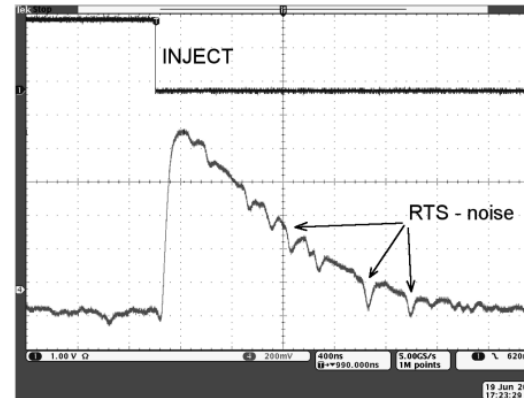
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DMAPS: a fully depleted monolithic active pixel sensor — analog performance characterization

M. Havránek,^{1,2} T. Hemperek, H. Krüger, Y. Fu, L. Germic, T. Kishishita, C. Marinas, T. Obermann and N. Wermes

Physikalisches Institut, Universität Bonn,
Nüfallee 12, 53115 Bonn, Germany³

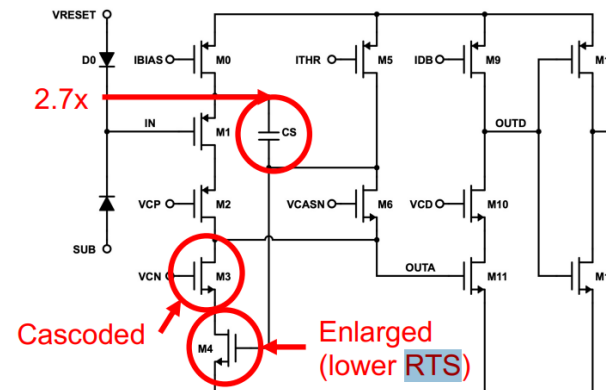
E-mail: miroslav.havranek@cern.ch



Random Telegraph Signal noise (RTS) represents a significant noise component of all variants of the DMAPS pixels in EPCB01. Spikes caused by the RTS are clearly visible in figure 10. RTS noise is not a speciality of EPCB01 only. The RTS noise often appears in monolithic pixels as described for example in [13] and [14].

Latest Developments and Results of Radiation Tolerance CMOS Sensors with Small Collection electrodes

I. ASEÑI TORTAJADA^{1,2,*}, P. ALLFORT³, M. BARBERO⁴, P. BARRILLON⁴, I. BERDALOVIC^{1,5}, C. BESPIN⁶, S. BHAT⁴, D. BORTOLETTO⁷, P. BREUGNON⁴, C. BUTTAR⁸, R. CARDELLA¹, F. DACHS^{1,13}, V. DAO¹, Y. DEGERLI¹², H. DENIZLI¹⁰, M. DYNDAI¹, L. FLORES SANZ DE ACEDO^{1,8}, P. FREEMAN³, L. GONELLA³, A. HABIB⁴, T. HEMPEREK⁶, T. HIRONO⁶, T. KUGATHASAN¹, I. MANDIC⁹, M. MIKUZ⁹, K. MOUTAKAS⁶, M. MUNKER¹, K.Y. OYULMAZ¹⁰, P. PANGAUD⁴, H. PERNEGGER¹, F. PIRO¹, P. RIEDLER¹, H. SANDAKER¹¹, E.J. SCHIOPPA¹, P. SCHWEMLING¹², A. SHARMA^{1,7}, L. SIMON ARGEMI⁸, C. SOLANS SANCHEZ¹, W. SNOEYS¹, T. SULIGOI³, T. WANG⁶, N. WERMES⁶



2. Evolution of MALTA and Mini-MALTA

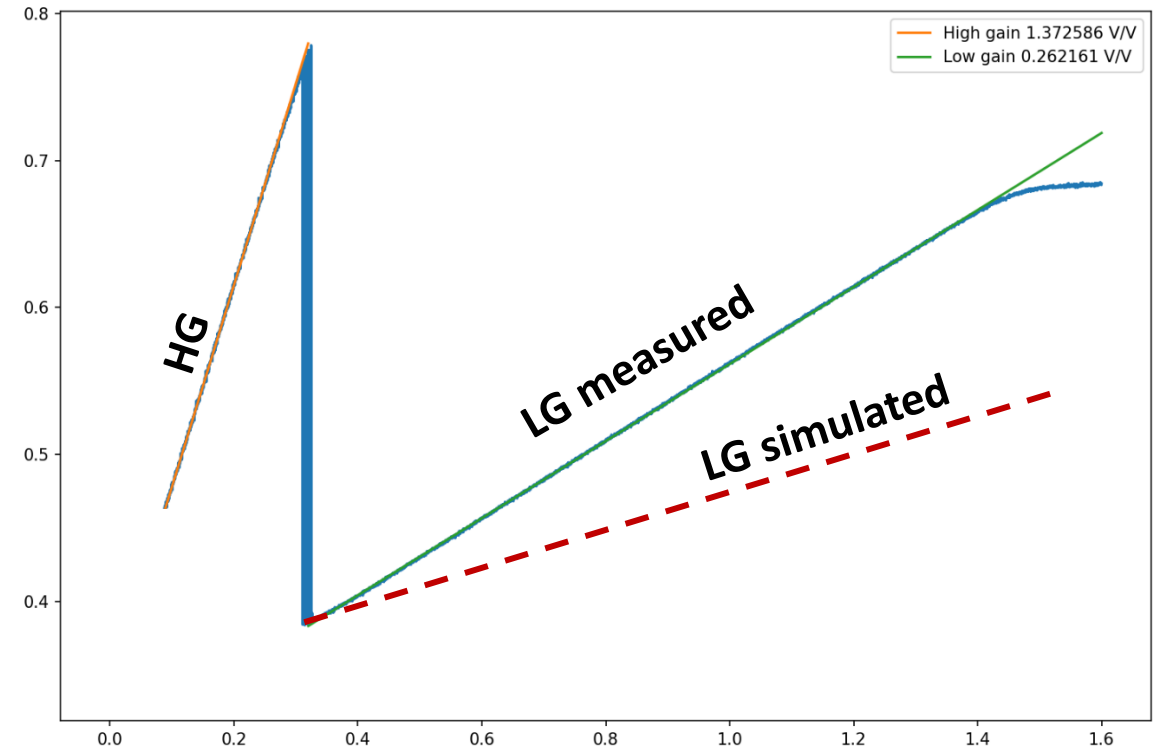
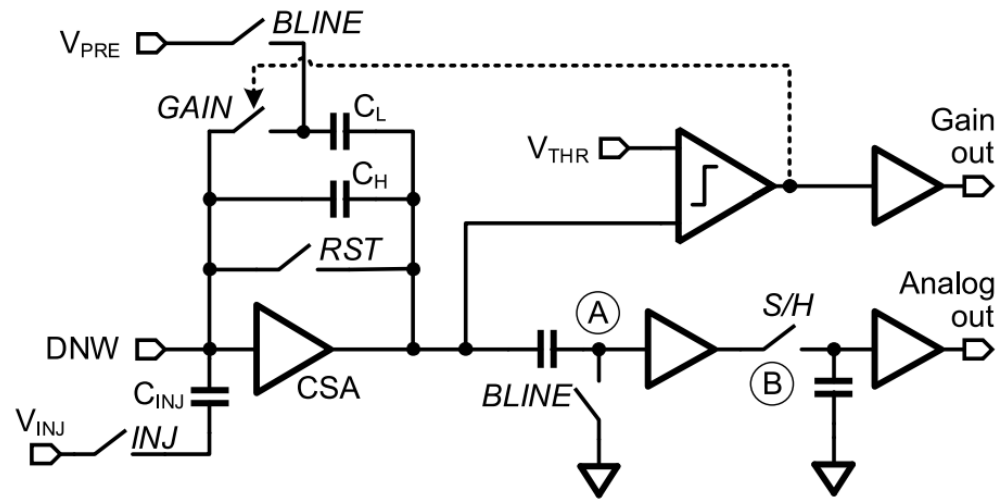
The analog Front-end (FE) of MALTA and Mini-MALTA is shown in Fig. 1. Measurements on MALTA sensor revealed significant Random Telegraph Signal (RTS) noise, preventing lower threshold settings which was attributed to the "M3" transistors being too small. To verify this assumption, the Mini-MALTA sensor includes sectors with the same "M3" size as on MALTA and with a larger transistor. Measurements with Mini-MALTA confirmed that the RTS noise was decreased due to the larger transistor size, before and after irradiation.

ePixM detector: specifications

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Frame Rate [kHz]	5 
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ePixM first measurements

- Gain in low-gain was off by a factor of 2
- Issue was later identified...



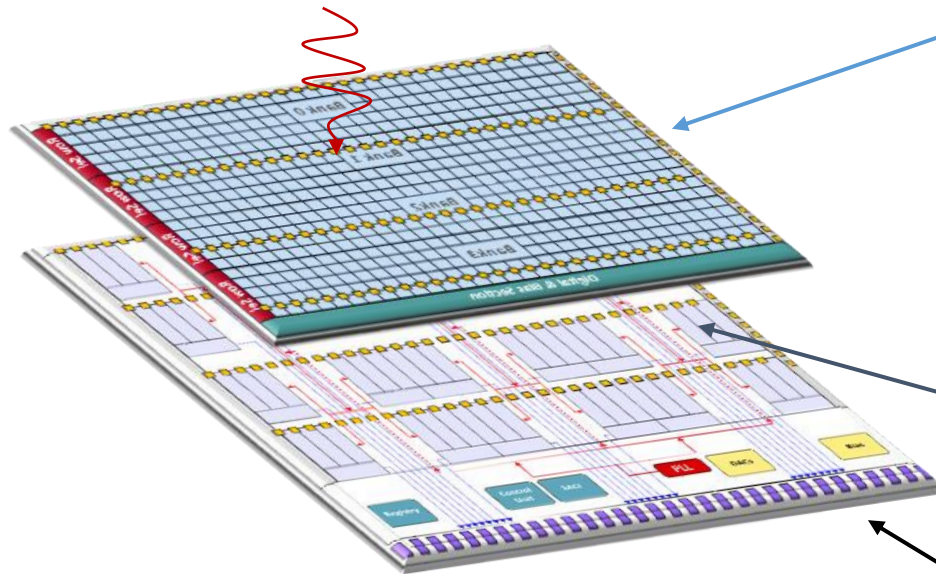
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ePixM camera

- In order to achieve high-frame rate, we parallelize the readout: multiple A/D converters
- Hard to implement in MAPS layer, so we de-coupled the problem...

X-rays $E_\gamma = 250 \text{ eV} - 2 \text{ keV}$



ePixM Monolithic Active Pixel Sensor (MAPS)

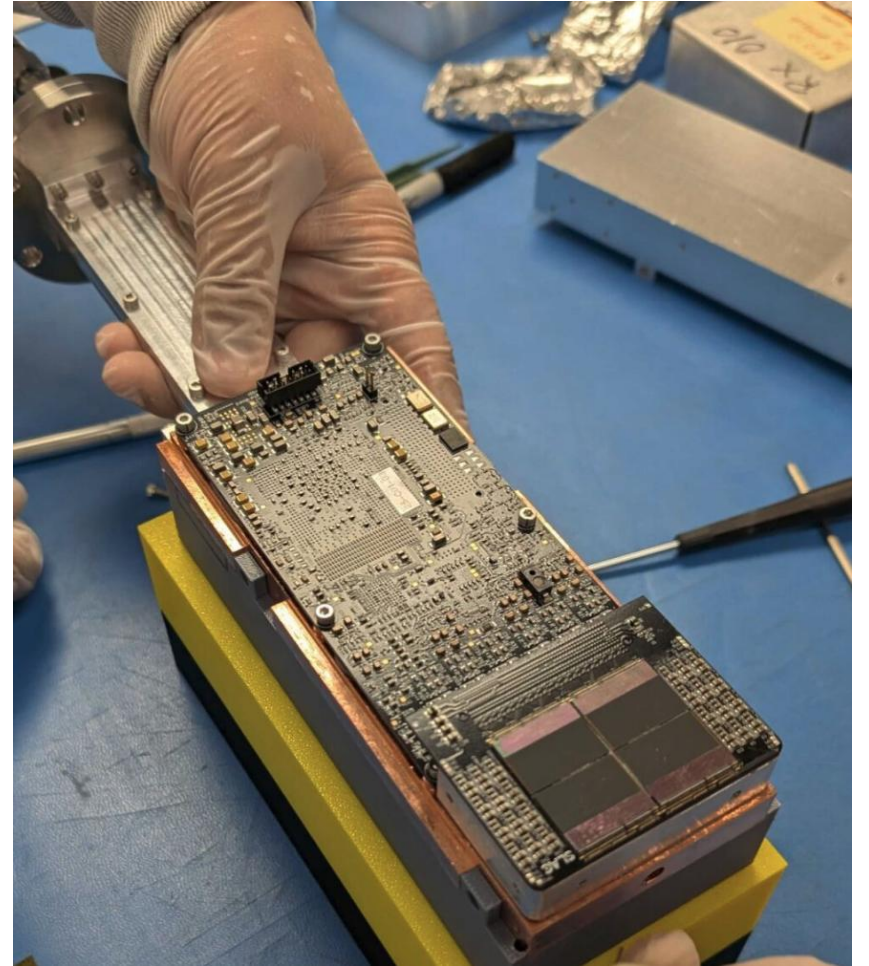
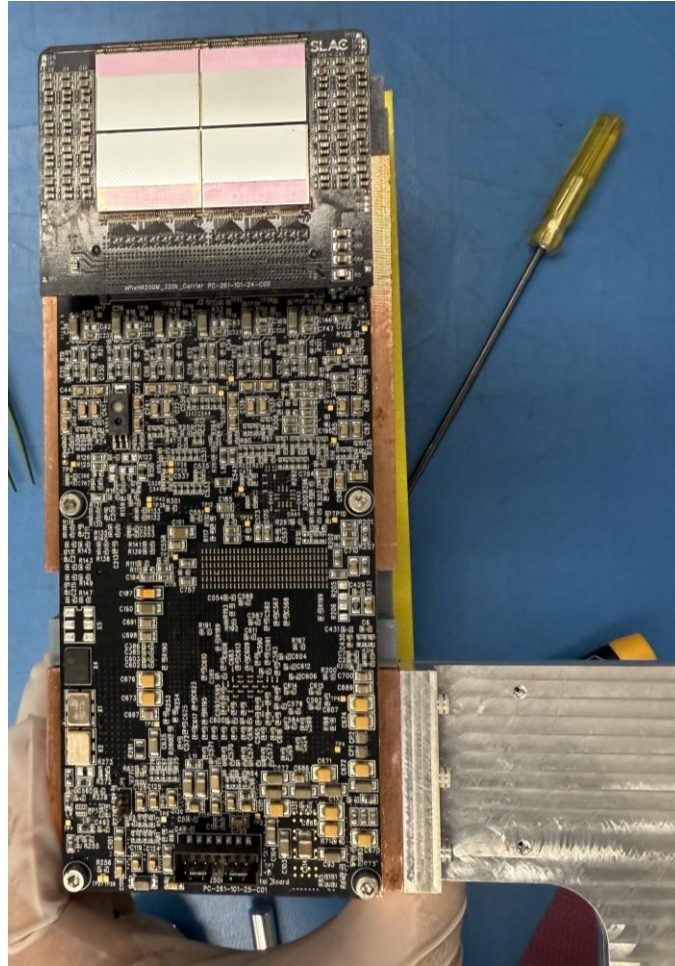
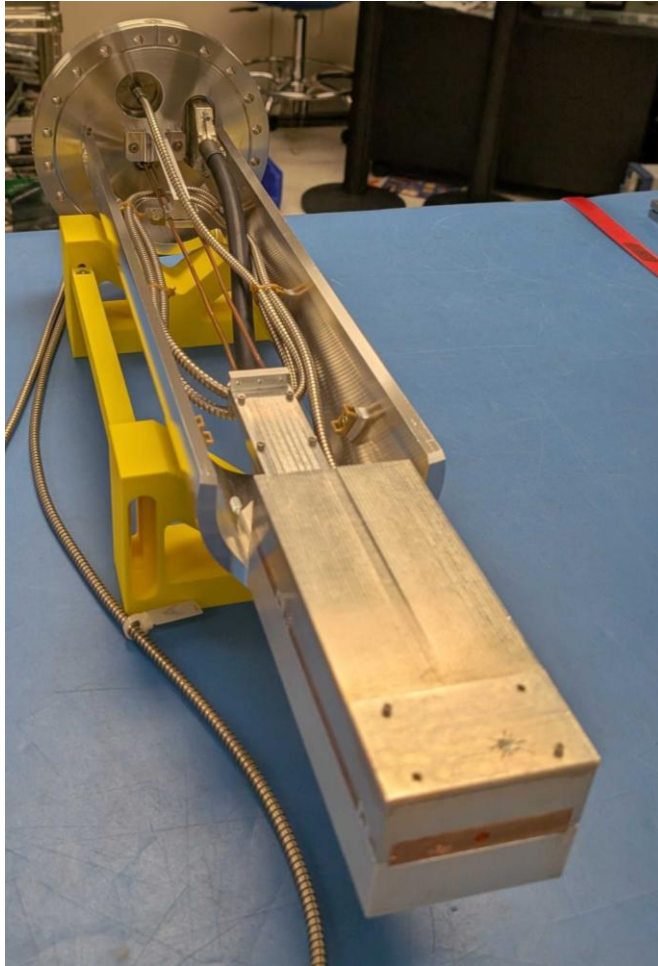
Standard micro-bumps

ePixHR-M Readout ASIC:
Analog-Digital converters, synchronization,
biasing...

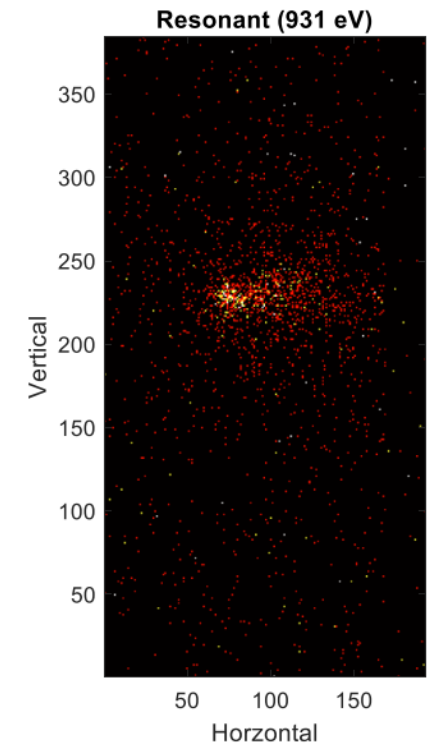
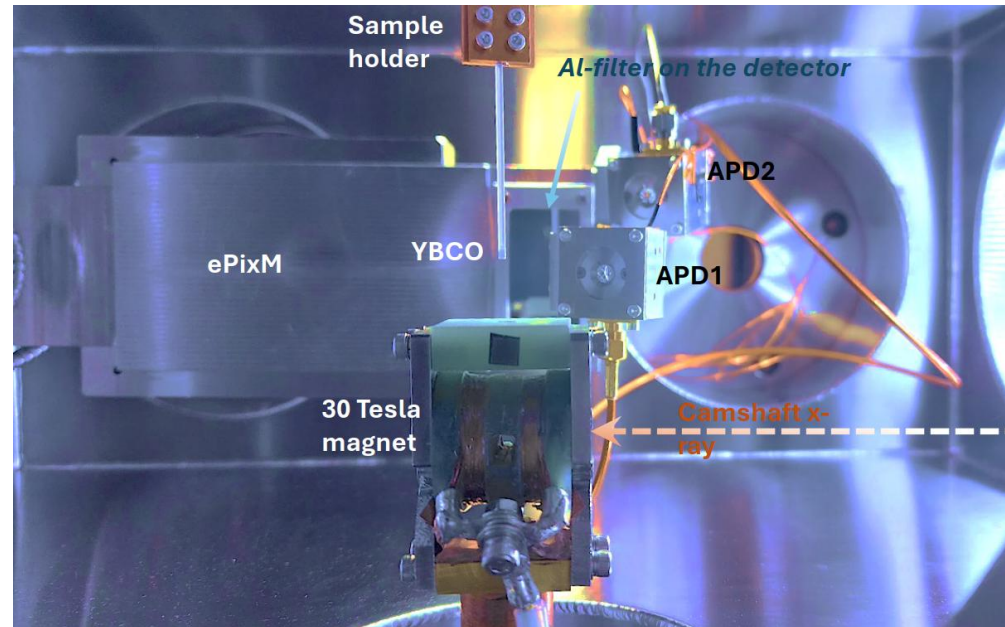
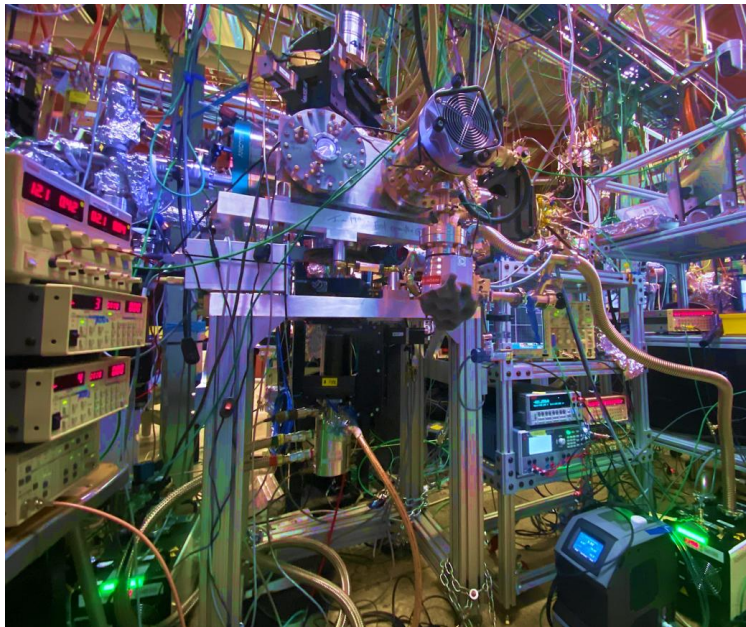
ePixM camera

... many years of works, with lots of challenges...

ePixM camera



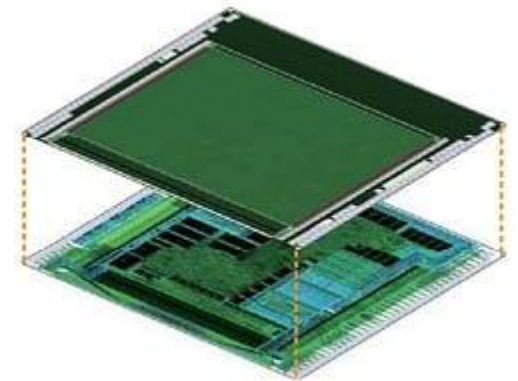
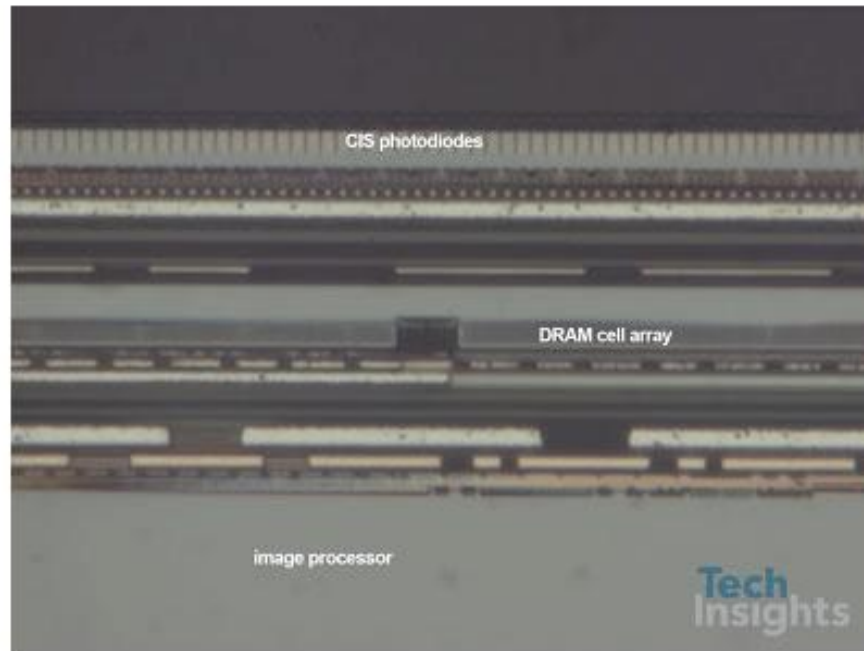
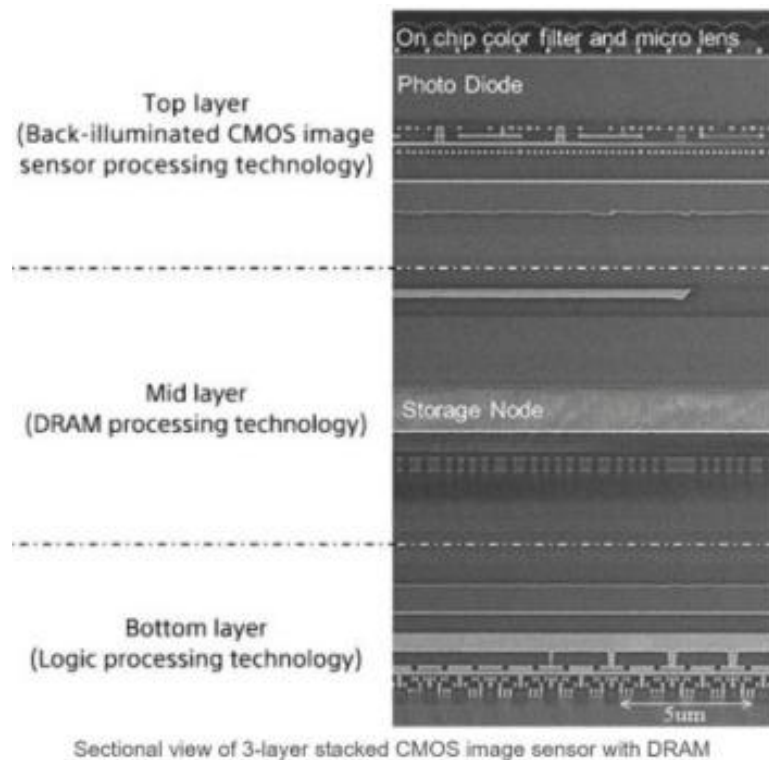
ePixM camera



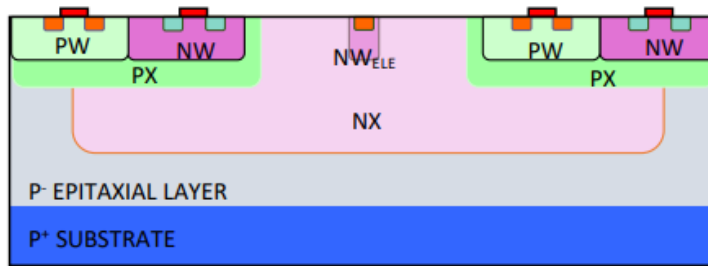
Emerging technologies – 3D stacking

3D stacking in CMOS imaging technology

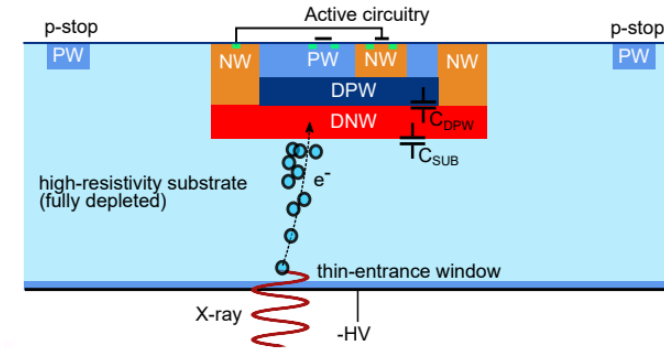
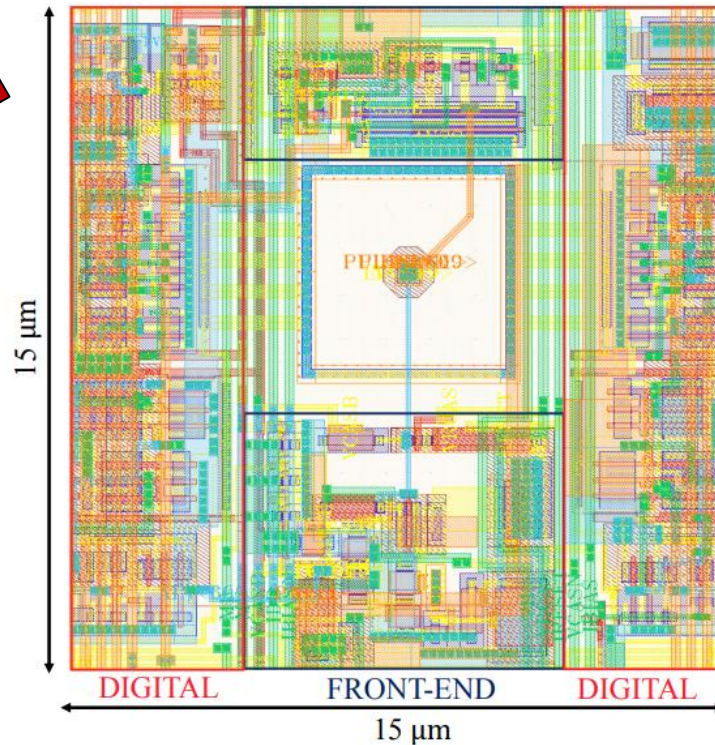
- 3D stacking at wafer level is now an established technology at major CIS fabs: Sony, Canon, TowerJazz, STMicroelectronics, etc.
- Wafer bonding can reduce interconnection capacitance between layers



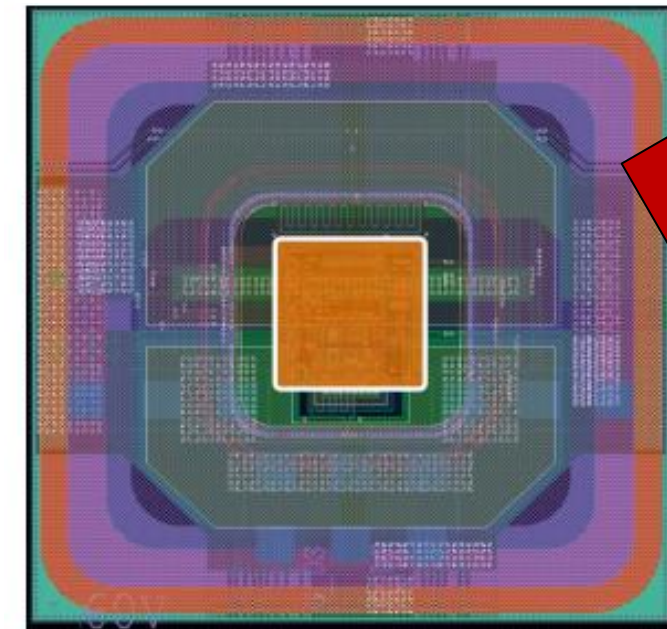
Why 3D stacking?



Small collection electrode



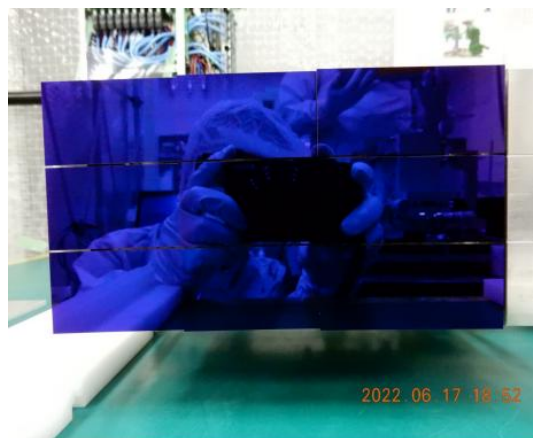
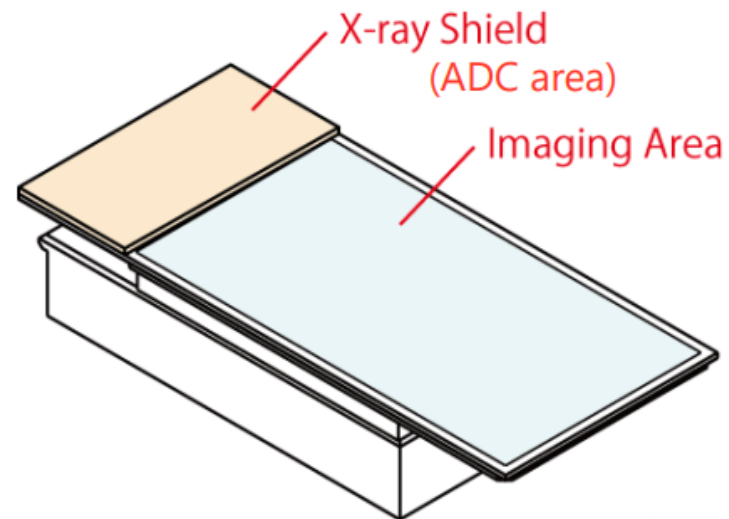
Large collection electrode



Why 3D stacking?

- Optimized processes:
 - Top = imaging / detection layer
 - Bottom = analog / digital layer
- Strongly reduce trade-offs between layout of sensing node and readout electronics
- More metals for routing:
 - Better power supply
 - More logic density
- \$\$\$, complexity, access to prototyping and small volume fabrication

3D stacking in X-ray imagers: CITIUS detector



Stitching Lithography and 3D integration (by Sony Semiconductor Solutions)

Stitching Lithography

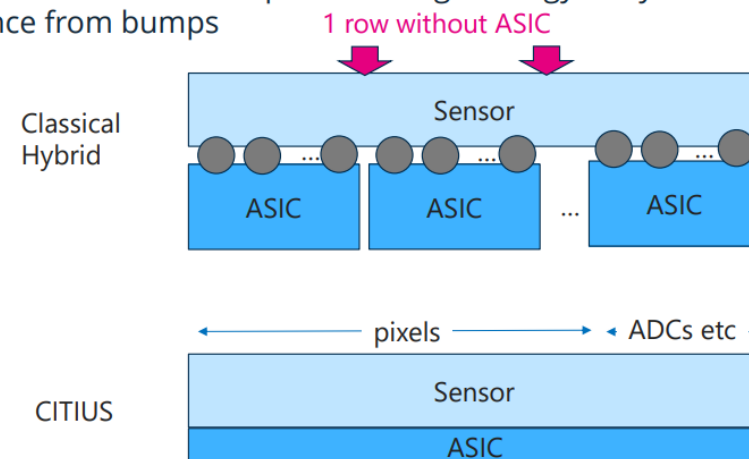
- technique to make chips larger than on lithography shot (> 30 mm)
- Widely used for camera with 35mm Full-frame Image Sensor



from <https://electronics.sony.com/>

3D integration

- no bumps results in uniform response for high-energy X-rays
- no fluorescence from bumps

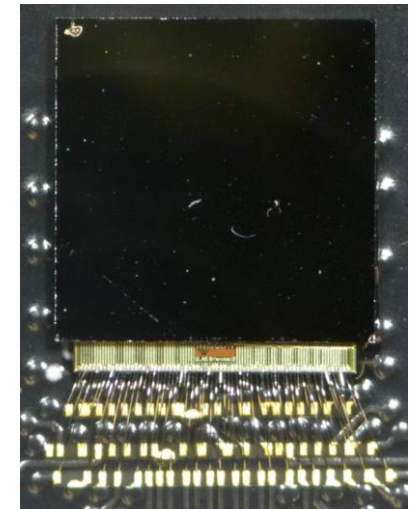
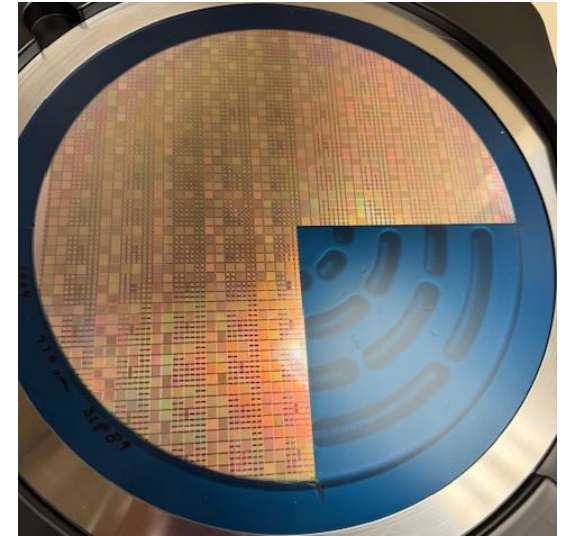
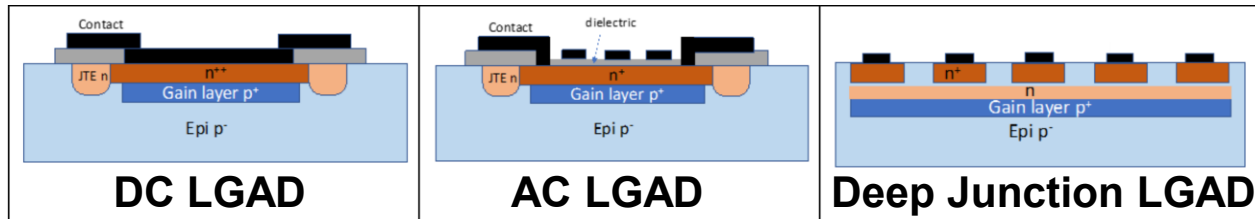


18th March, 2024 IFDEPS

T. Hatsui, RIKEN 21

3D stacking in HEP detectors: the ACCELERATE project

- Goal: stack LGAD sensor with gain-layer + readout ASIC on advanced CMOS node
- Development in partnership with Tower Semiconductor, FNAL, LLNL
- Full wafer run on 12" process: first time done with LGADs
- ~50 separate sensor structures: pixel arrays; strip; device test structures
- LGAD variants: AC, Deep Junction (DJ), Reach Through (RT)



MAPS for timing detectors

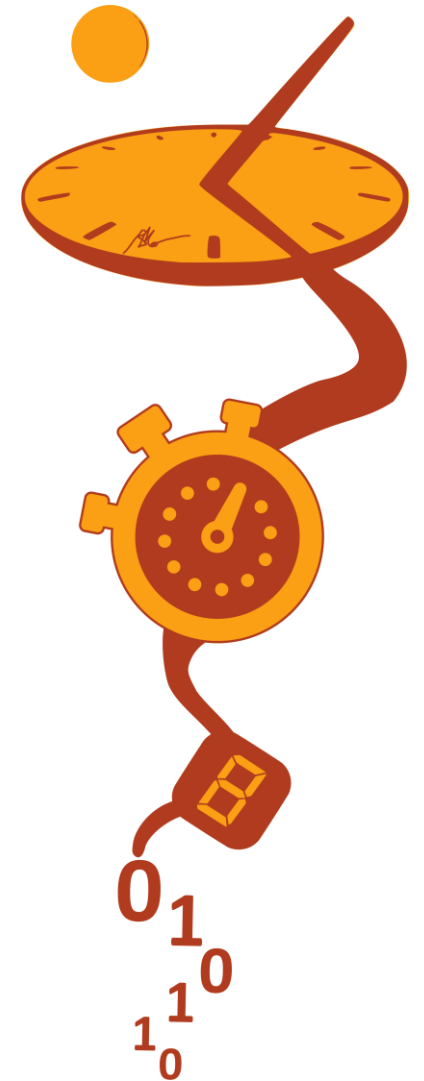


Summer Week 2025

Timing detectors for HEP

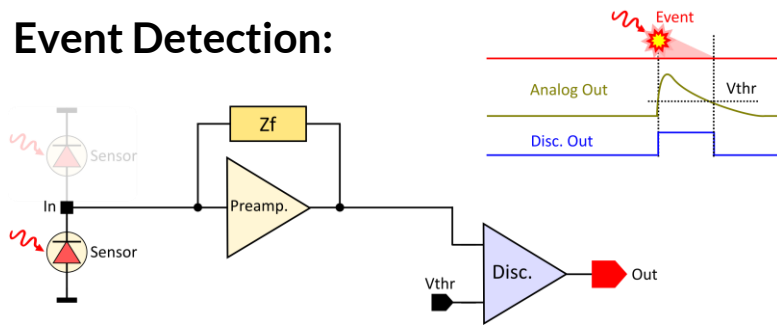
Bojan Markovic, SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory
markovic@slac.stanford.edu

24 June 2025

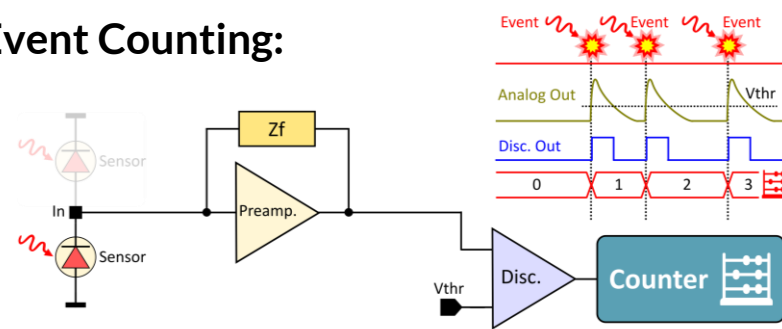


Detector front-end: what are we measuring?

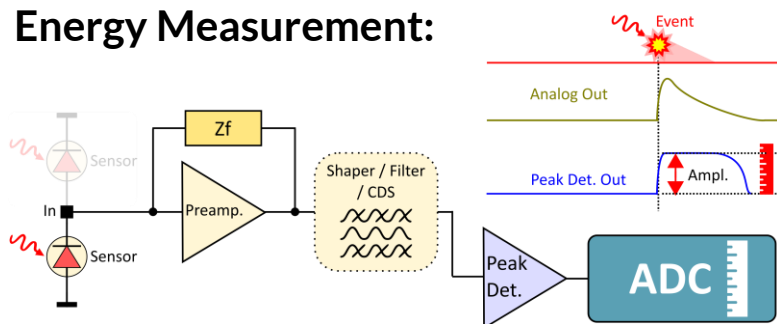
Event Detection:



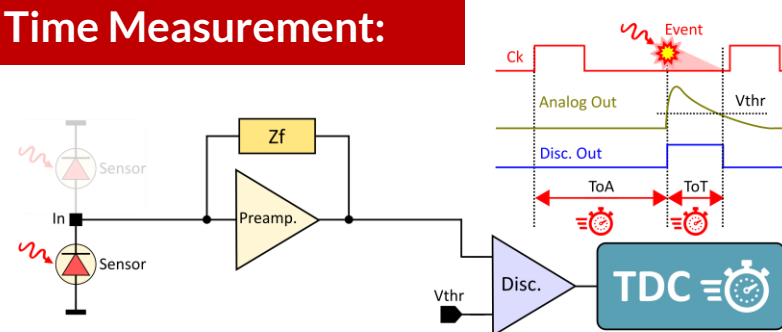
Event Counting:



Energy Measurement:



Time Measurement:

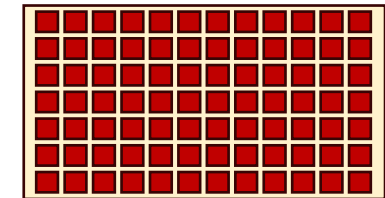


+ Spatial Position:

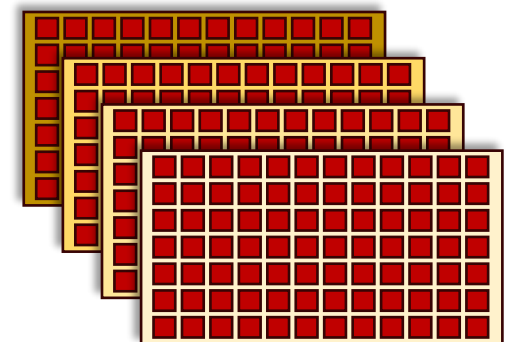
- Strips → 1D



- Pixels → 2D

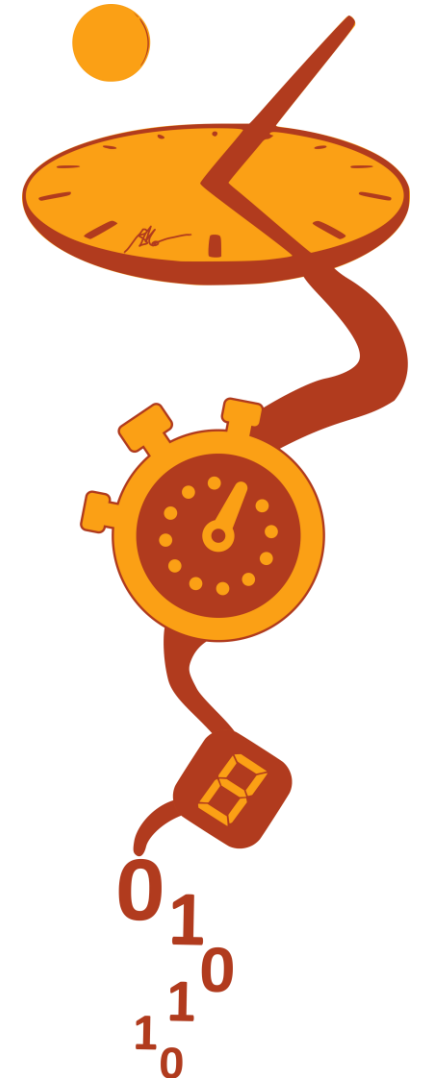


- Layers of pixels / strips → 3D

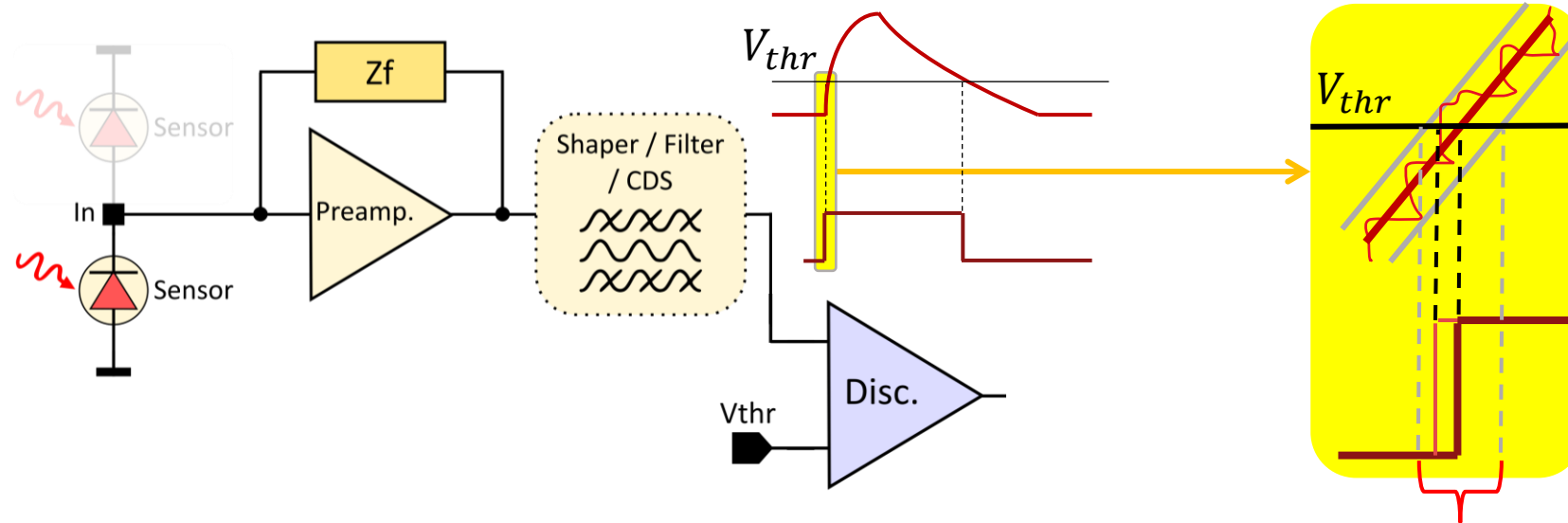


Some terminology...

- **Time Measurement** is a loose term as time has no absolute physical properties to measure.
- What we are really measuring is the duration separating two events; thus, a more accurate term is **Time Interval Measurement**.
- Electronic high-precision time measurement circuits are called by different names: Time Interval Meters (TIM), time counters, time digitizers, **Time-to-Digital Converters (TDC)**.



Detector front-end: time measurement



Temporal uncertainty; time noise → **jitter**

$$Jitter_{rms} = \frac{\sigma_V}{\text{slope}} \approx \frac{v_n G_v \sqrt{BW}}{\frac{Q_{in}/Z_f}{t_r}} \sim \frac{v_n (C_d + C_{in})}{Q_{in}} \frac{t_r}{\sqrt{t_p}} \sim \sqrt{t} \rightarrow \text{Faster = better}$$

up to what point?

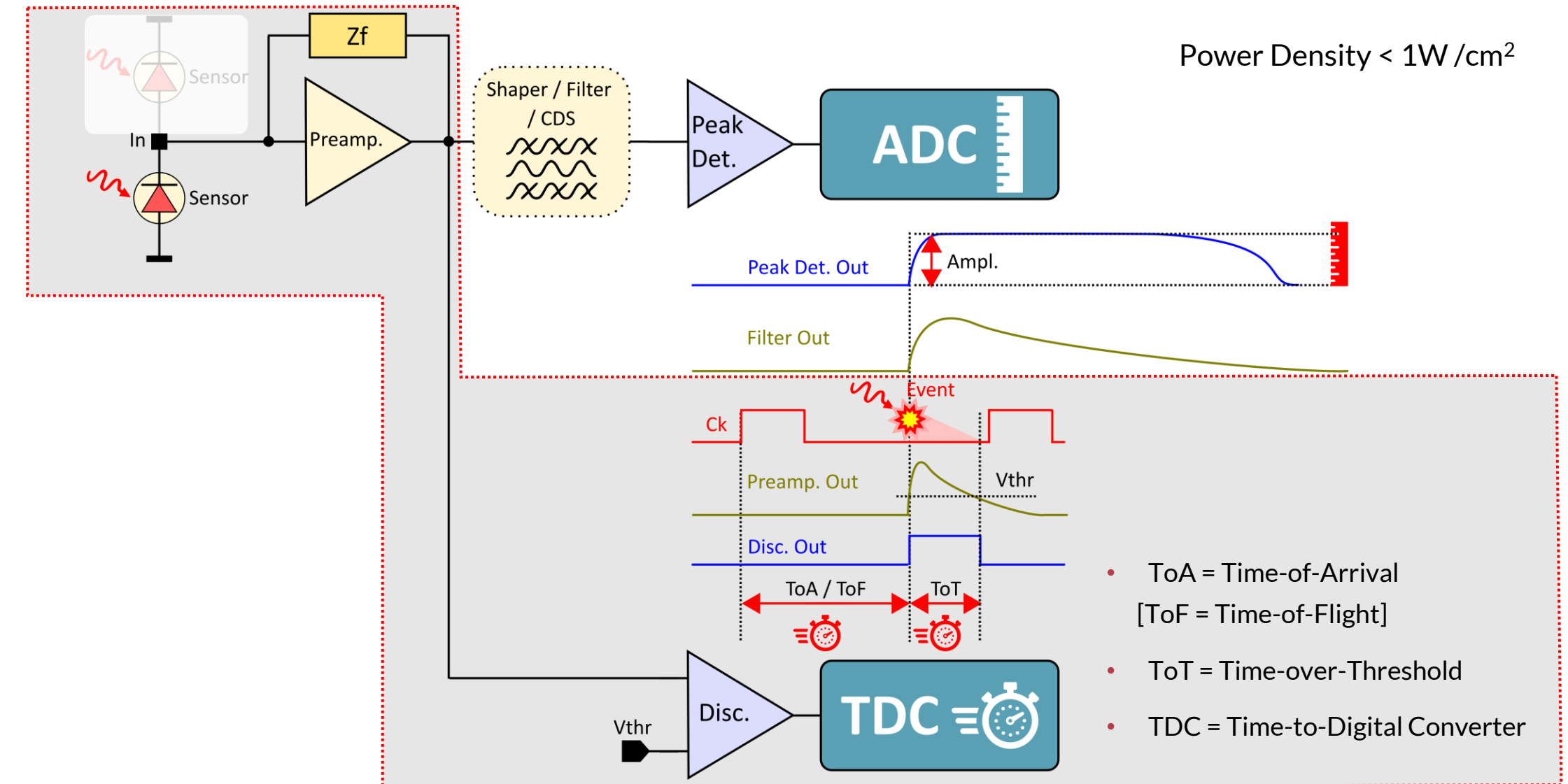
$$\frac{t_r}{\sqrt{t_p}} = \sqrt{\frac{t_p^2 + t_c^2}{t_p}}$$

minimum for:

$$t_p = t_c$$

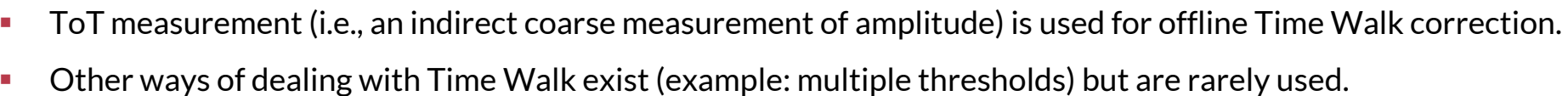
front-end shaping
time equal charge
collection time

Detector front-end: time / amplitude measurement



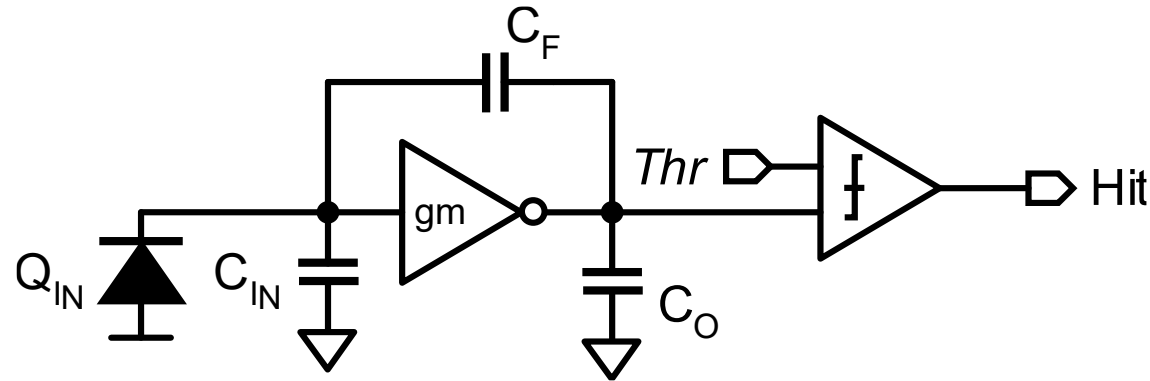
The diagram illustrates the operation of a TDC-based time-to-digital converter. The schematic on the left shows an input signal (In) passing through a sensor, then a preamplifier (Preamp.) with feedback (Zf), and a discriminator (Disc.) with a threshold (Vthr). The output of the discriminator is connected to a TDC (Time-to-Digital Converter), represented by a stopwatch icon.

The timing diagram on the right shows the response to two events, Event 1 and Event 2. The analog output (Analog Out 1 and Analog Out 2) is shown as a peak. The discriminator output (Disc. Out 1 and Disc. Out 2) is shown as a digital signal. The time-to-digital converter (TDC) output is shown as a digital signal. The time intervals are labeled: ToA 1 (Time of Arrival 1), ToA 2 (Time of Arrival 2), ToT 1 (Time of Trigger 1), and ToT 2 (Time of Trigger 2). The time difference between the two events is labeled Time-Walk.



Back to MAPS for timing detectors...

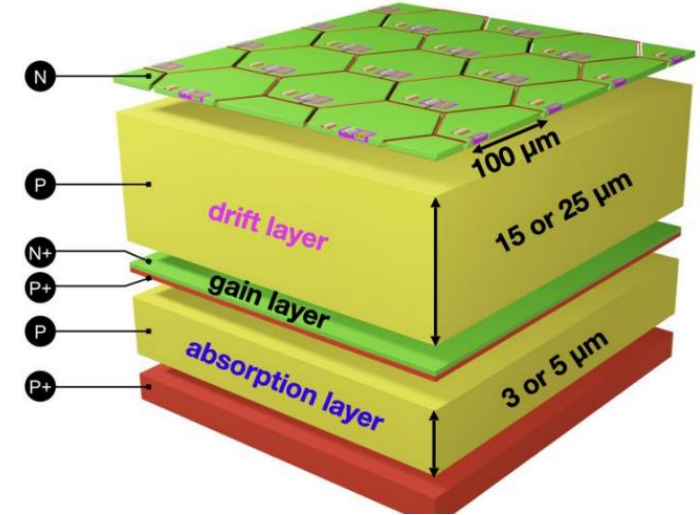
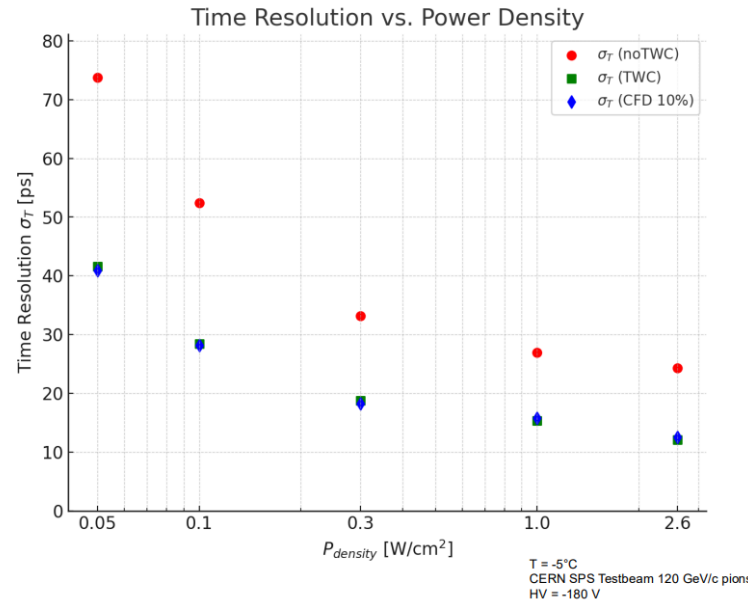
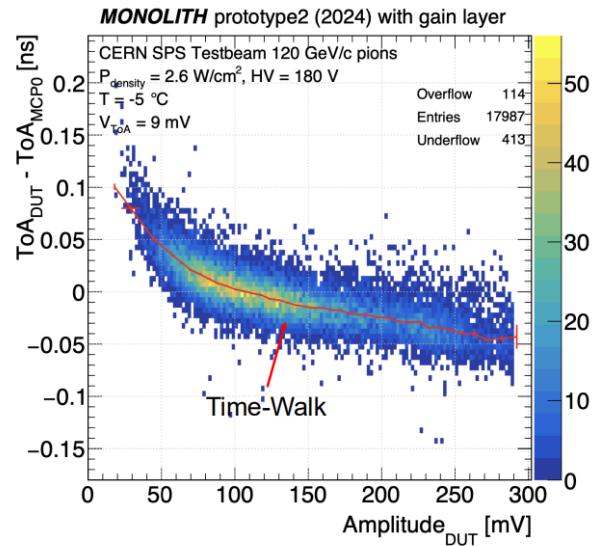
Pixel front-end: timing basics



- Jitter in a front-end architecture with CSA [1]:
$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q Enc \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + C_{IN}/C_{FB})$$
- Reducing jitter:
 - Increase power consumption → **limited power budget**
 - Reduce noise
 - Decrease ratio C_{IN}/C_{FB} } **Trade-off: noise, timing performance, threshold dispersion**
 - Reduce capacitance at CSA output → **optimize circuit & adopt scaled CMOS nodes**
 - Time-walk is also reduced → **important if we want to gate the front-end**

Timing MAPS: MONOLITH

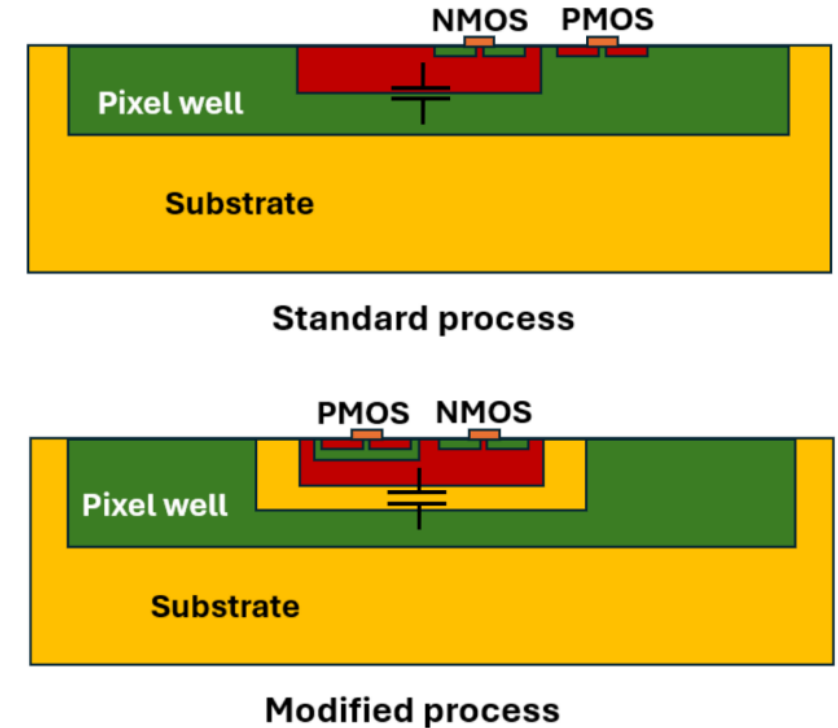
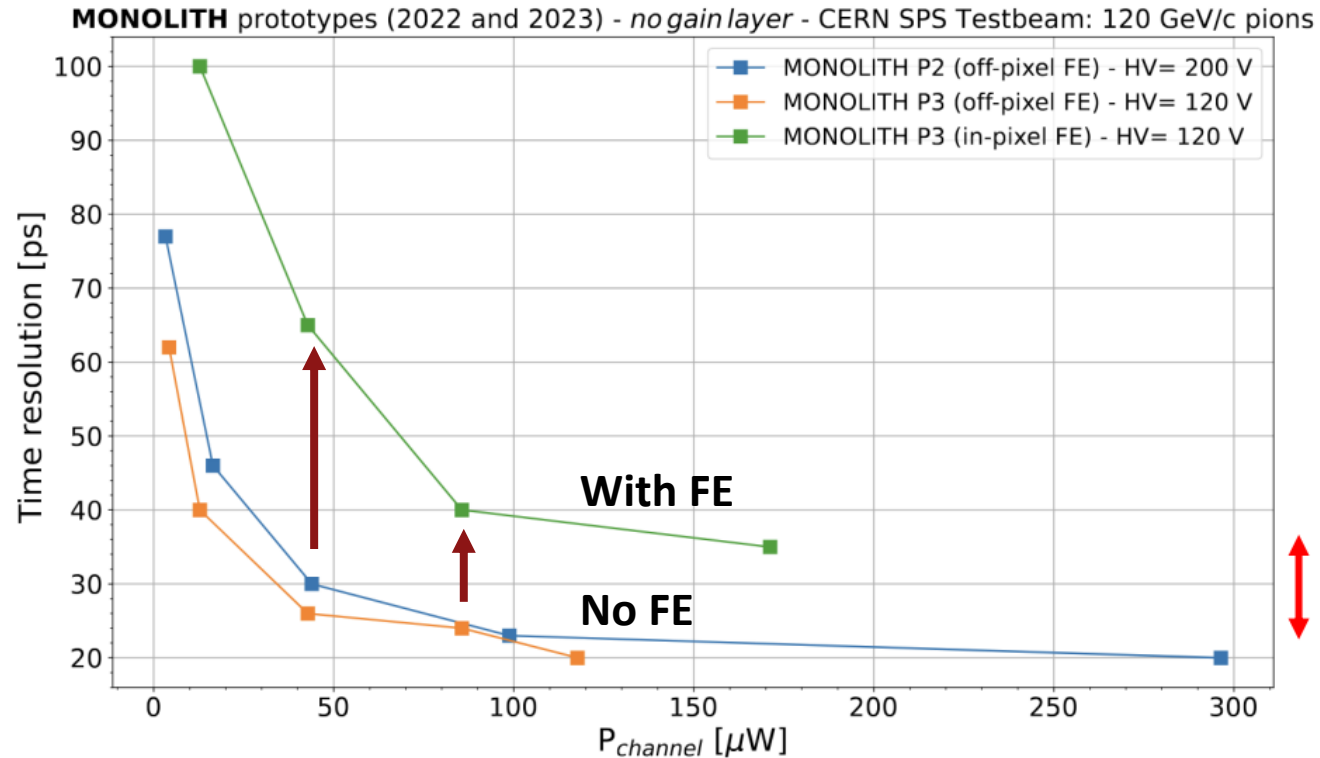
$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q Enc \frac{C_o}{g_m} (1 + C_{IN}/C_{FB})$$



- IHP 130nm process with deep implants to implement gain layer in substrate
- SiGe HBT process offers higher efficiency: better g_m for same current
- Monolith prototype 2, with electronics outside the pixels, achieved excellent timing performance: **<30 ps time resolution** even without Time Walk Correction

Timing MAPS: MONOLITH

$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q Enc \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + C_{IN}/C_{FB})$$

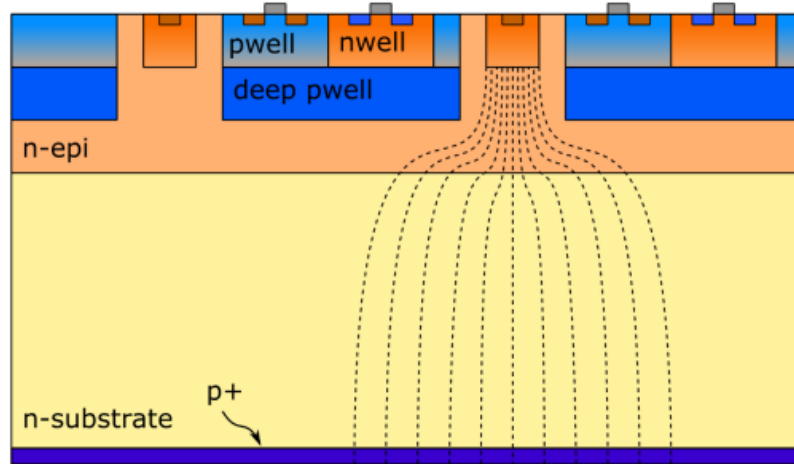


- When front-end circuitry is implemented inside the pixel, performance is affected
- Solution to mitigate by additional well to isolate transistors well from collecting electrode

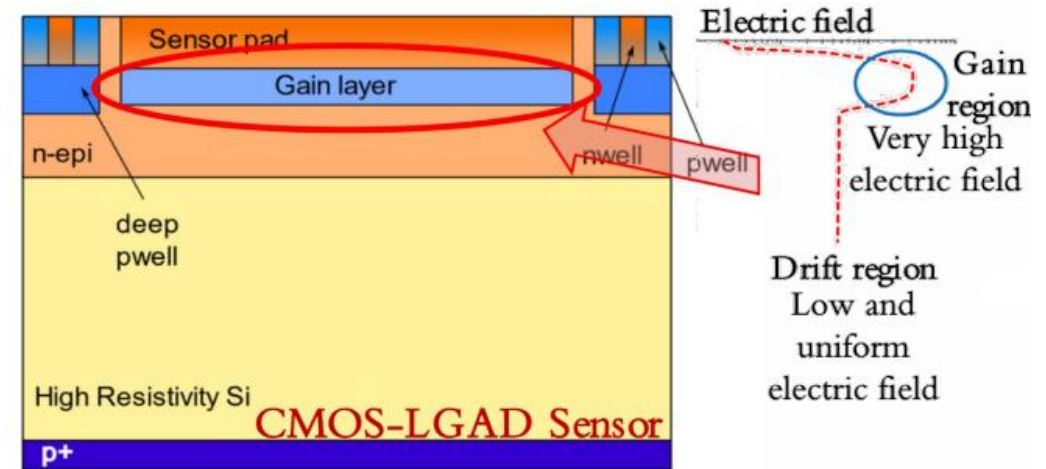
~30 ps @ 700 mW/cm²

Timing MAPS: MadPix / Arcadia

$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q Enc \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + C_{IN}/C_{FB})$$



Standard ARCADIA sensor, small collection electrode

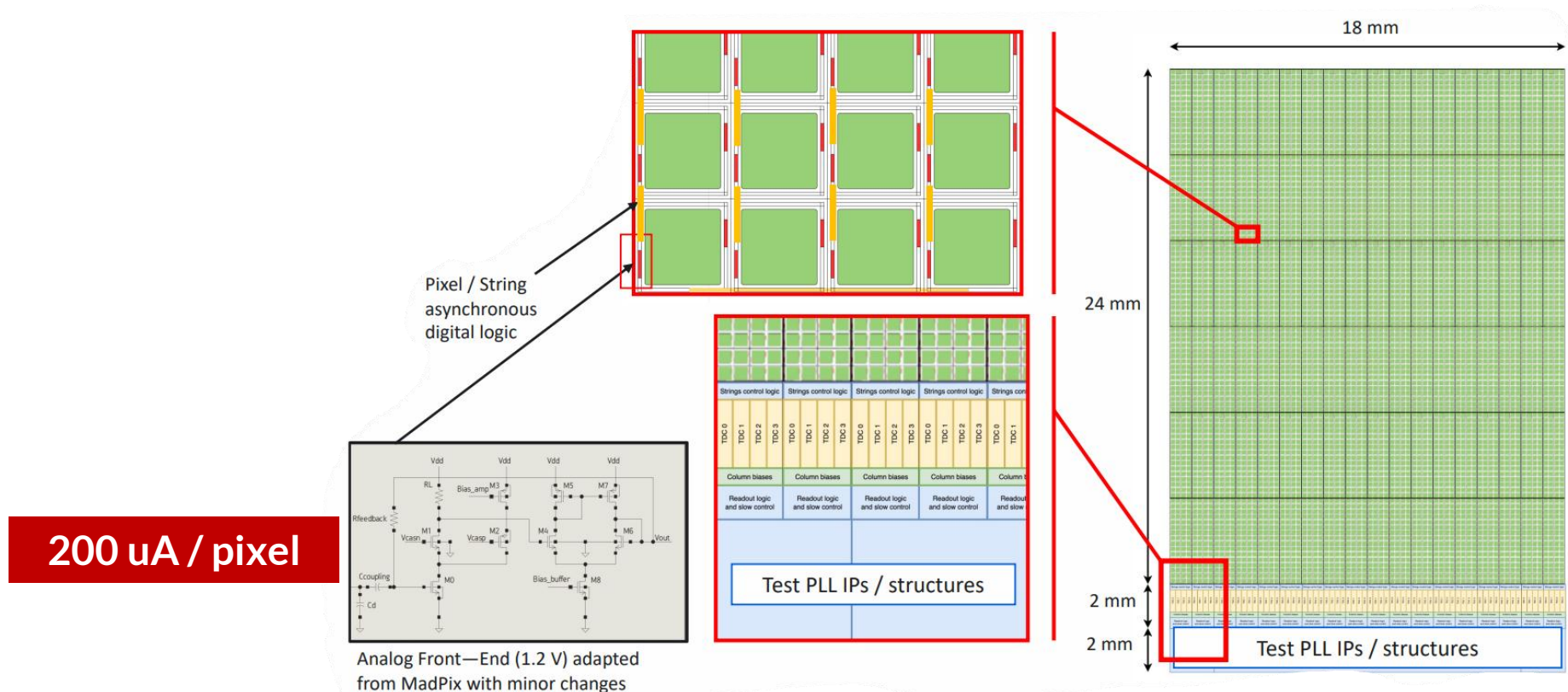


MadPix sensor with large electrode and gain layer

- LFoundry 110nm process, modified for timing applications: ALICE 3 TOF layer
- Achieved 80ps, working towards 20ps with 15um thickness and better control of gain layer

Timing MAPS: MadPix / Arcadia

$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q Enc \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + C_{IN}/C_{FB})$$

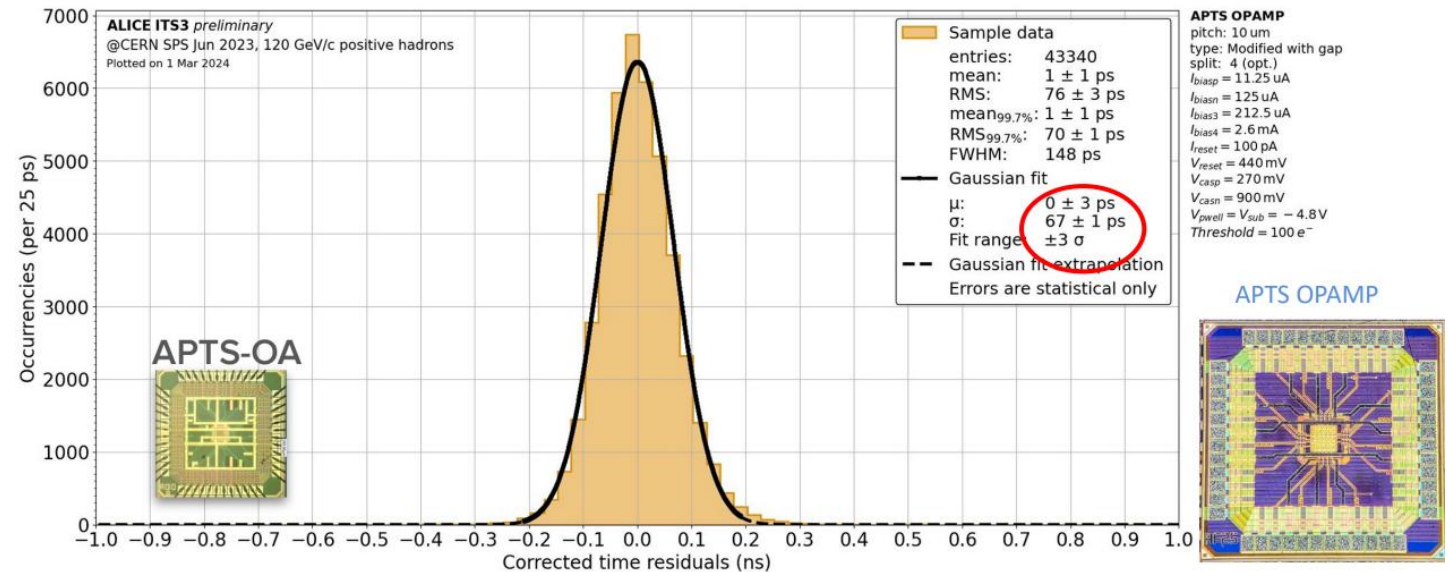
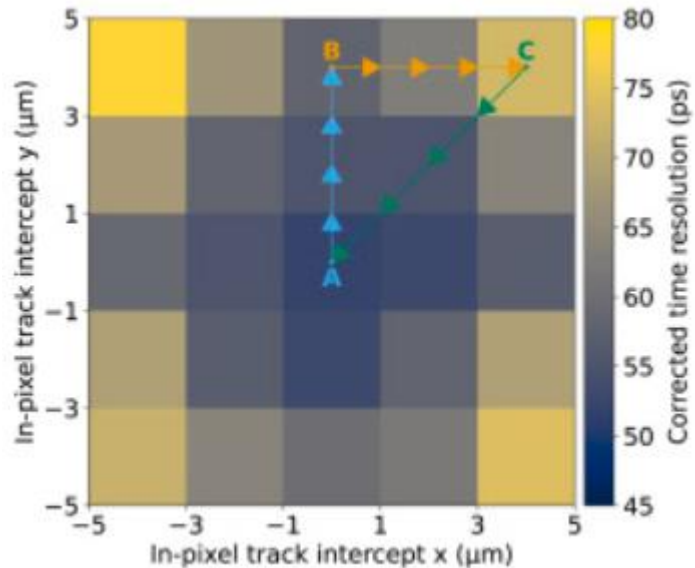
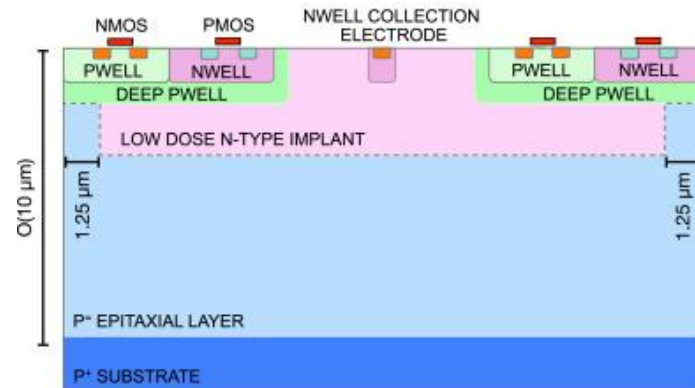


- Large collection electrode with gain layer does not allow to place circuitry inside the pixels (250um pitch)
- Approach: move circuitry in-between collection pads, implement TDCs at the periphery

**~30 ps @ 320 mW/cm²
(planned)**

Timing MAPS: TPSCo 65nm?

$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q \boxed{Enc} \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + \boxed{C_{IN}}/C_{FB})$$



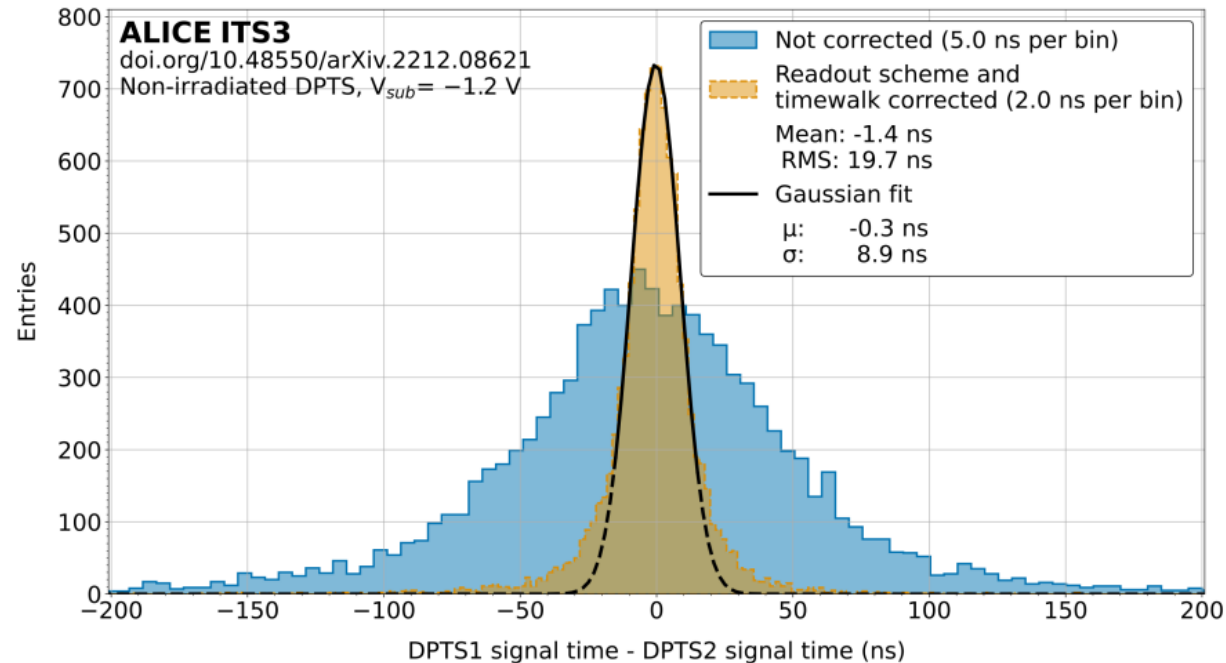
[doi/10.1016/j.nima.2024.170034](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nima.2024.170034)

- 10 μm pixel, sensor only
- Time-walk and cluster size correction to correct for non-uniformity of electric field

Timing MAPS: TPSCo?

$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q \boxed{Enc} \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + \boxed{C_{IN}}/C_{FB})$$

Sensor + Front end (DPTS)



~6 ns timing resolution

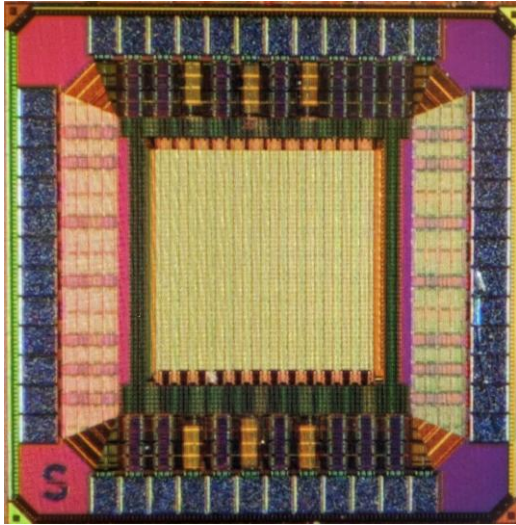
(~30 ns not corrected)

~120 nW in-pixel

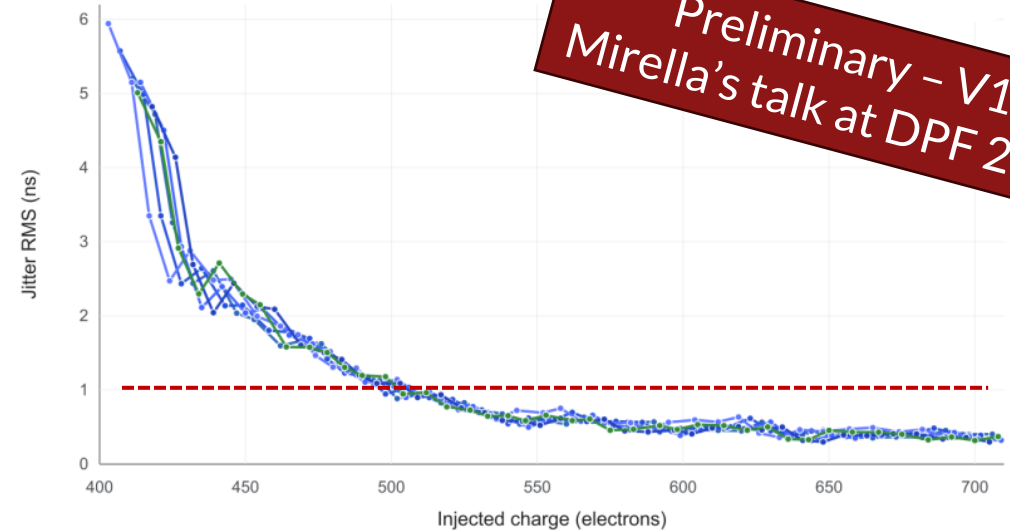
- Note: DPTS is not a Front-End optimized for timing

NAPA: exploring timing on TPSCo

$$Jitter = \frac{1}{Q_{in}} q_{Enc} \frac{C_O}{g_m} (1 + C_{IN}/C_{FB})$$



Jitter vs injected charge

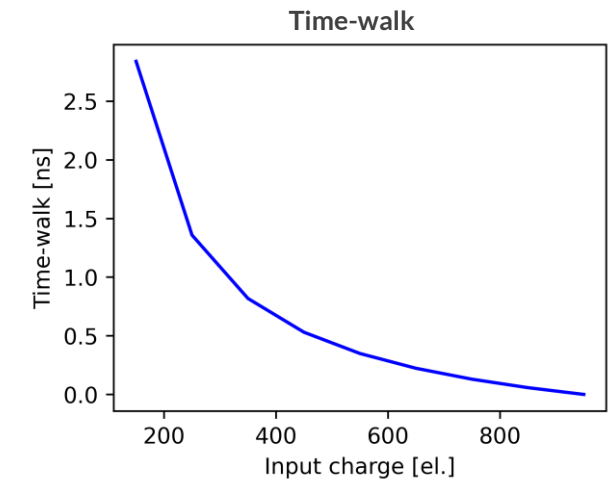
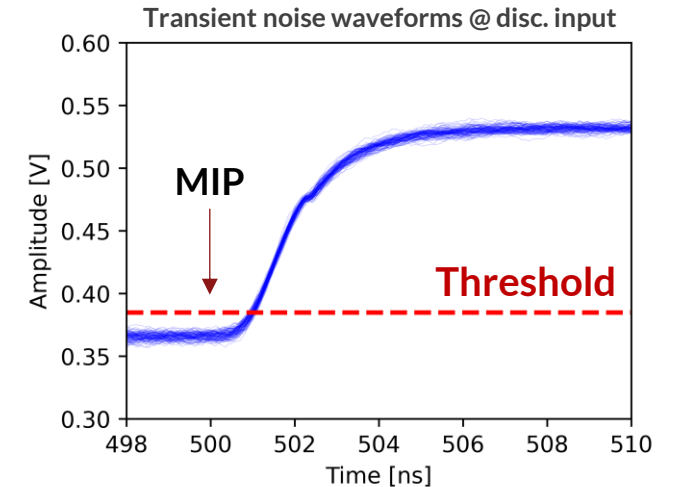


- **Goal of NAPA project @ SLAC:**

- explore timing resolution with TPSCo 65nm technology
- Focus on long term R&D targeting requirements at e+e- colliders, in particular O(ns) timing
- Power consumption compatible with large area, low material budget

NAPA: can we get to sub-100 ps timing?

- Pushing the pixel front-end towards fast timing:
 - ENC: $16 e^-$
 - Jitter: 36.8 ps
 - Current: $2.6 \mu A / \text{pixel}$
 - Timewalk: 3 ns $\rightarrow$ sets the “gating” / “integration time” accuracy

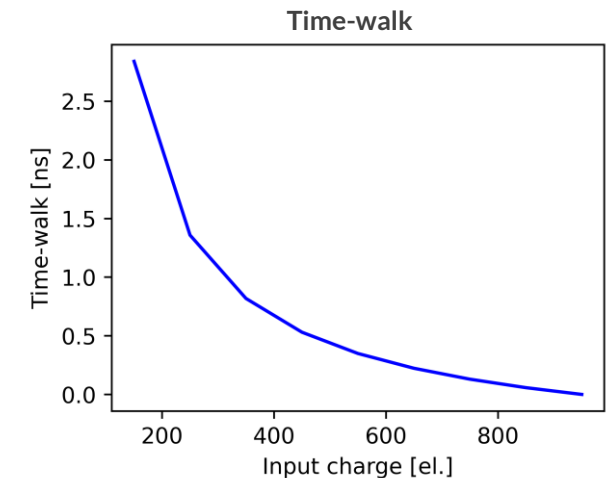
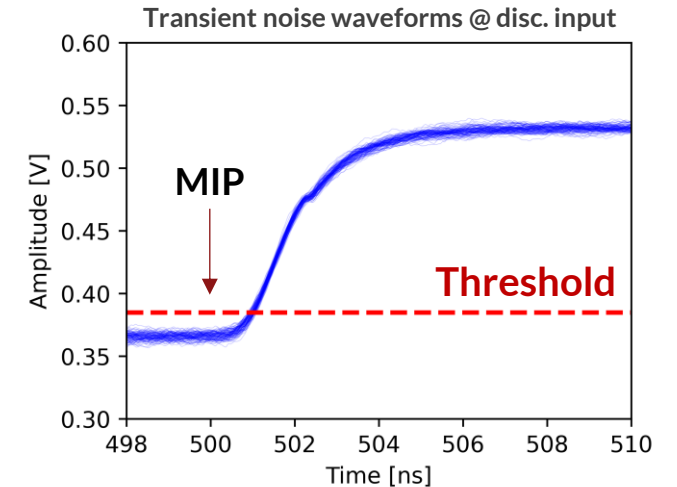


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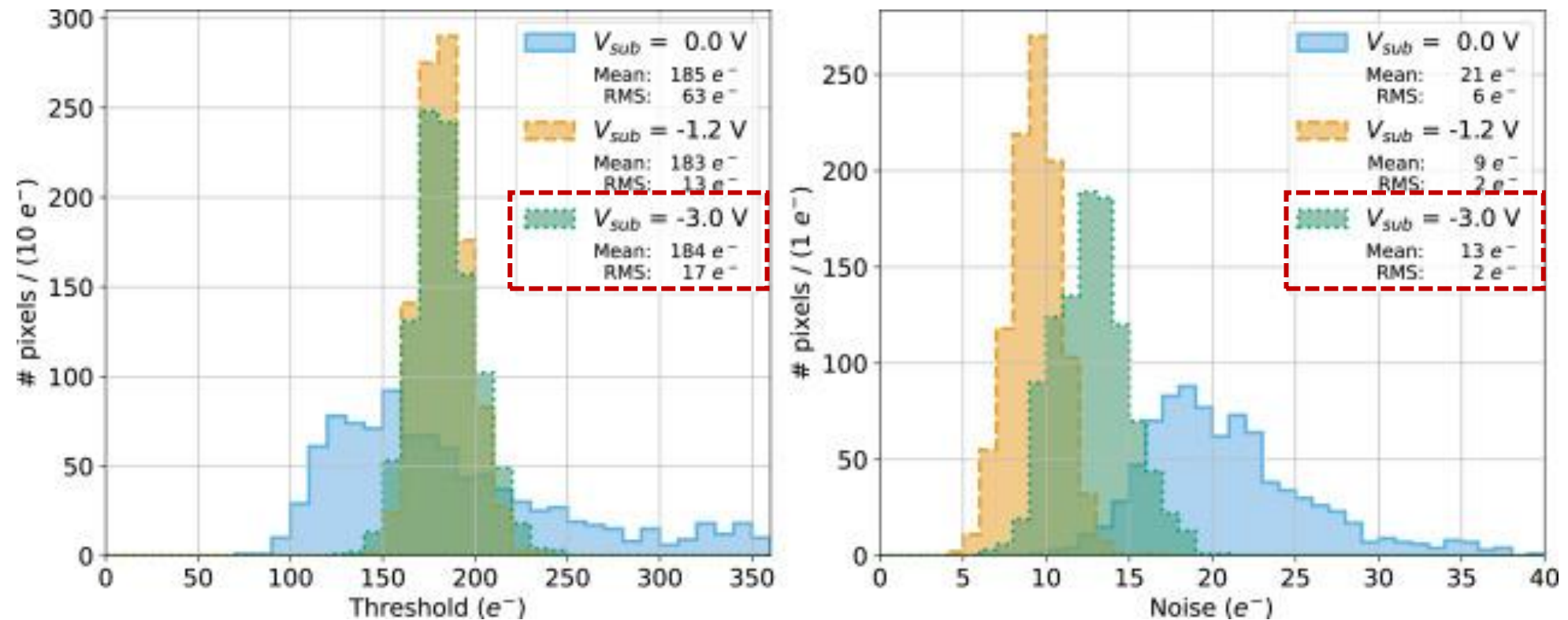
→ At 10 μm pixel pitch: $3 \text{ W}/\text{cm}^2$!!!!!

Need further optimization of sensor and/or power-pulse the chip



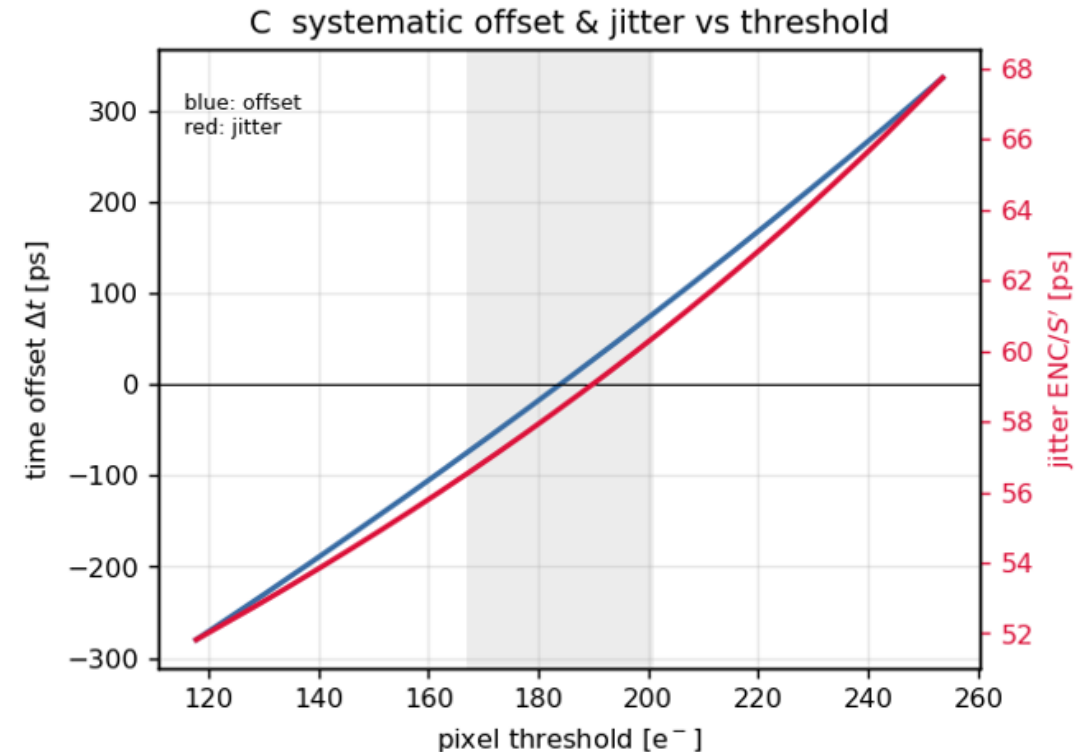
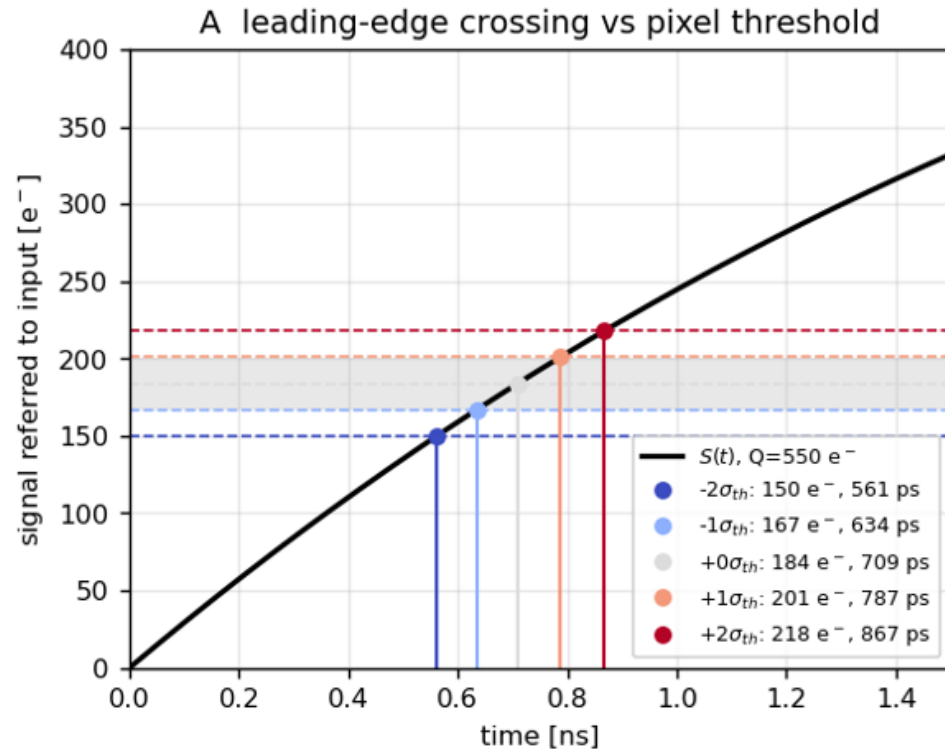
Can we get sub-100ps timing on the whole pixel matrix?

Let's take the numbers from DPTS as starting point to estimate what happens over a large area...



Sub-100ps timing on the whole pixel matrix?

A quick numerical simulation...

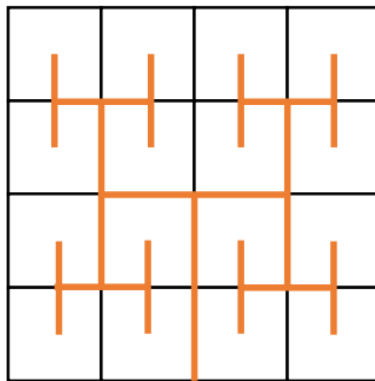


Controlling precisely the threshold
in every pixel is a must in timing detectors!

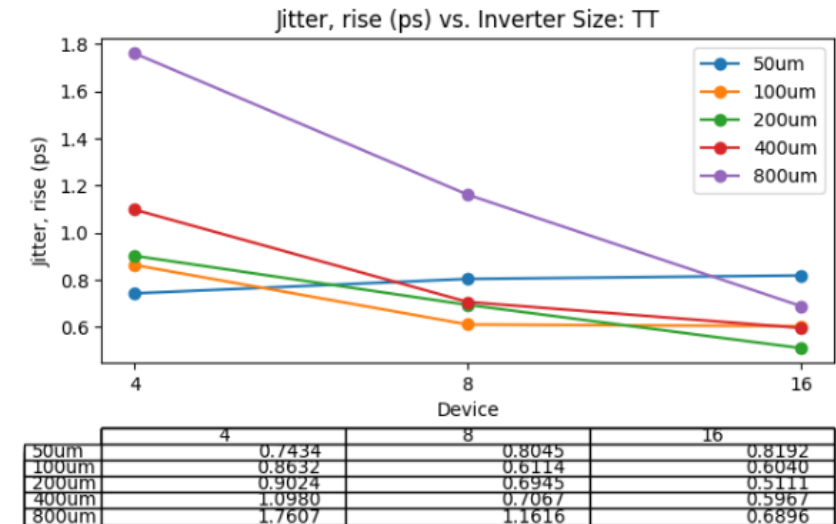
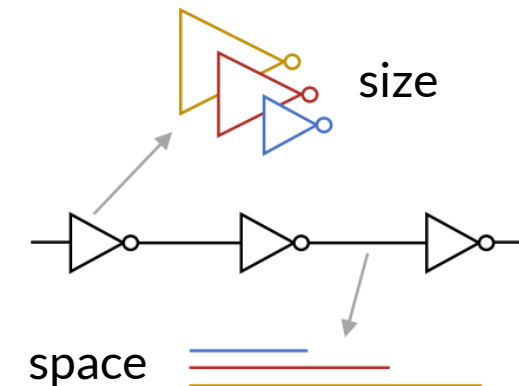
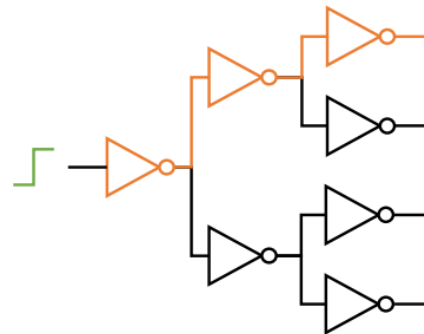
Clock & timing signal distribution

M. Zeng (Stanford - HEPIC), B. Markovic

- Clock & signal distribution network strategy based on H-tree
- Evaluate performance for different buffer size & spacing
- Assuming a 256x256 matrix of 50 μm “macro pixels”:
 - Jitter*: **<2 ps**
 - Power consumption @ 100 kHz clock freq: **0.1 mW/cm²**
 - **Power scales linearly with frequency!**



=

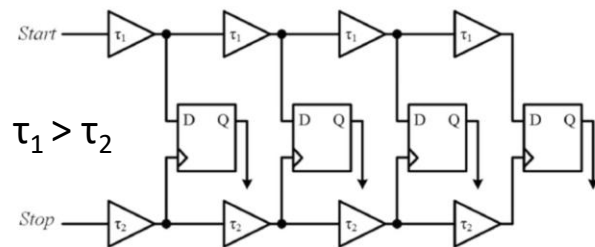


TDC Architecture

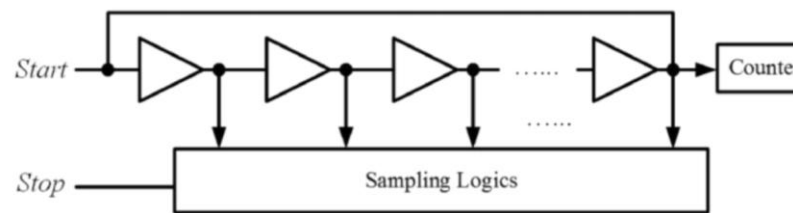
A. Duncanson, M. Zeng (Stanford - HEPIC), B. Markovic

- Multiple pixel analog front-ends connected to one TDC
- HIT information from pixel → **START** conversion signal
- Clock → **STOP** signal
- Time-to-Digital Converter (TDC) architecture [1]:
 - Vernier Delay line: high resolution ($\tau_1 - \tau_2$)
 - Ring Oscillator: large dynamic range due to counter

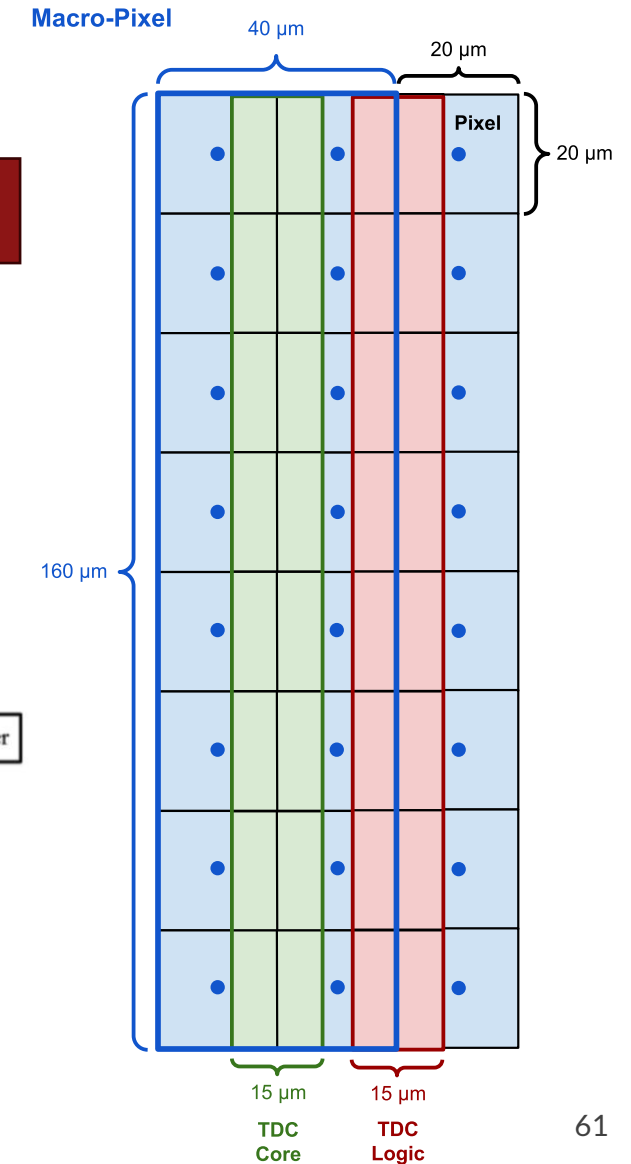
Why?



Vernier Delay Line



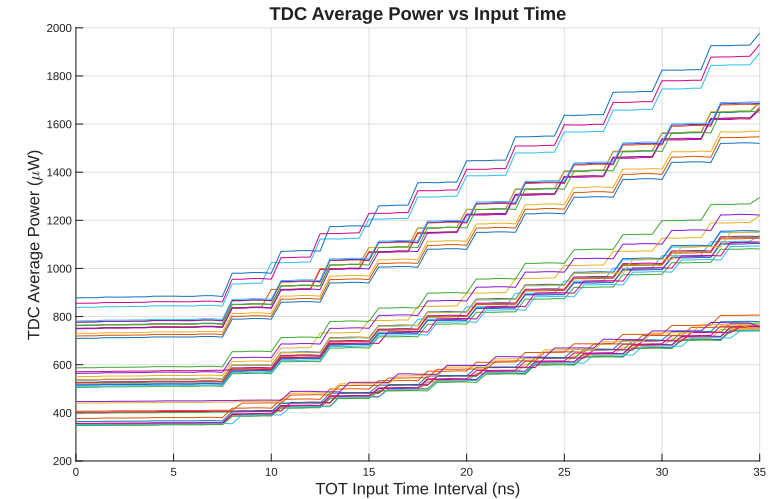
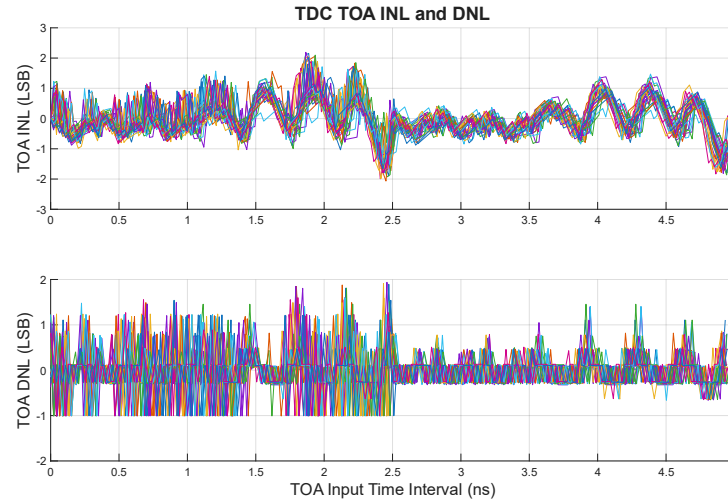
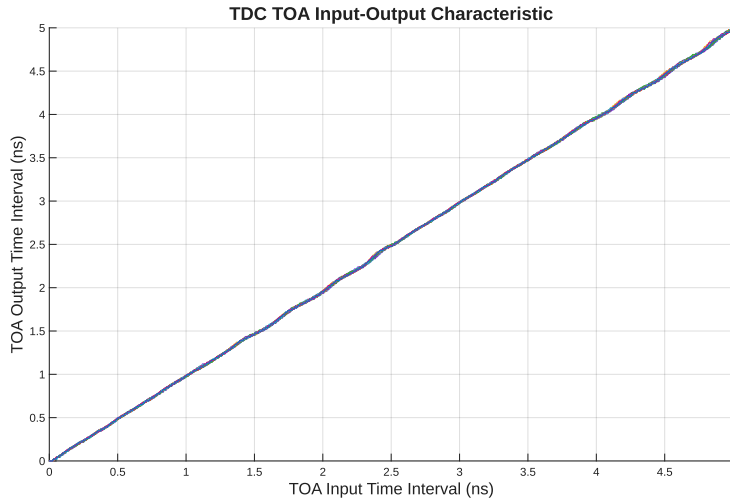
Ring Oscillator (RO)



TDC: Post-layout simulations

A. Duncanson (Stanford - HEPIC), B. Markovic

TOA Simulations Across Corners¹



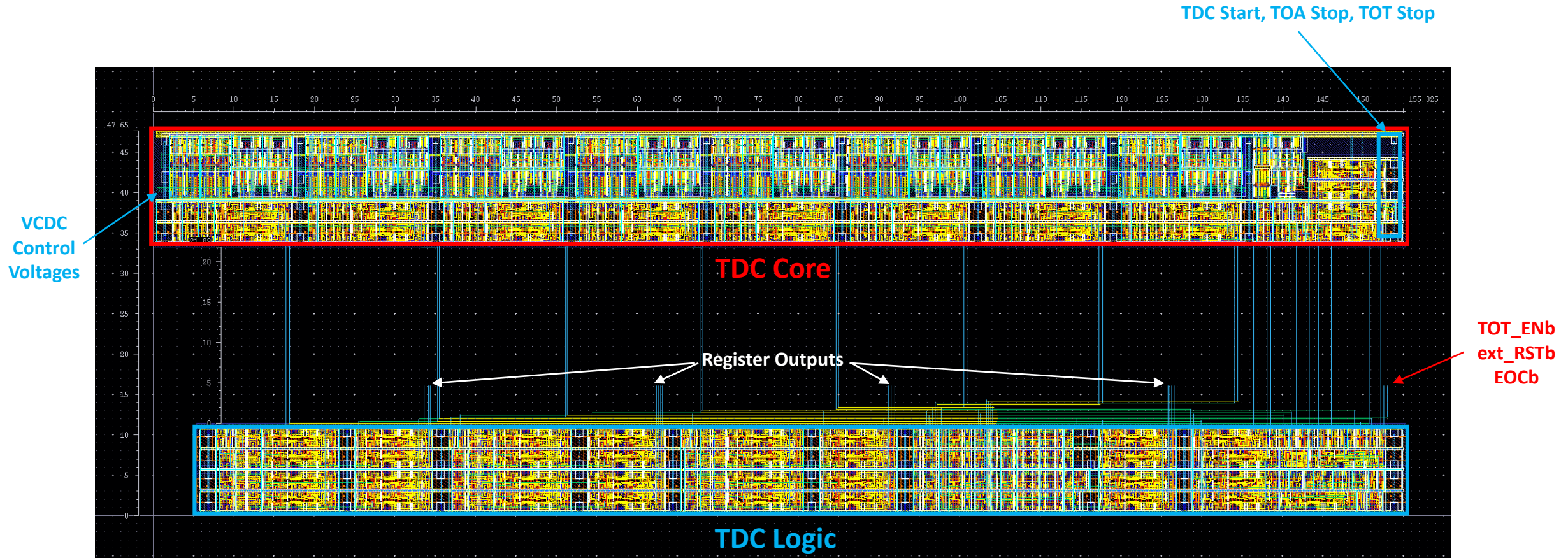
- **TOA resolution:** 20 ps
- **TOT resolution:** 2.5 ns
- **Power consumption:**
 - If no HIT: only static power consumption due to leakage
 - If HIT: 6 μW assuming continuous conversion every 10 μs → scaled by macro-pixel occupancy

**TDC Power Consumption is dynamic, depends on:
how often & how long the conversion is!**

TDC: Layout

A. Duncanson, M. Zeng (Stanford - HEPIC), B. Markovic

Full TDC area: TDC Core + TDC Logic = 4,250 μm^2



Putting it all together: power breakdown at 100 kHz BX

- Assumptions:

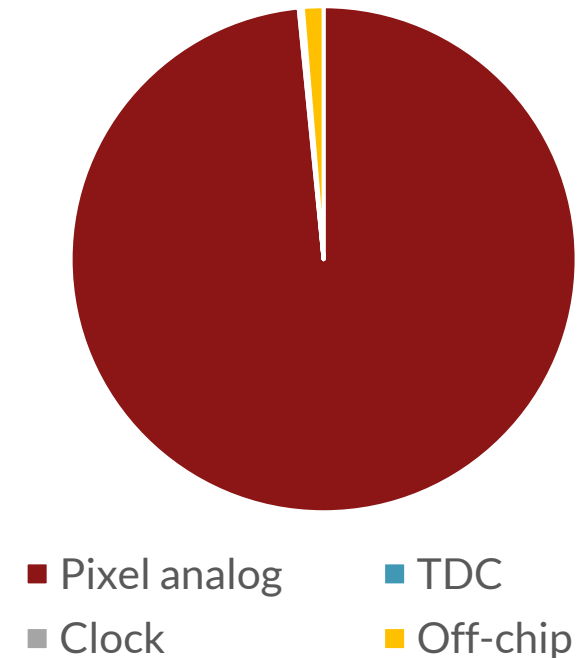
- Bunch-crossing: **10 μ s**
- Occupancy: **100 hits / cm² / BX** (assuming in-pixel timing cuts)
- Macro-pixel pitch: 200×60 μ m
- Pixel pitch*: 20 μ m (!!!)

- Estimated power consumption:

- Analog front-end: 750 mW (2.6 μ A/pixel @ 25 μ m pitch)
- TDC: 1 mW
- Clock distribution: 1 mW
- Off-chip data link: 10 mW

- Power in pixel analog front-end dominates power consumption**

Power consumption breakdown



Putting it all together: power breakdown at 40 MHz BX

- Assumptions:

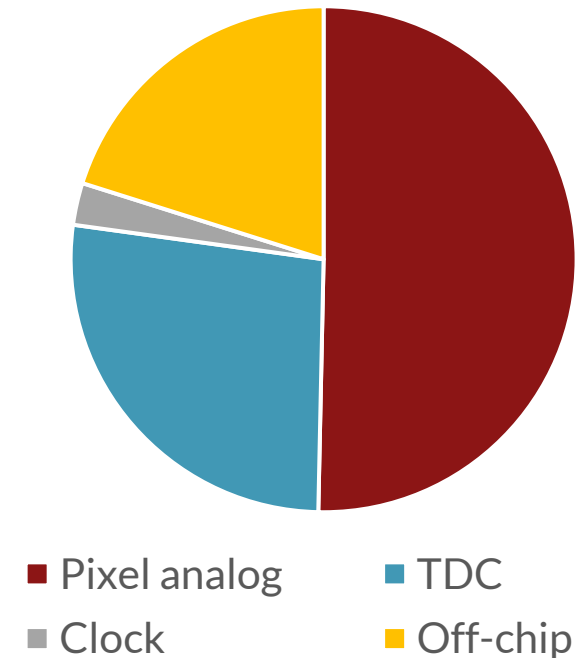
- Bunch-crossing: **25 ns (x400)**
- Occupancy: 100 hits / cm² / BX
- Macro-pixel pitch: 200×60 μm
- Pixel pitch*: 20 μm (!!!)

- Estimated power consumption:

- Analog front-end: 750 mW (2.6 μA/pixel)
- TDC: 400 mW
- Clock distribution: 40 mW
- Off-chip data link: 300 mW

- Dynamic power consumption matches the analog front-end**

Power consumption breakdown



Final thoughts on MAPS for timing

- Several approaches towards MAPS with improved timing performance are being proposed
- No one has yet delivered an HEP timing detector based on MAPS:
 - **Heavy modified process with custom doping profiles to implement gain layers (<50 ps):**
 - ☺ Excellent sensor performance, uniform electric field for better timing
 - ☹ No advanced nodes, availability, circuit performance, effect of circuits on sensor performance
 - **TSPCO 65nm approach – Small collection electrode**
 - ☺ More advanced CMOS, more real estate for circuits, low detector capacitance
 - ☹ Current sensor performance not optimized for timing, small pitch is a draw-back

Large pixel size,
low occupancy?

Small pixel size,
O(ns) timing?