

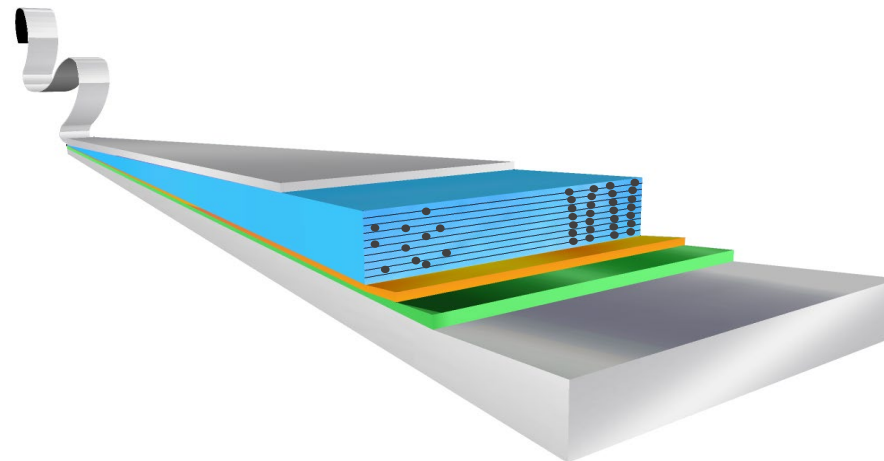
Progress and challenges in R&D of high current REBa₂Cu₃O₇ coated conductors

Xavier Obradors

*Institut de Ciència de Materials de Barcelona
ICMAB-CSIC, Catalonia, Spain*

Superconductivity News Forum (<https://snf.ieeecsc.org/>)

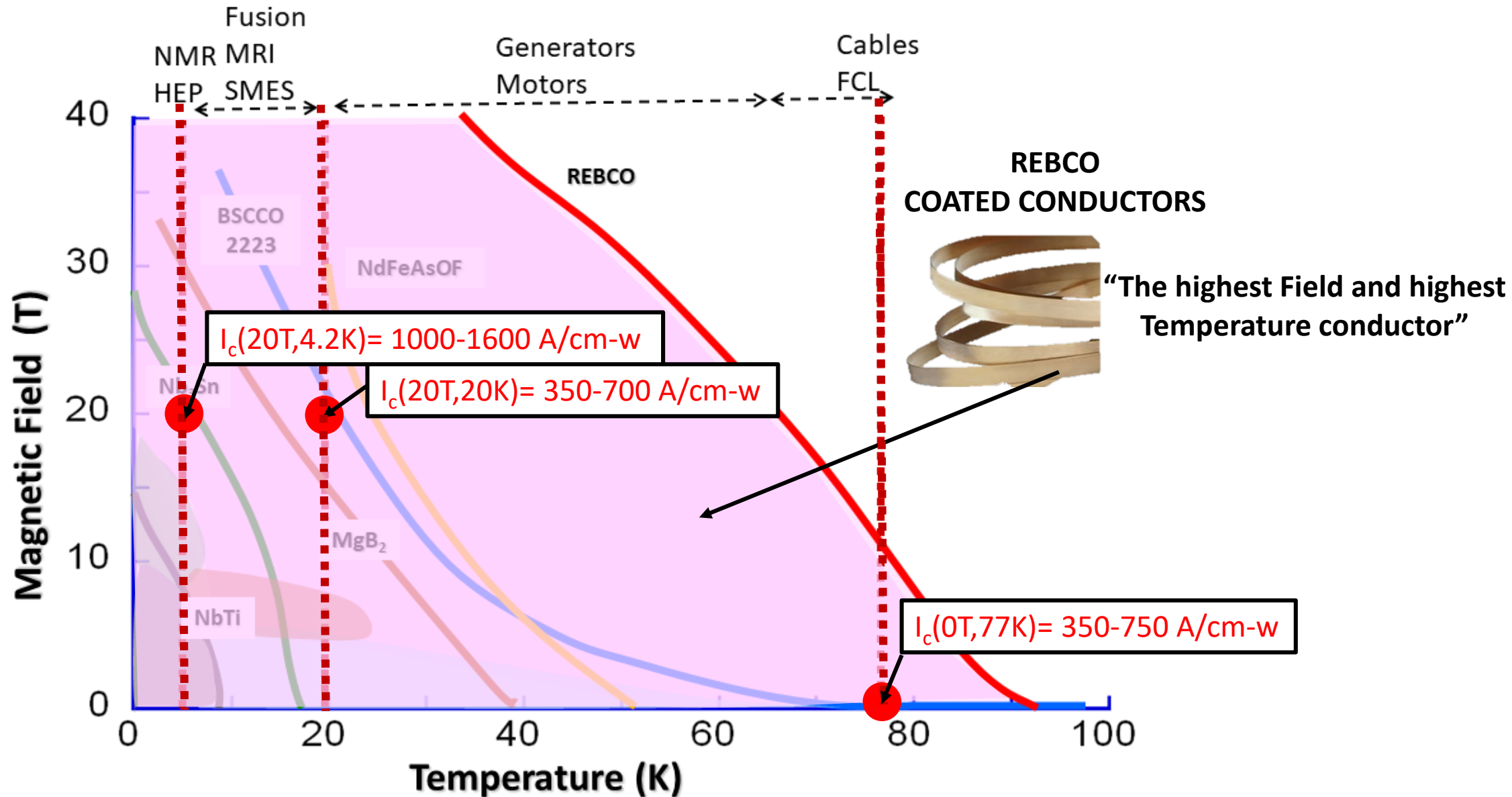
**Special thanks to Prof. Teresa Puig
SNF Issues 54, 53, 47**



Outline

- **REBCO coated conductors: present status, future potential and technology pull**
- **Coated Conductors: materials objectives, challenges and market requirements**
- **Fundamental aspects of coated conductor processing: towards high throughput**
- **Highest performance: vortex pinning landscape and electronic structure control**
- **Coated Conductor tapes integration into conductors**
- **Industrial scale: manufacturing and device integration**
- **Conclusions**

REBCO COATED CONDUCTORS: AT THE FRONTIER OF TECHNOLOGY



The prospects of high-temperature superconductors

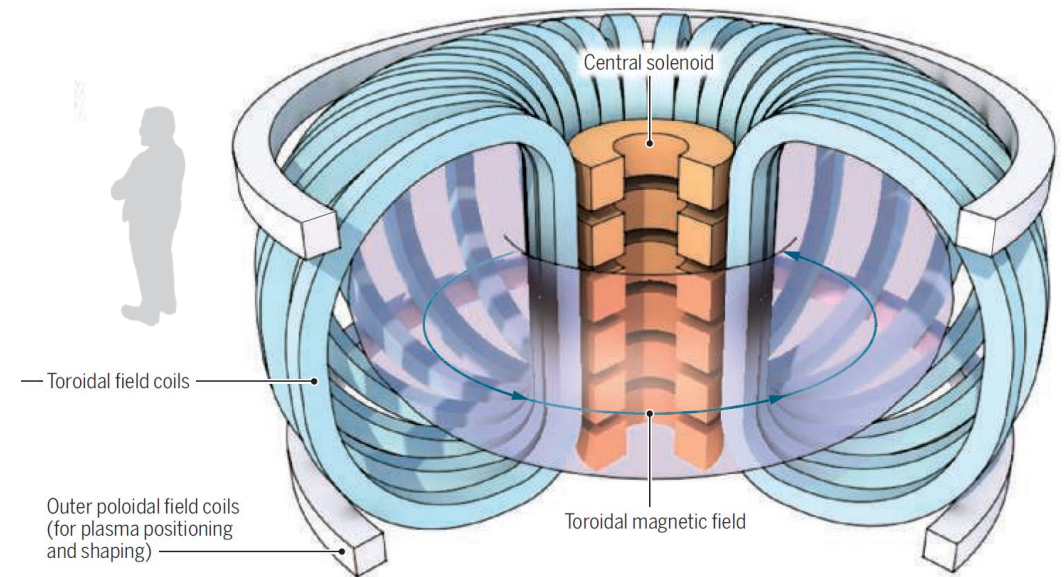
Overcoming cost barriers could make high-temperature superconductors pervasive

By Alexander Molodyk¹ and David C. Larbalestier²

“...the present outlook for high-temperature superconductor materials and their industrial applications is historic...”

Science, 380, 1220, 2023

COMPACT FUSION



HTS-CC NMR is already a commercial device



High-field (25.9 T LTS+HTS) Bruker Analytical NMR

<https://www.bruker.com>

Strong pull for:

Electric aviation: Rotating machines

Smart grid: Power cables, FCL, SMES



<https://www.theva.com/superlink>

<https://www.nkt.com>

110 kV, 12 km, 500 MVA

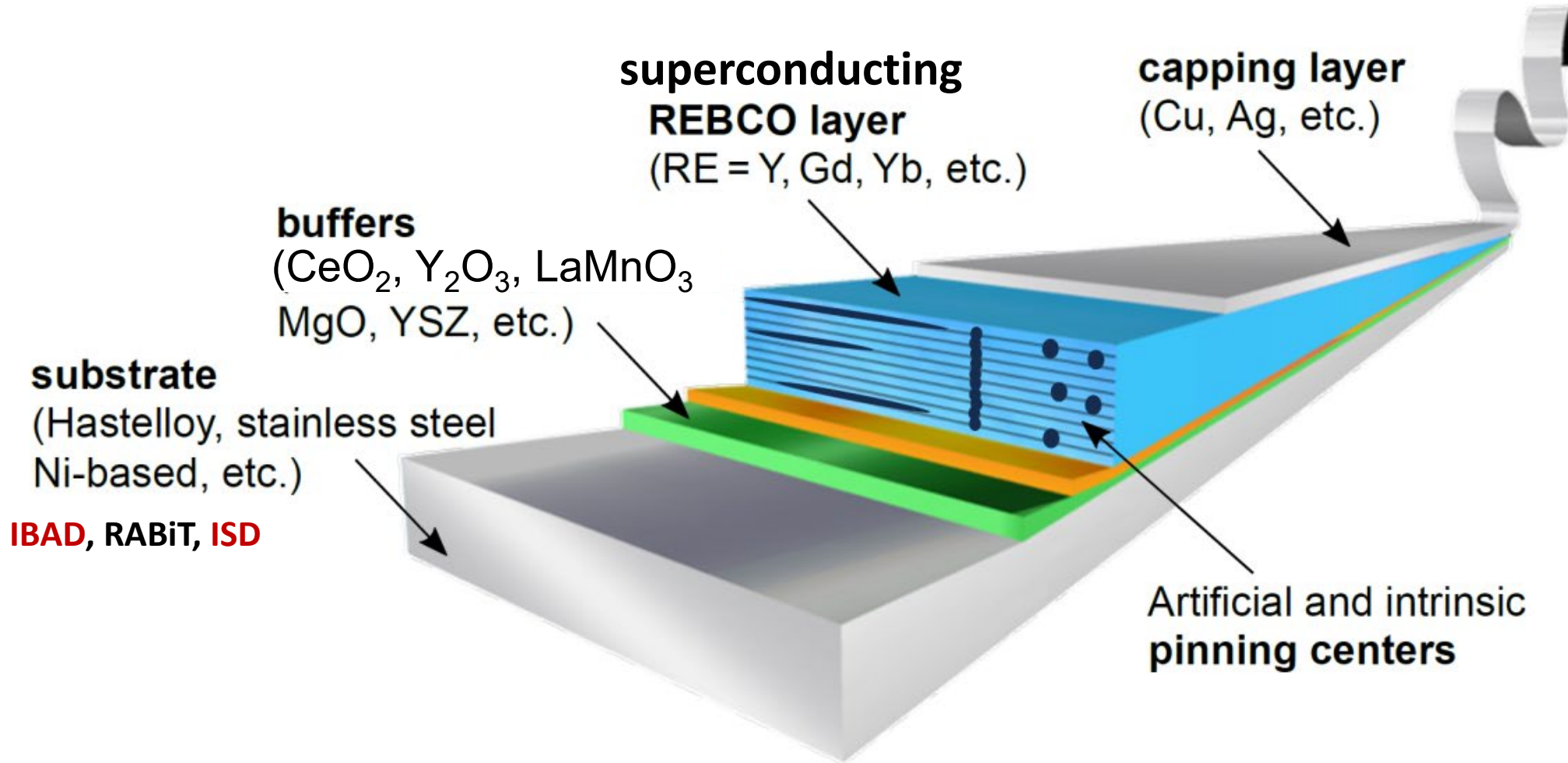
Accelerator physics: Complex high field magnets operating at higher temperatures



Feather M2 HTS dipole accelerator magnet

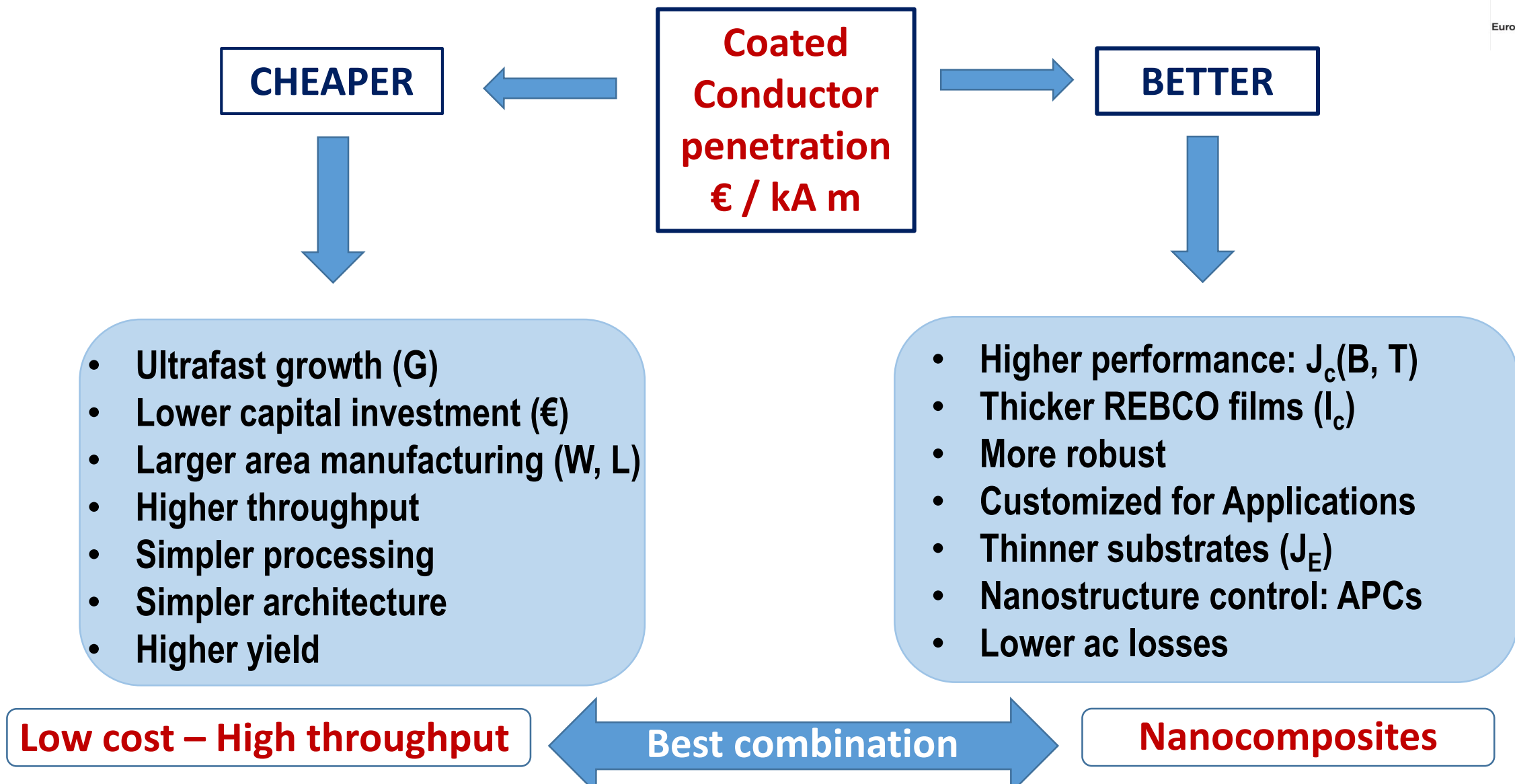
L. Rossi, C. Senatore, Instruments 5(1), 8 (2021)

COATED CONDUCTOR, CC

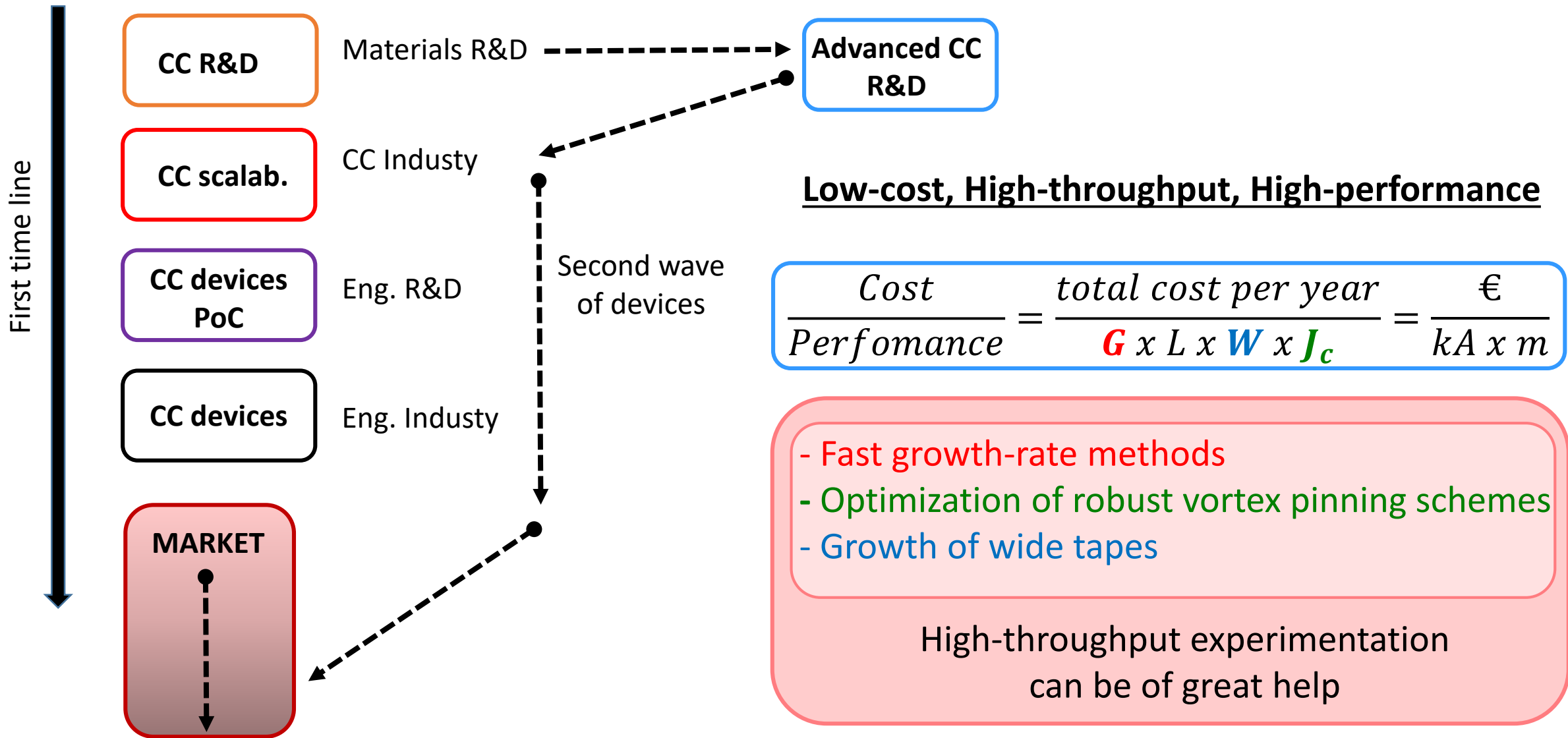


(Long length and thick) epitaxial superconducting layer on a multilayer flexible architecture

Coated Conductors: materials objectives

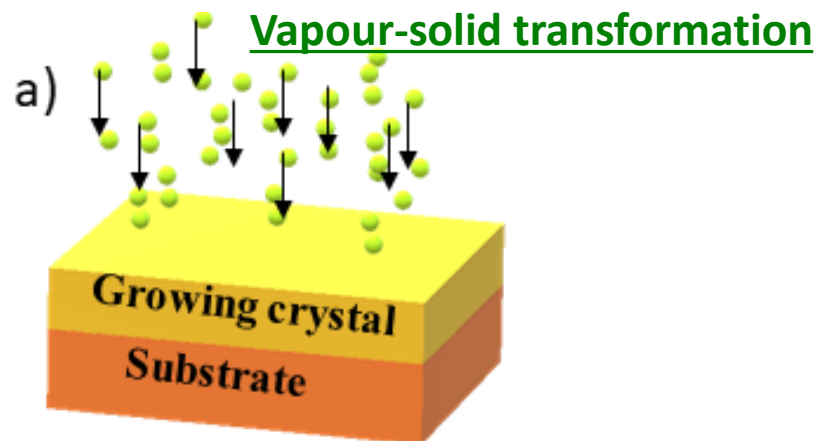


Contributions from CC Materials Research



REBCO growth processing

Supersaturation, σ , is the driving force for crystallization: $\sigma \propto G$ (growth rate)



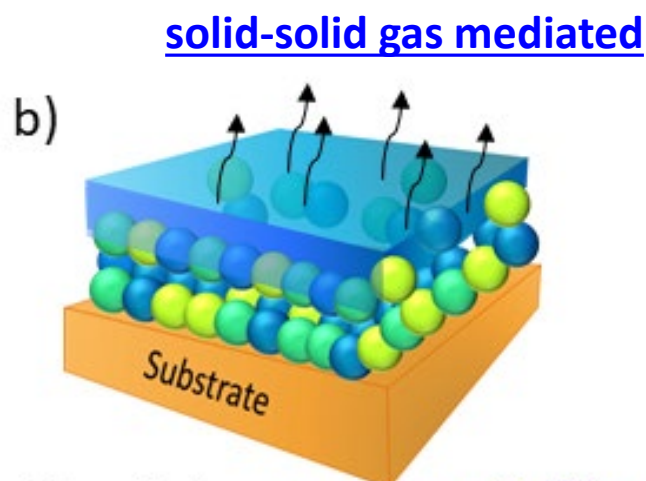
Growth from **vapour phase**
PLD, MOCVD, ME, MBE, Sputt

$$\sigma = (P_{ad} - P_{ad,e}) / P_{ad,e}$$

Deposition rate
High vacuum environ.

$P_{ad,e}$ = ad-atoms equilibrium pressure at surface growth front
 P_{ad} = ad-atoms pressure at surface growth front

Growth rate: **G= 0.5-25 nm/s**

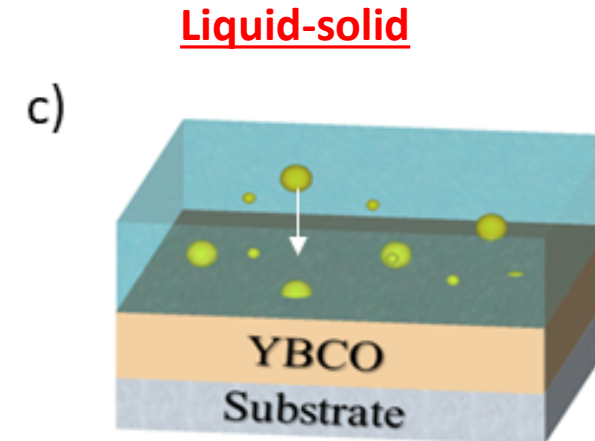


Growth from **nanocrystalline solids**
TFA-MOD, BaF₂

$$\sigma = f(\ln(P_{HF}^2 / P_{H2O}))$$

P_{HF} = HF partial pressure
 P_{H2O} = water partial pressure

G= 0.5-5 nm/s



Growth from **liquid phase**
TLAG-CSD, RCE-DR, HLPE, VLS

$$\sigma = (C_{\delta} - C_e) / C_e$$

RE solubility,
Ba-Cu-O liquid

C_e = RE equilibrium concentration in the liquid
 C_{δ} = RE actual concentration

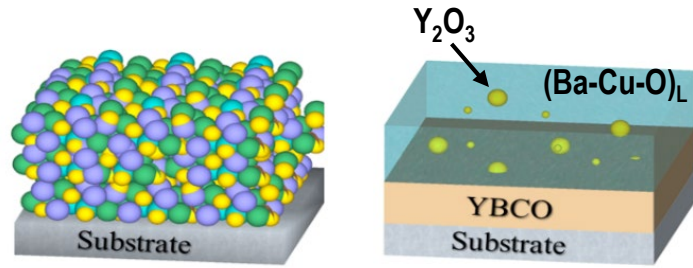
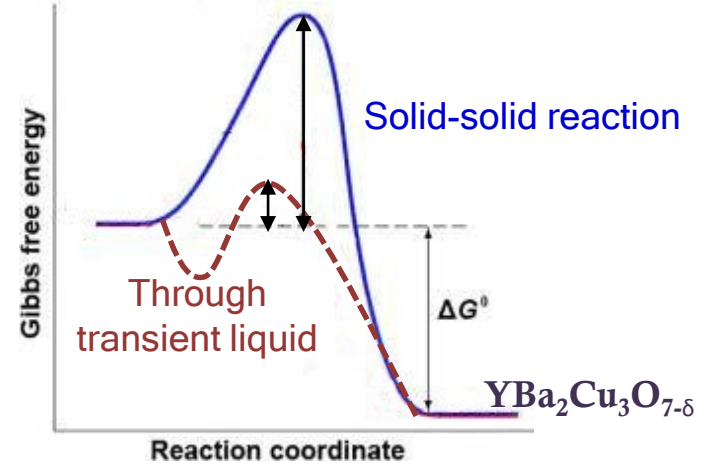
G=10-1000 nm/s



Transient Liquid Assisted Growth (TLAG)

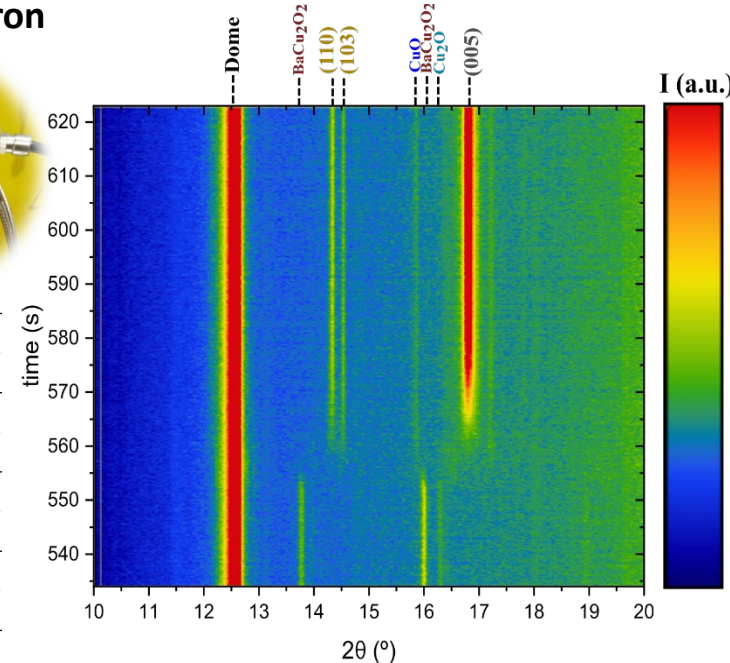
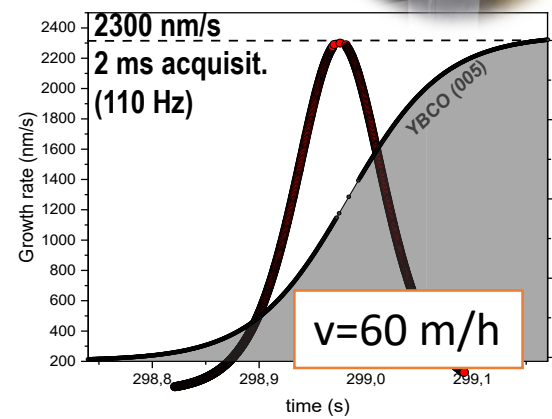
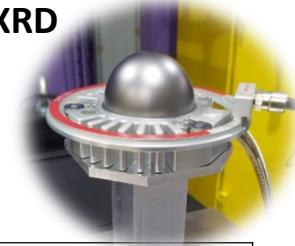


A new high throughput non-equilibrium kinetically controlled growth process



- High performance (3 MA/cm^2 at 77K)
- High throughput
- **High growth rate** (2.300 nm/s)
- Simple reactor
- Large area processing
- Low cost/performance method

In-situ synchrotron XRD

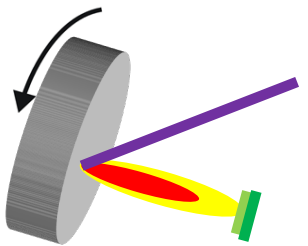


European Research Council Executive Agency



CSD

L. Saltarelli et al, ACS Appl. Mat. & Interf. (2022)



Low Temp PLD

A. Queralto et al, SUST (2023)

100 nm/s by **ultrafast-PLD** EuBCO/BHO (transient liquid growth at high T PLD)

Y. Wu, Materials & Design 224 (2022)

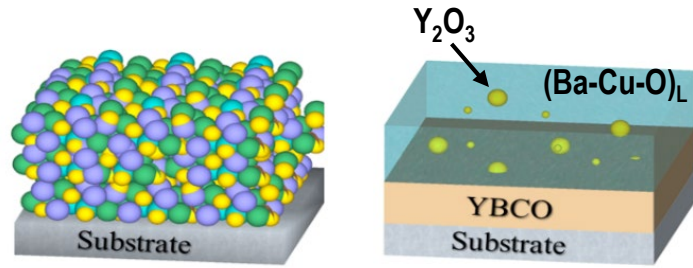
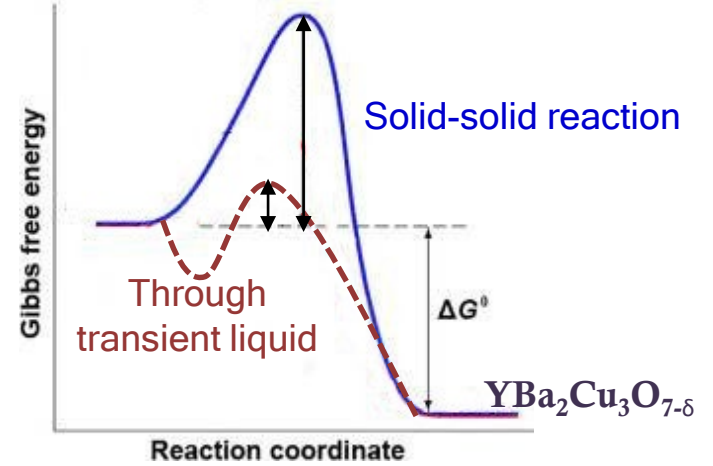
L. Soler et al., Nat Comm (2020), S. Rasi, et al, Advance Science (2022); L. Saltarelli et al, ACS Mat Int (2024)



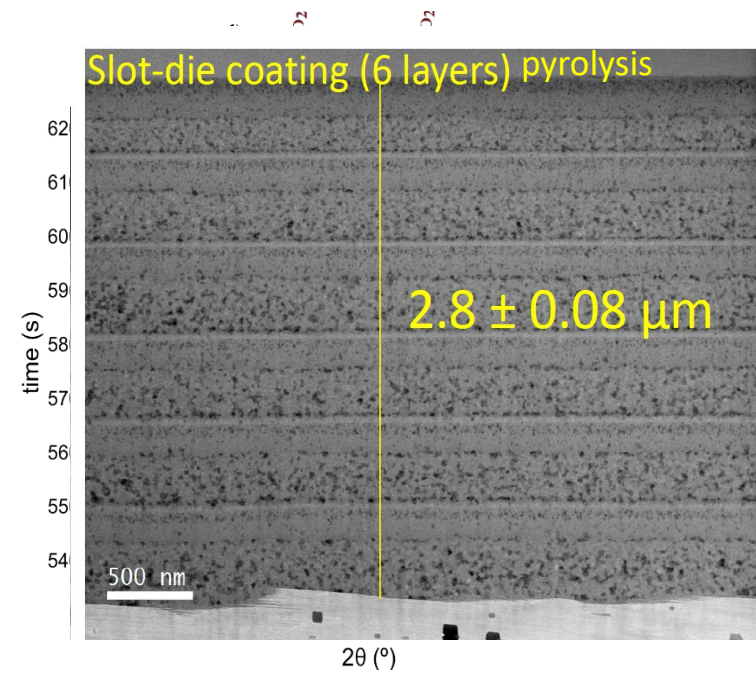
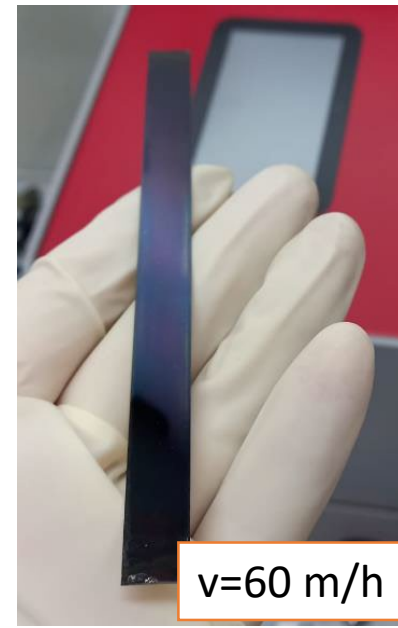
Transient Liquid Assisted Growth (TLAG)



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- **High growth rate** (2.300 nm/s)
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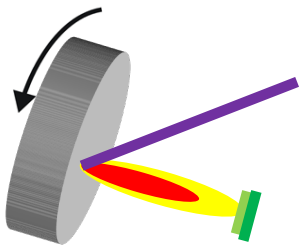


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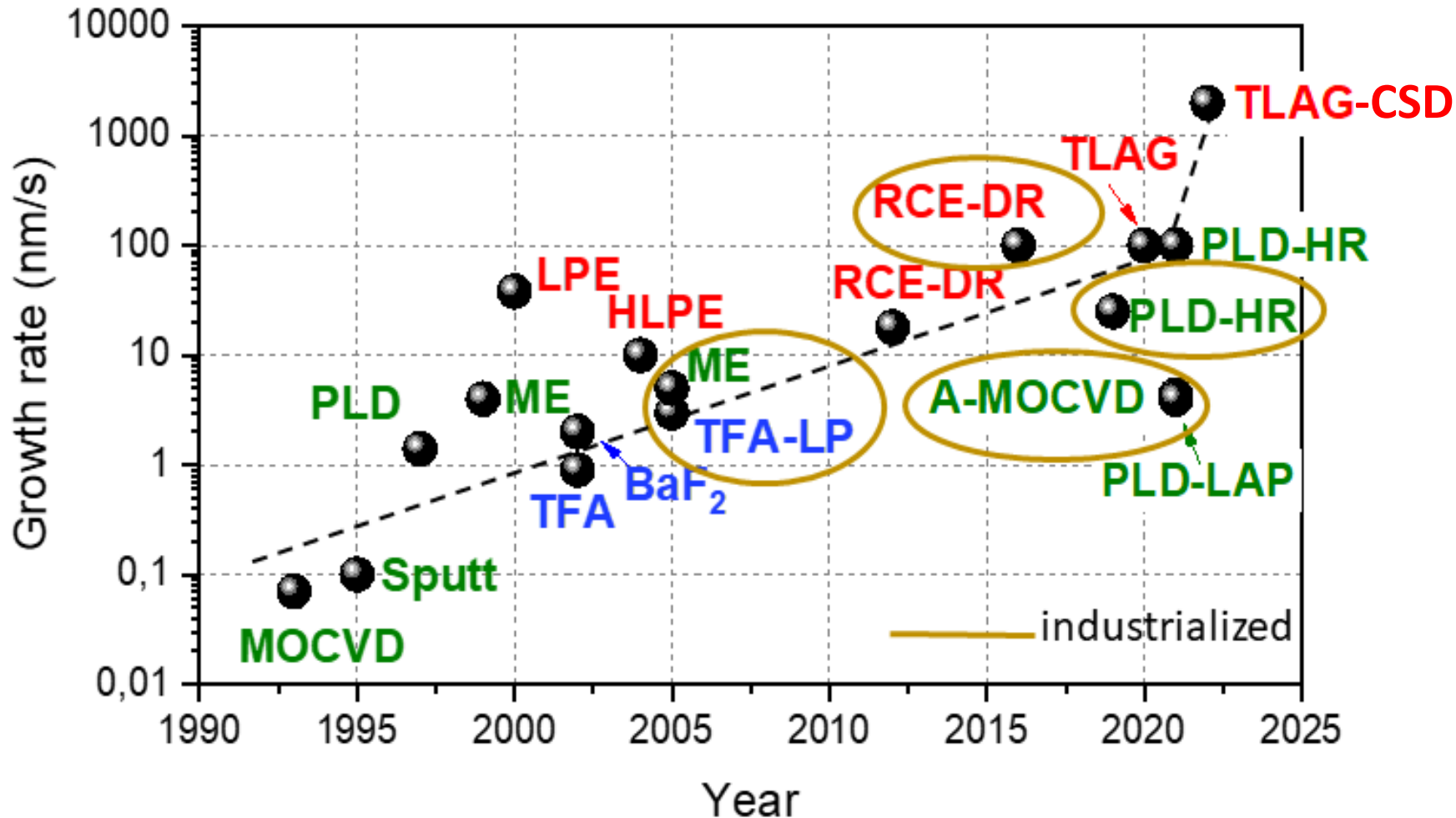
Y. Wu, Materials & Design 224 (2022)

L. Soler et al., Nat Comm (2020), S. Rasi, et al, Advance Science (2022); L. Saltarelli et al, ACS Mat Int (2024)

Reaching high Growth Rate: A path towards cost reduction

Figure of merit:
$$\frac{\text{Cost}}{\text{Performance}} = \frac{\text{total cost per year}}{G \times L \times W \times (I_{c-w}/d)} = \frac{\text{€}}{\text{kA} \times \text{m}}$$

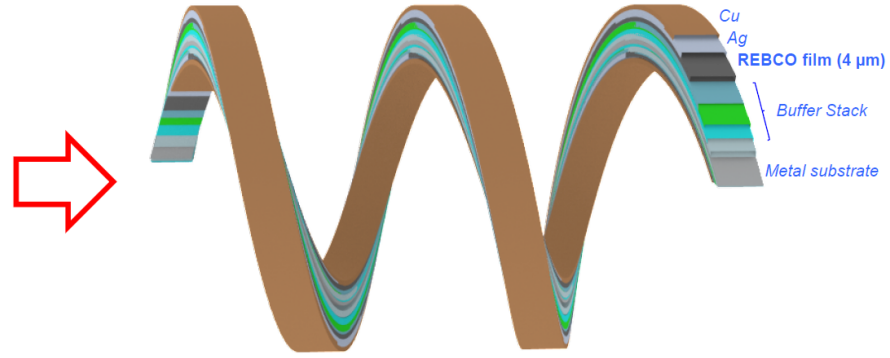
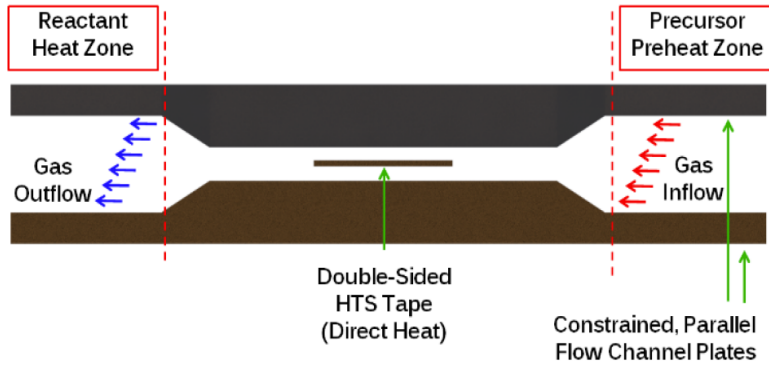
G = growth rate
 W = tape width
 L = tape length
 d = tape thickness



Large area deposition: width, double side CC



Double-sided REBCO tapes by Advanced MOCVD



- Reduced tape quantity per device
- Reduced raw chemicals
- Increase I_c
- Reduced cost

Double-sided REBCO 2x 2.5 μm thick film in a single step (3.5 x I_c commercial tape)

Double-sided REBCO 2x 5 μm thick film 10 x I_c commercial tape



x 2.5 production capacity 125 mm wide tapes	Seed layer : PLD system Thick REBCO layer: RCE-DR system
New production line for 40 mm wide tapes	x 7 production capacity increase in 2025
Tape width 4 × 80 -100 mm	Capacity: 2500+ km ₁₂
40 mm solution deposition slot die	CSD TLAG growth under development

Large area deposition and patterning (Fusion sterallator)

...and simplify HTS manufacturing

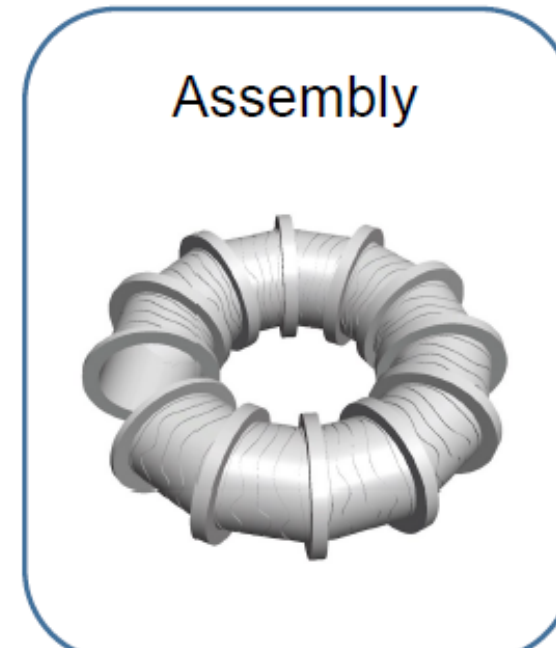
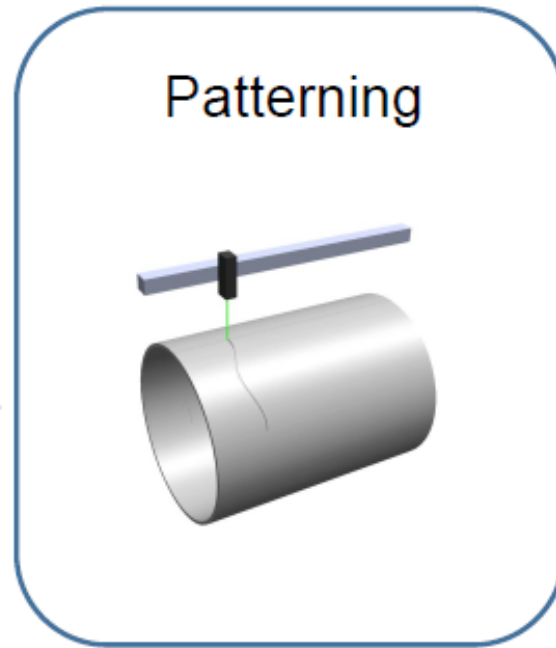
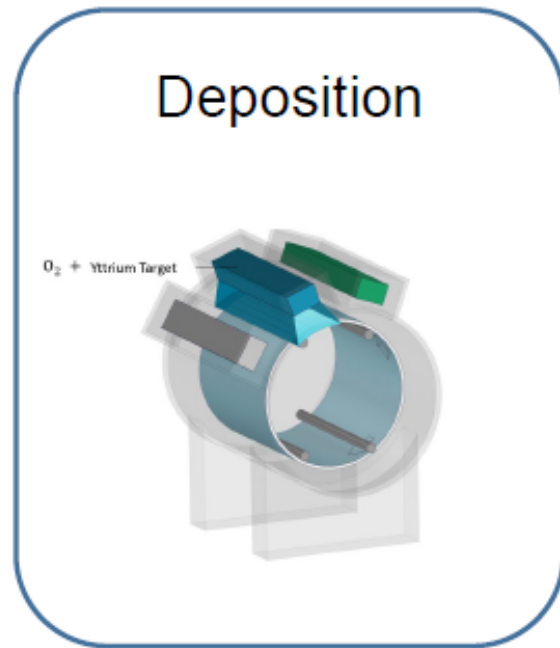
IEEE-CSC & ESAS SUPERCONDUCTIVITY NEWS FORUM (global edition), June 2023.
Presentation given at Coated Conductors for Applications Workshop, Houston, TX, USA, April 2023.



F. Volte and A. Usoskin

SNF Issue 53

MOCVD, 1 m wide cylinder



2 machines instead of 7

7x faster process

Multi-layer

3D → two 1D movements

Portable sub-assemblies
(cryostat + vessel + coil-set)

Patents pending

**RENAISSANCE
FUSION**

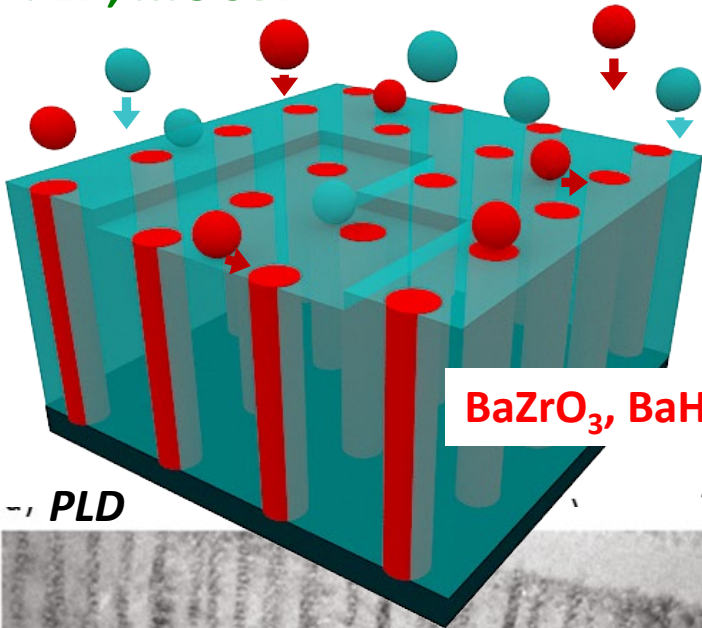


Nanocomposites: The best Artificial Pinning Centres

See SUST Special issue on APC 2018

Simultaneous nanocomposite growth method

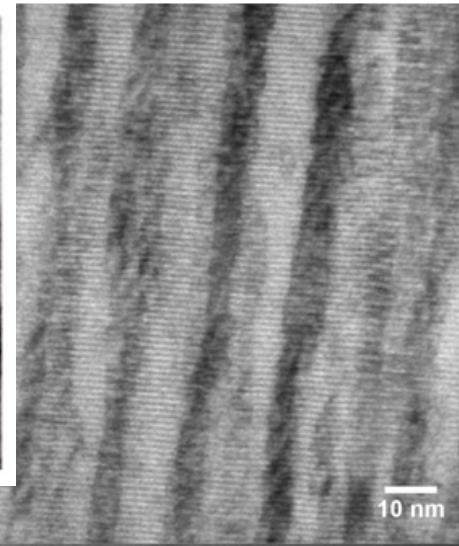
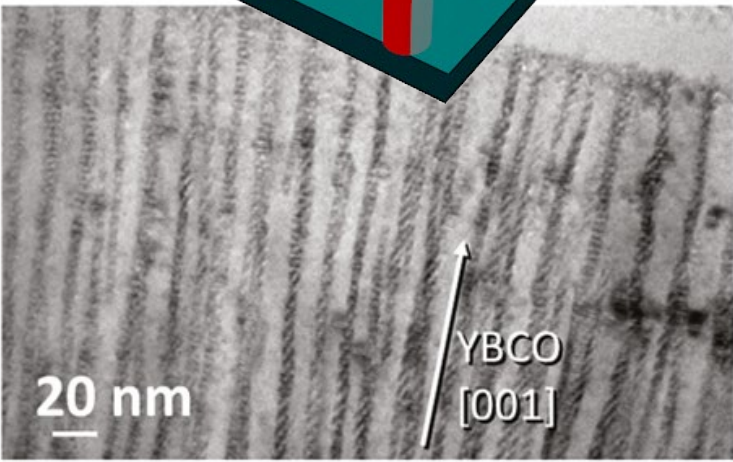
PLD, MOCVD



- Ad-atoms deposition, absorption, surface diffusion
- Self-assembly of epitaxial nanorods while epitaxial REBCO growth

BaZrO₃, BaHfO₃, ...

A-MOCVD



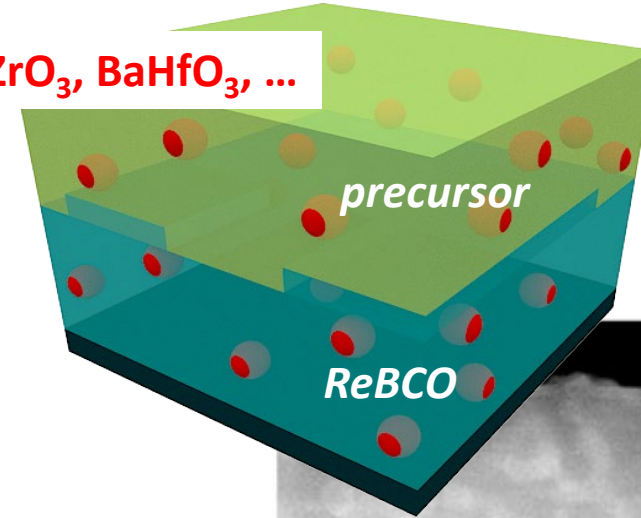
C. Cantoni et al, ACSNano (2011)

Majkic, G. et al. SUST 33 (2020)

Sequential nanocomposite growth method

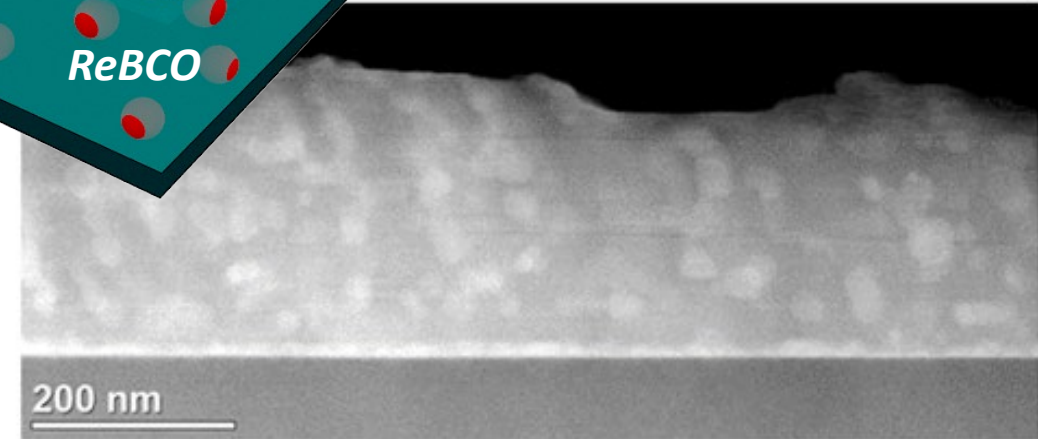
TFA-MOD, RCE-DR, TLAG-CSD

BaZrO₃, BaHfO₃, ...

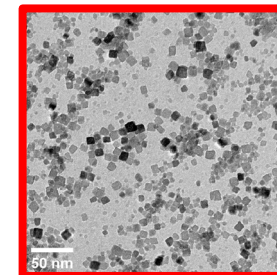


- Precursor deposition
- Np are spontaneously segregated or pre-formed
- ReBCO epitaxial growth traps random Np

TFA-MOD



A. Llordes, Nat Mat (2012)



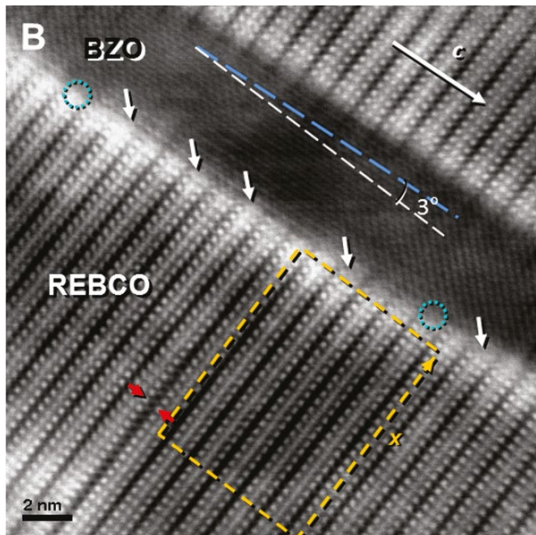
Pre-formed Np with a fine control of size, composition

N. Chamorro, RSC Adv. (2020)

Simultaneous growth of Nanocomposites

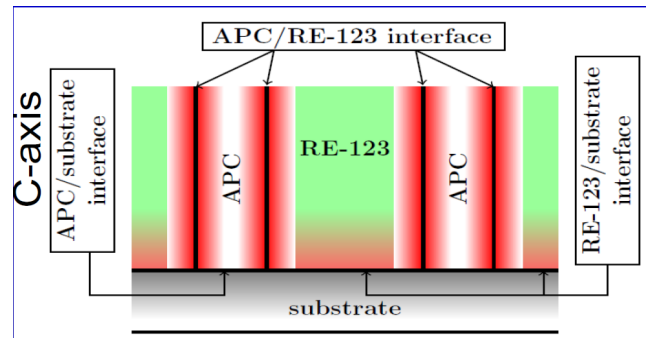
Low versus high growth rate

Grown at 0.6 nm/s



C. Cantoni et al, ACSNano 2011

Elastic Strain energy model

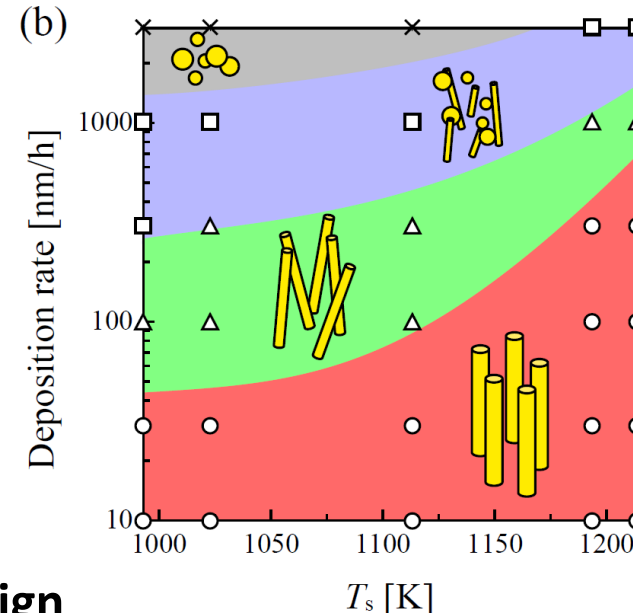


Wu, et al, SUST 30 (2017)

Engineering landscape by design

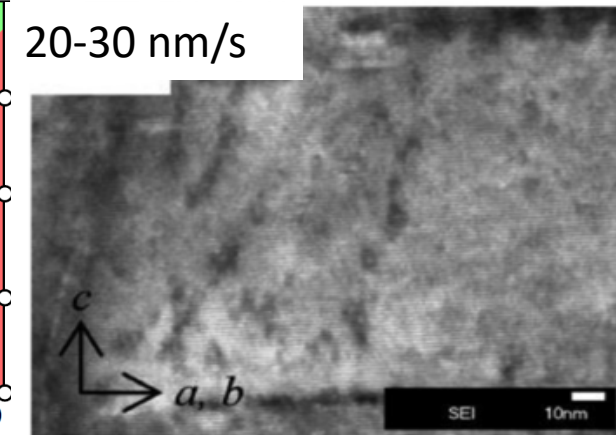
High growth rates (10-50 nm/s)

Montecarlo simulations

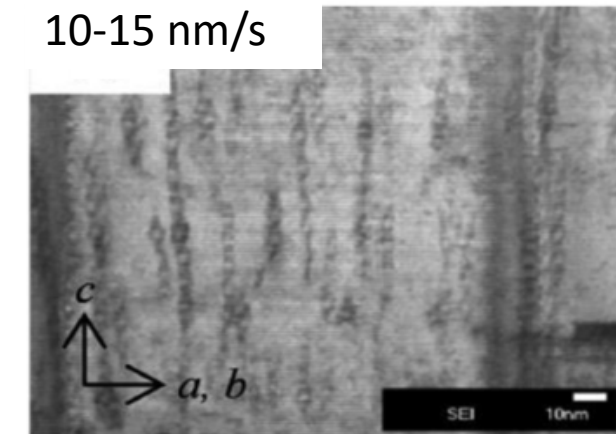


Y Ichino et al J.JAP 56 (2017)

EuBCO + HfBaO₃ nanorods

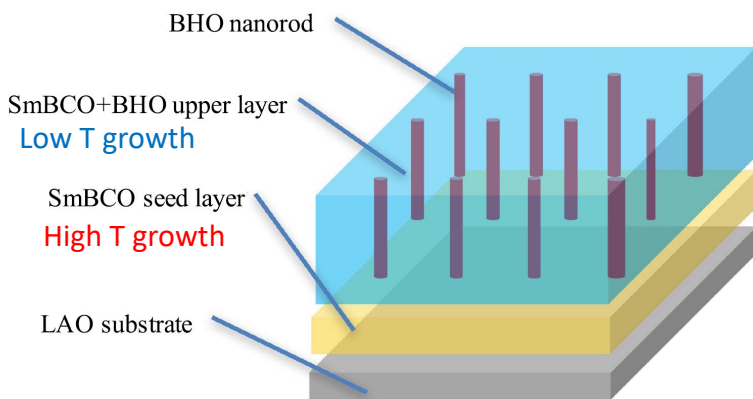


10-15 nm/s

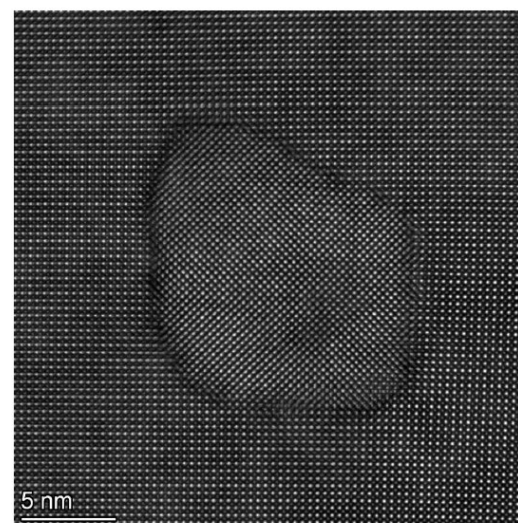


Fujita, S. et al. IEEE TAS 29 (2019)

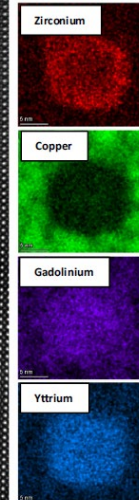
LTG – PLD method



Y. Yoshida et al, SUST 30 (2017)



Nano-EDS



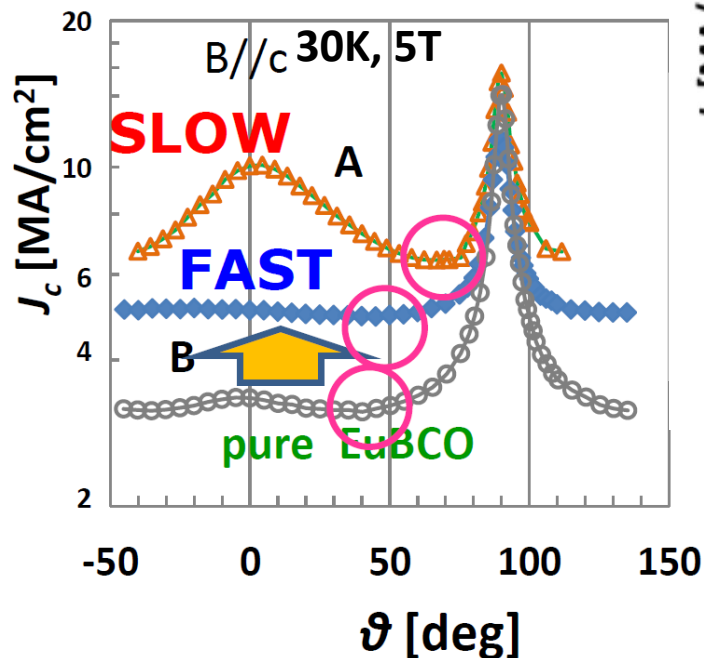
A. Goyal et al, Nat Comm (2024)

Vortex pinning consequences at high growth rate:

PLD-HR

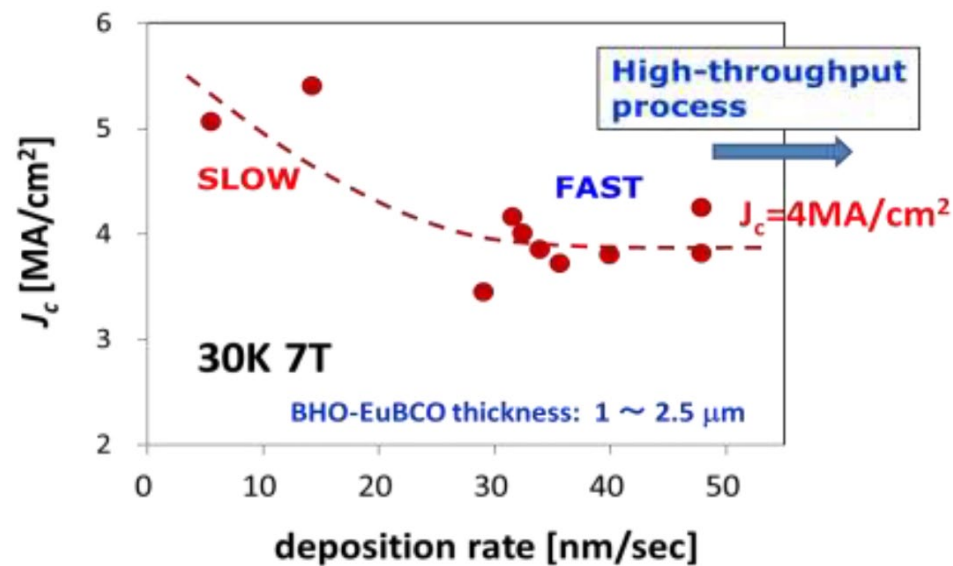


EuBCO + HfBaO₃ nanorods

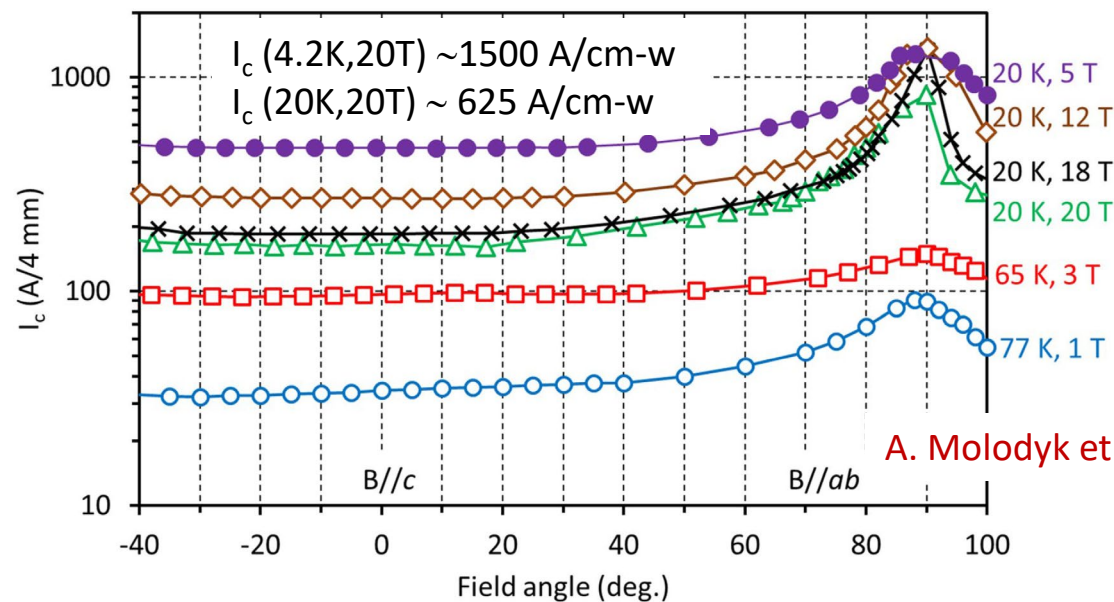
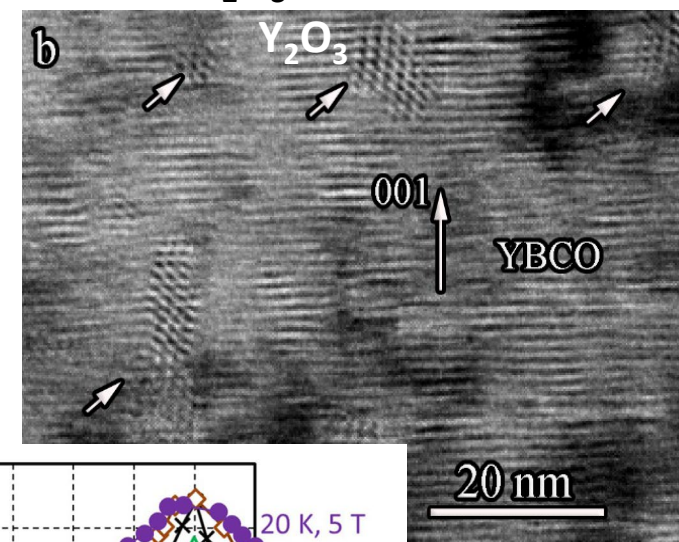


Y. Iijima, SNF Issue 53

Aligned long nanorods are not essential at low T - high H



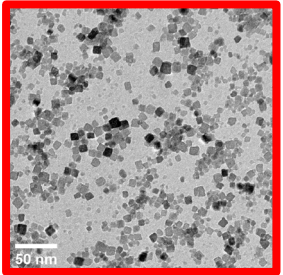
YBCO + Y₂O₃ nanoparticles



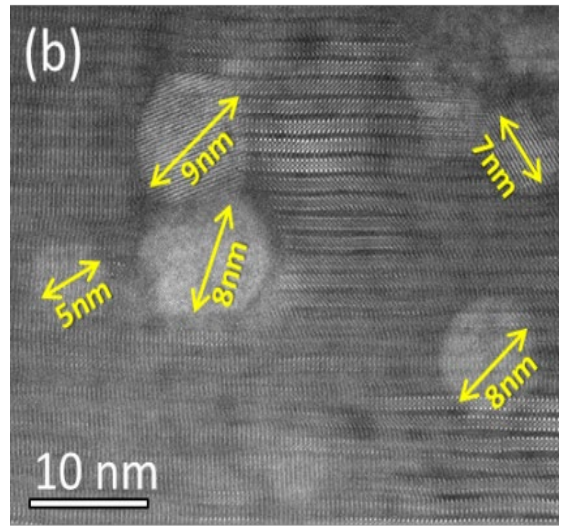
A. Molodyk et al, Sci. Rep 11 (2021)

Sequential growth of Nanocomposites at high growth rate: TFA vs TLAG

TFA-MOD (0.5-1 nm/s)



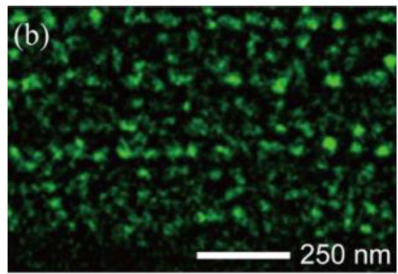
Fast heating with preformed Np



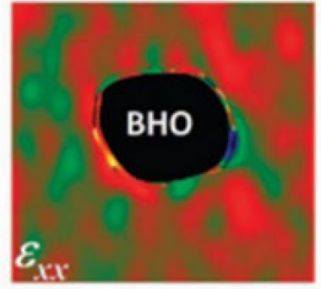
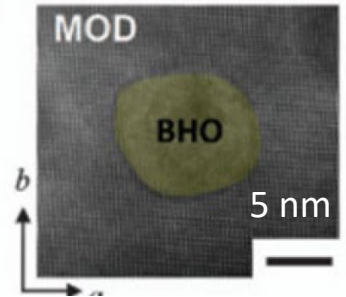
Small randomly oriented Np are obtained
 $V \sim 7.7\%$

Z.Li et al, Sci. Rep 9 (2019)

J_c (77K, sf) ~ 5 MA/cm²



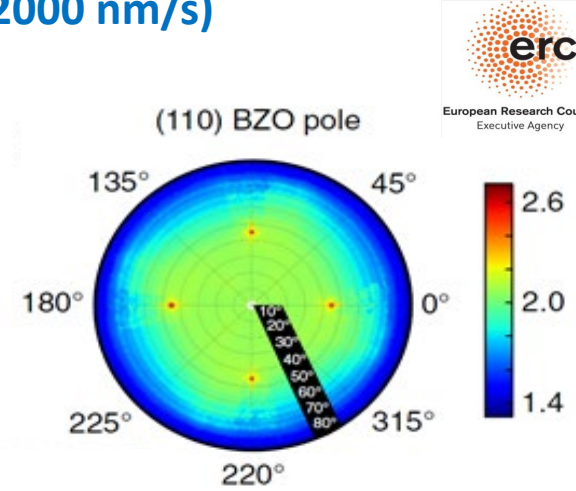
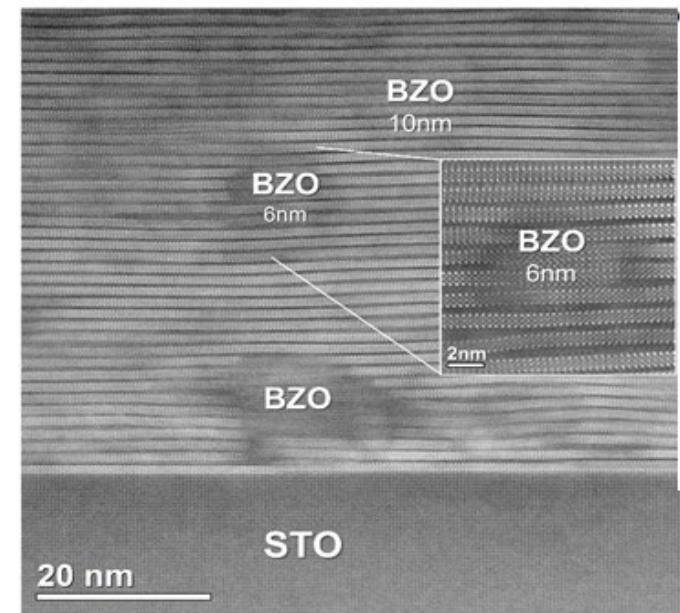
UTOOC: ultrathin multicoating to avoid Np coarsening



J_c (77K, sf) ~ 5.5 MA/cm²
 J_c (26K, 6T) ~ 11 MA/cm²

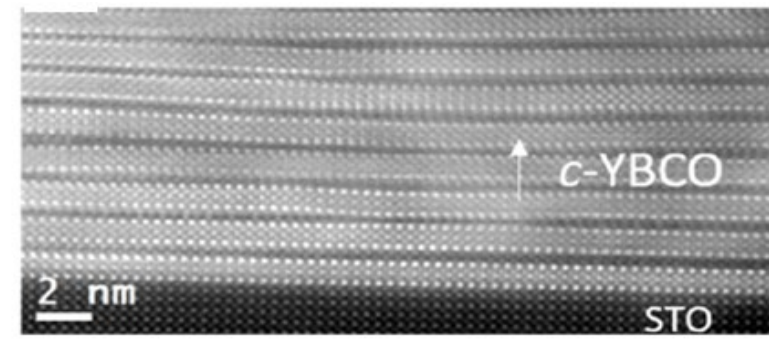
T. Izumi, K. Nakaoka, SUST., 31 (2018)
M. Miura et al, NPG Asia Materials 9 (2017)

TLAG-CSD (50-2000 nm/s)



Small epitaxial oriented Np and high defect density are reached

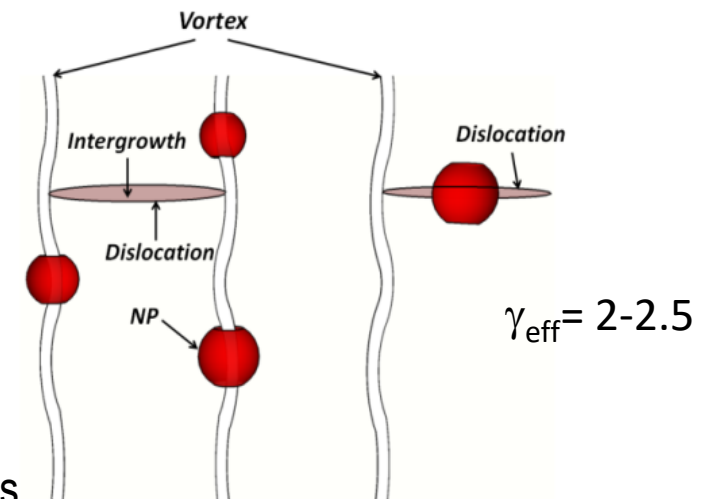
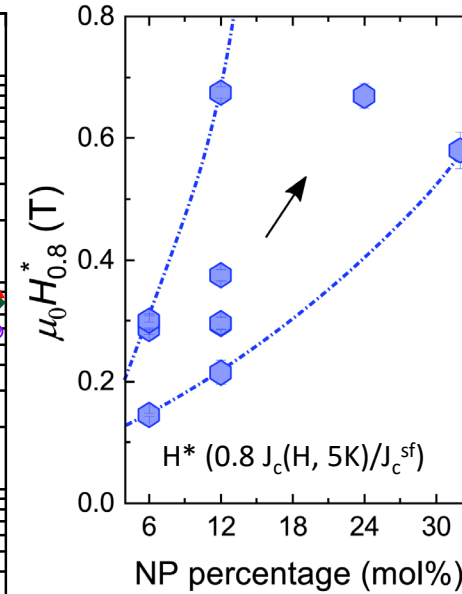
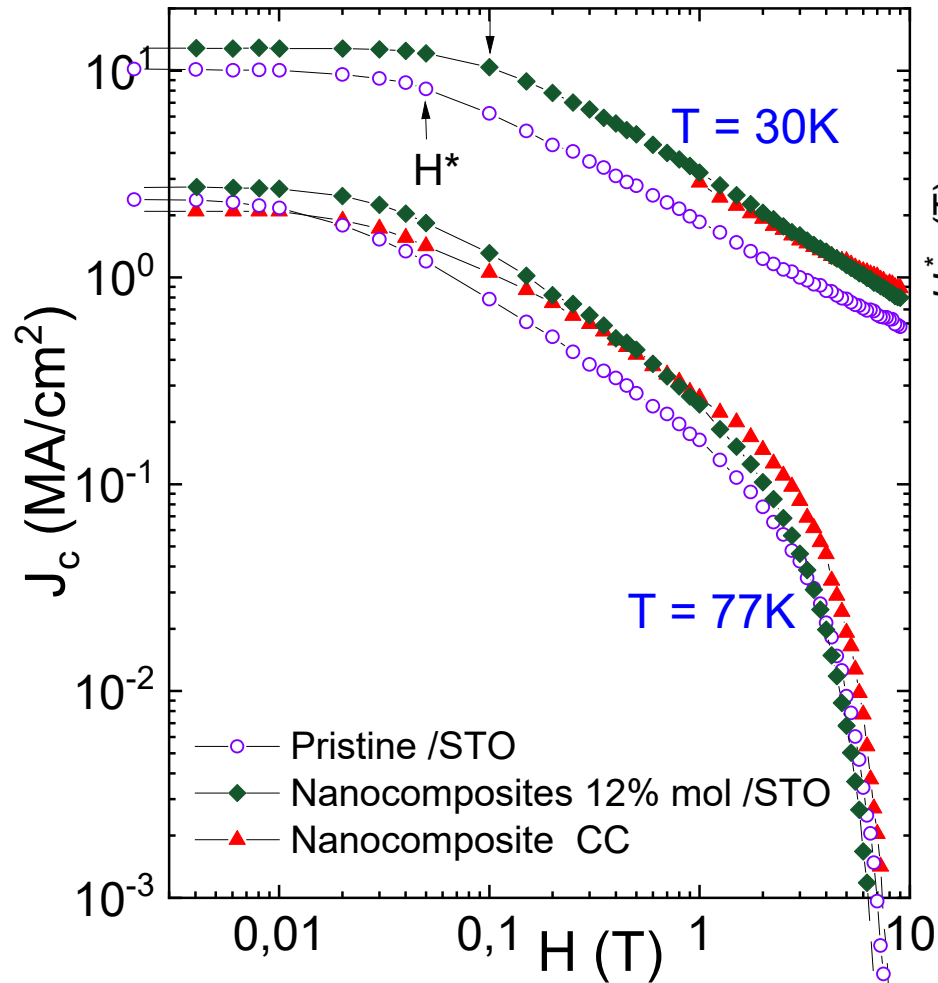
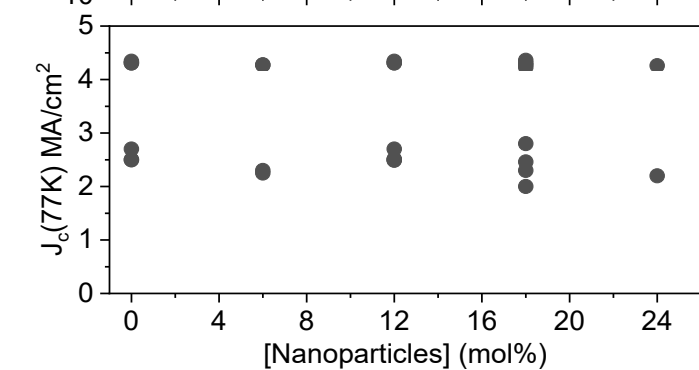
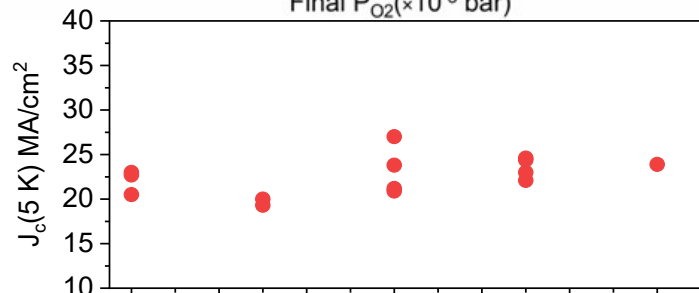
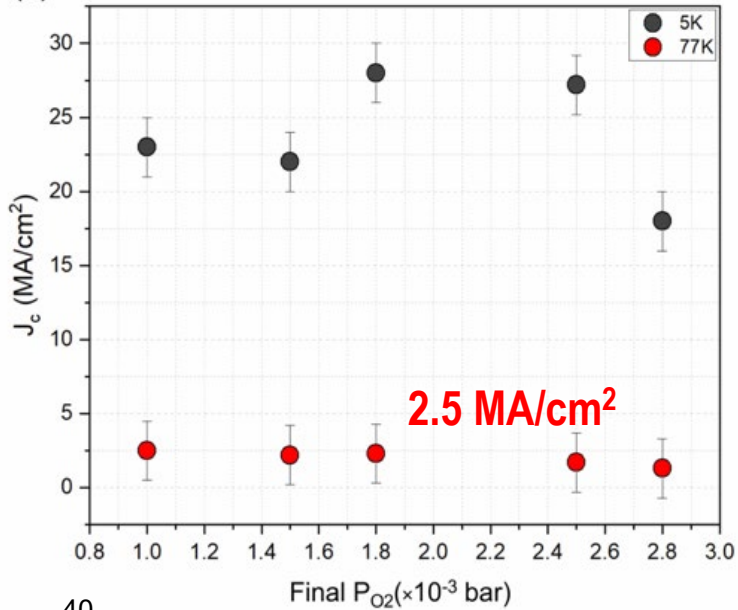
Pristine YBCO film



L. Soler et al., Nat Comm (2020)
S. Rasi, et al, Advance Science (2022)

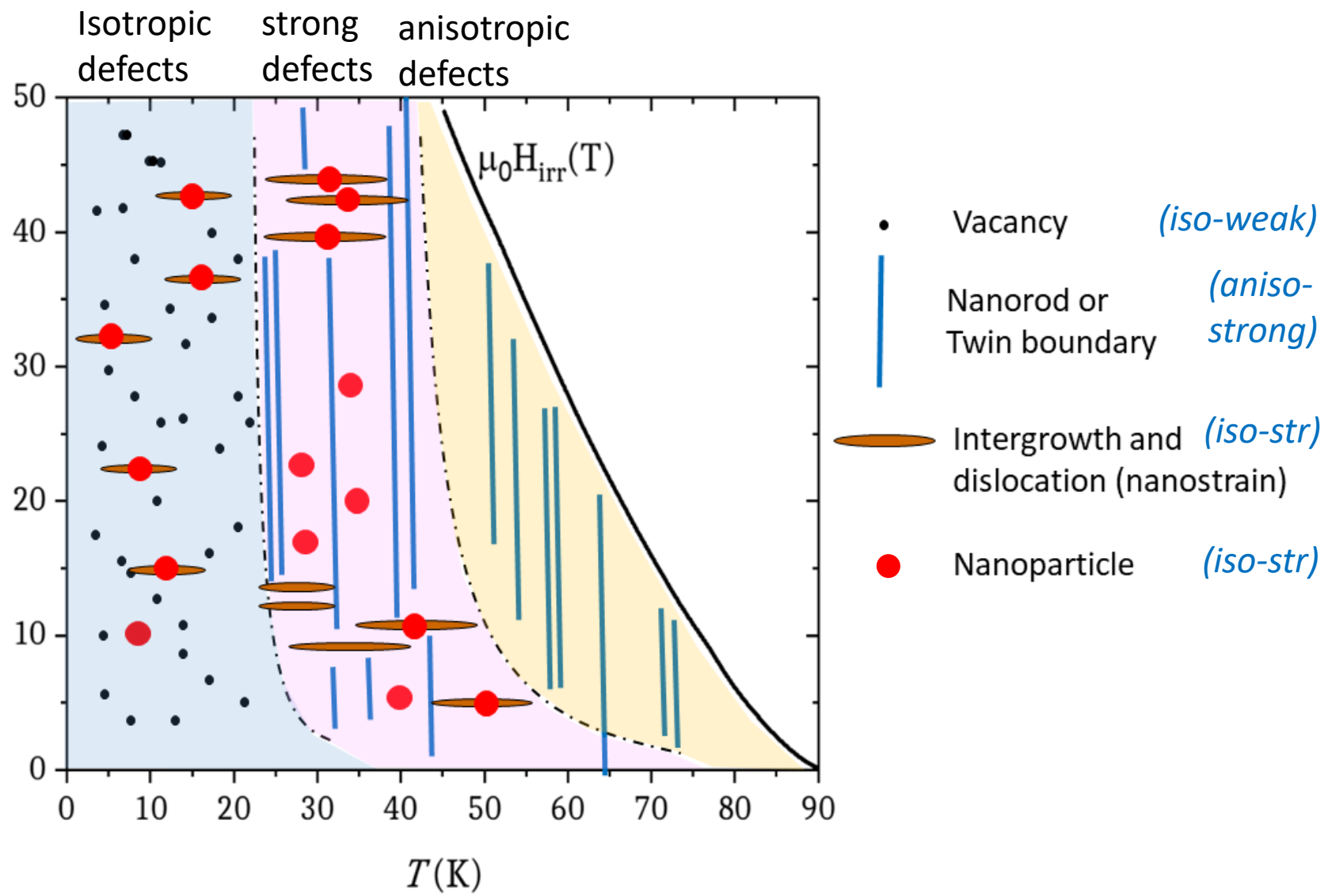
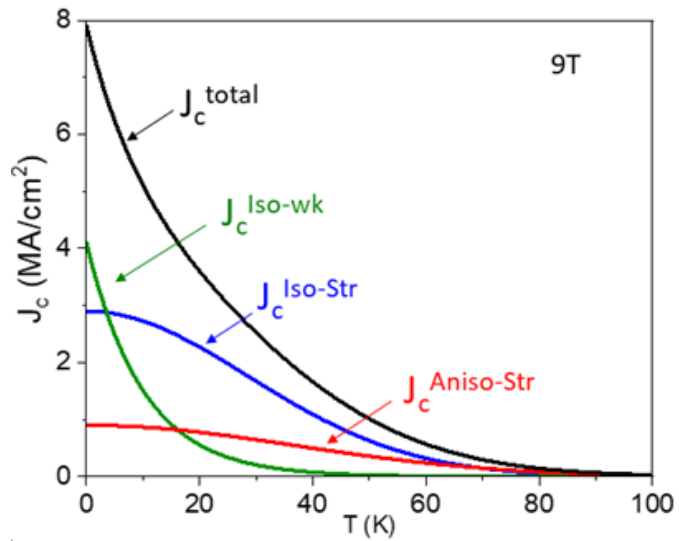
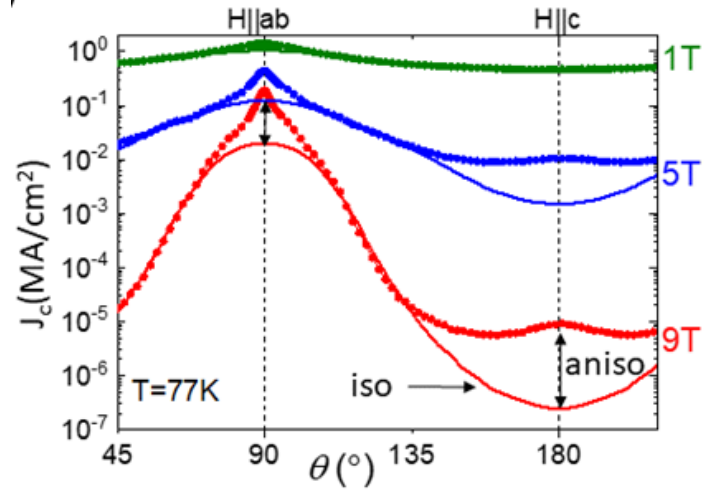
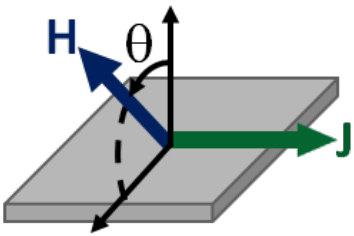
Vortex pinning consequences at high growth rate: TLAG-CSD

50 nm/s → 1500 nm/s

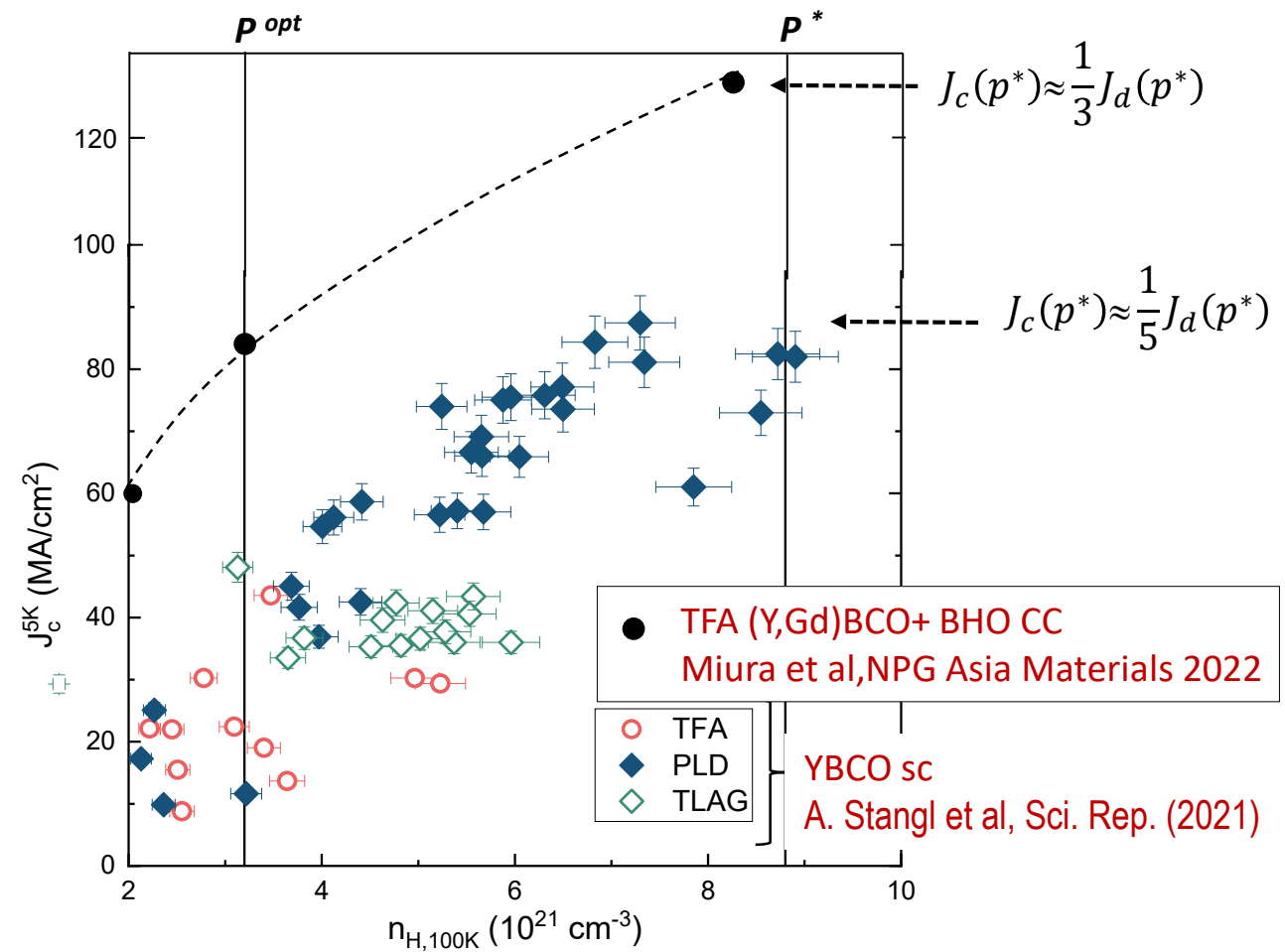
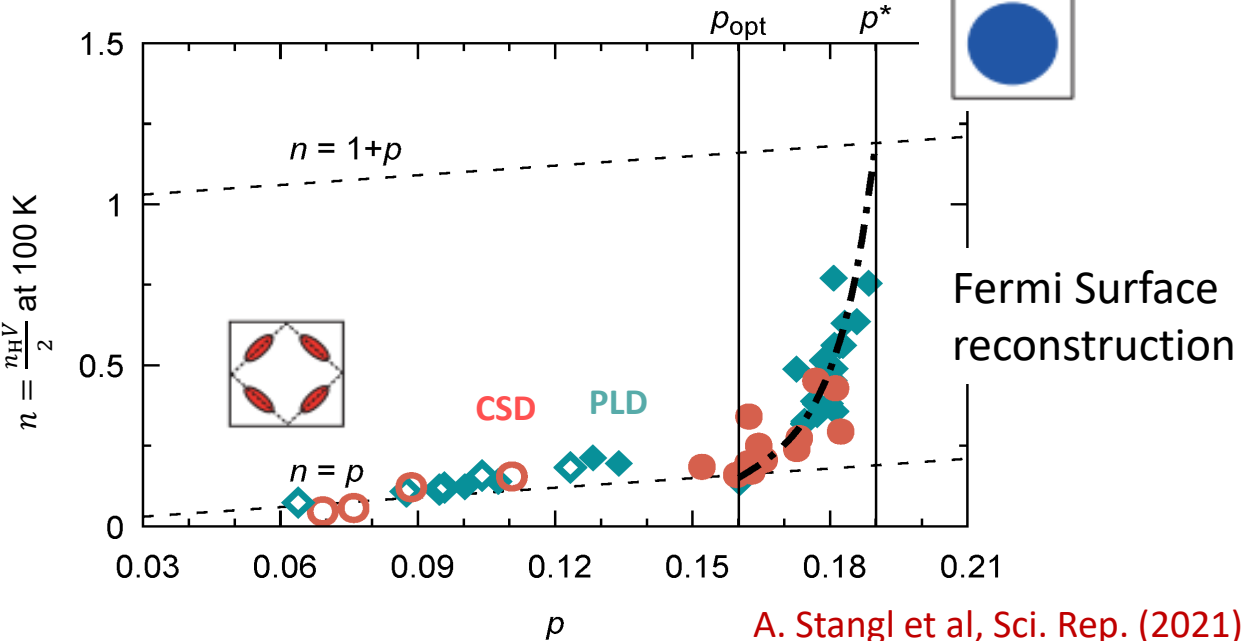
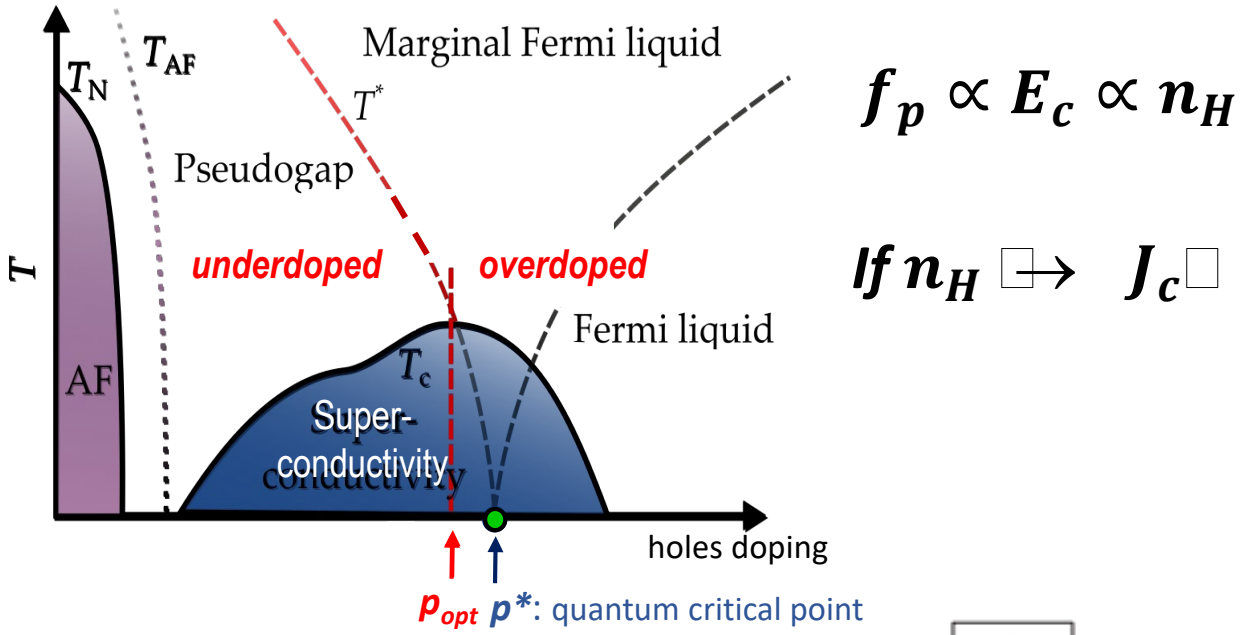


Rich vortex pinning determined by the defect microstructure of high growth rates

Vortex pinning landscape of CC, $J_c(\theta, H, T)$

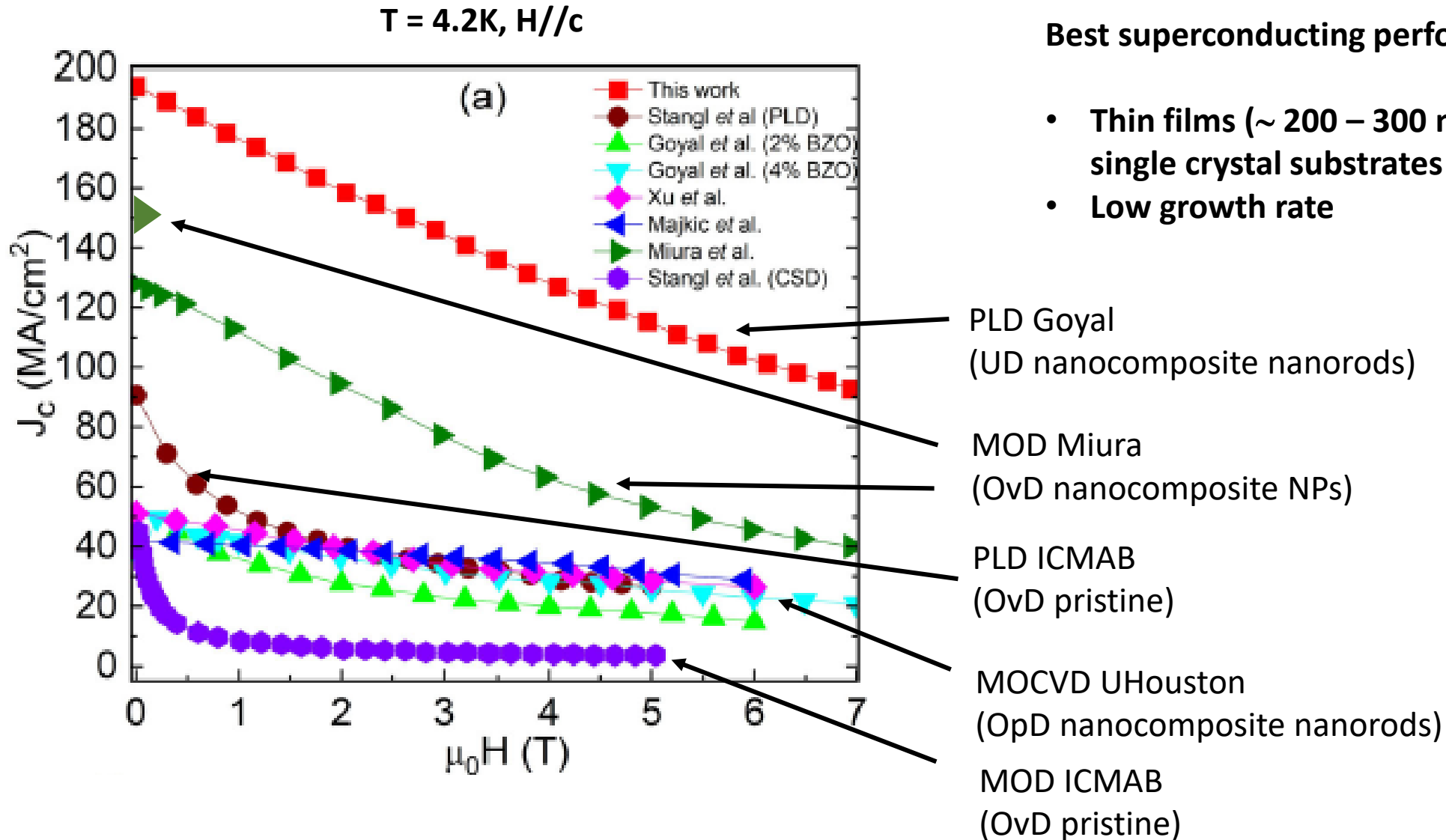


$J_c(n_H, T, H)$ in the Overdoped state: where Condensation energy and charge carrier density increases



Interest in combining high throughput and nanocomposite CC in overdoped state

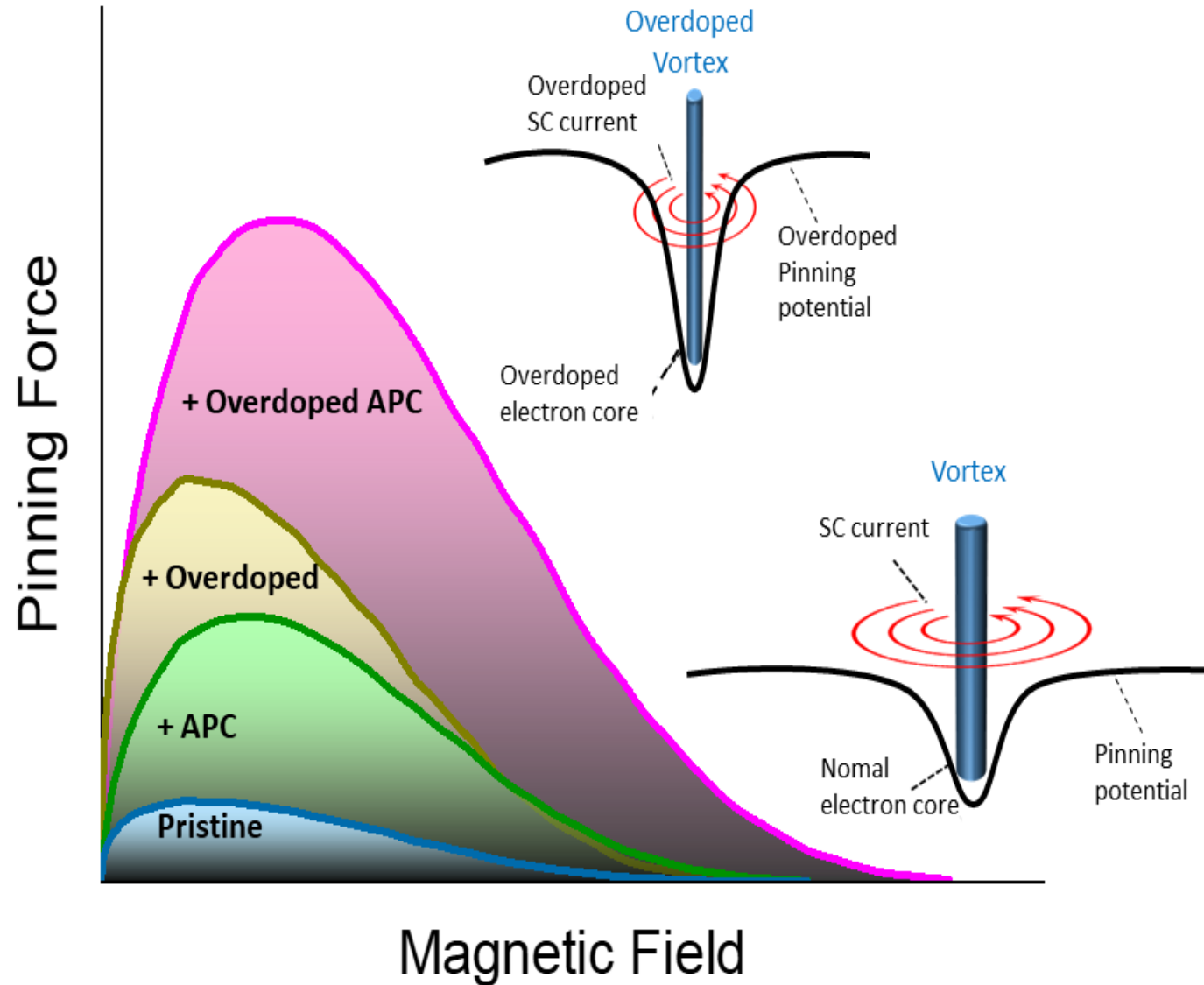
Record values of superconducting performance in REBCO CCs



Record values of superconducting performance in REBCO CCs

Performance enhancement

1. First thrust: biaxially textured CCs (pristine) (optimally doped)
2. Second thrust: Artificial pinning Centers (optimally doped)
3. Third thrust: synergy enhanced carrier concentration (overdoped) and APCs



X. Obradors, T. Puig, "Pin the vortex on the superconductor", Nature Mater. News and Views (2024, in press);
 M. Miura et al, NPG Asia (2022); M. Miura et al., Nat Mat (2024) for IBS

Summary materials processing challenges

to decrease cost/performance ratio

	PLD	MOCVD	ME	TFA-CSD	RCE-DR	TLAG-CSD
High performance	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
High homogeneity in long length	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	To demonstrate
Large area processing	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Orange	Green	To demonstrate
High thickness (> 3 μm)	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Orange	To demonstrate
High growth rate	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Green
Low cost equipment	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Green
High manufacturing yield	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	To demonstrate

Different growth methods have adopted different approaches to achieve competitiveness

Other application driven relevant materials aspects: from CC to conductor

Coated Conductor tape:

- Engineering current density, J_e
- Homogeneity and uniformity
- Mechanical strength
- Fatigue
- Splicing
- Quench protection
- Ac losses
- Radiation damage, ...

Conductor wire:

- Conductor configuration (current sharing, transposition, ...)
- Conductor bending radius
- Winding methodologies (impregnation, winding guides,...)
- Insulated, non-Insulated, partially insulated wiring
- Thermal stress, mechanical resilience, quench management, ac-losses,



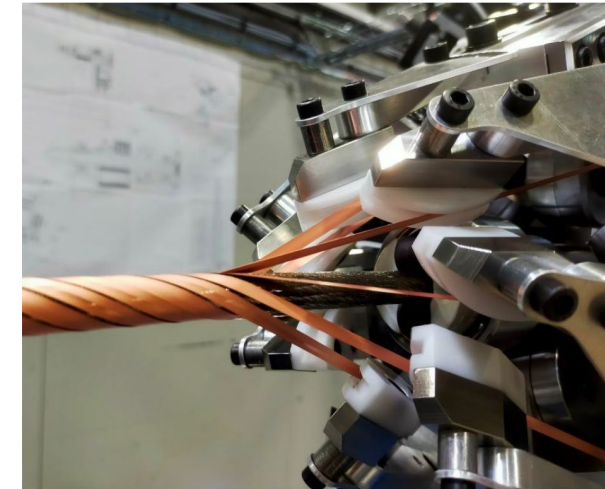
D. Van der Laan et al, SUST 34 (2021)



Z.S. Hartwig et al, SUST 33 (2020)



S. Kar et al, SUST 33 (2020)










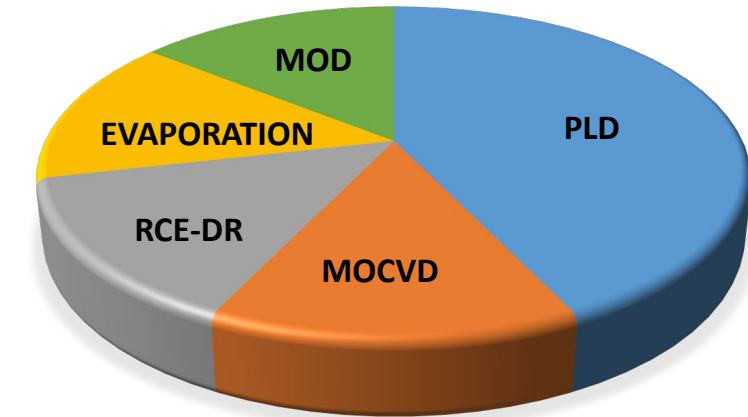
A. Ballarino, HiTAT Workshop, Geneva, March 2023








N Yanagi et al J. Phys.: Conf. Ser. 2545 (2023)

Status of CC fabrication at Industrial scale

Consolidated product	Growth method	Textured substrate	REBCO materials	Main APC
	PLD	IBAD	YBCO	Y ₂ O ₃ nanoparticle
			GdBCO	
	PLD	IBAD	EuBCO	BHO nanorod
			GdBCO	
	PLD	IBAD	YBCO	BZO nanorod
	MOCVD	IBAD	(Y,Gd)BCO	BZO nanorod
			HM prod.	
	ME	ISD	GdBCO	
	RCE-DR	IBAD	GdBCO	
	CSD	IBAD	YBCO	BZO nanoparticle



R&D product

	PLD
	PLD
	CSD
	CSD
	MOCVD

New horizons at Faraday Group (PLD method)



Multi GA-m factories vision (mid-2020's) Next-gen production unit (600W laser + 2 chambers)



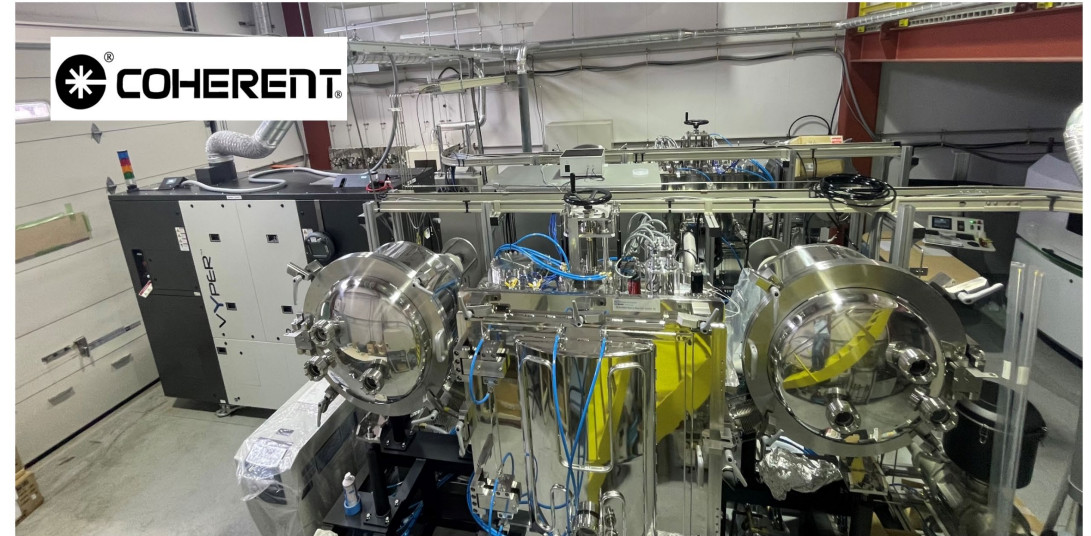
Fits well into standard logistics center

5000 m² unit I_c L = 1 GA-m/year for 2024
(2500 tapes x 600 A (20T, 20K) x 700 m) (12 mm eq.)

We are up to build more modular plants as demand unveils

CCA-2023, University of Houston, UH Hilton, Texas, USA, 3-6 April 2023

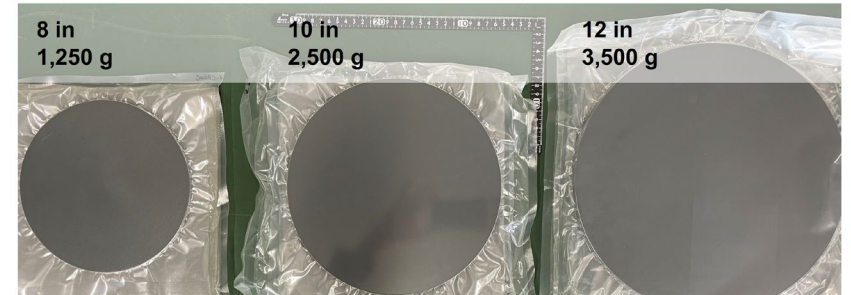
25000 km/yr (12 mm) in 2028



February – received equipment, April – started operation
If R&D successful, there's potential to reach **1 GA-m/year with only 5 units**

CCA-2023, University of Houston, UH Hilton, Texas, USA, 3-6 April 2023

Scaling up PLD major raw materials (PLD targets)



New horizons at Faraday Group (PLD method)



Multi GA-m factories vision (mid-2020's)



Fits well into standard logistics center

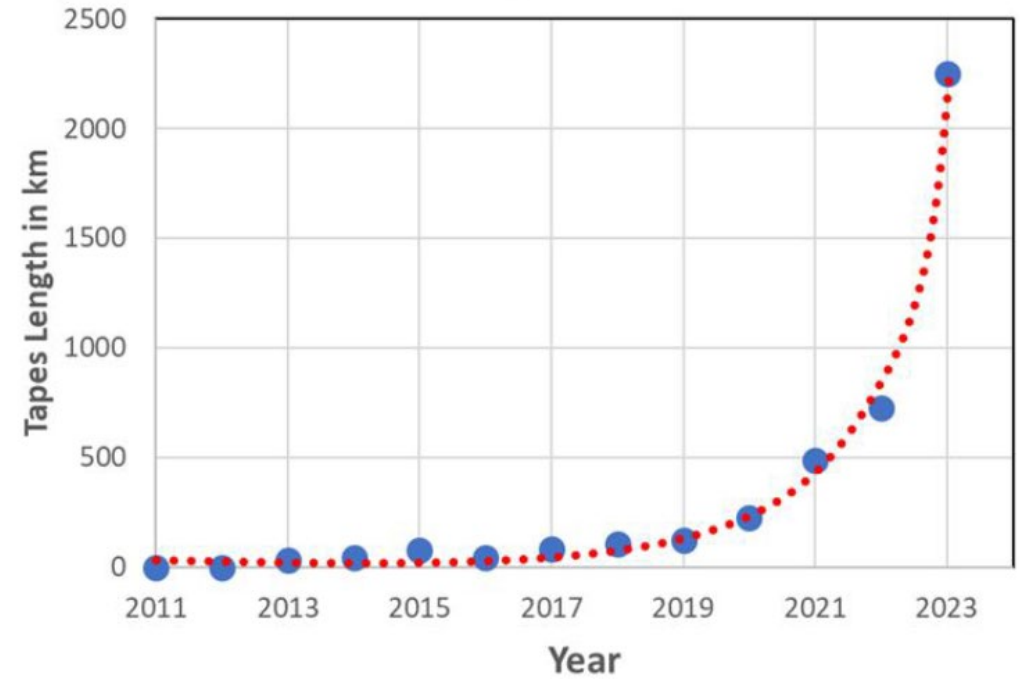
5000 m² unit I_c L = 1 GA-m/year for 2024
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We are up to build more modular plants as demand unveils

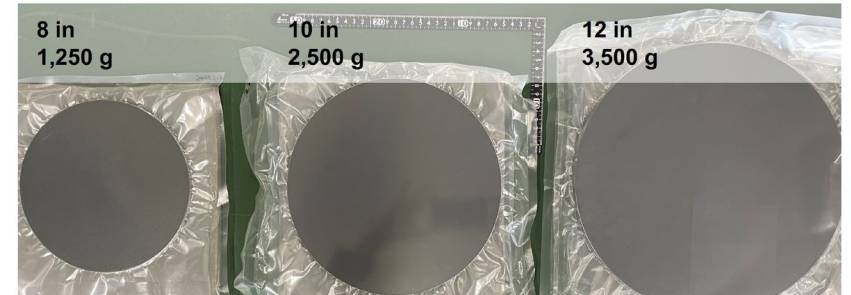
CCA-2023, University of Houston, UH Hilton, Texas, USA, 3-6 April 2023

25000 km/yr (12 mm) in 2028

4mm HTS Tape Production



Scaling up PLD major raw materials (PLD targets)



Shanghai Superconductor Technology (SST) (PLD method)

Plant #1 (Upgrading of existing plant)

Zhangjiang Hi-tech Park, Shanghai



Plant #2 (New)

Kangqiao Industrial Park, Shanghai

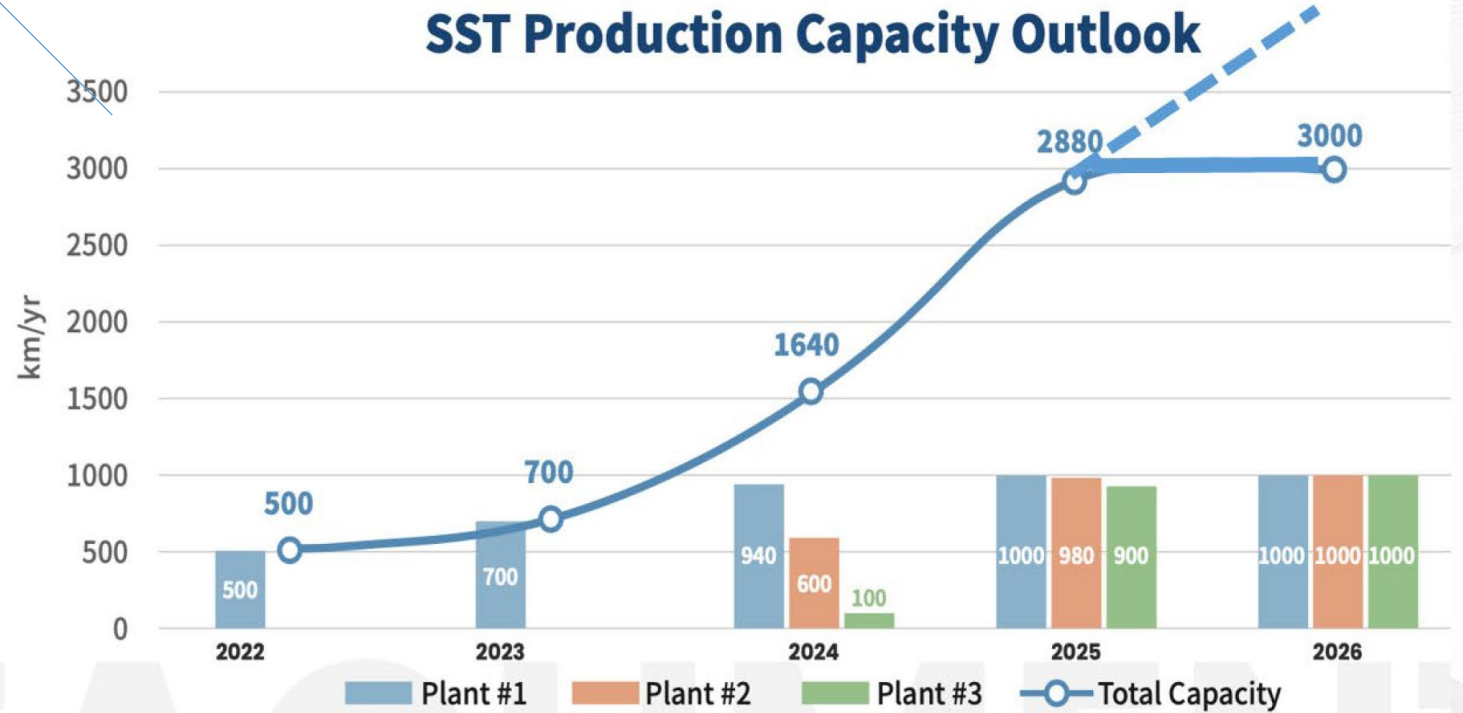


Plant #3 (New)

Aviation Harbour Demonstration Park, Hefei



SST Production Capacity Outlook



3 years
Expansion

3
Plants

3000 km/yr (12 mm eq.)
Capacity

Current development progress in SuNAM

(RCE-DR method)

RCE-DR system



120 mm-w Electro-polishing



PLD system



Present: 400 km/yr (4 mm eq.)

Target 2025: x 2.5 production capacity
125 mm wide tapes

Real-time (AI) is used for CC surface analysis

Development of a new process:

→ Seed layer : PLD system

→ Thick REBCO layer: RCE-DR system

Shanghai Creative Superconductors, SCSC

Industrial production lines (TFA-MOD method)



Polishing



Buffer layer texturing



Present:
400 km/yr (4 mm)

New production line
under construction for
40 mm wide tapes



Coating and growth of the Superconducting layer



Packaging

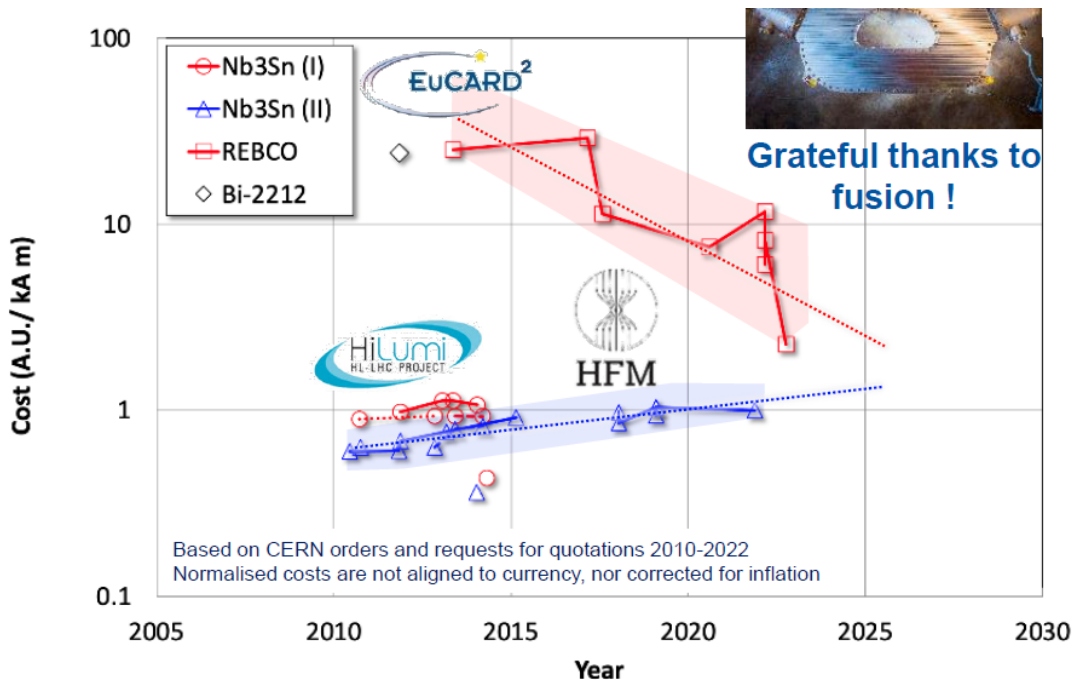
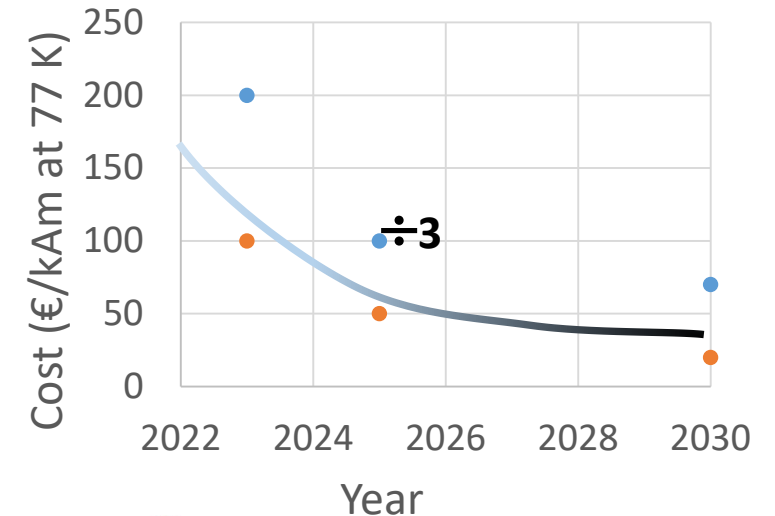
x 7 production capacity
increase in 2025

Status of CC materials at industrial scale and prospects

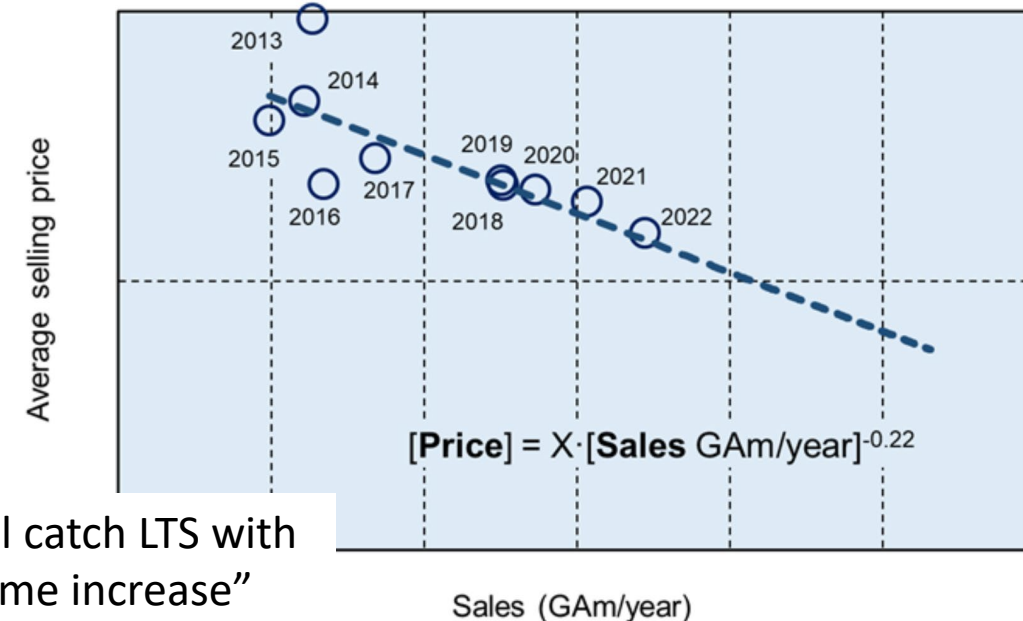
Cost ...
7 consolidated companies

Magnitude	At present	Target for 2025	Target for 2028
Length (km)	0.5 – 1	1 – (5)	
Width (mm)	2, 3, 4, 6, 12	40, 80, 100, 125	
Production (km/yr) <i>12 mm equiv.</i>	3000 - 5000	6000 -10000	+40000 (+25000 Faraday)

S. Lee, Faraday Group, SNF Issue 53



L. Bottura, CERN,
SNF Issue 52

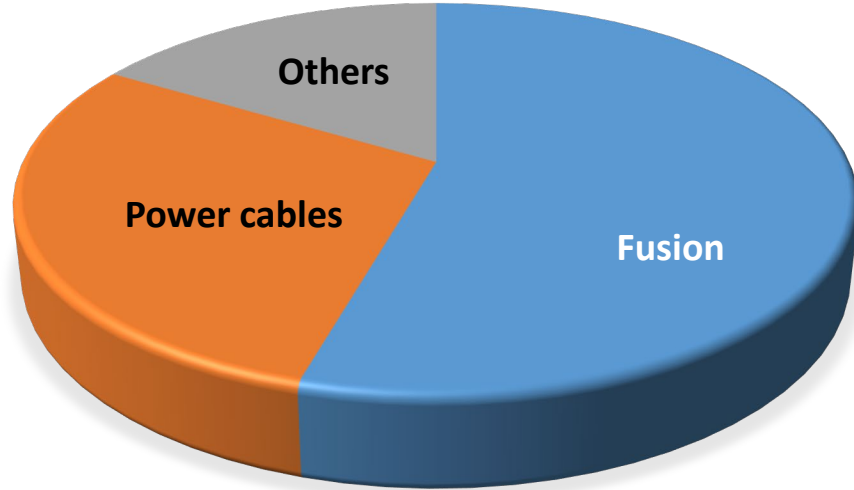


“HTS price will catch LTS with a 10-fold volume increase”

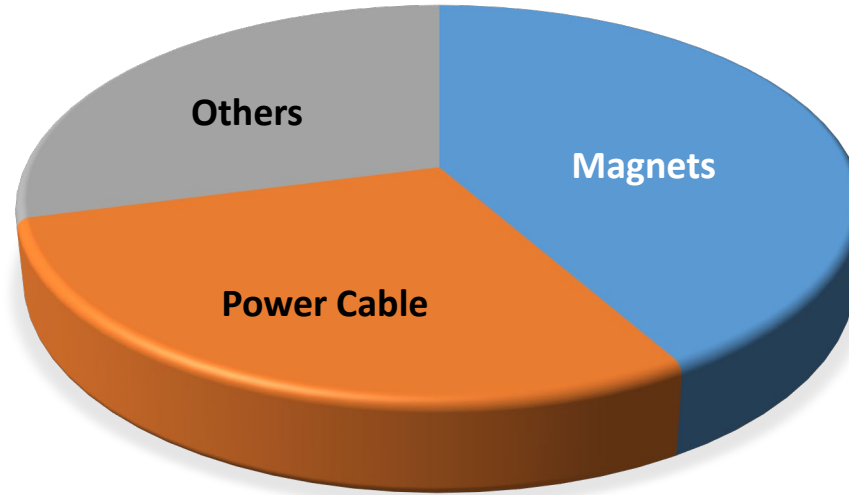
CC Industry application target

7 consolidated companies

Main target



Second target

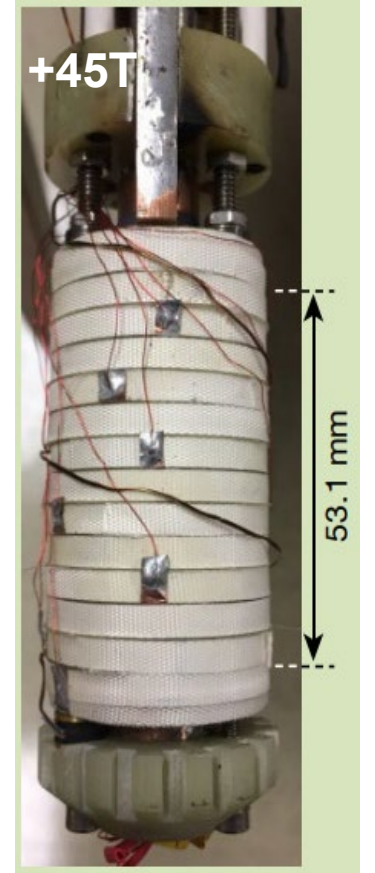


<https://www.theva.com/superlink>

<https://www.nkt.com>

<https://cfs.energy/technology>

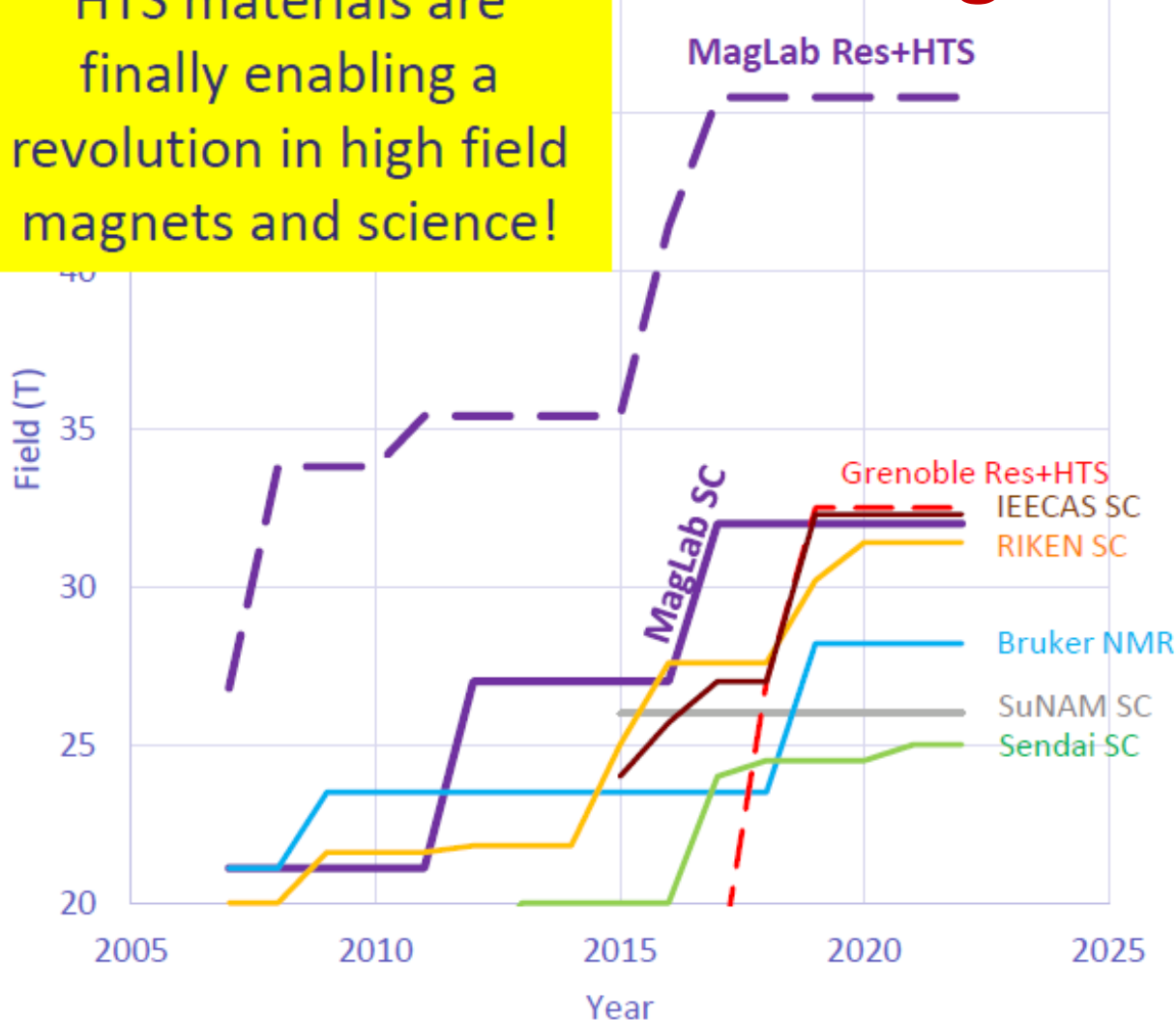
NATIONAL HIGH
MAGNETIC
FIELD LABORATORY



S. Hahn et al, Nature 570, 496 (2019)

HTS materials are finally enabling a revolution in high field magnets and science!

UHF Magnets



NMR = Nuclear Magnetic Resonance.

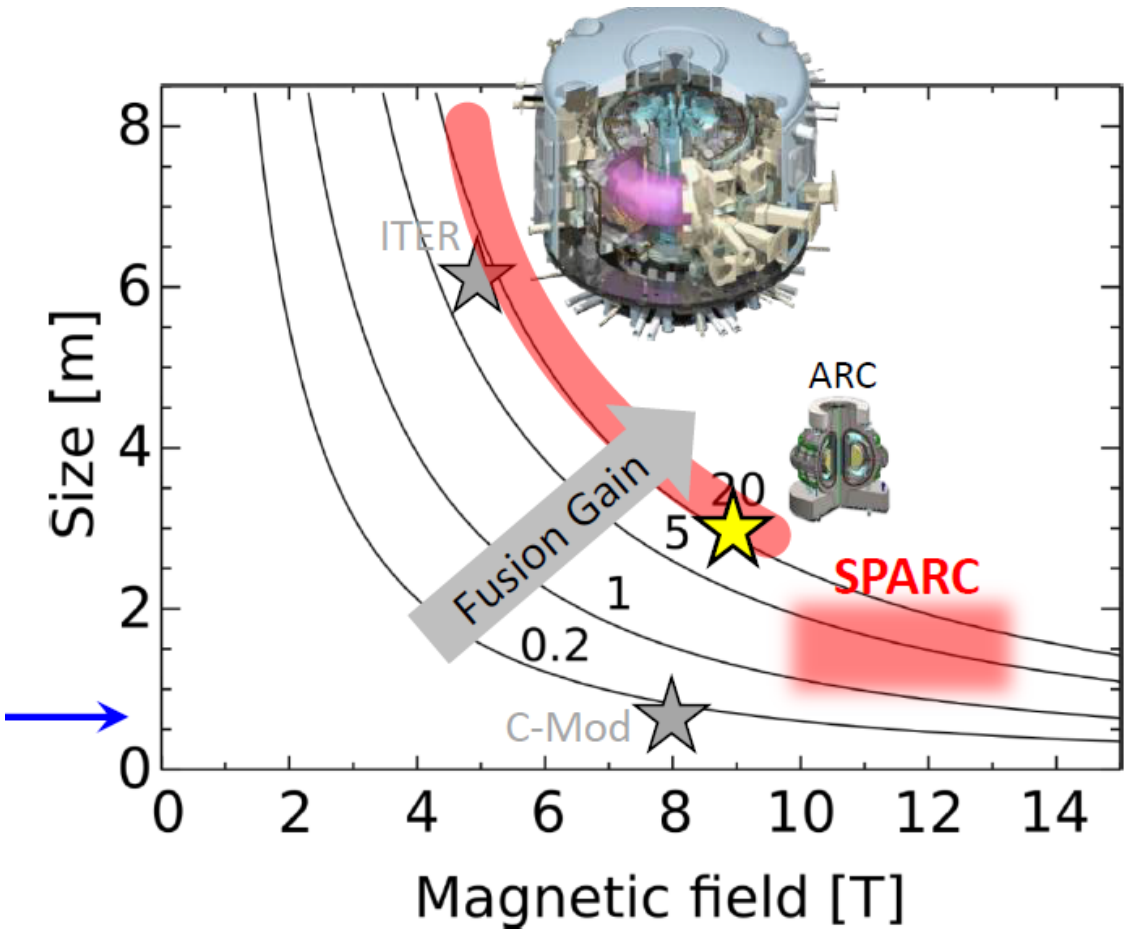
There are now > 7 organizations worldwide developing HTS coils for service at Ultra-High Fields.

- All SC magnets >25 T use REBCO.
 - SC magnets are presently available at 28 – 32 T for condensed matter physics.
 - NMR magnets are operating at 28.2 T (1.2 GHz).
 - >4 groups are pursuing 30 – 35 T SC.
 - 2 groups are pursuing 30.5 T (1.3 GHz) NMR.
 - ~4 labs are pursuing 40 T SC.
- Variability of properties, effects of screening currents, and quench protection remain important challenges.

Compact fusion with Ultra High Field Magnets



SPARC: Smallest Possible Affordable, Robust, Compact



500 MW reactors, 10^8 °C



- Huge R&D efforts worldwide with public and private partners and investment (tens of new companies)
- Reactors in 2030?
- Fusion could generate 20-30 % of renewable worldwide energy
- Very low land use ($\div 100$ vs PV)

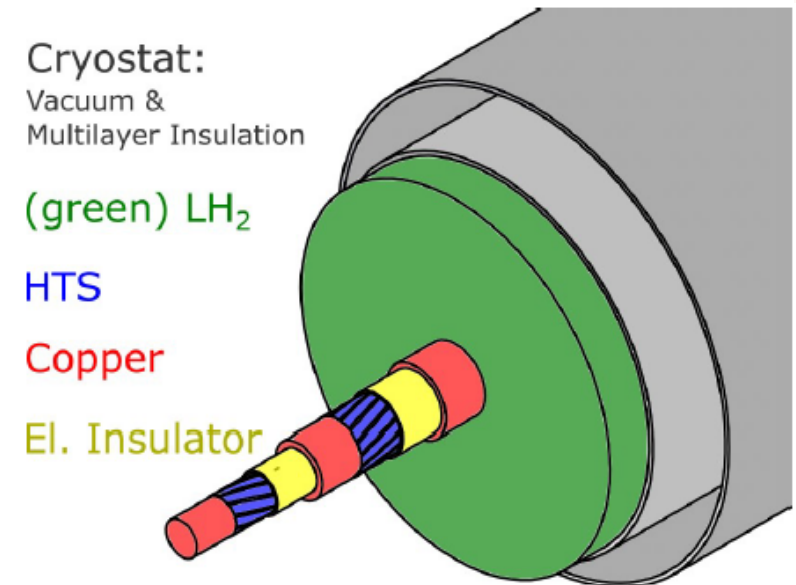
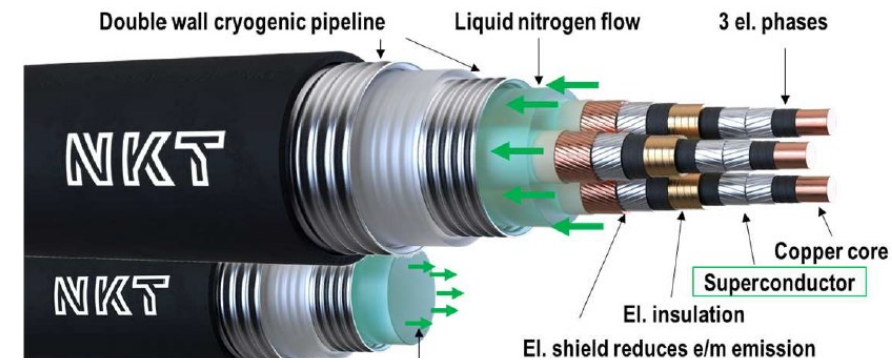
J.K. Noland et al., Scientific Reports 12, 21280 (2022)

Special Issue of the IEEE TRANS APPL SUPERCOND, vol. 34. March (2024)

- High field with HTS ($B \sim 12T$): much lower volume ($\div 100$ ITER and DEMO) (~ few M\$)
- Coils REBCO $\sim 2-3$ m at 20 T and 20 K, $P \propto B^4$ (x 16)
- CC demand: 10.000 km (2024) / 20.000 km/device / demand x 10-20 in 10 years

Smart grids: superconductor cables and fault current limiters

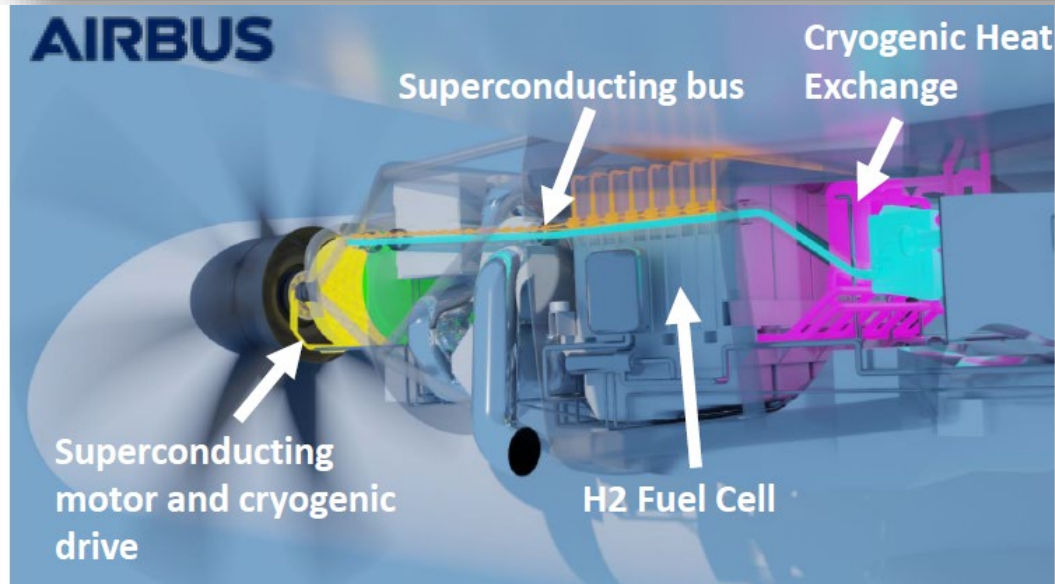
- **Power increase** in urban zones with environmental restrictions (underground)
- **AC cables** with reduced voltage (+1.2 km / 110 kV / 500 MVA). Superlink Project: 15 km (Munich)
- No losses in **DC cables** (< 35 kV / +2.4 km). Transport, railway, data centers, busbars for industry electrolysis, ...
- Low social acceptance of HV grids: **Underground HVDC** cables is a solution for (Supernode Project, 1 GW, renewables integration)
- **Overhead transmission lines**, smaller rights of way and lower cost (VEIR)
- **Reduced use of transformers** (lower voltage) and FCL integration
- **Hybrid Energy pipelines** (LH₂ fuel + HTSC electricity / 25 K). TransHyde Project (Germany)



Electrical airplanes: HTS CCs are key elements

IEEE CS, IAS and CSSJ SUPERCONDUCTIVITY NEWS FORUM (global edition), Issue No. 57, Oct 2024. Presentation given at ASC 2024, Sept 2024, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

<https://www.airbus.com/innovation/zero-emission/hydrogen/zeroe.html>



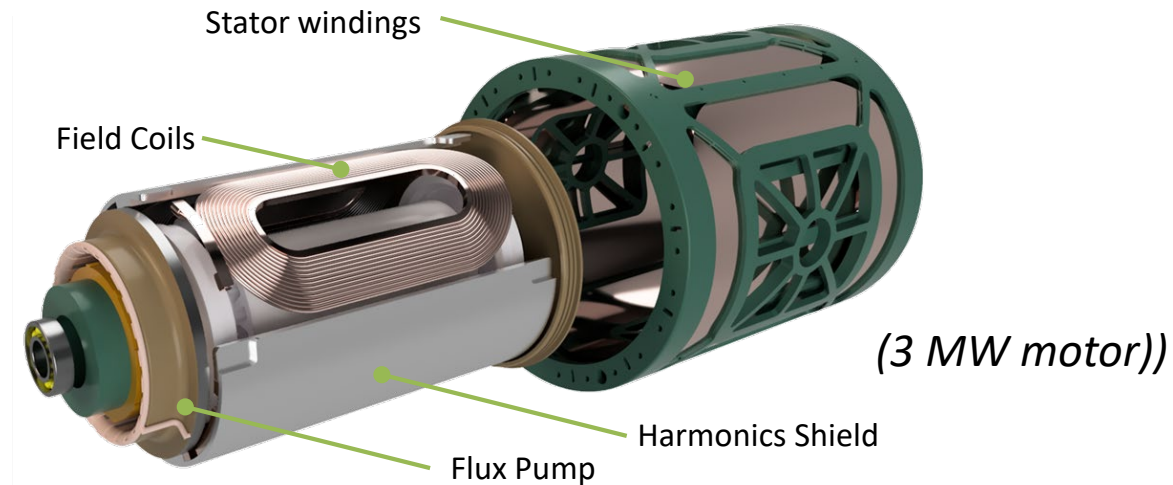
<https://www.airbus.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2024-05-airbus-takes-superconductivity-research-for-hydrogen-powered>

- Minimize weight of components (motors, generators, cables)

Center for High-Efficiency Electrical Technologies for Aircraft CHEETA members



Cables
Motors
Generators



R.A. Badcock et al, Robinson Res Inst, New Zealand
SNF Issue 56

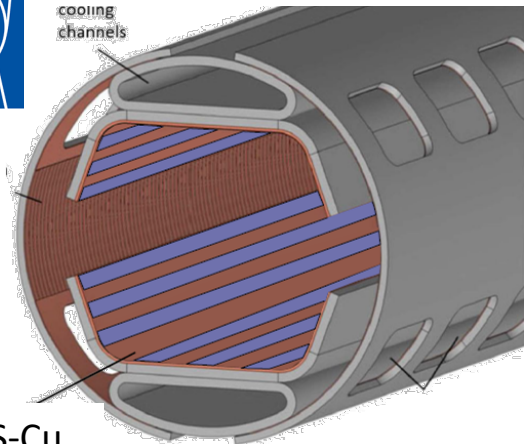
Additional opportunities for CC



Case of RF cavities at high magnetic fields for HEP



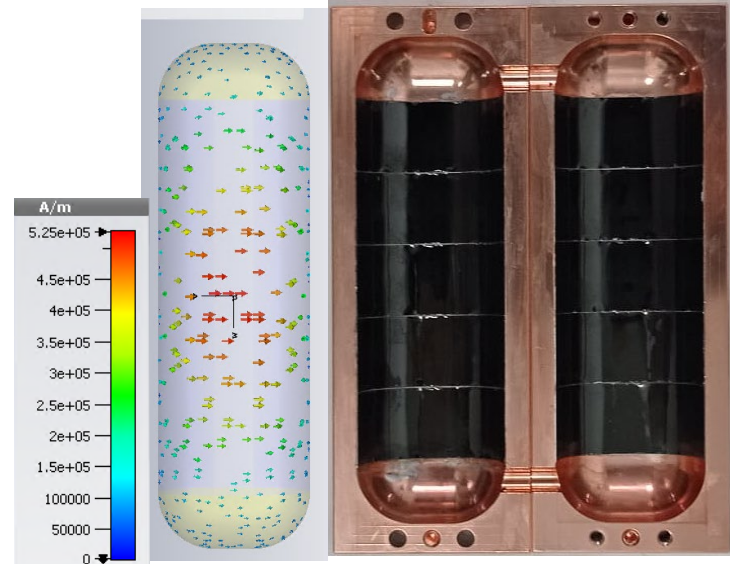
High energy circular Collider Beam screen



HTS-Cu hybrid coating

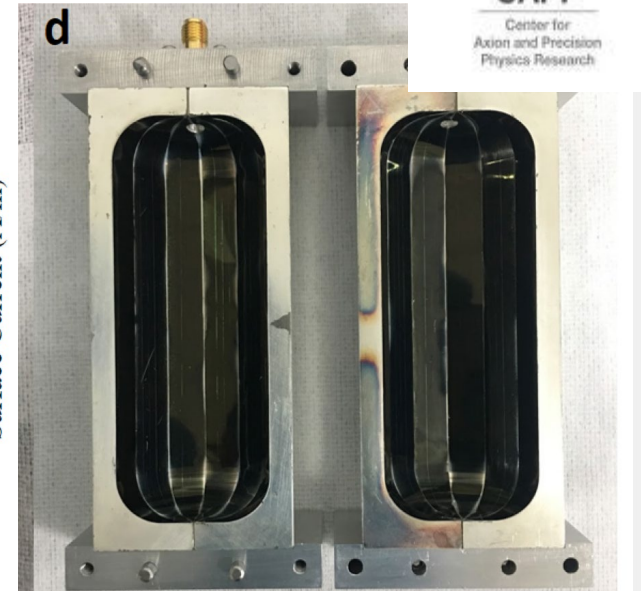
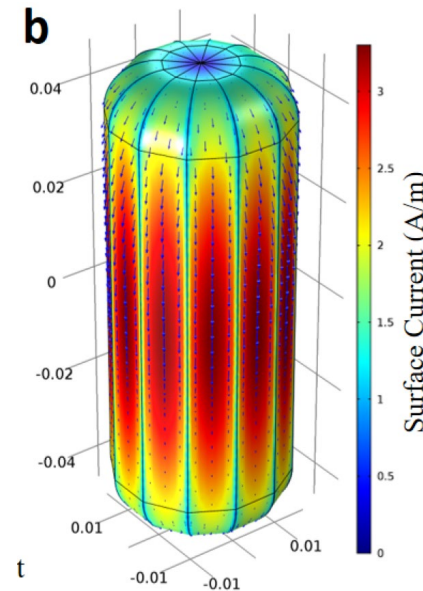


High-Q RF cavities at high H for Dark Matter search (Axion haloscopes)



J. Golm et al, IEEE TAS 32 (2022)

$Q \sim 6 \times 10^4$ @ 11T, 4.2 K (8 GHz)



D. Ahn et al, Phys Rev Appl 17 (2022)

$Q \sim 3.3 \times 10^5$ @ 8T, 4.2 K (6.9 GHz)

$Q \sim 1.3 \times 10^7$ @ 8 T, 150 mK (5.4 GHz)

($200 \times Q_{Cu}$)

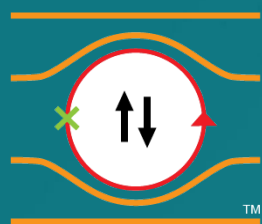
J. Gutiérrez et al, SNF Issue 55

Opportunities in Muon collider

G. T. Telles et al, SUST 36 (2023)

Conclusions

- Coated conductors are unique superconducting materials that are set to enable numerous applications
- Only with an understanding of materials, vortex physics and engineering properties can superconducting devices emerge
- After 20 years of R&D on coated conductors, the CC industry is ready to take the big step to scale up production
- Applications such as fusion, NMR, power cables, magnets (HEP), electrical transportation are ready to make the necessary pull
- R&D in CC must persist to help improve the capabilities, robustness and reduce figure of merit “cost/performance” and push the market penetration in several enabling technologies
- Strengthen academic – industry collaboration should be pursued as well as lobbying to become a clean and efficient energy technology



IEEE CSC
Council on Superconductivity



Prof. Xavier Obradors

Superconductivity News Forum (<https://snf.ieeecsc.org/>)

Xavier Obradors, **SNF EiC**,
ICMAB-CSIC, Bellaterra, Catalonia, Spain

xavier.obradors@icmab.es

Editorial Team

Kazuhiko Hayashi (Large scale); Tony Przybysz (Electronics)

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