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# NEXTorch: A Design and Bayesian Optimization Toolkit for Chemical Sciences and Engineering

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# About Me

- Graduated from Vlachos Group Dec 2021
- ML Research Scientist at Meta
- Based in San Francisco
- Research interests: AI data annotation, active learning, generative AI, reinforcement learning from human feedback (RLHF)
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wangyifan411/>

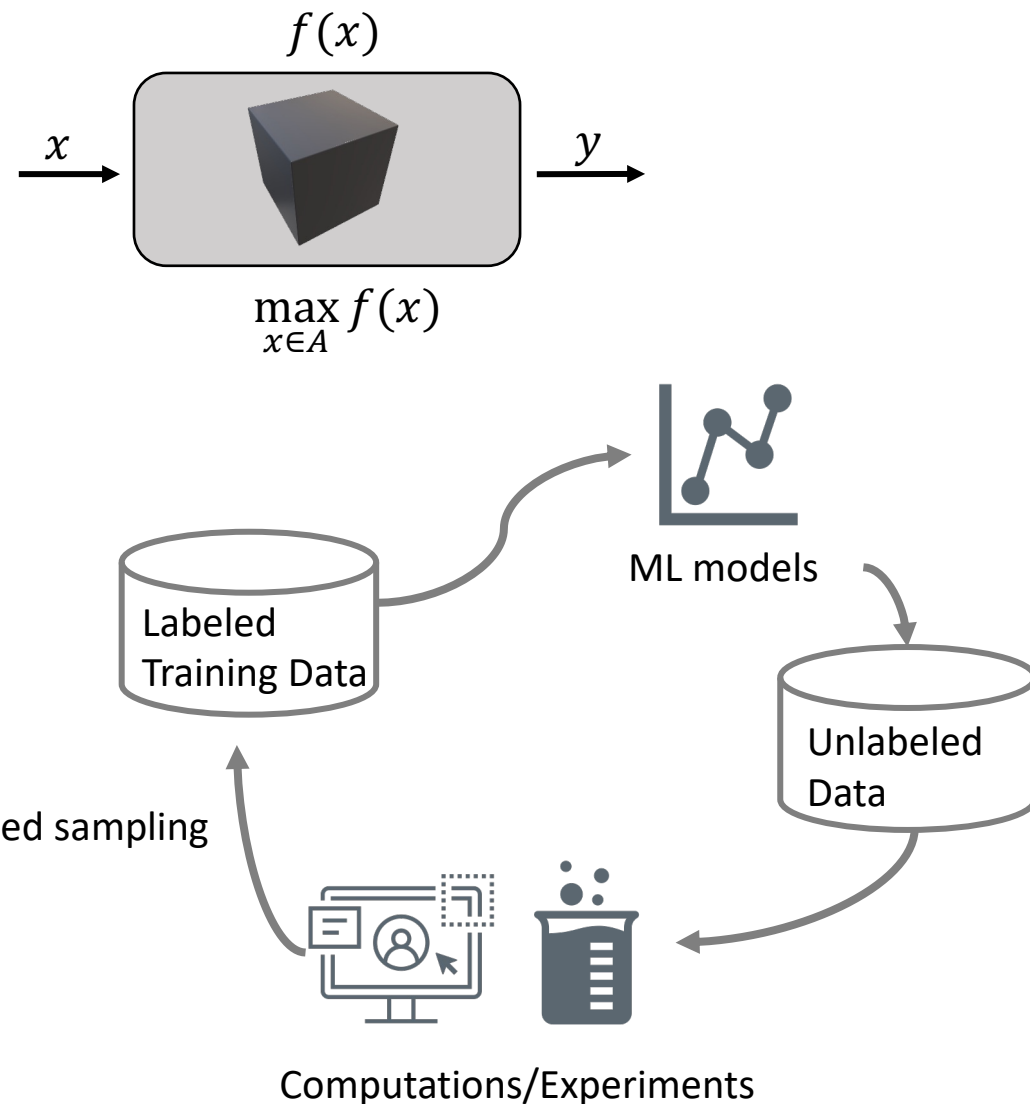
## Blackbox functions<sup>[1]</sup>

- Expensive computer model or laboratory experiments
- Unknown explicit model form
- Multi-dimensional

## Active learning<sup>[2]</sup>

- An algorithm “learning” from data, proposing next experiments, and improving prediction accuracy with fewer training data or lower cost

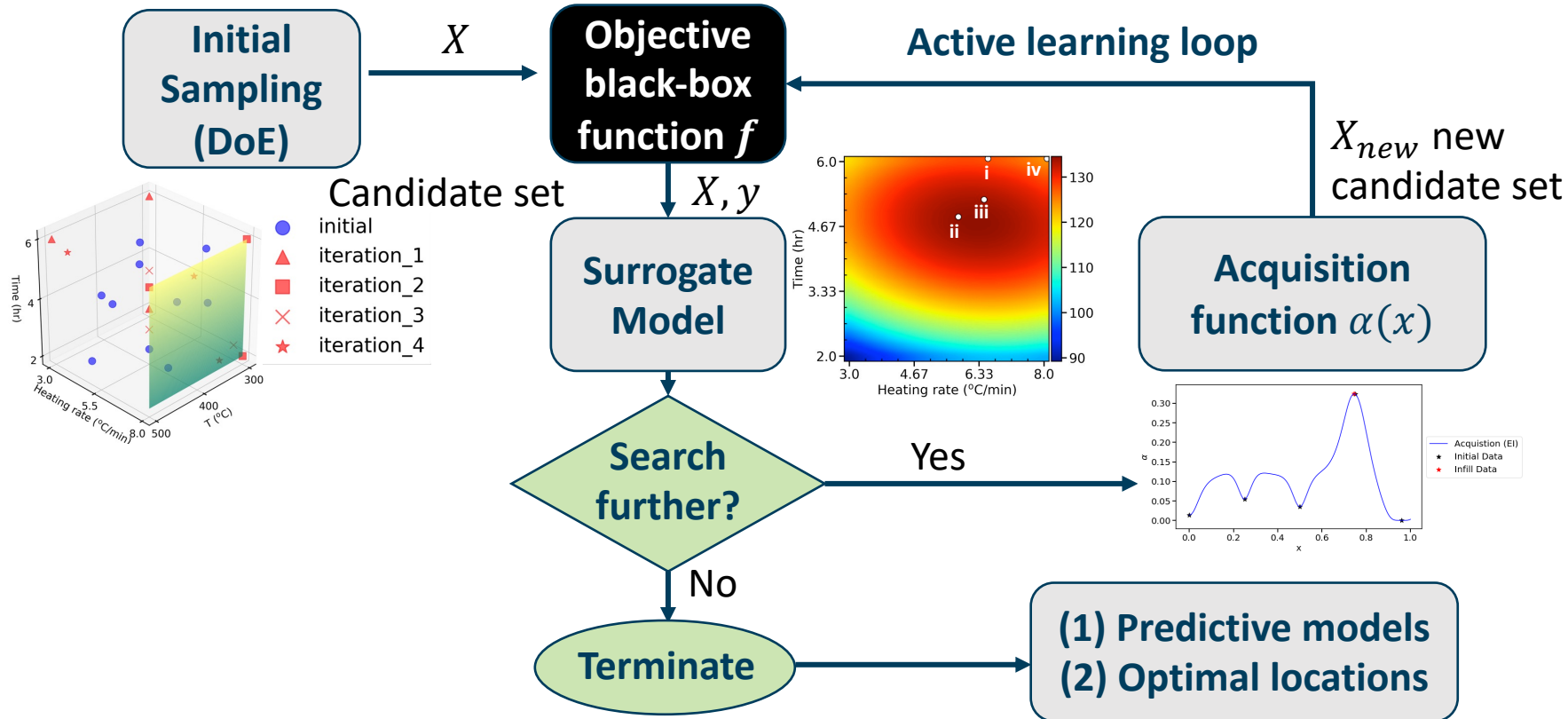
Use **active learning** to **reduce experimental (computational) cost** and **improve accuracy** of the surrogate model



[1] D.R. Jones, M. Schonlau, and W. J. Welch, J. Glob. Optim. **13**, 455 (1998).

[2] Settles, B. *Active Learning Literature Survey*. *Active Learning Literature Survey* (2009).

# Bayesian Optimization (BO)



# Bayesian Statistics

Posterior	Data	Prior
$P(f D)$	$\propto$	$P(D f)P(f)$



## Thomas Bayes

- Initial sampling can be generated through design of experiments (DoE)
- The surrogate model is typically a Gaussian Process (GP)
- Next experiment points are generated by acquisition functions (exploration vs. exploitation)

## Gaussian Process (GP)

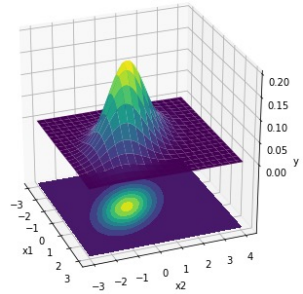
= Mean function  $\mu_0(X)$  + Kernel (covariance) function  $\Sigma_0(X, X')$

Constant  $\mu_0(x) = \mu$

Polynomial  $\mu_0(x) = \mu + \sum_{i=1}^p \beta_i \Psi_i(x)$

Exponential (Gaussian)  $\Sigma_0(x, x') = \alpha_0 \exp(-\|x - x'\|^2)$

Matern  $\Sigma_0(x, x') = \alpha_0 \frac{2^{1-\nu}}{\Gamma(\nu)} \left( \sqrt{2\nu} \|x - x'\| \right)^\nu K_\nu(\sqrt{2\nu} \|x - x'\|)$



The hyperparameters are determined by maximizing the cost function – maximum likelihood estimate (MLE)

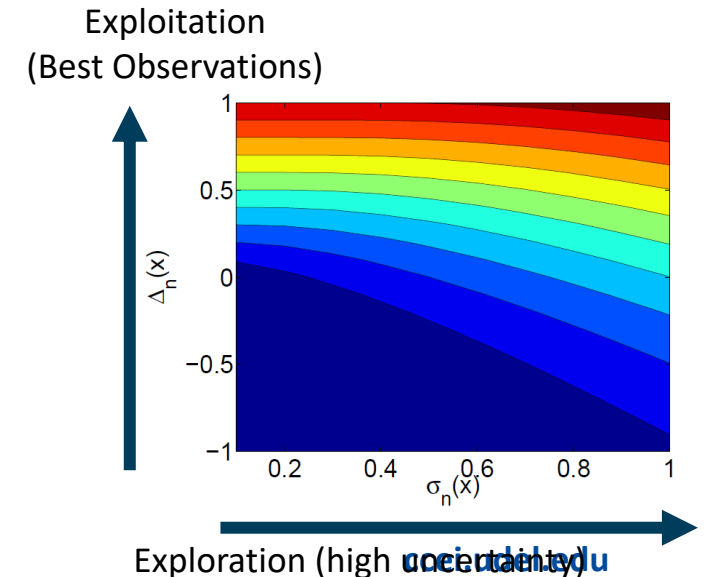
## Acquisition Function

= Controls the trade-off between **exploration** and **exploitation**

Expected improvement (EI)





Probability of improvement (PI)

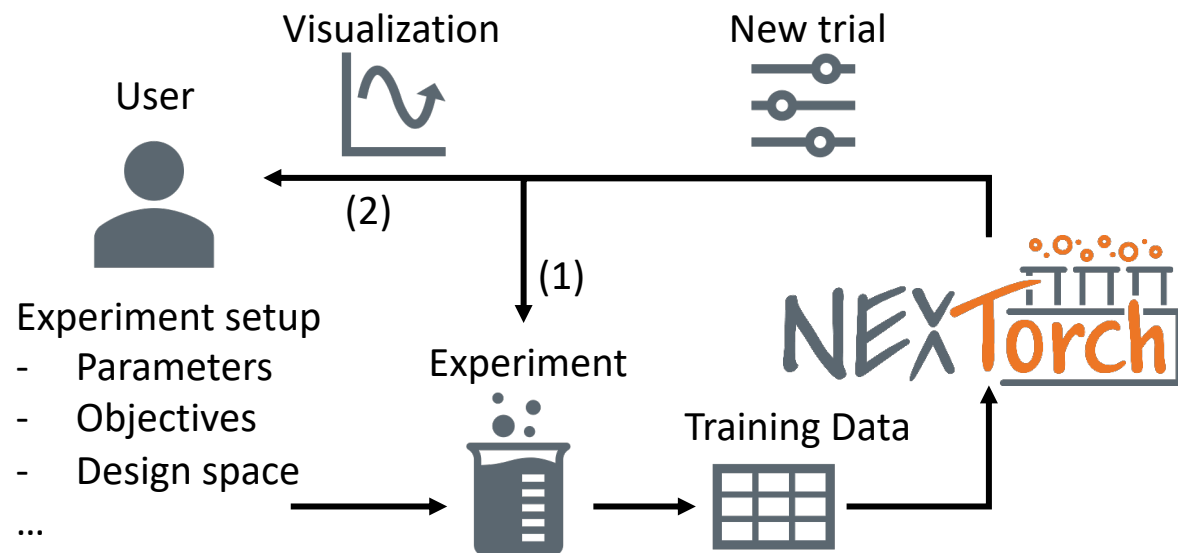
Upper confidence bound (UCB)



1 P.I. Frazier, 1 (2018). <http://arxiv.org/abs/1807.02811>

2 C.E. Rasmussen and C.K.I. Williams, *Gaussian Processes for Machine Learning* (2000).

- Key dependencies:  python™  **pyDOE**  PyTorch  BoTorch  
pythonhosted.org/pyDOE/ pytorch.org botorch.org
- GPU acceleration, modern BO algorithms, visualization
- Connect BO implement to chemistry or engineering problems
  - (1) Automated optimization (good for computations);
  - (2) Human-in-the-loop optimization (good for laboratory experiments)



[1] **Y. Wang**, T. Chen, and D.G. Vlachos, J. Chem. Inf. Model. 61, 5312–5319 (2021).

GitHub: <https://github.com/VlachosGroup/nextorch>

Documentation: <https://nextorch.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>



# Online Documentation Page



The screenshot shows the top part of the NEX Torch documentation page. At the top is the NEX Torch logo with the word 'latest' underneath. Below the logo is a search bar labeled 'Search docs'. To the left is a dark sidebar with a list of navigation links. The links are grouped into sections: 'GETTING STARTED' (NEX Torch), 'USER DOCUMENTATION' (Introduction, Installation, Overview, Input and Output, Parameter, Design of Experiment, Data Type and Preprocessing, BoTorch Models and Functions, Experiment, Visualization, Examples), 'INTRO TO BO' (Key Concepts in BO, Applications of BO), 'API REFERENCE' (nextorch.io, nextorch.doe, nextorch.parameter, nextorch.utils, nextorch.bo, nextorch.plotting), and 'Appendix'. At the bottom of the sidebar is a 'Read the Docs' button and a version selector showing 'v: latest'.

» Welcome to nextorch's documentation!

[Edit on GitHub](#)

## Welcome to nextorch's documentation!

### Getting Started

- [NEX Torch](#)

### User Documentation

- [Introduction](#)
- [Installation](#)
- [Overview](#)
- [Input and Output](#)
- [Parameter](#)
- [Design of Experiment](#)
- [Data Type and Preprocessing](#)
- [BoTorch Models and Functions](#)
- [Experiment](#)
- [Visualization](#)
- [Examples](#)

### Intro to BO

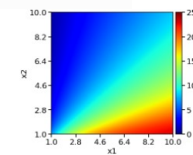
- [Key Concepts in BO](#)
- [Applications of BO](#)

### API Reference

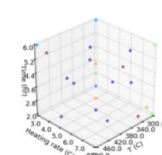
- [nextorch.io](#)
- [nextorch.doe](#)
- [nextorch.parameter](#)
- [nextorch.utils](#)
- [nextorch.bo](#)
- [nextorch.plotting](#)

### Appendix

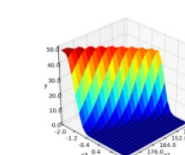
- NEX Torch modules and functions
- Tutorials with code examples
- Introduction to BO theory
- BO applications in literature



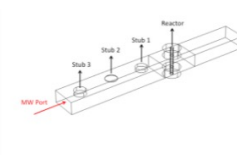
Example 3 - Langmuir  
Hinshelwood  
mechanism



Example 4 - Nitrogen-  
doped carbon catalysts



Example 5 - Plug flow  
reactor yield



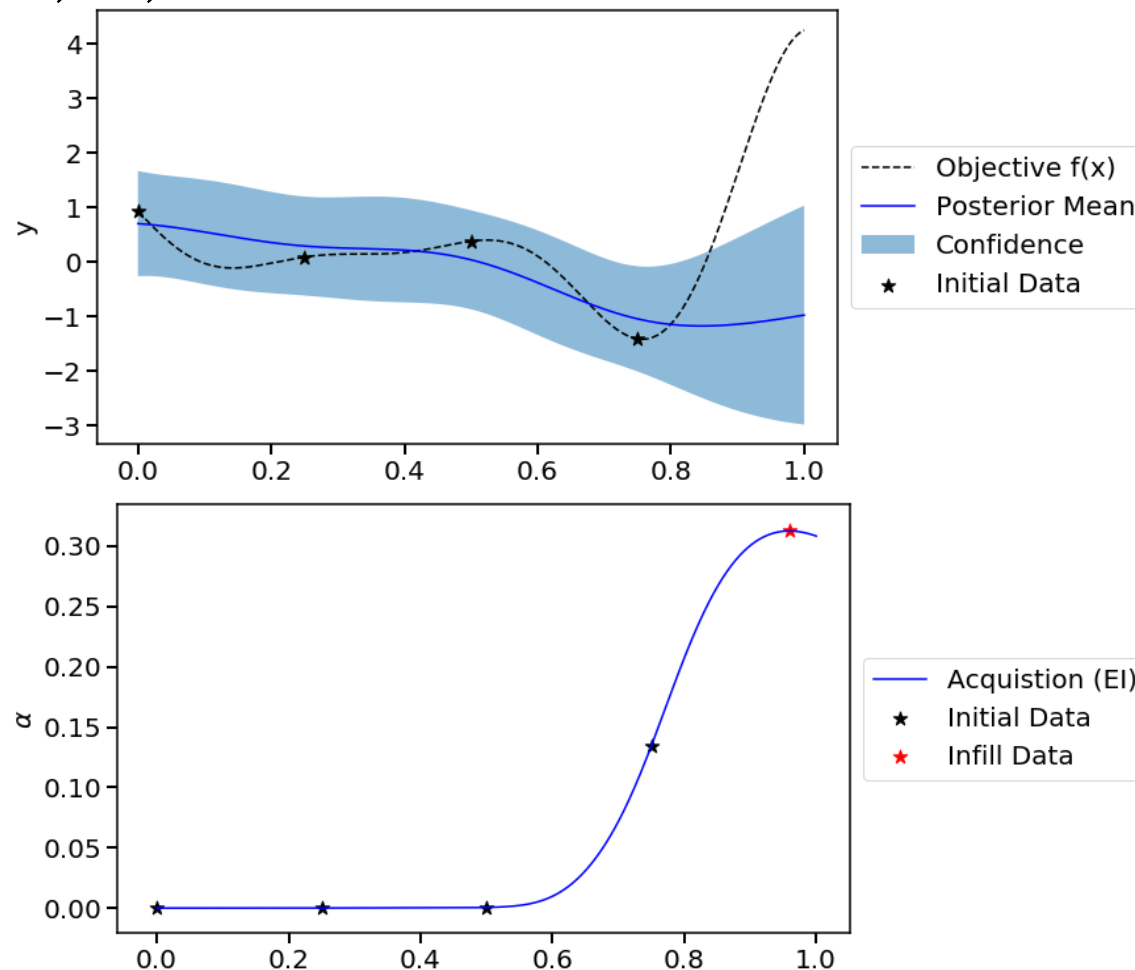
Example 8 - Stub tuner  
of the microwave cavity

- [1] E.O. Ebikade, et al, React. Chem. Eng. (2020).  
[2] T. Chen, et al, Ind. Eng. Chem. Res. 59, 10418 (2020).

<https://nextorch.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>



- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Starting from  $x = 0, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75$



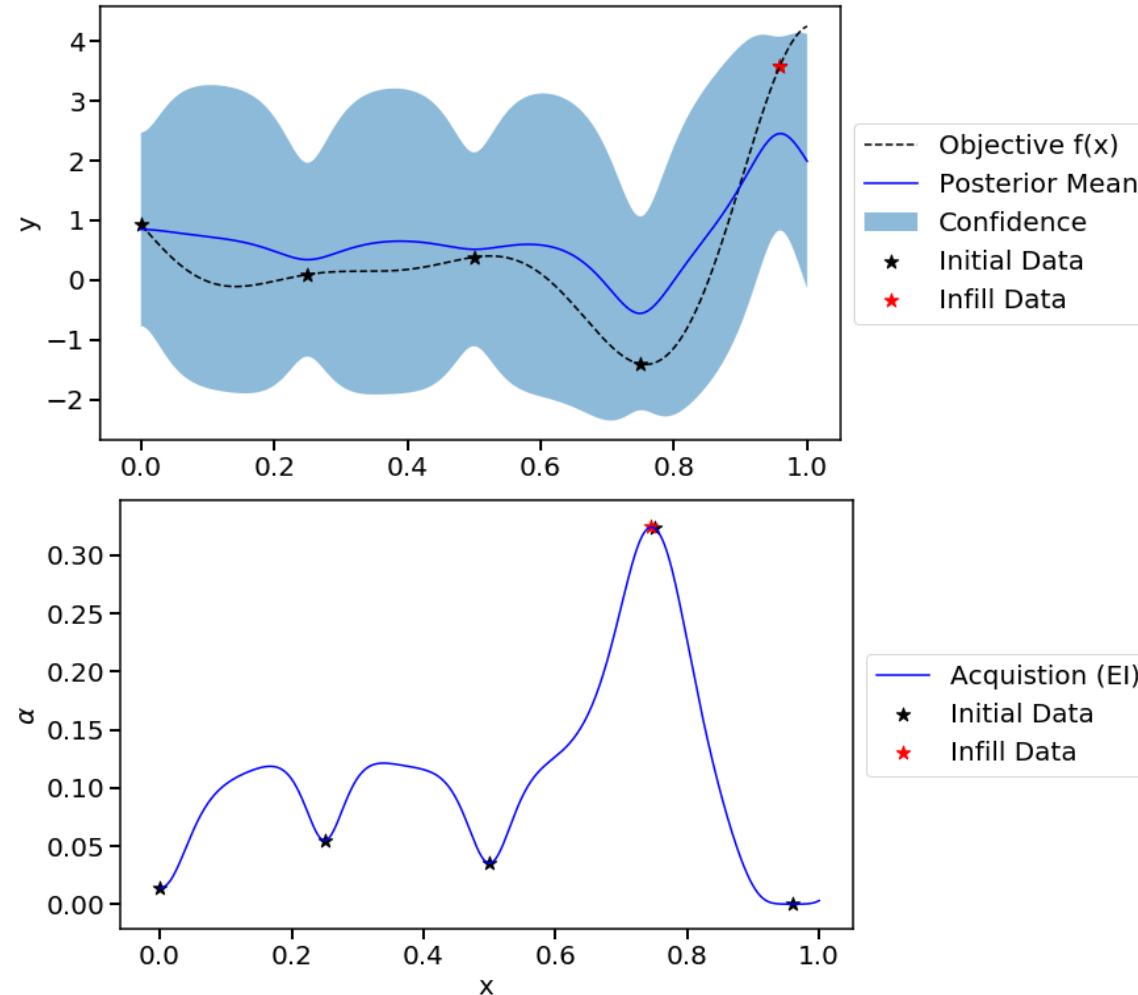
Demo instructions: [https://github.com/VlachosGroup/vlab\\_workshop\\_2023/tree/main/NEXTorch](https://github.com/VlachosGroup/vlab_workshop_2023/tree/main/NEXTorch)

Notebook location: [https://github.com/VlachosGroup/nextorch/blob/main/examples/notebooks/01\\_simple\\_1d.ipynb](https://github.com/VlachosGroup/nextorch/blob/main/examples/notebooks/01_simple_1d.ipynb)



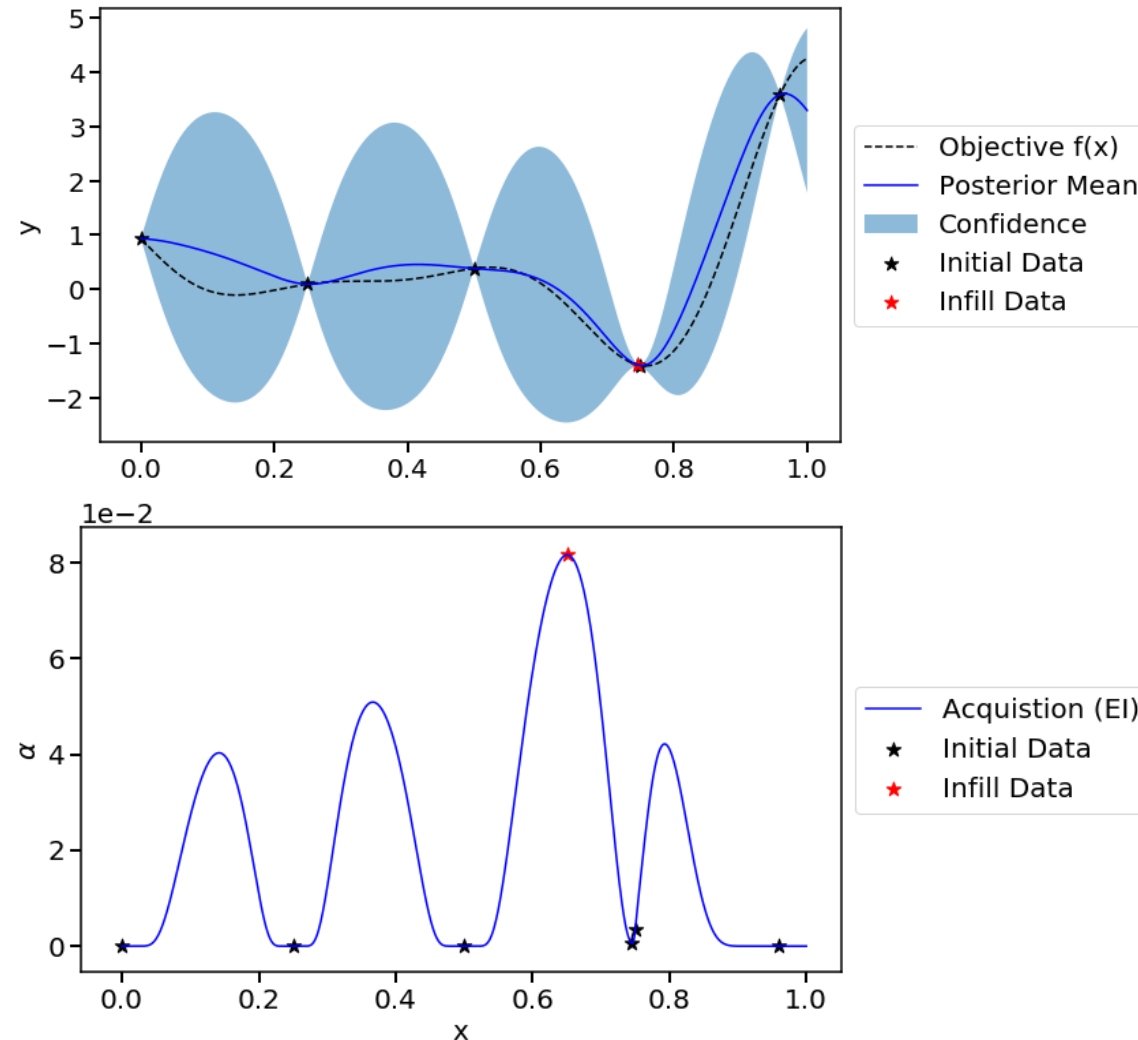
# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 1, acquisition function – expected improvement (EI)



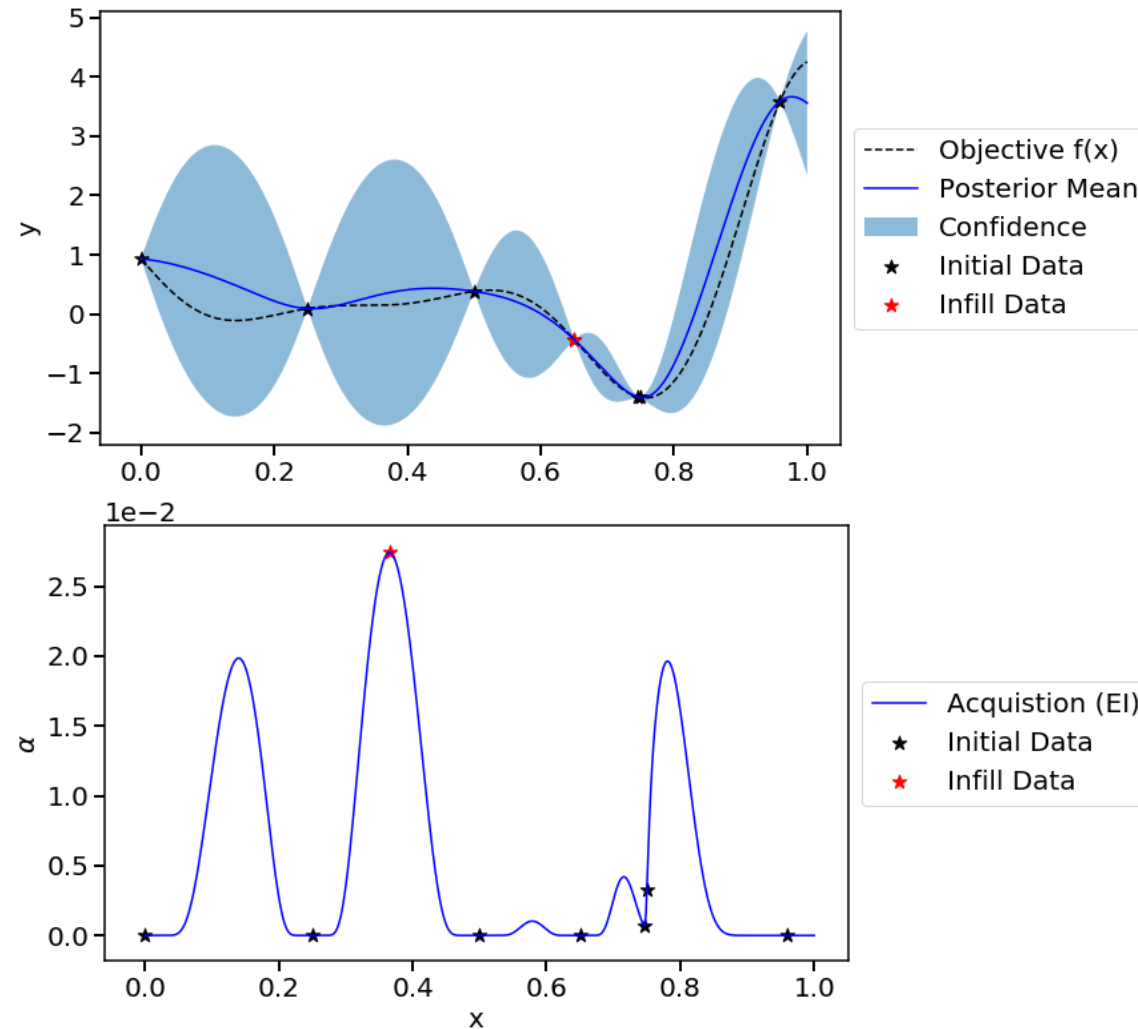
# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 2



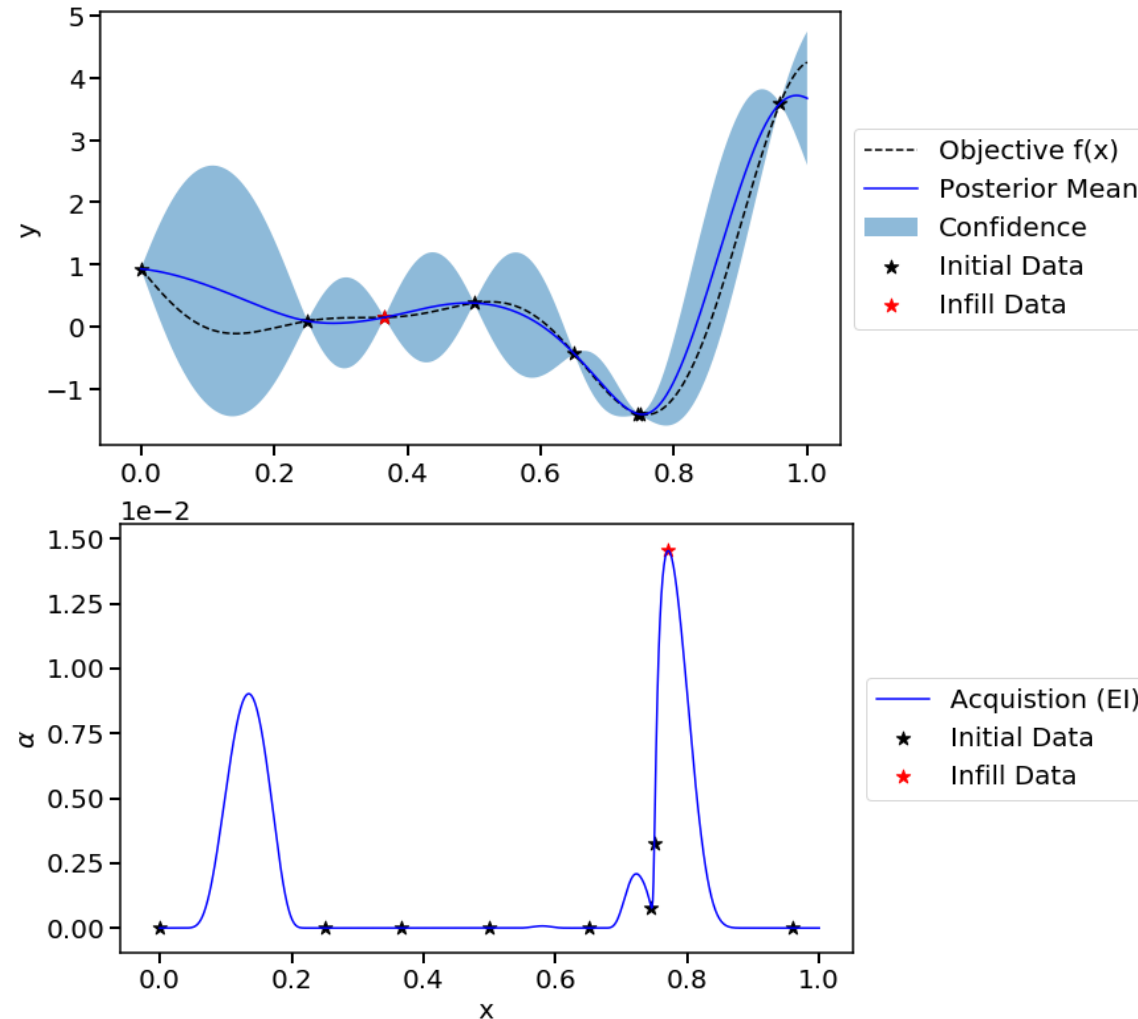
# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 3



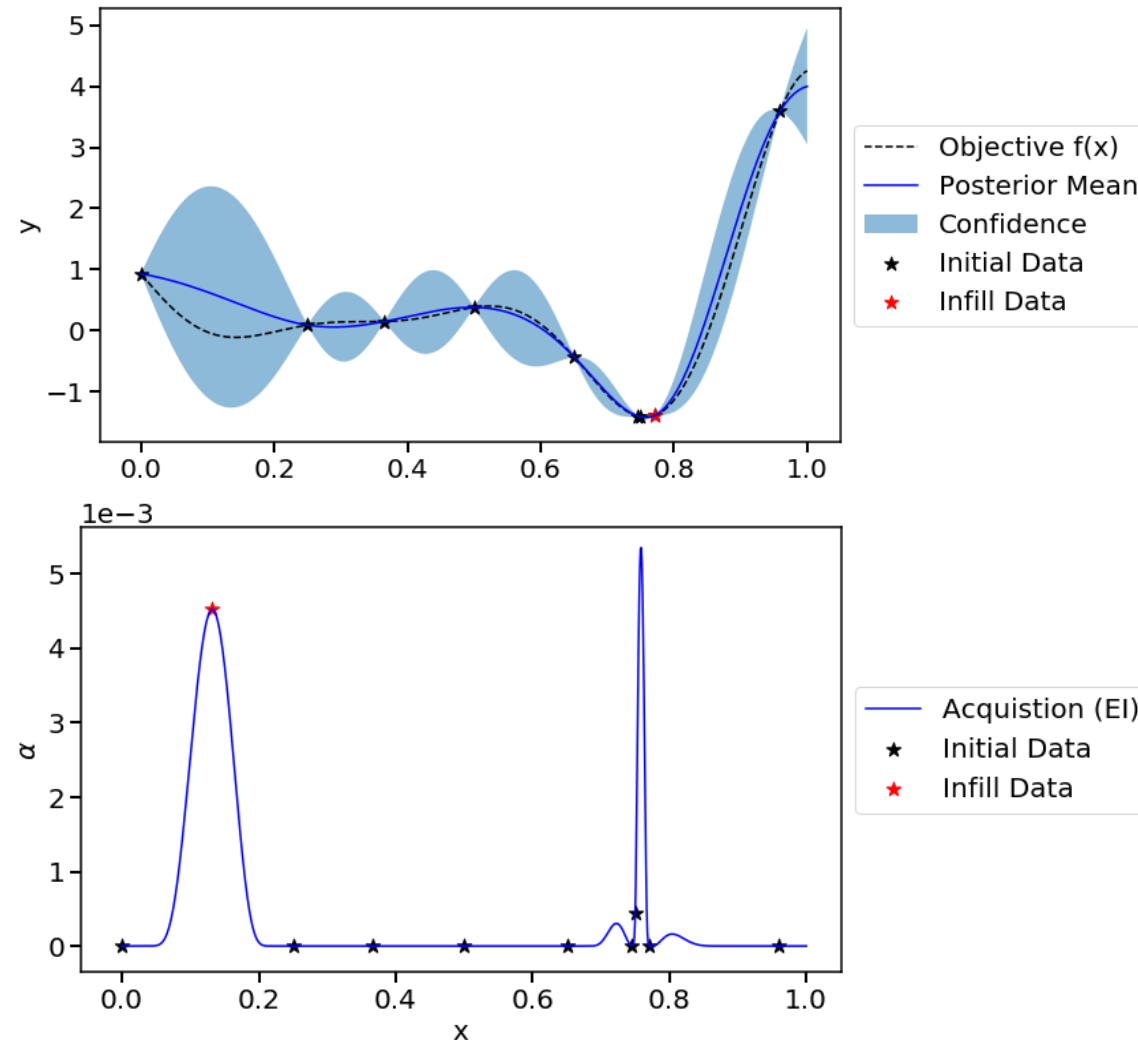
# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 4

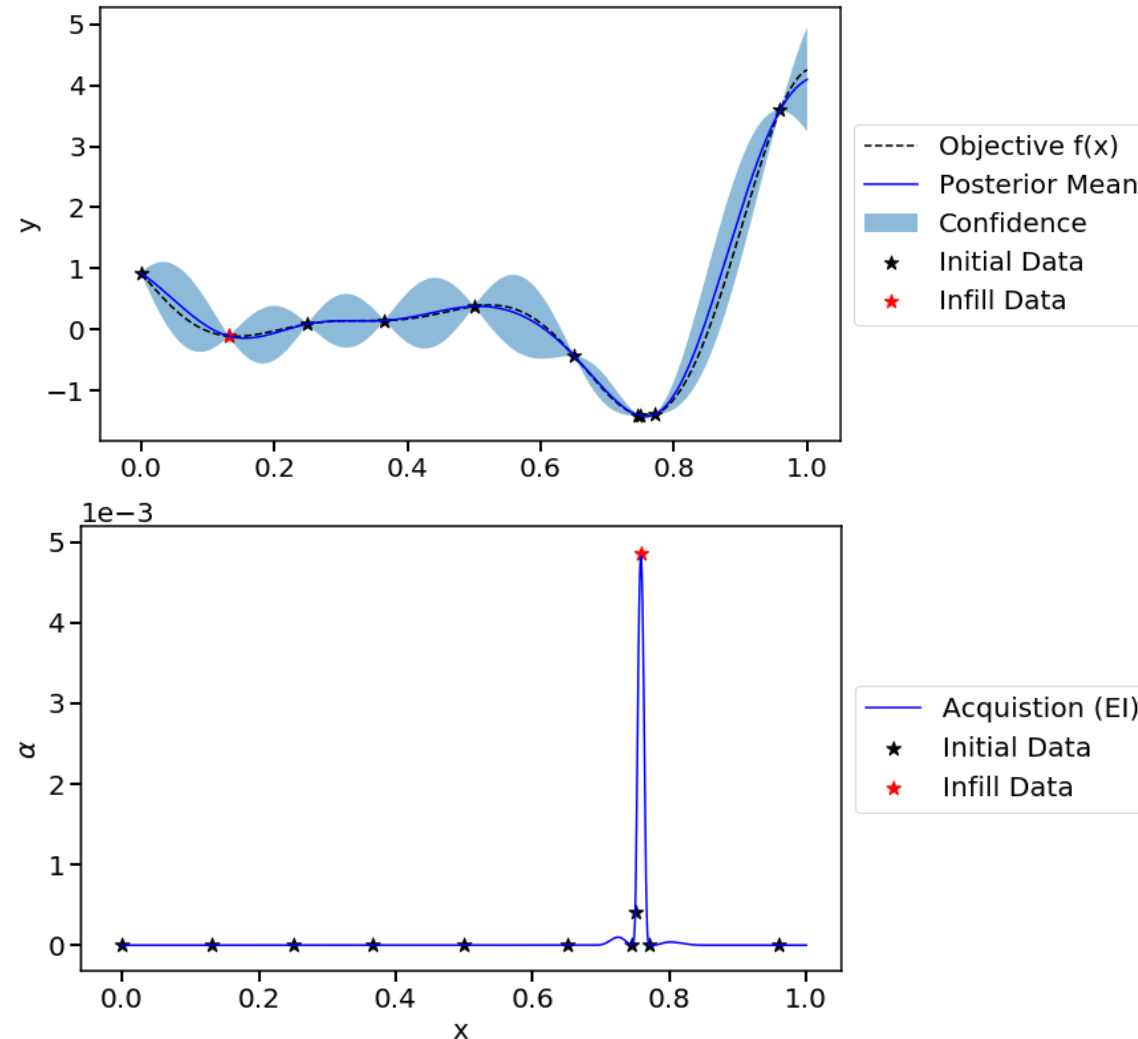


# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 5



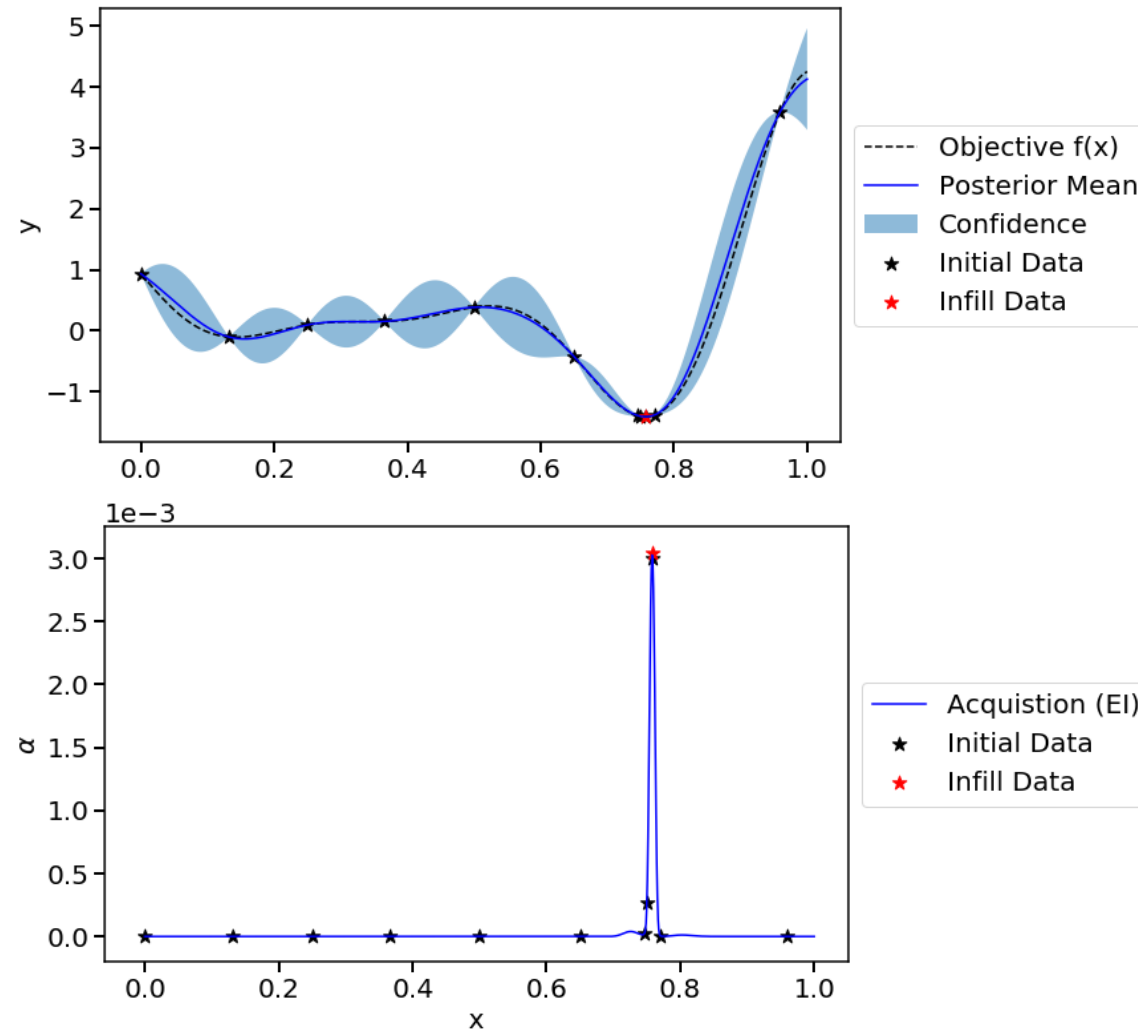
- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 6





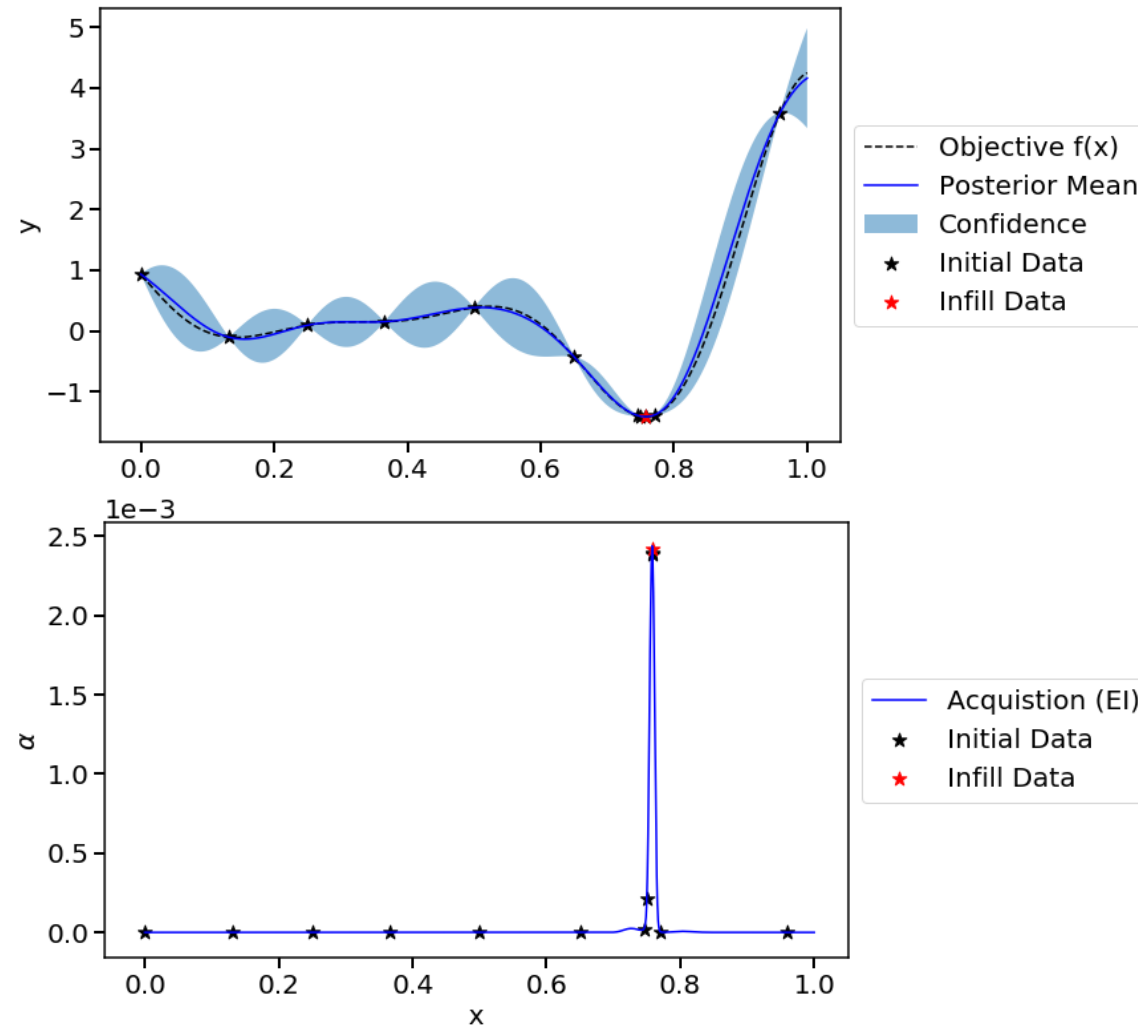
# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 7



# BO Examples in 1D

- Find the minima of  $f(x) = (6x - 2)^2 \sin(12x - 4); x \in [0,1]$
- Iteration 8

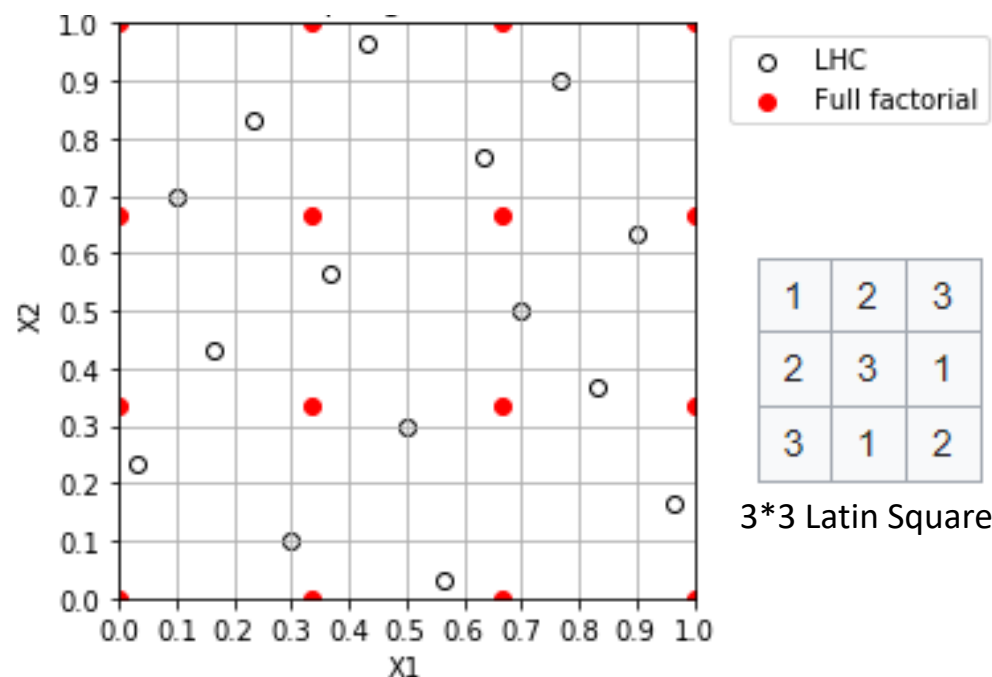


# Optimized Latin Hypercube design (LHS)

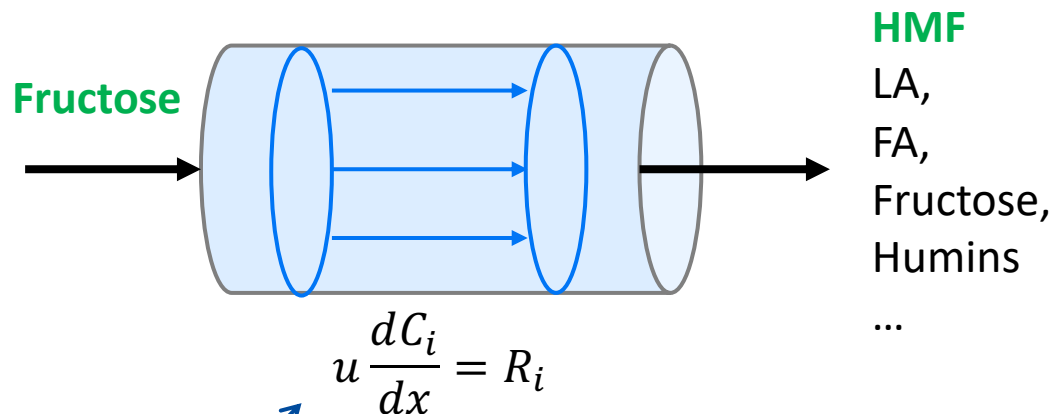
Initial Sampling plan for high dimensional space:

- Monte Carlo sampling
- Maximize the distance between points
- Maximize the information gain in the sampling space

**2D example (level = 4, 16 samples)**



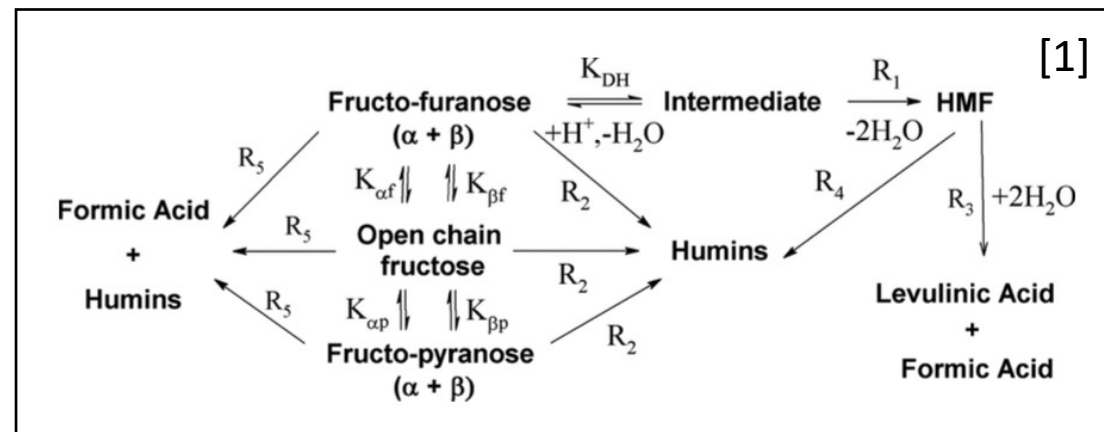
# Case Study – HMF Yield Optimization



$$\begin{aligned} R_{FRU} &= -r_1 - r_2 - r_3 \\ R_{HMF} &= r_1 - r_3 - r_4 \\ R_{LA} &= r_3 \\ R_{FA} &= r_3 + r_5 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} r_1 &= k_1(T) C_{Fru} \left( \frac{K_{DH}(T) C_{H+}}{C_{H_2O}} \right) \\ r_2 &= k_2(T) C_{Fru} C_{H+} \\ r_3 &= k_3(T) C_{HMF} C_{H+} \\ r_4 &= k_4(T) C_{HMF} C_{H+} \\ r_5 &= k_5(T) C_{Fru} C_{H+} \end{aligned}$$

- Fructose dehydrated to produce valuable platform chemical, HMF.
- It's important to maximize the HMF yield ( $Y$ ) to improve productivity and reduce downstream costs.
- Three key input parameters ( $X$ ) include the reaction temperature, pH, and residence time.





## Step 1 - Define Parameter Space and Sampling Plan

### Code example 1. Import, Parameter Space and DOE

```
from nextorch import bo, doe
import PFR_yield

X_name_list = ['T', 'pH', 'log10(tf)']
Y_name = 'Yield %'
var_names = X_name_list + [Y_name]

# Objective function
objective_func = PFR_yield

# Set the operating range for each parameter
X_ranges = [[140, 200],
             [0, 1],
             [-2, 2]]

# Get the information of the design space
n_dim = len(X_name_list) # the dimension of inputs
n_objective = 1 # the dimension of outputs

# Latin hypercube design with 10 initial points
n_init_lhs = 10
X_init_lhs = doe.latin_hypercube(n_dim=n_dim, n_points=n_init_lhs, seed=1)
# Get the initial responses
Y_init_lhs = bo.eval_objective_func(X_init_lhs, X_ranges, objective_func)
```

- The ranges of temperature, pH, and residence time are defined.
  - Temperature: 140 – 200 [°C]
  - pH: 0 – 1 [-]
  - Residence time: 0.01 – 100 [min]
- Three different sampling plans are tested.
  - Full factorial
  - Latin Hypercube
  - Completely random



## Step 2 – Initialize the Object and Do the Optimization

### Code example 2. *Experiment* Object

```
# Set its name, the files will be saved under the folder with the same name
Exp_lhs = bo.Experiment('PFR_yield_lhs')
# Import the initial data
Exp_lhs.input_data(X_init_lhs, Y_init_lhs, X_ranges=X_ranges, unit_flag=True)
# Set the optimization specifications
Exp_lhs.set_optim_specs(objective_func=objective_func,
                        maximize=True)
```

### Code example 3. Optimization Loops

```
# Set the number of iterations
n_total = 64
n_trials_lhs = n_total - n_init_lhs
for i in range(n_trials_lhs):
    # Generate the next experiment point
    X_new, X_new_real, acq_func = Exp_lhs.generate_next_point()
    # Get the response at this point
    Y_new_real = objective_func(X_new_real)
    # Retrain the model by input the next point into Exp object
    Exp_lhs.run_trial(X_new, X_new_real, Y_new_real)

# lhs optimum
y_opt_lhs, X_opt_lhs, index_opt_lhs = Exp_lhs.get_optim()
```

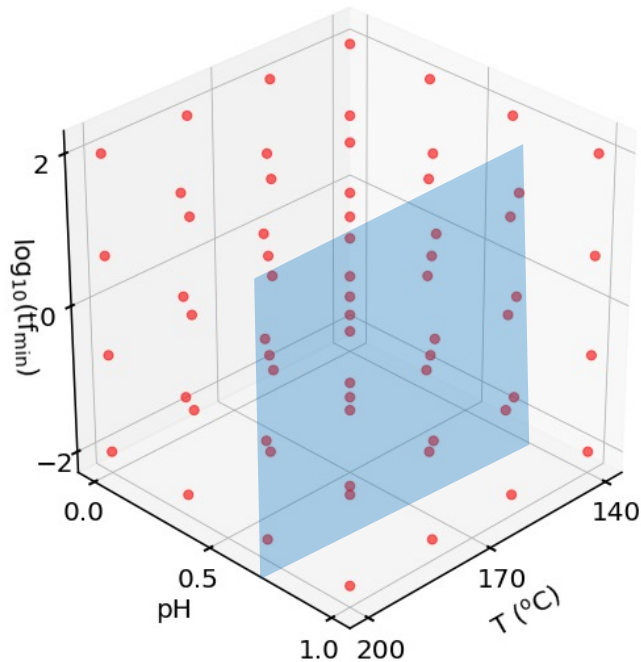
- Set the objective function as PFR model and the goal as maximization
- Perform the optimization using an explicit (human-in-the-loop) format
  - Users can access the values of parameters and responses in real units.



# Sampling Plans

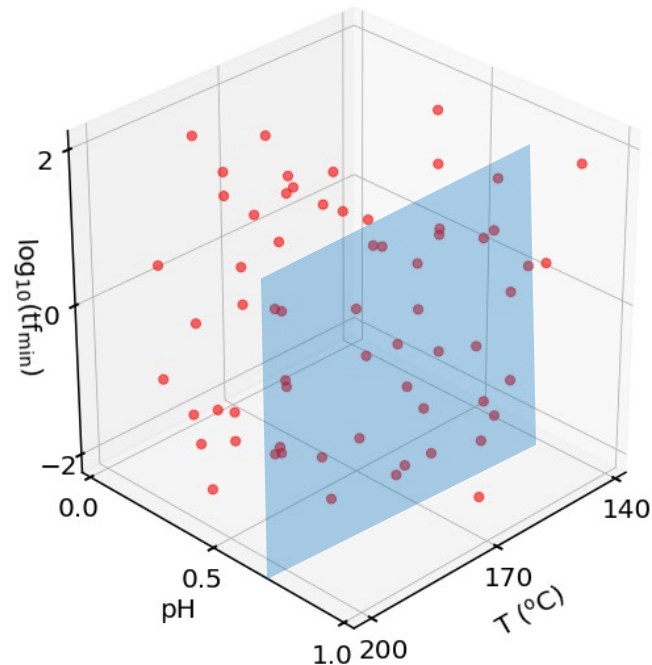
## Design 1

Full factorial (level = 4)  
64 samples



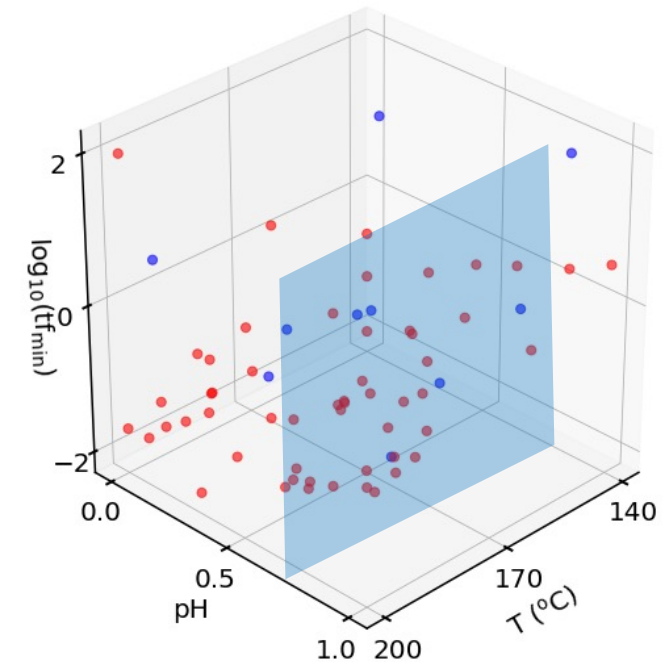
## Design 2

64 random samples



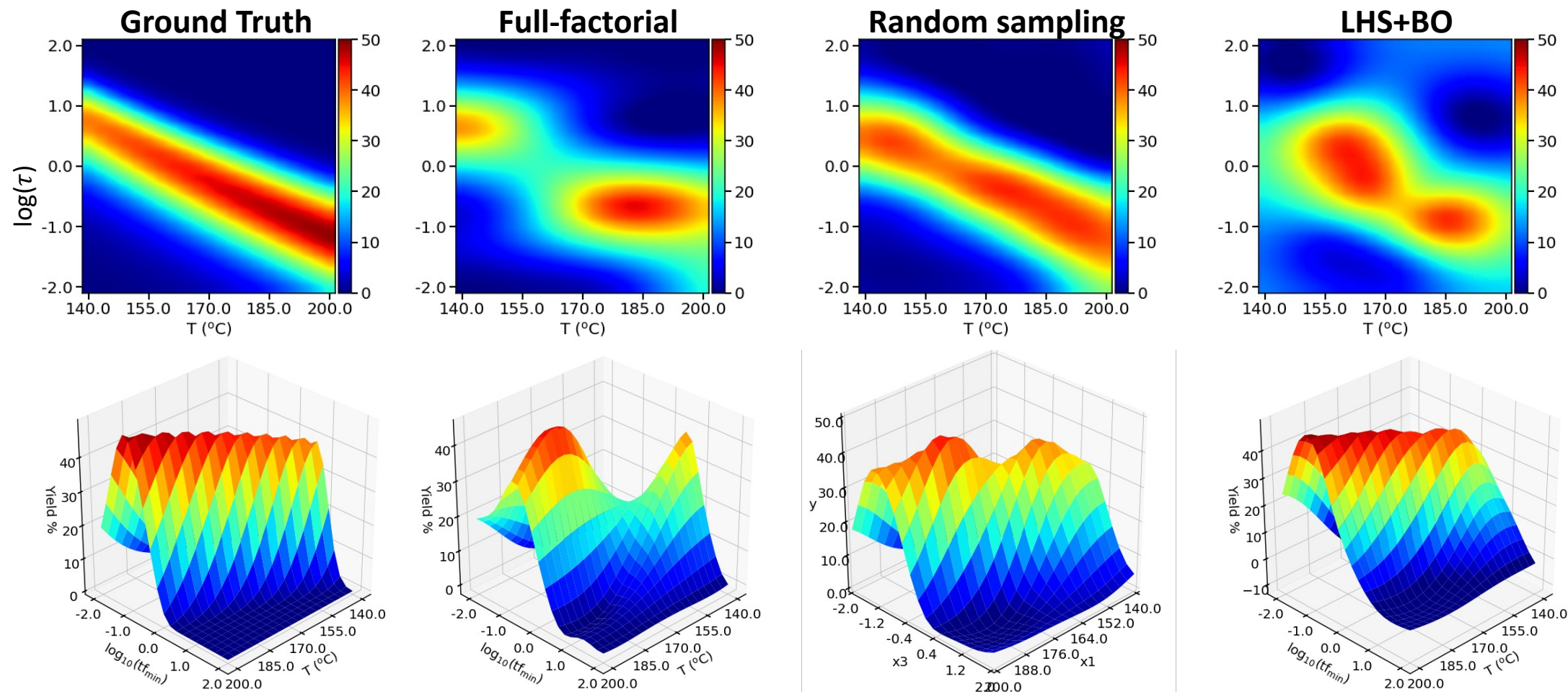
## Design 3

10 samples from Latin hypercube (LHS)  
54 samples from 54 BO loops,  
Acquisition function – EI



- LHS is an efficient space-filling, Monte Carlo sampling method
- We compare response surfaces of HMF yield at **pH=0.7** with varying temperature and residence time

# Surrogate Model Performance

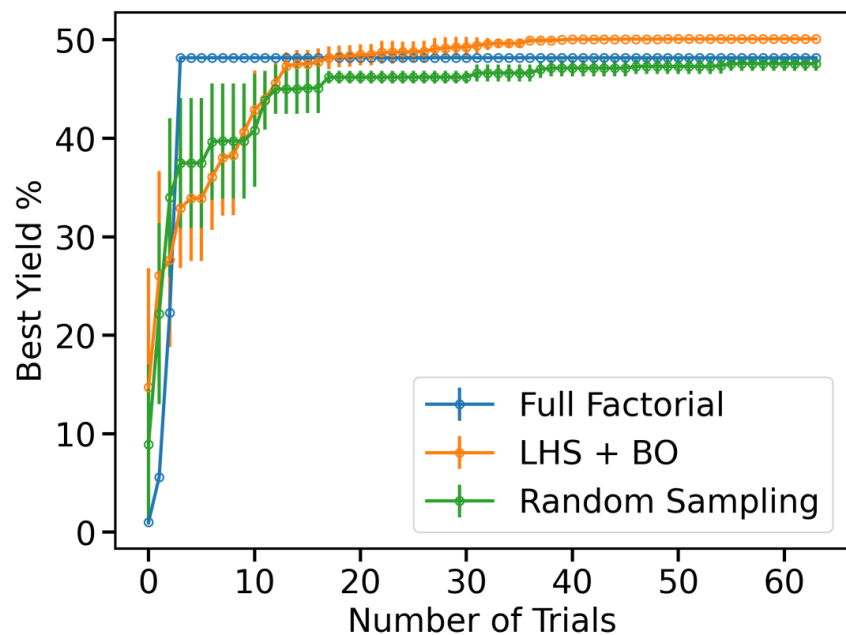


- LHS+BO produces more accurate surrogate models

# Single-, Multi-Objective Optimization

## Maximize HMF Yield

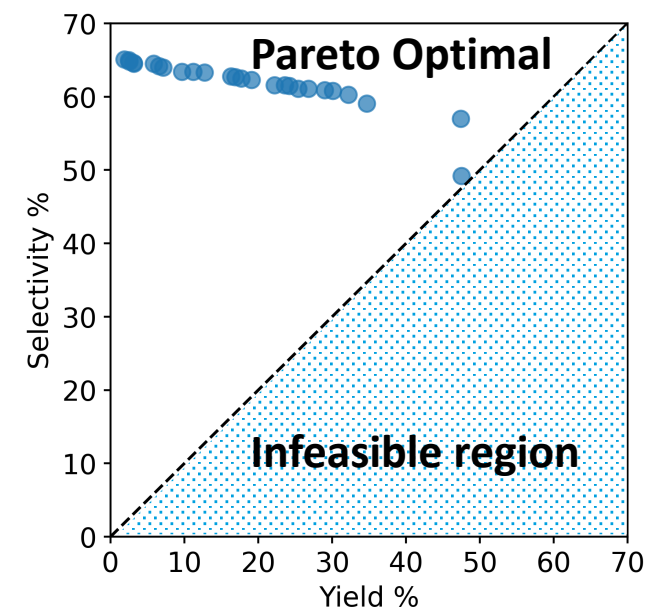
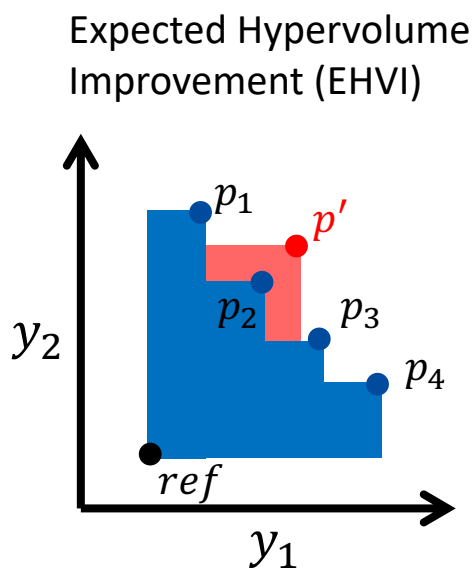
- Optimal condition: Temperature – 200 ° C  
pH – 0.705  
Residence time – 0.076 min (4.56 s)



- LHS+BO locates a higher optimal value compared to others
- The runtime of core BO functions completes in seconds per iteration on a laptop CPU
- NEXTorch requires little code and reduces the time or materials for **computations** or **lab experiments**

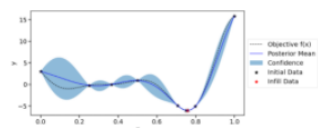
## Co-maximize HMF Yield and Selectivity

- HMF Yield = Fructose Conversion  $\times$  HMF Selectivity
- Fructose Conversion  $\leq 100\%$

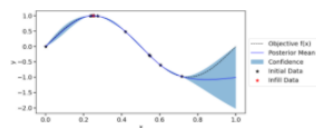


# More Examples

## Basic API Usage

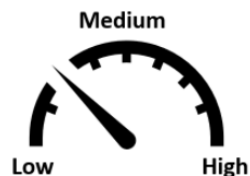


Example 1 - Simple 1d nonlinear function



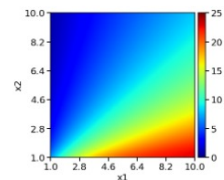
Example 2 - Sin(x) 1d function

## Mixed Type Parameters

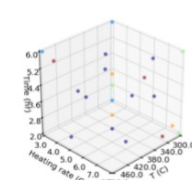


Example 10 - Plug flow reactor yield with mixed type inputs

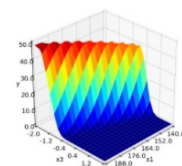
## Applications in Reaction Engineering



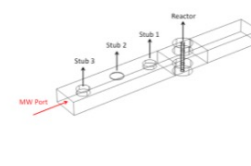
Example 3 - Langmuir-Hinshelwood mechanism



Example 4 - Nitrogen-doped carbon catalysts

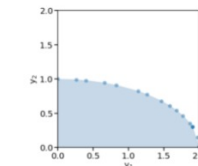


Example 5 - Plug flow reactor yield

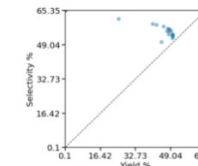


Example 8 - Stub tuner of the microwave cavity

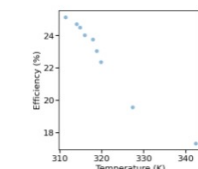
## Multi-Objective Optimization(MOO)



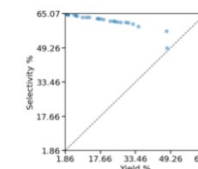
Example 6 - Multi-objective optimization for an ellipse function



Example 7 - Multi-objective optimization for plug flow reactor



Example 9 - Multi-objective optimization for Microwave operating conditions



Example 11 - Multi-objective optimization for plug flow reactor