

Intense absorbed dose rate measured on-line thanks to specific calorimeters inside research reactors

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Summary

- Context
- Example of research reactor: JHR
- Nuclear heating rate
- Calorimeter and challenges
- Approach and results obtained with the CALORRE calorimeter
- Conclusions and outlooks



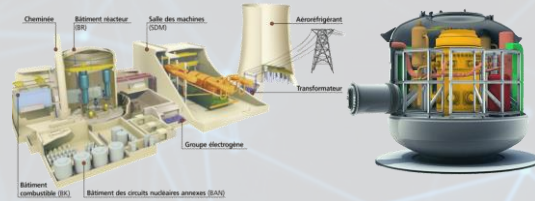
CONTEXT

The general context

☐ Nuclear Energy

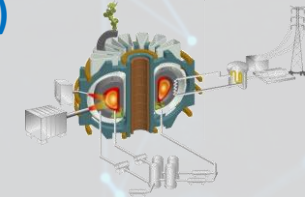
○ Energy produced by fission

➤ NPP at present, SMR/AMR in project



○ Energy produced by fusion

➤ In the future (first industrialization step: DEMO)



Research work required and carried out to improve knowledge, innovate, answer challenges by means of research programs in **Major Nuclear Research Facilities (Reactors and Tokamaks)**



Safety
Live span
Dismantling
Fuel improvement
Radioactive waste management
Future power-plant generation

Reactors
JHR, JSI-TRIGA, CABRI, MITR, MARIA, BR2, ATR, TREAT ...



Tokamaks
WEST, JET, ITER, EAST, JT-90, CFETR ...



Demonstration of the feasibility of fusion as a massive and continuous energy source
Confinement
Fuel breeding and management
Heat extraction



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Generation of specific harsh conditions and nuclear environments for specific experiments

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Research Work

Fuel, material and structure characterization from normal to accidental conditions (scenarios possible)

Better understanding of phenomena

Design and qualification of Innovative instrumentation and diagnostics for online measurements

Validation of high-performance multi-physical and multi-scale numerical simulation tools

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Research Work

Design and qualification of Innovative instrumentation and diagnostics for online measurements

- Neutron detectors
- Fission product detection systems
- Temperature sensors
- **Absorbed dose rate sensors → Calorimeter for intense values called nuclear heating rate**

The general context

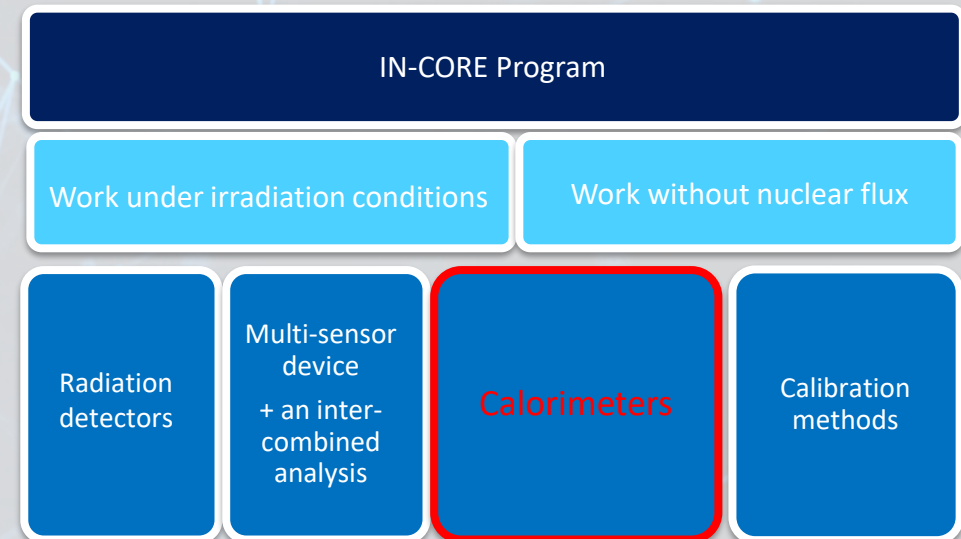
- A key research thematic on nuclear heating rate measurement by calorimeter
 - Created in 2009 at Aix-Marseille University in the South of France
 - Realized within the framework of a joint laboratory called LIMMEX (Laboratory of Instrumentation and Measurement Methods under EXtreme conditions) with the CEA
 - Generated by needs associated to Jules Horowitz reactor (MTR under construction in France)



a joint AMU/CEA research program initiated in 2008-2009 by the national JHR program → IN-CORE program (Instrumentation for Nuclear radiations and Calorimetry Online in Reactor)



➤ IN-CORE program aims Design and characterize innovative, high-performance sensors/detectors, methods and diagnostics to carry out on-line quantification of key conditions/parameters into JHR experimental channels in order to propose a multi-sensor device for mapping



REACTOR

The targeted nuclear environment

❑ Research reactors such as the Jules Horowitz Reactor (JHR)

- a Material Testing Reactor under construction in the South of France
 - Used for a better understanding of the ageing of inert materials under irradiation conditions and of the behavior of nuclear fuel
 - Used for the production of medical radio-elements (up to 50% of European needs)



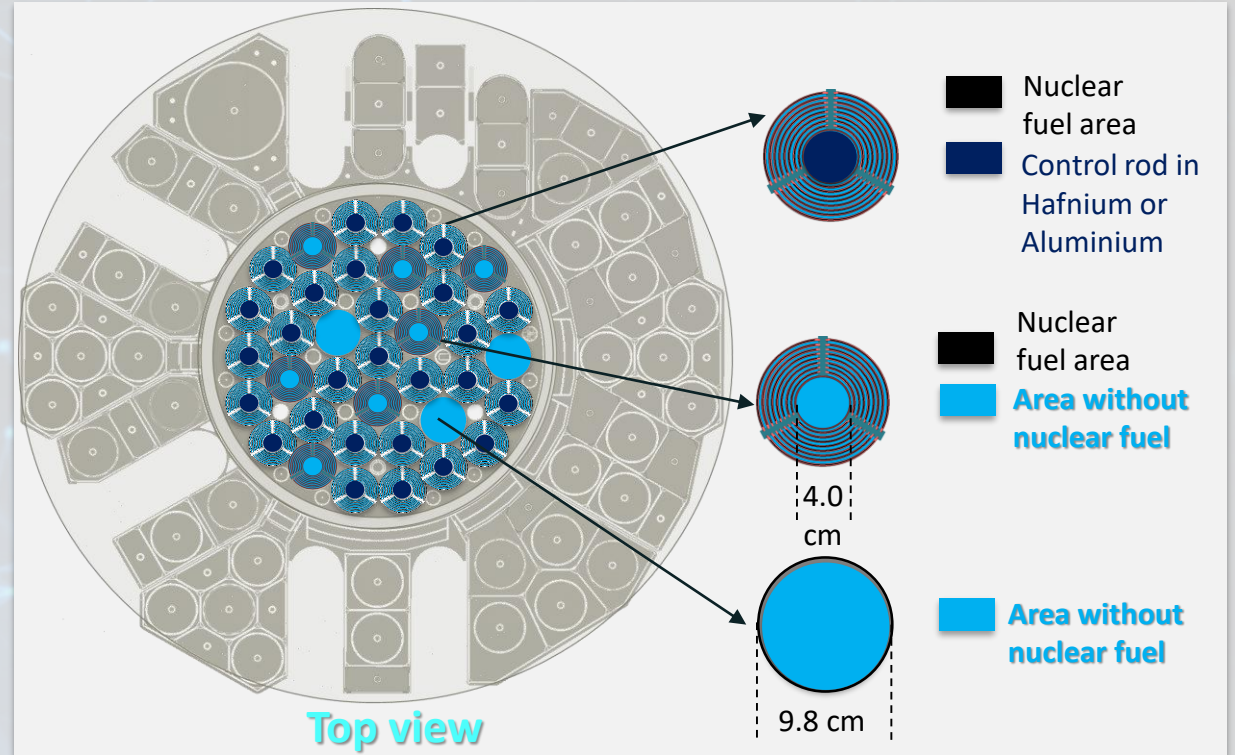
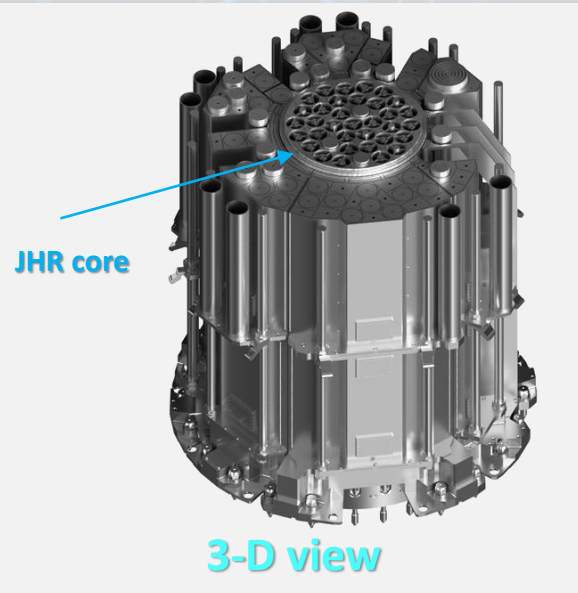
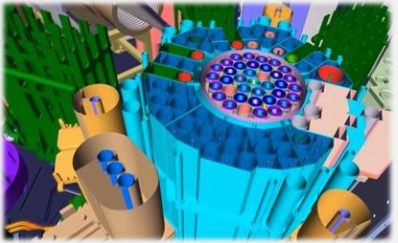
Video of the JHR core

The targeted nuclear environment

□ Research reactors such as the Jules Horowitz Reactor (JHR)

○ JHR core characteristics

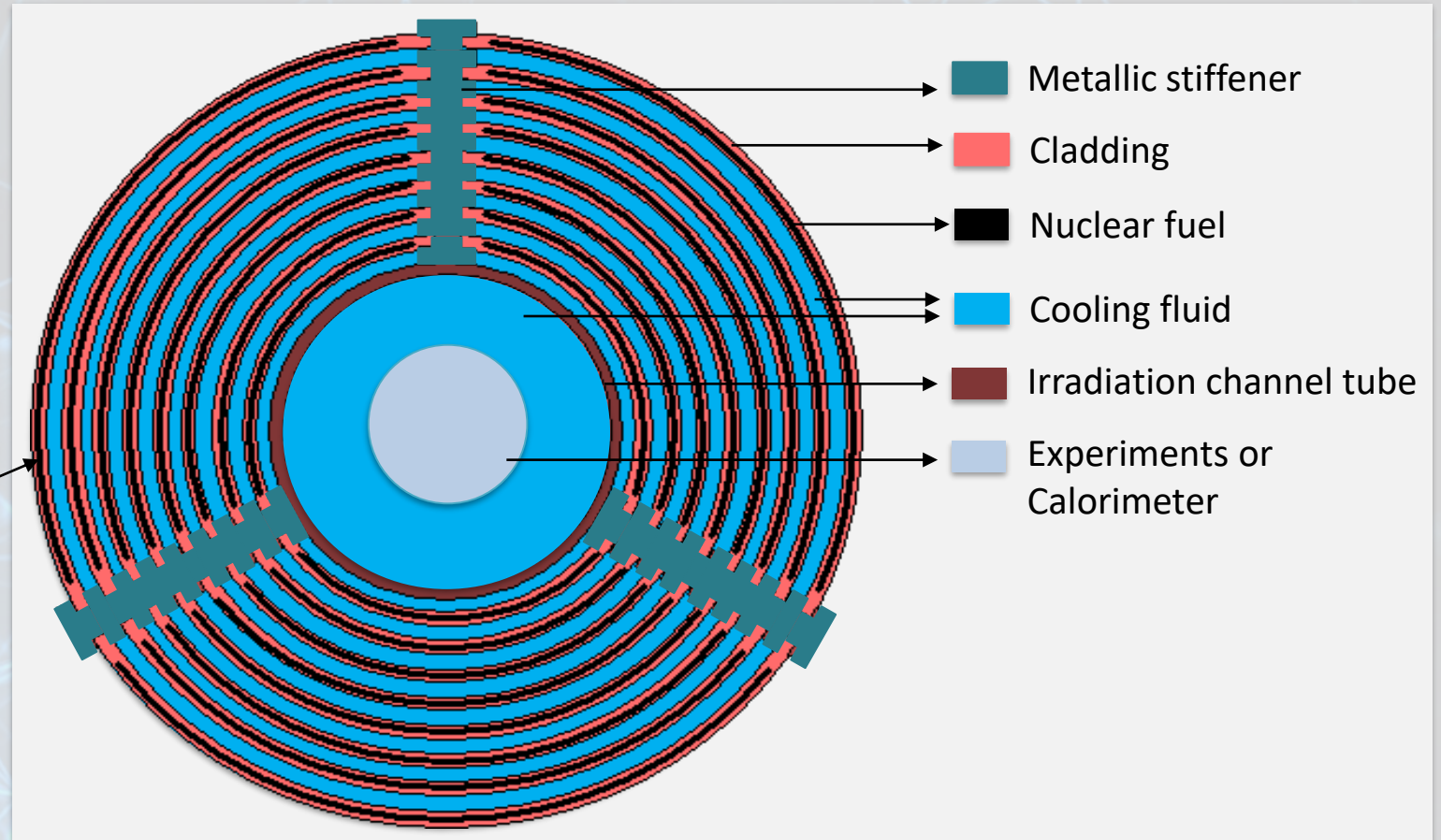
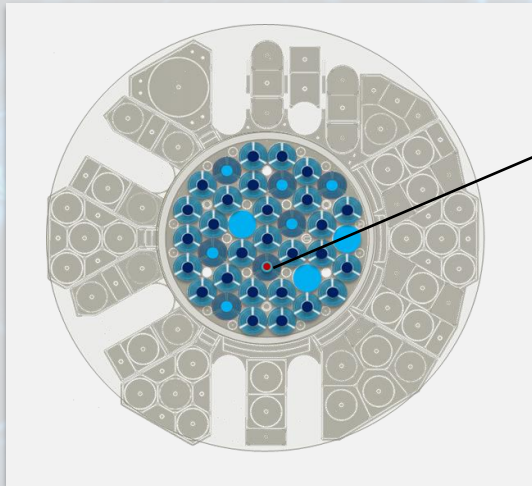
- 100 MWth
- Core diameter and height: 60 cm
- Thermal neutron flux: $3.5 \cdot 10^{14} \text{ n.cm}^{-2}.\text{s}^{-1}$
- Fast neutron flux: $5.5 \cdot 10^{14} \text{ n. cm}^{-2}.\text{s}^{-1} (> 1 \text{ MeV})$
- Displacement per atom: 16 dpa.year⁻¹
- **Nuclear heating rate: 20 W.g⁻¹**



The targeted nuclear environment

□ Research reactors such as the Jules Horowitz Reactor (JHR)

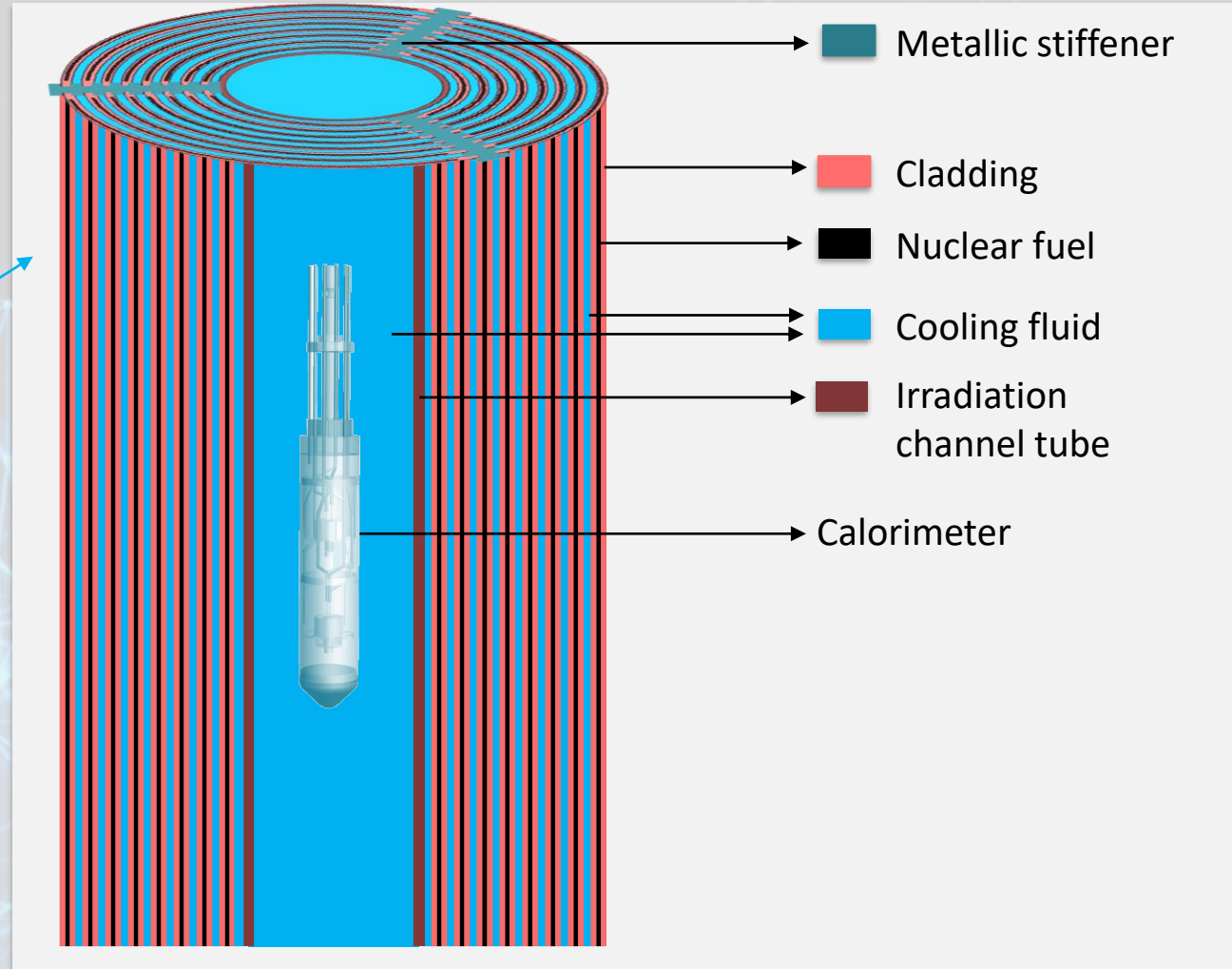
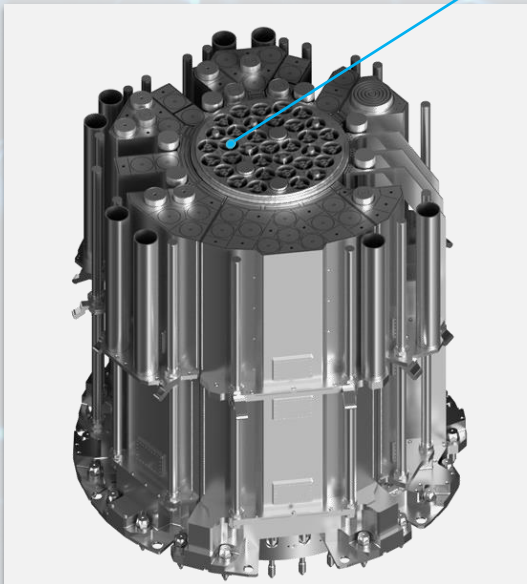
- Nuclear heating rate will be measured inside JHR irradiation channels dedicated to experiments



The targeted nuclear environment

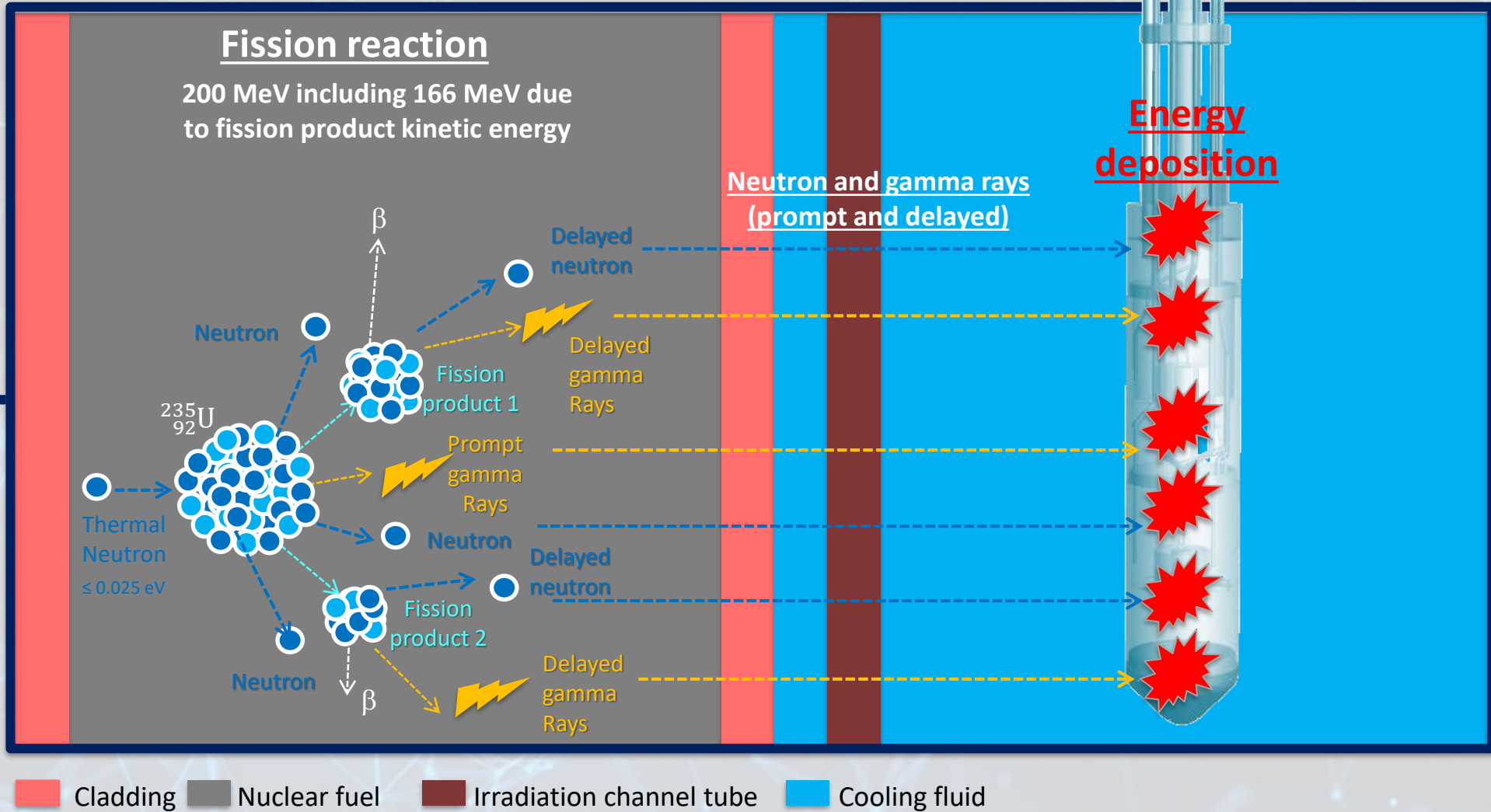
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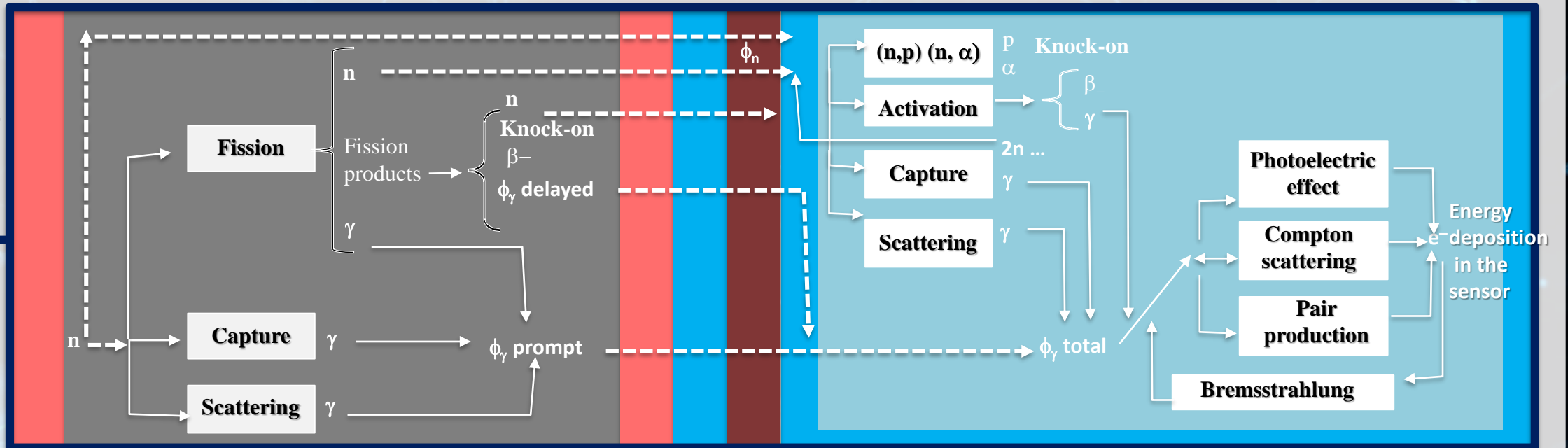


NUCLEAR HEATING

□ Its origin



Its origin



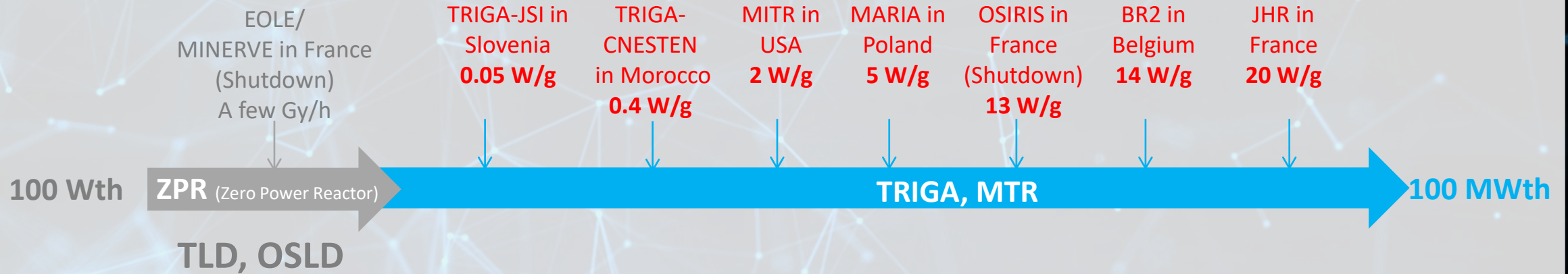
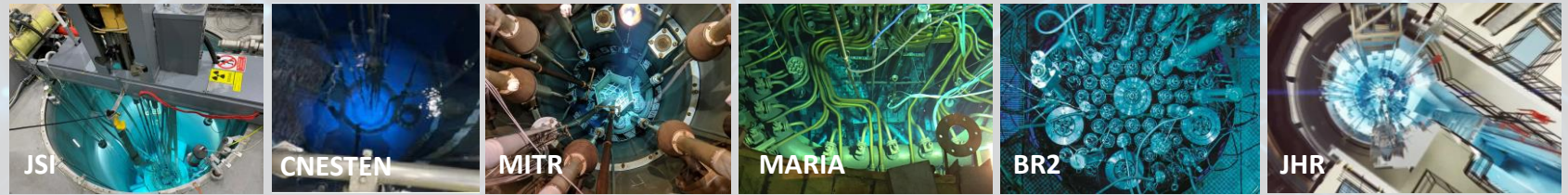
Its definition and unit

- Absorbed dose rate = Energy deposition per mass and time unit induced by several ray-matter interactions

- in $\text{J.kg}^{-1}.\text{s}^{-1}$
- in Gy. h^{-1} if low values
- in W.g^{-1} if intense values and thus called nuclear heating rate

The nuclear heating rate in research reactor

□ Its range



□ The sensor used to quantify it

Intense absorbed dose rate in W/g = Nuclear heating rate

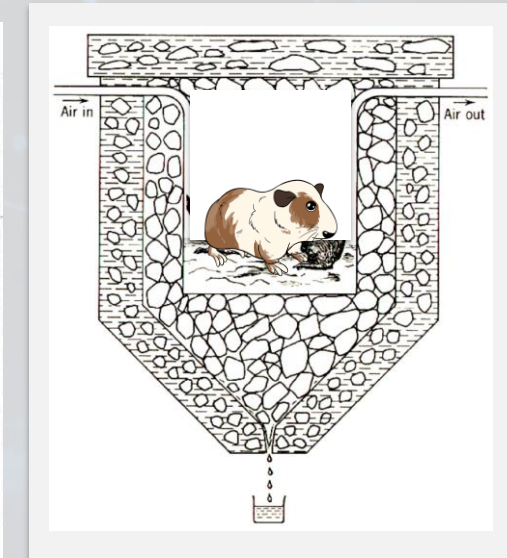
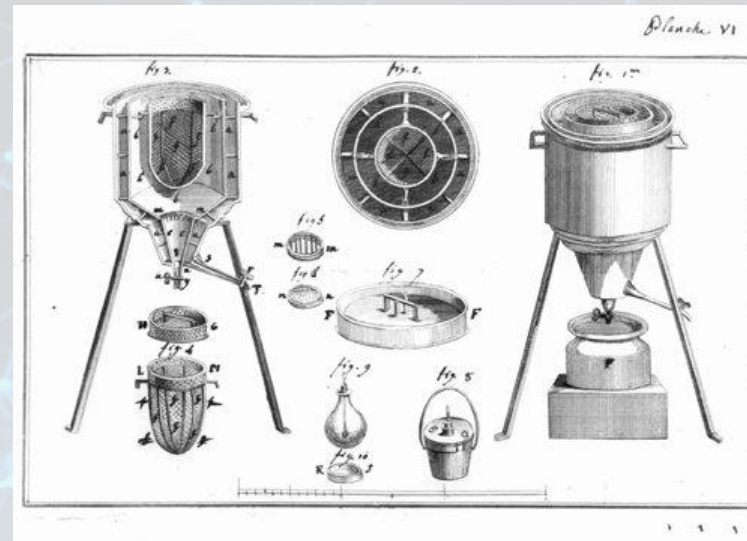
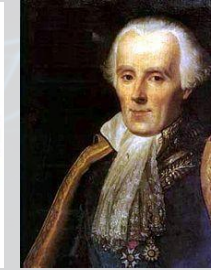
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Heat energy per time and masse unit measurable by means of calorimeter

CALORIMETER

A bit of history regarding calorimeters in general

- ❑ Device used to measure the amount of heat energy released or absorbed by a body/sample under certain conditions
- ❑ Created at the end of the XVIII century
 - By Lavoisier and Laplace (French scientists)
 - First calorimeter: ice calorimeter
 - To study the breathing



- ❑ Applied in various fields including the nuclear domain (before, **during** and after nuclear conditions)

Thermal sciences

Heat energy released or absorbed by a sample to be characterized inside the calorimeter = heat source in the sensor

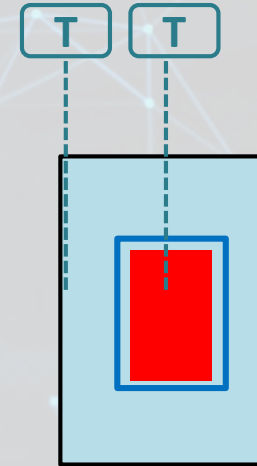
$$\rho C_p \frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + \rho C_p \vec{V} \cdot \nabla \vec{T} = \nabla \cdot (\lambda \nabla \vec{T}) + \mathbf{S} + \dots$$

Temperature field generated in the calorimeter

Temperature measurements with temperature sensors

Inverse calculation method

A simplified schematic



- Sample holder
- Sample of inert material to be characterized
- Gas
- Jacket
- Temperature sensors

Three main criteria

Operating mode

Adiabatic

Heat flow

Phase change

...

Assembly/
fabrication

Single-cell

Multi-cells

Measurement
method

Heat compensating
principle

Heat accumulating
principle

Heat exchanging
principle

Three main criteria

For applications in nuclear research reactor

Operating mode

Adiabatic

Heat flow

Phase change

...

Assembly/
fabrication

Single-cell

Multi-cells

Measurement
method

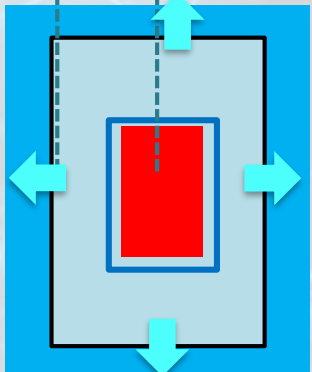
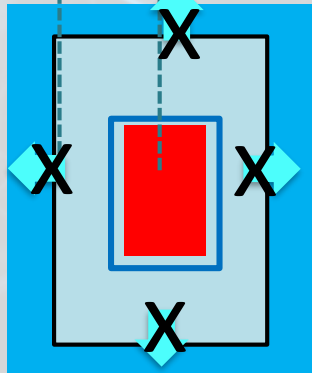
Heat compensating
principle

Heat accumulating
principle

Heat exchanging
principle

Calorimeter types used in research reactor

❑ Heat-flow calorimeters (non-adiabatic sensors)



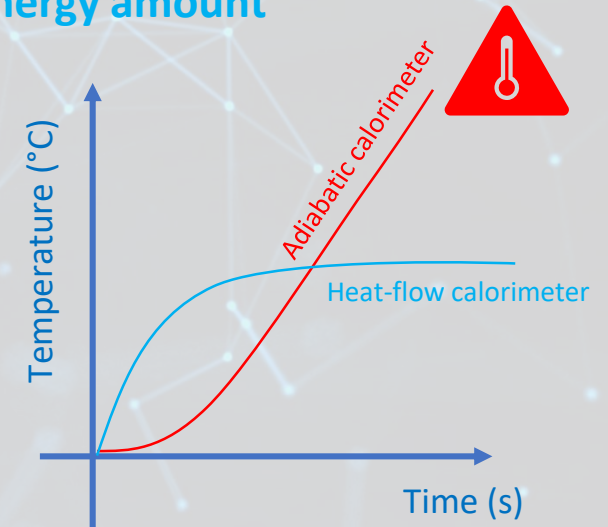
- **Adiabatic calorimeter not possible to be used due to the intense energy amount**

- **No heat exchanges with the external cooling fluid**

→ an infinite thermal resistance between the sample and the external surrounding

Adiabatic calorimeter = No heat exchange

→ 10 g Aluminum at 20 W/g
Material melting in 30 s



- **Heat-flow calorimeters (non-adiabatic sensors) are used**

- **Heat exchanges with the external cooling fluid (natural or forced convection according to the reactor type or power)**

→ a non-infinite thermal resistance between the sample and the external surrounding

- **Response depending on the thermal resistance induced by heat transfers (conduction, convection, thermal radiation) between the temperature measurement points**

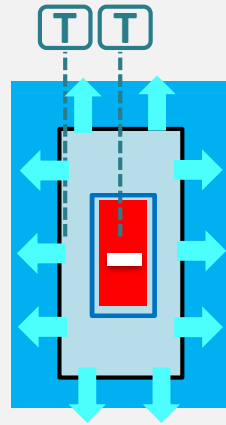
Calorimeter families used in research reactor

Two families of heat-flow calorimeter

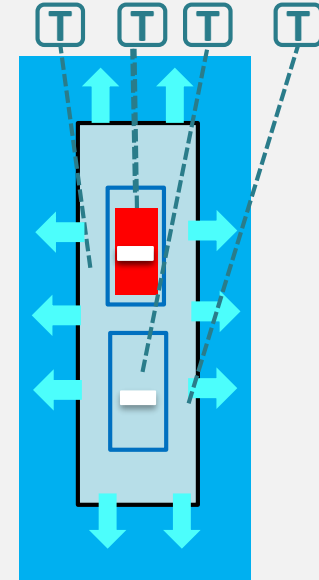
Single-cell calorimeter without a reference cell

Multi-cell calorimeter composed of a sample cell and a reference cell at least

Single-cell calorimeter



Differential calorimeter



- Cooling Fluid
- Heat exchanges
- Sample of inert material to be characterized
- Gas
- Temperature sensors
- Jacket
- Heating element
- Sample holder

Single-cell calorimeter without a reference cell

In various countries

MARIA reactor – Poland
Sample: Graphite or Lead

120°C.g.W⁻¹
20°C.g.W⁻¹

[Tarchalski, 2016]



HANARO – Korea
Sample: Aluminum

400-800°C.g.W⁻¹

[Kim, 2020]



BR2 reactor – Belgium
HALDEN reactor – Norway
MNR – Canada
RSG-GAS – Indonesia
Sample: Stainless steel

[Van Nieuwenhowe, 2019,2020]

[Fourmental, 2013]

[Tarchalski, 2016]

[Alqahtani, 2020, 2022]

[Rohanda, 2020]



SAFARI – South Africa
Sample: Stainless steel and
Molybdenum

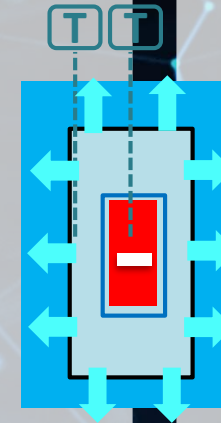
[Makgopa, 2008]



GGR-1 reactor – Greece
Sample: Iron

90- 200°C.g.W⁻¹

[Varvayanni, 2008]



Advantages

- ✓ Very basic design
- ✓ Small size
- ✓ Very high sensitivity possible



Drawbacks

- ✓ No reference cell to compensate for unwanted energy deposition in areas that do not correspond to the sample
- ✓ Complex transient calibration requiring the knowledge of heat capacity (Cp) of the sample
- ✓ Less modular than differential calorimeter



Calorimeter families used in research reactor

Multi-cell calorimeter: differential calorimeter composed of a sample cell and a reference cell at least

- In France and tested in other countries



In the past
Five-stage calorimeter
Sample: Graphite

[Péron, 2015]
[Malouche, 2012]

CALMOS calorimeter
Sample: Graphite

11°C.g.W⁻¹
[Carcreff, 2011-2019]
[CEA patent in 2010]

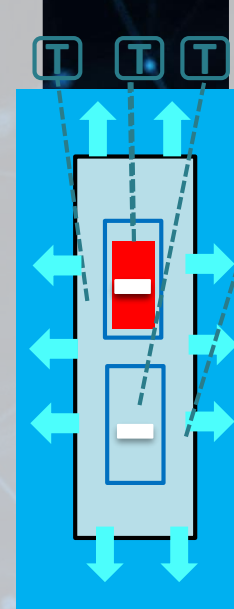
CARMEN calorimeter
Sample: Graphite

65°C.g.W⁻¹
[De Vita, 2016]
[Fourmentel, 2013]

CALMOS 2 calorimeter
Sample: Graphite, W, Eurofer, Al, Stainless steel

Various values°C.g.W⁻¹
[Carcreff, 2022]

CARMEN for JHR
Sample: Al
[Blanchet, 2021]



Advantages



- ✓ A reference cell to compensate for unwanted energy
- ✓ Easy calibration based on steady thermal states (Cp not required) by using the heaters
- ✓ 3 measurement methods possible to be applied in reactor thanks to the heaters

Drawbacks



- ✓ Complex assembly
- ✓ Various cables due to the thermocouples and the heaters
- ✓ Greater size than that of single-cell calorimeters

Calorimeter families used in research reactor

Temperature measurements

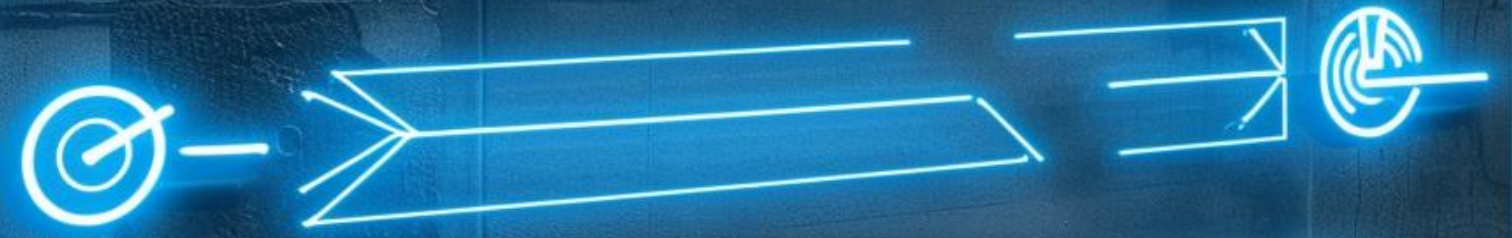
Temperature sensors used: K-type Thermocouples instead of Pt100 resistance

- Active sensor (no power supply required)
- Less number of cables
- Lower absorption cross-section
- Lower drift

Matter	Absorption cross section for 2200 m/s neutrons (Barn)	Type	Thermal drift (after 1500 h)	Neutronic drift (after 1500 h)	Overall drift
Al	0.231	K	-10 to -20 °C	Negligible	-10 to -20 °C
Cr	3.05	N	-5 to -10 °C	Negligible	-5 to -10 °C
Ni	4.49	S	< 5 °C	-75 °C (-1.2 °C/day)	-80 °C
Pt	10.3	C ou W5	< 5 °C	-56 °C (-0.9 °C/day)	-60 °C
Re	89.7				
W	18.3				
Rh	144.8				

Type	Metal A (+)	Metal B (-)	Temperature range	Seebeck coefficient α ($\mu\text{V}/^\circ\text{C}$) at T $^\circ\text{C}$
B	Platinum-30% Rhodium	Platinum-6% Platinum	0°C to 1820°C	5.96 μV at 600°C
E	Nickel 10% Chromium	Copper-Nickel alloy (Constantan)	-270°C to 1000°C	58.67 μV at 0°C
J	Iron	Copper-Nickel alloy (Constantan)	-210°C to 1200°C	50.38 μV at 0°C
K	Nickel-Chromium alloy (Chromel)	Nickel-luminium alloy (Alumel)	-270°C to 1372°C	39.45 μV at 0°C
N	Nickel-Chromium-Silicium alloy (Nicrosil)	Nickel-Silicium alloy (Nisil)	-270°C to 1300°C	25.93 μV at 0°C
R	Platinum-13% Rhodium	Platinum	-50°C to 1768°C	11.36 μV at 600°C
S	Platinum-10% Rhodium	Platinum	-50°C to 1768°C	10.21 μV at 600°C
T	Copper	Copper-Nickel alloy (Constantan)	-270°C to 400°C	38.75 μV at 0°C
W	Tungsten	Tungsten-26% Rhenium	+20°C to +2300°C	
W3	Tungsten-3% Rhenium	Tungsten-25% Rhenium	+20°C to +2000°C	
W5	Tungsten-5% Rhenium	Tungsten-26% Rhenium	+20°C to +2300°C	

CHALLENGES



CALORIMETER



Challenges in calorimeter

□ From the sensor to the methods

- Expansion of the measurement range from very low to high nuclear heating rate (mW.g^{-1} → 20 W.g^{-1})
- Optimization of metrological characteristics of the sensors (sensitivity, linearity, response time, etc.)
- Miniaturization of calorimetric cells and calorimeters
- Diversification of calibration and measurement methods
- Behavior and response prediction by 3-D simulation
- Detailed knowledge of the thermal properties of materials and their evolution



TRIGA-JSI
Slovenia
0.05 W/g

MITR
USA
2 W/g

MARIA
Poland
5 W/g

OSIRIS France
(Shutdown)
13 W/g

BR2
Belgium
14 W/g

JHR
France
20 W/g

mW.g^{-1}

$20 \text{ kGy.s}^{-1} = 20 \text{ W.g}^{-1}$

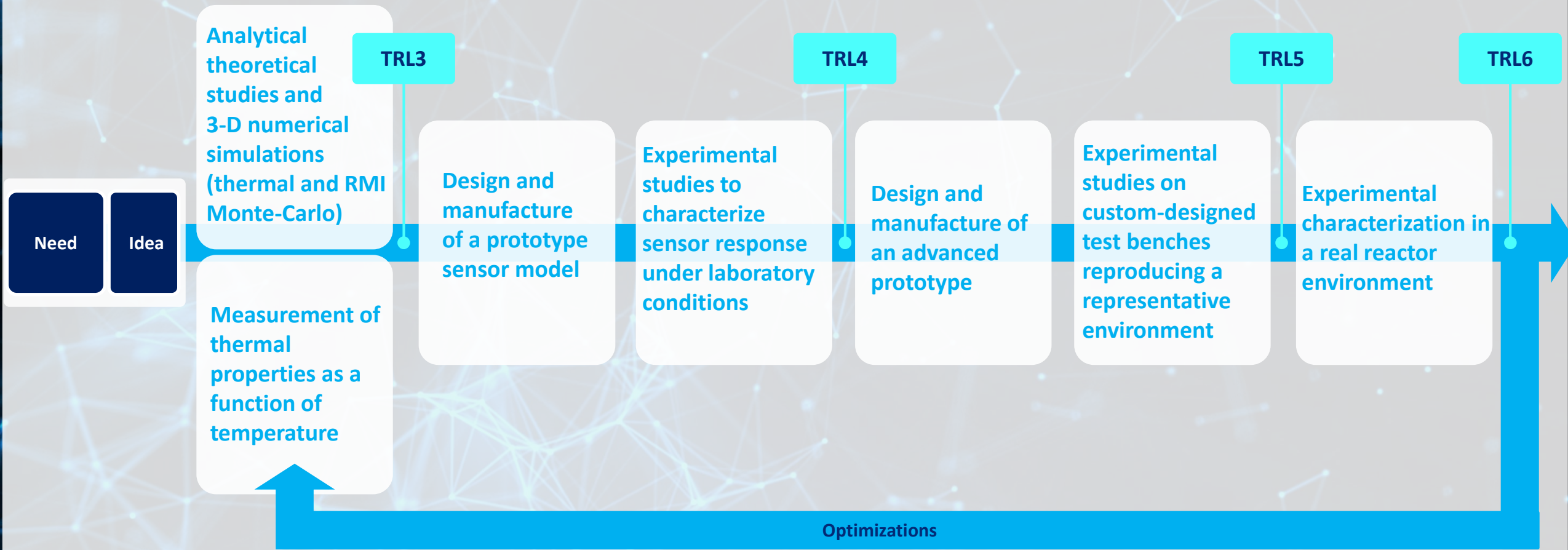
Important for

- local and faster measurements
- devices coupling different types of sensors for simultaneous multi-measurements such as CARMEN device
- devices coupling several calorimeters with different material samples
- simplification of the in-pile operating protocol
- integration in irradiation device

APPROACH

A comprehensive approach to innovate in calorimetry at AMU

- Work carried out using an incremental approach combining experiments and simulations from laboratory conditions to reactor conditions



TRL = Technology Readiness Level

EXAMPLE

RESULTS

Two types of calorimeters patented: differential calorimeter and single-cell calorimeter

- A differential calorimeter and a single-cell calorimeter including a thin heating-element

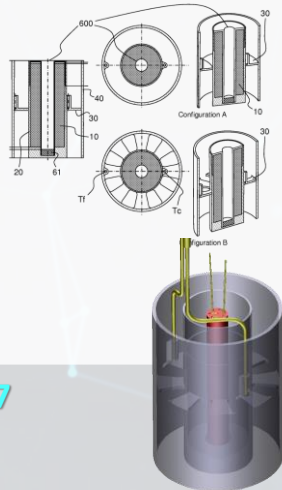
Need

Miniaturization of calorimetric cells and calorimeters

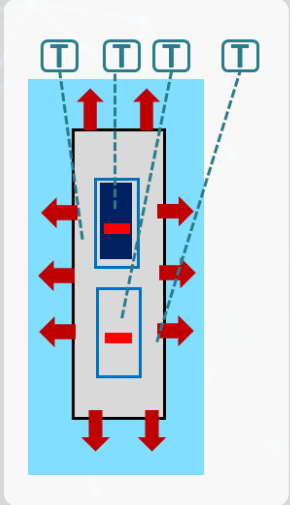
Ideas

CALORRE

A differential calorimeter with radial heat transfer



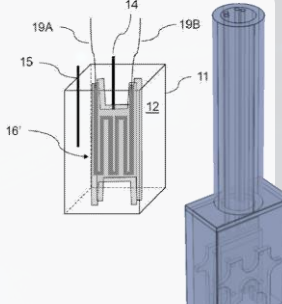
Cell size divided by 7



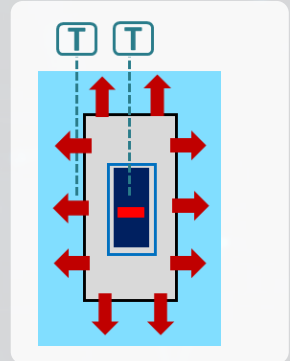
Patent 2015
AMU/CEA, M.
Carette et al.

MONO-CALO

A single-cell calorimeter integrating thin layers

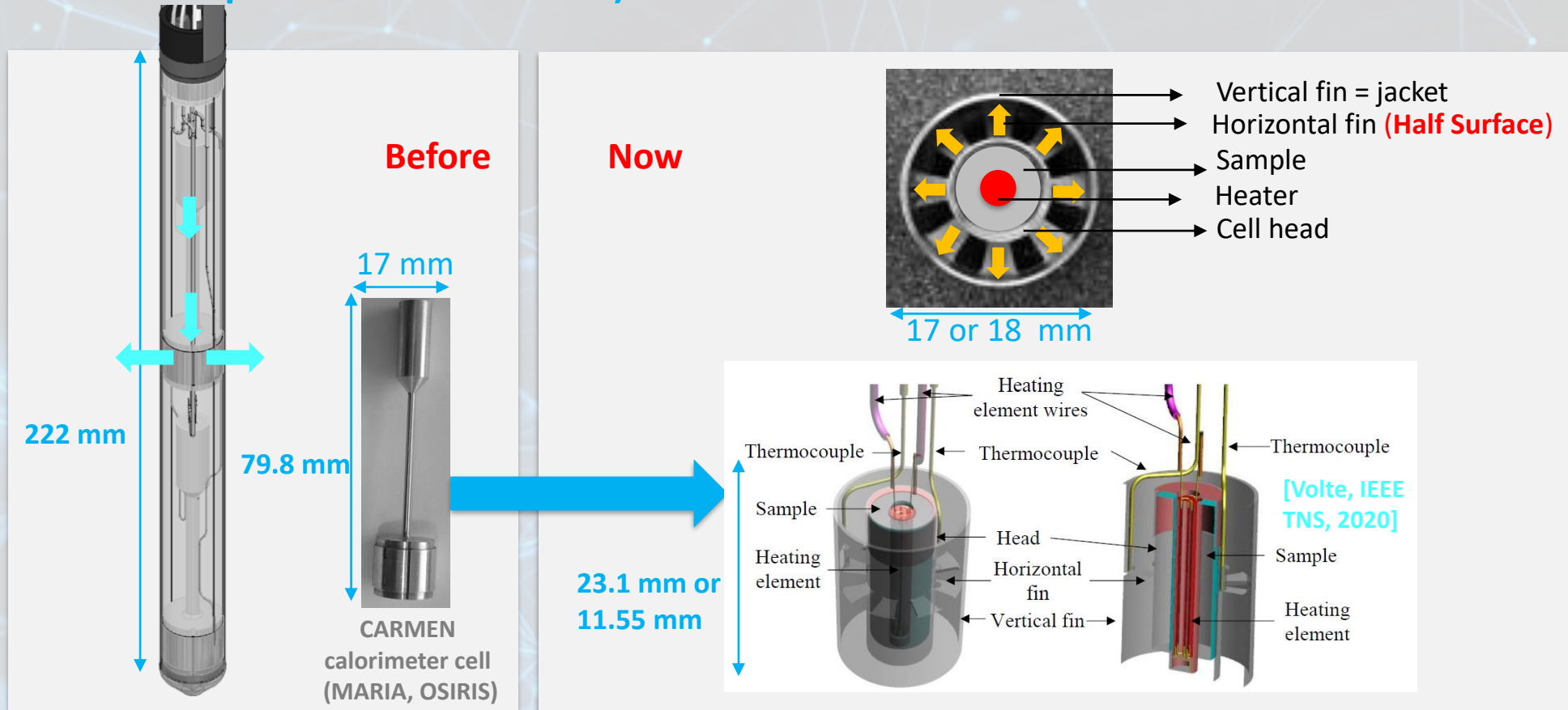


Calorimeter size divided by 10



Patent 2020
AMU/CEA/CNRS C.
Reynard-Carette et al.

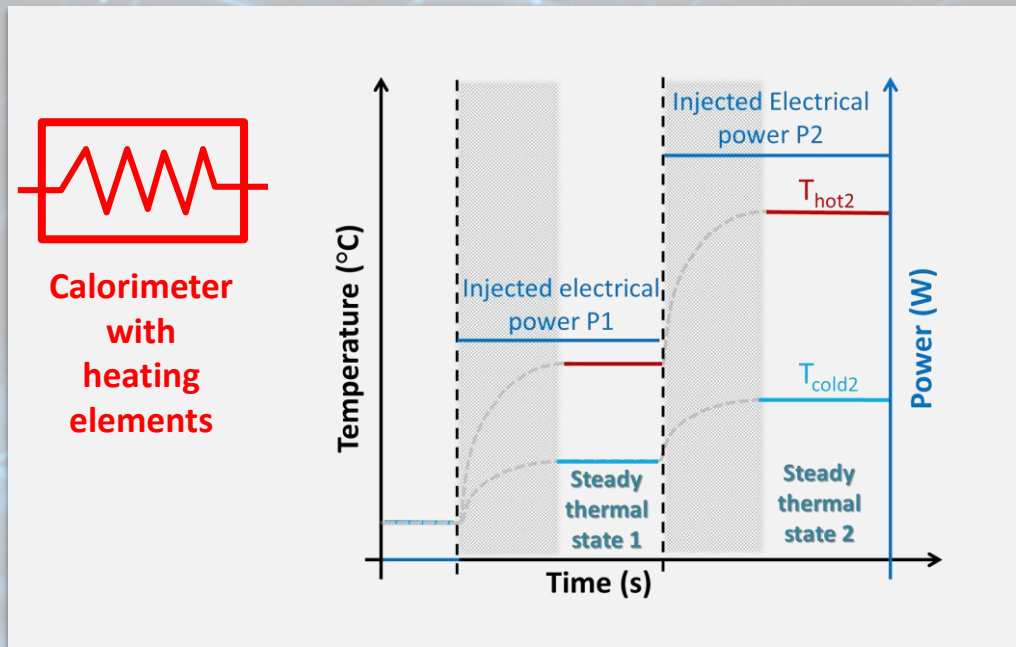
- A new design to have a reduced-height calorimeter
 - with main heat transfer in radial and azimuthal directions in each calorimetric cell (instead of axial direction with previous calorimeters)



CALORRE calibration

- 2 methods depending on the calorimeter type: steady-state-based calibration method or transient-state-based calibration method

- Method#1: Steady-state calibration method



- Under laboratory conditions without nuclear rays

- ✓ By using specific experimental benches
- ✓ By generating a heat source by Joule effect inside each calorimetric cell thanks to heaters and to simulate the absorbed dose rate

- Inside the reactor during shutdown

- ✓ By generating a heat source by Joule effect inside each calorimetric cell thanks to heaters and to simulate the absorbed dose rate

CALORRE calibration

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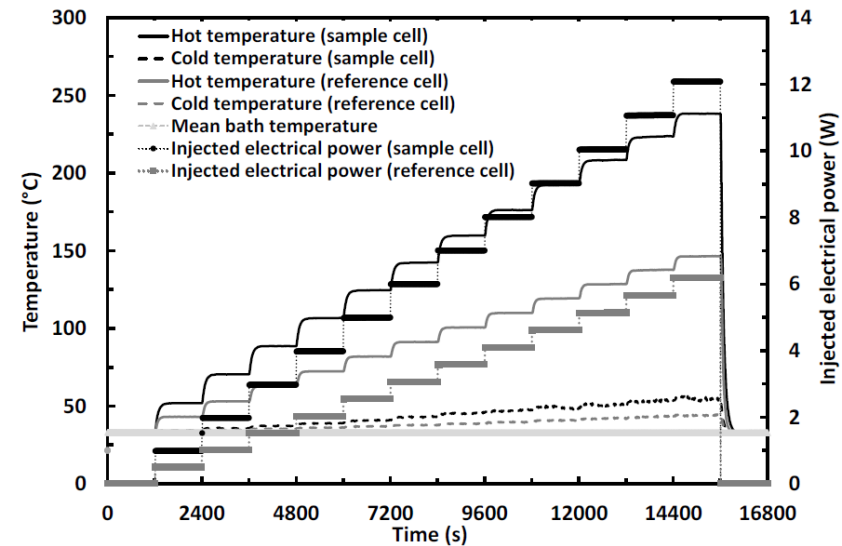
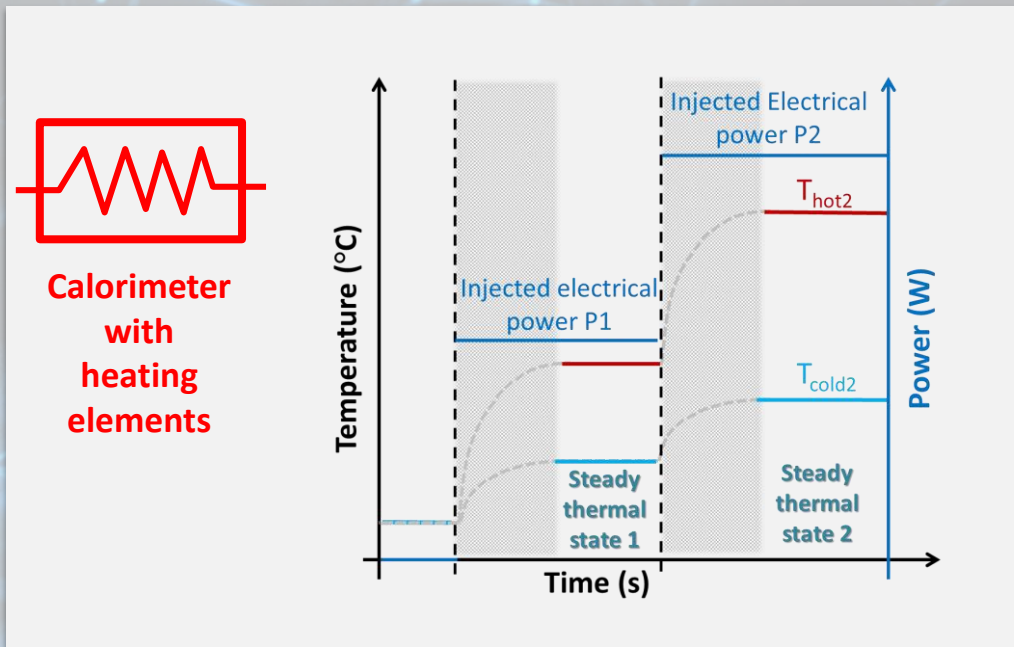
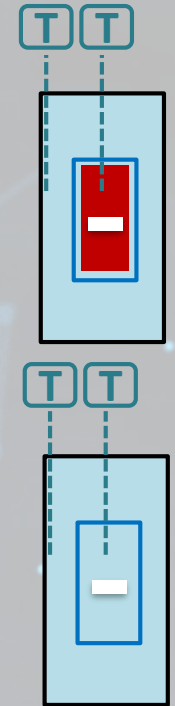


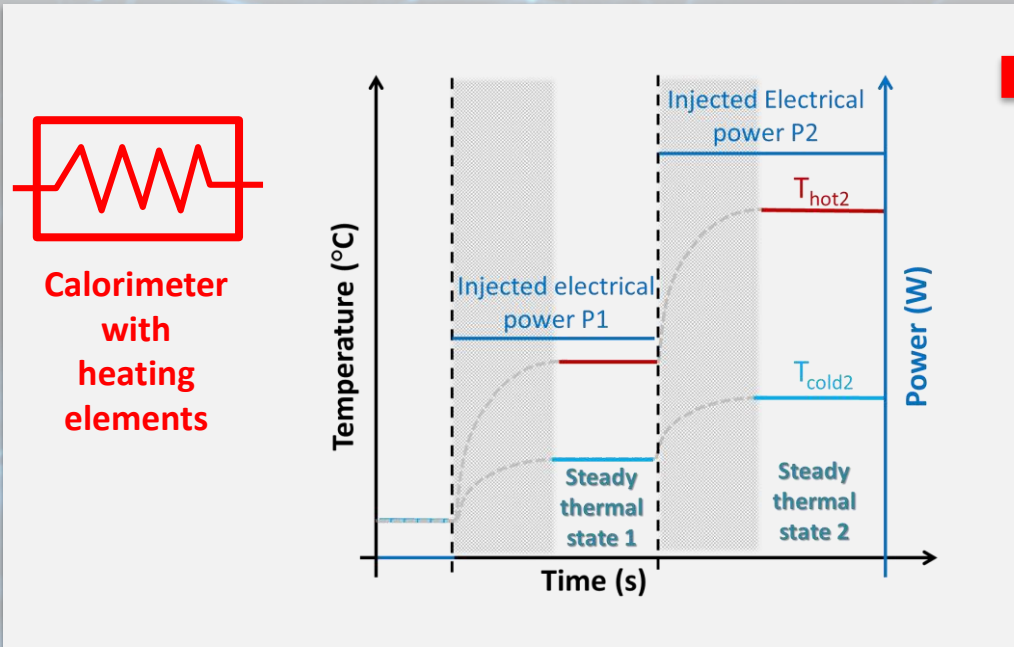
Fig. 14. Temperatures and injected electrical powers versus time for the sample and reference cells, a fluid temperature of 33 °C and a Reynolds number of 1607 obtained with the second operating protocol.

[Volte, IEEE
TNS, 2024]



CALORRE calibration

- 2 methods depending on the calorimeter type: steady-state-based calibration method or transient-state-based calibration method
 - Method#1: Steady-state calibration method



Calibration curve giving $T_{hot} - T_{cold}$ for the steady states versus P for each calorimetric cell

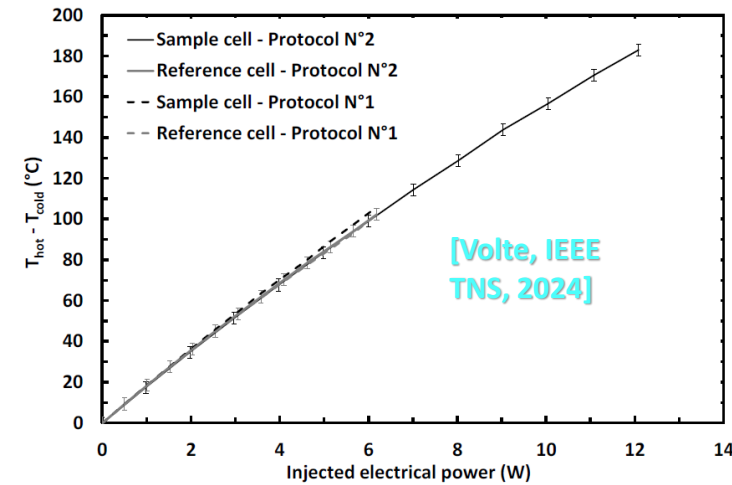
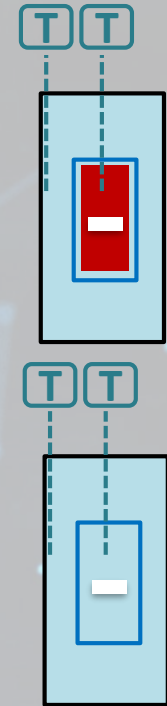
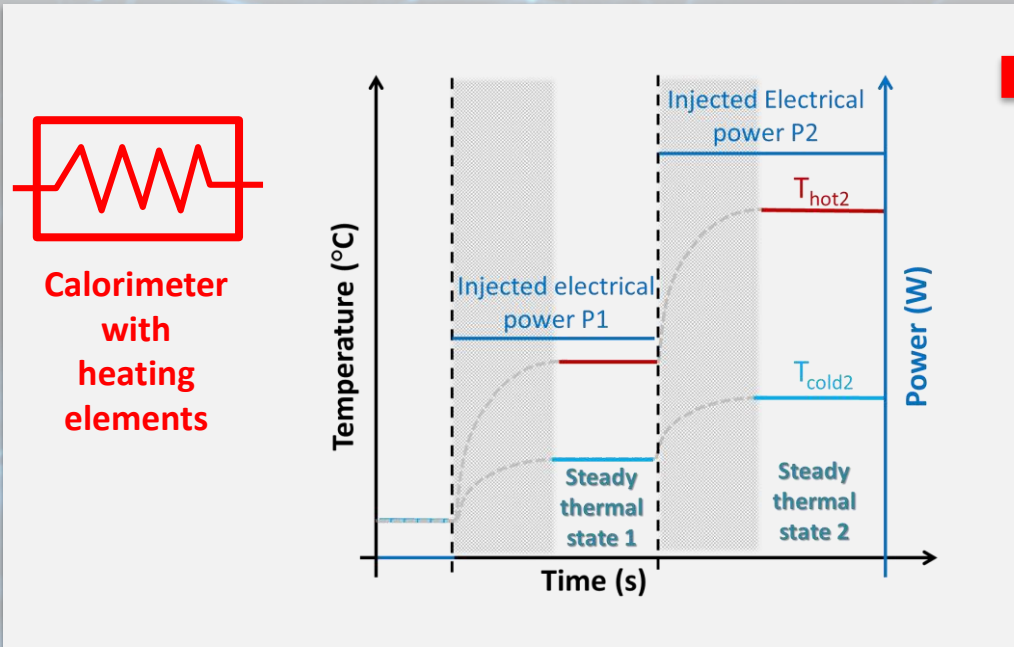


Fig. 15. Calibration curves of the sample and the reference cells obtained by applying two protocols for a fluid temperature of 33 °C and a Reynolds number of 1607.

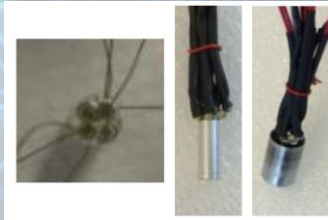
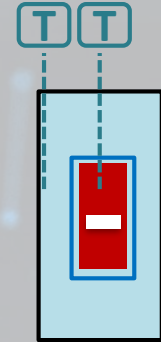
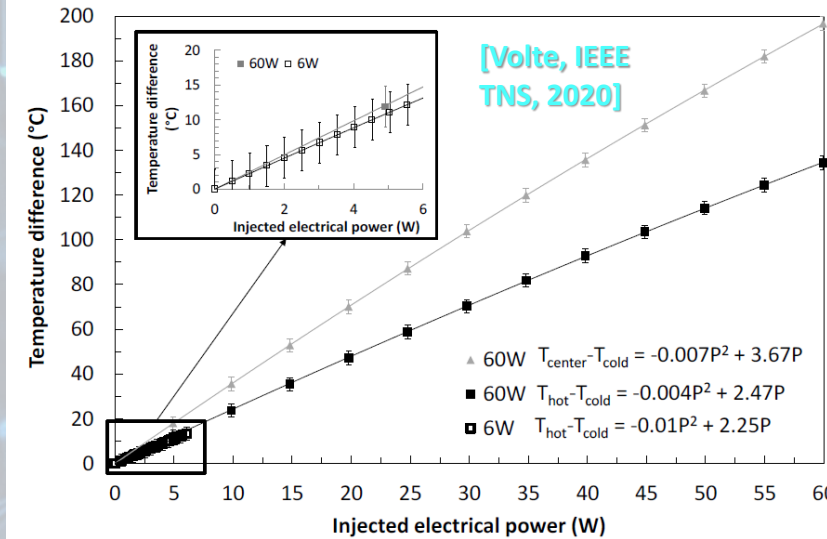


CALORRE calibration

- 2 methods depending on the calorimeter type: steady-state-based calibration method or transient-state-based calibration method
 - Method#1: Steady-state calibration method



Calibration curve giving $T_{hot}-T_{cold}$ for the steady states versus P for each calorimetric cell



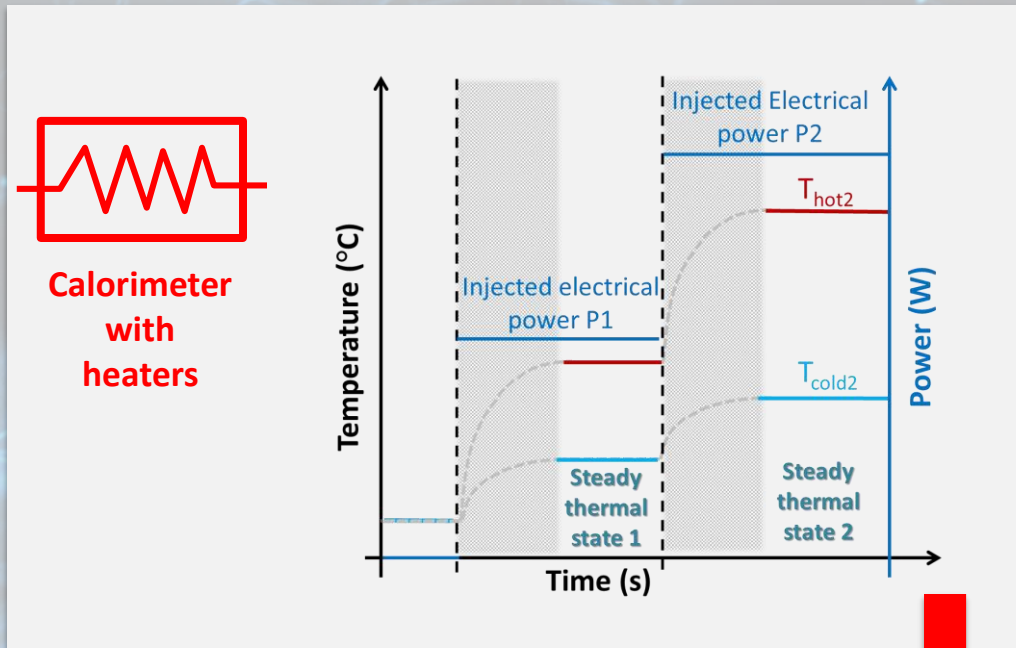
➤ The chosen electrical power range depends on the targeted range of the nuclear heating rate

CALORRE calibration

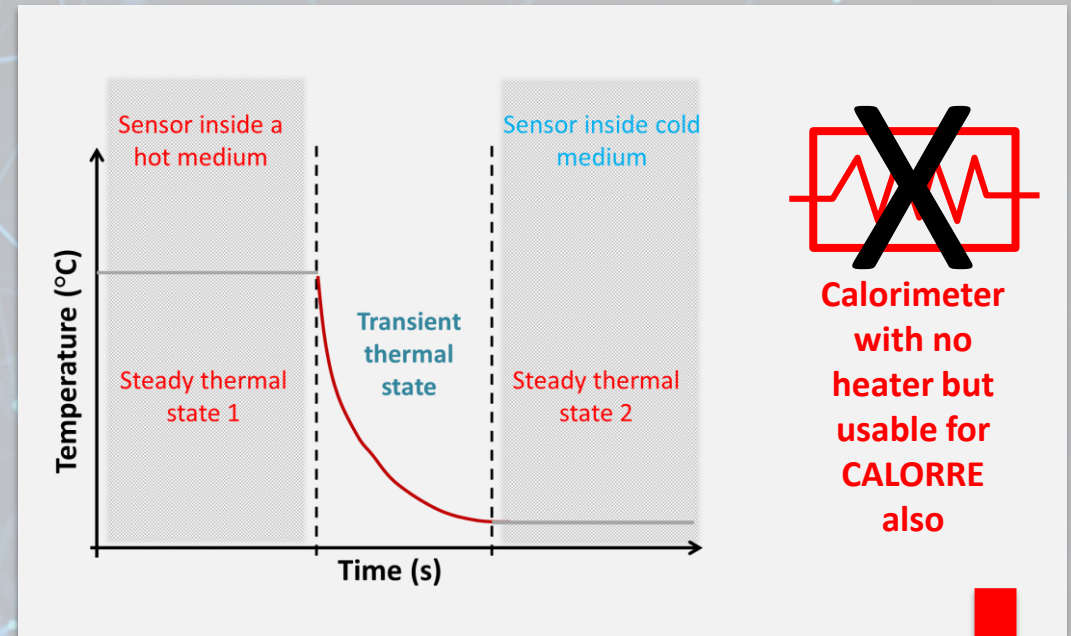
- 2 methods depending on the calorimeter type: steady-state-based calibration method or transient-state-based calibration method

- Method#1: Steady-state calibration method

- Method#2: Transient-state calibration method



Calibration curve giving $T_{hot} - T_{cold}$ versus P for each calorimetric cell → Cell sensitivity

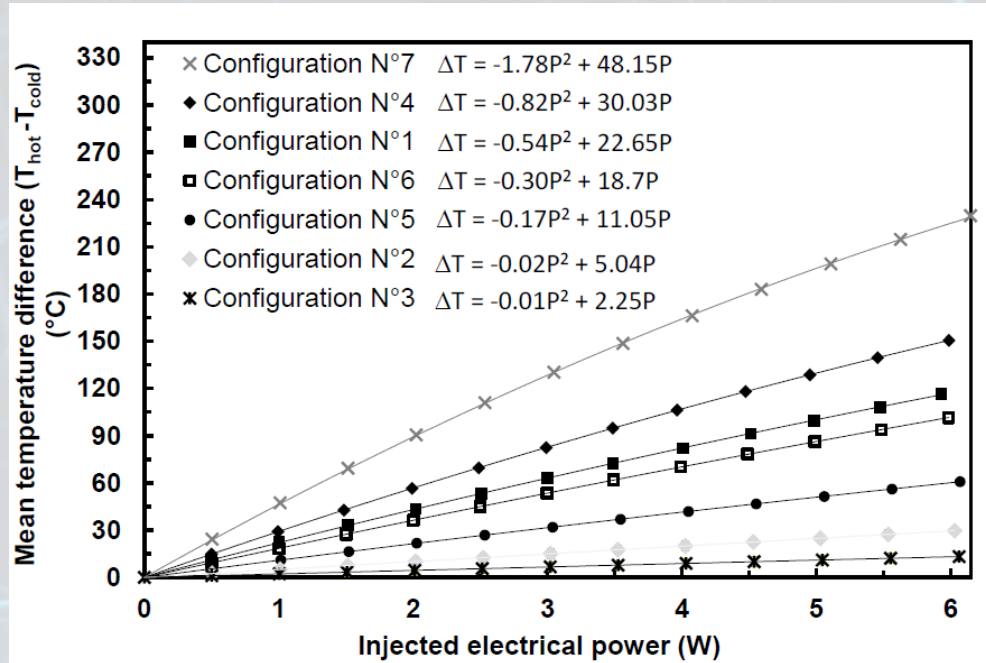


Thermal constant time of the calorimetric cell → Cell sensitivity by considering C_p

CALORRE calorimeter sensitivity

□ CALORRE: a very modular calorimeter in term of sensitivity to target different nuclear heating rate values

- By changing the geometry of the horizontal fin
 - Effect of the gas and metal thermal conductivity
- By changing the nature of the material of the calorimetric cell structure
 - Effect of the thermal conductivity



[Volte, IEEE TNS, 2018]
 [Volte, PhD 2019]
 [Volte, IEEE TNS, 2022]



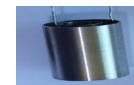
TABLE II
 METROLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR SEVEN CONFIGURATIONS OF A CALORRE CALORIMETRIC CELL

Configuration	N°1	N°2	N°3	N°4	N°5	N°6	N°7
H (mm)	23.1	23.1	23.1	23.1	23.1	11.55	11.55
Material (-)	AISI 316L	Al 5754	Al 5754	AISI 316L	AISI 316L	AISI 316L	TA6V
Fin (-)	1/2	1/4	1/2	1/4	1	1/2	1/4
t _{average} (s)	291	97	88	418	208	174	287
S _{6W} (°C.W ⁻¹)	16.2	4.8	2.1	20.3	9.0	15.1	26.8
m (g)	5.22	3.20	3.20	5.22	5.22	2.92	2.16
T _{hot/6W} (°C)	169	72	62	209	122	157	272

Full surface, Half surface, Quarter surface



23.1 mm height

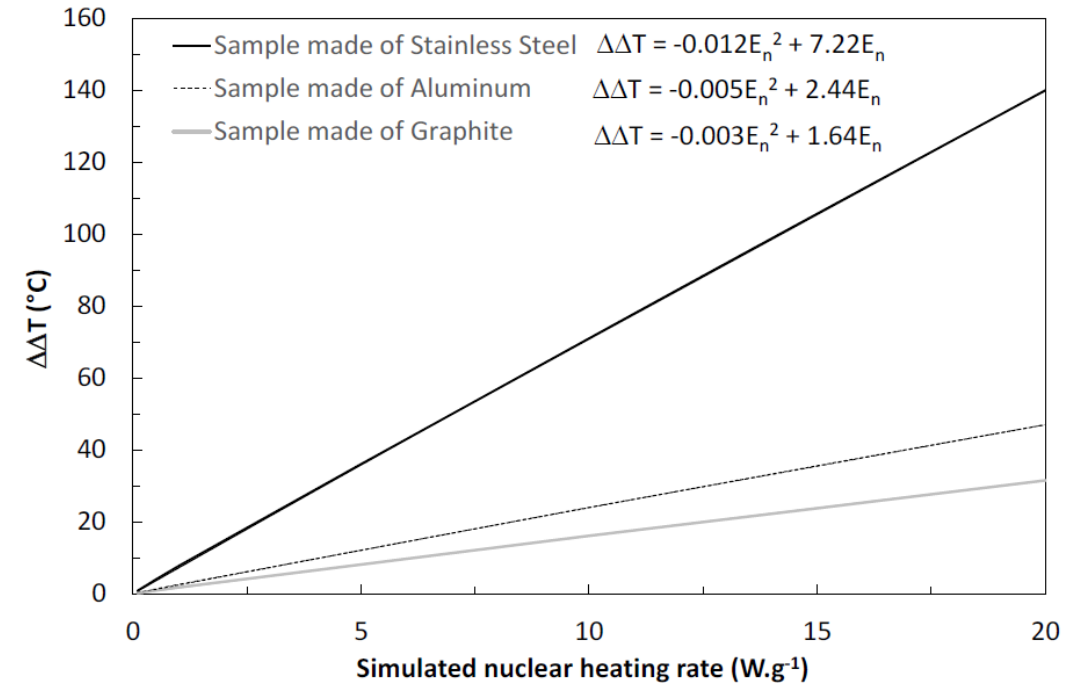
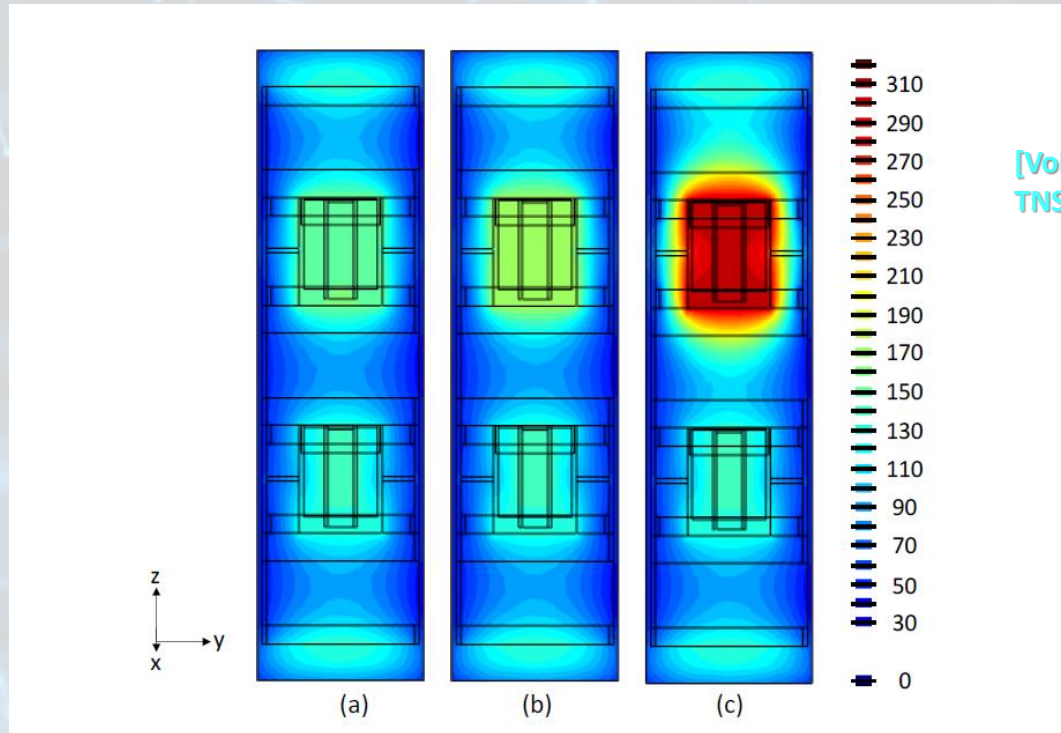


11.55 mm height

CALORRE calorimeter sensitivity

□ CALORRE: a very modular calorimeter in term of sensitivity to target different nuclear heating rate values

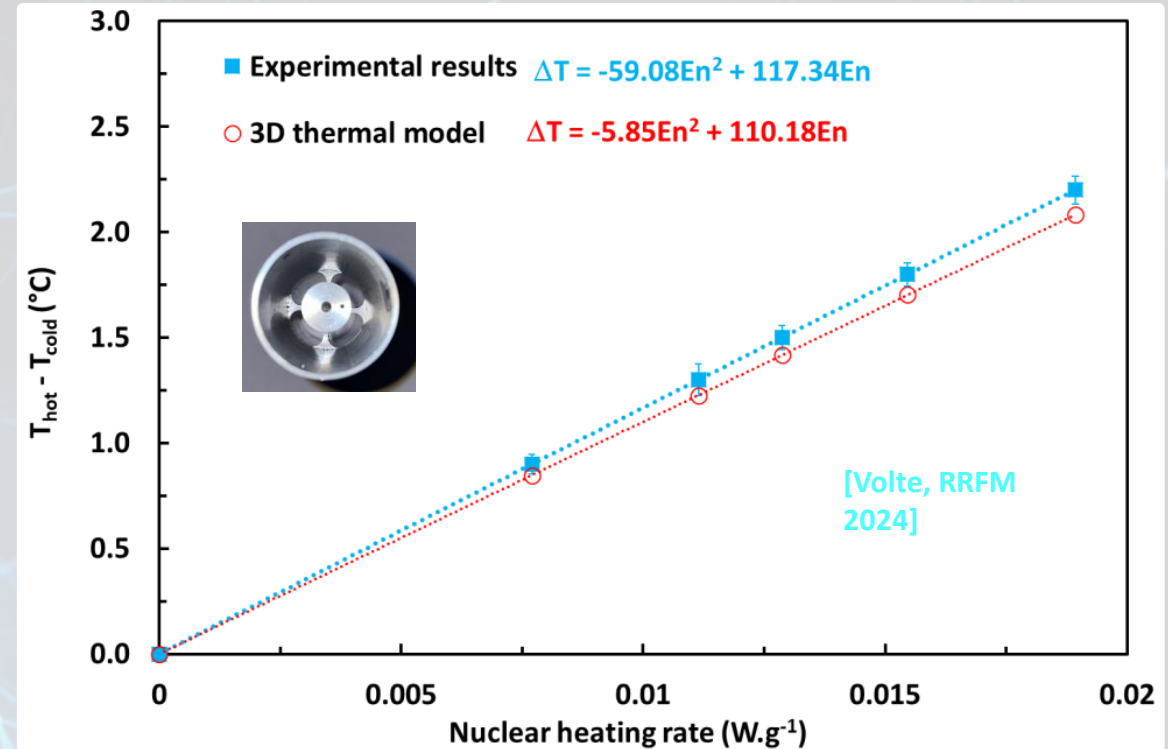
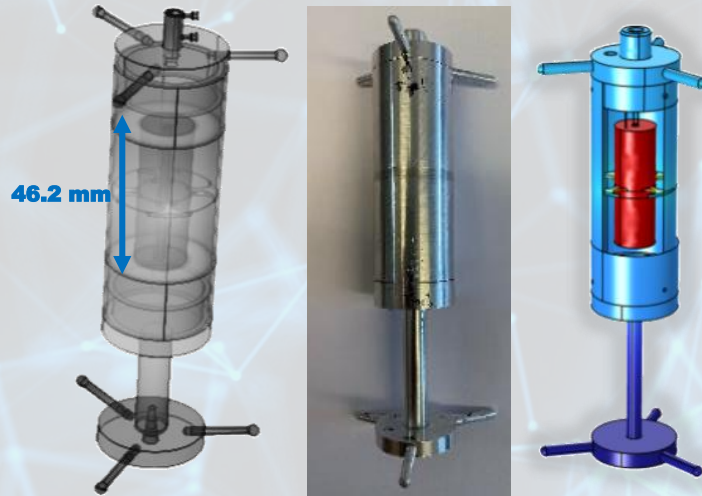
- By changing the nature of the sample
 - Effect of the mass



CALORRE calorimeter sensitivity

□ CALORRE: a very modular calorimeter in term of sensitivity to target different nuclear heating rate values

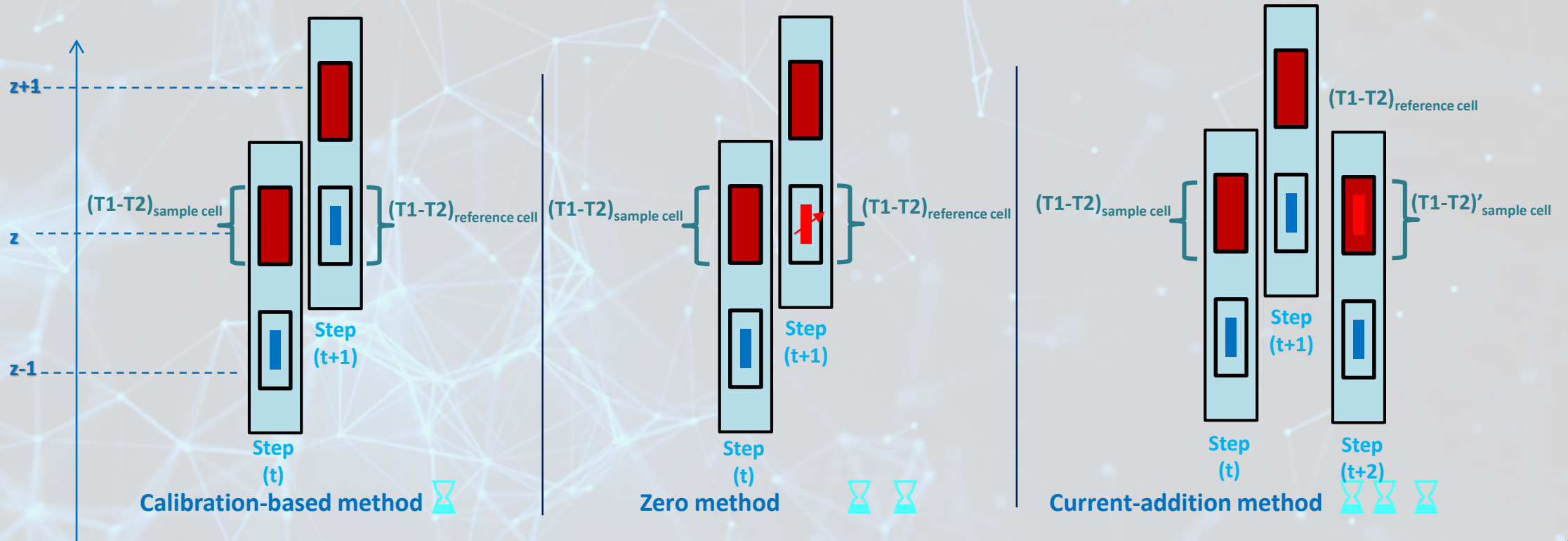
- By changing the dimension of the sample



3 methods in the case of a differential calorimeter

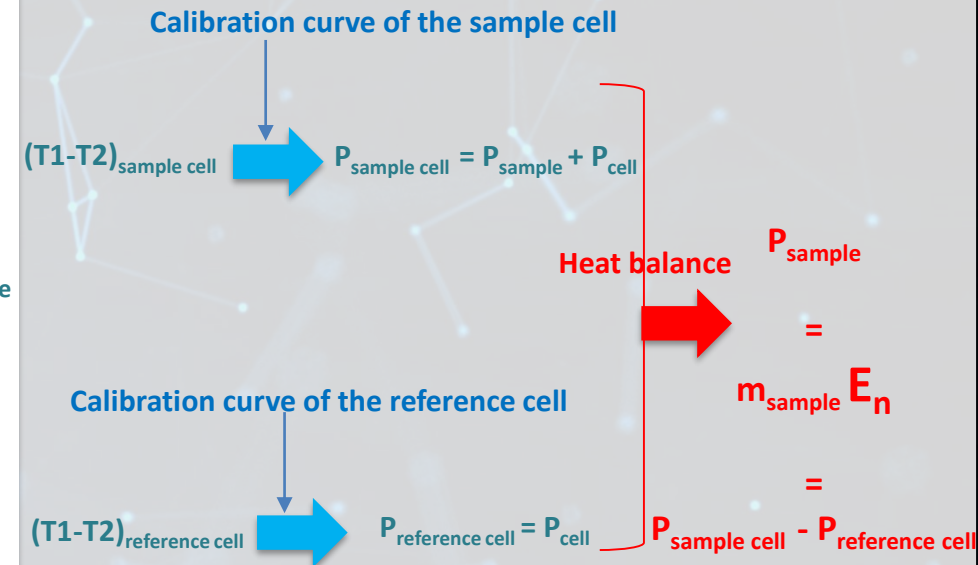
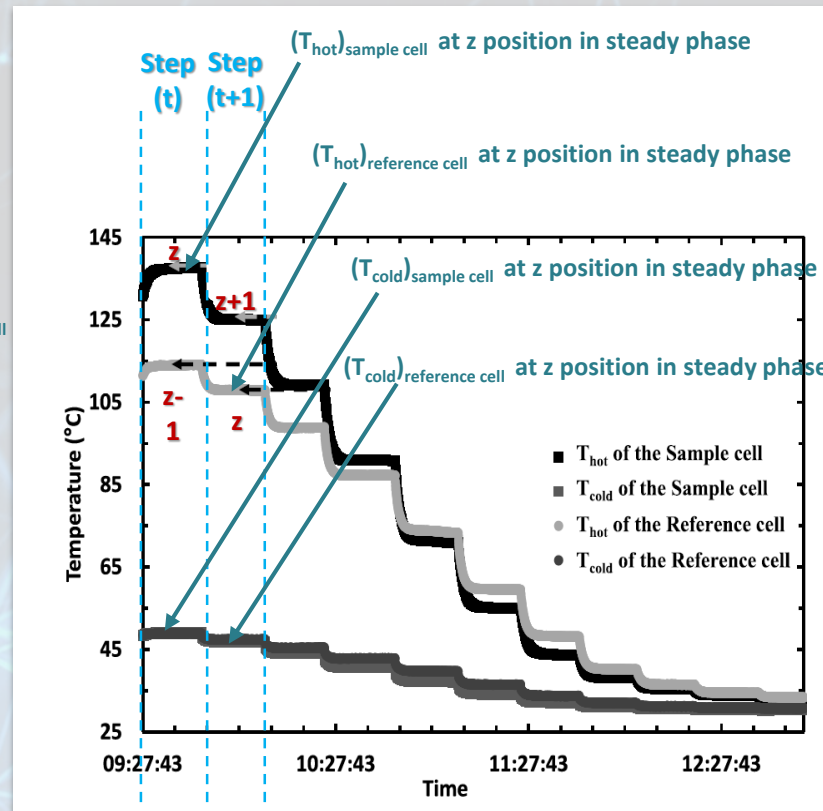
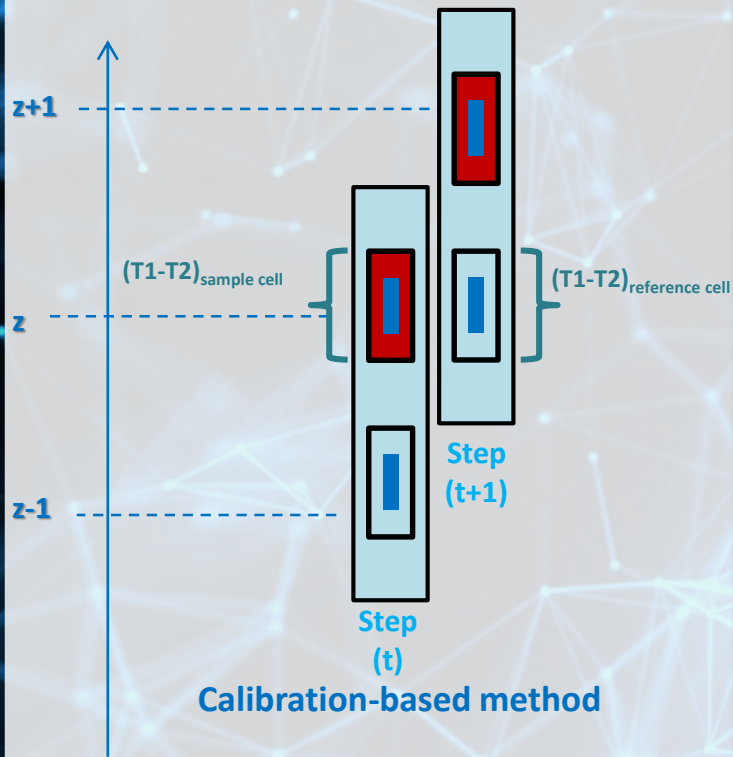


- **Method 1:** with heaters switched-off and using the out-of-pile calibration curves (called calibration-based method)
- **Method 2:** with heater switched-on in the reference cell and injecting a current to reach $(T1-T2)_{\text{sample cell}} - (T1-T2)_{\text{reference cell}} = 0$ (called zero method)
- **Method 3:** with heater switched-on in the sample cell (called current-addition method)



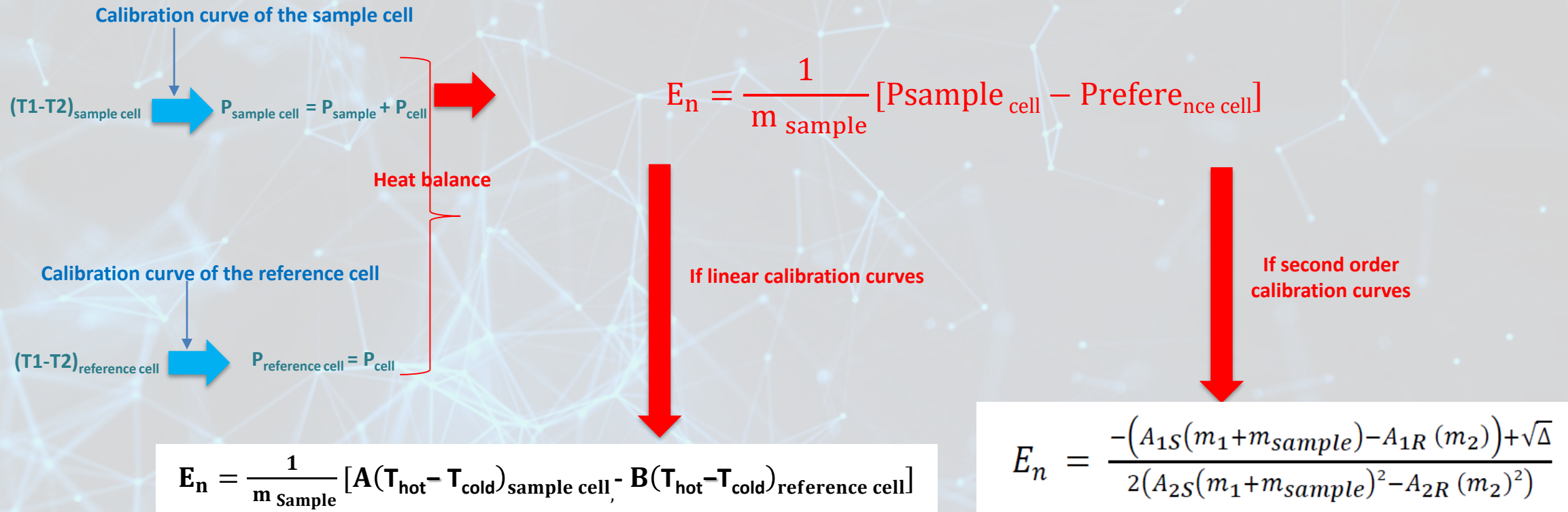
3 methods in the case of differential calorimeter

- Method 1: with heaters switched-off and using the out-of-pile calibration curves (called calibration-based method)



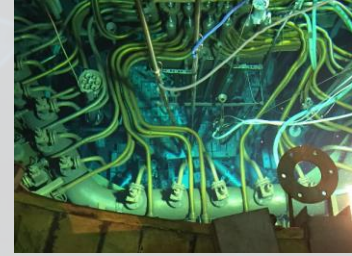
3 methods in the case of differential calorimeter

- Method 1: with heaters switched-off and using the out-of-pile calibration curves (called calibration-based method)



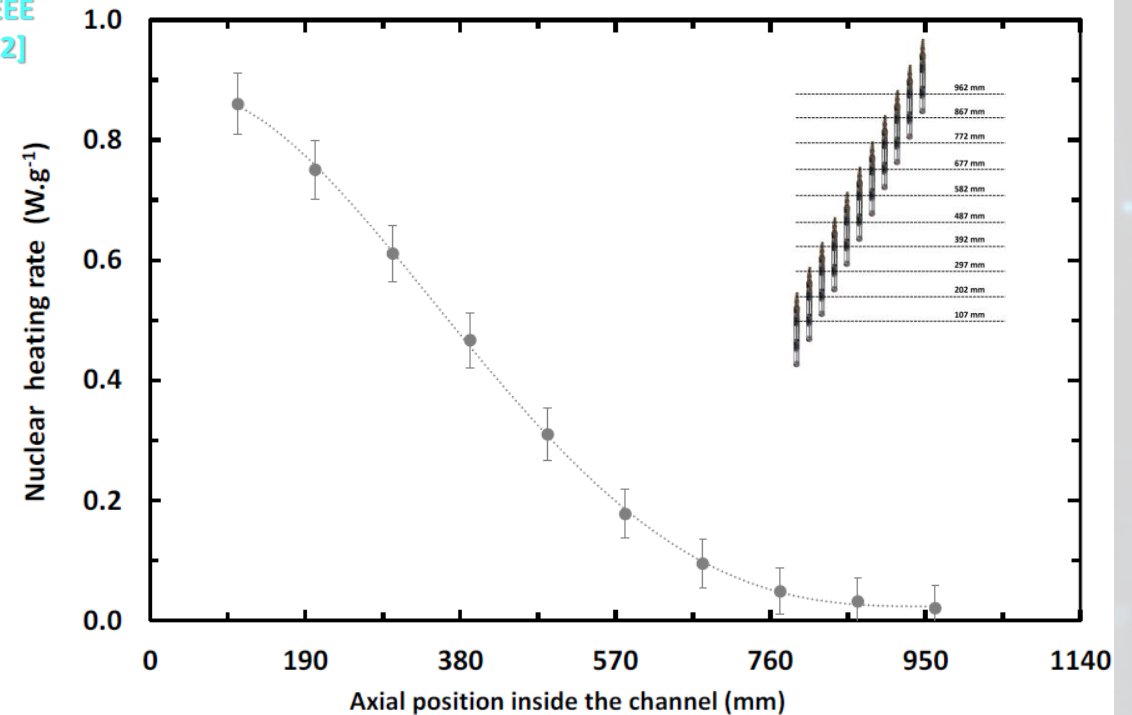
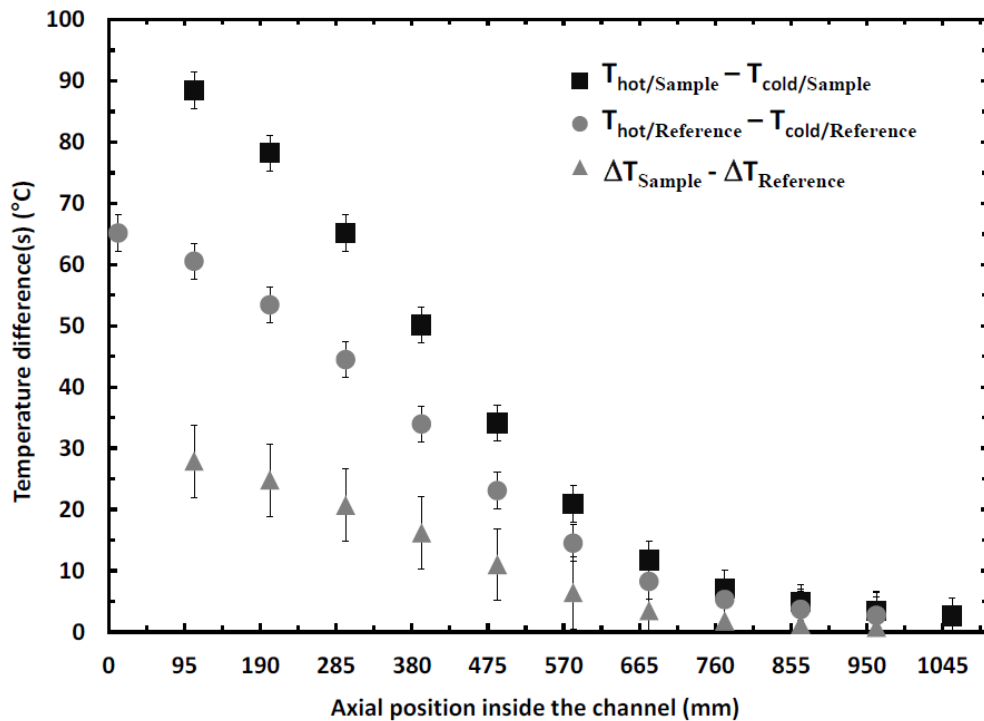
3 methods in the case of differential calorimeter

- Method 1: with heaters switched-off and using the out-of-pile calibration curves (called calibration-based method)



MARIA reactor, Poland, 24 MW

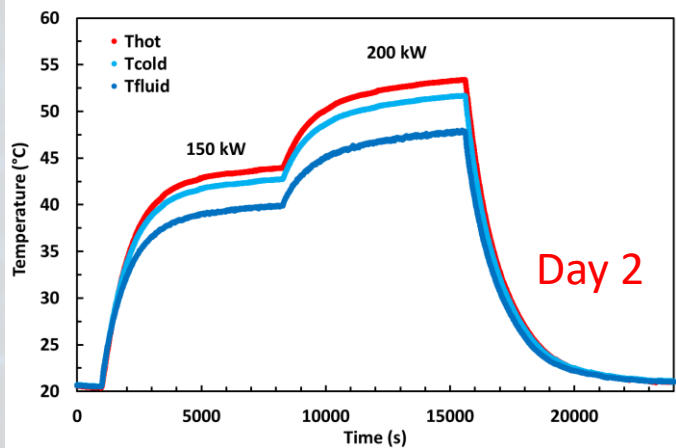
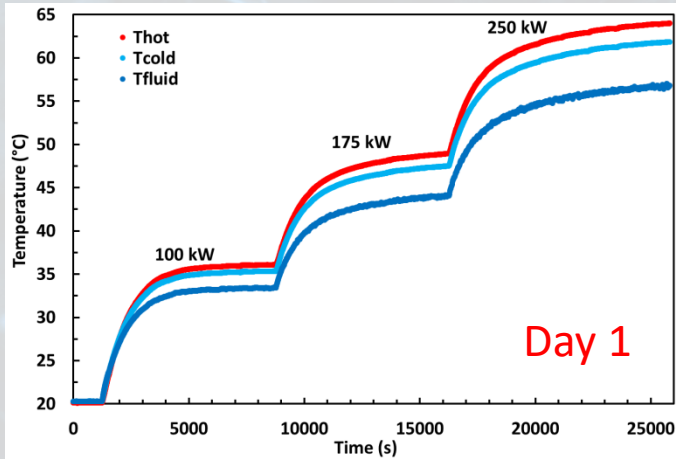
[Volte, IEEE TNS, 2022]



An axial mapping of the nuclear heating rate in irradiation channel

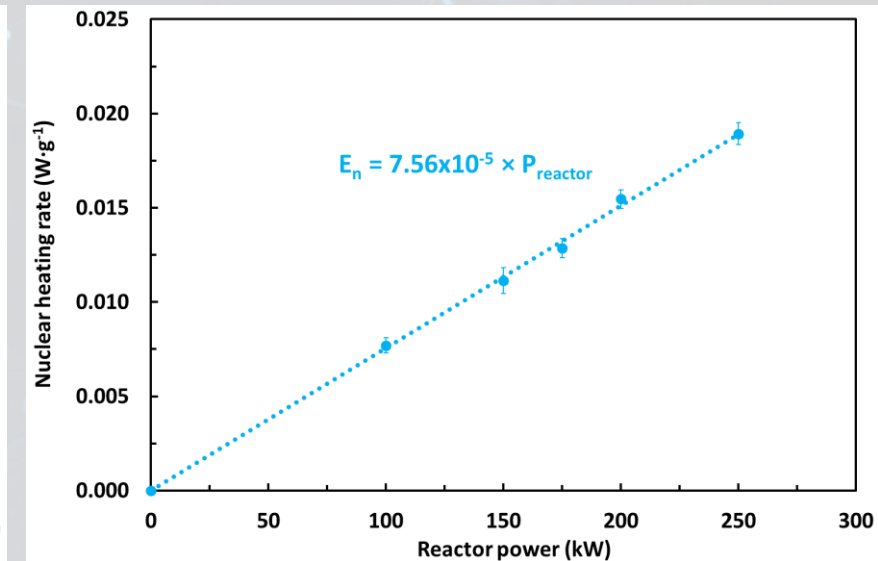
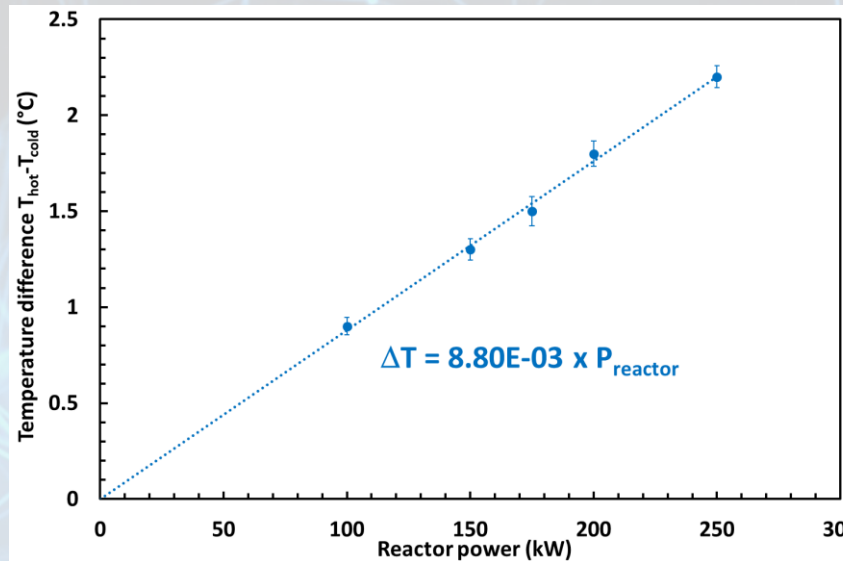
3 methods in the case of differential calorimeter

- Method 1: with heaters switched-off and using the out-of-pile calibration curves (called calibration-based method)



[Volte, RRFM 2024]

[Valero, PhD thesis, 2023]



The nuclear heating rate versus the reactor power for one axial position

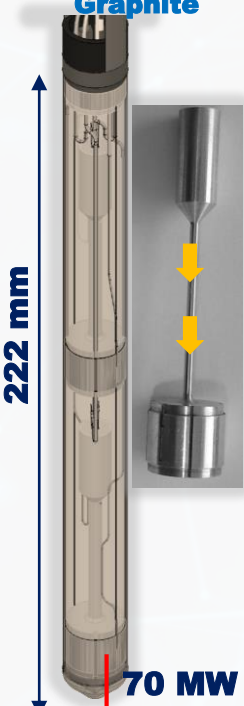
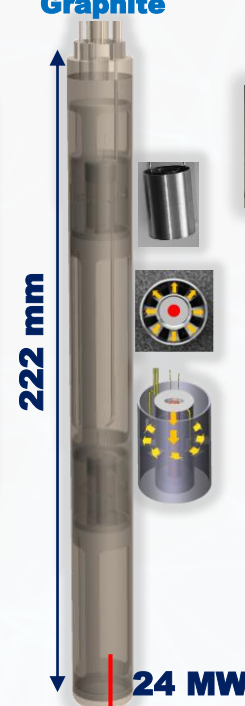



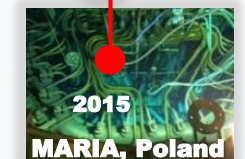




CONCLUSION

OUTLOOK

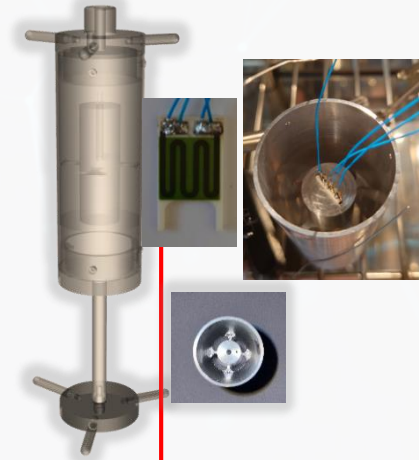
Conclusions and outlooks

Several CALORRE prototypes developed and tested

CARMEN < 2 W.g ⁻¹ Graphite	CALORRE < 2 W.g ⁻¹ Graphite	CALORRE 60 W 20 W.g ⁻¹ Aluminium	CALORRE < 19 mW.g ⁻¹ Aluminium
			
222 mm	222 mm	86 mm	
70 MW	24 MW	Laboratory	250 kW
 2012, 2013 OSIRIS, France	 2015 MARIA, Poland	 2016-2019 LIMMEX/IM2NP	 2023 JSI, Slovenia

Irradiation campaign from 1 to 3 of July 2024

CALORRE including heating element with thin-layers
< 19 mW.g⁻¹
Aluminium

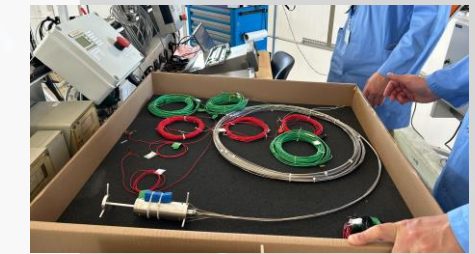
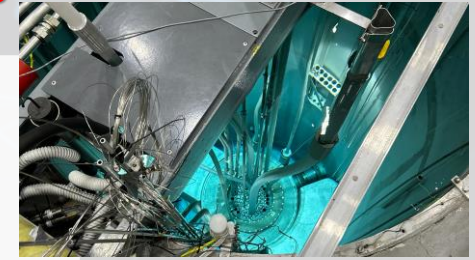


250 kW

July 2024



JSI, Slovenia



IEEE TNS 2012, J. Brun *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2013, D. Fourmentel *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2014, J. Brun *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2015, H. Amharrak *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2016, C. De Vital *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2016, J. Brun *et al.*

Patent 2015, M. Carette *et al.*
PhD thesis 2019, A. Volte
IEEE TNS 2020, A. Volte *et al.*

christelle.carette@

RRFM 2024, A. Volte *et al.*
PhD thesis 2023, V. Valero

Conclusions and outlooks

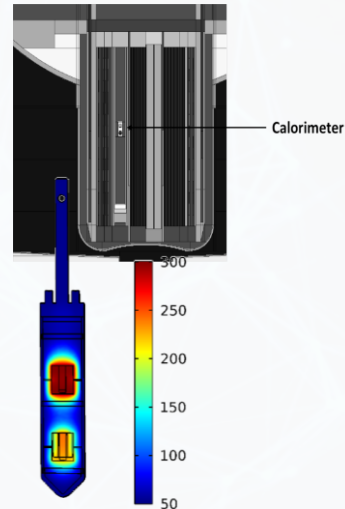
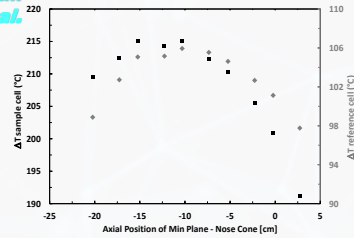
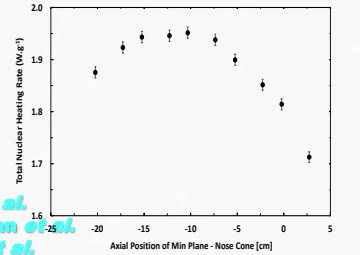
□ New reduced-size and miniaturized sensors and new purposes for nuclear fusion field

CALORRE

< 2 W.g⁻¹
Stainless steel



ANIMMA 2023, A. Volte *et al.*
ANIMMA 2023, S. Hauptman *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2022, A. Volte *et al.*
IEEE TNS 2024, A. Volte *et al.*



A*MIDEX
CALOR-I
project
with



6 MW

October
2024



MONO-CALO

Alumina

PhD thesis 2019, A. Volte
Patent 2020, C. Reynard-Carette *et al.*
ANIMMA 2023, J. Rebaud *et al.*



LIMMEX Micro-
CALOR project
with

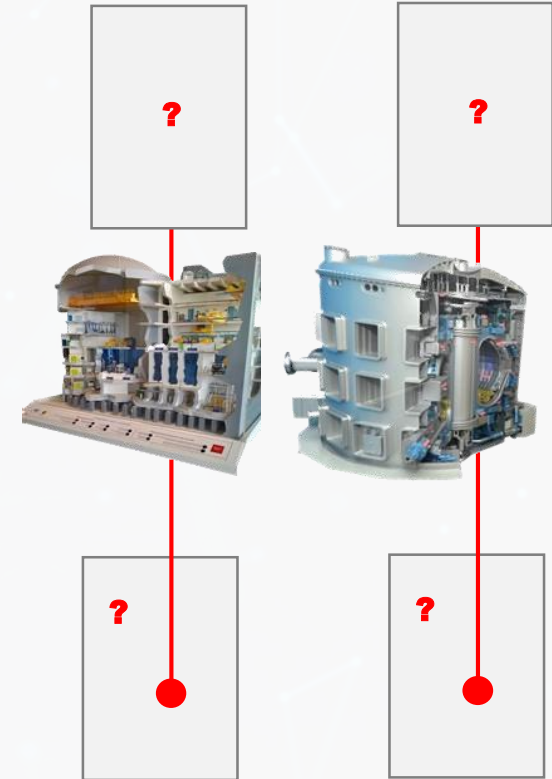


250 kW Laboratory



CALORRE for
various sample
materials (fission
and fusion fields)

CALORRE for
tokamak
environment



EDUCATION

Several actions at master's level

☐ Developed with a very strong link between research and education

Mobility abroad

Diplomas

Immersive pedagogical tours

Events

Specific pedagogical methods

Education-Research platform

MOBIL-APP program created in 2018
IMSci-Nu mobility

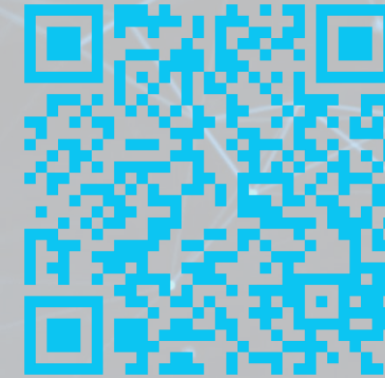
1-year master in Instrumentation and Measurement Science for major Nuclear research facilities (IMSci-Nu, M2)

Nuclear research centers
Laboratories Facilities

Thematic days
IMSci-Nu School

Research project
Escape game
Virtual reality

PLATINUM platform with equipment pool



IMSci-Nu



THANK YOU

