

Graph Neural Networks for Calorimeter-Based Cluster Calibration at the ATLAS Experiment

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On behalf of the ATLAS Collaboration

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[ATL-PHYS-PUB-2026-019](#)



Jet constituent: Topo-clusters

➤ Topo-clusters are 3D connected-cell objects built from calorimeter cell energies via a topological clustering algorithm

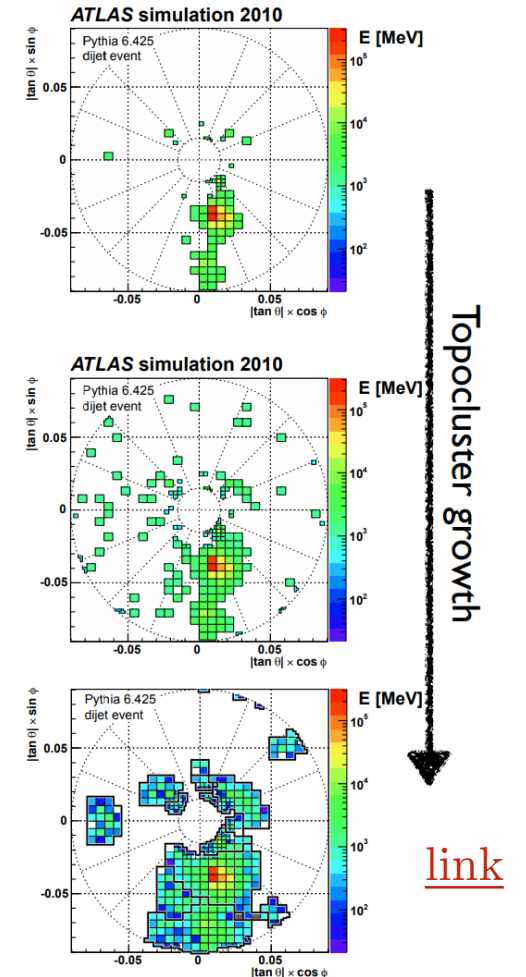
■ Define significance for each cell:

- Seed Cells: $\zeta_{clus}^{EM} > 4$
- Neighbour Cells: $\zeta_{clus}^{EM} > 2$
- Boundary Cells: $\zeta_{clus}^{EM} > 0$

$$\zeta_{cell} = \frac{E_{cell}}{\sigma_{noise,cell}}$$

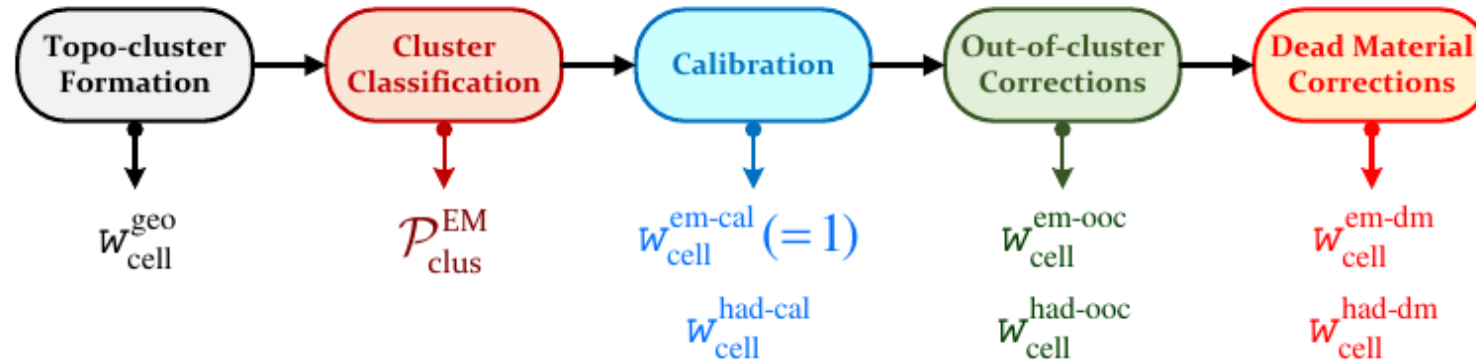
➤ Cell energies are calibrated at the electromagnetic (EM) scale, correctly measuring EM shower energy

- Hadronic (HAD) showers deposit energy differently (nuclear breakup, invisible energy), so EM-scale calibration under-measures hadronic energy – motivating further calibration



Topo-cluster calibration

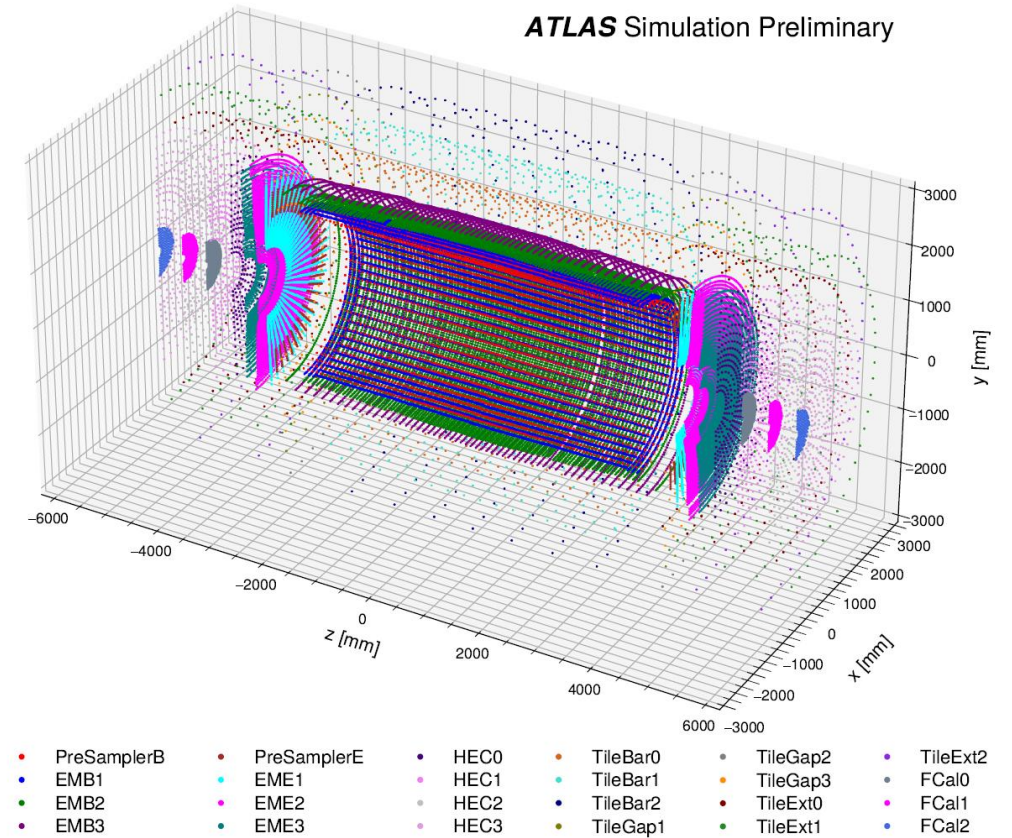
- Usual method: Local Cell Weighting (LCW)
 - Multi-step sequence which has look-up-table corrections
 - w.r.t $\mathcal{P}_{\text{clus}}^{\text{EM/HAD}}$ - likelihood of the topo-cluster being attributed to an EM/HAD-like energy deposit



- Calibration factors are extracted from rigid multi-dimensional binned look-up tables and hence bin-edge effects limit performance.

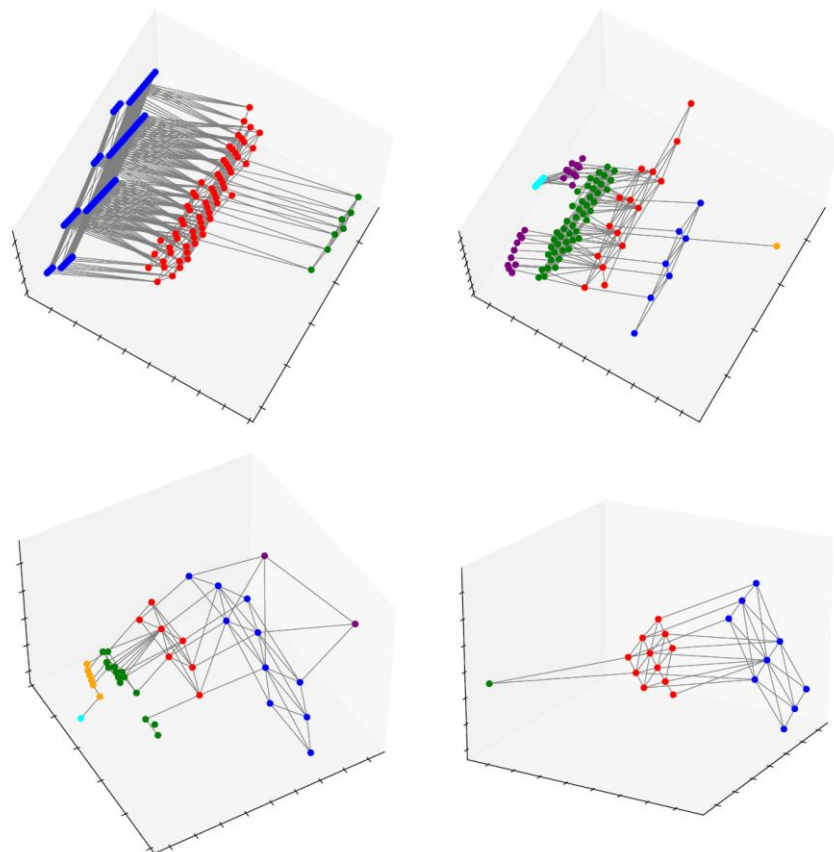
Calorimeter geometry

- The ATLAS calorimeter system consists of 180,000+ individual cells, in a 3D space
- Can we exploit this natural geometry using graph neural networks (GNNs) for cluster calibration?



Cluster Graphs

ATLAS Simulation Preliminary



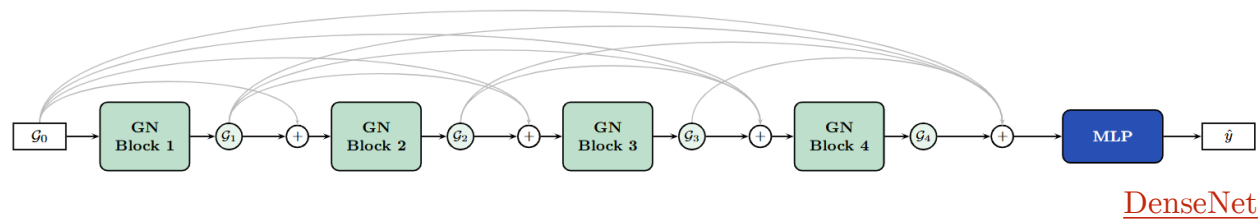
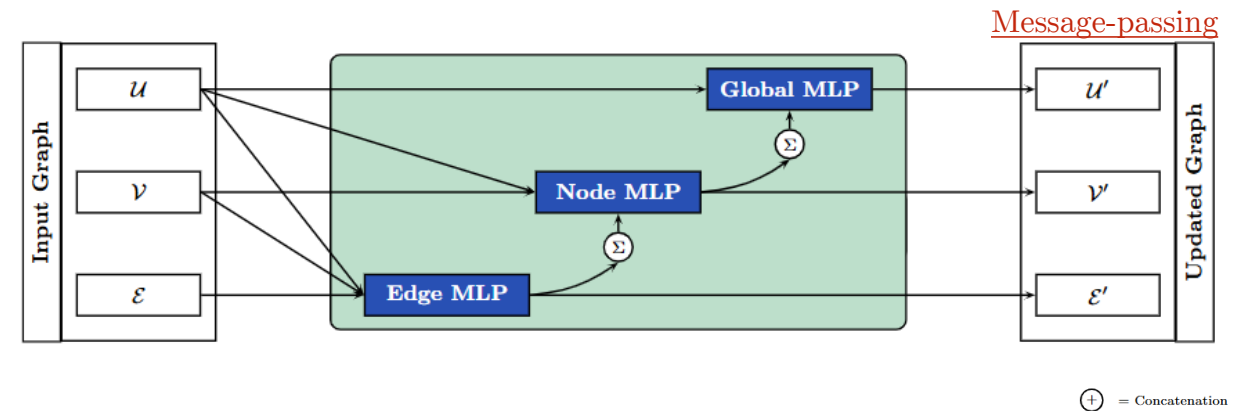
- Nodes ($\mathcal{V}$) – Cells of the cluster
 - Features: Cell Energy, Sampling layer, η , ϕ , $r_{\perp}$, $\Delta\eta$ & $\Delta\phi$ (from barycentre)
- Edges ($\mathcal{E}$) – Detector geometry

Edge type	Description
prevInEta / nextInEta	Adjacent in η , same layer
prevInPhi / nextInPhi	Adjacent in ϕ , same layer
prevInSamp / nextInSamp	Adjacent sampling layer
prevSubDet / nextSubDet	Adjacent across sub-detectors
prevSuperCalo / nextSuperCalo	Used for the densely packed FCAL
corners2D	Diagonal adjacency, combining InEta and InPhi relations

- Global ($\mathcal{U}$) – Reconstructed Cluster Energy (EM)

GNN Model

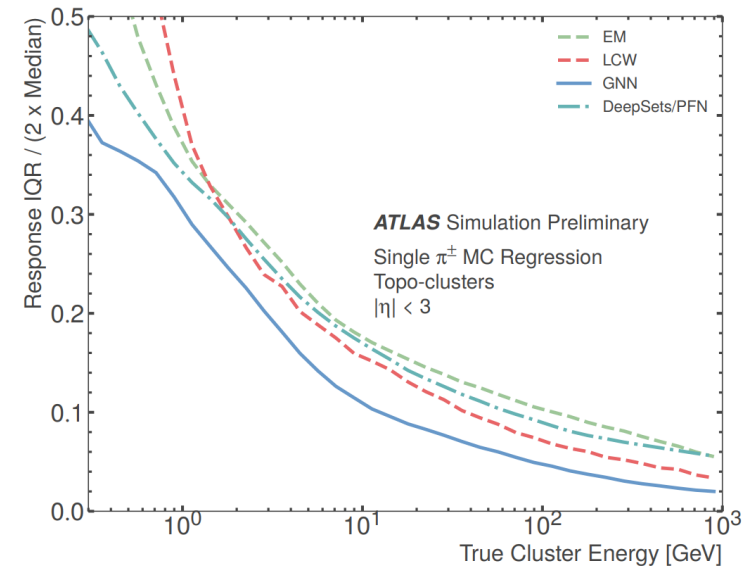
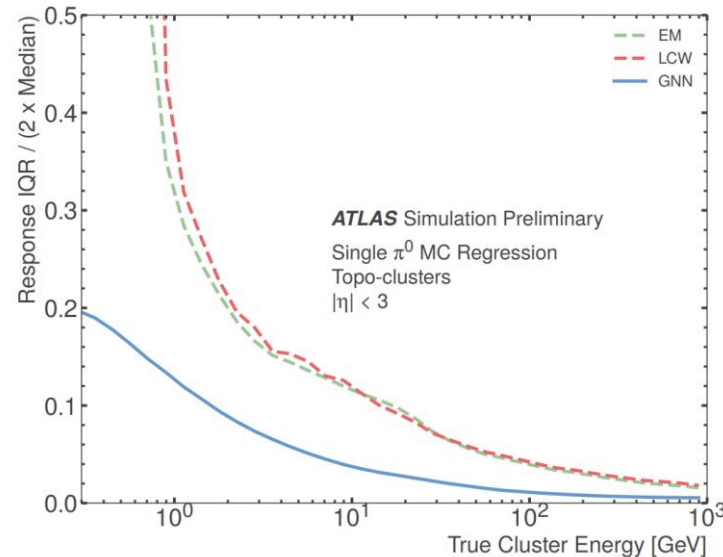
- 4 layers of a GN block
 - Utilising standard message-passing techniques
- Connect these GN blocks using Dense-Net-like connections
- Into a MLP for regression
- GNN will be predicting the truth cluster energy



Hyperparameter	Value
<i>Model architecture</i>	
Number of blocks	4
Latent size	64
Number of MLP layers	4
Aggregation function	Mean
<i>Training</i>	
Batch size	1024
Epochs	100
Train/validation split	0.75
Initial learning rate	1×10^{-3}
Patience (epochs before LR reduction)	5
Learning rate reduction factor (Δ)	2
Early-stopping patience (epochs)	20
<i>Loss</i>	
Loss function	Mean absolute error

Previous results

- In 2022, ATLAS released a [PUBNOTE](#) focusing on clusters from π 's



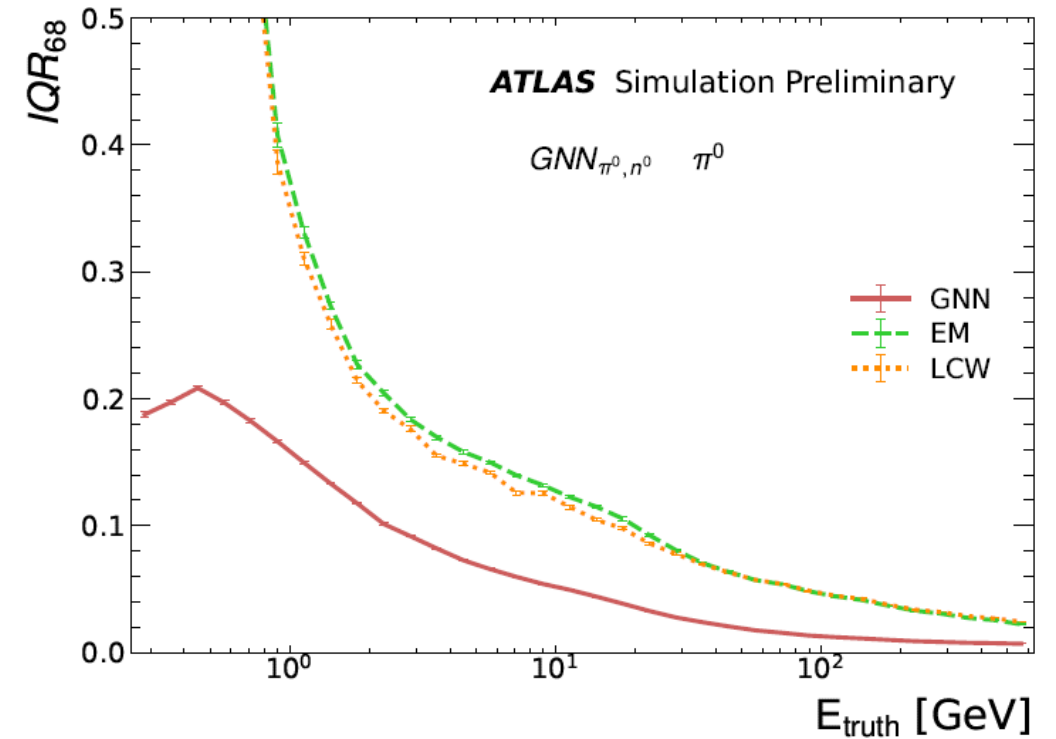
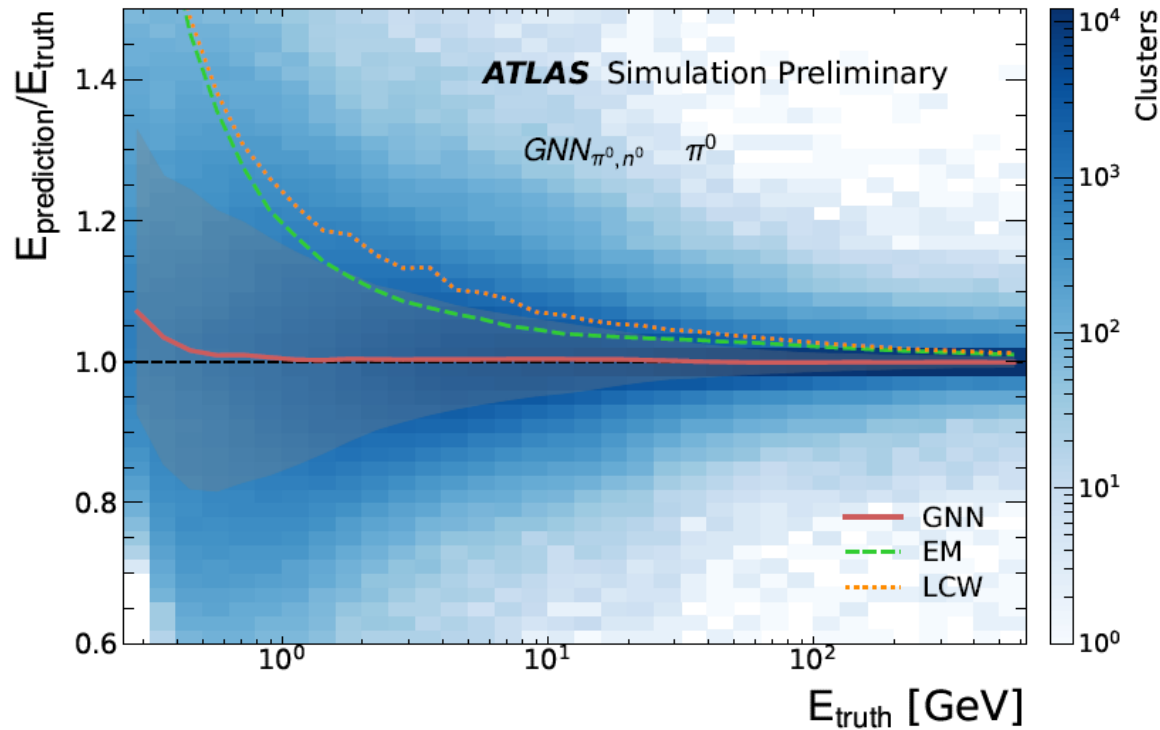
- The results I show today expand upon these results significantly by using the same GNN architecture, but applied to a wider range of particle types in more complex environments

Results

- Several models are trained, each with inputs of more complex topologies for the clusters
- Each of these were simulated with full Run3 ATLAS Simulation
 - GNN_{π^0, n^0} : 1M clusters from each π^0 and n^0 ParticleGuns
 - $\text{GNN}_{\text{Dijet}}$: 3M clusters from QCD Dijets MC
 - $\text{GNN}_{\text{Dijet, PF}}$: 3M clusters from QCD Dijets MC, ParticleFlow applied
- 2 performance metrics are used:
 - (Median [$\mathcal{R}_{50}$]) Energy Response: $\mathcal{R} = \frac{E_{\text{prediction}}}{E_{\text{truth}}}$
 - Measure of spread, $\text{IQR}_{68} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\mathcal{R}_{84} - \mathcal{R}_{16}}{\mathcal{R}_{50}},$
- Compared against the baselines of EM and LCW

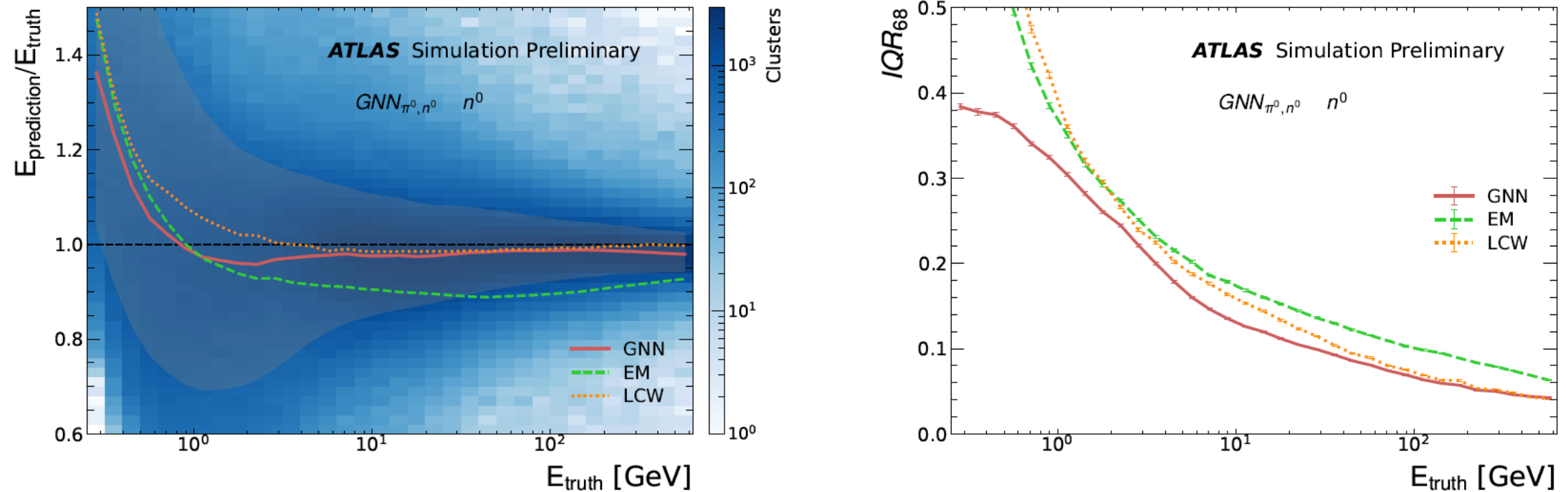
NB: All samples are without pileup

GNN $_{\pi^0, n^0}$ for π^0



- Very good linearity compared to EM/LCW.
- Much better resolution (+30% in some cases)

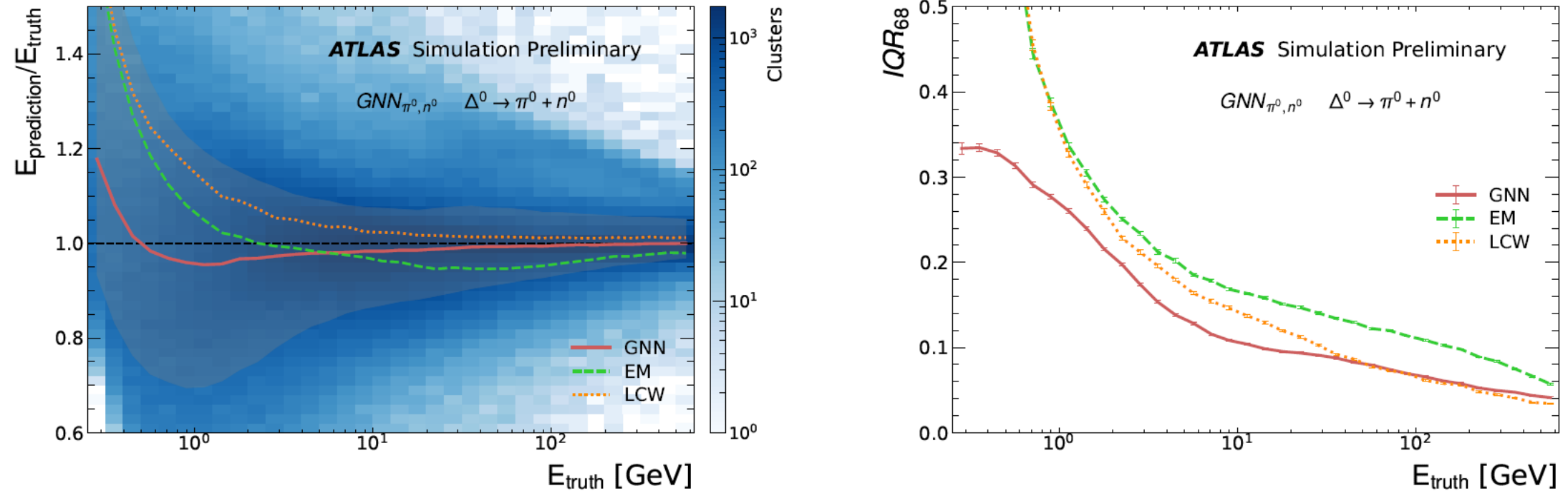
GNN $_{\pi^0, n^0}$ for n^0



- Resolution still outperforms the baselines, especially at low E_{truth}
- Comparable to LCW at high E_{truth}

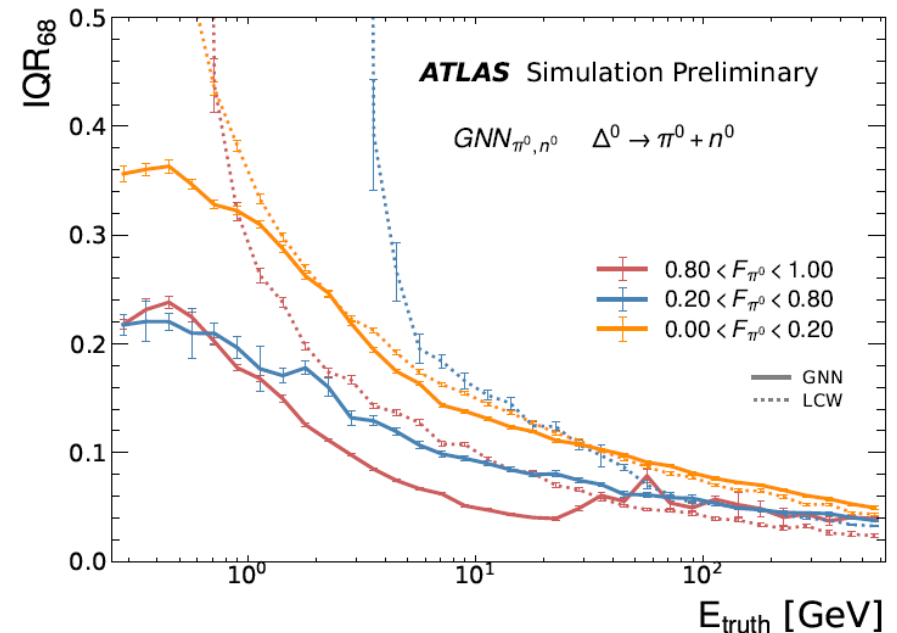
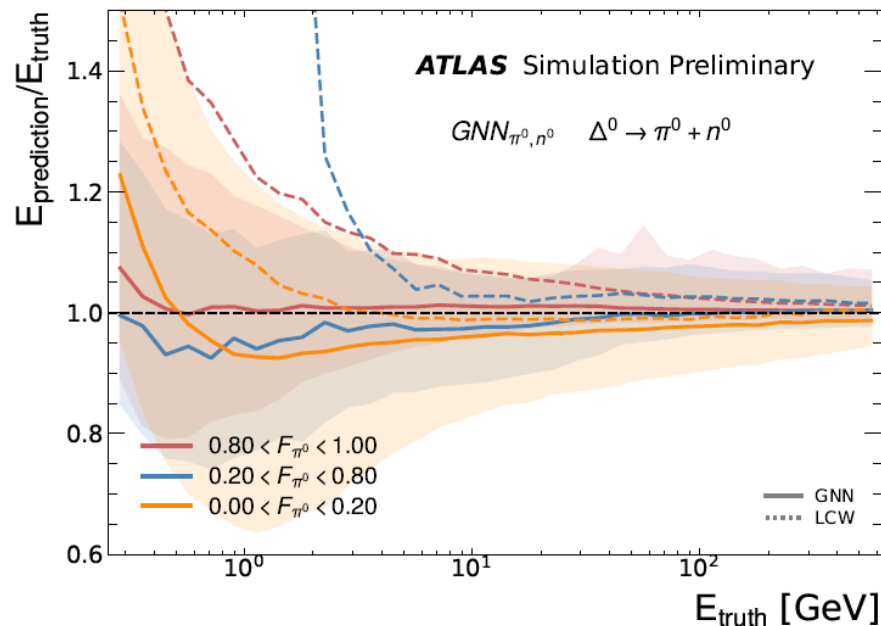
GNN $_{\pi^0, n^0}$ for $\Delta^0 \rightarrow \pi^0 + n^0$

- To see if the GNN can generalise, inference on Δ -ParticleGun, enforcing the $\Delta^0 \rightarrow \pi^0 + n^0$ decay



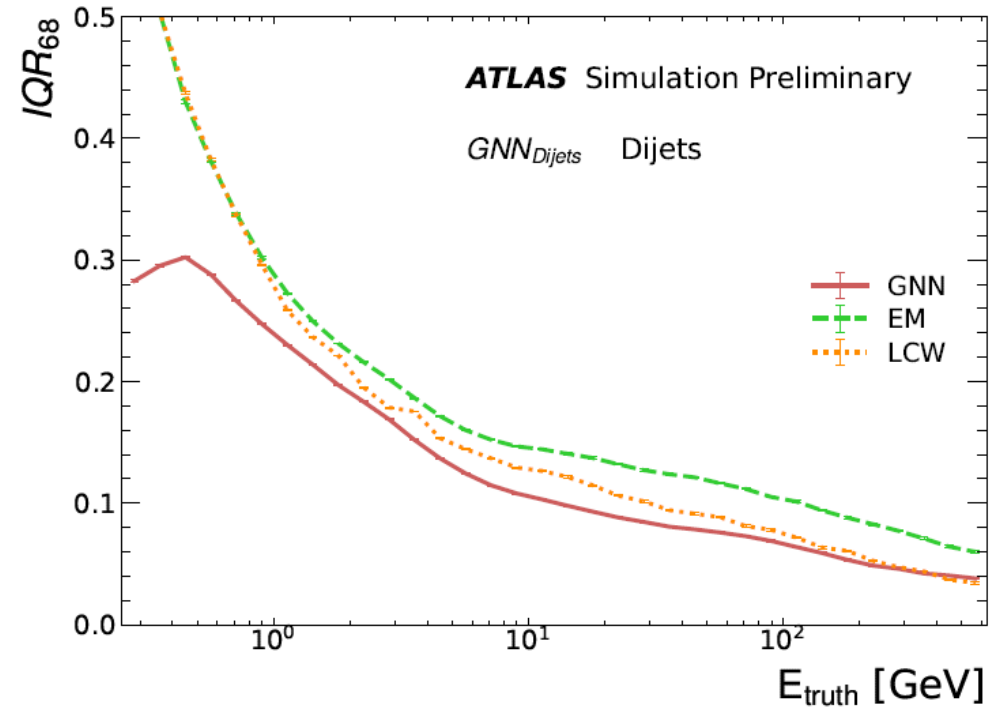
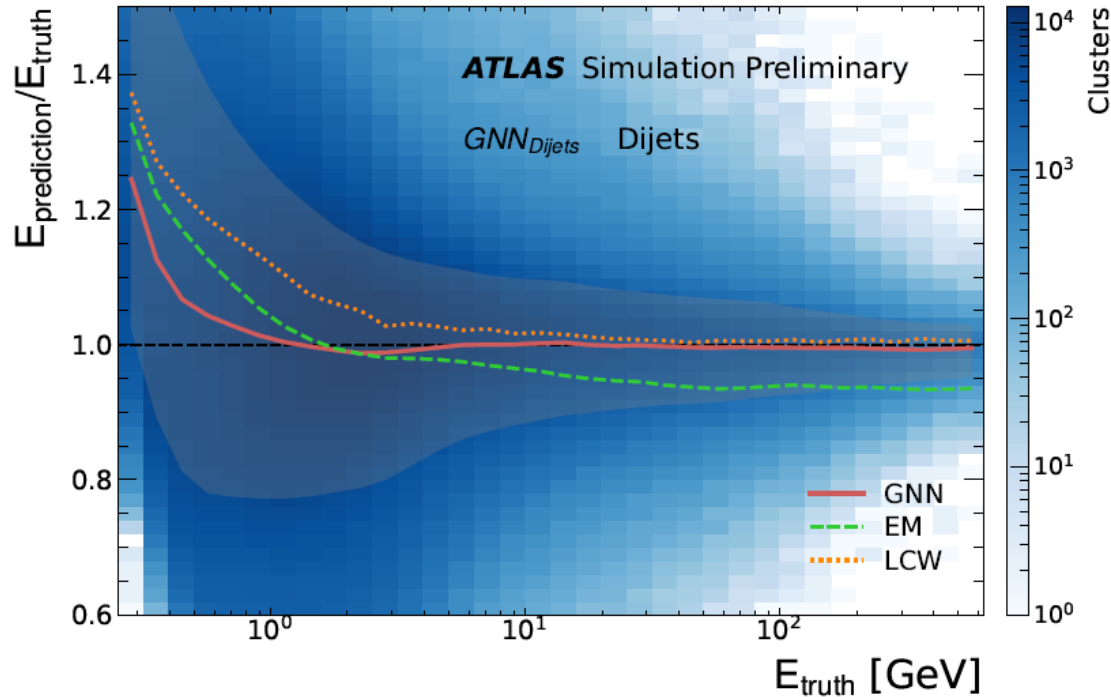
Composite clusters

➤ F_{π^0} - Fraction of energy attributed to the π^0



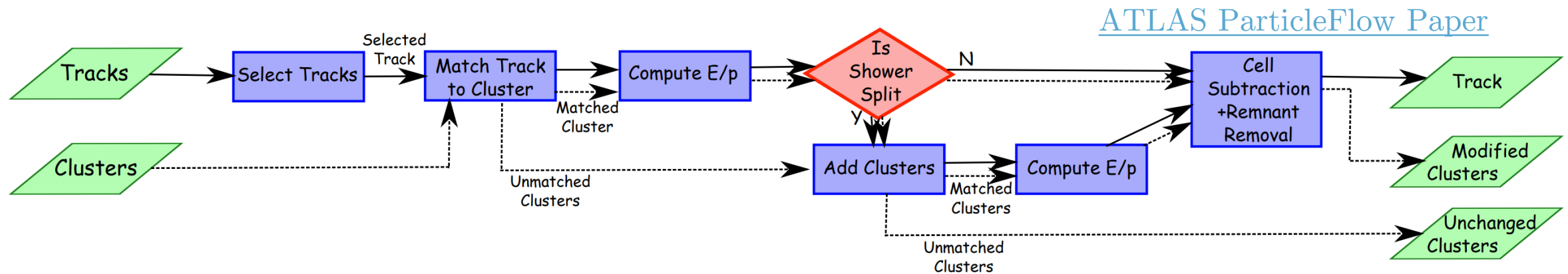
- Similar performance as the single-particle clusters
- Combined clusters severally outperform the LCW baseline
 - GNN can generalise to composite clusters

GNN_{Dijet}

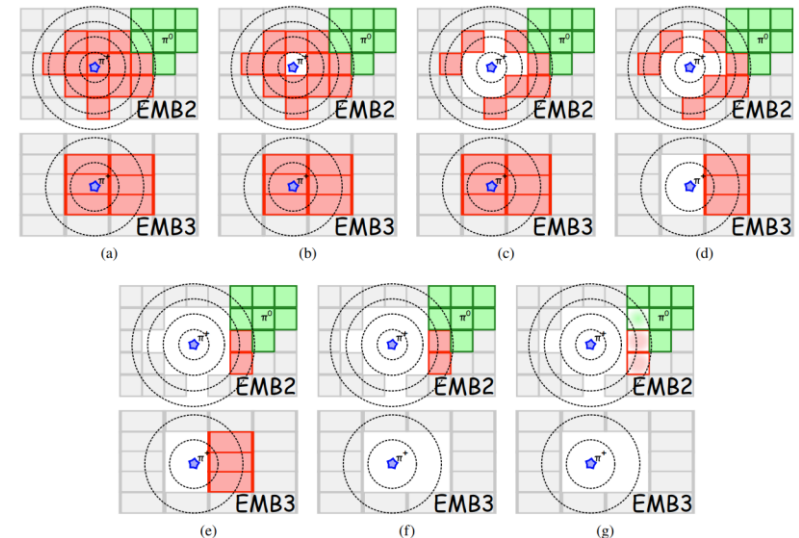


- To limit test the model, it was trained with clusters from QCD Dijets
 - Outperforms LCW on the lower E_{truth} , comparable at high E_{truth}

ATLAS ParticleFlow Overview

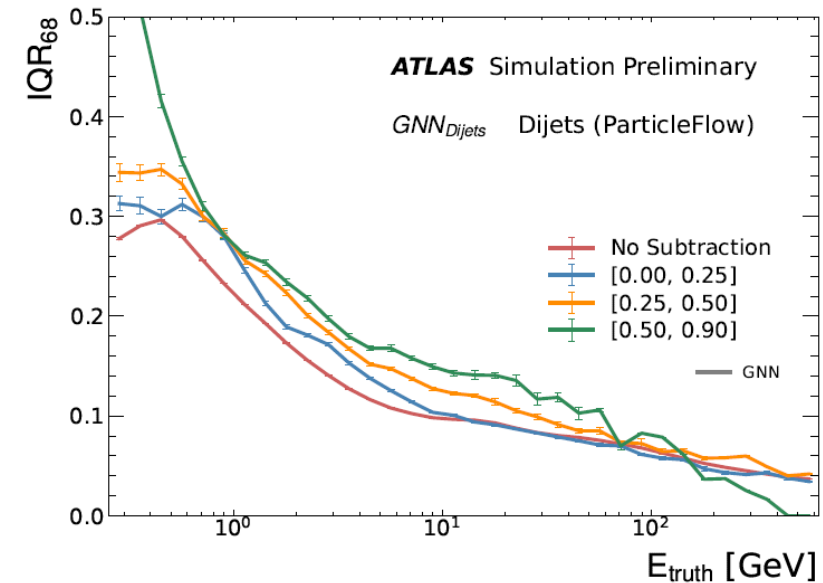
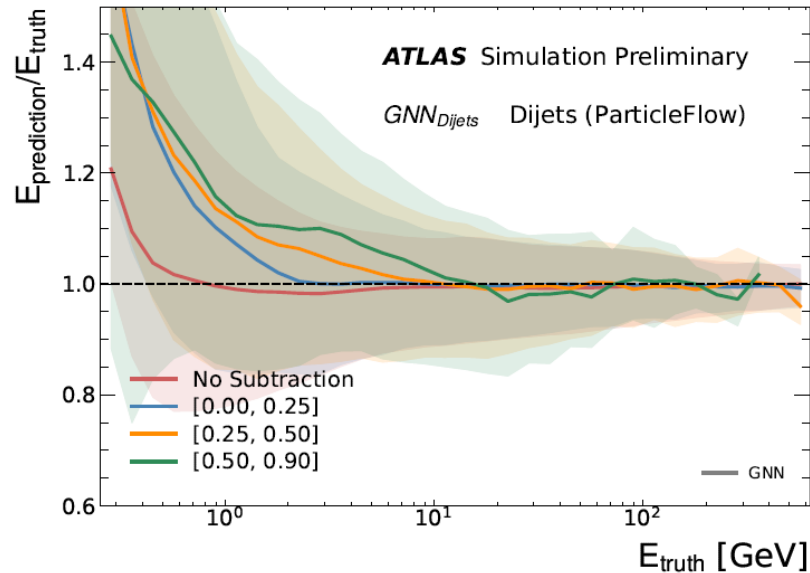


- Maximises the entire detector by leveraging the tracker information
- Removes the charged energy from the clusters via cell subtraction
 - Can the GNN be used on the cluster remnants?



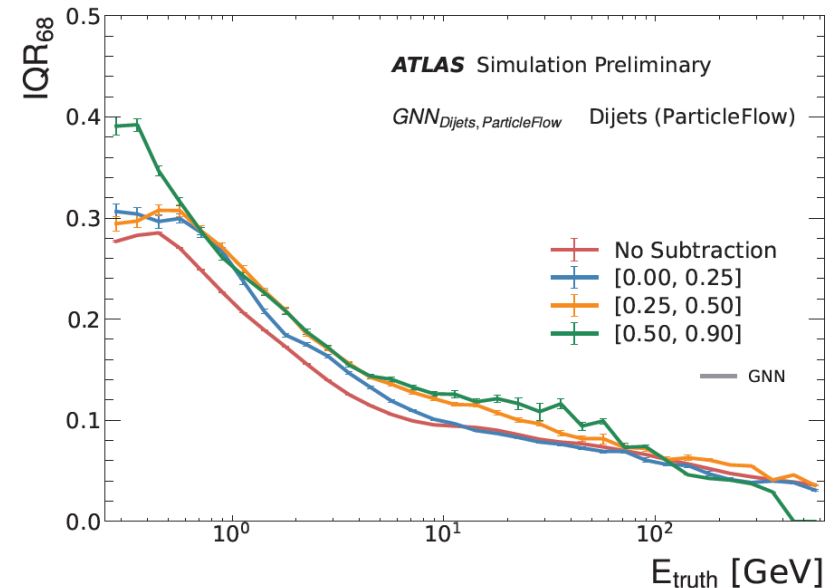
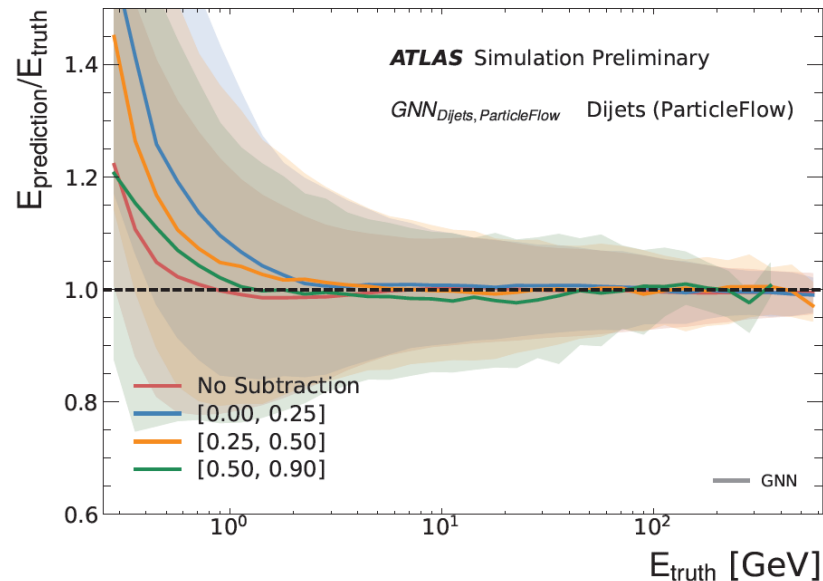
GNN_{Dijet} , in bins of $F_{cells\ removed}$

- Perform ATLAS ParticleFlow $\Rightarrow$ inference on these clusters
- $F_{cells\ removed} = \frac{\text{number of cells after PFlow}}{\text{number of cells before PFlow}}$



GNN_{Dijet,ParticleFlow} , in bins of $F_{cells\ removed}$

- Retrained the model using clusters that have gone through ParticleFlow



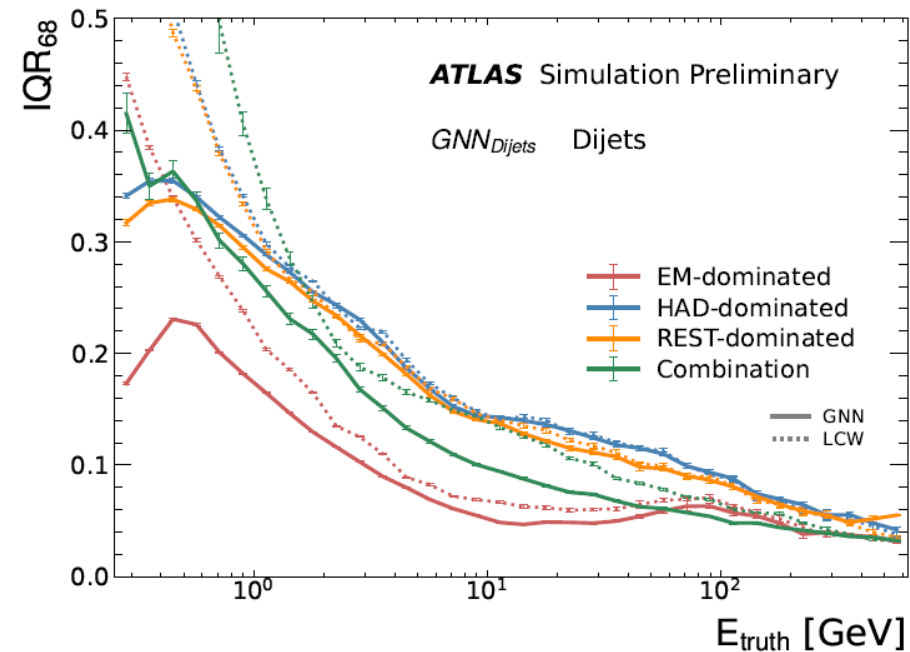
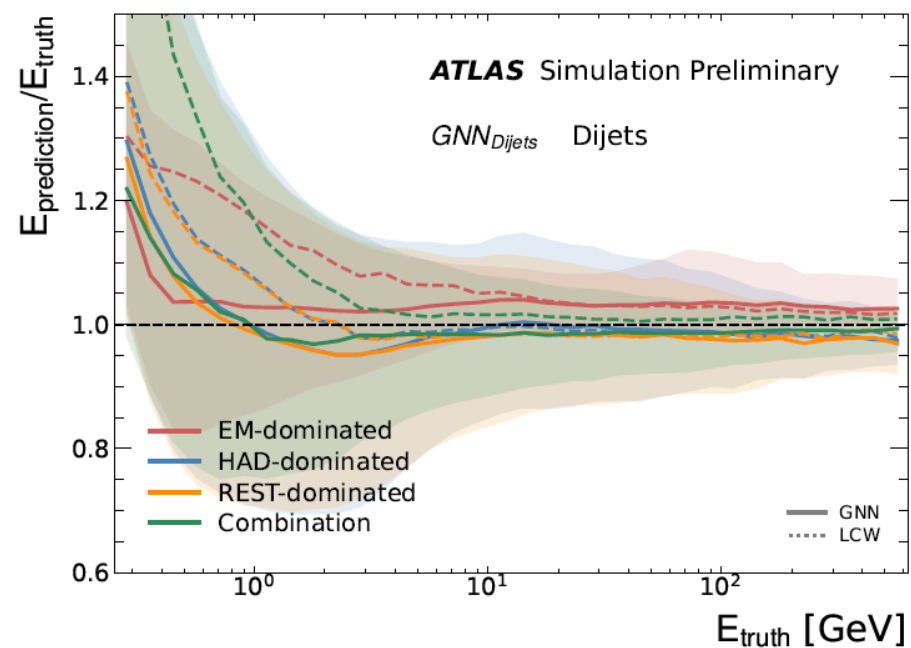
- Clear improvement and much better linearity in the response

Conclusion

- Showed that using the GNN-based cluster calibration performs well for complex topologies:
 - Able to generalise more than the traditional LCW approach for composite clusters
 - Similar performance was shown for dijets, novel for this architecture as it was only previously used on ParticleGun samples
 - GNN can be used as a post-ParticleFlow scheme
 - Training on these clusters explicitly improves the calibration without spoiling the performance of non-subtracted clusters.

Backup

GNN_{Dijet} , in bins of EM/HAD/REST



- EM: electrons, photons and π^0
- HAD: $\pi^\pm$
- REST: attributed to any other particle (n^0, K_L , etc.)

“Dominated” - $>90\%$ of particle type
“Combination” - $<70\%$ of particle type

Truth Information: Calibration Hits

- Associated with every particle, and every calorimeter cell

Table 1: The four contributions to the truth energy of each stable truth particle recorded by calibration hits.

Contribution	Description
Electromagnetic	Energy deposited via electromagnetic interactions
Non-electromagnetic	Energy deposited via non-electromagnetic (hadronic) interactions
Invisible	Energy lost primarily to nuclear absorption, not detected
Escaped	Energy carried by particles that do not interact and escape the detector (neutrinos)