

Accelerator Technology to Quantum Computers

For their quantum computer project, Fermilab particle physicist Adam Lyon and computer scientist Jim Kowalkowski are collaborating with researchers at Argonne National Laboratory, where they'll be running simulations on high-performance computers. [30]

Researchers from the Institute for Quantum Computing (IQC) at the University of Waterloo report the first occurrence of directly splitting one photon into three. [29]

This interference is important for everything from fundamental tests of quantum physics to the speedy calculations of quantum computers, but creating it requires exquisite control over particles that are indistinguishable. [28]

Scientists from the Faculty of Physics, University of Warsaw, in collaboration with the University of Oxford and NIST, have shown that quantum interference enables processing of large sets of data faster and more accurately than with standard methods. [27]

Over the last few decades, the exponential increase in computer power and accompanying increase in the quality of algorithms has enabled theoretical and particle physicists to perform more complex and precise simulations of fundamental particles and their interactions. [26]

A collaboration of scientists from five of the world's most advanced x-ray sources in Europe, Japan and the US, has succeeded in verifying a basic prediction of the quantum-mechanical behavior of resonant systems. [25]

This achievement is considered as an important landmark for the realization of practical application of photon upconversion technology. [24]
Considerable interest in new single-photon detector technologies has been scaling in this past decade. [23]

Engineers develop key mathematical formula for driving quantum experiments. [22]

Physicists are developing quantum simulators, to help solve problems that are beyond the reach of conventional computers. [21]

Engineers at Australia's University of New South Wales have invented a radical new architecture for quantum computing, based on novel 'flip-flop qubits', that promises to make the large-scale manufacture of quantum chips dramatically cheaper - and easier - than thought possible. [20]

A team of researchers from the U.S. and Italy has built a quantum memory device that is approximately 1000 times smaller than similar devices— small enough to install on a chip. [19]

The cutting edge of data storage research is working at the level of individual atoms and molecules, representing the ultimate limit of technological miniaturisation. [18]

This is an important clue for our theoretical understanding of optically controlled magnetic data storage media. [17]

A crystalline material that changes shape in response to light could form the heart of novel light-activated devices. [16]

Now a team of Penn State electrical engineers have a way to simultaneously control diverse optical properties of dielectric waveguides by using a two-layer coating, each layer with a near zero thickness and weight. [15]

Just like in normal road traffic, crossings are indispensable in optical signal processing. In order to avoid collisions, a clear traffic rule is required. A new method has now been developed at TU Wien to provide such a rule for light signals. [14]

Researchers have developed a way to use commercial inkjet printers and readily available ink to print hidden images that are only visible when illuminated with appropriately polarized waves in the terahertz region of the electromagnetic spectrum. [13]

That is, until now, thanks to the new solution devised at TU Wien: for the first time ever, permanent magnets can be produced using a 3D printer. This allows magnets to be produced in complex forms and precisely customised magnetic fields, required, for example, in magnetic sensors. [12]

For physicists, loss of magnetisation in permanent magnets can be a real concern. In response, the Japanese company Sumitomo created the strongest available magnet—one offering ten times more magnetic energy than previous versions—in 1983. [11]

New method of superstrong magnetic fields' generation proposed by Russian scientists in collaboration with foreign colleagues. [10]

By showing that a phenomenon dubbed the "inverse spin Hall effect" works in several organic semiconductors - including carbon-60 buckyballs - University of Utah physicists changed magnetic "spin current" into electric current. The efficiency of this new power conversion method isn't yet known, but it might find use in future electronic devices including batteries, solar cells and computers. [9]

Researchers from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and the University of Cambridge in the UK have demonstrated that it is possible to directly generate an electric current in a magnetic material by rotating its magnetization. [8]

This paper explains the magnetic effect of the electric current from the observed effects of the accelerating electrons, causing naturally the experienced changes of the electric field potential along the electric wire. The accelerating electrons explain not only the Maxwell Equations and the Special Relativity, but the Heisenberg Uncertainty Relation, the wave particle duality and the electron's spin also, building the bridge between the Classical and Quantum Theories.

The changing acceleration of the electrons explains the created negative electric field of the magnetic induction, the changing relativistic mass and the Gravitational Force, giving a Unified Theory of the physical forces. Taking into account the Planck Distribution Law of the electromagnetic oscillators also, we can explain the electron/proton mass rate and the Weak and Strong Interactions.

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Preface

Surprisingly nobody found strange that by theory the electrons are moving with a constant velocity in the stationary electric current, although there is an accelerating force $\underline{F} = q \underline{E}$, imposed by the \underline{E} electric field along the wire as a result of the \underline{U} potential difference. The accelerated electrons are creating a charge density distribution and maintaining the potential change along the wire. This charge distribution also creates a radial electrostatic field around the wire decreasing along the wire. The moving external electrons in this electrostatic field are experiencing a changing electrostatic field causing exactly the magnetic effect, repelling when moving against the direction of the current and attracting when moving in the direction of the current. This way the \underline{A} magnetic potential is based on the real charge distribution of the electrons caused by their acceleration, maintaining the \underline{E} electric field and the \underline{A} magnetic potential at the same time.

The mysterious property of the matter that the electric potential difference is self maintained by the accelerating electrons in the electric current gives a clear explanation to the basic sentence of the relativity that is the velocity of the light is the maximum velocity of the electromagnetic matter. If the charge could move faster than the electromagnetic field, this self maintaining electromagnetic property of the electric current would be failed.

More importantly the accelerating electrons can explain the magnetic induction also. The changing acceleration of the electrons will create a $-\underline{E}$ electric field by changing the charge distribution, increasing acceleration lowering the charge density and decreasing acceleration causing an increasing charge density.

Since the magnetic induction creates a negative electric field as a result of the changing acceleration, it works as a relativistic changing electromagnetic mass. If the mass is electromagnetic, then the gravitation is also electromagnetic effect. The same charges would attract each other if they are moving parallel by the magnetic effect.

Particle accelerator technology could solve one of the most vexing problems in building quantum computers

Last year, researchers at Fermilab received over \$3.5 million for projects that delve into the burgeoning field of quantum information science. Research funded by the grant runs the gamut, from building and modeling devices for possible use in the development of quantum computers to using ultracold atoms to look for dark matter.

For their quantum computer project, Fermilab particle physicist Adam Lyon and computer scientist Jim Kowalkowski are collaborating with researchers at Argonne National Laboratory, where they'll be running simulations on high-performance computers. Their work will help determine whether instruments called superconducting radio-frequency cavities, also used in

particle accelerators, can solve one of the biggest problems facing the successful development of a quantum computer: the decoherence of qubits.

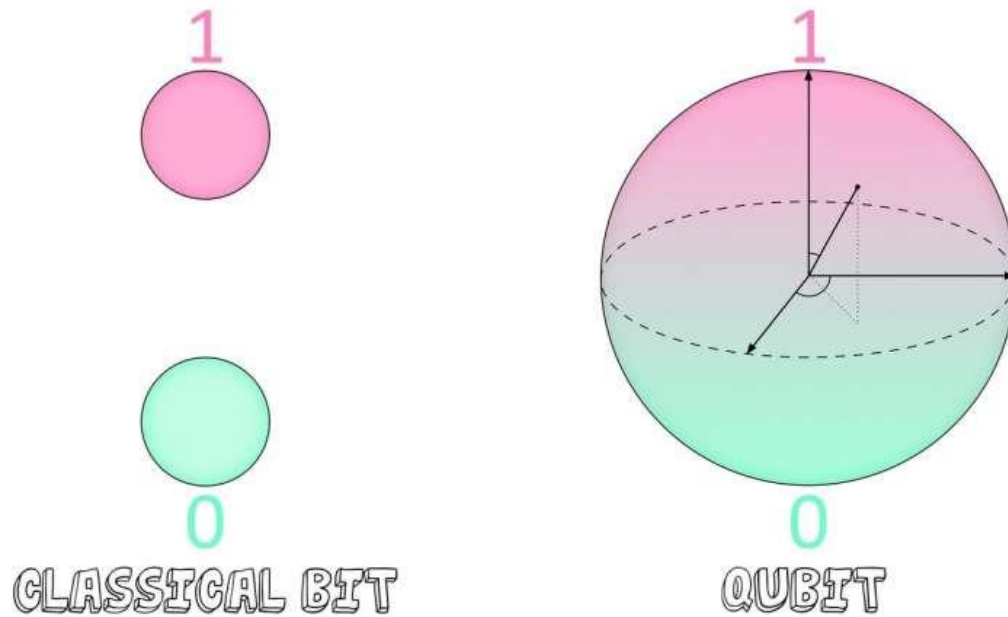
"Fermilab has pioneered making superconducting cavities that can accelerate particles to an extremely high degree in a short amount of space," said Lyon, one of the lead scientists on the project. "It turns out this is directly applicable to a qubit."

Researchers in the field have worked on developing successful quantum computing devices for the last several decades; so far, it's been difficult. This is primarily because quantum computers have to maintain very stable conditions to keep qubits in a quantum state called superposition.

Superposition

Classical computers use a binary system of zeroes and ones—called bits—to store and analyze data. Eight bits combined make one byte of data, which can be strung together to encode even more information. (There are about 31.8 million bytes in the average three-minute digital song.) In contrast, quantum computers aren't constrained by a strict binary system. Rather, they operate on a system of qubits, each of which can take on a continuous range of states during computation. Just as an electron orbiting an atomic nucleus doesn't have a discrete location but rather occupies all positions in its orbit at once in an electron cloud, a qubit can be maintained in a superposition of both zero and one.

Since there are two possible states for any given qubit, a pair doubles the amount of information that can be manipulated: $2^2 = 4$. Use four qubits, and that amount of information grows to $2^4 = 16$. With this exponential increase, it would take only 300 entangled qubits to encode more information than there is matter in the universe.



Qubits can be in a superposition of 0 and 1, while classical bits can be only one or the other.
Credit: Jerald Pinson

Parallel positions

Qubits don't represent data in the same way as bits. Because qubits in superposition are both zero and one at the same time, they can similarly represent all possible answers to a given problem simultaneously. This is called quantum parallelism, and it's one of the properties that makes quantum computers so much faster than classical systems.

The difference between classical computers and their quantum counterparts could be compared to a situation in which there is a book with some pages randomly printed in blue ink instead of black. The two computers are given the task of determining how many pages were printed in each color.

"A classical computer would go through every page," Lyon said. Each page would be marked, one at a time, as either being printed in black or in blue. "A quantum computer, instead of going through the pages sequentially, would go through them all at once."

Once the computation was complete, a classical computer would give you a definite, discrete answer. If the book had three pages printed in blue, that's the answer you'd get.

"But a quantum computer is inherently probabilistic," Kowalkowski said.

This means the data you get back isn't definite. In a book with 100 pages, the data from a quantum computer wouldn't be just three. It also could give you, for example, a one percent chance of having three blue pages or a one percent chance of 50 blue pages.

An obvious problem arises when trying to interpret this data. A quantum computer can perform incredibly fast calculations using parallel qubits, but it spits out only probabilities, which, of course, isn't very helpful—unless, that is, the right answer could somehow be given a higher probability.



When waves meet, they may constructively interfere, producing one wave with a higher crest.
Credit: Jerald Pinson

Interference

Consider two water waves that approach each other. As they meet, they may constructively interfere, producing one wave with a higher crest. Or they may destructively interfere, canceling each other so that there's no longer any wave to speak of. Qubit states can also act as waves, exhibiting the same patterns of interference, a property researchers can exploit to identify the most likely answer to the problem they're given.

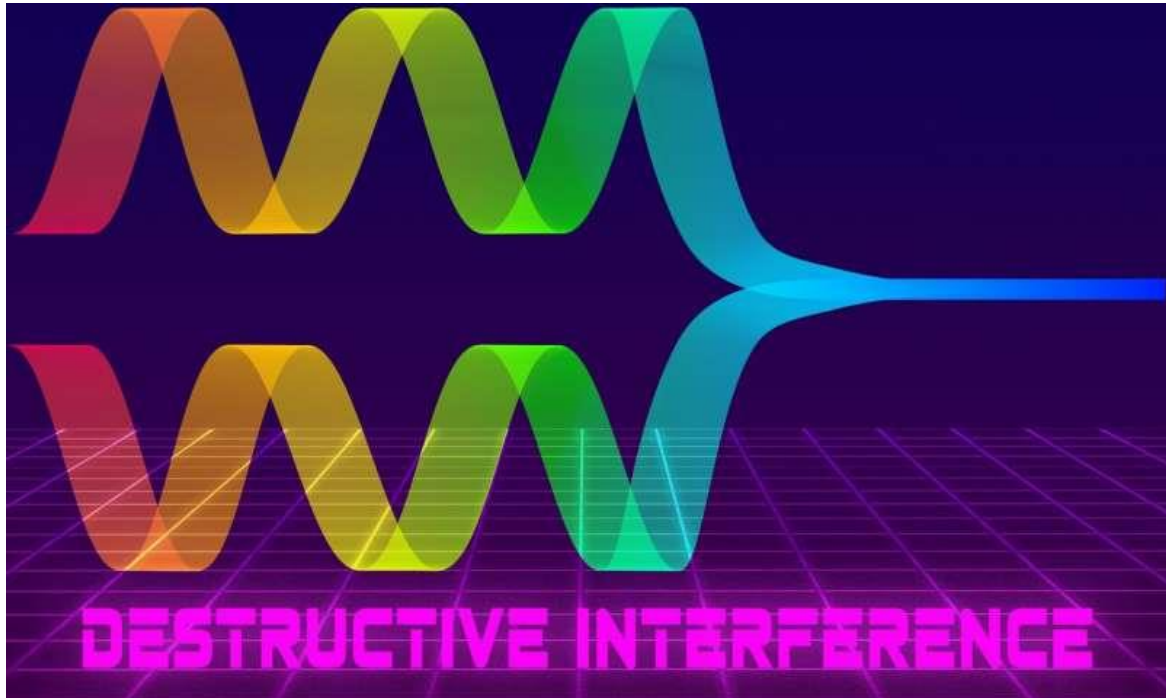
"If you can set up interference between the right answers and the wrong answers, you can increase the likelihood that the right answers pop up more than the wrong answers," Lyon said. "You're trying to find a quantum way to make the correct answers constructively interfere and the wrong answers destructively interfere."

When a calculation is run on a quantum computer, the same calculation is run multiple times, and the qubits are allowed to interfere with one another. The result is a distribution curve in which the correct answer is the most frequent response.

Listening for signals above the noise

In the last five years, researchers at universities, government facilities and large companies have made encouraging advancements toward the development of a useful quantum computer. Last year, Google announced that it had performed calculations on their quantum processor called Sycamore in a fraction of the time it would have taken the world's largest supercomputer to complete the same task.

Yet the quantum devices that we have today are still prototypes, akin to the first large vacuum tube computers of the 1940s.



As waves, they may also destructively interfere, canceling each other so that there's no longer any wave to speak of. Credit: Jerald Pinson

"The machines we have now don't scale up much at all," Lyon said.

There's still a few hurdles researchers have to overcome before quantum computers become viable and competitive. One of the largest is finding a way to keep delicate qubit states isolated long enough for them to perform calculations.

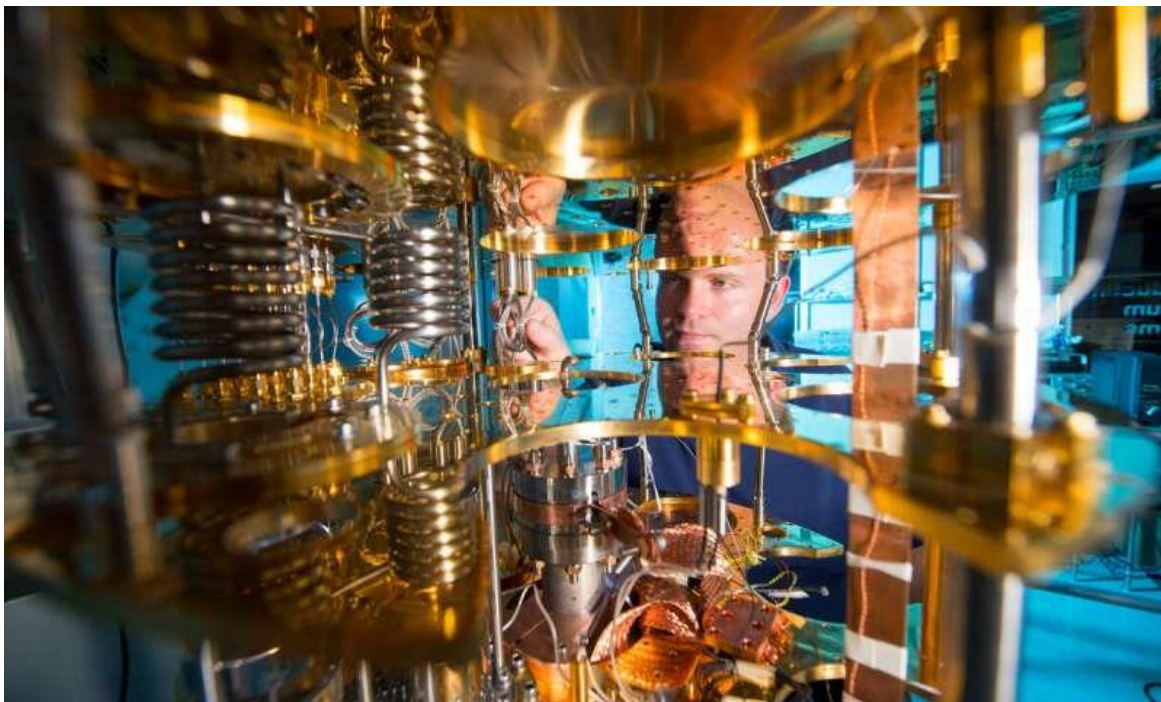
If a stray photon—a particle of light—from outside the system were to interact with a qubit, its wave would interfere with the qubit's superposition, essentially turning the calculations into a jumbled mess—a process called decoherence. While the refrigerators do a moderately good job at keeping unwanted interactions to a minimum, they can do so only for a fraction of a second.

"Quantum systems like to be isolated," Lyon said, "and there's just no easy way to do that."

Which is where Lyon and Kowalkowski's simulation work comes in. If the qubits can't be kept cold enough to maintain an entangled superposition of states, perhaps the devices themselves can be constructed in a way that makes them less susceptible to noise.

It turns out that superconducting cavities made of niobium, normally used to propel particle beams in accelerators, could be the solution. These cavities need to be constructed very precisely and operate at very low temperatures to efficiently propagate the radio waves that accelerate particle beams. Researchers theorize that by placing quantum processors in these cavities, the qubits will be able to interact undisturbed for seconds rather than the current record of milliseconds, giving them enough time to perform complex calculations.

Qubits come in several different varieties. They can be created by trapping ions within a magnetic field or by using nitrogen atoms surrounded by the carbon lattice formed naturally in crystals. The research at Fermilab and Argonne will be focused on qubits made from photons.



When a quantum computer is operating, it needs to be placed in a large refrigerator, like the one pictured here, to cool the device to less than a degree above absolute zero. This is done to keep energy from the surrounding environment from entering the machine. Credit: Reidar Hahn, Fermilab

Lyon and his team have taken on the job of simulating how well radio-frequency cavities are expected to perform. By carrying out their simulations on high-performance computers, known as HPCs, at Argonne National Laboratory, they can predict how long photon qubits can interact in this ultralow-noise environment and account for any unexpected interactions.

Researchers around the world have used open-source software for desktop computers to simulate different applications of quantum mechanics, providing developers with blueprints for

how to incorporate the results into technology. The scope of these programs, however, is limited by the amount of memory available on personal computers. In order to simulate the exponential scaling of multiple qubits, researchers have to use HPCs.

"Going from one desktop to an HPC, you might be 10,000 times faster," said Matthew Otten, a fellow at Argonne National Laboratory and collaborator on the project.

Once the team has completed their simulations, the results will be used by Fermilab researchers to help improve and test the cavities for acting as computational devices.

"If we set up a simulation framework, we can ask very targeted questions on the best way to store quantum information and the best way to manipulate it," said Eric Holland, the deputy head of quantum technology at Fermilab. "We can use that to guide what we develop for quantum technologies." [30]

Quantum researchers able to split one photon into three

Researchers from the Institute for Quantum Computing (IQC) at the University of Waterloo report the first occurrence of directly splitting one photon into three.

The occurrence, the first of its kind, used the spontaneous parametric down-conversion method (SPDC) in quantum optics and created what quantum optics researchers call a non-Gaussian state of light. A non-Gaussian state of light is considered a critical ingredient to gain a quantum advantage.

"It was understood that there were limits to the type of entanglement generated with the two-photon version, but these results form the basis of an exciting new paradigm of three-photon quantum optics," said Chris Wilson, a principle investigator at IQC faculty member and a professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Waterloo.

"Given that this research brings us past the known ability to split one photon into two entangled daughter photons, we're optimistic that we've opened up a new area of exploration."

"The two-photon version has been a workhorse for quantum research for over 30 years," said Wilson. "We think three photons will overcome the limits and will encourage further theoretical research and experimental applications and hopefully the development of optical quantum computing using superconducting units."

Wilson used microwave photons to stretch the known limits of SPDC. The experimental implementation used a superconducting parametric resonator. The result clearly showed the strong correlation among three photons generated at different frequencies. Ongoing work aims to show that the photons are entangled.

"Non-Gaussian states and operations are a critical ingredient for obtaining the quantum advantage," said Wilson. "They are very difficult to simulate and model classically, which has resulted in a dearth of theoretical work for this application."

The study, "Observation of Three-Photon Spontaneous Parametric Down-Conversion in a Superconducting Parametric Cavity," was published in *Physical Review X* on January 16, 2020. [29]

Stretched photons recover lost interference

The smallest pieces of nature—individual particles like electrons, for instance—are pretty much interchangeable. An electron is an electron is an electron, regardless of whether it's stuck in a lab on Earth, bound to an atom in some chalky moon dust or shot out of an extragalactic black hole in a superheated jet. In practice, though, differences in energy, motion or location can make it easy to tell two electrons apart.

One way to test for the similarity of particles like electrons is to bring them together at the same time and place and look for interference—a quantum effect that arises when particles (which can also behave like waves) meet. This interference is important for everything from fundamental tests of quantum physics to the speedy calculations of quantum computers, but creating it requires exquisite control over particles that are indistinguishable.

With an eye toward easing these requirements, researchers at the Joint Quantum Institute (JQI) and the Joint Center for Quantum Information and Computer Science (QIACS) have stretched out multiple photons—the quantum particles of light—and turned three distinct pulses into overlapping quantum waves. The work, which was published recently in the journal *Physical Review Letters*, restores the interference between photons and may eventually enable a demonstration of a particular kind of quantum supremacy—a clear speed advantage for computers that run on the rules of quantum physics.

"While photons do not directly interact with each other, when they meet they can exhibit a purely quantum feature absent from classical, non-quantum waves," says JQI Fellow Mohammad Hafezi, a co-author of the paper and an associate professor of physics and electrical and computer engineering at the University of Maryland.

These days, testing the similarity of photons is routine. It involves bringing them together at a device called a beam splitter and measuring the light coming out the other side.

When a single photon hits a balanced beam splitter, there's a 50 percent chance that it will travel straight through and a 50 percent chance that it will reflect off at an angle. By placing detectors in these two possible paths, scientists can measure which way individual photons end up going.

If two identical photons meet at the beam splitter, with one traveling to the east and the other to the north, it's tempting to apply the same treatment to each particle individually. It's true that both photons have an equal chance to travel through or reflect, but because the photons are indistinguishable, it's impossible to tell which one goes where.

The upshot of this identity confusion is that two of the possible combinations—those in which both photons travel straight through the beam splitter and both photons reflect—cancel each other out, leaving behind a distinctly quantum result: The photons team up and travel as a pair, always ending up at one of the two detectors together.

Now Hafezi and his colleagues from UMD and the University of Portsmouth have observed a similar interference effect with distinguishable photons—pulses of light just two picoseconds long (a picosecond is a trillionth of a second) that are separated by tens of picoseconds. The essential trick was finding a way to make the pulses less distinguishable so that they could interfere.

"We used a single optical element that's basically a fiber," says Sunil Mittal, a postdoctoral researcher at JQI and a co-author of the new paper. "It emulates the equivalent of about 150 kilometers of fiber, which stretches the photons. It acts a bit like a lens in reverse, causing different frequencies in the pulses to disperse and defocus."

By lengthening each photon by a factor of about 1000, the researchers could effectively erase the time delay between pulses and create large sections of overlap. That overlap made it more likely that photons would arrive to detectors at the same time and interfere with one another.

Prior experiments ([including by JQI and QuICS Fellow Christopher Monroe and collaborators](#)) have successfully interfered distinguishable photons, but those results required multiple channels for the incoming light—one for each photon. The new work uses just a single channel that carries light at standard telecom frequencies, which the authors say allows their system to easily scale to include many more photons.

Having more photons would allow researchers to study boson sampling, a computational problem that's thought to be too hard for ordinary computers (similar to [the problem Google is rumored to have solved](#)). In its standard form, boson sampling concerns photons—which are members of a family of particles called bosons—making their way through a big network of beam splitters. The photons enter the network through different channels and exit to detectors, with one detector per channel.

The boson sampling "problem" amounts to doing a complicated coin flip, since each experiment samples from the underlying chance that (say) three photons entering the network at ports 1, 2 and 5 will end up at outputs 2, 3 and 7. The interference inside the network is complex and impossible to track with a regular computer—even for modest numbers of photons—and it gets

harder the more photons you add. But with real photons in a real network, the problem would solve itself.

"The connection of this experiment to boson sampling is a great example of how the growing synergy between quantum many-body physics and computational complexity theory can lead to great progress in both fields," says JQI and QuICS Fellow Alexey Gorshkov, an adjunct associate professor of physics at UMD and another co-author of the paper.

But up until now, boson sampling experiments have suffered from the problem of scalability: Solving the problem for more photons meant adding more channels, which meant taking up more space and timing the arrival of yet more photons to ensure their interference. Mittal says that their technique potentially solves both of these problems.

"In our system, the inputs don't need to be in different fibers," Mittal says. "All the photons can travel in a single fiber and the time differences can be erased by the same method we've already demonstrated." Another off-the-shelf device could mimic the network of beam splitters, with the added benefit of allowing for easy reconfiguration, Mittal says. "We're not doing boson sampling now, but it would be relatively easy to go in that direction." [28]

Quantum interference in the service of information technology

Scientists from the Faculty of Physics, University of Warsaw, in collaboration with the University of Oxford and NIST, have shown that quantum interference enables processing of large sets of data faster and more accurately than with standard methods. Their studies may boost applications of quantum technologies in artificial intelligence, robotics and medical diagnostics, for example. The results of this work have been published in *Science Advances*.

Contemporary science, medicine, engineering and information technology demand efficient processing of data—still images, sound and radio signals, as well as information coming from different sensors and cameras. Since the 1970s, this has been achieved by means of the Fast Fourier Transform algorithm (FFT). The FFT makes it possible to efficiently compress and transmit data, store pictures, broadcast digital TV, and talk over a mobile phone. Without this algorithm, medical imaging systems based on magnetic resonance or ultrasound would not have been developed. However, it is still too slow for many demanding applications.

To meet this goal, scientists have been trying for years to harness quantum mechanics. This resulted in the development of a quantum counterpart of the FFT, the Quantum Fourier Transform (QFT), which can be realized with a quantum computer. As the quantum computer simultaneously processes all possible values (so-called "superpositions") of input data, the number of operations decreases considerably.

In spite of the rapid development of quantum computing, there is a relative stagnation in the field of quantum algorithms. Now scientists have shown that this result can be improved, and in a rather surprising way.

Quantum interference in service of information technology. Credit: M. Czerniawski, L. Kaluza, Promotion Office UW

Kravchuk transform

Mathematics describes many transforms. One of them is a Kravchuk transform. It is very similar to the FFT, as it allows processing of discrete (e.g. digital) data, but uses Kravchuk functions to decompose the input sequence into the spectrum. At the end of the 1990s, the Kravchuk transform was "rediscovered" in computer science. It turned out to be excellent for image and sound processing. It allowed scientists to develop new and much more precise algorithms for the recognition of printed and handwritten text (including even the Chinese language), gestures, sign language, people, and faces. A dozen years ago, it was shown that this transform is ideal for processing low-quality, noisy and distorted data, and thus it could be used for computer vision in robotics and autonomous vehicles. There is no fast algorithm to compute this transform, but it turns out that quantum mechanics allows one to circumvent this limitation.

"Holy Grail" of computer science

In their article published in *Science Advances*, scientists from the University of Warsaw—Dr. Magdalena Stobinska and Dr. Adam Buraczewski, scientists from the University of Oxford, and NIST, have shown that the simplest quantum gate, which interferes between two quantum states, essentially computes the Kravchuk transform. Such a gate could be a well-known optical device—a beam splitter, which divides photons between two outputs. When two states of quantum light enter its input ports from two sides, they interfere. For example, two identical photons, which simultaneously enter this device, bunch into pairs and come out together by the same exit port. This is the well-known Hong-Ou-Mandel effect, which can also be extended to states made of many particles. By interfering "packets" consisting of many indistinguishable photons (indistinguishability is very important, as its absence destroys the quantum effect), which encode the information, one obtains a specialized quantum computer that computes the Kravchuk transform.

The experiment was performed in a quantum optical laboratory at the Department of Physics at the University of Oxford, where a special setup was built to produce multiphoton quantum states, so-called Fock states. This laboratory is equipped with TES (Transmission Edge Sensors), developed by NIST, which operate at near-absolute zero temperatures. These detectors possess a unique feature: they can actually count photons. This allows one to precisely read the quantum state leaving the beam splitter and thus, the result of the computation. Most importantly, such a computation of the quantum Kravchuk transform always takes the same time, regardless of the size of the input data set. It is the "Holy Grail" of computer science: an algorithm consisting of just one operation, implemented with a single gate. Of course, in order to obtain the result in practice, one needs to perform the experiment several hundred times to get the statistics. This is

how every quantum computer works. However, it does not take long, because the laser produces dozens of millions of multiphoton "packets" per second.

The result obtained by scientists from Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States will find applications in the development of new quantum technologies and quantum algorithms. Its range of uses go beyond quantum photonics, since a similar quantum interference can be observed in many different quantum systems. The University of Warsaw applied for an international patent for this innovation. The scientists hope that the Kravchuk transform will soon find use in quantum computation, where it will become a component of new algorithms, especially in hybrid quantum-classical computers that merge quantum circuits with "normal" digital layouts. [27]

Improving the signal-to-noise ratio in quantum chromodynamics simulations

Over the last few decades, the exponential increase in computer power and accompanying increase in the quality of algorithms has enabled theoretical and particle physicists to perform more complex and precise simulations of fundamental particles and their interactions. If you increase the number of lattice points in a simulation, it becomes harder to tell the difference between the observed result of the simulation and the surrounding noise. A new study by Marco Ce, a physicist based at the Helmholtz-Institut Mainz in Germany and recently published in *EPJ Plus*, describes a technique for simulating particle ensembles that are 'large' (at least by the standards of particle physics). This improves the signal-to-noise ratio and thus the precision of the simulation; crucially, it also can be used to model ensembles of baryons: a category of elementary particles that includes the protons and neutrons that make up atomic nuclei.

Ce's simulations employ a Monte Carlo algorithm: a generic computational method that relies on repeated random sampling to obtain numerical results. These algorithms have a wide variety of uses, and in mathematical physics they are particularly well suited to evaluating complicated integrals, and to modelling systems with many degrees of freedom.

More precisely, the type of Monte Carlo algorithm used here involves multi-level sampling. This means that the samples are taken with different levels of accuracy, which is less computationally expensive than methods in which the sampling accuracy is uniform. Multi-level Monte Carlo methods have previously been applied to ensembles of bosons (the class of particle that, self-evidently, includes the now famous Higgs particle), but not to the more complex fermions. This latter category includes electrons as well as baryons: all the main components of 'everyday' matter.

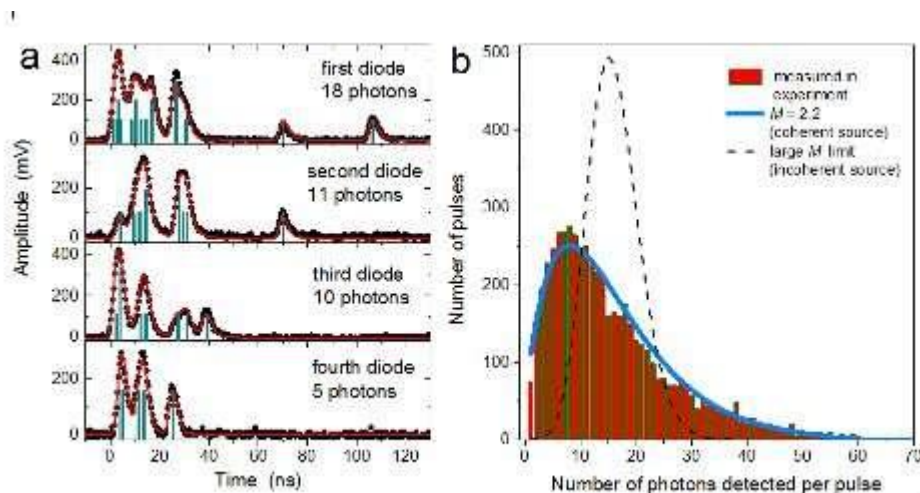
Ce concludes his study by noting that there are many other problems in particle physics where computation is affected by high signal-to-noise ratios, and which might benefit from this approach. [26]

Superradiance of an ensemble of nuclei excited by a free electron laser

A collaboration of scientists from five of the world's most advanced x-ray sources in Europe, Japan and the US, has succeeded in verifying a basic prediction of the quantum-mechanical behavior of resonant systems. In the study published in *Nature Physics*, they were able to carefully follow, one x-ray at a time, the decay of nuclei in a perfect crystal after excitation with a flash of x-rays from the world's strongest pulsed source, the SACLA x-ray free electron laser in Harima, Japan. They observed a dramatic reduction of the time taken to emit the first x-ray as the number of x-rays increased. This behavior is in good agreement with one limit of a superradiant system, as predicted by Robert H. Dicke in 1954.

Dicke predicted that, in the same way that a large collection of bells will act differently from a single bell that is tapped, a group of atoms will emit light in response to excitation at a different rate—faster—than a single atom. He predicted a "superradiant" state, where, when large numbers of photons or quanta are put into a system with many atoms, the decay becomes much faster than for a single atom in isolation. Taking the analogy of bells, he was suggesting that if you have a large number of bells that you excite together, they can ring loudly, but the sound dies out much more quickly than the gentle fading of a single bell. His approach included quantum effects, predicting that the fastest decay occurred when the number of quanta was half the number of atoms.

The concept of superradiance has since been verified, and, indeed, is a touchstone in the field of quantum optics. However, Dicke also predicted that a very strong change in decay rate would occur even when the number of quanta in the system was much less than the number of atoms in the system. This is what was investigated in the recent experiments at SACLA and the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) in France.



The new work replaced the low-energy quanta envisioned by Dicke with high-energy x-rays, allowing the researchers to follow the decay of the system one quantum—meaning one x-ray—at a time. However, getting strong pulses of x-rays is much harder than for low energy light, and required using the most modern sources, x-ray [free electron lasers](#). These sources have only become available recently, and of the few operating in the world, only one, SACLA, at the RIKEN SPring-8 Center in Japan, achieves the required high energy. Using this source an international team of researchers from the ESRF in France, SPring-8 in Japan, DESY in Germany, the APS in the USA, and the Kurchatov Institute in Russia, were able to precisely follow the decay for up to 68 x-ray photons. They observed the accelerated emission of the first photon to be in excellent agreement with Dicke's prediction. The single-photon decay under the same experimental conditions was studied at the ESRF.

According to Alfred Baron of the RIKEN SPring-8 Center, "Through this work, we were able to demonstrate Dicke's work to be correct, and were also able to offer an alternative picture of the decay properties, based on a statistical approach. This will be valuable for understanding future work." [25]

Sustainable solvent platform for photon upconversion increases solar utilization efficiency

The conversion of solar energy into electricity is currently restricted by a concept known as the Shockley-Queisser limit. This limitation allows only photons that have higher energies than those of the bandgap to be used, while those with lower energies are wasted. In an effort to obtain a solution to this problem and make solar energy conversion more efficient, researchers have developed a process of converting photons with lower energies into ones with higher energies, called photon upconversion.

In the past decade, a method of photon upconversion that uses triplet-triplet annihilation (TTA) of organic molecules has drawn attention because it is presently the only method applicable to weak light such as sunlight. This method combines two kinds of organic molecules or chromophores, a sensitizer and an emitter. The sensitizer will absorb a photon and convert it to its excited triplet state. The excitation [energy](#) is then transferred to the emitter. When two emitters with excitation energy collide, one will convert to its lowest excited singlet state and release an upconverted photon that can be harvested for energy conversion.

While many studies into photon upconversion have been carried out in organic solvents, their practical use is limited due to the high vapor pressures, vapor toxicity, flammability, and lack of thermal stability of the solvent mixtures. Multiple approaches have been proposed to overcome these limitations, including the use of viscous fluidic media like [ionic liquids](#) that have low vapor pressures and high thermal stability. Ionic liquids are also limited in practicality, however, due to the relatively high costs of starting materials and synthetic processes, as well as their poor biodegradability.

To fundamentally resolve these previous problems, scientists at Tokyo Tech developed a TTA photon upconversion using a new class of liquids known as deep eutectic solvents (DESs). DESs are a potential alternative to ionic fluids, because they possess desirable properties similar to those of ionic fluids and can be created through a simple mixing of two substances, a hydrogen bond donor and a hydrogen bond acceptor, without the need for synthetic processes. The starting substances for the generation of DESs are also generally much cheaper, safer and more biodegradable than those needed for the creation of ionic liquids, making them an ideal alternative.

Photographs of the DESs and photon upconverters are shown in Fig. 1. The prepared DES was optically transparent and colorless and used as the solvent for the sensitizer and emitter chromophores. The sample converts weak incident green light (wavelength: 532 nm; power: 2-3 mW) into blue emission (wavelength: ~440 nm). The expected high thermal stability was confirmed by the absence of ignition and fuming during exposure to a burner flame for 1 min.

Notably, the photon upconversion quantum yield of the samples reached 0.21 (where the maximum quantum yield is defined as 0.5; one higher-energy photon is created by using two lower-energy photons at maximum in photon upconversion). This corresponds to the upconversion quantum efficiency of 42 percent (whose maximum is defined as 100 percent). This is a relatively high efficiency.

The scientists developed a novel material platform for TTA photon upconversion using cheaper, less toxic, and thermally stable DESs. This achievement is considered as an important landmark for the realization of practical application of [photon](#) upconversion technology. [24]

Graphene single photon detectors

Considerable interest in new single-photon detector technologies has been scaling in this past decade. Nowadays, quantum optics and quantum information applications are, among others, one of the main precursors for the accelerated development of single-photon detectors. Capable of sensing an increase in temperature of an individual absorbed photon, they can be used to help us study and understand, for example, galaxy formation through the cosmic infrared background, observe entanglement of superconducting qubits or improve quantum key distribution methods for ultra-secure communications.

Current detectors are efficient at detecting incoming photons that have relatively high energies, but their sensitivity drastically decreases for low frequency, low energy photons. In recent years, graphene has shown to be an exceptionally efficient photo-detector for a wide range of the electromagnetic spectrum, enabling new types of applications for this field.

Thus, in a recent paper published in the journal *Physical Review Applied*, and highlighted in *APS Physics*, ICFO researcher and group leader Prof. Dmitri Efetov, in collaboration with researchers from Harvard University, MIT, Raytheon BBN Technologies and Pohang University of Science and

Technology, have proposed the use of graphene-based Josephson junctions (GJJs) to detect single photons in a wide electromagnetic spectrum, ranging from the visible down to the low end of radio frequencies, in the gigahertz range.

In their study, the scientists envisioned a sheet of graphene that is placed in between two superconducting layers. The so created Josephson junction allows a supercurrent to flow across the graphene when it is cooled down to 25 mK. Under these conditions, the heat capacity of the graphene is so low, that when a single photon hits the graphene layer, it is capable of heating up the electron bath so significantly, that the supercurrent becomes resistive – overall giving rise to an easily detectable voltage spike across the device. In addition, they also found that this effect would occur almost instantaneously, thus enabling the ultrafast conversion of absorbed light into electrical signals, allowing for a rapid reset and readout.

The results of the study confirm that we can expect a rapid progress in integrating graphene and other 2-D materials with conventional electronics platforms, such as in CMOS-chips, and shows a promising path towards single-photon-resolving imaging arrays, quantum information processing applications of optical and microwave photons, and other applications that would benefit from the quantum-limited detection of low-energy photons. [23]

Engineers develop key mathematical formula for driving quantum experiments

Since he was a graduate student, Washington University in St. Louis systems engineer Jr-Shin Li has provided specific mathematical information to experimentalists and clinicians who need it to perform high-resolution magnetic resonance applications, such as body MRIs for medical diagnosis or spectroscopy for uncovering protein structures. Now, after more than a decade of work, he has developed a formula that researchers can use to generate that information themselves.

Li, the Das Family Career Development Distinguished Associate Professor in the School of Engineering & Applied Science, and his collaborators have derived a mathematical formula to design broadband pulse sequences to excite a population of nuclear spins over a wide band of frequencies. Such a broadband excitation leads to enhanced signal or sensitivity in diverse quantum experiments across fields from protein spectroscopy to quantum optics.

The research, the first to find that designing the pulse can be done analytically, was published in Nature Communications Sept. 5.

"This design problem is traditionally done by purely numerical optimization," Li said. "Because one has to design a common input—a magnetic field to excite many, many particles—the problem is challenging. In many cases in numerical optimization, the algorithms fail to converge or take enormous amounts of time to get a feasible solution."

For more than a decade, Li has sought a better way for pulse design using the similarity between spins and springs by applying numerical experiments. Spin is a form of angular momentum carried by elementary particles. Spin systems are nonlinear and difficult to work with, Li said, while spring systems, or harmonic oscillators, are linear and easier to work with. While a doctoral student at Harvard University, Li found a solution by projecting the nonlinear spin system onto the linear spring system, but was unable to prove it mathematically until recently.

"We have very rigorous proof that such a projection from nonlinear to linear is valid, and we also have done a lot of numerical simulations to demonstrate the discovery," Li said. "My collaborator, Steffan Glaser (of the Technische Universität Munich), has been in this field of NMR spectroscopy for more than 20 years, and he is confident that if the quantum pulses perform well in computer simulations, they may perform the same in experimental systems."

The team plans to conduct various experiments in magnetic resonance to verify the analytical invention.

The theoretical work opens up new avenues for pulse sequence design in quantum control. Li plans to create a website where collaborators can enter their parameter values to generate the pulse formula they will need in their quantum experiments. [22]

New tool for characterizing quantum simulators

Physicists are developing quantum simulators, to help solve problems that are beyond the reach of conventional computers. However, they first need new tools to ensure that the simulators work properly. Innsbruck researchers around Rainer Blatt and Christian Roos, together with researchers from the Universities of Ulm and Strathclyde, have now implemented a new technique in the laboratory that can be used to efficiently characterize the complex states of quantum simulators. The technique, called matrix product state tomography, could become a new standard tool for characterizing quantum simulators.

Many phenomena in the quantum world cannot be investigated directly in the laboratory, and even supercomputers fail when trying to simulate them. However, scientists are now able to control various quantum systems in the laboratory very precisely and these systems can be used to simulate other quantum systems. Such Quantum Simulators are therefore considered to be one of the first concrete applications of the second quantum revolution.

However, the characterization of large quantum states, which is necessary to guide the development of large-scale quantum simulators, proves to be difficult. The current gold standard for quantum-state characterization in the laboratory - quantum-state tomography - is only suitable for small quantum systems composed of a handful of quantum particles. Researchers from the Institute of Experimental Physics at the University of Innsbruck and the Institute for Quantum Optics and Quantum Information of the Austrian Academy of Sciences have now established a new method in the laboratory that can be used to efficiently characterize large quantum states.

A collaborative effort

In ion traps, charged atoms (ions) are cooled to temperatures close to absolute zero and manipulated with the aid of lasers. Such systems represent a promising approach to performing quantum simulations that can go beyond the capabilities of modern supercomputers. The Innsbruck quantum physicists are amongst the world leaders in this field and can currently entangle 20 or more ions in their traps. In order to fully characterize such large quantum systems, they need new methods. For this, theorists around Martin Plenio from the University of Ulm, Germany, came to their aid. In 2010, the Plenio team proposed a new method for the characterization of complex quantum states called matrix-product-state tomography. Using this method, the state of a group of entangled quantum particles can be estimated precisely without the effort increasing dramatically as the number of particles in the group is increased. In collaboration with the teams around Martin Plenio from Ulm and Andrew Daley from the University of Strathclyde in Scotland, the Innsbruck experimental physicists around Christian Roos, Ben Lanyon and Christine Maier have now implemented this procedure in the laboratory.

More efficient measurements

As a test case, the physicists built a quantum simulator with up to 14 quantum bits (atoms), that was first prepared in a simple initial state without quantum correlations. Next, the researchers entangled the atoms with laser light and observed the dynamical propagation of entanglement in the system. "With the new method, we can determine the quantum state of the whole system by measuring only a small fraction of the system properties," says START prize winner Ben Lanyon. The theorists around Martin Plenio took the characterization of the global quantum state from the measured data: "The method is based on the fact that we can theoretically describe locally-distributed entanglement well and can now also measure it in the laboratory."

When the work group of Rainer Blatt realized the first quantum byte in 2005, more than 6,000 measurements were required for the characterization of the quantum state, taken over a period of ten hours. The new method requires only 27 measurements to characterise the same size system, taken over around 10 minutes. "We were able to show that this method can be used to identify large and complex quantum states efficiently," says Christine Maier, a team member from Innsbruck. Now the scientists want to further develop the algorithms so that they can also be used flexibly by other research groups.

New gold standard

The new method allows the complete characterization of systems containing large numbers of correlated quantum particles and thus provides a comparison option for quantum simulations. "We can use the new technique to calibrate quantum simulators, by comparing the states that we find in the lab with the ones expected from analytical calculations," explains Christian Roos. "Then we know if the simulator does what we want." The new method offers physicians a tool for many applications and could become a new standard for quantum simulations. [21]

Flip-flop qubits: Radical new quantum computing design invented

Engineers at Australia's University of New South Wales have invented a radical new architecture for quantum computing, based on novel 'flip-flop qubits', that promises to make the large-scale manufacture of quantum chips dramatically cheaper - and easier - than thought possible.

The new chip design, detailed in the journal *Nature Communications*, allows for a silicon quantum processor that can be scaled up without the precise placement of atoms required in other approaches. Importantly, it allows quantum bits (or 'qubits') - the basic unit of information in a quantum computer - to be placed hundreds of nanometres apart and still remain coupled.

The design was conceived by a team led by Andrea Morello, Program Manager in UNSW-based ARC Centre of Excellence for Quantum Computation and Communication Technology (CQC2T) in Sydney, who said fabrication of the new design should be easily within reach of today's technology.

Lead author Guilherme Tosi, a Research Fellow at CQC2T, developed the pioneering concept along with Morello and co-authors Fahd Mohiyaddin, Vivien Schmitt and Stefanie Tenberg of CQC2T, with collaborators Rajib Rahman and Gerhard Klimeck of Purdue University in the USA.

"It's a brilliant design, and like many such conceptual leaps, it's amazing no-one had thought of it before," said Morello.

"What Guilherme and the team have invented is a new way to define a 'spin qubit' that uses both the electron and the nucleus of the atom. Crucially, this new qubit can be controlled using electric signals, instead of magnetic ones. Electric signals are significantly easier to distribute and localise within an electronic chip."

Tosi said the design sidesteps a challenge that all spin-based silicon qubits were expected to face as teams begin building larger and larger arrays of qubits: the need to space them at a distance of only 10-20 nanometres, or just 50 atoms apart.

"If they're too close, or too far apart, the 'entanglement' between quantum bits - which is what makes quantum computers so special - doesn't occur," Tosi said.

Researchers at UNSW already lead the world in making spin qubits at this scale, said Morello.

"But if we want to make an array of thousands or millions of qubits so close together, it means that all the control lines, the control electronics and the readout devices must also be fabricated at that nanometric scale, and with that pitch and that density of electrodes. This new concept suggests another pathway."

At the other end of the spectrum are superconducting circuits - pursued for instance by IBM and Google - and ion traps. These systems are large and easier to fabricate, and are currently leading the way in the number of qubits that can be operated. However, due to their larger dimensions, in the long run they may face challenges when trying to assemble and operate millions of qubits, as required by the most useful quantum algorithms.

"Our new silicon-based approach sits right at the sweet spot," said Morello, a professor of quantum engineering at UNSW. "It's easier to fabricate than atomic-scale devices, but still allows us to place a million qubits on a square millimetre."

In the single-atom qubit used by Morello's team, and which Tosi's new design applies, a silicon chip is covered with a layer of insulating silicon oxide, on top of which rests a pattern of metallic electrodes that operate at temperatures near absolute zero and in the presence of a very strong magnetic field.

At the core is a phosphorus atom, from which Morello's team has previously built two functional qubits using an electron and the nucleus of the atom. These qubits, taken individually, have demonstrated world-record coherence times.

Tosi's conceptual breakthrough is the creation of an entirely new type of qubit, using both the nucleus and the electron. In this approach, a qubit '0' state is defined when the spin of the electron is down and the nucleus spin is up, while the '1' state is when the electron spin is up, and the nuclear spin is down.

"We call it the 'flip-flop' qubit," said Tosi. "To operate this qubit, you need to pull the electron a little bit away from the nucleus, using the electrodes at the top. By doing so, you also create an electric dipole."

"This is the crucial point," adds Morello. "These electric dipoles interact with each other over fairly large distances, a good fraction of a micron, or 1,000 nanometres.

"This means we can now place the single-atom qubits much further apart than previously thought possible," he continued. "So there is plenty of space to intersperse the key classical components such as interconnects, control electrodes and readout devices, while retaining the precise atom-like nature of the quantum bit."

Morello called Tosi's concept as significant as Bruce Kane seminal 1998 paper in Nature. Kane, then a senior research associate at UNSW, hit upon a new architecture that could make a silicon-based quantum computer a reality - triggering Australia's race to build a quantum computer.

"Like Kane's paper, this is a theory, a proposal - the qubit has yet to be built," said Morello. "We have some preliminary experimental data that suggests it's entirely feasible, so we're working to fully demonstrate this. But I think this is as visionary as Kane's original paper."

Building a quantum computer has been called the 'space race of the 21st century' - a difficult and ambitious challenge with the potential to deliver revolutionary tools for tackling otherwise impossible calculations, with a plethora of useful applications in healthcare, defence, finance, chemistry and materials development, software debugging, aerospace and transport. Its speed and power lie in the fact that quantum systems can host multiple 'superpositions' of different

initial states, and in the spooky 'entanglement' that only occurs at the quantum level the fundamental particles.

"It will take great engineering to bring quantum computing to commercial reality, and the work we see from this extraordinary team puts Australia in the driver's seat," said Mark Hoffman, UNSW's Dean of Engineering. "It's a great example of how UNSW, like many of the world's leading research universities, is today at the heart of a sophisticated global knowledge system that is shaping our future."

The UNSW team has struck a A\$83 million deal between UNSW, telco giant Telstra, Australia's Commonwealth Bank and the Australian and New South Wales governments to develop, by 2022, a 10-qubit prototype silicon quantum integrated circuit - the first step in building the world's first quantum computer in silicon.

In August, the partners launched Silicon Quantum Computing Pty Ltd, Australia's first quantum computing company, to advance the development and commercialisation of the team's unique technologies. The NSW Government pledged A\$8.7 million, UNSW A\$25 million, the Commonwealth Bank A\$14 million, Telstra A\$10 million and the Federal Government A\$25 million. [20]

New quantum memory device small enough to fit on a chip

A team of researchers from the U.S. and Italy has built a quantum memory device that is approximately 1000 times smaller than similar devices—small enough to install on a chip. In their paper published in the journal *Science*, the team describes building the memory device and their plans for adding to its functionality.

Scientists have been working steadily toward building quantum computers and networks, and have made strides in both areas in recent years. But one inhibiting factor is the construction of quantum memory devices. Such devices have been built, but until now, they have been too large to put on a chip, a requirement for practical applications. In this new effort, the researchers report developing a quantum memory device that is not only small enough to fit on a chip, but is also able to retrieve data on demand.

The device is very small, approximately 10 by 0.7 micrometers and has an odd shape, like a Toblerone candy bar—long and thin with a notched triangular shape, with mirrors on either end. It is made of yttrium orthovanadate with small amounts of neodymium, which form a cavity. These cavities in turn hold a crystal cavity that traps single photons encoding data information (zero, one or both).

To operate the device, the researchers fired laser pulses at it, causing photons to assemble in the comb, which forced them to be absorbed—the configuration also caused the photons to emerge from the comb after 75 nanoseconds. During the time period when the photons were absorbed, the researchers fired dual laser pulses at the comb to delay the reemergence of the

photons for 10 nanoseconds, which allowed for on-demand retrieval of data. During the time period when the photons were held, they existed as dual pulses—early and late.

To show that the device was actually storing data information, the team compared the wavefunction of the photons both before and after storage and found them to be virtually unchanged, meaning they still held their zero, one or both state—it had not been destroyed, which meant the device was truly a quantum memory device. [19]

How to store data on magnets the size of a single atom

The cutting edge of data storage research is working at the level of individual atoms and molecules, representing the ultimate limit of technological miniaturisation.

Magnetism is useful in many ways, and the magnetic memory effect appears even at the atomic level.

There is an adage that says that data will expand to fill all available capacity. Perhaps ten or 20 years ago, it was common to stockpile software programs, MP3 music, films and other files, which may have taken years to collect. In the days when hard disk drives offered a few tens of gigabytes of storage, running out of space was almost inevitable.

Now that we have fast broadband internet and think nothing of downloading a 4.7 gigabyte DVD, we can amass data even more quickly. Estimates of the total amount of data held worldwide are to rise from 4.4 trillion gigabytes in 2013 to 44 trillion gigabytes by 2020. This means that we are generating an average of 15m gigabytes per day. Even though hard disk drives are now measured in thousands of gigabytes rather than tens, we still have a storage problem.

Research and development is focused on developing new means of data storage that are more dense and so can store greater amounts of data, and do so in a more energy efficient way. Sometimes this involves updating established techniques: recently IBM announced a new magnetic tape technology that can store 25 gigabytes per square inch, a new world record for the 60-year-old technology. While current magnetic or solid-state consumer hard drives are more dense at around 200 gigabytes per square inch, magnetic tapes are still frequently used for data back-up.

However, the cutting edge of data storage research is working at the level of individual atoms and molecules, representing the ultimate limit of technological miniaturisation.

The quest for atomic magnets

Current magnetic data storage technologies – those used in traditional hard disks with spinning platters, the standard until a few years ago and still common today – are built using “top-down” methods. This involves making thin layers from a large piece of ferromagnetic material, each containing the many magnetic domains that are used to hold data. Each of these magnetic

domains is made of a large collection of magnetised atoms, whose magnetic polarity is set by the hard disk's read/write head to represent data as either a binary one or zero.

An alternative "bottom-up" method would involve constructing storage devices by placing individual atoms or molecules one by one, each capable of storing a single bit of information. Magnetic domains retain their magnetic memory due to communication between groups of neighbouring magnetised atoms.

Single-atom or single-molecule magnets on the other hand do not require this communication with their neighbours to retain their magnetic memory. Instead, the memory effect arises from quantum mechanics. So because atoms or molecules are much, much smaller than the magnetic domains currently used, and can be used individually rather than in groups, they can be packed more closely together which could result in an enormous increase in data density.

Working with atoms and molecules like this is not science fiction. Magnetic memory effects in single-molecule magnets (SMMs) were first demonstrated in 1993, and similar effects for singleatom magnets were shown in 2016.

Raising the temperature

The main problem standing in the way of moving these technologies out of the lab and into the mainstream is that they do not yet work at ambient temperatures. Both single atoms and SMMs require cooling with liquid helium (at a temperature of -269°C), an expensive and limited resource. So research effort over the last 25 years has concentrated on raising the temperature at which magnetic hysteresis – a demonstration of the magnetic memory effect – can be observed. An important target is -196°C , because this is the temperature that can be achieved with liquid nitrogen, which is abundant and cheap.

It took 18 years for the first substantive step towards raising the temperature in which magnetic memory is possible in SMMs – an increase of 10°C achieved by researchers in California. But now our research team at the University of Manchester's School of Chemistry have achieved magnetic hysteresis in a SMM at -213°C using a new molecule based on the rare earth element dysprosocenium, as reported in a letter to the journal Nature. With a leap of 56°C , this is only 17°C away from the temperature of liquid nitrogen.

Future uses

There are other challenges, however. In order to practically store individual bits of data, molecules must be fixed to surfaces. This has been demonstrated with SMMs in the past, but not for this latest generation of high-temperature SMMs. On the other hand, magnetic memory in single atoms has already been demonstrated on a surface.

Optical control of magnetic memory—New insights into fundamental mechanisms

This is an important clue for our theoretical understanding of optically controlled magnetic data storage media. The findings are published at August 25th in the journal Scientific Reports.

The demands placed on digital storage media are continuously increasing. Rapidly increasing quantities of data and new technological applications demand memory that can store large amounts of information in very little space and permit this information to be utilised dependably with high access speeds.

Re-writeable magnetic data storage devices using laser light appear to have especially good prospects. Researchers have been working on this new technology for several years. "However, there are still unresolved questions about the fundamental mechanisms and the exact manner in which optically controlled magnetic storage devices operate", says Dr. Florian Kronast, assistant head of the Materials for Green Spintronics department at the Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin (HZB).

A research team led by him has now succeeded in making an important step toward better understanding of this very promising storage technology. The scientists were able to empirically establish for the first time that the warming of the storage material by the energy of the laser light plays an instrumental role when toggling the magnetisation alignments and that the change in the material only takes place under certain conditions.

Making precise measurements in tiny laser spots

The HZB scientists together with those of Freie Universität Berlin and Universität Regensburg studied the microscopic processes at extremely high resolution while irradiating a thin layer of magnetic material using circularly polarised laser light. To do this, they directed the light of an infrared laser onto a nanometre-thick layer of alloy made from the metals terbium and iron (TbFe). What was special about the experimental set-up was that the narrowly focussed spot of laser light had a diameter of only three microns. "That is far less than was usual in prior experiments", says HZB scientist Ashima Arora, first author of the study. And it provided the researchers with unsurpassed detail resolution for studying the phenomena. The images of the magnetic domains in the alloy that the team created with the help of X-rays from the BESSY II synchrotron radiation source revealed fine features that themselves were only 30 nanometres in size.

The crucial thing occurs in the boundary ring

The results of the measurements prove that a ring-shaped region forms around the tiny laser spot and separates the two magnetically contrasting domains from one another. The extant magnetisation pattern inside the ring is completely erased by the thermal energy of the laser light. Outside the ring, however, it remains in its original state. Within the boundary zone itself, a temperature distribution arises that facilitates a change in magnetisation by displacing the

domain boundaries. "It is only there that the toggling of magnetic properties can proceed, permitting a device to store re-writable data", explains Arora.

Surprising influence of the layer thickness

"These new insights will assist in the development of optically controlled magnetic storage devices having the best possible properties," in the view of Kronast. An additional effect contributes to better understanding the physical processes that are important in this phenomenon, which researchers at HZB unexpectedly observed for the first time. The way the toggling of the magnetisations happens is highly dependent on the layer thickness of the material irradiated by the laser. It changes over an interval of 10 to 20 nanometres thickness.

"This is a clear indication that two contrasting mechanisms are involved and compete with one another", Kronast explains. He and his team suspect two complex physical effects for this. To confirm their suspicions, though, further empirical and theoretical studies are necessary. [17]

Photosensitive perovskites change shape when exposed to light

A crystalline material that changes shape in response to light could form the heart of novel lightactivated devices. Perovskite crystals have received a lot of attention for their efficiency at converting sunlight into electricity, but new work by scientists at KAUST shows their potential uses extend far beyond the light-harvesting layer of solar panels.

Photostriction is the property of certain materials to undergo a change in internal strain, and therefore shape, with exposure to light. Organic photostrictive materials offer the greatest shape change so far reported in response to light—a parameter known as their photostrictive coefficient—but their response is slow and unstable under ambient conditions.

KAUST electrical engineer Jr-Hau He and his colleagues have looked for photostriction in a new family of materials, the perovskites. "Perovskites are one of the hottest optical materials," says He. His work now shows there's more to their interesting optical properties than solar energy harvesting. The researchers tested a perovskite called MAPbBr₃ and revealed it had strong and robust photostriction behavior.

To extensively test the material's photostriction capabilities, the team developed a new method. They used Raman spectroscopy, which probes the molecular vibrations within the structure. When bathed in light, photostriction alters the internal strain in the material, which then shifts the internal pattern of vibrations. By measuring the shift in the Raman signal when the material was placed under mechanical pressure, the team could calibrate the technique and so use it to quantify the effect of photostriction.

"We demonstrated that in situ Raman spectroscopy with confocal microscopy is a powerful characterization tool for conveniently measuring intrinsic photoinduced lattice deformation," says Tzu-Chiao Wei, a member of the team. "The same approach could be applied to measure photostriction in other materials," he adds.

The perovskite material proved to have a significant photostriction coefficient of 1.25%. The researchers also showed that the perovskite's photostriction was partly due to the photovoltaic effect—the phenomenon at the heart of most solar cell operation. The spontaneous generation of positive and negative charges when the perovskite is bathed in light polarizes the material, which induces a movement in the ions the material is made from.

The robust and stable photostriction of perovskite makes it useful for a range of possible devices, says Wei. "We will use this material to fabricate next-generation optoelectronic devices, including wireless remote switchable devices and other light-controlled applications," he says. [16]

Conformal metasurface coating eliminates crosstalk and shrinks waveguides

The properties of materials can behave in funny ways. Tweak one aspect to make a device smaller or less leaky, for example, and something else might change in an undesirable way, so that engineers play a game of balancing one characteristic against another. Now a team of Penn State electrical engineers have a way to simultaneously control diverse optical properties of dielectric waveguides by using a two-layer coating, each layer with a near zero thickness and weight.

"Imagine the water faucet in your home, which is an essential every-day device," said Douglas H. Werner, John L. and Genevieve H. McCain Chair Professor of Electrical Engineering. "Without pipes to carry the water from its source to the faucet, the device is worthless. It is the same with 'waveguides.' They carry electromagnetic or optical signals from the source to the device—an antenna or other microwave, millimeter-wave or terahertz device. Waveguides are an essential component in any electromagnetic or optical system, but they are often overlooked because much of the focus has been on the devices themselves and not the waveguides."

According to Zhi Hao Jiang, former postdoctoral fellow at Penn State and now a professor at Southeast University, Nanjing, China, metasurface coatings allow researchers to shrink the diameter of waveguides and control the waveguiding characteristics with unprecedented flexibility.

The researchers developed a material that is so thin it is almost 2-dimensional, with characteristics that manipulate and enhance properties of the waveguide.

They developed and tested two conformal coatings, one for guiding the signal and one to cloak the waveguide. They created the coatings by judiciously engineering the patterning on the surfaces to enable new and transformative waveguide functionality. The coatings are applied to a rod-shaped, Teflon waveguide with the guiding layer touching the Teflon and the cloaking layer on the outside.

This quasi 2-dimensional conformal coating that is configured as a cloaking material can solve the crosstalk and blockage problem. Dielectric waveguides are not usually used singly, but in bundles. Unfortunately, conventional waveguides leak, allowing the signal from one waveguide to interfere with those located nearby.

The researchers also note in today's (Aug. 25) issue of Nature Communications that "the effectiveness of the artificial coating can be well maintained for waveguide bends by properly matching the dispersion properties of the metasurface unit cells." Although the coating can be applied to a bend in the waveguide, the waveguide cannot be bent after the coating is applied.

Improving the properties of the waveguide to carefully control polarization and other attributes allows the waveguides to be smaller, and alleviating crosstalk allows these smaller waveguides to be more closely bundled. Smaller waveguides more closely bundled could lead to increased miniaturization.

"In terms of applications these would include millimeter-wave/terahertz/infrared systems for sensing, communications, and imaging that need to manipulate polarization, squeeze signals through waveguides with a smaller cross-section, and/or require dense deployment of interconnected components," said Jiang.

Also working on this project was Lei Kang, research associate in electrical engineering, Penn State. [15]

A nano-roundabout for light

Just like in normal road traffic, crossings are indispensable in optical signal processing. In order to avoid collisions, a clear traffic rule is required. A new method has now been developed at TU Wien to provide such a rule for light signals. For this purpose, the two glass fibers were coupled at their intersection point to an optical resonator, in which the light circulates and behaves as in a roundabout. The direction of circulation is defined by a single atom coupled to the resonator. The atom also ensures that the light always leaves the roundabout at the next exit. This rule is still valid even if the light consists merely of individual photons. Such a roundabout will consequently be installed in integrated optical chips - an important step for optical signal processing.

Signal processing using light instead of electronics

The term "optical circulators" refers to elements at the intersection point of two mutually perpendicular optical fibers which direct light signals from one fiber to the other, so that the direction of the light always changes, for example, by 90° clockwise.

"These components have long been used for freely propagating light beams," says Arno Rauschenbeutel from the Vienna Center for Quantum Science and Technology at the Institute of Atomic and Subatomic Physics of TU Wien. "Such optical circulators are mostly based on the so-called Faraday effect: a strong magnetic field is applied to a transparent material, which is

located between two polarization beam splitters which are rotated with respect to each other. The direction of the magnetic field breaks the symmetry and determines in which direction the light is redirected."

However, for technical reasons, components that make use of the Faraday effect cannot be realized on the small scales of nanotechnology. This is unfortunate as such components are important for future technological applications. "Today, we are trying to build optical integrated circuits with similar functions as they are known from electronics," says Rauschenbeutel. Other methods to break the symmetry of the light function only at very high light intensities or suffer from high optical losses. However, in nanotechnology one would like to be able to process very small light signals, ideally light pulses that consist solely of individual photons.

Two glass fibers and a bottle for light

The team of Arno Rauschenbeutel chooses a completely different way: they couple a single rubidium atom to the light field of a so-called "bottle resonator" - a microscopic bulbous glass object on the surface of which the light circulates. If such a resonator is placed in the vicinity of two ultrathin glass fibers, the two systems couple to one another. Without an atom, the light changes from one glass fiber to the other via the bottle resonator. In this way, however, no sense of circulation is defined for the circulator: light, which is deflected by 90° in the clockwise direction, can also travel backwards via the same route, i.e. counter-clockwise.

In order to break this forward/backward symmetry, Arno Rauschenbeutel's team additionally couples an atom to the resonator, which prevents the coupling of the light into the resonator, and thus the overcoupling into the other glass fiber for one of the two directions of circulation. For this trick, a special property of the light is used at TU Wien: the direction of oscillation of the light wave, also known as its polarization.

The interaction between the light wave and the bottle resonator results in an unusual oscillation state. "The polarization rotates like the rotor of a helicopter," Arno Rauschenbeutel explains. The direction of rotation depends on whether the light in the resonator travels clockwise or counter-clockwise: in one case the polarization rotates counter-clockwise, while in the other case it rotates clockwise. The direction of circulation and the polarization of the light are therefore locked together.

If the rubidium atom is correctly prepared and coupled to the resonator, one can make its interaction with the light differ for the two directions of circulation. "The clockwise circulating light is not affected by the atom. The light in the opposite direction, on the other hand, strongly couples to the atom and therefore cannot enter the resonator," says Arno Rauschenbeutel. This asymmetry of the light-atom coupling with respect to the propagation direction of the light in the resonator allows control over the circulator operation: the desired sense of circulation can be adjusted via the internal state of the atom.

"Because we use only a single atom, we can subtly control the process," says Rauschenbeutel. "The atom can be prepared in a state in which both traffic rules apply at the same time: all light

particles then travel together through the circulator in both clockwise and counterclockwise direction." Luckily, this is impossible according to the rules of classical physics, as it would result in chaos in road traffic. In quantum physics however, such superpositions of different states are permitted which opens up entirely new and exciting possibilities for the optical processing of quantum information. [14]

Researchers create hidden images with commercial inkjet printers

Researchers have developed a way to use commercial inkjet printers and readily available ink to print hidden images that are only visible when illuminated with appropriately polarized waves in the terahertz region of the electromagnetic spectrum. The inexpensive method could be used as a type of invisible ink to hide information in otherwise normal-looking images, making it possible to distinguish between authentic and counterfeit items, for example.

"We used silver and carbon ink to print an image consisting of small rods that are about a millimeter long and a couple of hundred microns wide," said Ajay Nahata from the University of Utah, leader of the research team. "We found that changing the fraction of silver and carbon in each rod changes the conductivity in each rod just slightly, but visually, you can't see this modification. Passing terahertz radiation at the correct frequency and polarization through the array allows extraction of information encoded into the conductivity."

In The Optical Society's journal for high impact research, *Optica*, the researchers demonstrated their new method to hide image information in an array of printed rods that all look nearly identical. They used the technique to conceal both grayscale and 64-color QR codes, and even embedded two QR codes into a single image, with each code viewable using a different polarization. To the naked eye the images look like an array of identical looking lines, but when viewed with terahertz radiation, the embedded QR code image becomes apparent.

"Our very easy-to-use method can print complex patterns of rods with varying conductivity," said Nahata. "This cannot easily be done even using a multimillion dollar nanofabrication facility. An added benefit to our technique is that it can be performed very inexpensively."

Printing metamaterials

The new technique allows printing of different shapes that form a type of metamaterial - synthetic materials that exhibit properties that don't usually exist in nature. Although there is a great deal of interest in manipulating metamaterials to better control the propagation of light, most techniques require expensive lithography equipment found in nanofabrication facilities to pattern the material in a way that produces desired properties.

Nahata and his colleagues previously developed a simple method to use an off-the-shelf inkjet printer to apply inks made with silver and carbon, which can be purchased from specialty stores online. They wanted to see if their ink-jet printing technique could create various conductivities, a parameter that is typically difficult to modify because it requires changing the type of metal

applied at each spatial location. To do this using standard lithography would be time consuming and expensive because each metal would have to be applied in a separate process.

"As we were printing these rods we saw that, in many cases, we couldn't visually tell the difference between different conductivities," said Nahata. "That led to the idea of using this to encode an image without the need for standard encryption approaches."

Creating hidden images

To see if they could use the method to encode information, the researchers printed three types of QR codes, each 72 by 72 pixels. For one QR code they used arrays of rods to create nine different conductivities, each coding for one gray level. When they imaged this QR code with terahertz illumination, only 2.7 percent of the rods gave values that were different from what was designed. The researchers also used rods printed in a cross formation to create two separate QR codes that could each be read with a different polarization of terahertz radiation.

The team then created a color QR code by using non-overlapping rods of three different lengths to create each pixel. Each pixel in the image contained the same pattern of rods but varied in conductivity. By arranging the rods in a way that minimized errors, the researchers created three overlapping QR codes corresponding to RGB color channels. Because each pixel contained four different conductivities that could each correspond to a color, a total of 64 colors was observed in the final image. The researchers said they could likely achieve even more than 64 colors with improvements in the printing process.

"We have created the capability to fabricate structures that can have adjacent cells, or pixels, with very different conductivities and shown that the conductivity can be read with high fidelity," said Nahata. "That means that when we print a QR code, we see the QR code and not any blurring or bleeding of colors."

With the very inexpensive (under \$60) printers used in the paper, the technique can produce images with a resolution of about 100 microns. With somewhat more expensive but still commercially available printers, 20-micron resolution should be achievable. Although the researchers used QR codes that are relatively simple and small, the technique could be used to embed information into more complex and detailed images using a larger canvas.

Nahata's team used terahertz radiation to read the coded information because the wavelengths in this region are best suited for imaging the resolution available from commercial inkjet printers. The researchers are now working to expand their technique so the images can be interrogated with visible, rather than terahertz, wavelengths. This challenging endeavor will require the researchers to build new printers that can produce smaller rods to form images with higher resolutions.

The researchers are also exploring the possibility of developing additional capabilities that could make the embedded information even more secure. For example, they could make inks that

might have to be heated or exposed to light of a certain wavelength before the information would be visible using the appropriate terahertz radiation. [13]

For the first time, magnets are be made with a 3-D printer

Today, manufacturing strong magnets is no problem from a technical perspective. It is, however, difficult to produce a permanent magnet with a magnetic field of a specific pre-determined shape. That is, until now, thanks to the new solution devised at TU Wien: for the first time ever, permanent magnets can be produced using a 3D printer. This allows magnets to be produced in complex forms and precisely customised magnetic fields, required, for example, in magnetic sensors.

Designed on a computer

"The strength of a magnetic field is not the only factor," says Dieter Süß, Head of the Christian Doppler Advanced Magnetic Sensing and Materials laboratory at TU Wien. "We often require special magnetic fields, with field lines arranged in a very specific way - such as a magnetic field that is relatively constant in one direction, but which varies in strength in another direction."

In order to achieve such requirements, magnets must be produced with a sophisticated geometric form. "A magnet can be designed on a computer, adjusting its shape until all requirements for its magnetic field are met," explains Christian Huber, a doctoral student in Dieter Süß' team.

But once you have the desired geometric shape, how do you go about implementing the design? The injection moulding process is one solution, but this requires the creation of a mould, which is time-consuming and expensive, rendering this method barely worthwhile for producing small quantities.

Tiny magnetic particles in the polymer matrix

Now, there is a much simpler method: the first-ever 3D printer which can be used to produce magnetic materials, created at TU Wien. 3D printers which generate plastic structures have existed for some time, and the magnet printer functions in much the same way. The difference is that the magnet printer uses specially produced filaments of magnetic micro granulate, which is held together by a polymer binding material. The printer heats the material and applies it point by point in the desired locations using a nozzle. The result is a three-dimensional object composed of roughly 90% magnetic material and 10% plastic.

The end product is not yet magnetic, however, because the granulate is deployed in an unmagnetised state. At the very end of the process, the finished article is exposed to a strong external magnetic field, converting it into a permanent magnet.

"This method allows us to process various magnetic materials, such as the exceptionally strong neodymium iron boron magnets," explains Dieter Süss. "Magnet designs created using a computer can now be quickly and precisely implemented - at a size ranging from just a few centimetres through to decimetres, with an accuracy of well under a single millimetre."

A whole world of new possibilities

Not only is this new process fast and cost-effective, it also opens up new possibilities which would be inconceivable with other techniques: you can use different materials within a single magnet to create a smooth transition between strong and weak magnetism, for instance. "Now we will test the limits of how far we can go - but for now it is certain that 3D printing brings something to magnet design which we could previously only dream of," declares Dieter Süss. [12]

New method to make permanent magnets more stable over time

For physicists, loss of magnetisation in permanent magnets can be a real concern. In response, the Japanese company Sumitomo created the strongest available magnet—one offering ten times more magnetic energy than previous versions—in 1983. These magnets are a combination of materials including rare-earth metal and so-called transition metals, and are accordingly referred to as RE-TM-B magnets. A Russian team has now been pushing the boundaries of magnet design, as published in a recent study in EPJ Plus.

They have developed methods to counter the spontaneous loss of magnetisation, based on their understanding of the underlying physical phenomenon. Roman Morgunov from the Institute of Problems of Chemical Physics at the Russian Academy of Sciences and colleagues have now developed a simple additive-based method for ensuring the stability of permanent magnets over time, with no loss to their main magnetic characteristics.

To design magnets that retain their magnetic stability, the authors altered the chemical composition of a RE-TM-B magnet. Their method consists in inserting small amounts of Samarium atoms at random places within the crystalline sub-lattice of the magnet's rare-earth component. They observed a multi-fold increase in the magnet's stability over time with as little as 1% Samarium. The advantage of using such low quantity of additives to stabilise the magnet is that it does not alter the magnetic properties.

The authors believe this result is linked to Samarium's symmetry. It differs from the crystalline structure of Dysprosium atoms, which enter the composition of the magnet's rare-earth component. As a result, spontaneous magnetisation no longer takes place. This is because the potential barriers separating the magnetisation states of different energies are enhanced by the disrupted symmetry.

Further developments of this research will most likely focus on identifying the discrete magnetisation jumps—elementary events that initiate the reversible magnetisation, leading to a loss in stability. [11]

New method for generating superstrong magnetic fields

Researchers of MEPhI (Russia), the University of Rostock (Germany) and the University of Pisa (Italy) suggest a new method for generating extremely strong magnetic fields of several gigaGauss in the lab. Currently available techniques produce fields of one order of magnitude less than the new method. In nature, such superstrong fields exist only in the space. Therefore, generation of such fields in laboratory conditions provides new opportunities for the modeling of astrophysical processes. The results will contribute to the new research field of laboratory astrophysics.

The Faraday effect has been known for a long time. It refers to the polarization plane of an electromagnetic wave propagating through a non-magnetic medium, which is rotating in the presence of a constant magnetic field. There is also an inverse process of the generation of a magnetic field during the propagation of a circularly polarized wave through a crystal or plasma. It was considered theoretically in the 1960s by Soviet theorist Lev Pitaevsky, a famous representative of Landau's school. The stronger the wave, the higher the magnetic field it can generate when propagating through a medium. However, a peculiarity of the effect is that it requires absorption for its very existence—it does not occur in entirely transparent media. In highly intense electromagnetic fields, electrons become ultrarelativistic, which considerably reduces their collisions, suppressing conventional absorption. The researchers demonstrate that at very high laser wave intensities, the absorption can be effectively provided by radiation friction instead of binary collisions. This specific friction leads to the generation of a superstrong magnetic field.

According to physicist Sergey Popruzhenko, it will be possible to check the calculations in the near future. Several new laser facilities of record power will be completed in the next several years. Three such lasers are now under construction within the European project Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI) in the Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary. The Exawatt Center for Extreme Light Studies – XCELS is under the development at the Applied Physics Institute RAS at Nizhny Novgorod. These laser facilities will be capable of the intensities required for the generation of superstrong magnetic fields due to radiation friction and also for the observation of many other fundamental strong-field effects. [10]

Inverse spin Hall effect: A new way to get electricity from magnetism

By showing that a phenomenon dubbed the "inverse spin Hall effect" works in several organic semiconductors - including carbon-60 buckyballs - University of Utah physicists changed magnetic "spin current" into electric current. The efficiency of this new power conversion method isn't yet known, but it might find use in future electronic devices including batteries, solar cells and computers.

"This paper is the first to demonstrate the inverse spin Hall effect in a range of organic semiconductors with unprecedented sensitivity," although a 2013 study by other researchers

demonstrated it with less sensitivity in one such material, says Christoph Boehme, a senior author of the study published April 18 in the journal Nature Materials.

"The inverse spin Hall effect is a remarkable phenomenon that turns so-called spin current into an electric current. The effect is so odd that nobody really knows what this will be used for eventually, but many technical applications are conceivable, including very odd new powerconversion schemes," says Boehme, a physics professor.

His fellow senior author, distinguished professor Z. Valy Vardeny, says that by using pulses of microwaves, the inverse spin Hall effect and organic semiconductors to convert spin current into electricity, this new electromotive force generates electrical current in a way different than existing sources.

Coal, gas, hydroelectric, wind and nuclear plants all use dynamos to convert mechanical force into magnetic-field changes and then electricity. Chemical reactions power modern batteries and solar cells convert light to electrical current. Converting spin current into electrical current is another method.

Scientists already are developing such devices, such as a thermoelectric generator, using traditional inorganic semiconductors. Vardeny says organic semiconductors are promising because they are cheap, easily processed and environmentally friendly. He notes that both organic solar cells and organic LED (light-emitting diode) TV displays were developed even though silicon solar cells and nonorganic LEDs were widely used.

A new way to get electricity from magnetism

Vardeny and Boehme stressed that the efficiency at which organic semiconductors convert spin current to electric current remains unknown, so it is too early to predict the extent to which it might one day be used for new power conversion techniques in batteries, solar cells, computers, phones and other consumer electronics.

"I want to invoke a degree of caution," Boehme says. "This is a power conversion effect that is new and mostly unstudied."

Boehme notes that the experiments in the new study converted more spin current to electrical current than in the 2013 study, but Vardeny cautioned the effect still "would have to be scaled up many times to produce voltages equivalent to household batteries."

The new study was funded by the National Science Foundation and the University of Utah-NSF Materials Research Science and Engineering Center. Study co-authors with Vardeny and Boehme were these University of Utah physicists: research assistant professors Dali Sun and Hans Malissa, postdoctoral researchers Kipp van Schooten and Chuang Zhang, and graduate students Marzieh Kavand and Matthew Groesbeck.

From spin current to electric current

Just as atomic nuclei and the electrons that orbit them carry electrical charges, they also have another inherent property: spin, which makes them behave like tiny bar magnets that can point north or south.

Electronic devices store and transmit information using the flow of electricity in the form of electrons, which are negatively charged subatomic particles. The zeroes and ones of computer binary code are represented by the absence or presence of electrons within silicon or other nonorganic semiconductors.

Spin electronics - spintronics - holds promise for faster, cheaper computers, better electronics and LEDs for displays, and smaller sensors to detect everything from radiation to magnetic fields.

The inverse spin Hall effect first was demonstrated in metals in 2008, and then in nonorganic semiconductors, Vardeny says. In 2013, researchers elsewhere showed it occurred in an organic semiconductor named PEDOT:PSS when it was exposed to continuous microwaves that were relatively weak to avoid frying the semiconductor. [9]

New electron spin secrets revealed: Discovery of a novel link between magnetism and electricity

The findings reveal a novel link between magnetism and electricity, and may have applications in electronics.

The electric current generation demonstrated by the researchers is called charge pumping. Charge pumping provides a source of very high frequency alternating electric currents, and its magnitude and external magnetic field dependency can be used to detect magnetic information.

The findings may, therefore, offer new and exciting ways of transferring and manipulating data in electronic devices based on spintronics, a technology that uses electron spin as the foundation for information storage and manipulation.

The research findings are published as an Advance Online Publication (AOP) on Nature Nanotechnology's website on 10 November 2014.

Spintronics has already been exploited in magnetic mass data storage since the discovery of the giant magnetoresistance (GMR) effect in 1988. For their contribution to physics, the discoverers of GMR were awarded the Nobel Prize in 2007.

The basis of spintronics is the storage of information in the magnetic configuration of ferromagnets and the read-out via spin-dependent transport mechanisms.

"Much of the progress in spintronics has resulted from exploiting the coupling between the electron spin and its orbital motion, but our understanding of these interactions is still

immature. We need to know more so that we can fully explore and exploit these forces," says Arne Brataas, professor at NTNU and the corresponding author for the paper.

An electron has a spin, a seemingly internal rotation, in addition to an electric charge. The spin can be up or down, representing clockwise and counterclockwise rotations.

Pure spin currents are charge currents in opposite directions for the two spin components in the material.

It has been known for some time that rotating the magnetization in a magnetic material can generate pure spin currents in adjacent conductors.

However, pure spin currents cannot be conventionally detected by a voltmeter because of the cancellation of the associated charge flow in the same direction.

A secondary spin-charge conversion element is then necessary, such as another ferromagnet or a strong spin-orbit interaction, which causes a spin Hall effect.

Brataas and his collaborators have demonstrated that in a small class of ferromagnetic materials, the spin-charge conversion occurs in the materials themselves.

The spin currents created in the materials are thus directly converted to charge currents via the spin-orbit interaction.

In other words, the ferromagnets function intrinsically as generators of alternating currents driven by the rotating magnetization.

"The phenomenon is a result of a direct link between electricity and magnetism. It allows for the possibility of new nano-scale detection techniques of magnetic information and for the generation of very high-frequency alternating currents," Brataas says. [8]

Simple Experiment

Everybody can repeat my physics teacher's - Nándor Toth - middle school experiment, placing aluminum folios in form V upside down on the electric wire with static electric current, and seeing them open up measuring the electric potential created by the charge distribution, caused by the acceleration of the electrons.

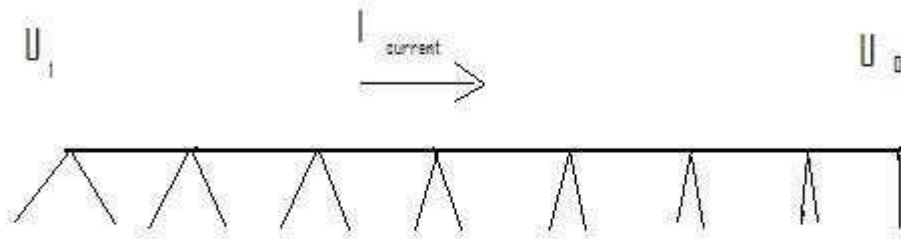


Figure 1.) Aluminium folios shows the charge distribution on the electric wire

He wanted to show us that the potential decreasing linearly along the wire and told us that in the beginning of the wire it is lowering harder, but after that the change is quite linear.

You will see that the folios will draw a parabolic curve showing the charge distribution along the wire, since the way of the accelerated electrons in the wire is proportional with the square of time. The free external charges are moving along the wire, will experience this charge distribution caused electrostatic force and repelled if moving against the direction of the electric current and attracted in the same direction – the magnetic effect of the electric current.

Uniformly accelerated electrons of the steady current

In the steady current $I = dq/dt$, the q electric charge crossing the electric wire at any place in the same time is constant. This does not require that the electrons should move with a constant v velocity and does not exclude the possibility that under the constant electric force created by the $E = -dU/dx$ potential changes the electrons could accelerating.

If the electrons accelerating under the influence of the electric force, then they would arrive to the $x = \frac{1}{2} at^2$ in the wire. The $dx/dt = at$, means that every second the accelerating q charge will take a linearly growing length of the wire. For simplicity if $a=2$ then the electrons would found in the wire at $x = 1, 4, 9, 16, 25 \dots$, which means that the dx between them should be $3, 5, 7, 9 \dots$, linearly increasing the volume containing the same q electric charge. It means that the density of the electric charge decreasing linearly and as the consequence of this the U field is decreasing linearly as expected: $-dU/dx = E = \text{const}$.

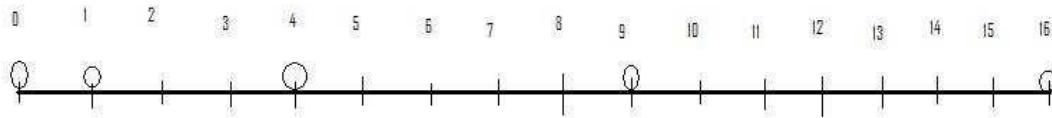


Figure 2.) The accelerating electrons created charge distribution on the electric wire

This picture remembers the Galileo's Slope of the accelerating ball, showed us by the same teacher in the middle school, some lectures before. I want to thank him for his enthusiastic and impressive lectures, giving me the associating idea between the Galileo's Slope and the accelerating charges of the electric current.

We can conclude that the electrons are accelerated by the electric \mathbf{U} potential, and with this accelerated motion they are maintaining the linear potential decreasing of the \mathbf{U} potential along they movement. Important to mention, that the linearly decreasing charge density measured in the referential frame of the moving electrons. Along the wire in its referential frame the charge density lowering parabolic, since the charges takes way proportional with the square of time.

The decreasing \mathbf{U} potential is measurable, simply by measuring it at any place along the wire. One of the simple visualizations is the aluminum foils placed on the wire opening differently depending on the local charge density. The static electricity is changing by parabolic potential giving the equipotential lines for the external moving electrons in the surrounding of the wire.

Magnetic effect of the decreasing \mathbf{U} electric potential

One q electric charge moving parallel along the wire outside of it with velocity v would experience a changing \mathbf{U} electric potential along the wire. If it experiencing an emerging potential, it will repel the charge, in case of decreasing \mathbf{U} potential it will move closer to the

wire. This radial electric field will move the external electric charge on the parabolic curve, on the equipotential line of the accelerated charges of the electric current. This is exactly the magnetic effect of the electric current. A constant force, perpendicular to the direction of the movement of the matter will change its direction to a parabolic curve.

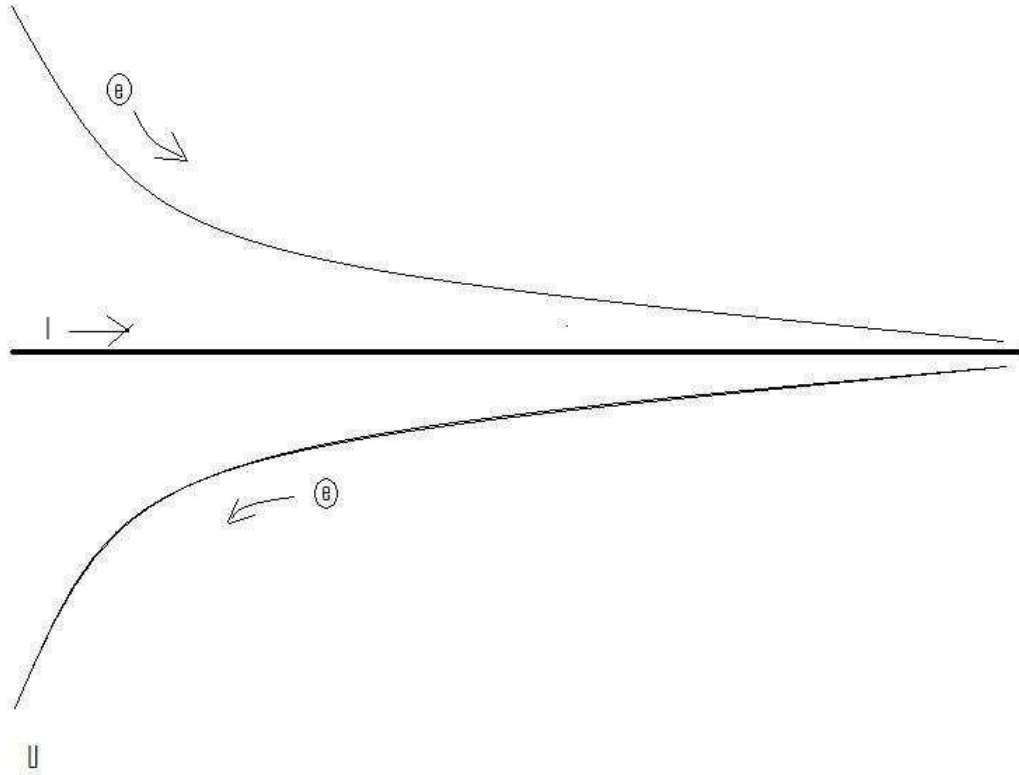


Figure 3.) Concentric parabolic equipotential surfaces around the electric wire causes the magnetic effect on the external moving charges

Considering that the magnetic effect is $\mathbf{F} = q \mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{B}$, where the \mathbf{B} is concentric circle around the electric wire, it is an equipotential circle of the accelerating electrons caused charge distribution. Moving on this circle there is no electric and magnetic effect for the external charges, since $\mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{0}$. Moving in the direction of the current the electric charges crosses the biggest potential change, while in any other direction – depending on the angle between the current and velocity of the external charge there is a modest electric potential difference, giving exactly the same force as the $\mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{B}$ magnetic force.

Getting the magnetic force from the $\mathbf{F} = d\mathbf{p}/dt$ equation we will understand the magnetic field velocity dependency. Finding the appropriate trajectory of the moving charges we need simply get it from the equipotential lines on the equipotential surfaces, caused by the accelerating charges of the electric current. We can prove that the velocity dependent force causes to move the charges on the equipotential surfaces, since the force due to the potential difference according to the velocity angle – changing only the direction, but not the value of the charge's velocity.

The work done on the charge and the Hamilton Principle

One basic feature of magnetism is that, in the vicinity of a magnetic field, a moving charge will experience a force. Interestingly, the force on the charged particle is always perpendicular to the direction it is moving. Thus magnetic forces cause charged particles to change their direction of motion, but they do not change the speed of the particle. This property is used in high-energy particle accelerators to focus beams of particles which eventually collide with targets to produce new particles. Another way to understand this is to realize that if the force is perpendicular to the motion, then no work is done. Hence magnetic forces do no work on charged particles and cannot increase their kinetic energy. If a charged particle moves through a constant magnetic field, its speed stays the same, but its direction is constantly changing. [2]

In electrostatics, the work done to move a charge from any point on the equipotential surface to any other point on the equipotential surface is zero since they are at the same potential. Furthermore, equipotential surfaces are always perpendicular to the net electric field lines passing through it. [3]

Consequently the work done on the moving charges is zero in both cases, proving that they are equal forces, that is they are the same force.

The accelerating charges self-maintaining potential equivalent with the Hamilton Principle and the Euler-Lagrange equation. [4]

The Magnetic Vector Potential

Also the $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$ magnetic vector potential gives the radial parabolic electric potential change of the charge distribution due to the acceleration of electric charges in the electric current.

Necessary to mention that the $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$ magnetic vector potential is proportional with $\underline{\mathbf{a}}$, the acceleration of the charges in the electric current although this is not the only parameter.

The $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$ magnetic vector potential is proportional with $I=dQ/dt$ electric current, which is proportional with the strength of the charge distribution along the wire. Although it is proportional also with the U potential difference $I=U/R$, but the R resistivity depends also on the cross-sectional area, that is bigger area gives stronger I and $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$. [7] This means that the bigger potential differences with smaller cross-section can give the same I current and $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$ vector potential, explaining the gauge transformation.

Since the magnetic field B is defined as the curl of $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$, and the curl of a gradient is identically zero, then any arbitrary function which can be expressed as the gradient of a scalar function may be added to A without changing the value of B obtained from it. That is, A' can be freely substituted for A where

$$\vec{A}' = \vec{A} + \vec{\nabla}\phi$$

Such transformations are called gauge transformations, and there have been a number of "gauges" that have been used to advantage in specific types of calculations in electromagnetic theory. [5]

Since the potential difference and the vector potential both are in the direction of the electric current, this gauge transformation could explain the self maintaining electric potential of the accelerating electrons in the electric current. Also this is the source of the special and general relativity.

The Constant Force of the Magnetic Vector Potential

Moving on the parabolic equipotential line gives the same result as the constant force of gravitation moves on a parabolic line with a constant velocity moving body.

Electromagnetic four-potential

The electromagnetic four-potential defined as:

$$A^\alpha = (\phi/c, \mathbf{A}) \quad \text{SI units} \quad A^\alpha = (\phi, \mathbf{A}) \quad \text{cgs units}$$

in which ϕ is the electric potential, and \mathbf{A} is the magnetic vector potential. [6] This is appropriate with the four-dimensional space-time vector (T, \mathbf{R}) and in stationary current gives that the potential difference is constant in the time dimension and vector potential (and its curl, the magnetic field) is constant in the space dimensions.

Magnetic induction

Increasing the electric current I causes increasing magnetic field \mathbf{B} by increasing the acceleration of the electrons in the wire. Since $I=at$, if the acceleration of electrons is growing, then the charge density dQ/dl will decrease in time, creating a $-\mathbf{E}$ electric field. Since the resistance of the wire is constant, only increasing U electric potential could cause an increasing electric current $I=U/R=dQ/dt$. The charge density in the static current changes linear in the time coordinates. Changing its value in time will causing a static electric force, negative to the accelerating force change. This explains the relativistic changing mass of the charge in time also.

Necessary to mention that decreasing electric current will decrease the acceleration of the electrons, causing increased charge density and \mathbf{E} positive field.

The electric field is a result of the geometric change of the U potential and the timely change of the \mathbf{A} magnetic potential:

$$\mathbf{E} = - d\mathbf{A}/dt - dU/dr$$

$$\mathbf{B} = \nabla \times \mathbf{A}, \quad \mathbf{E} = -\nabla\phi - \frac{\partial \mathbf{A}}{\partial t},$$

The acceleration of the electric charges proportional with the A magnetic vector potential in the electric current and also their time dependence are proportional as well. Since the A vector potential is appears in the equation, the proportional \mathbf{a} acceleration will satisfy the same equation.

Since increasing acceleration of charges in the increasing electric current the result of increasing potential difference, creating a decreasing potential difference, the electric and magnetic vector potential are changes by the next wave - function equations:

$$\frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial t^2} - \nabla^2 \varphi = \frac{\rho}{\epsilon_0}$$

$$\nabla^2 \mathbf{A} - \frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial^2 \mathbf{A}}{\partial t^2} = -\mu_0 \mathbf{J}$$

The simple experiment with periodical changing \mathbf{U} potential and \mathbf{I} electric current will move the aluminium folios with a moving wave along the wire.

The Lorentz gauge says exactly that the accelerating charges are self maintain their accelerator fields and the divergence (source) of the A vector potential is the timely change of the electric potential.

$$\nabla \cdot \vec{A} + \frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial t} = 0.$$

Or

$$\vec{E} = -\nabla \varphi - \frac{\partial \vec{A}}{\partial t}.$$

The timely change of the A vector potential, which is the proportionally changing acceleration of the charges will produce the negative electric field.

Lorentz transformation of the Special Relativity

In the referential frame of the accelerating electrons the charge density lowering linearly because of the linearly growing way they takes every next time period. From the referential frame of the wire there is a parabolic charge density lowering.

The difference between these two referential frames, namely the referential frame of the wire and the referential frame of the moving electrons gives the relativistic effect. Important to say that the moving electrons presenting the time coordinate, since the electrons are taking linearly increasing way every next time period, and the wire presenting the geometric coordinate.

The Lorentz transformations are based on moving light sources of the Michelson - Morley experiment giving a practical method to transform time and geometric coordinates without explaining the source of this mystery.

The real mystery is that the accelerating charges are maintaining the accelerating force with their charge distribution locally. The resolution of this mystery that the charges are simply the results of the diffraction patterns, that is the charges and the electric field are two sides of the same thing. Otherwise the charges could exceed the velocity of the electromagnetic field.

The increasing mass of the electric charges the result of the increasing inductive electric force acting against the accelerating force. The decreasing mass of the decreasing acceleration is the result of the inductive electric force acting against the decreasing force. This is the relativistic mass change explanation, especially importantly explaining the mass reduction in case of velocity decrease.

Heisenberg Uncertainty Relation

In the atomic scale the Heisenberg uncertainty relation gives the same result, since the moving electron in the atom accelerating in the electric field of the proton, causing a charge distribution on Δx position difference and with a Δp momentum difference such a way that they product is about the half Planck reduced constant. For the proton this Δx much less in the nucleon, than in the orbit of the electron in the atom, the Δp is much higher because of the greater proton mass.

This means that the electron and proton are not point like particles, but has a real charge distribution.

Wave – Particle Duality

The accelerating electrons explains the wave – particle duality of the electrons and photons, since the elementary charges are distributed on Δx position with Δp impulse and creating a wave packet of the electron. The photon gives the electromagnetic particle of the mediating force of the electrons electromagnetic field with the same distribution of wavelengths.

Atomic model

The constantly accelerating electron in the Hydrogen atom is moving on the equipotential line of the proton and it's kinetic and potential energy will be constant. Its energy will change only when it is changing its way to another equipotential line with another value of potential energy or getting free with enough kinetic energy. This means that the Rutherford-Bohr atomic model is

right and only the changing acceleration of the electric charge causes radiation, not the steady acceleration. The steady acceleration of the charges only creates a centric parabolic steady electric field around the charge, the magnetic field. This gives the magnetic moment of the atoms, summing up the proton and electron magnetic moments caused by their circular motions and spins.

Fermions' spin

The moving charges are accelerating, since only this way can self maintain the electric field causing their acceleration. The electric charge is not point like! This constant acceleration possible if there is a rotating movement changing the direction of the velocity. This way it can accelerate forever without increasing the absolute value of the velocity in the dimension of the time and not reaching the velocity of the light.

The Heisenberg uncertainty relation says that the minimum uncertainty is the value of the spin: $\frac{1}{2} h = dx dp$ or $\frac{1}{2} h = dt dE$, that is the value of the basic energy status, consequently related to the m_0 inertial mass of the fermions.

The photon's 1 spin value and the electric charges 1/2 spin gives us the idea, that the electric charge and the electromagnetic wave two sides of the same thing, $1/2 - (-1/2) = 1$.

Fine structure constant

The Planck constant was first described as the proportionality constant between the energy E of a photon and the frequency ν of its associated electromagnetic wave. This relation between the energy and frequency is called the Planck relation or the Planck–Einstein equation:

$$E = h\nu .$$

Since the frequency ν , wavelength λ , and speed of light c are related by $\lambda\nu = c$, the Planck relation can also be expressed as

$$E = \frac{hc}{\lambda} .$$

Since this is the source of the Planck constant, the e electric charge countable from the Fine structure constant. This also related to the Heisenberg uncertainty relation, saying that the mass of the proton should be bigger than the electron mass because of the difference between their wavelengths, since $E = mc^2$.

The expression of the fine-structure constant becomes the abbreviated

$$\alpha = \frac{e^2}{\hbar c}$$

This is a dimensionless constant expression, 1/137 commonly appearing in physics literature.

This means that the electric charge is a result of the electromagnetic waves diffractions, consequently the proton – electron mass ratio is the result of the equal intensity of the corresponding electromagnetic frequencies in the Planck distribution law.

Planck Distribution Law

The Planck distribution law explains the different frequencies of the proton and electron, giving equal intensity to different lambda wavelengths! The weak interaction transforms an electric charge in the diffraction pattern from one side to the other side, causing an electric dipole momentum change, which violates the CP and time reversal symmetry.

The Planck distribution law is temperature dependent and it should be true locally and globally. I think that Einstein's energy-matter equivalence means some kind of existence of electromagnetic oscillations enabled by the temperature, creating the different matter formulas, atoms, molecules, crystals, dark matter and energy.

One way dividing the proton to three parts is, dividing his oscillation by the three direction of the space. We can order 1/3 e charge to each coordinates and 2/3 e charge to one plane oscillation, because the charge is scalar. In this way the proton has two +2/3 e plane oscillation and one linear oscillation with -1/3 e charge. The colors of quarks are coming from the three directions of coordinates and the proton is colorless. [1]

Electromagnetic inertia and Gravitational attraction

Since the magnetic induction creates a negative electric field as a result of the changing acceleration, it works as an electromagnetic changing mass.

It looks clear that the growing acceleration results the relativistic growing mass - limited also with the velocity of the electromagnetic wave.

The negatively changing acceleration causes a positive electric field, working as a decreasing mass.

Since $E = h\nu$ and $E = mc^2$, $m = h\nu / c^2$ that is the m depends only on the ν frequency. It means that the mass of the proton and electron are electromagnetic and the result of the electromagnetic induction, caused by the changing acceleration of the spinning and moving charge! It could be that the m_0 inertial mass is the result of the spin, since this is the only accelerating motion of the electric charge. Since the accelerating motion has different frequency for the electron in the

atom and the proton, their masses are different, also as the wavelengths on both sides of the diffraction pattern, giving equal intensity of radiation.

If the mass is electromagnetic, then the gravitation is also an electromagnetic effect caused by the magnetic effect between the same charges, they would attract each other if they are moving parallel by the magnetic effect.

The Planck distribution law explains the different frequencies of the proton and electron, giving equal intensity to different λ wavelengths. Also since the particles are diffraction patterns they have some closeness to each other – can be seen as the measured effect of the force of the gravitation, since the magnetic effect depends on this closeness. This way the mass and the magnetic attraction depend equally on the wavelength of the electromagnetic waves.

Conclusions

The generation and modulation of high-frequency currents are central wireless communication devices such as mobile phones, WLAN modules for personal computers, Bluetooth devices and future vehicle radars. [8]

Needless to say that the accelerating electrons of the steady stationary current are a simple demystification of the magnetic field, by creating a decreasing charge distribution along the wire, maintaining the decreasing U potential and creating the \underline{A} vector potential experienced by the electrons moving by \underline{v} velocity relative to the wire. This way it is easier to understand also the time dependent changes of the electric current and the electromagnetic waves as the resulting fields moving by c velocity.

There is a very important law of the nature behind the self-maintaining \underline{E} accelerating force by the accelerated electrons. The accelerated electrons create electromagnetic fields so natural that they occur as electromagnetic waves traveling with velocity c . It shows that the electric charges are the result of the electromagnetic waves diffraction.

One of the most important conclusions is that the electric charges are moving in an accelerated way and even if their velocity is constant, they have an intrinsic acceleration anyway, the so-called spin, since they need at least an intrinsic acceleration to make possible their movement. The bridge between the classical and quantum theory is based on this intrinsic acceleration of the spin, explaining also the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle. The particle – wave duality of the electric charges and the photon makes certain that they are both sides of the same thing. Basing the gravitational force on the magnetic force and the Planck Distribution Law of the electromagnetic waves caused diffraction gives us the basis to build a Unified Theory of the physical interactions.

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