

gammaUPC4LHC

Improving Monte Carlo modeling of
photon-induced processes in
ultraperipheral collisions at the LHC

Hua-Sheng Shao



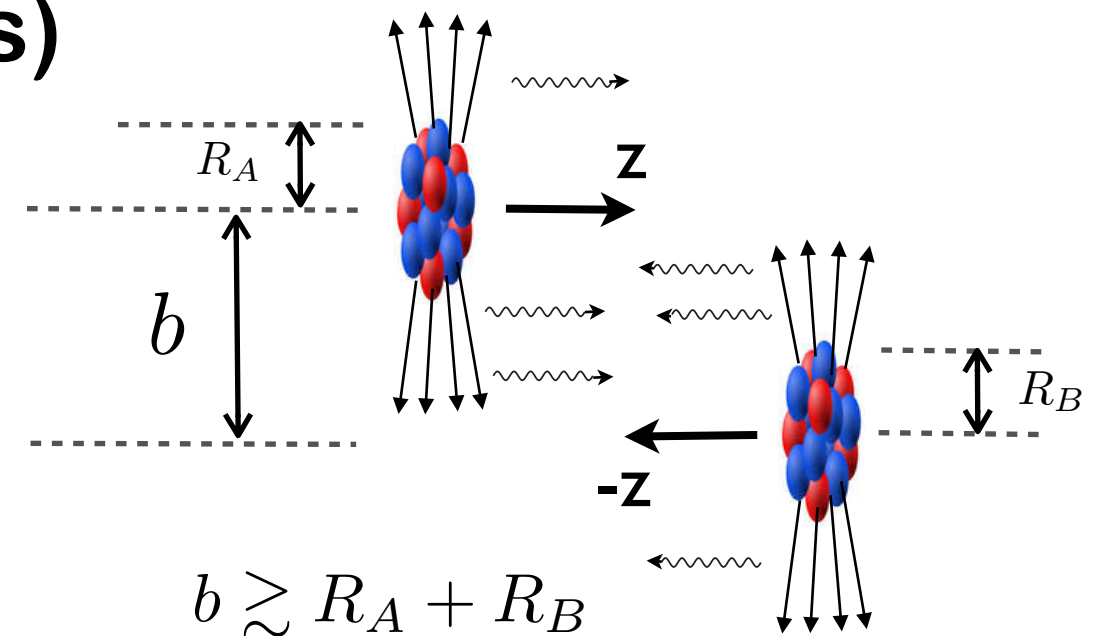
Hadron Physics in Horizon Europe
Town Meeting, Nantes, France
01 July 2025

- **Ultra-Peripheral Collisions (UPCs)**

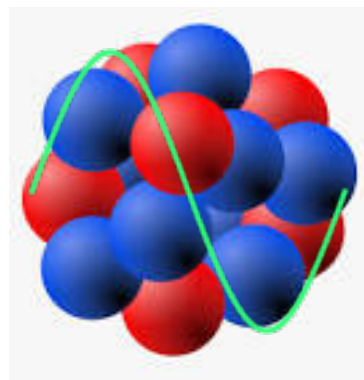
- **Large photon flux $\propto Z^2$**

- **Cross section enhanced by Z^4**

E.g., PbPb is $Z^4 = 45M$ times larger than pp & e^+e^-



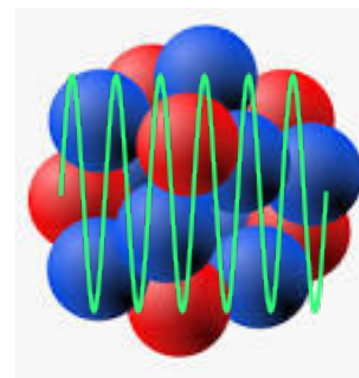
- **Photon may interact either coherently or incoherently**



$$\lambda \gtrsim R_A$$

Coherent

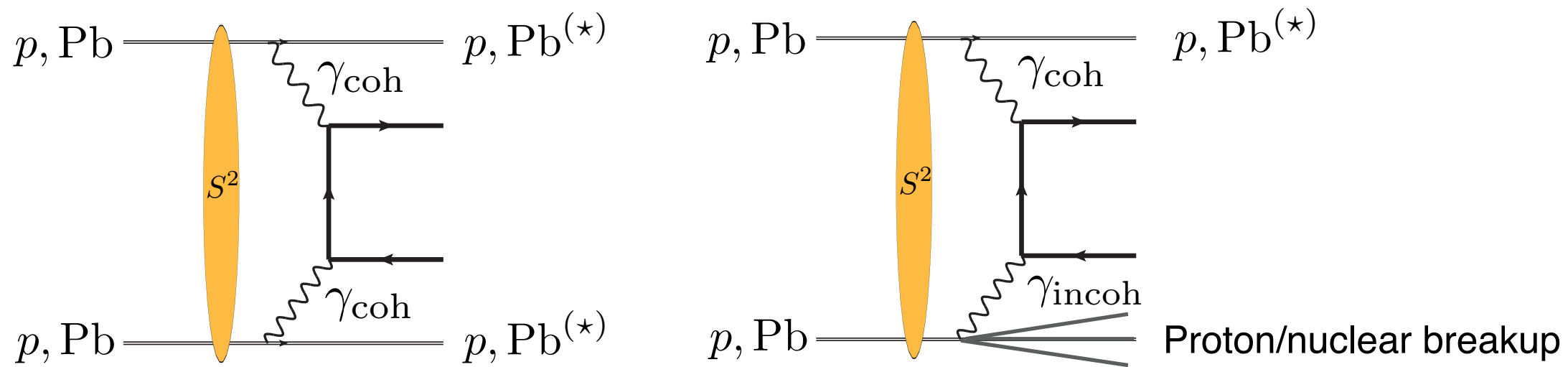
vs



$$\lambda < R_A$$

Incoherent

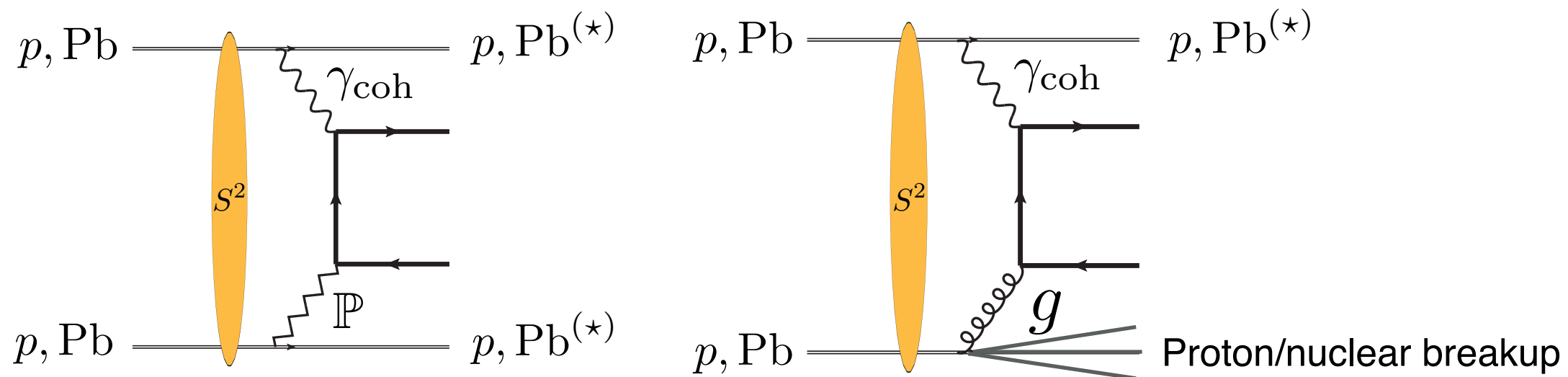
- Photon-photon processes**



- Motivations: SM tests, BSM searches, photon fluxes ...

E.g., tau g-2, axion-like particles, anomalous quartic gauge couplings

- Photon-hadron processes**



- Motivations: GPD, (proton/nuclear) PDF ...

- Improving Monte Carlo Modeling of these processes
- **gamma-UPC:** <https://hshao.web.cern.ch/hshao/gammaupc.html>
 - The first and currently the only public code for simulating arbitrary final states in coherent photon-photon collisions
 - Leading order and next-to-leading order QCD and electroweak accuracy of elementary final-state particles using gamma-UPC together with MadGraph5_aMC@NLO in collinear factorization
 - Leading order accuracy of elementary particles+quarkonia using gamma-UPC together with HELAC-Onia in collinear factorization
- We aim to go beyond the state of the art

- **Five main research axes:**

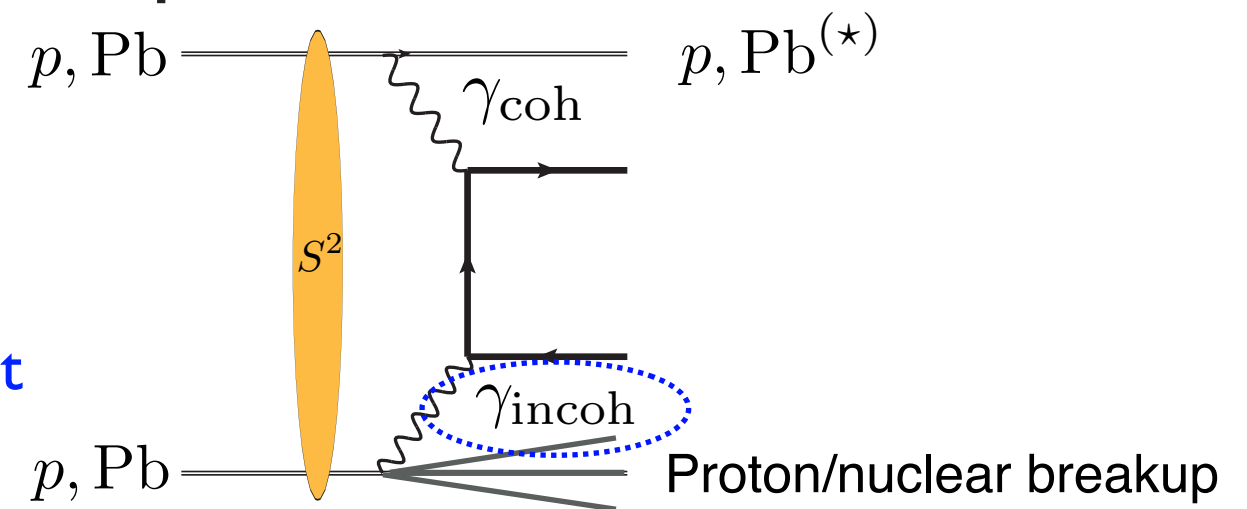
- **Five main research axes:**

- **I) Incoherent photon-induced UPC processes**

- Important backgrounds

E.g., tau g-2 in pp UPC

- Knowledge of **impact-parameter-dependent incoherent photon fluxes**



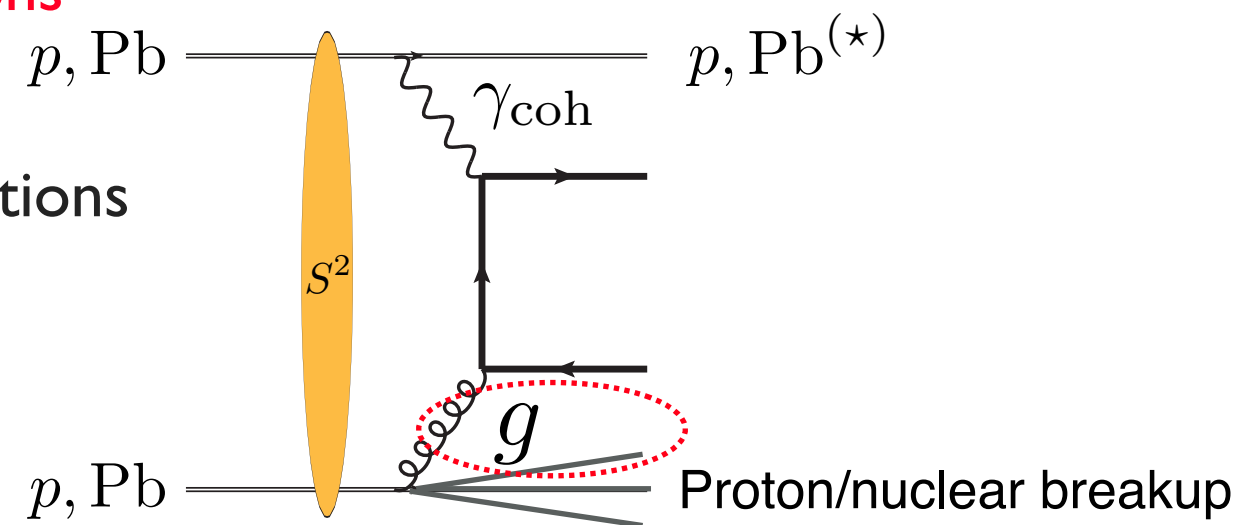
- **Five main research axes:**

- 1) Incoherent photon-induced UPC processes

- 2) Inclusive UPC photoproduction processes

- New probes of **parton-distribution functions**

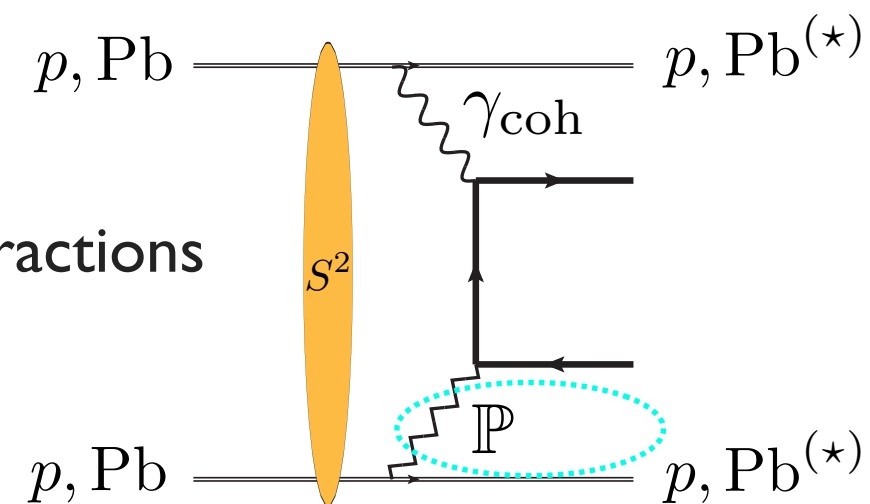
- Complementary (x, Q^2) w.r.t inclusive reactions
E.g., dijet and open charm in PbPb UPC



- **Five main research axes:**

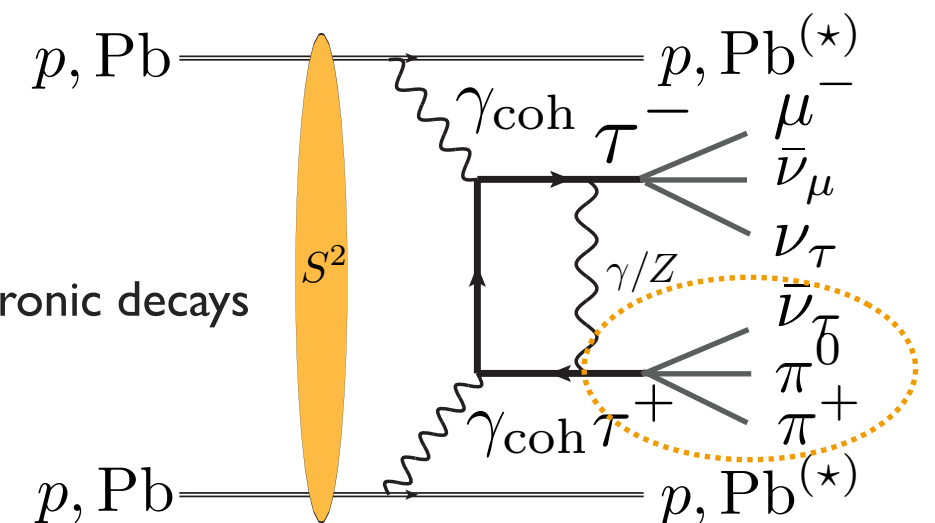
- 1) Incoherent photon-induced UPC processes
- 2) Inclusive UPC photoproduction processes
- 3) Automated coherent photoproduction processes with GPDs

- Probing **generalized parton distributions**
- Main challenge: threshold-singularity subtractions



- **Five main research axes:**

- 1) Incoherent photon-induced UPC processes
- 2) Inclusive UPC photoproduction processes
- 3) Automated coherent photoproduction processes with GPDs
- 4) Spin-entangled tau hadronic decay with NLO EW corrections
 - Tau g-2 in the SM is part of NLO EW corrections
 - To enable **tau spin-entangled hadronic decay** at NLO EW
 - To add consistently spin correlations including NLO EW and tau hadronic decays



- **Five main research axes:**
 - 1) Incoherent photon-induced UPC processes
 - 2) Inclusive UPC photoproduction processes
 - 3) Automated coherent photoproduction processes with GPDs
 - 4) Spin-entangled tau hadronic decay with NLO EW corrections
 - 5) Extension beyond collinear factorization
 - Coherent photons in UPCs are linearly polarized
 - TMD factorization allows to study TMD-sensitive observables, such as azimuthal angle modulations
 - Also probing (coherent) photon GTMD

- **Five main research axes:**
 - 1) Incoherent photon-induced UPC processes
 - 2) Inclusive UPC photoproduction processes
 - 3) Automated coherent photoproduction processes with GPDs
 - 4) Spin-entangled tau hadronic decay with NLO EW corrections
 - 5) Extension beyond collinear factorization

This proposal develops tools to support experimental measurements at CERN LHC and has potential connections to the VAs NLOAccess, GPDPortal, TMDPortal

Research Team & Funding Request

Team members :

- ◆ Hua-Sheng Shao (leader, LP THE Paris, CNRS)
- ◆ David d'Enterria (CERN)
- ◆ A 2-year postdoc hired by CNRS based at LP THE in Paris

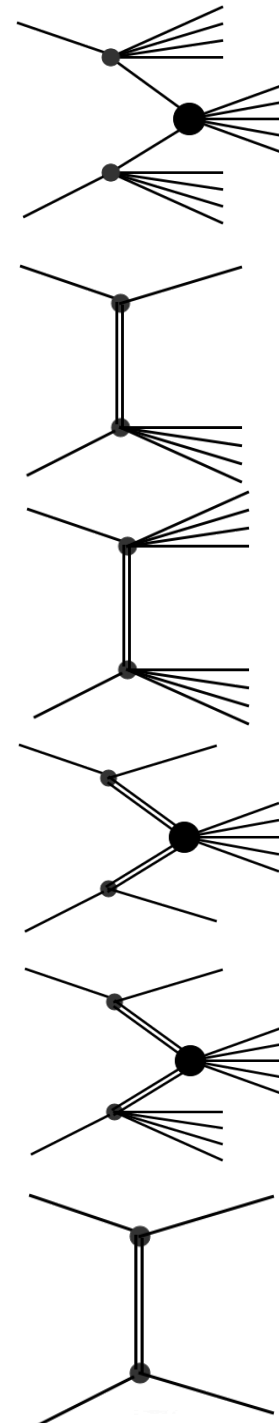
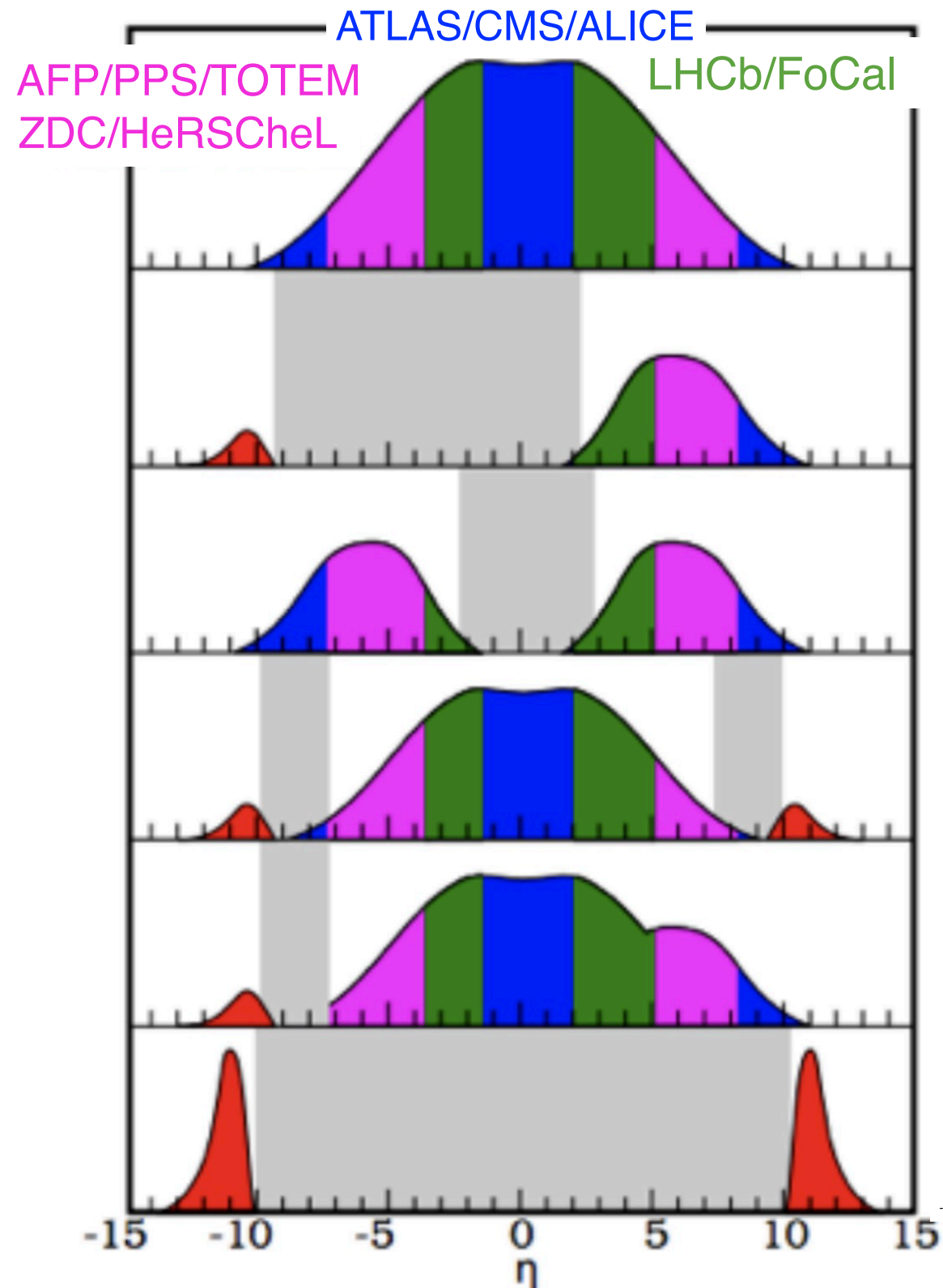
The postdoc will develop a fraction of the 5 research axes mentioned before

Funding request :

- ◆ 2-year CNRS postdoc contract (165k Euros, w/ 25% overhead)
- ◆ Travel budget (30k Euros, including visits to CERN)
- ◆ Total budget: 195k Euros

Backup Slides

- Scattering processes at the LHC: rapidity coverage



Inelastic

$$\sigma_{\text{inel}}^{pp} \sim 70 \text{ mb}$$

Single diffraction

$$\sigma_{\text{sd}}^{pp} \sim 10 \text{ mb}$$

Double diffraction

CEP+UPC elastic

$$\sigma_{\text{CEP}}^{pp} \sim 100 \mu\text{b}$$

CEP+UPC inelastic

Elastic

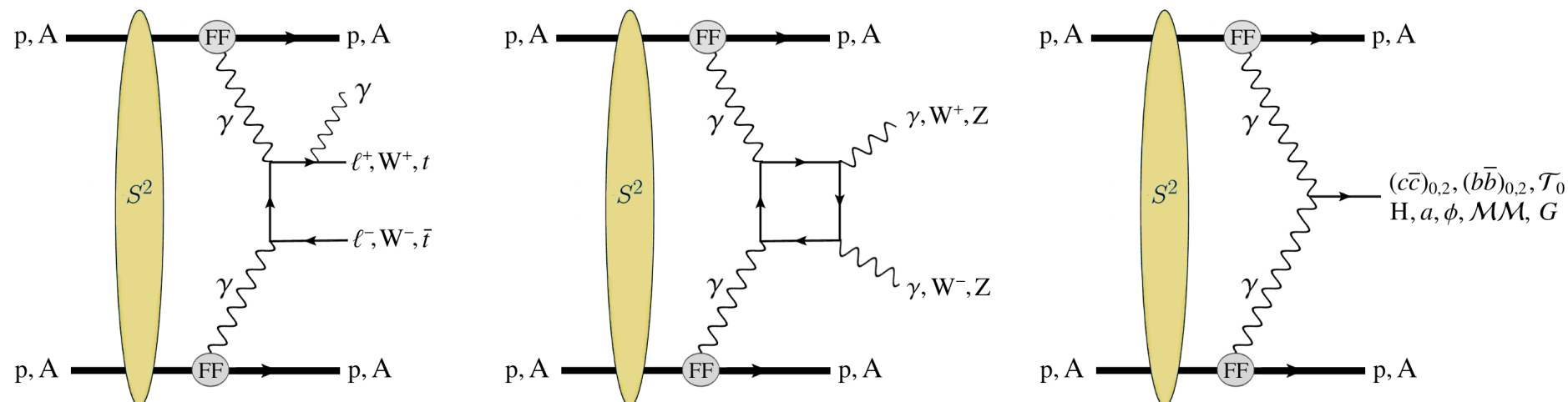
$$\sigma_{\text{el}}^{pp} \sim 30 \text{ mb}$$

• Gold-plated SM and BSM processes

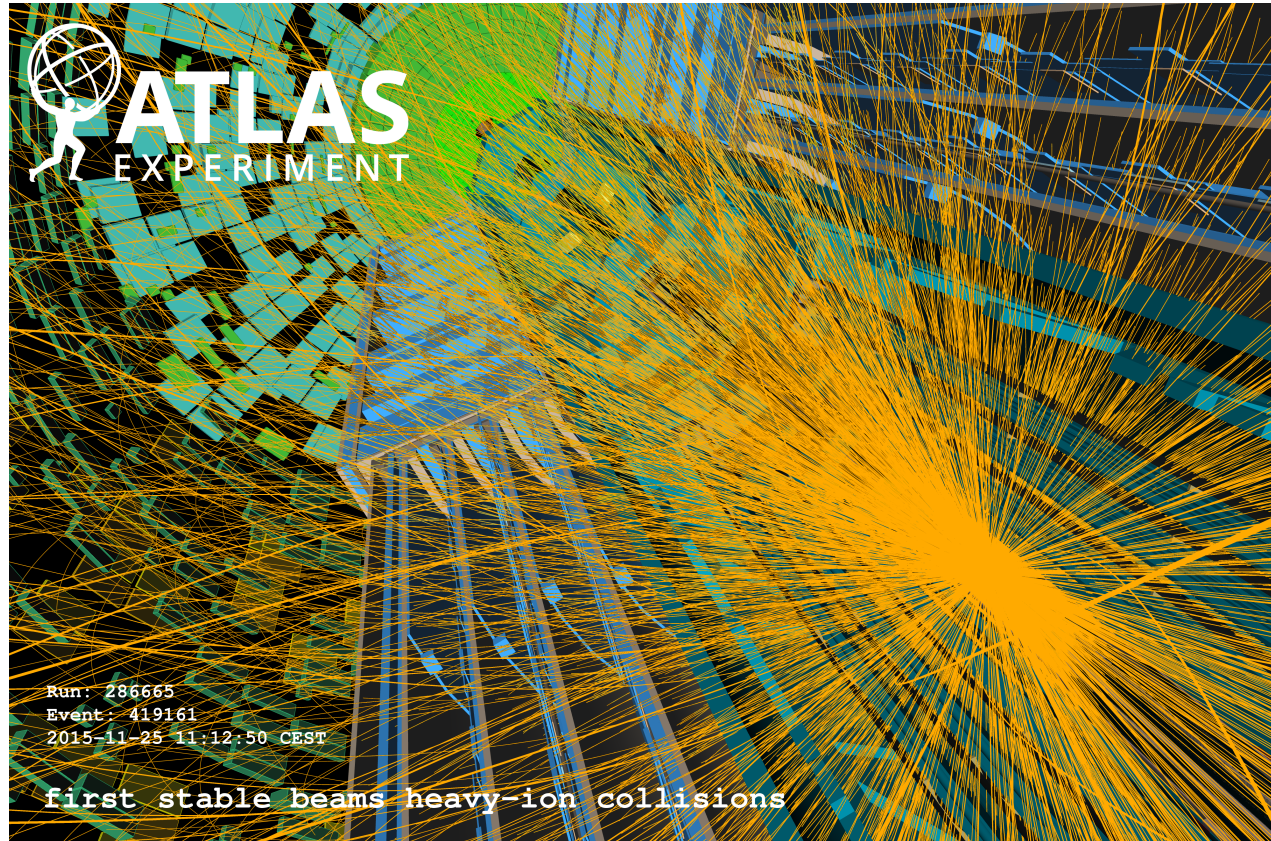
Loop-induced in the SM !

Process	Physics motivation
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow e^+e^-, \mu^+\mu^-$	“Standard candles” for proton/nucleus γ fluxes, EPA calculations, and higher-order QED corrections
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$	Anomalous τ lepton e.m. moments [29–32]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$	aQGC [25], ALPs [27], BI QED [28], noncommut. interactions [36], extra dims. [37],...
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \mathcal{T}_0$	Ditauonium properties (heaviest QED bound state) [38, 39]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow (c\bar{c})_{0,2}, (b\bar{b})_{0,2}$	Properties of scalar and tensor charmonia and bottomonia [40, 41]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow XYZ$	Properties of spin-even XYZ heavy-quark exotic states [42]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow VM VM$	(with $VM = \rho, \omega, \phi, J/\psi, \Upsilon$): BFKL-Pomeron dynamics [43–46]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow W^+W^-, ZZ, Z\gamma, \dots$	anomalous quartic gauge couplings [11, 26, 47, 48]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow H$	Higgs- γ coupling, total H width [49, 50]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow HH$	Higgs potential [51], quartic $\gamma\gamma HH$ coupling
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow t\bar{t}$	anomalous top-quark e.m. couplings [11, 49]
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \tilde{\ell}\tilde{\ell}, \tilde{\chi}^+\tilde{\chi}^-, H^{++}H^{--}$	SUSY pairs: slepton [11, 52, 53], chargino [11, 54], doubly-charged Higgs bosons [11, 55].
$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow a, \phi, MM, G$	ALPs [27, 56], radions [57], monopoles [58–61], gravitons [62–64],...

HSS d’Enterria (JHEP’22)



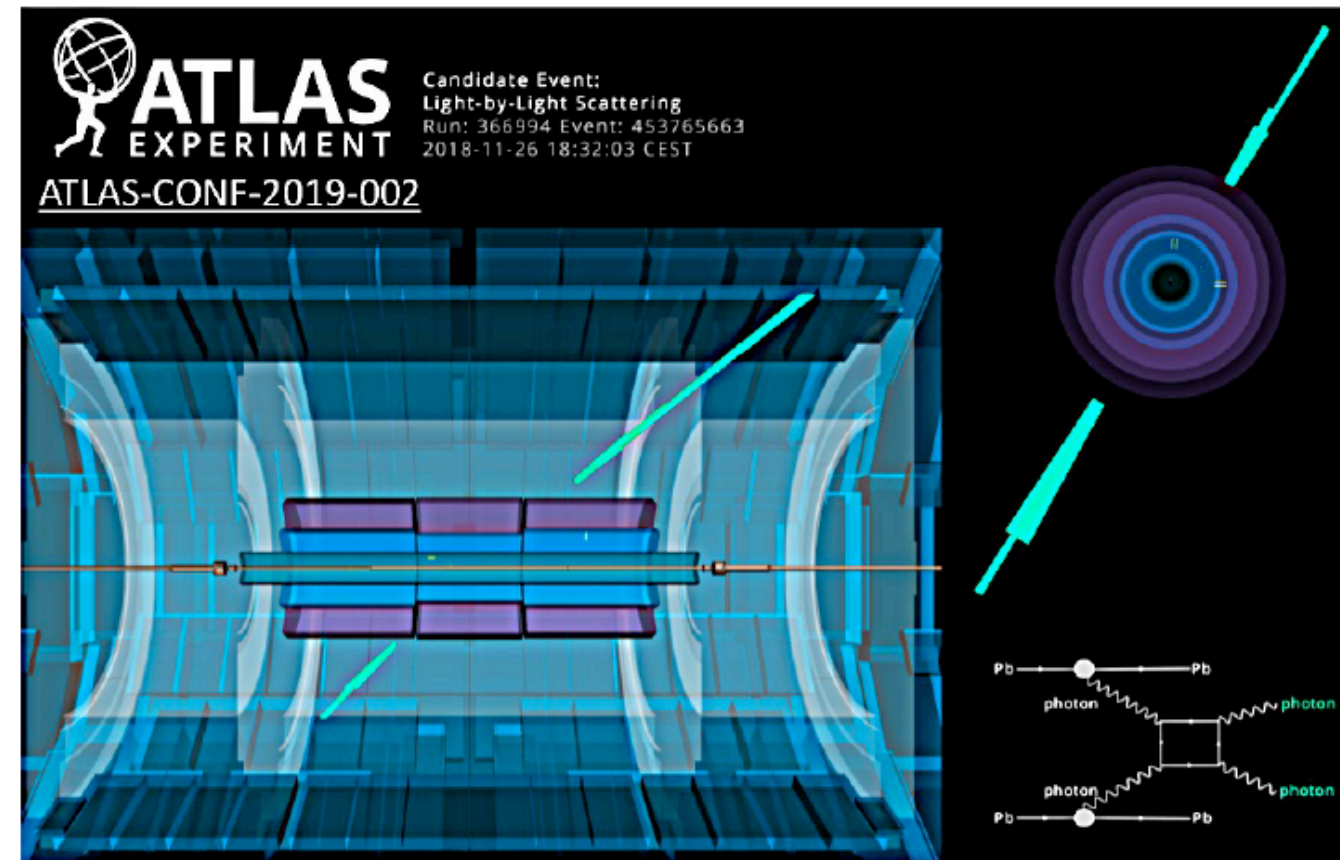
How do events look like ?



VS

UPC: low multiplicities

Most collisions have enormous multiplicities.





<https://hshao.web.cern.ch/hshao/gammaupc.html>