The MATHUSLA Experiment

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INSTITUTE OF PARTICLE PHYSICS

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Outline

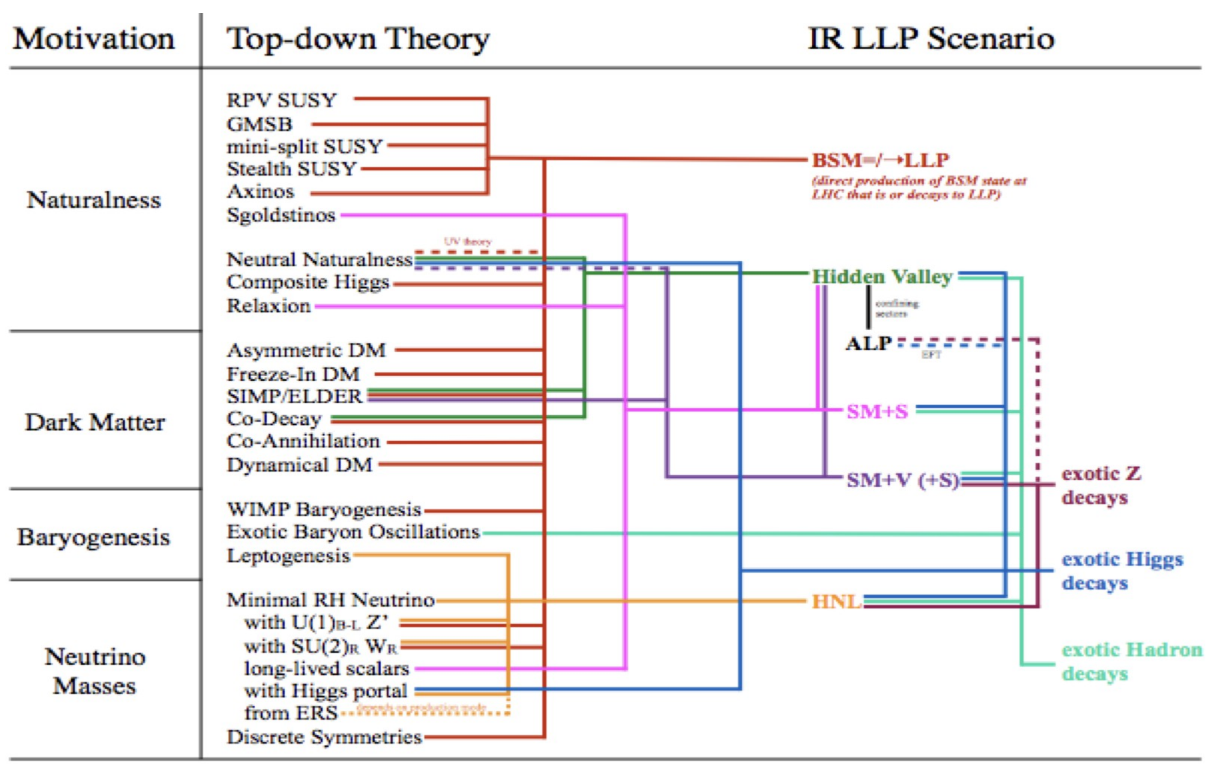
- Why Long-Lived Particles?
- MATHUSLA concept
- MATHSULA-40 detector design
- Expected physics reach
- Ongoing research and development activities
- Prospects

Long-lived particles

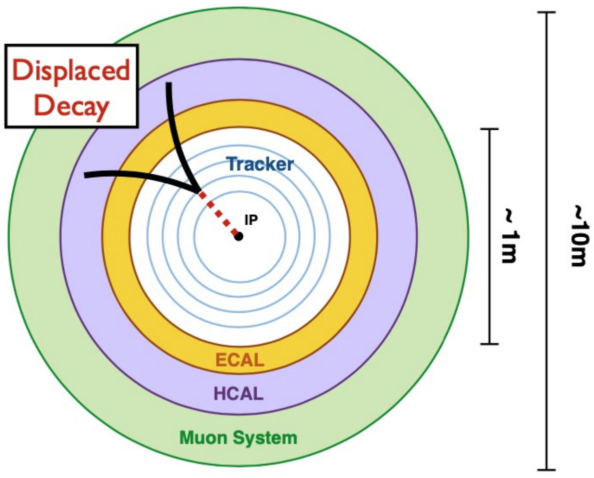
Particles have long lifetimes due to inaccessibility of states into which they can readily decay (i.e. due to kinematics and/or couplings)

- Examples exist within the SM, e.g. muons $\tau_\mu \sim 2.2\ \mu s$
- Big Bang nucleosynthesis limit on long-lived new particles is ~0.1s ($c\tau \sim 10^7$ m)

► **Reasonable to expect that beyond-SM particles may also have long lifetimes, particularly if they are light or have "feeble" couplings to the SM**



Searching for LLPs



Neutral long-lived particles (LLPs) cannot be directly detected in experiments

- Instead, the SM decay daughters must be detected and the LLP reconstructed based on the displaced decay vertex
- If the decay length $c\tau$ is too long, the decay can occur outside of the detector fiducial volume
- "Missing energy" searches can be challenging due to resolution, background, and trigger issues

Approved CERN experiments:

- SHiP
- FASER

Forward / low p_T

Proposed experiments:

- ANUBIS
- CODEX-B
- **MATHUSLA**

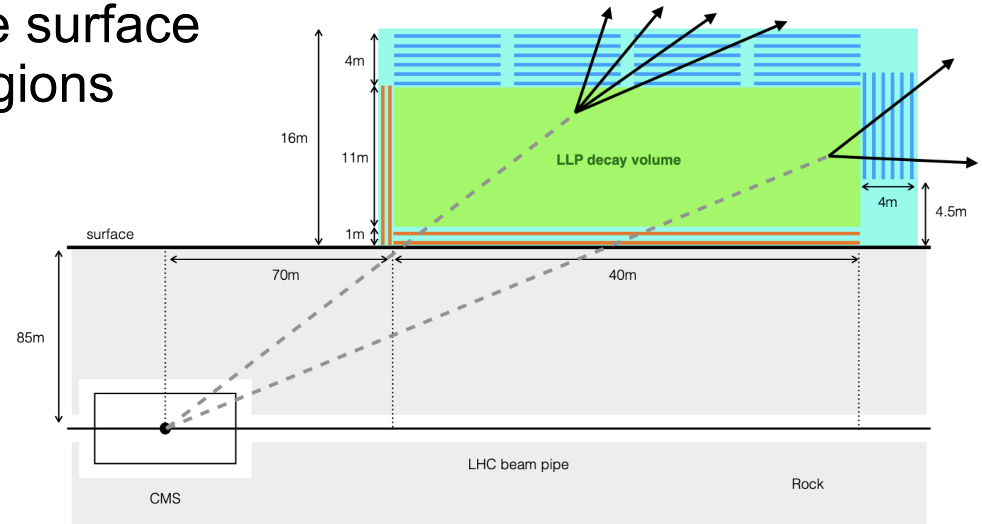
High p_T

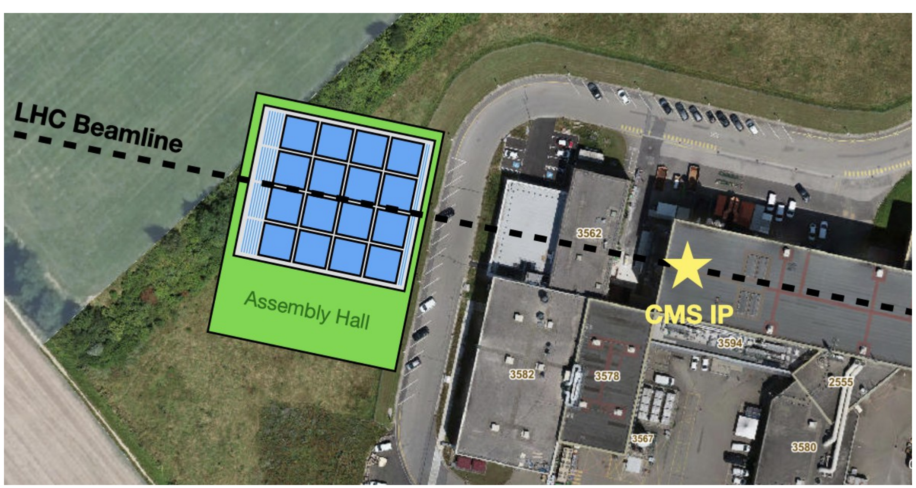
LHC centre of mass energy gives access to heavy states that may be coupled to LLPs (e.g. Higgs)

Concept

MATHUSLA - a large LLP detector on the surface adjacent to one of the LHC interaction regions

- 40m x 40m x ~16m instrumented decay volume to detect LLP decay daughters
- Array of 16 10m x 10m modules composed of 6 layers of tracking detectors, plus 2 layers of floor “veto” detectors
- Back wall tracking layers to improve tracking acceptance





Track multiplicity of potential signals depends on the LLP mass

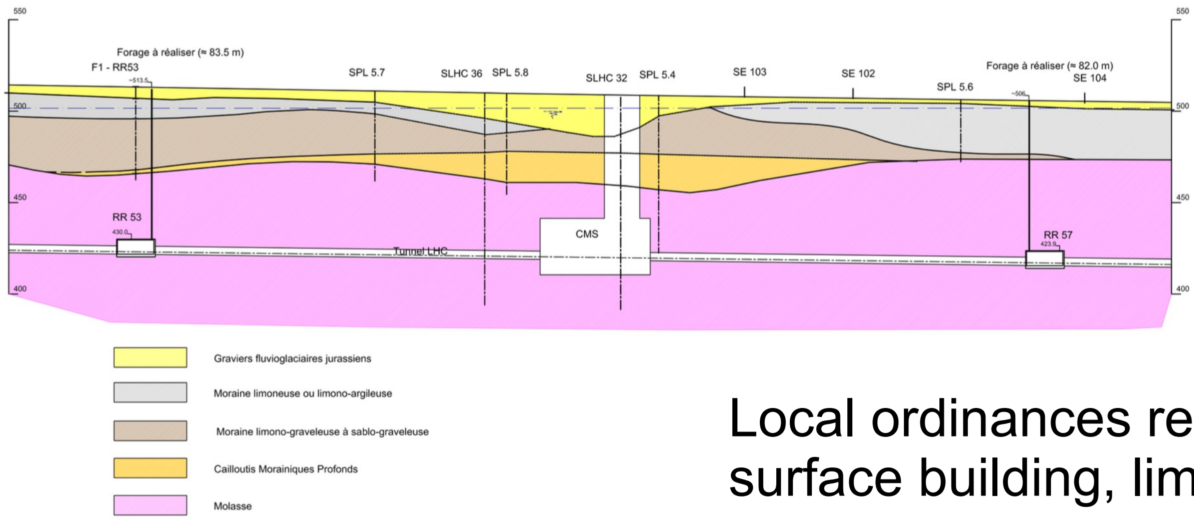
- Reconstruct 4D decay vertices of upward-going LLPs
- Use timing and hit position information to reject LHC and cosmic ray backgrounds

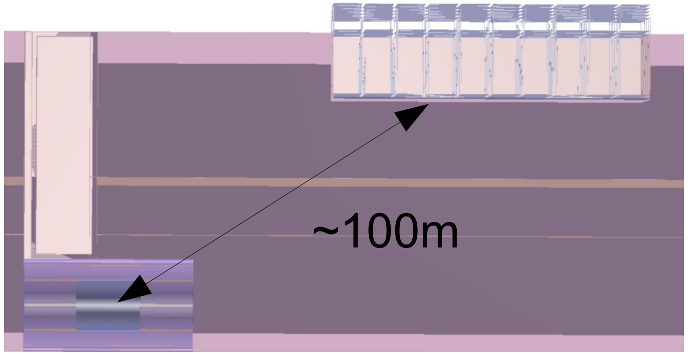
Previous (100m x 100m x 25m) MATHUSLA proposal recently re-scoped for cost reasons (new design referred to as “MATHUSLA-40”)

Location (CMS)

An appropriate site is available adjacent to the CMS surface buildings at CERN Point 5 (Cessy, France)

- CERN owned land, green-field site (currently leased as farmland)
- MATHUSLA decay volume would be located ~100m straight-line distance from the CMS IP
- Substantial shielding from LHC, particularly for LHC muons





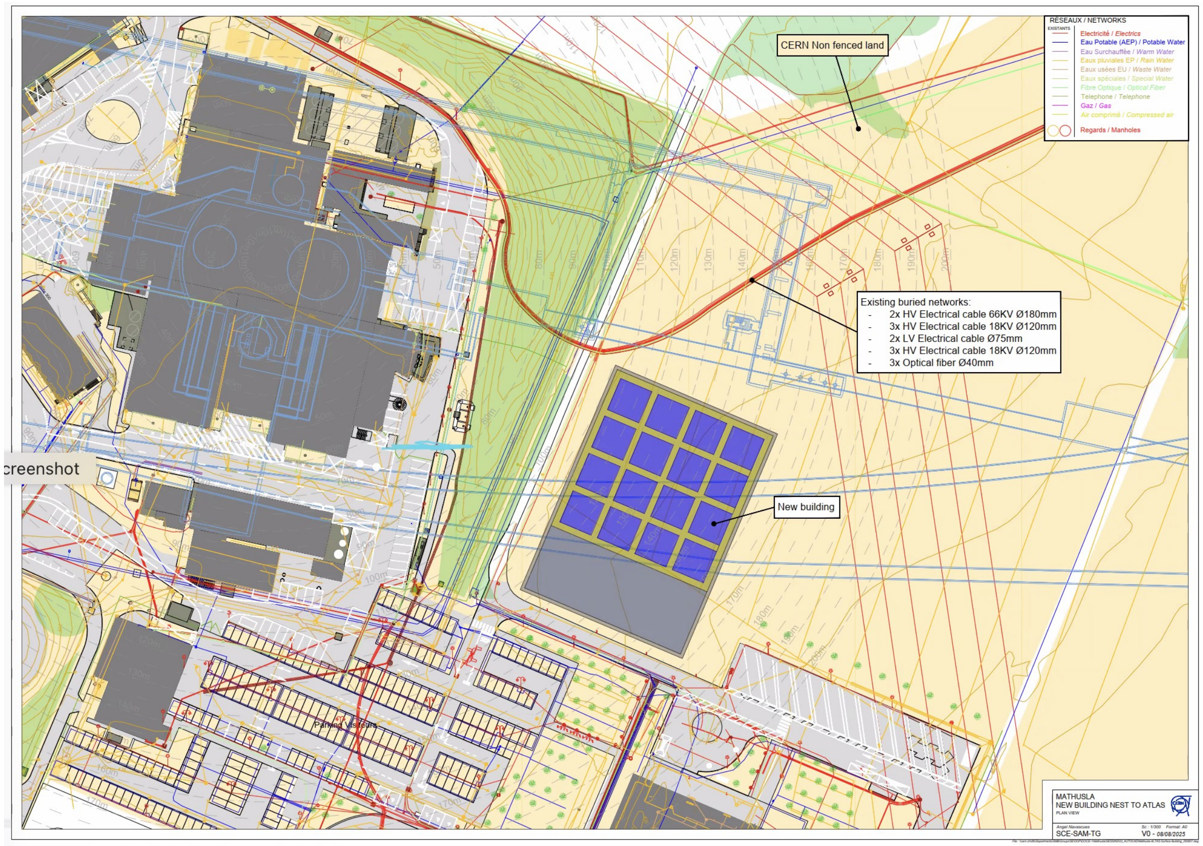
Local ordinances restrict roof height to 17m for the surface building, limiting vertical extent of detector

- excavation possible, but expensive

Location (ATLAS)

Alternate site being considered adjacent to ATLAS (Point 1):

- Also CERN–owned land, currently used as farmland



Preliminary CERN civil engineering studies in progress

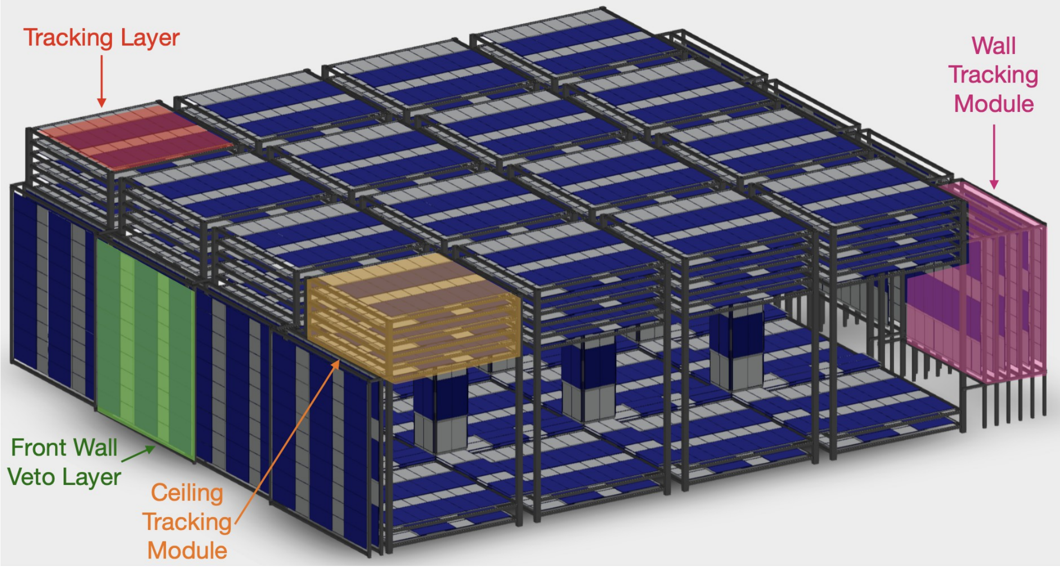
- Several alternative detector geometries under consideration

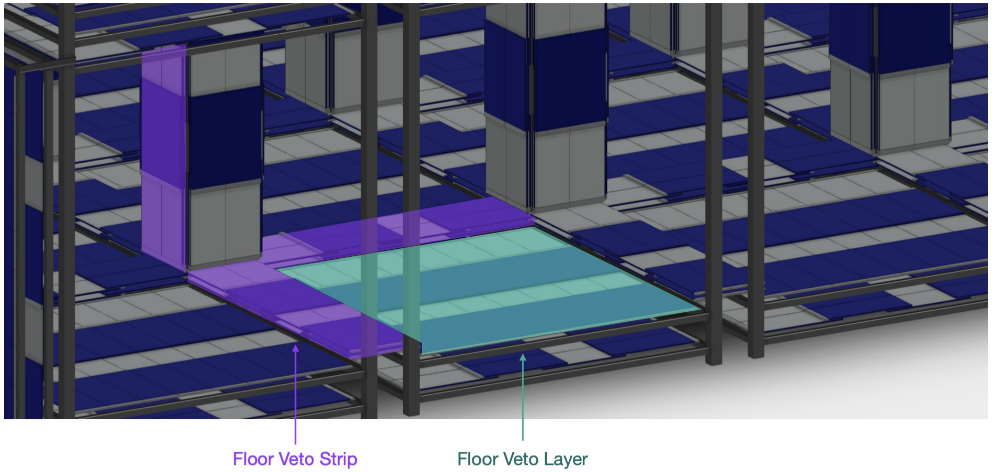
- Does not impact ATLAS upgrades or operations in any way

Detector concept

40m x 40m array of 16 “towers” of low-cost plastic scintillator bars

- floor and forward “veto” layers to reject punch-through LHC muons and CR back-scatters
- scintillator panels surround support columns to veto interactions in material





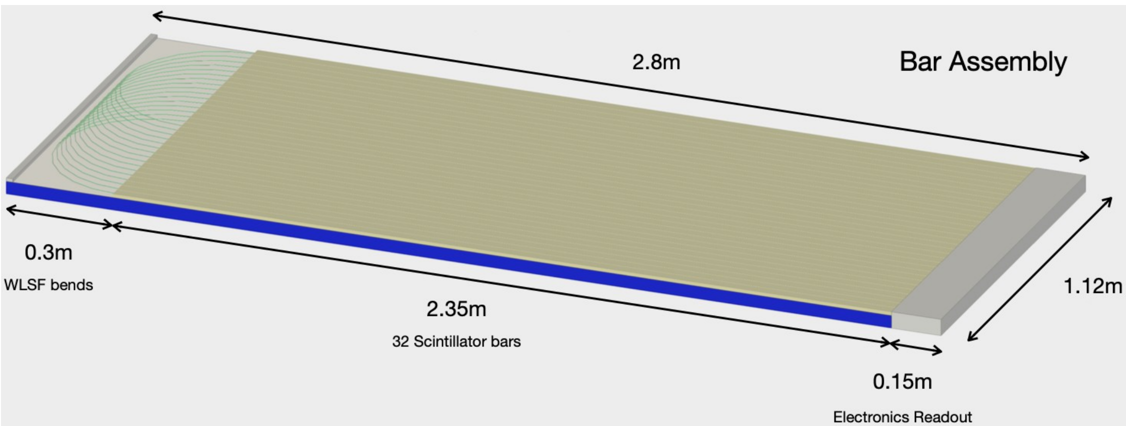
- Detector access possible via catwalks between towers
- Removable floor scintillator panels to access floor walkways
- Serviced by (low profile) overhead rail crane and/or floor-lifts

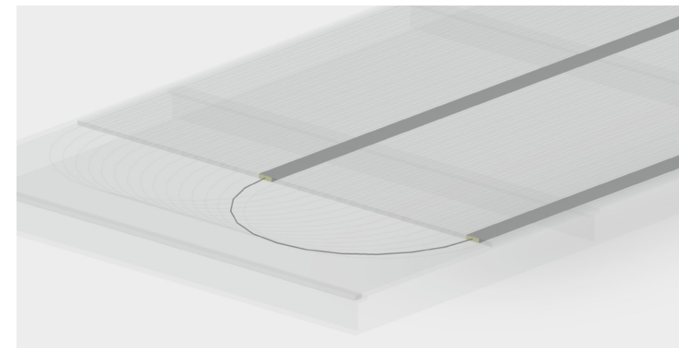
Large detector volume: Cost is a major factor in the detector design

Bar modules

Very simple detector technology based on extruded plastic scintillator

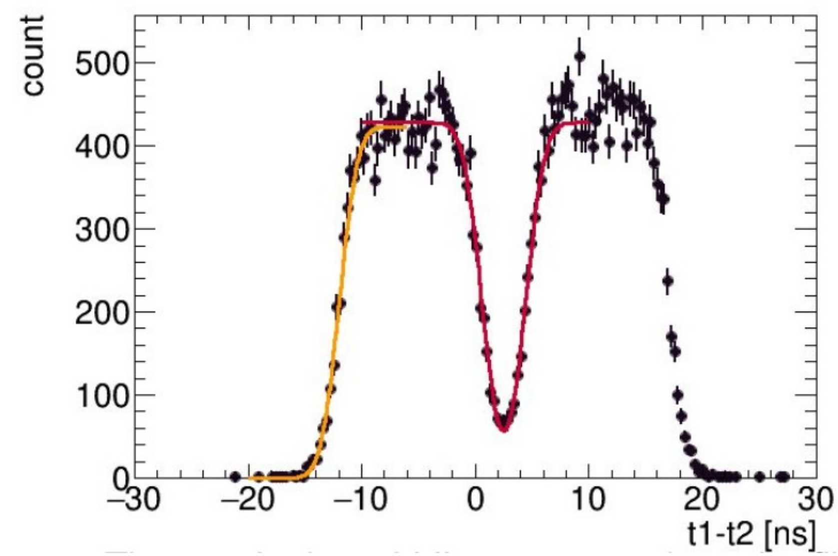
- 3.5cm x 1cm x 2.35m extruded scintillator bars, threaded with 1.5mm WLSF





32 bars per module:

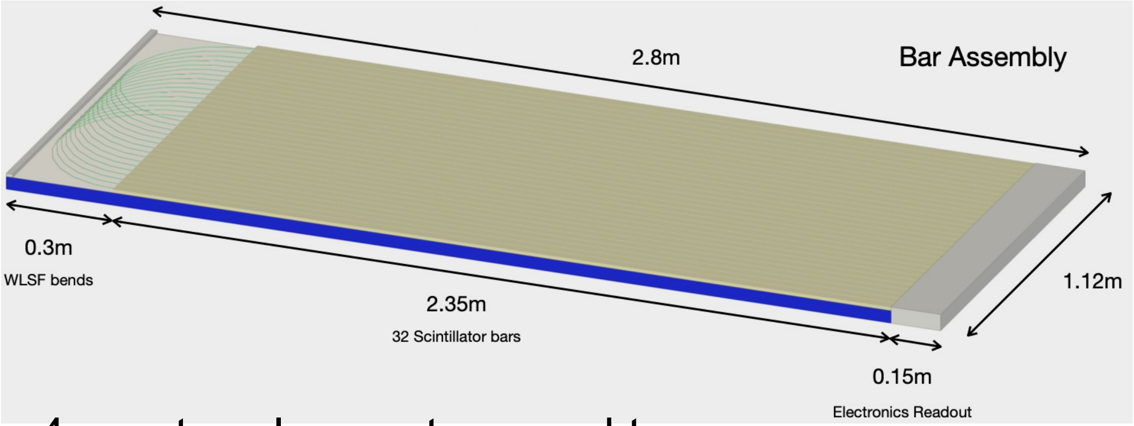
- ~5m WLSF looped through two bars, with SiPMs on both ends
- Absolute and differential timing from the two end of each fibre
- Electronic readout only on one side of bar assembly



Tower assemblies

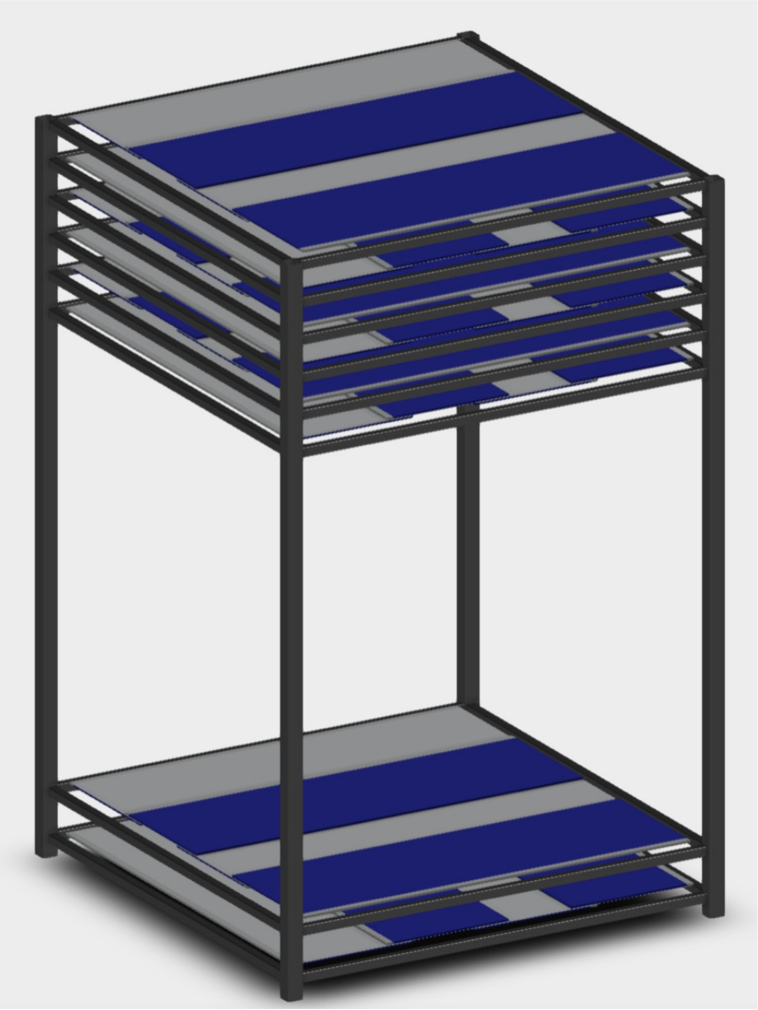
Bar modules can be mechanically connected edge-wise to create quarter-planes of ~9m x 2.35m of active detector area

- 8 bar modules per quarter-plane



- 4 quarter-planes staggered to provide full plane coverage:

- tracking planes alternate bar orientation in x-y

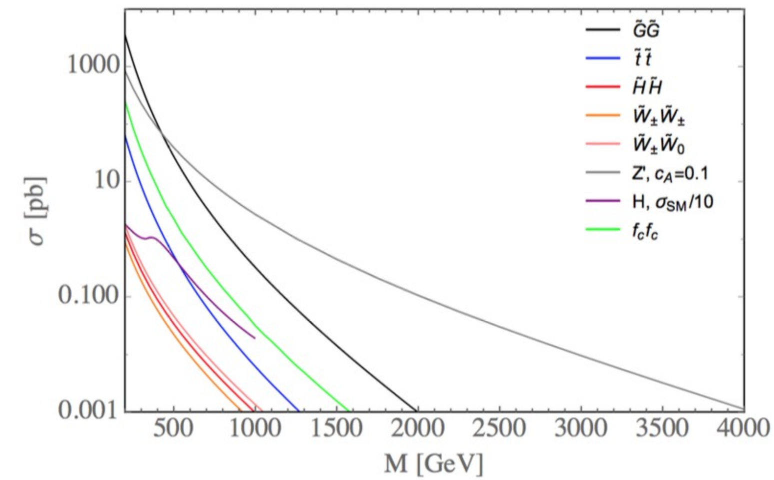


Physics objectives

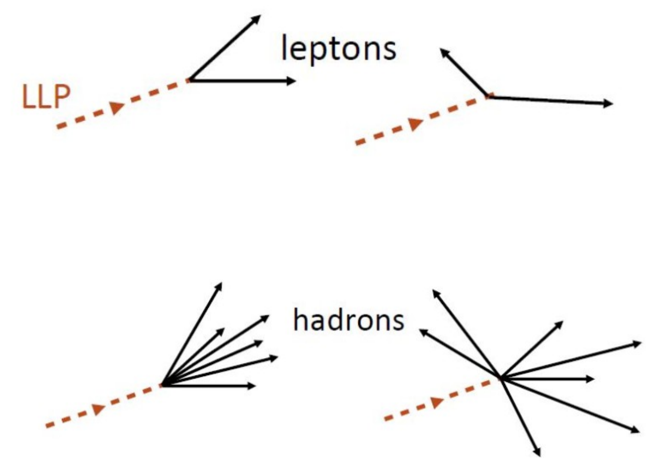
MATHUSLA can search for two general categories of physics signatures:

- Hadronically decaying LLPs ranging from a few GeV to TeV scale
  - High multiplicity final states are relatively easy to vertex and distinguish from backgrounds
  - Large improvement over LHC for LLPs with mass < ~100 GeV *(LHC searches are background limited and difficult to trigger)*

Any production process with σ > 1fb can give a signal.
Sensitivity to multi-TeV scales:



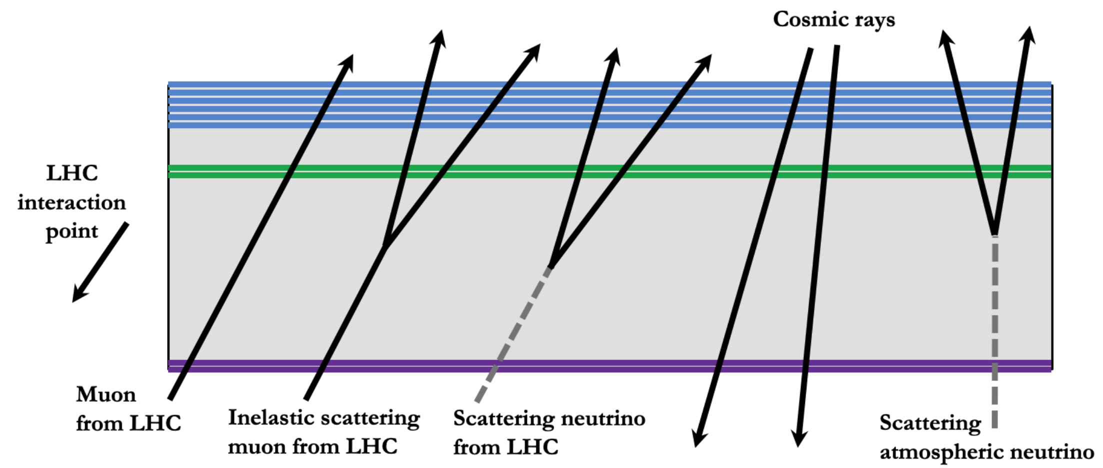
- LLPs with mass less than a few GeV (any decay mode)
  - Typically low multiplicity (i.e. 2 tracks) final states
  - Sensitivity **very dependent on detector geometry and performance** due to both signal efficiency and background rejection requirements
  - Forward / low p_T experiments likely more sensitive, so lower priority for MATHUSLA



Backgrounds

Primary physics target (high multiplicity decay vertices) is essentially background-free

- Secondary physics target of low-mass, low multiplicity LLP decays have backgrounds that need to be carefully studied



LHC muons:

- Muons with E > 40 GeV can penetrate rock shielding, but do not generally form vertices
- Delta rays and rare decays can be rejected based on vertex topology

GeV-scale atmospheric neutrinos:

- Scattering within the decay volume result in a few events per year
- Can be effectively vetoed using time-of-flight track measurements

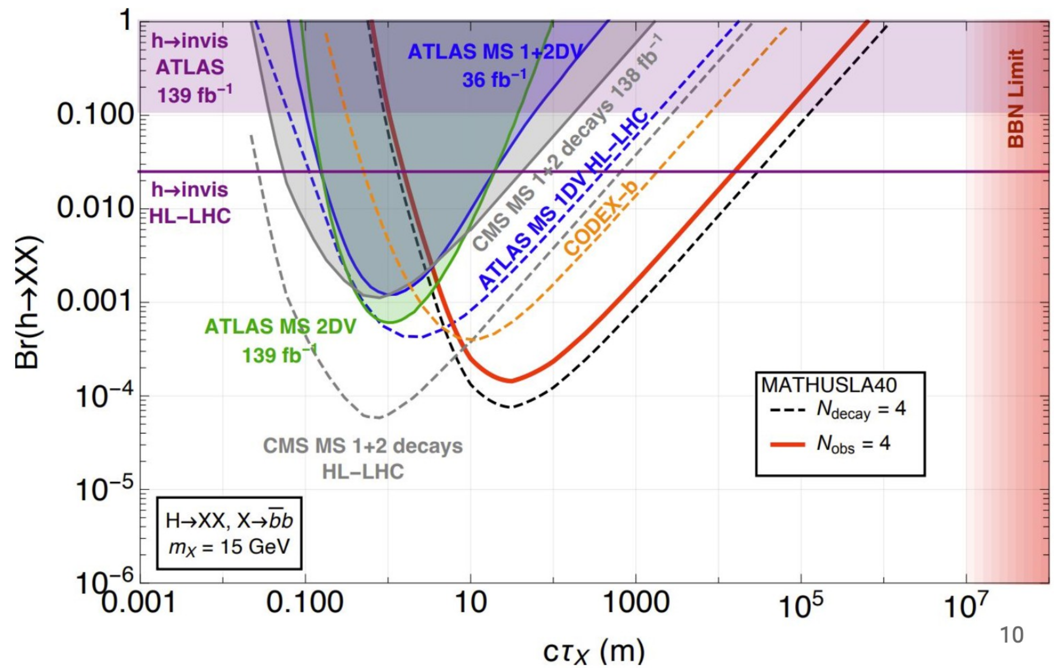
Cosmic rays:

- ~300 kHz flux to entire detector; rejected by directionality (timing) and topology
- Cosmic ray nucleons can undergo inelastic backscatter in detector floor
- Results in O(100) non-relativistic Ks0 (over life of experiment) traveling into MATHUSLA volume and decaying into charged particles that could reach the ceiling trackers.
- Can be characterized with beam off, and distinctive low momentum signature

New physics sensitivity

MATHUSLA-40 Benchmark analysis: $h \to XX$ LLP, with $X \to$ hadrons

- Backgrounds, in order of severity:
  - Cosmic ray inelastic interactions, (most importantly protons and neutrons): simulated using PARMA
  - LHC muons: MadGraph + Pythia for EW & bb production, propagate through rock to detector in GEANT4
  - Atmospheric neutrinos: simulate interaction with detector material, support structure and air in GENIE



- LHC muons and atmospheric neutrinos can be completely eliminated by signal selection cuts, with typical signal efficiency ~ 50%

► MATHUSLA events can be matched via timestamps with triggered ATLAS/CMS events, or can even provide a L1-trigger signal to the nearby experiment

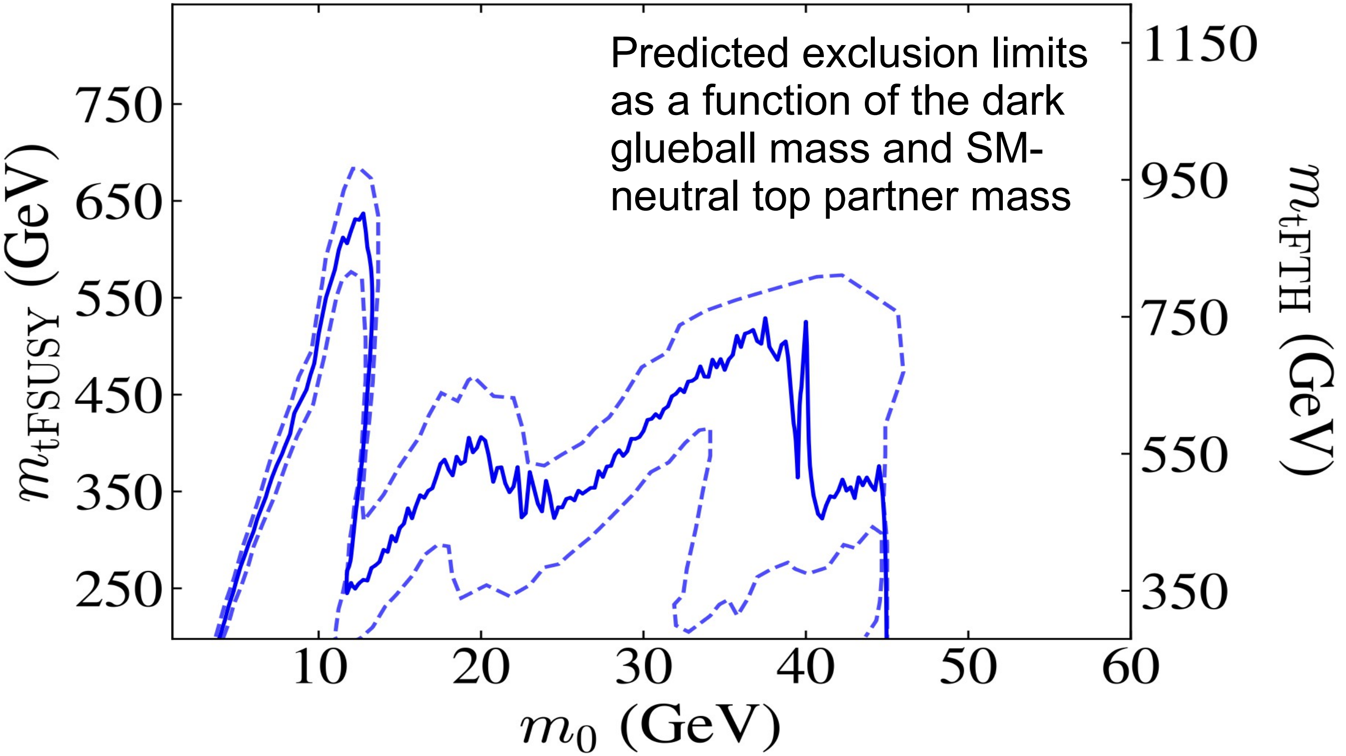
New physics sensitivity

Dark glueballs produced in exotic Higgs decays:

- LLP signal arising from the production of all meta-stable dark glueball species

Batz, A., Cohen, T., Curtin, D. et al. Dark sector glueballs at the LHC. J. High Energ. Phys. 2024, 70 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/JHEP04(2024)070

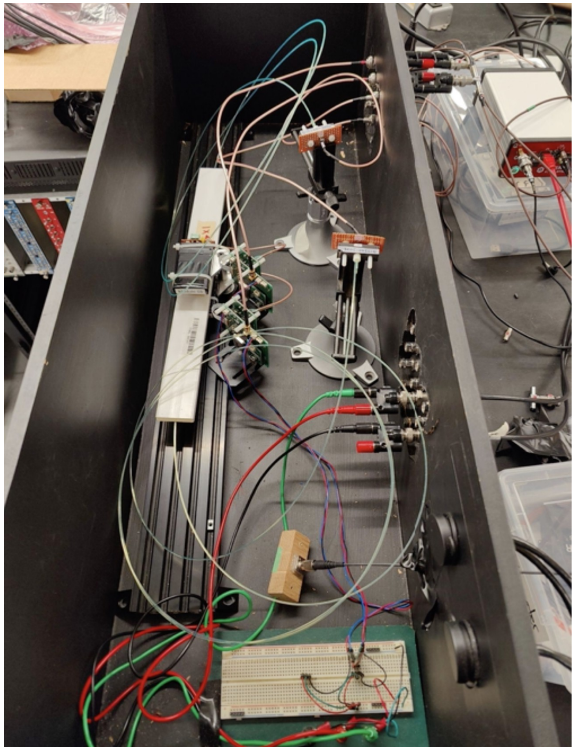
MATHUSLA effectively probes neutral naturalness solutions of the little hierarchy problem across the entire motivated TeV-range of neutral top partner masses



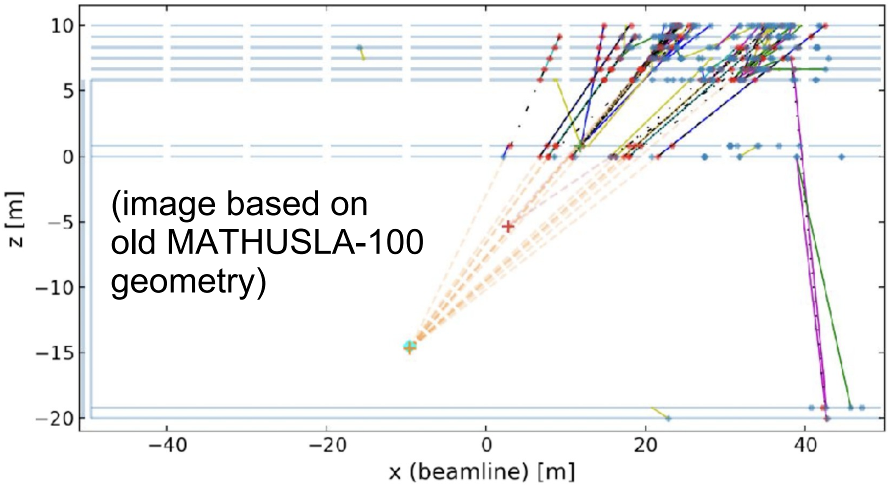
Additional scenarios studied based on original MATHUSLA-100 concept

- To be updated using new geometry and simulation framework

Ongoing R&D activities



- Studies of new WLSF formulations with higher yield, shorter decay times and longer attenuation lengths
  - Light yield impacts timing resolution (not efficiency), and reduces material costs
- Cost/performance optimization for SiPMs
  - SiPM performance not a limiting factor
  - Define QA/QC criteria



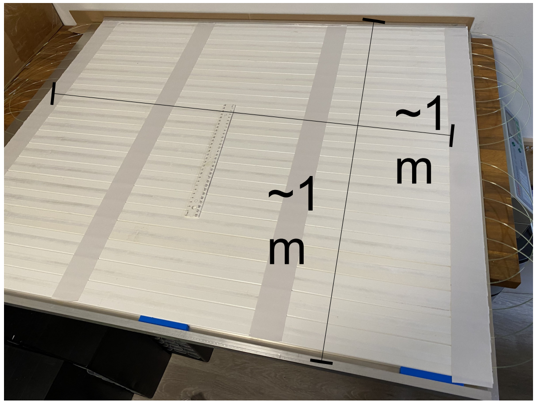
- Detailed GEANT4 simulation studies with robust pattern recognition/ track finding (Kalman filter) and vertexing

"Global" performance optimization of extrusion, WLSF and SiPMs still to be performed (detailed technical design)

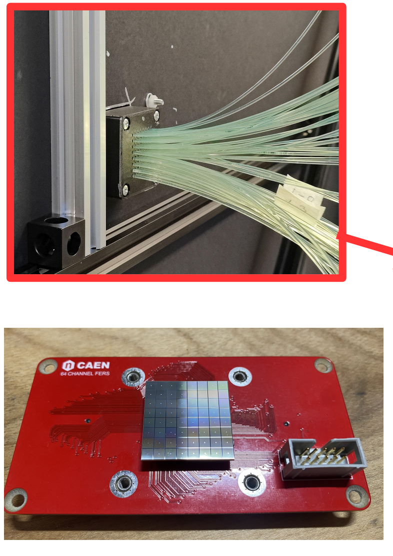
Tracking test-stands

Ongoing testing of prototype scintillator bar modules in two large cosmic ray hodoscopes

- Tracking with four-layer x-y arrays with looped WLSF and 80cm layer spacing
- Scintillator bars, fiber and SiPMs with close to MATHUSLA nominal specifications

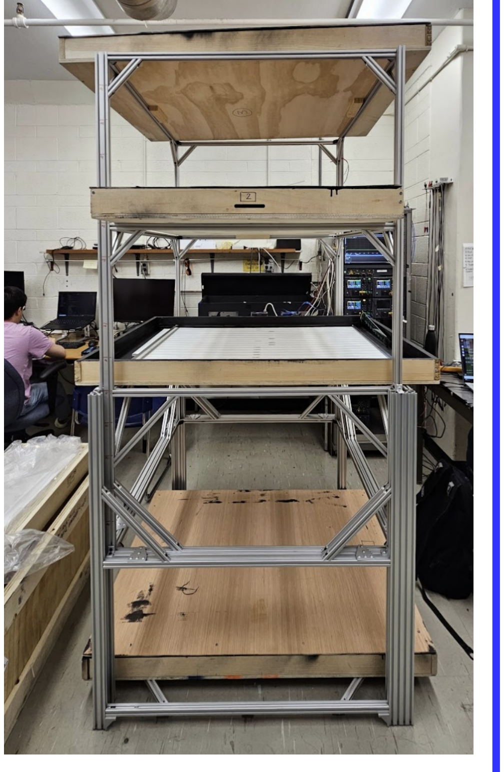


UVic: Full-length (~5m) WLSF routed to single 64-SiPM array with CAEN readout system



UofT: Individual SiPMs mounted on front face of scintillator bars

- Custom preamps mounted on bar module
- More similar to final MATHUSLA design, but different WLSF configuration

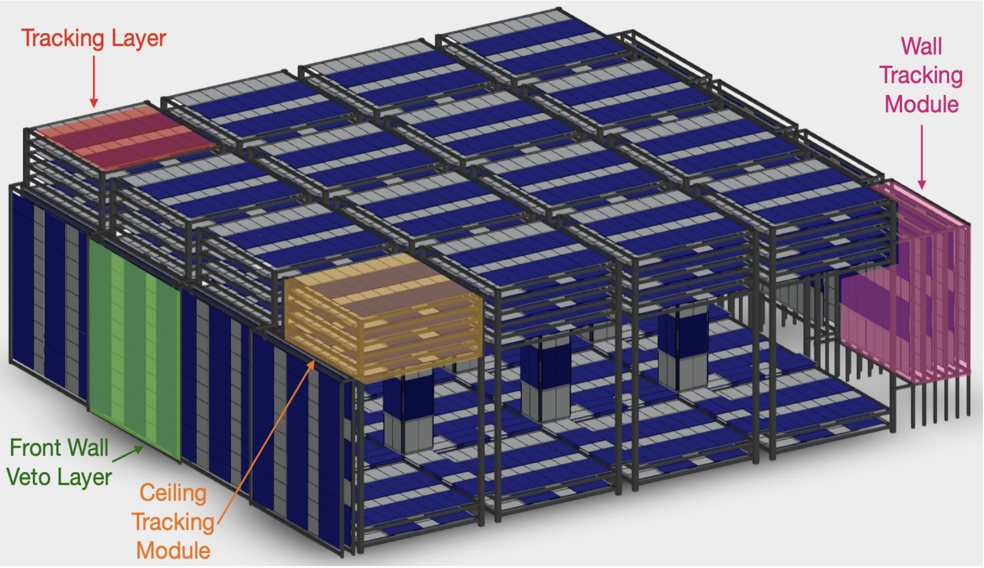


Prospects

Conceptual Design Report for MATHUSLA-40 detector is available on arXiv:

https://arxiv.org/abs/2503.20893

- Detailed GEANT4 simulation of realistic MATHUSLA-40 detector
- Full physics simulations with robust and realistic background estimates for benchmark physics models



- Detector R&D ongoing using large test stands; have demonstrated required performance capabilities

Transverse LLP detectors for the LHC are under consideration within the CERN Physics Beyond Colliders group, with the the goal of recommendations to the LHCC by the end of 2025.

► **New contributors welcome!**

Extra material

References

John Paul Chou, David Curtin, and H.J. Lubatti. New detectors to explore the lifetime frontier. Physics Letters B, 767:29–36, Apr 2017.

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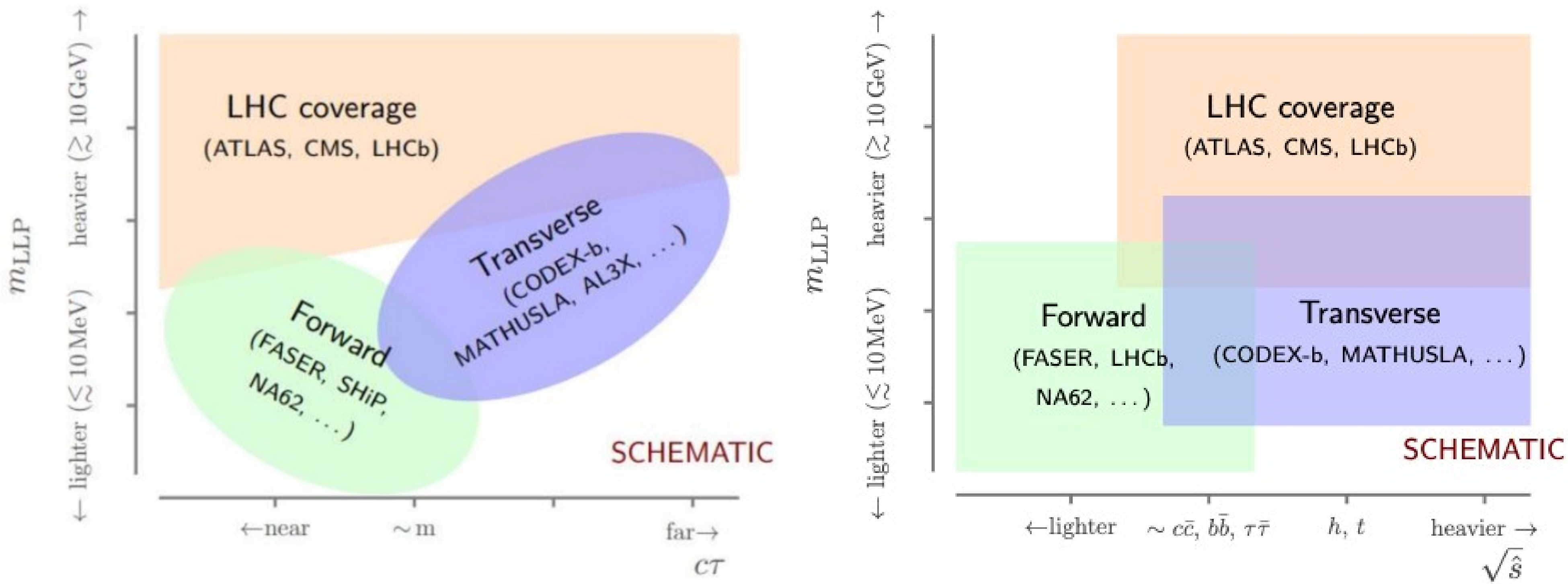
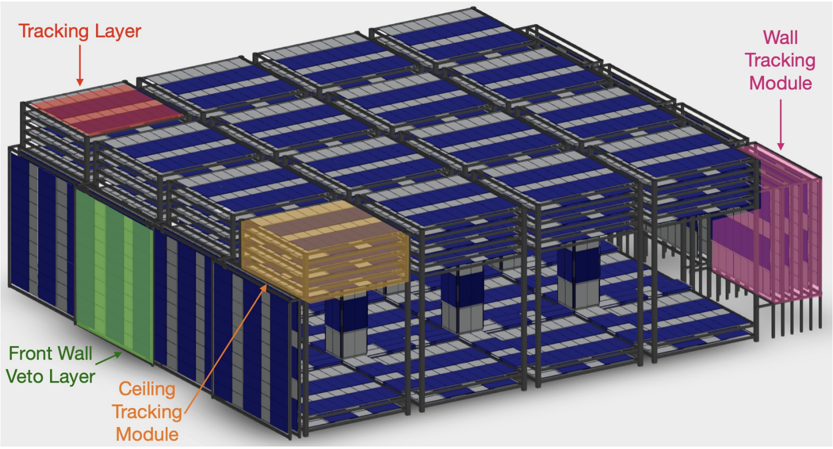
Cristiano Alpigiani et al. An Update to the Letter of Intent for MATHUSLA: Search for Long-Lived Particles at the HL-LHC, 2020, arXiv:2009.01693.

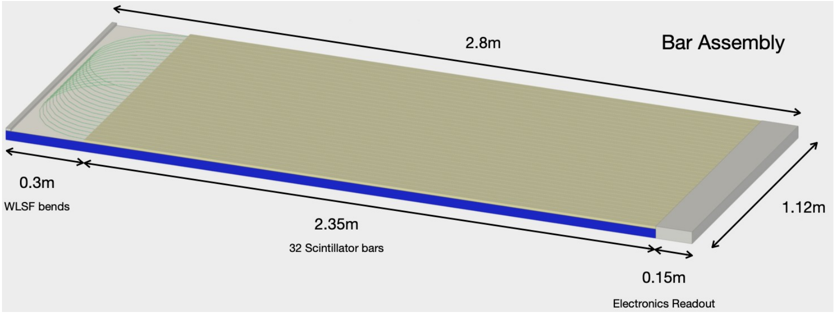
Complementarity



Fernandez, Emilio. (2024).
COmpact DEtector for EXotics at LHCb:
CODEX-b. 1077. 10.22323/1.476.1077.

Detector specifications



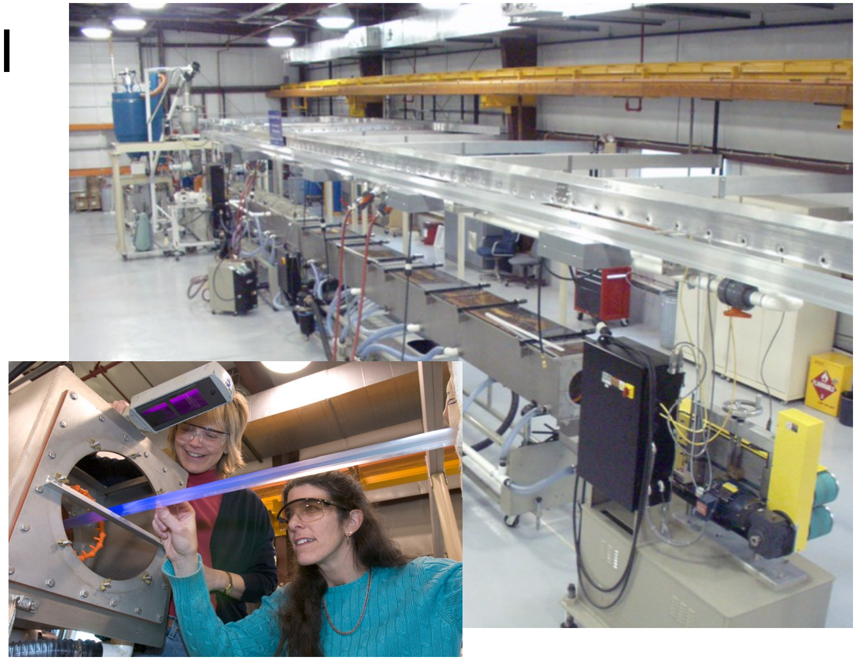


Distance from CMS IP	86-97m vertical, 70-110m horizontal along beam axis.
Detector footprint	40 m × 45 m
Decay volume	$\sim$ 40 m × 40 m × 11 m
Number of tracking modules	20 total: a grid of 4 × 4 tower modules each has a ceiling tracking module, and 4 wall tracking modules are mounted on the rear wall.
Tracking module Dimensions	9 m × 9 m, height $\sim$ 4 m
Tracking layers	6 in ceiling (top 4m, 0.8m apart) and 6 in rear wall (starting $\sim$ 4.5m above the floor, also 0.8m apart).
Hermetic wall detector	Double layer in wall facing IP to detect LHC muons.
Hermetic floor detector	2 floor veto layers at heights 0.5m and 1m in each of the 16 tower modules, 24 (9 m × 2.8 m) floor veto strips to cover gaps between tower modules, and 9 column detectors each utilizing 4 vertical floor veto strips to cover the vertical support columns.
Detector technology	Extruded plastic scintillator bars, 3.5 cm wide, 1 cm thick, 2.35 m long, arranged in alternating orientations with each vertical tracking layer. Bars are threaded with wavelength-shifting fibers connected to SiPMs.
Number of bar assemblies	6224, 32 channels each
Number of Channels	$\sim 2 \times 10^5$ SiPMs
Tracking resolution	$\sim$ 1 ns timing resolution; $\sim$ 1 cm (15 cm) along transverse (longitudinal) direction of scintillator bar.
Trigger	3 × 3 groups of tracking modules perform simplified tracking/vertexing to trigger on upwards-traveling tracks and vertices. Corresponding time stamps flag regions of MATHUSLA datastream for full reconstruction and permanent storage. MATHUSLA can also send hardware trigger signal to CMS to record LLP production event.
Data rate	Each tracking module and section of floor veto detector detector associated with each tower module produces $\lesssim$ 0.6 TB/day. (The front wall veto detector data rate is a small addition.) Less than 0.1% of full detector data will be selected for permanent storage using a trigger system, corresponding to about 8 TB/year.

Active detectors

Extruded scintillator based on commercial polystyrene pellets with added dopants

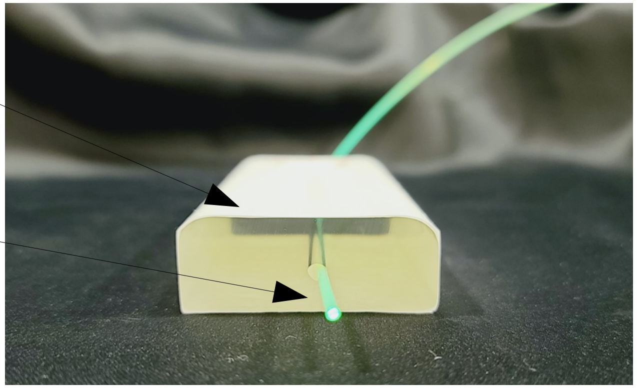
- MUCH cheaper than “cast” scintillator
- Intrinsic light yield comparable to cast scintillator, but poorer optical quality (attenuation length O(10cm))
- wavelength shifting optical fibre used to bring signals to photodetectors



Fermilab extrusion facility

Extruded plastic scintillator is primary detector element

Light brought to the bar ends via blue-green wavelength shifting optical fiber (WLSF)

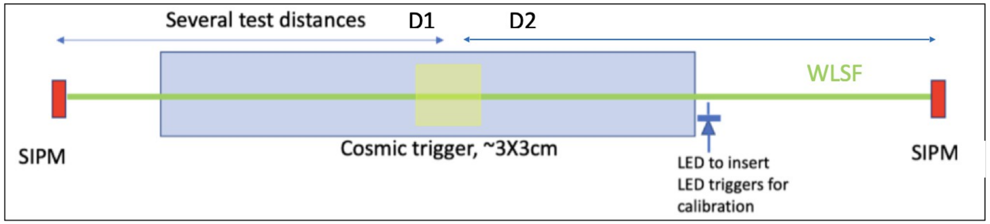


- **Primary dopant:** ~1% PPO
  2,5-diphenyloxazole
- **Secondary dopant:** ~0.02% POPOP
  (wavelength shifter)
  1,4-bis(5-phenylxazole-2-yl)benzene
- TiO_2 reflective coating co-extruded
- Various profiles can be extruded, with holes for inserting WLSF

Performance

Large detector volume means material costs are a limiting factor, hence desirable to use:

- smallest number of electronic readout channels (i.e. widest/longest scintillator bars)
- thinnest feasible scintillator bars
- smallest diameter WLSF



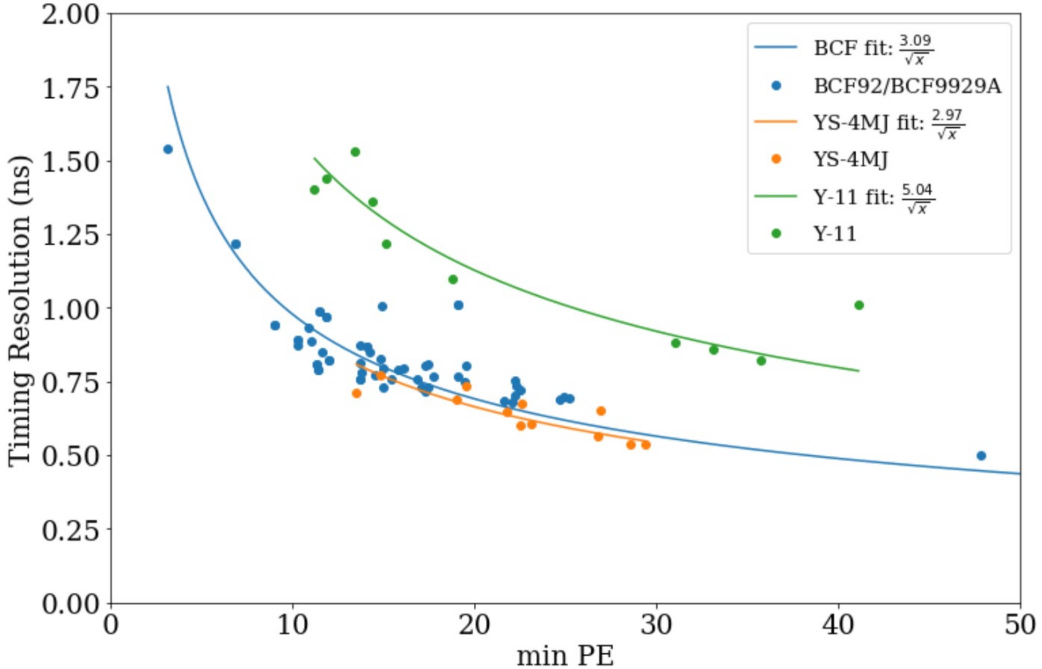


Photo-electrons detected by SiPM

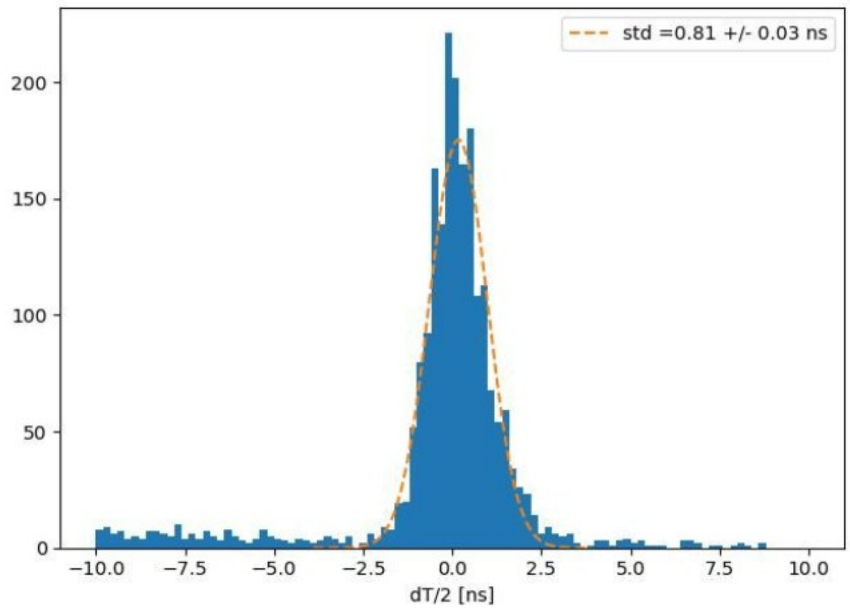
Hit efficiency and timing are key performance metrics:

- **Light yield**
- WLSF based on K-27 fluor (e.g. Y-11) are not fast enough, given the typical light yield in the MATHUSLA design

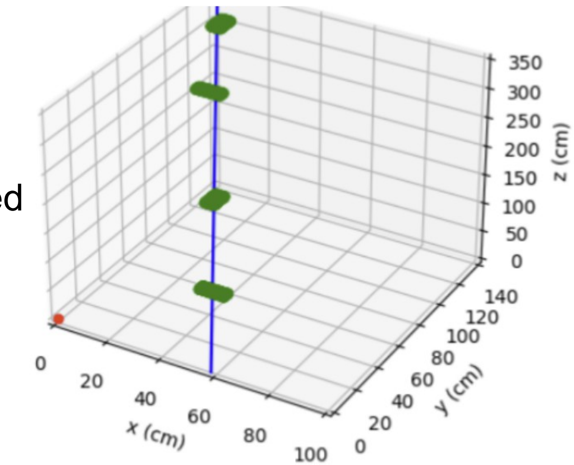
Tracking test-stands

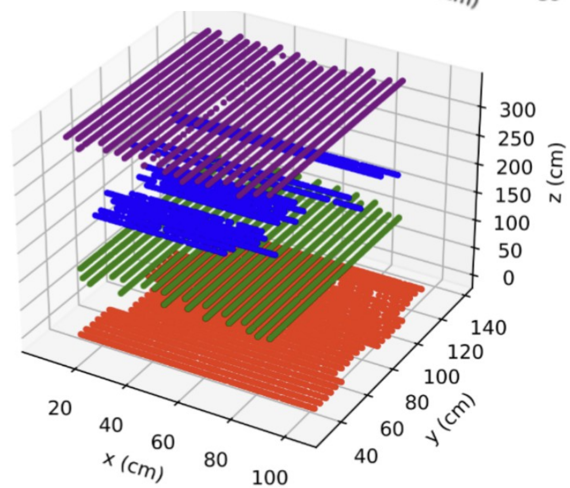
Recent milestones:

- MATHUSLA benchmark 1ns timing performance achieved using FNAL 4cm x 1cm extrusion and 1.5mm St. Gobain BCF-92XL fibre
- O(10cm) position resolution from timing



Cosmic ray muon track reconstructed in UVic test stand

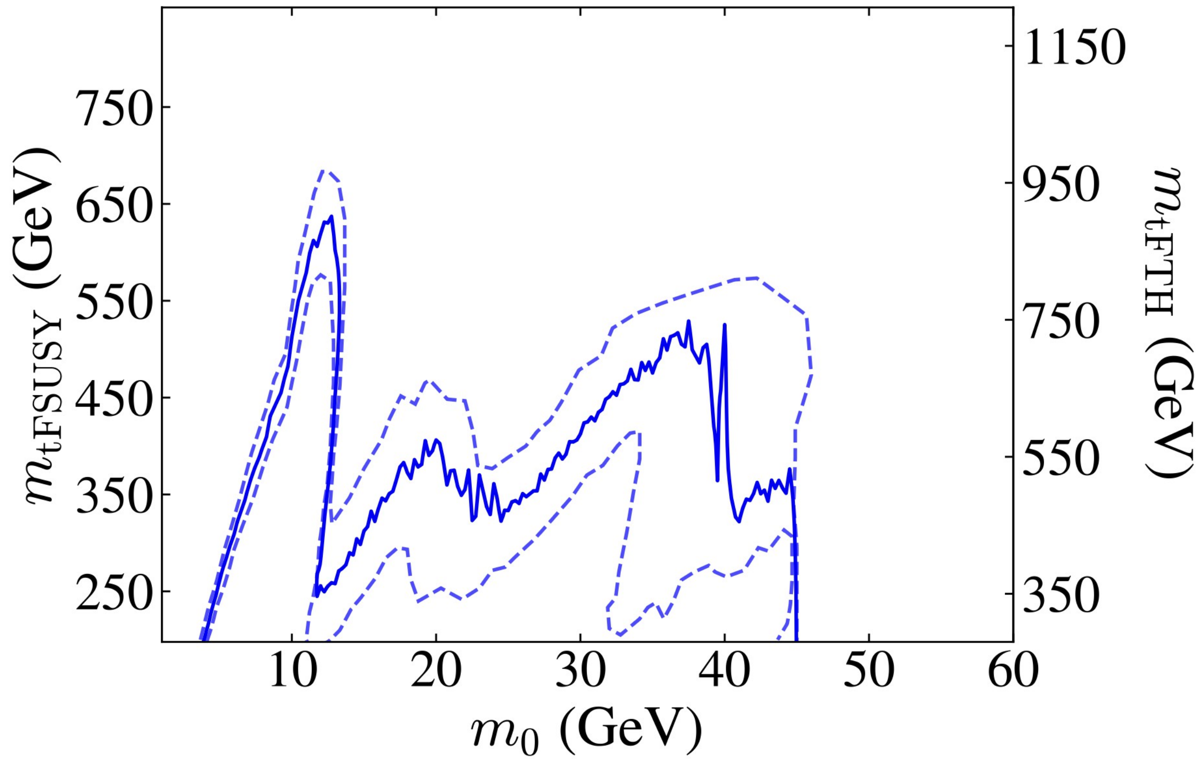




Cosmic ray muon hit positions in scintillator bars

- Work ongoing to characterize tracking parameters (i.e. residuals) in UVic test stand

Neutral Naturalness



Reach of the 40m MATHUSLA design in a simplified parameter space of Neutral Naturalness, generated using the dark glueball Monte Carlo from [18]. Dark glueballs, the lightest of which has mass m0, are produced in exotic Higgs decays which undergo dark Lund-String hadronization. The effective higgs coupling to dark gluons, which also allows glueballs to decay, is generated by neutral top partners in the Folded SUSY [46] and Fraternal Twin Higgs [16] models, with masses indicated on the horizontal axes. The solid blue curve shows the reach for 8 decays in the MATHUSLA decay volume, corresponding to the exclusion limit for 50% reconstruction efficiency expected for near-background-free searches. The dashed curves represent theoretical uncertainties in this reach from unknown aspects of non-perturbative dark Nf = 0 QCD.

Primary physics goal:

- $h \rightarrow XX$ LLP, with $X \rightarrow bb$

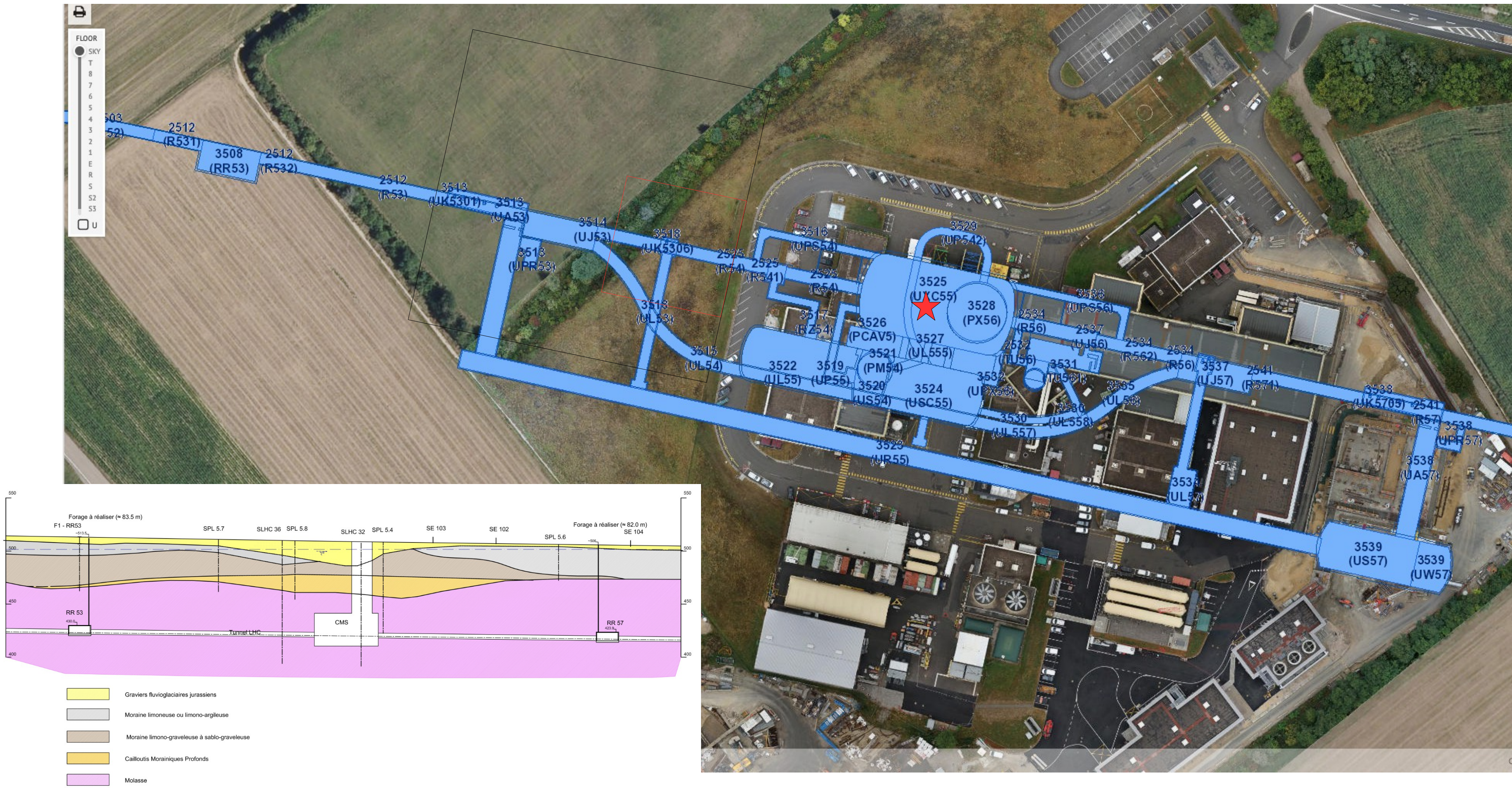
Secondary measurements:

- $X \rightarrow cc, \tau^+\tau^-$
- Heavy neutral lepton (HNL)
- Dark glueballs

	5 year exposure	**Generator**
LHC muon	1	MADGRAPH+PYTHIA
Atmospheric neutrino	2	GENIE+PYTHIA
Cosmic proton	1/32	PARMA
Cosmic neutron	1/27	CRY

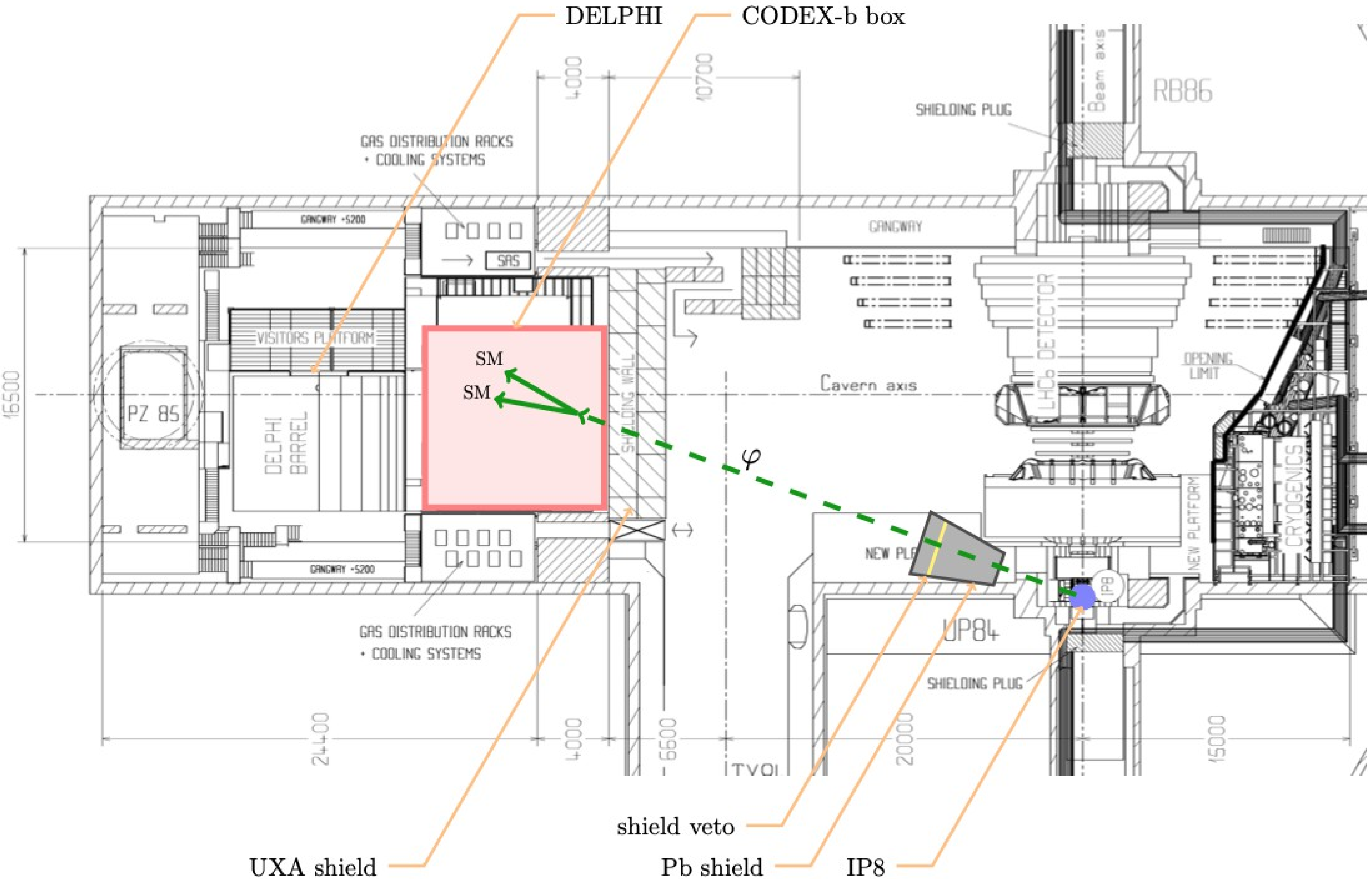
Expected background rates (N/5 years) for X bb search with ~50% signal e ciency

Location



FLOOR
3508 (RR53)
2512 (R532)
3513 (UK5301)
3514 (UJ53)
3518 (UK5306)
3525 (UXC55)
3528 (PX56)
3526 (PCAV5)
3527 (UL555)
3522 (UL55)
3519 (UP55)
3521 (PM54)
3520 (US54)
3524 (USC55)
3523 (UR55)
3537 (UJ57)
3539 (US57)
3539 (UW57)
Forage à réaliser (≈ 83.5 m)
F1 - RR53
SPL 5.7
SLHC 36
SPL 5.8
SLHC 32
SPL 5.4
SE 103
SE 102
SPL 5.6
Forage à réaliser (≈ 82.0 m)
SE 104
RR 53
CMS
Tunnel LHC
RR 57
550
500
450
400
Graviers fluvioglaciaires jurassiens
Moraine limoneuse ou limono-argileuse
Moraine limono-graveleuse à sablo-graveleuse
Cailloutis Morainiques Profonds
Molasse

CODEX-b



DELPHI
CODEX-b box
SM
SM
φ
shield veto
UXA shield
Pb shield
IP8
GAS DISTRIBUTION RACKS
+ COOLING SYSTEMS
VISITORS PLATFORM
DELPHI BARREL
PZ 85
SHIELDING WALL
Cavern axis
LHCb DETECTOR
RB86
SHIELDING PLUG
Beam axis
GANGWAY
OPENING LIMIT
CRYOGENICS
NEW PLATFORM
UP84
IP8
GAS DISTRIBUTION RACKS
+ COOLING SYSTEMS
SHIELDING PLUG
16500
24400
4000
10700
6600
20000
15000