



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

Looking for the invisible

Light new physics and modified electrodynamics:
axions, scalars and dark photons
in *light-shining-through-wall* experiments

Supervisor:

Prof. Luca Di Luzio

Student:

Matteo Olivieri

July 16, 2026
GraSPA Annecy

Nice to meet you!



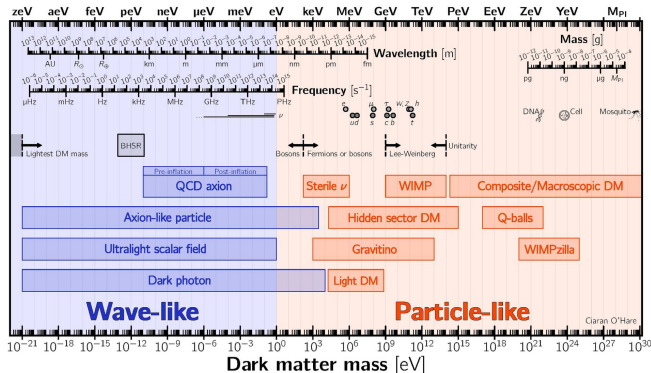
UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

- I'm Matteo Olivieri, a third-year undergraduate student at the University of Padua
- I'm passionate about the physics of fundamental interactions
- Long-term goal of studying (B)SM phenomenology

Why new light bosons?



$$\mathcal{L}_{QCD} \supset \theta \frac{g_s^2}{32\pi^2} G_{\mu\nu} \tilde{G}^{\mu\nu}$$



1. Pseudoscalar case (axions & ALPS):

$$\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{4}F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{2}\partial_\mu\phi\partial^\mu\phi - \frac{1}{2}m_a^2\phi^2 - \frac{1}{4}g\phi F_{\mu\nu}\tilde{F}^{\mu\nu}$$

2. Scalar case:

$$\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{4}F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{2}\partial_\mu\phi\partial^\mu\phi - \frac{1}{2}m_a^2\phi^2 + \frac{1}{4}g\phi F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu}$$

3. Vector case (dark photons):

$$\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{4}F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{4}X_{\mu\nu}X^{\mu\nu} + \frac{\chi}{2}X_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{2}m_{\gamma'}^2X_\mu X^\mu$$

$$\left[(\omega^2 + \partial_z^2) \mathbb{I} + \begin{pmatrix} 2\omega^2(n_{\perp} - 1) & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 2\omega^2(n_{\parallel} - 1) & gB\omega \\ 0 & gB\omega & -m_{\phi}^2 \end{pmatrix} \right] \begin{pmatrix} A_{\perp} \\ A_{\parallel} \\ \phi \end{pmatrix} = 0$$

$|n - 1| \ll 1$

$$i\partial_z \begin{pmatrix} A_{\perp} \\ A_{\parallel} \\ \phi \end{pmatrix} = \left[\omega \mathbb{I} + \begin{pmatrix} \Delta_{\perp} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \Delta_{\parallel} & \Delta_g \\ 0 & \Delta_g & \Delta_{\phi} \end{pmatrix} \right] \begin{pmatrix} A_{\perp} \\ A_{\parallel} \\ \phi \end{pmatrix}$$

1. "Spatial evolution" operator $U(0, z) = e^{iHz}$
2. Oscillation amplitude:

$$\mathcal{A}_{\gamma \rightarrow \phi} = \langle \phi | \psi \rangle = (0, 1) \cdot \psi(z) = (0, 1) \cdot U(0, z) \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

3. Oscillation probability:

$$\mathcal{P}_{\gamma \rightarrow \phi} = |\mathcal{A}_{\gamma \rightarrow \phi}|^2 = \left(\frac{gBL}{2} \right)^2 |\mathcal{F}(qL)|^2$$

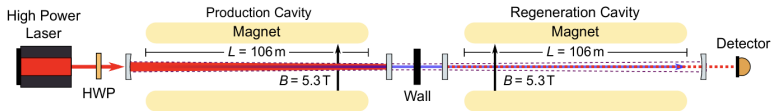


Figure: Functioning scheme of an LSW experiment

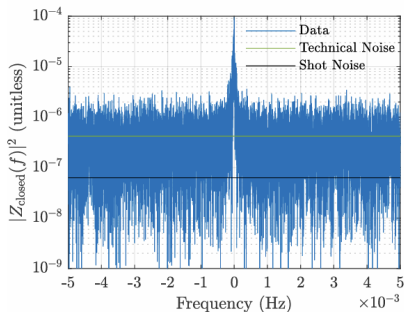


Figure: Detected signal in first ALPS II scientific run

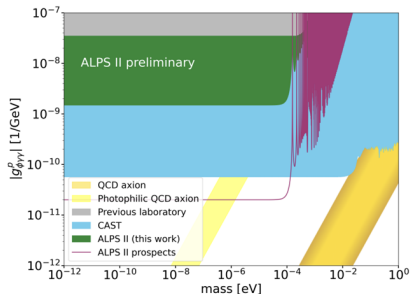


Figure: Axion parameter space and exclusion limits



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

Back-up slides

- Bianchi identities:

$$\vec{\nabla} \times \vec{E} + \frac{\partial \vec{B}}{\partial t} = 0$$

$$\vec{\nabla} \cdot \vec{B} = 0$$

- Maxwell equations:

$$\vec{\nabla} \cdot \vec{E} = -g \vec{B} \cdot \vec{\nabla} \phi$$

$$\partial_t \vec{E} - \vec{\nabla} \times \vec{B} = g \left(\vec{E} \times \vec{\nabla} \phi - \vec{B} \partial_t \phi \right)$$

- Axion field equation of motion:

$$\left(\square + m_a^2 \right) \phi = g \vec{B} \cdot \vec{E}$$

Parameter	Value
Single dipole magnetic length	$L_{SD} = (8826 \pm 2) \text{ mm}$
Dipole magnetic field strength	$B = (5.318 \pm 0.005) \text{ T}$
Number of dipoles	$2 \cdot N = 2 \cdot 12$
Gap between dipoles	$\Delta = (936 \pm 2) \text{ mm}$
Gap between strings	$(6290 \pm 5) \text{ mm}$

Figure: Experimental parameters of the ALPS II experiment

1. Open shutter runs:

$$P_{\text{open}} = T_M \eta^2 \beta_R P_i \quad (1)$$

2. Closed shutter runs:

$$P_\gamma = \mathcal{P}_{\gamma \rightarrow \phi}^2 \eta^2 \beta_R P_i \quad (2)$$

3. Determination of $g_{\phi\gamma\gamma}$:

$$\mathcal{P}_{\gamma \rightarrow \phi}^2 = T_M \frac{P_\gamma}{P_{\text{open}}} \quad (3)$$

Boson	95% CL limit
pseudoscalar	$g_{\phi\gamma\gamma}^p < 1.5 \cdot 10^{-9} \text{ GeV}^{-1}$
scalar	$g_{\phi\gamma\gamma}^s < 1.8 \cdot 10^{-9} \text{ GeV}^{-1}$
vector	$\epsilon < 2.1 \cdot 10^{-7}$
tensor, $\gamma_{\perp}$	$G'/G < 7.3 \cdot 10^{18}$
tensor, $\gamma_{\parallel}$	$G'/G < 6.6 \cdot 10^{18}$
tensor, combined	$G'/G < 5.4 \cdot 10^{18}$

Figure: Exclusion limits set by first ALPS II science run