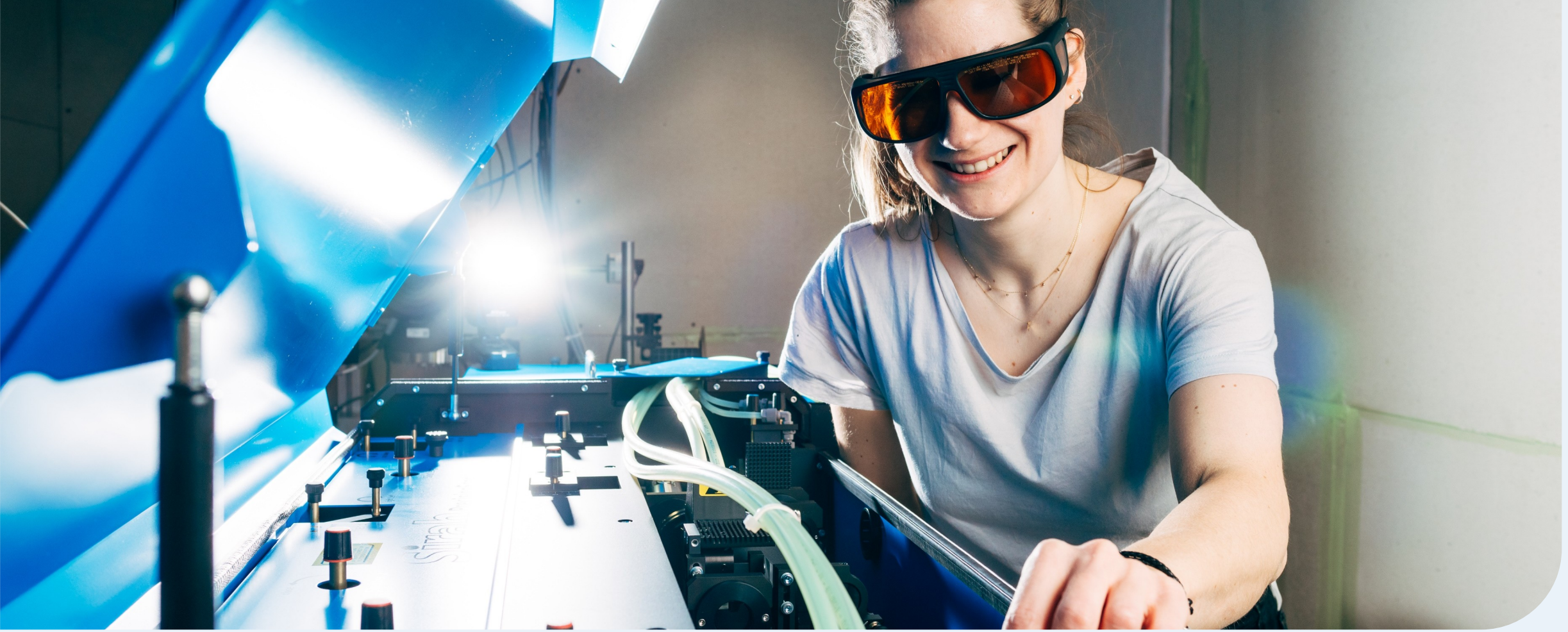
ÖAW Austrian Academy of Sciences

MARIETTA BLAU INSTITUTE FOR PARTICLE PHYSICS

Making slides with Claude Code

Claudius Krause

Vienna, 23.10.2026



Preparation

Three things before the first prompt

Tooling

Claude Code
`python-pptx`: reads and writes `.pptx` / `.potx`

Outline

A rough `outline.md`
Headings and a few bullets are enough

Figures

Decide up front which plots or images go where
Put them in the folder



Execution

The folder is the context

One folder per talk, containing only:

- `MBI_PPP_Vorlage_EN.potx`: the institute template
- `outline.md`: what I want to say

Claude Code is started in that folder and reads both

Layouts, fonts and colours come from the template, not from Claude

outline.md

```
- layout as suggested by MBI_PPP_Vorlage_EN.potx
- a few slides for a 5-10 presentation

# making slides with claude code

## preparation
- pptx-python package
- coming up with outline and possible figures

## execution
- content of this folder
- content of outline.md
- the prompt I made in claude code
```

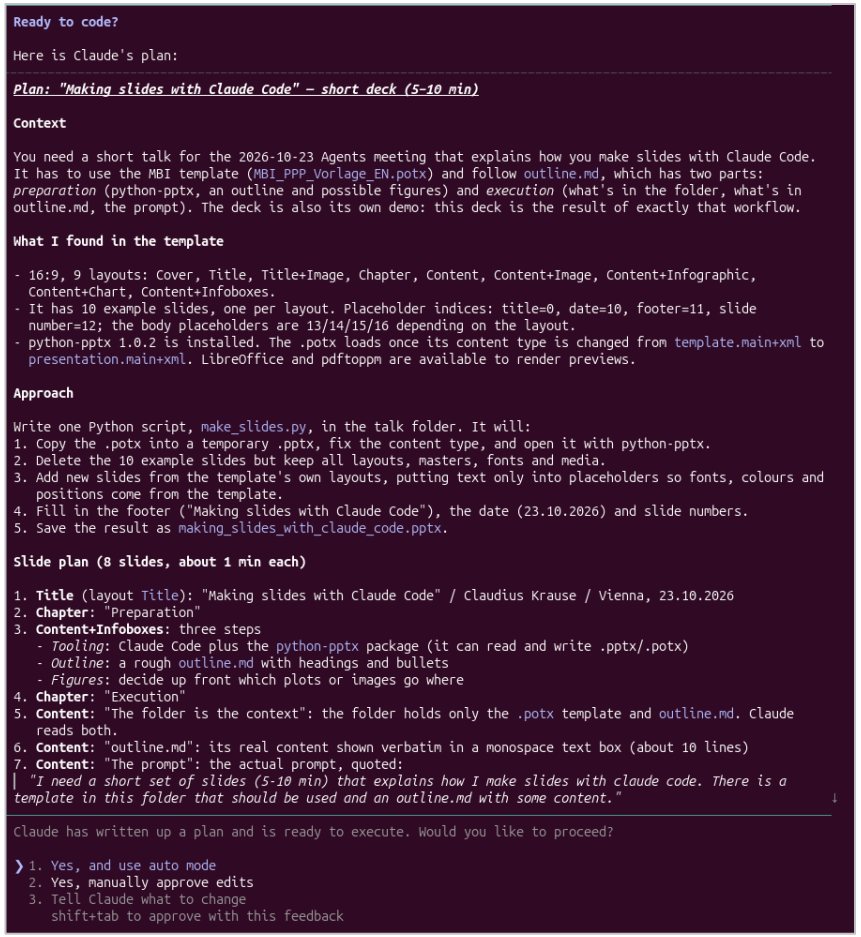
The prompt

I need a short set of slides (5-10 min) that explains how I make slides with claude code. There is a template in this folder that should be used and an outline.md with some content.

Plan mode → Claude inspects the template → writes a plan → I review → it writes a script → renders previews to check

Claude's plan

Plan mode: Claude only reads, it doesn't write
It unpacked the template and listed every layout and placeholder
Then it wrote a plan: approach, slide-by-slide content, verification
I review the plan before any file is touched



Ready to code?

Here is Claude's plan:

Plan: "Making slides with Claude Code" — short deck (5-10 min)

Context

You need a short talk for the 2026-10-23 Agents meeting that explains how you make slides with Claude Code. It has to use the MBI template (MBI_PPP_Vorlage_EN.potx) and follow outline.md, which has two parts: *preparation* (python-pptx, an outline and possible figures) and *execution* (what's in the folder, what's in outline.md, the prompt). The deck is also its own demo: this deck is the result of exactly that workflow.

What I found in the template

- 16:9, 9 layouts: Cover, Title, Title+Image, Chapter, Content, Content+Image, Content+Infographic, Content+Chart, Content+Infoboxes.
- It has 10 example slides, one per layout. Placeholder indices: title=0, date=10, footer=11, slide number=12; the body placeholders are 13/14/15/16 depending on the layout.
- python-pptx 1.0.2 is installed. The .potx loads once its content type is changed from template.main+xml to presentation.main+xml. LibreOffice and pdftoppm are available to render previews.

Approach

Write one Python script, make_slides.py, in the talk folder. It will:
1. Copy the .potx into a temporary .pptx, fix the content type, and open it with python-pptx.
2. Delete the 10 example slides but keep all layouts, masters, fonts and media.
3. Add new slides from the template's own layouts, putting text only into placeholders so fonts, colours and positions come from the template.
4. Fill in the footer ("Making slides with Claude Code"), the date (23.10.2026) and slide numbers.
5. Save the result as making_slides_with_claude_code.pptx.

Slide plan (8 slides, about 1 min each)

1. **Title** (layout Title): "Making slides with Claude Code" / Claudius Krause / Vienna, 23.10.2026
2. **Chapter**: "Preparation"
3. **Content+Infoboxes**: three steps
   - *Tooling*: Claude Code plus the python-pptx package (it can read and write .pptx/.potx)
   - *Outline*: a rough outline.md with headings and bullets
   - *Figures*: decide up front which plots or images go where
4. **Chapter**: "Execution"
5. **Content**: "The folder is the context": the folder holds only the .potx template and outline.md. Claude reads both.
6. **Content**: "outline.md": its real content shown verbatim in a monospace text box (about 10 lines)
7. **Content**: "The prompt": the actual prompt, quoted:

> *"I need a short set of slides (5-10 min) that explains how I make slides with claude code. There is a template in this folder that should be used and an outline.md with some content."*

Claude has written up a plan and is ready to execute. Would you like to proceed?

❯ 1. Yes, and use auto mode
  2. Yes, manually approve edits
  3. Tell Claude what to change
     shift+tab to approve with this feedback

Steering by feedback

Instead of approving the plan, I rejected it and typed:
I added a plan.png, which is a screenshot of the plan above. add that. also add the text I'm typing here

Claude updated the plan and added this slide and the previous one
So the deck documents its own making

Take-aways

Prepare

A good template plus an outline is most of the work

Placeholders

Filling the template's placeholders keeps the corporate design intact

Script

A script can be re-run, so changes are cheap
This deck was made this way