



南方科技大学  
SOUTH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OF CHINA

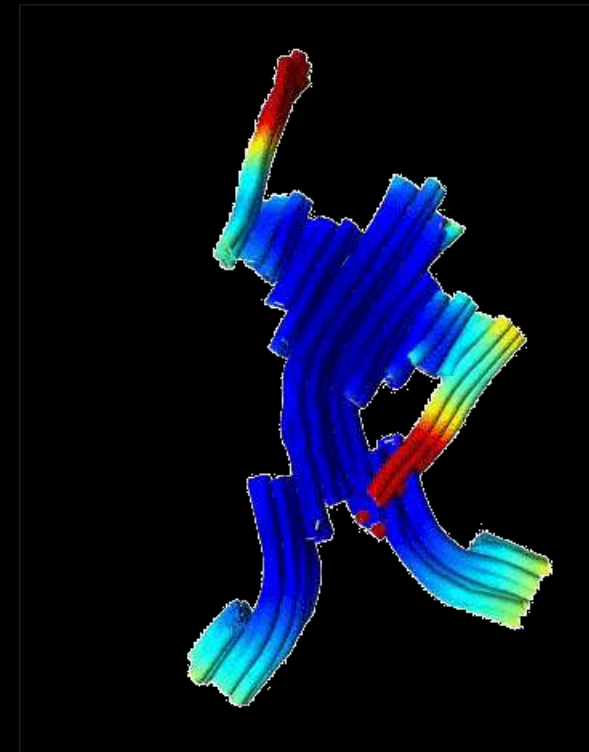
# Micro\Nano-robotics



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Southern University of Science and Technology 南方科技大学  
Micro/Nano-robotics Lab 微纳机器人实验室

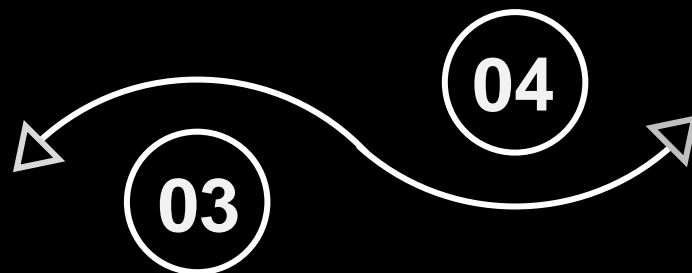


**Motivations**



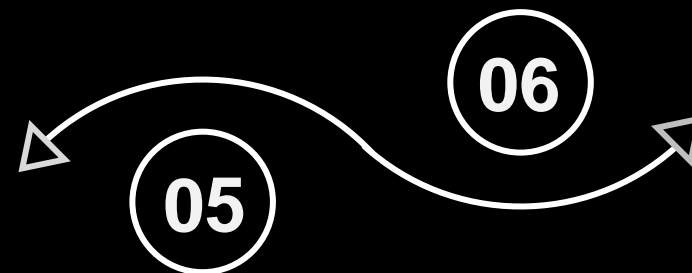
**Backgrounds**

**Objectives  
&  
Challenges**



**System  
Overview**

**Conclusion**



**Design  
&  
Experiments**

# Motivation

- **What makes micro/nano-robots unique?**
  - Small is Different

# Background: Robotics

*What about the  
Future ?*



*Atlas | Boston Dynamics®*



*Kiva System® | Amazon®*



*ASIMO | Honda®*



*<West World>*



*Phantom | DJI®*



*da Vinci Surgical System | Intuitive Surgical®*



*Soft Robotic Fish | MIT, R.K.Katzschmann et al.*



*<Transformers>*



*Industrial robot | FANUC®*



*Mars Rover | Nasa*

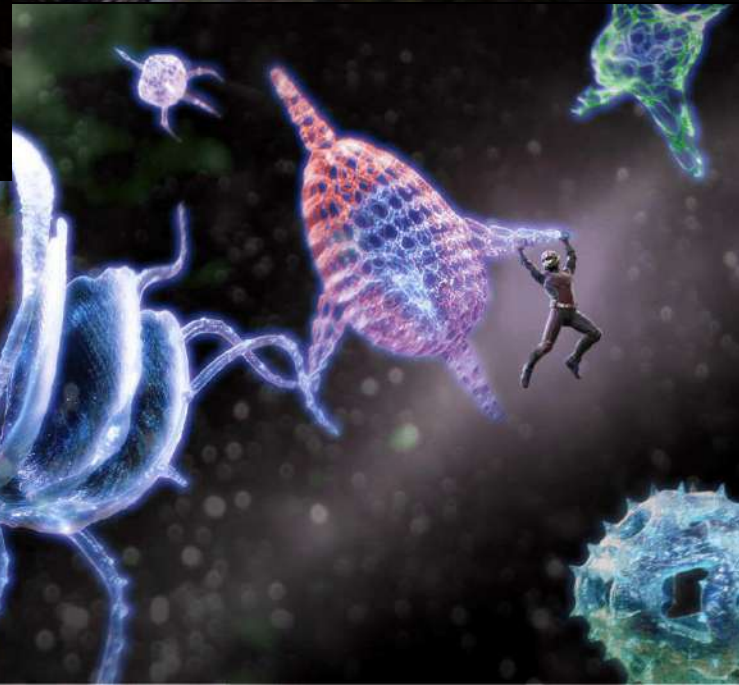


*DARPA Warrior Web Exosuit | Ekso Bionics®*



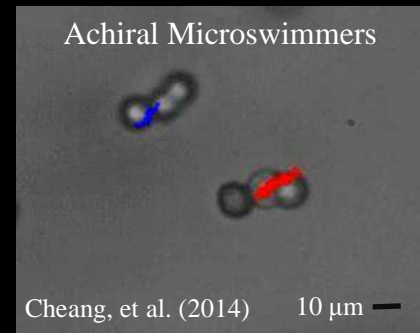
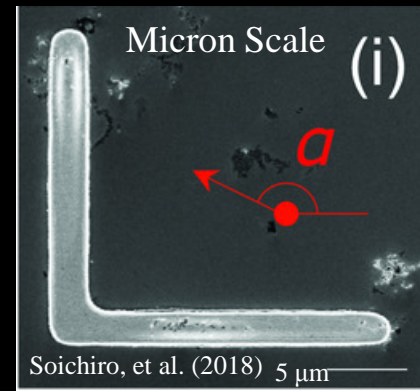
*< Alita: Battle Angel >*





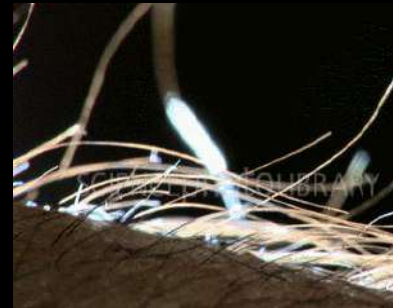
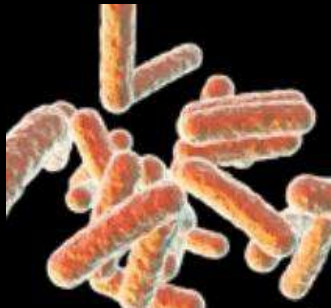
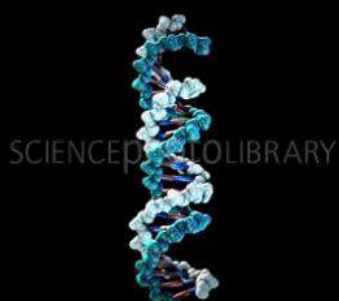
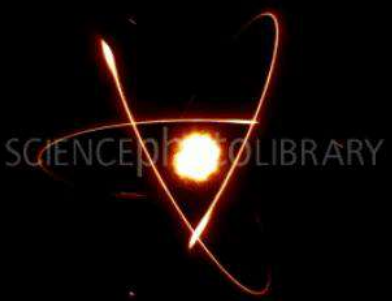
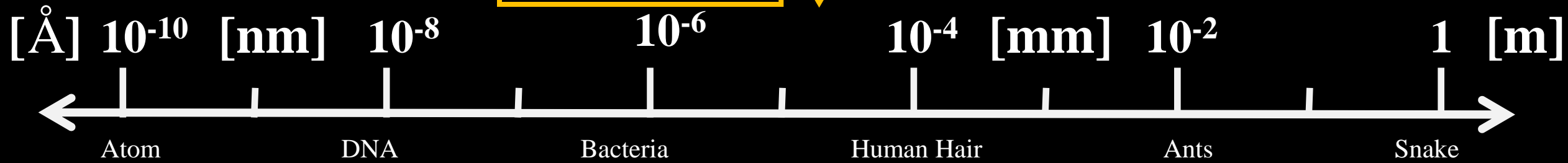
# Background

What are  
micro-robots ?



## • Micro-robotics

- Micron Scale ( $10 \sim 1000 \mu\text{m}$ , ( $\mu\text{m} \sim \text{mm}$ ))
- Micro-fabrication
- Micro-manipulation
- .....



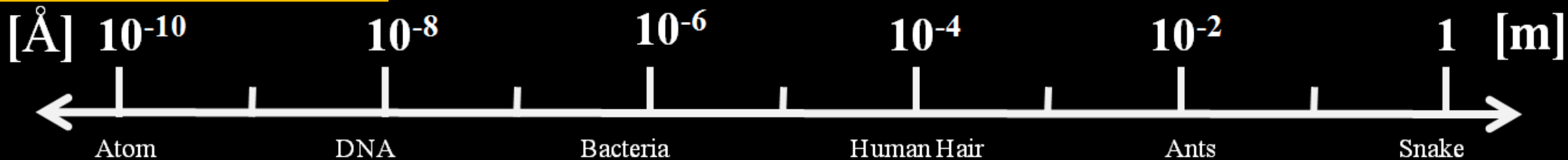
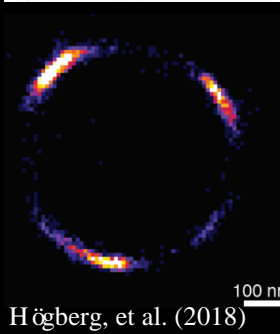
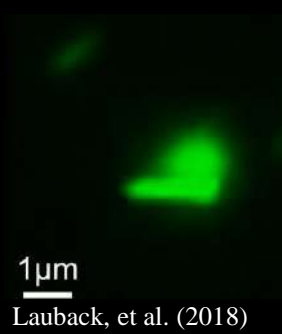
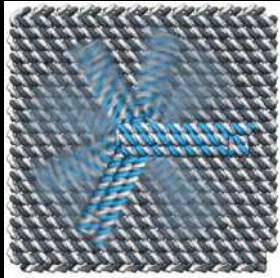
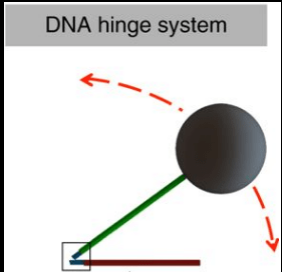


# Background

What are  
nano-robots ?

- Nano-robotics

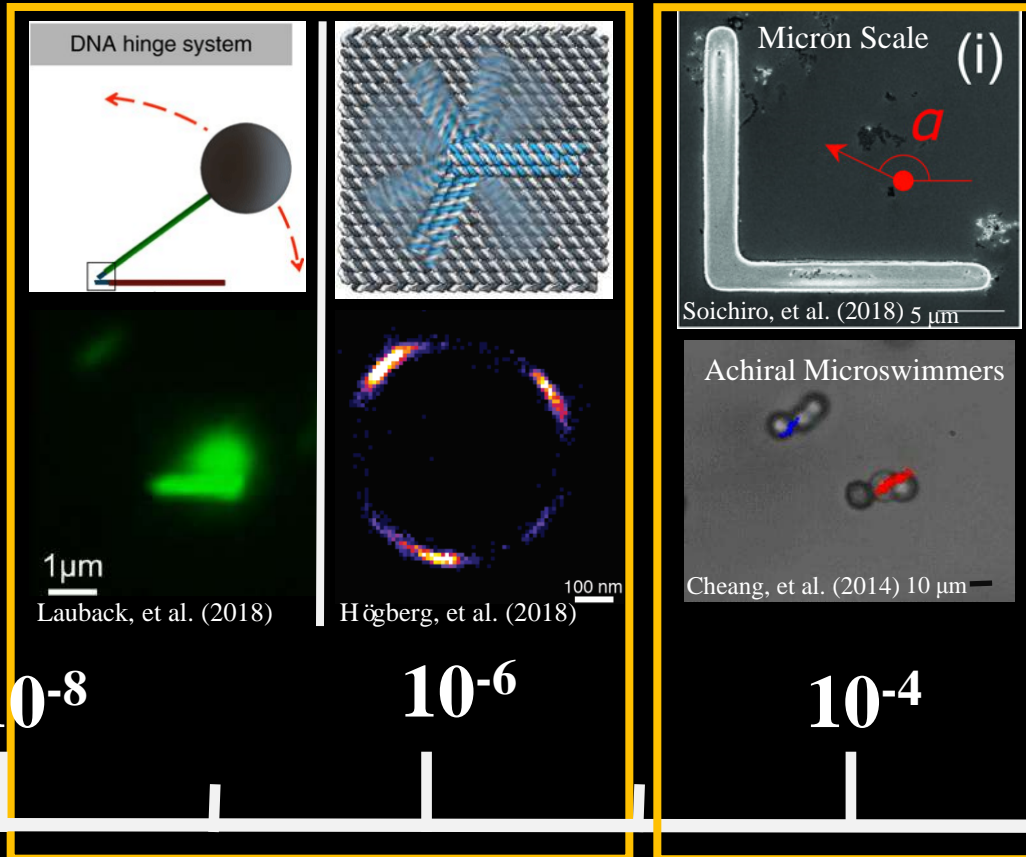
- Nano Scale (10 nm ~ 10  $\mu$ m, (nm ~  $\mu$ m))
- Nano-fabrication
- Nano-manipulation
- .....



# Background

## What are micro/nano-robots ?

- Nano-robotics
- Nano Scale  
(10 nm ~ 10  $\mu\text{m}$ ,  
(nm ~  $\mu\text{m}$ ))
- Nano-fabrication
- Nano-manipulation
- .....



- Micro-robotics
- Micron Scale  
(10 ~ 1000  $\mu\text{m}$ ,  
( $\mu\text{m}$  ~ mm))
- Micro-fabrication
- Micro-manipulation
- .....

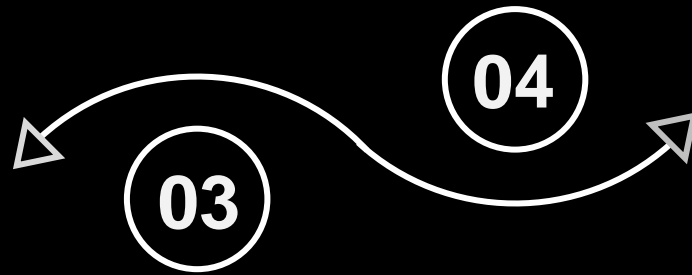


## Motivations



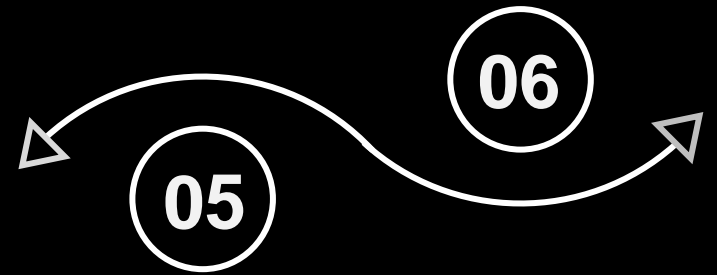
Backgrounds

## Objectives & Challenges

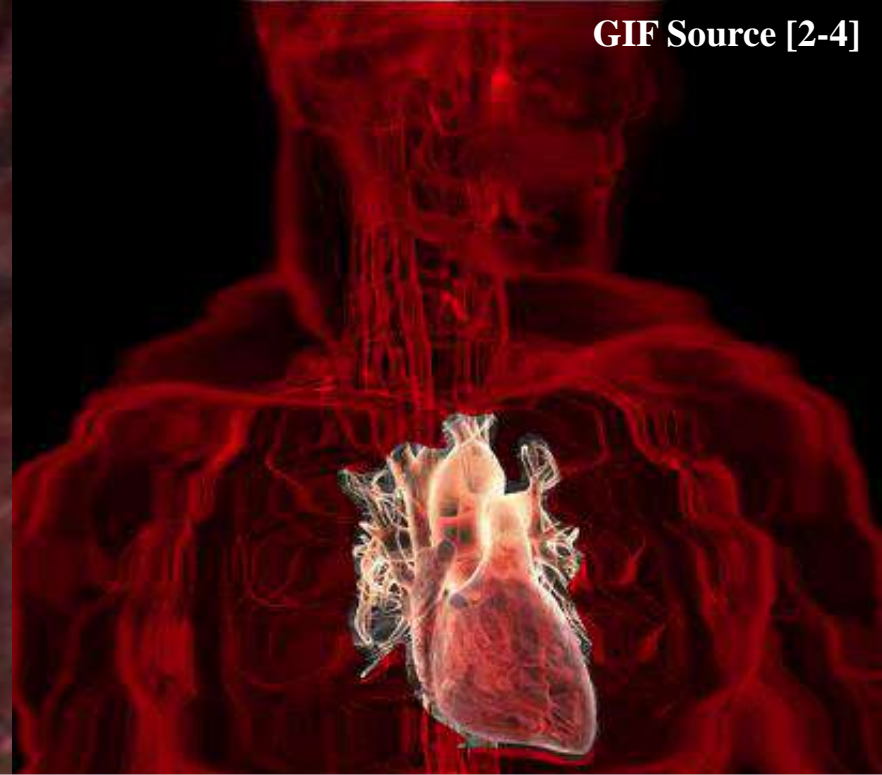
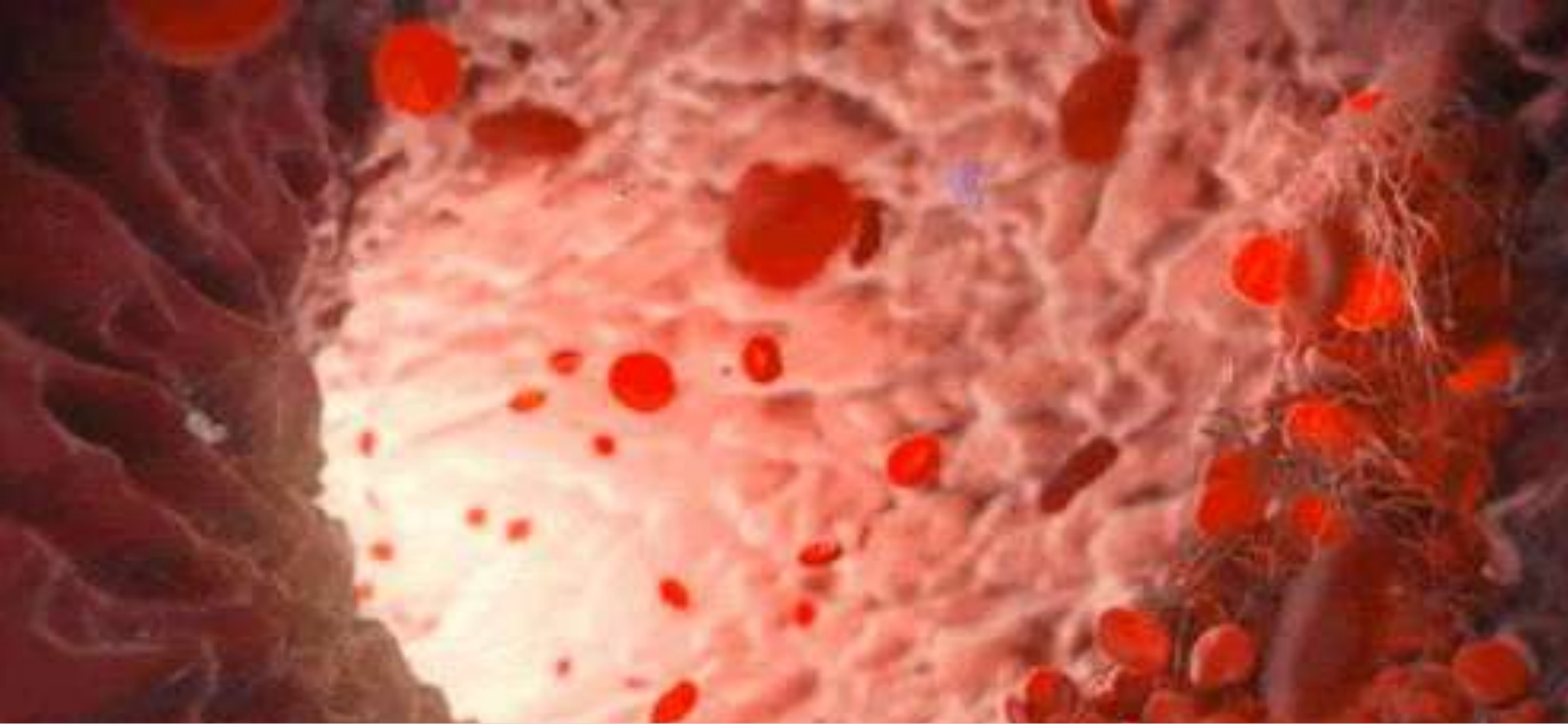


System  
Overview

## Conclusion

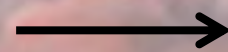


Design  
&  
Experiments



## Challenges

- Complex Environments



- Confined Space



- Low Efficiency, Time Consuming Task



## Requirements

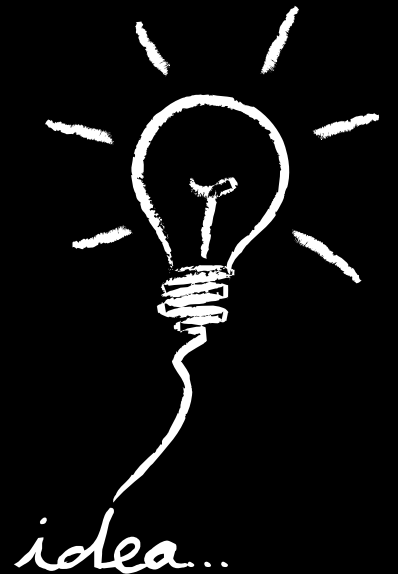
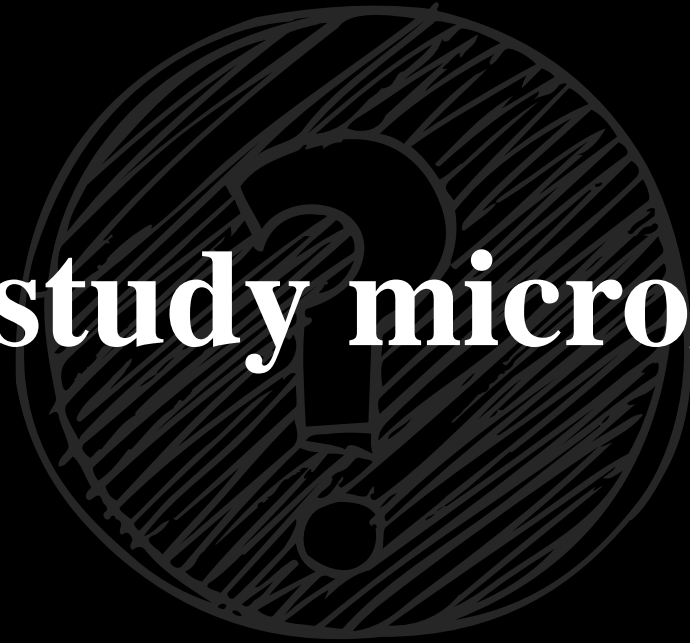
- Precise Magnetic Control

- Small Scale Size, Deformable

- Collaborative Swarm

# Motivation

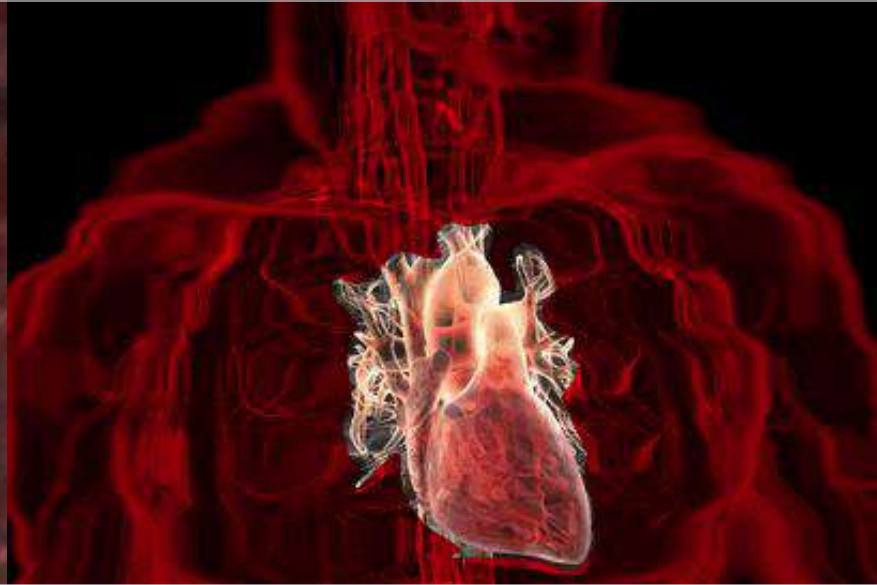
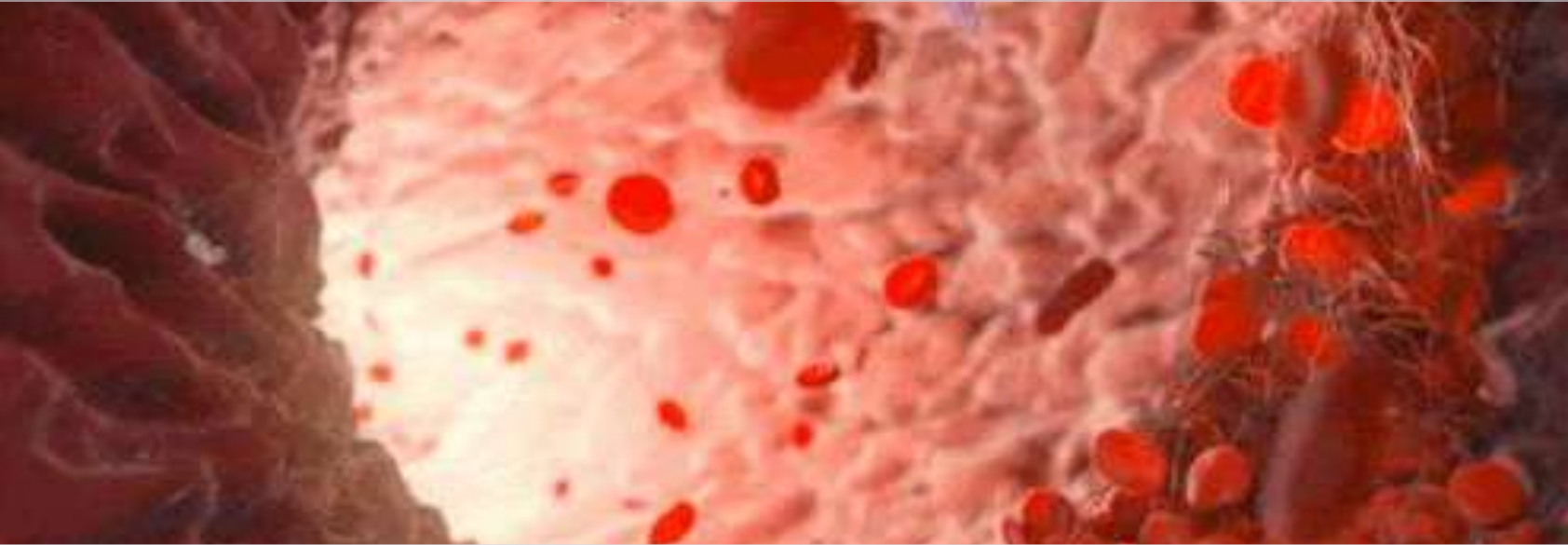
- **Why do we study micro/nano-robots?**





# Why — New Physics

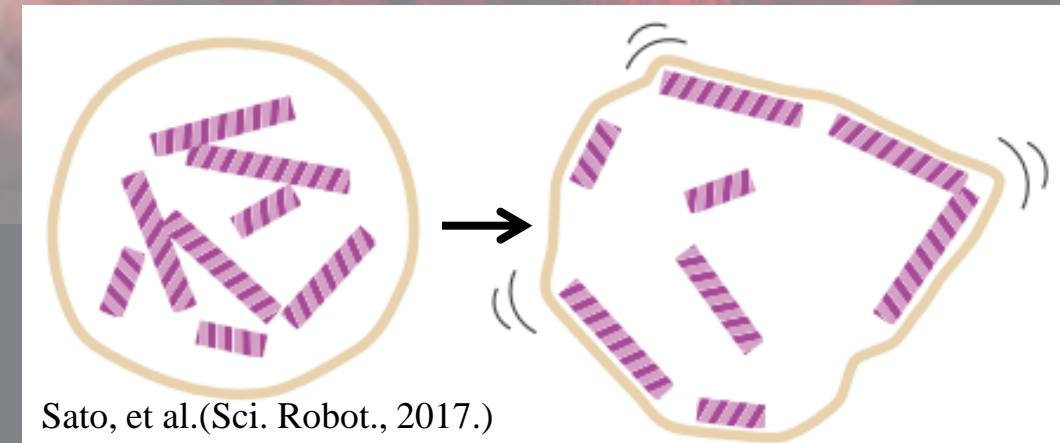
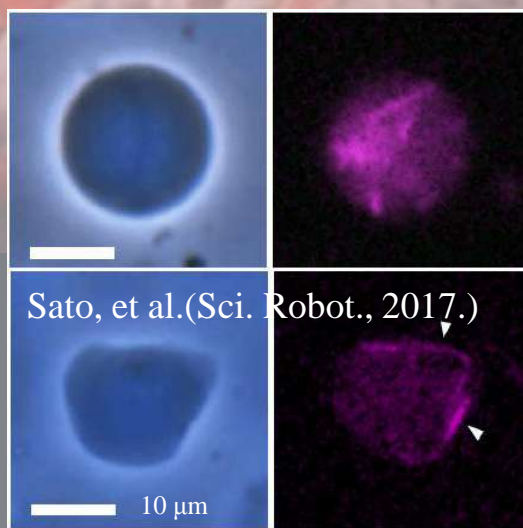
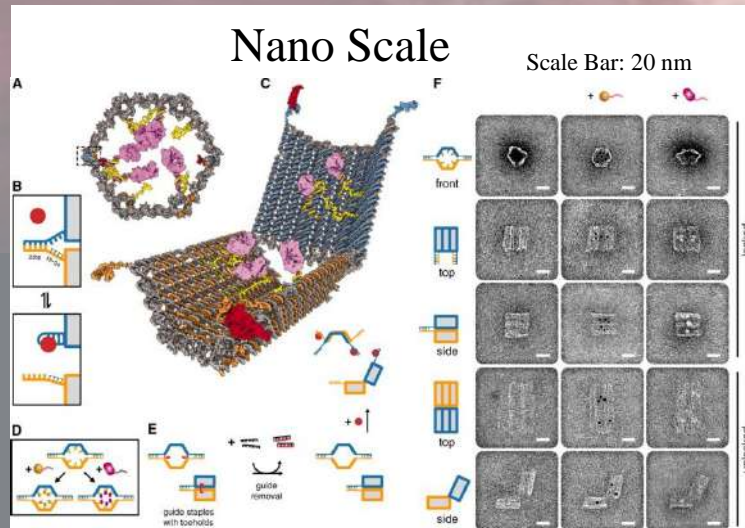
Image Source [2,3,7-10]



Small

Soft & Deformable

Robot Swarm





# Why — New Applications



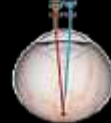
Can Fantasy becomes Reality? Micro/Nanorobots, future of medicine?



Drug Delivery



Marking



Sensing



Electrode



Brachytherapy  
(近距离治疗)



Hyperthermia  
(肿瘤热疗)



Stem cells



Ablation  
(动脉粥样斑块切除术)



Biopsy  
(活组织检查)



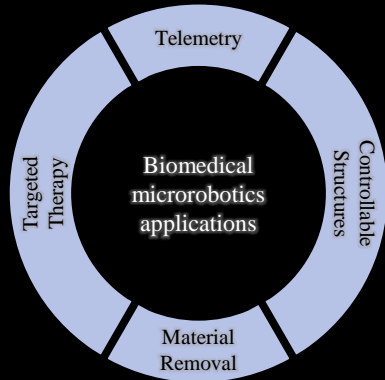
Occlusion  
(闭塞)



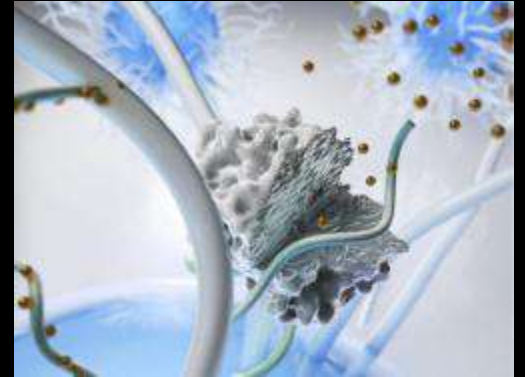
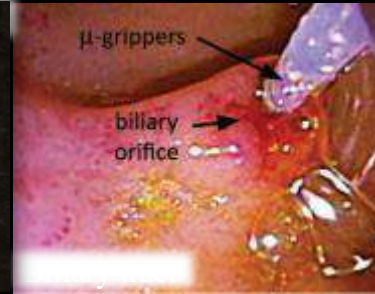
Stent  
(移植片固定模)



Scaffolding  
(生物支架)



Biopsy – minimal invasive retrieval of tissue sample



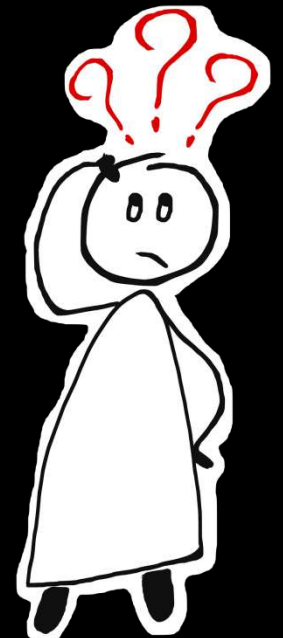
Genetic modification –  
gene and cell therapy



Drug delivery – precise target, minimize side effects



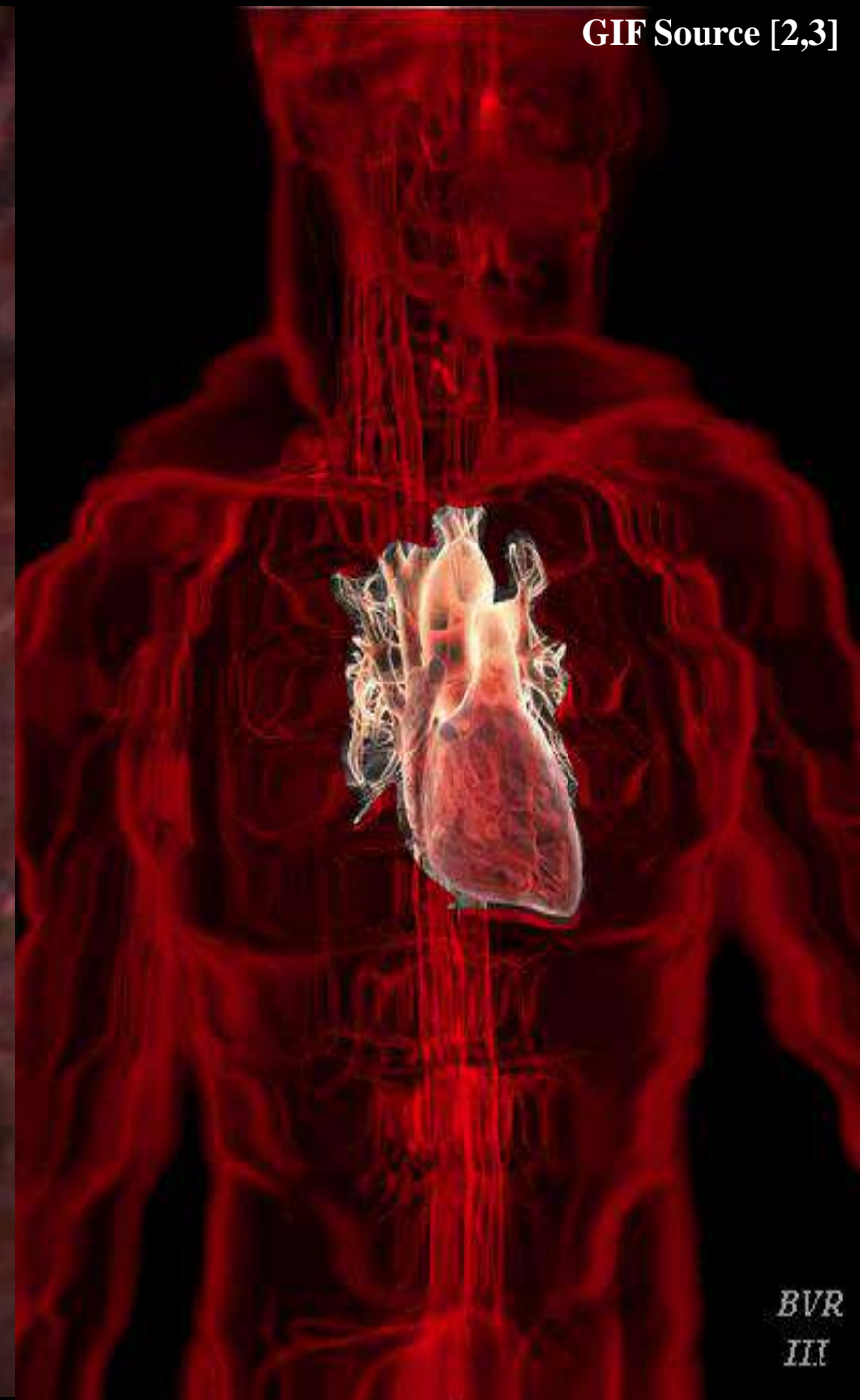
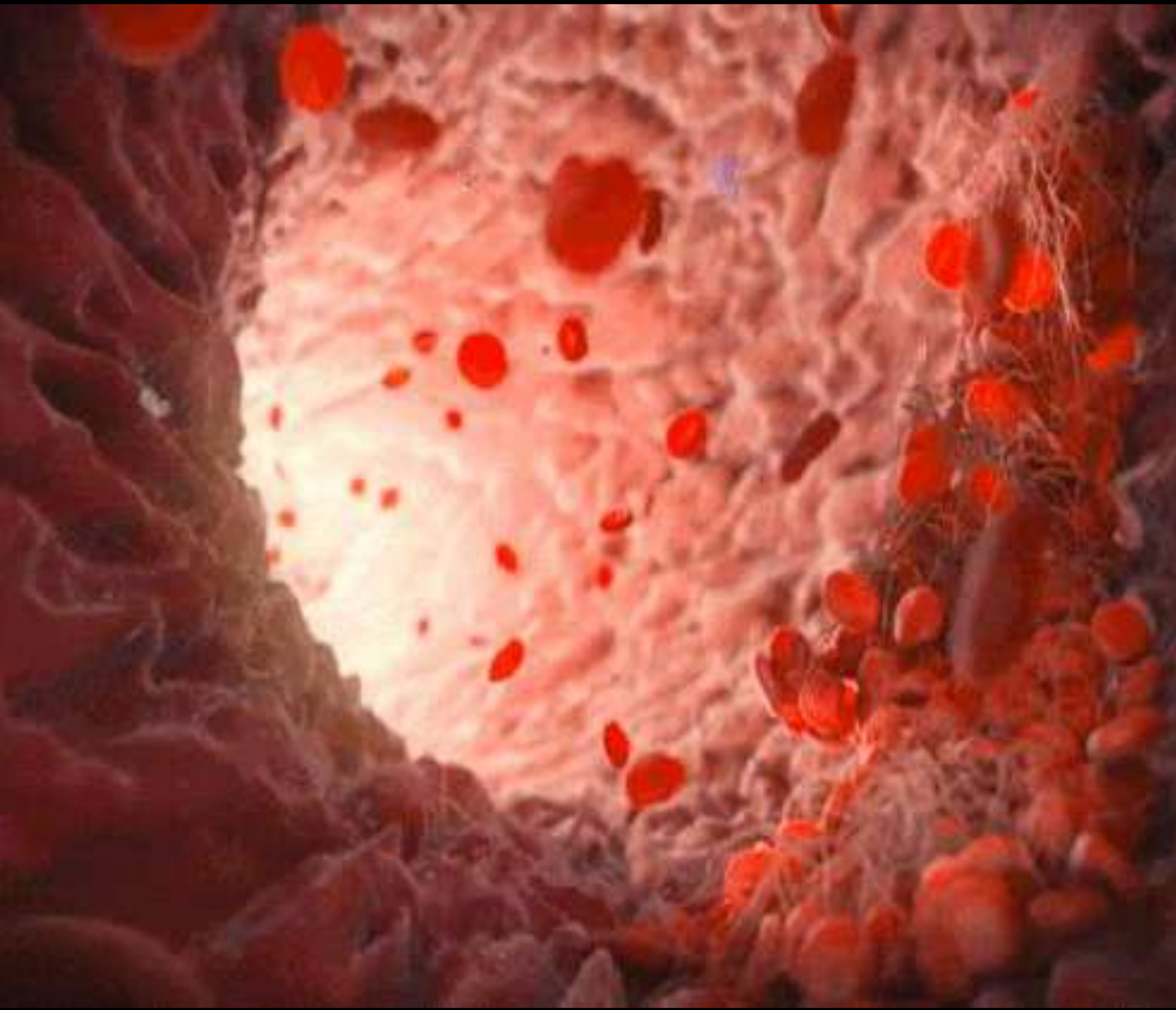
In vivo Navigation – steer microparticles in artery



# Motivation

- **Why do we study micro/nano-robots?**
  - High Research Value







# Why — High Research Value

<Made in China 2025>

MADE IN CHINA 中国制造  
2025



<Healthy China 2030>

“健康中国2030”  
规划纲要

## The 60 Most Significant Scientific and Technical Challenges

中国科协发布60个重大科学问题和重大工程技术难题

2018年05月28日10:46 来源：人民网-科技频道

在医学健康领域，入选了4个难题，重点集中在肿瘤、老年痴呆、精神疾病的新型治疗方法以及免疫微环境分子分型等方面。

在智能制造领域，入选了7个难题，重点集中在人机共融关键技术、光量子传感、动力电池技术、新一代智能制造系统、智能驾驶技术以及先进微纳机器人技术等方面。

据他介绍，此次征集共有76家全国学会、学会联合体参与，700多位科技工作者参与撰写，1142位专家学者参与推荐，2142名科研一线科学家参与初选，54名学科领军专家参与复选，33名院士参与终选。（记者 邱晨辉）

# Motivation

- **Why is studying micro/nano-robotics important and exciting?**

- Demonstrate locomotive capabilities and **functions** that are absent in larger, traditional robots
- Platforms for investigating **physics** at the micron and nano scale
- Drugs for **cancer and tumor therapy** is in high demand these days

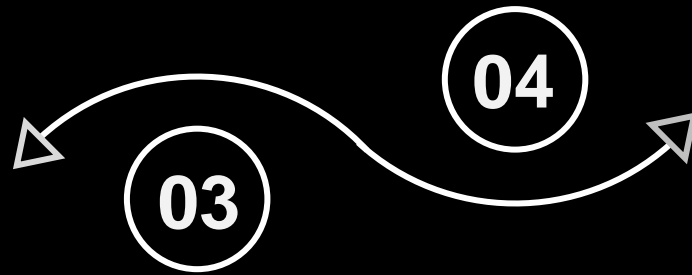


**Motivations**



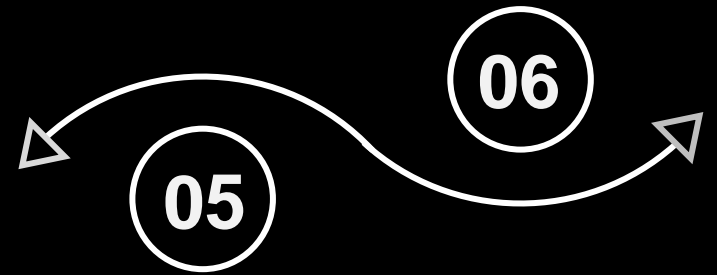
**Backgrounds**

**Objectives  
&  
Challenges**



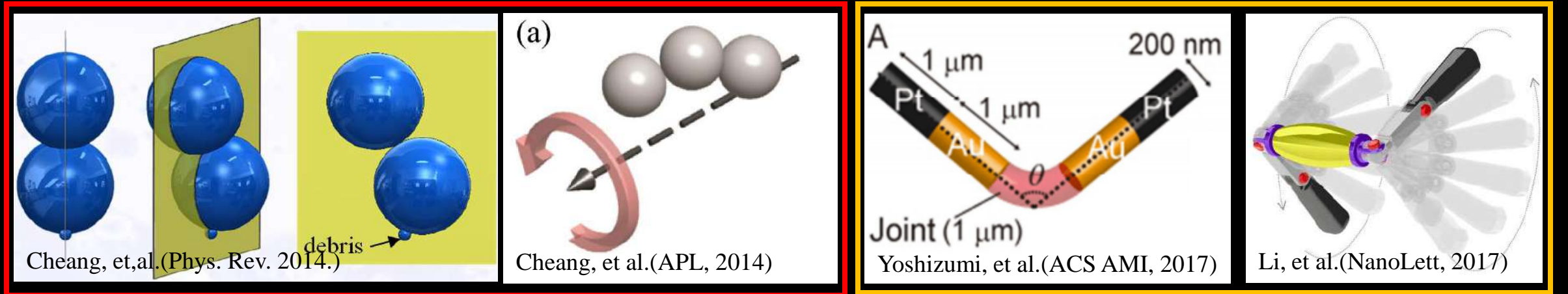
**System  
Overview**

**Conclusion**



**Design  
&  
Experiments**

# • Magnetic Controlled Simple Shape Micro-robotics



2005

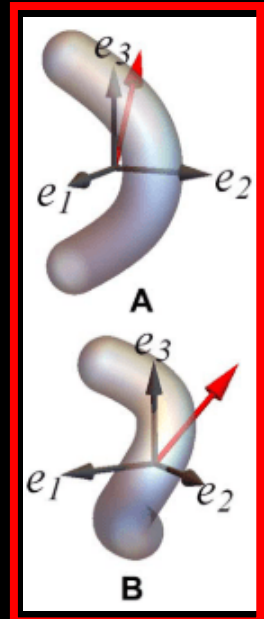
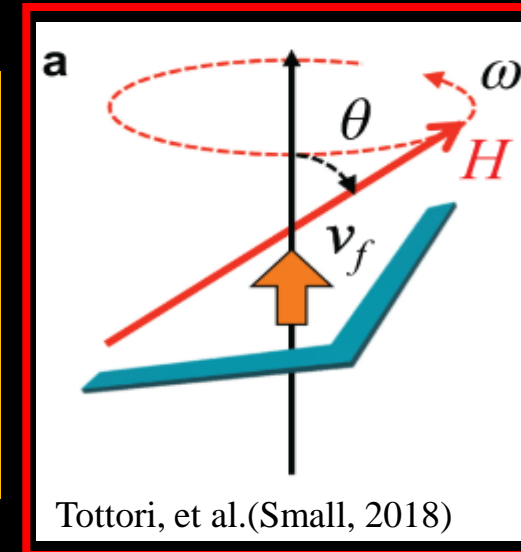
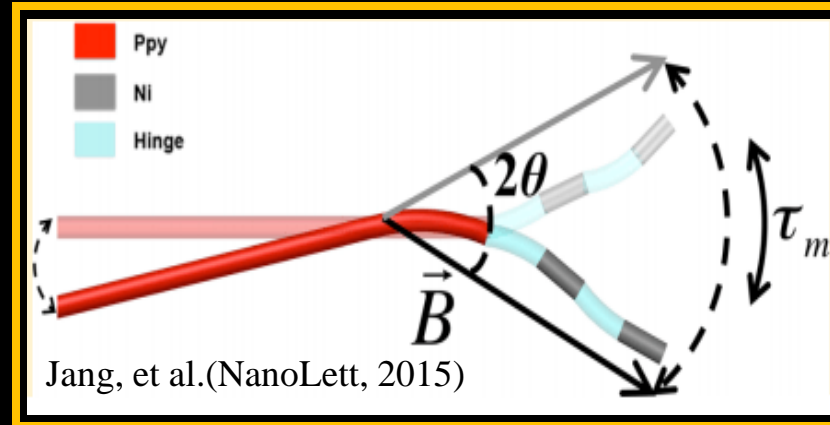
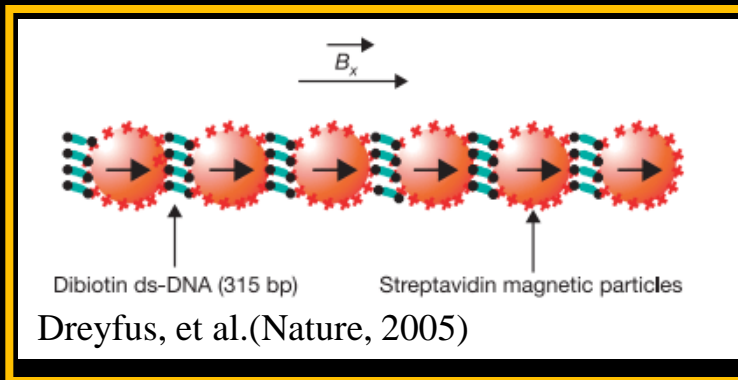
2014

2015

2017

2018

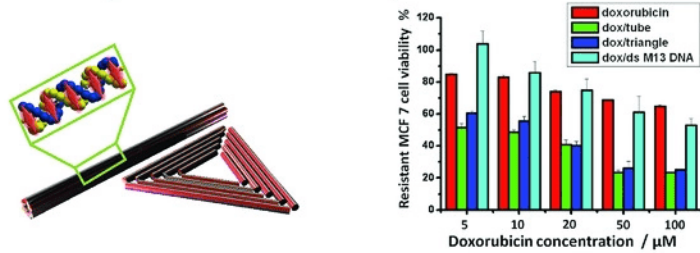
[A.D.]



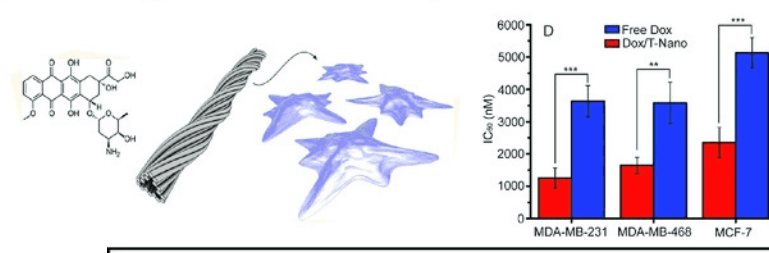
## • Overview

# • Bio-Medical Applications

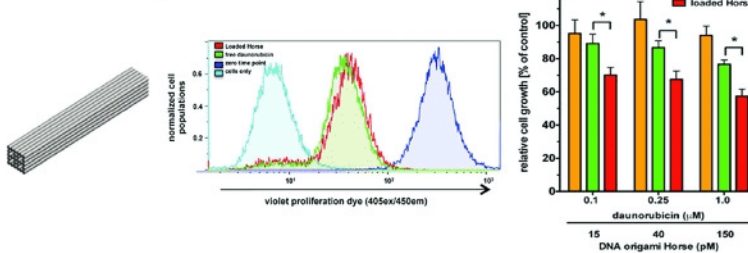
a DNA origami for Dox delivery



b DNA origami for Dox delivery



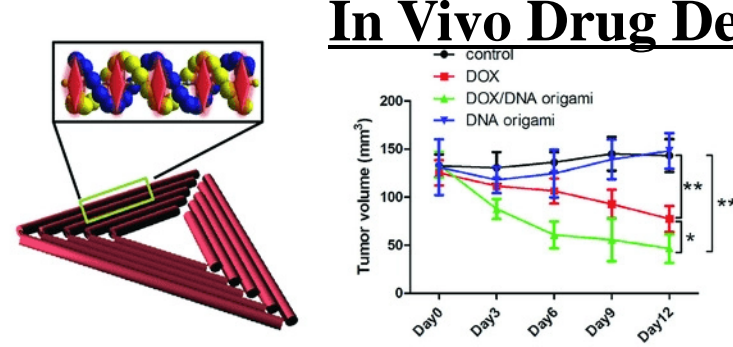
c DNA origami for daunorubicin delivery



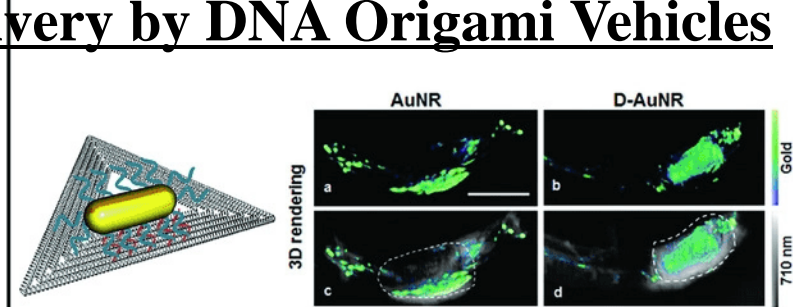
d DNA



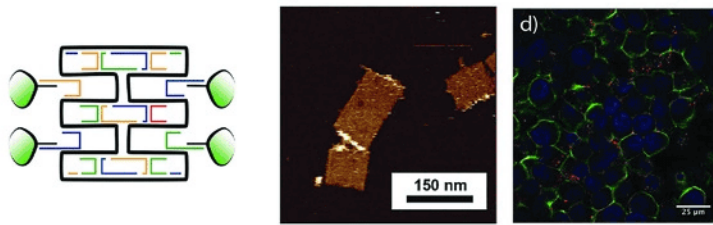
a DNA origami for Dox delivery



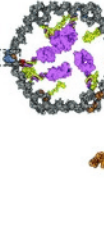
b DNA origami for AuNR delivery



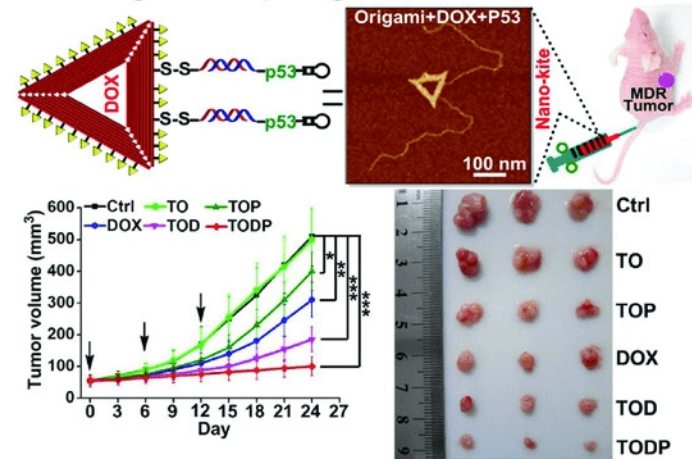
e Tf-loaded DNA origami for enhanced cellular uptake



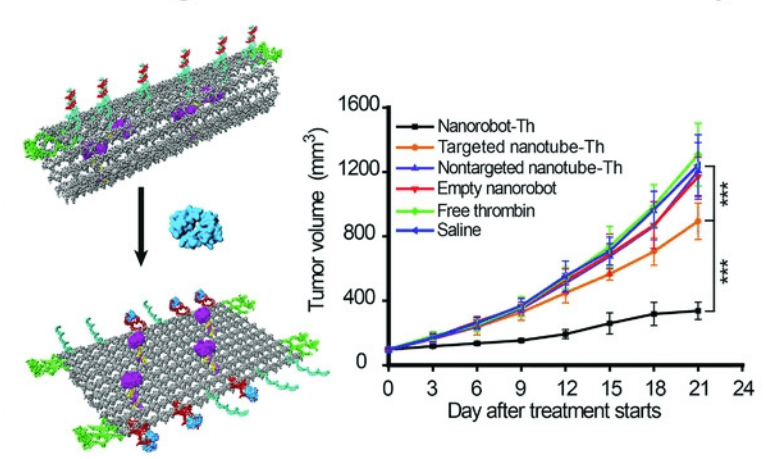
f DNA



c DNA origami for p53 gene and Dox co-delivery



d DNA origami nanorobot for thrombin delivery



## In Vitro Drug Delivery by DNA

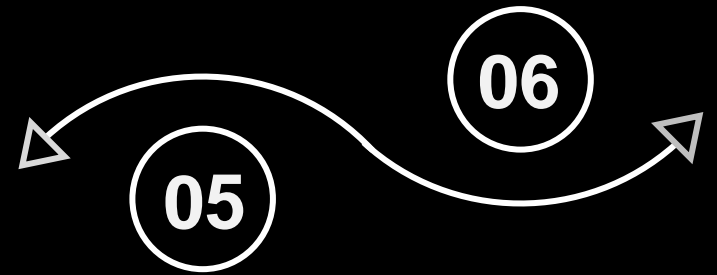
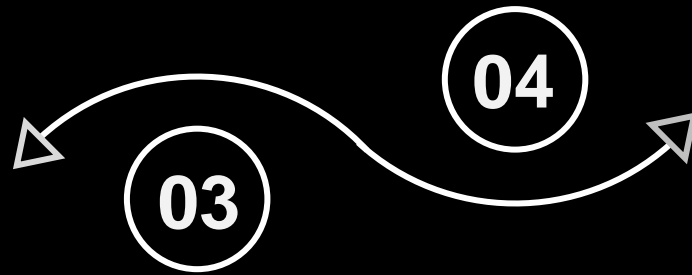
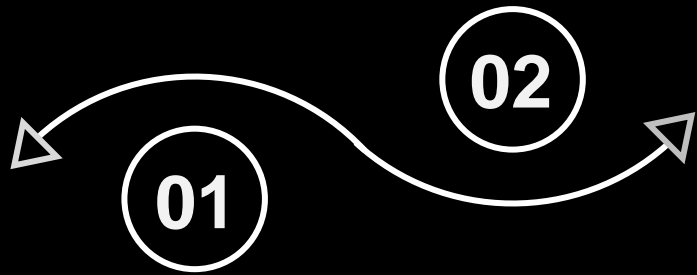
## DNA self-assembly



# Objectives & Challenges

**Motivations**

**Conclusion**



**Backgrounds**

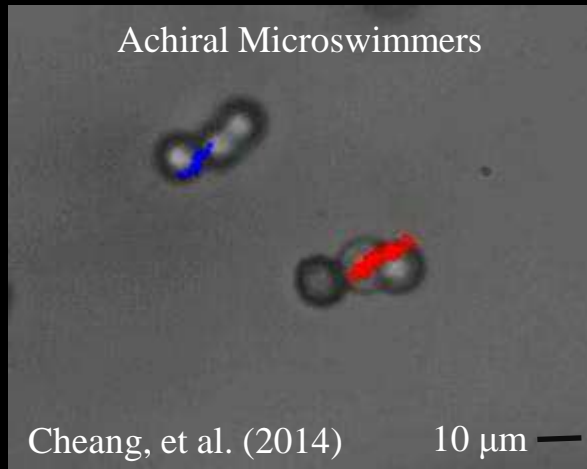
**System  
Overview**

**Design  
&  
Experiments**

# Research Objectives – Step.1

- Enable novel **functions** through leveraging **mesoscopic physics**
- Enable multimodal **locomotion** in complex environments through **magnetic control**

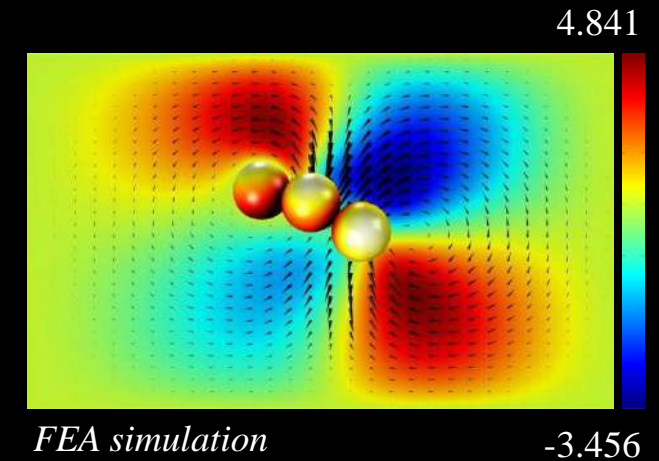
## Micro/Nano-robotics



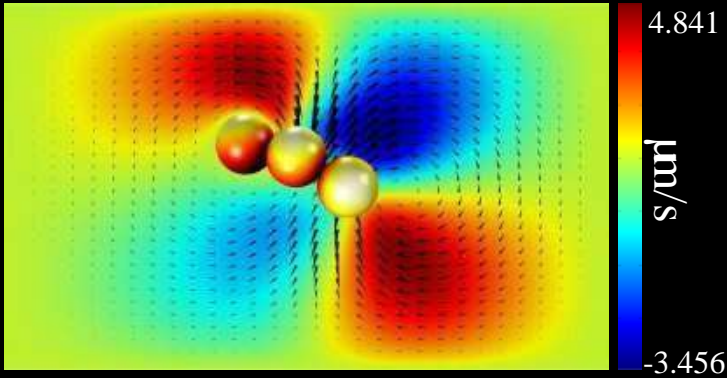
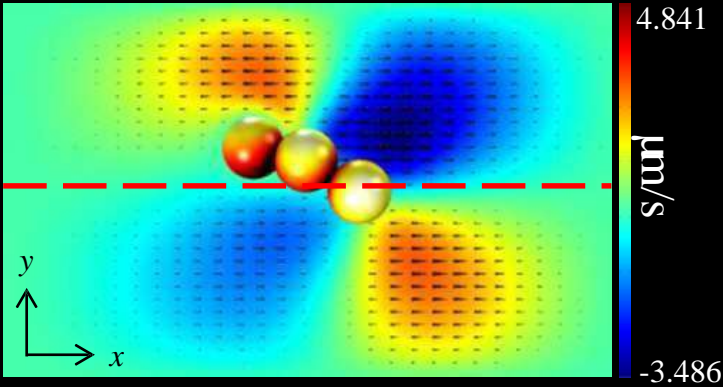
Study fluid-particle interaction,  
vortex shedding

← Enable low Reynolds number  
micro/nano-robotics locomotion

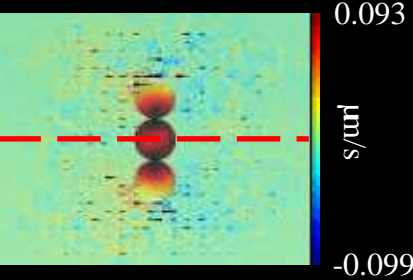
## Physics



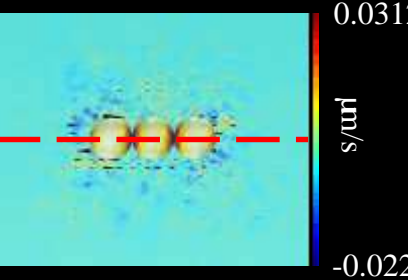
# Visualization of flow field



Symmetrical rotation - No propulsion



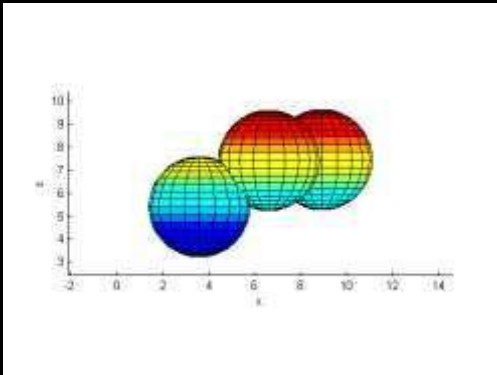
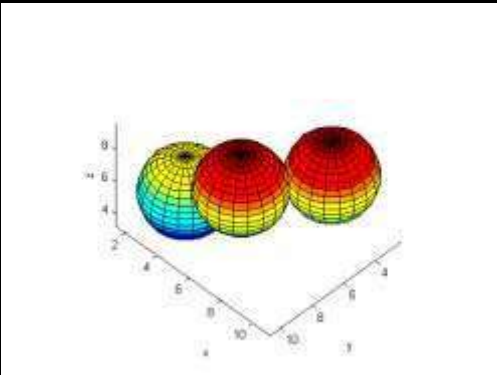
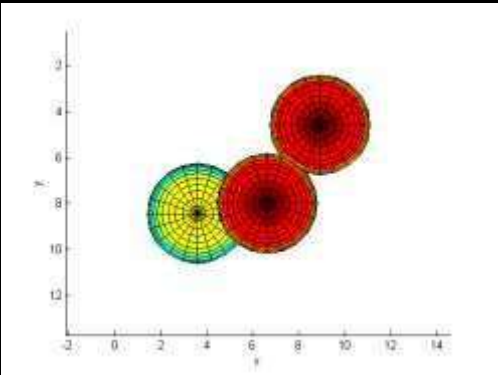
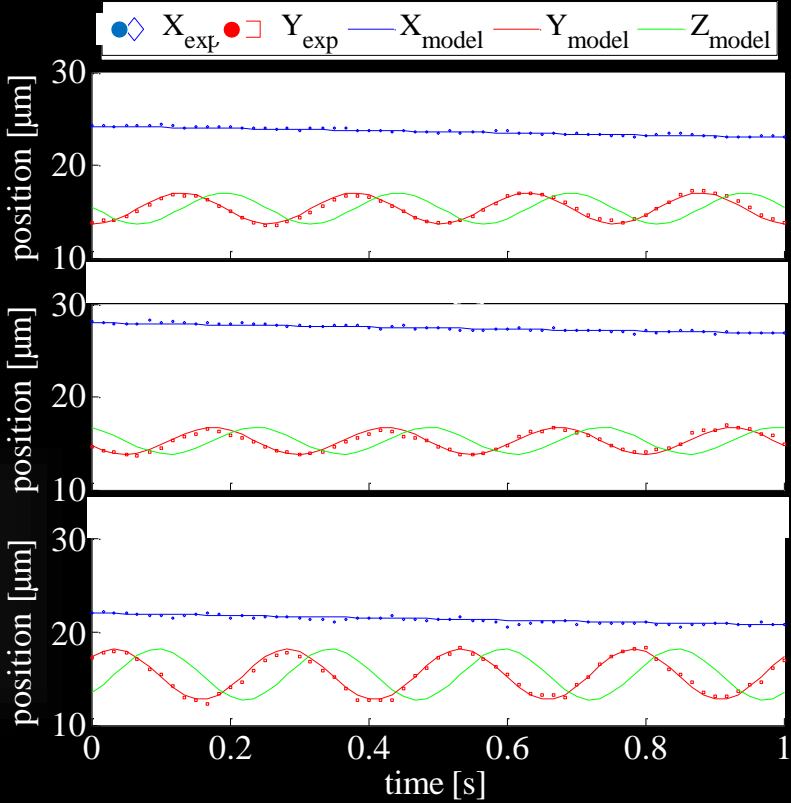
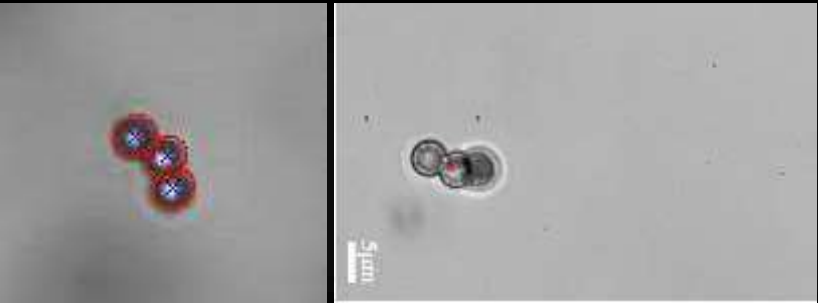
Symmetrical rotation - No propulsion



# 3D Reconstruction using Tracking

$$\begin{aligned} x(t) &= a_{x,i}t + b_{x,i} \\ y(t) &= a_{y,i} \sin(b_{y,i}(t - c_{y,i}) + d_{y,i}) \\ z(t) &= a_{z,i} \cos(b_{y,i}(t - c_{z,i}) + d_{z,i}) \end{aligned}$$

$i = \{1, 2, 3\}$   
 $a, b, c, d$  are derived experimentally

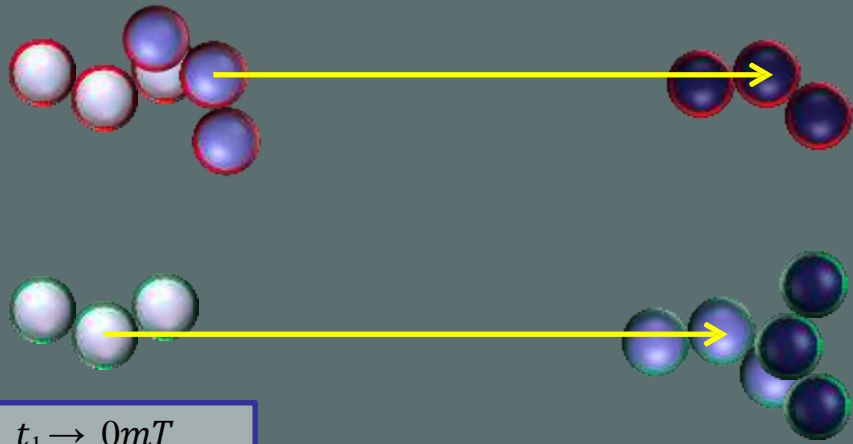




# Multiple Robot Control

**Micro-scale** → *Nano-scale?*

## Achiral Microrobots



$t_1 \rightarrow 0mT$

$t_2 \rightarrow 5mT$

$t_3 \rightarrow 10mT$

For example: 5 Hz, varying field B

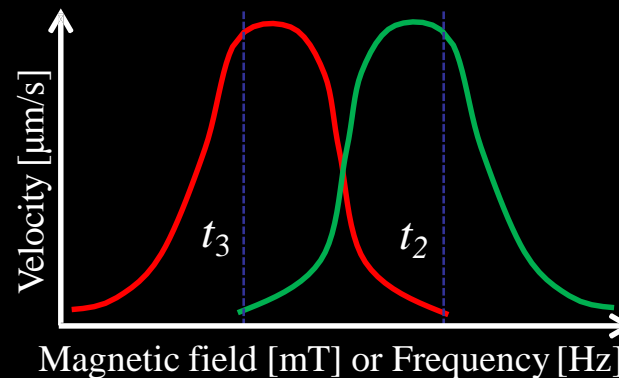
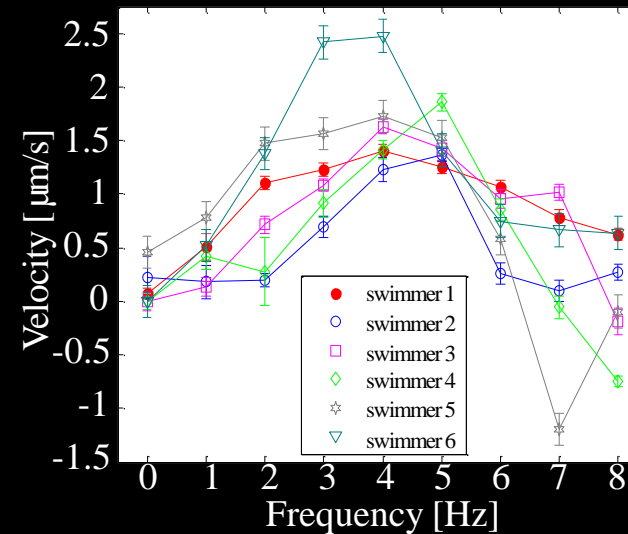
$t_1$  – red stationary green stationary

$t_2$  – red stationary green move

$t_3$  – red move green stationary

● Less magnetic content

● More magnetic content



## Achiral Microrobots

### Torque Model

For steady angular velocity, the opposing torque must balance [1]

$$T_m = T_r$$

$$T_m = \mathbf{m} \times \mathbf{B}$$

$$T_r = 6\pi\eta R\Omega(L_1^2 + L_2^2 + L_3^2)$$

$$\mathbf{m} \times \mathbf{B} = 6\pi\eta R\Omega(L^2 + L^2 + L^2)$$

$L$  – distances of beads from rotation axis

$T_m$  – magnetic torque

$T_r$  – hydrodynamic torque

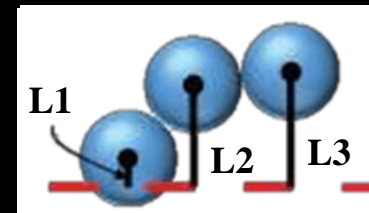
$\Omega$  – field rotation rate

$\mathbf{m}$  – magnetic moment

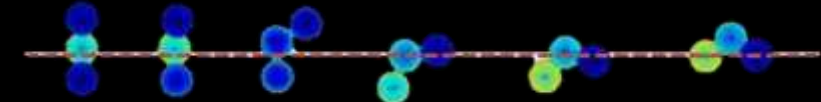
$\mathbf{B}$  – magnetic field

$\eta$  – dynamic viscosity

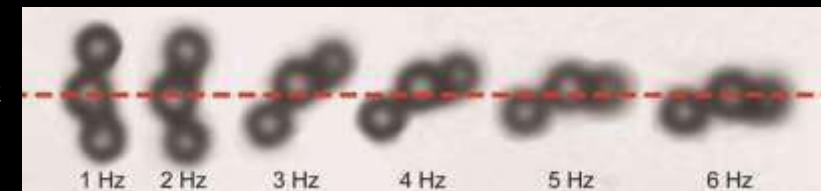
$R$  – bead radius



Simulation



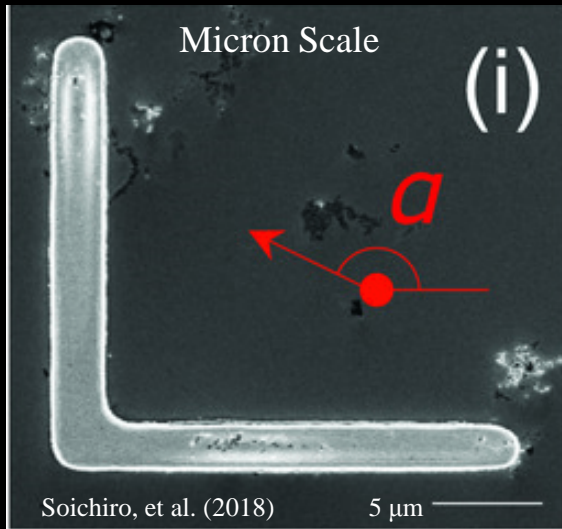
Experiment



# Research Objectives

- Enable novel functions through leveraging mesoscopic physics
- Enable multimodal locomotion in complex environments through magnetic control
- Enable shape-changing functions of micro/nano-robotics inside the lipid membrane

## • Microrobotics

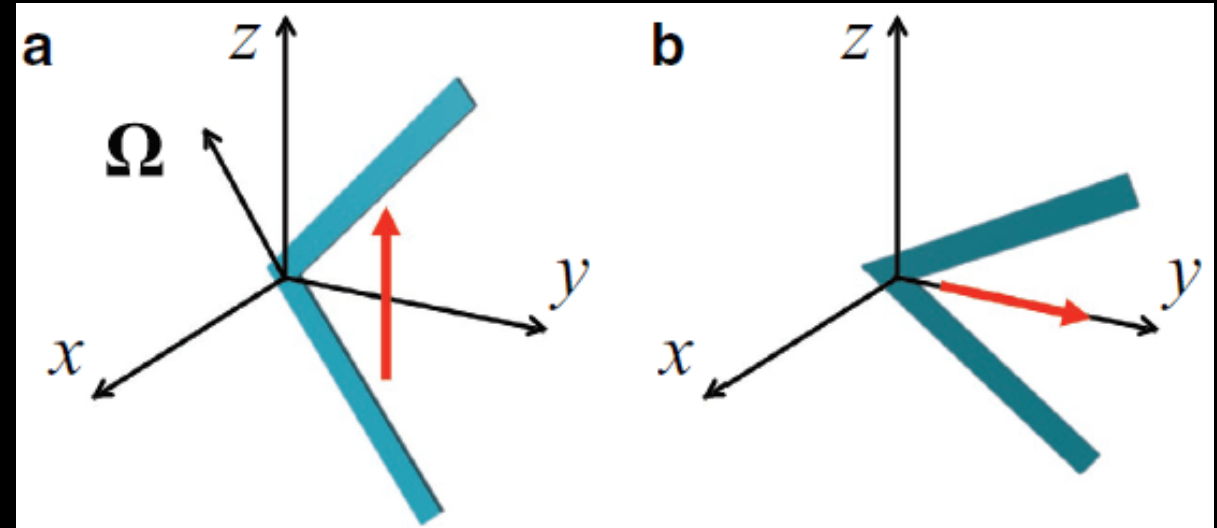


Low Reynolds Number  
Hydrodynamics



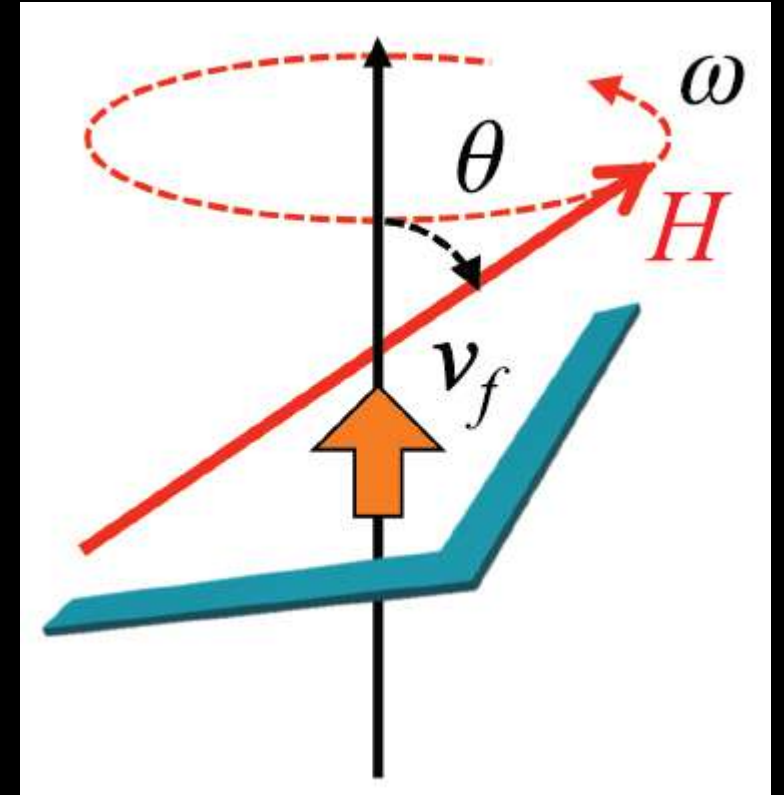
Magnetic Manipulation

## • Physics



# Schematic Illustrations

- The precessing magnetic field was generated by triaxial orthogonal coil pairs, being defined by:
- Field strength  $H$ ,
- Angular velocity  $\omega$ ,
- Precession angle  $\theta$
- The swimmers followed the direction of the magnetic field and propelled themselves along the precession axis, with the symmetry of their shape implying that structures with identical arm lengths could be both right-handed and left-handed





# Investigation Factors

Factors:

- correlate swimming velocity with swimmer morphology

i.e.,

- length,
- angle between arms,
- number of arms,
- field precession angle

# Theoretical Analysis

- External force  $F$ , torque  $T$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{F} \\ \mathbf{T} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{A} & \mathbf{B} \\ \mathbf{B}^T & \mathbf{C} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{V} \\ \boldsymbol{\Omega} \end{bmatrix}$$

- Translational velocity  $\mathbf{V}$ , and rotational velocity  $\mathbf{W}$
- The propulsion matrices  $\mathbf{A}$ ,  $\mathbf{B}$ , and  $\mathbf{C}$  of the 2D structures are give

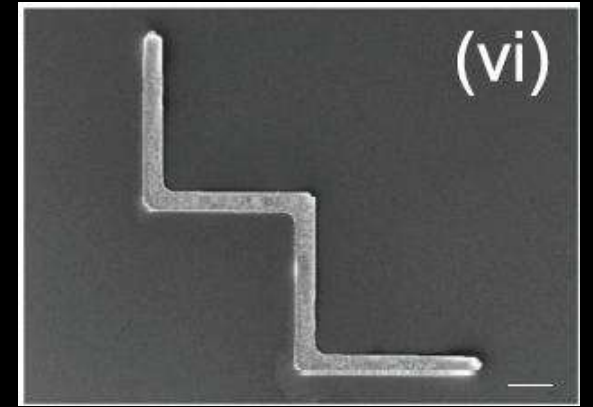
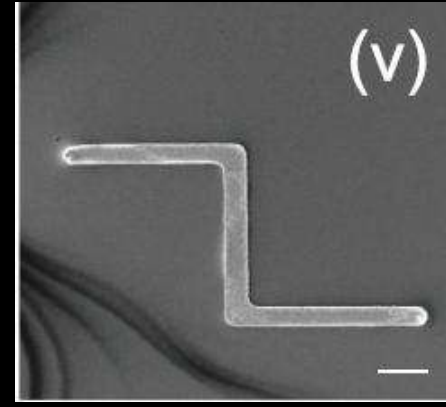
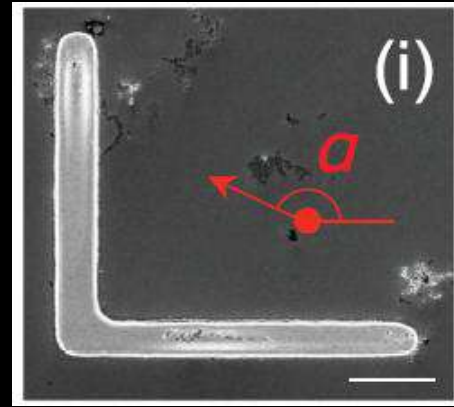
$$\mathbf{A} = \begin{bmatrix} A_1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & A_2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & A_3 \end{bmatrix}, \mathbf{B} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & B_{13} \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ B_{31} & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \mathbf{C} = \begin{bmatrix} C_1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & C_2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & C_3 \end{bmatrix}$$

- No external force,  $F = 0$

$$|v_f| = \frac{|\mathbf{V} \cdot \boldsymbol{\Omega}|}{|\boldsymbol{\Omega}|} = \left| \left( \frac{B_{13}}{A_1} + \frac{B_{31}}{A_3} \right) \Omega_1 \Omega_3 \right|$$

# Theoretical Analysis

$$|v_f| = \frac{|\mathbf{V} \cdot \boldsymbol{\Omega}|}{|\boldsymbol{\Omega}|} = \left| \left( \frac{B_{13}}{A_1} + \frac{B_{31}}{A_3} \right) \Omega_1 \Omega_3 \right|$$



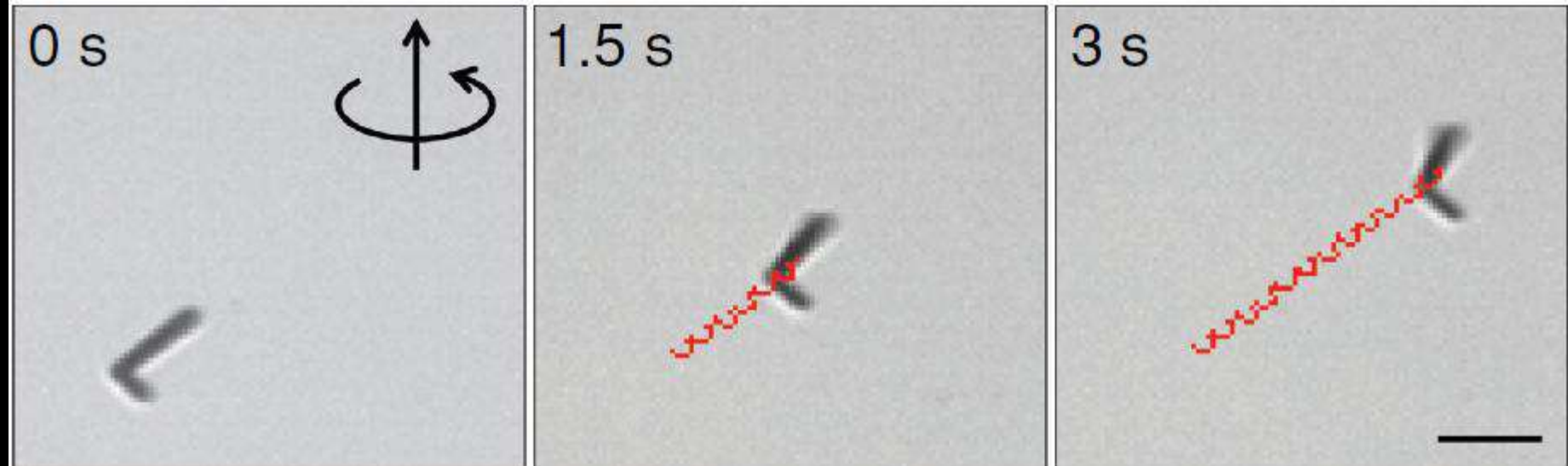
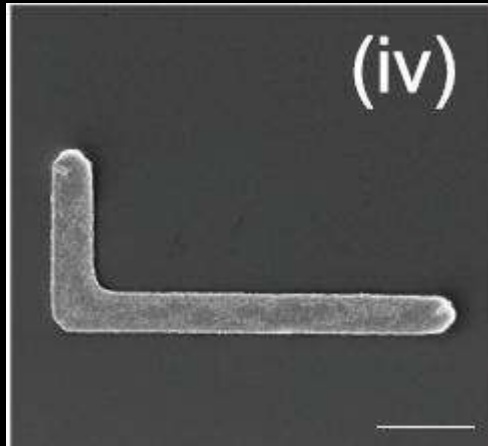
- The minimal geometric requirement for the swimmer is actually  $(B_{13}/A_1 + B_{31}/A_3) \neq 0$ , not  $B \neq 0$
- For the symmetrical three-arm structure (v):  
 $(B_{13}/A_1 + B_{31}/A_3) = 0$ ,
- Thus the three-arm structure showed nearly zero forward velocity,
- The four-arm structure featured a lower propulsion velocity than the two-arm one
- **Reason:** the inner two arms generated a propulsion force directed oppositely to that generated by the outer two arms.



# Theoretical Analysis

$$|v_f| = \frac{|\mathbf{V} \cdot \mathbf{\Omega}|}{|\mathbf{\Omega}|} = \left| \left( \frac{B_{13}}{A_1} + \frac{B_{31}}{A_3} \right) \Omega_1 \Omega_3 \right|$$

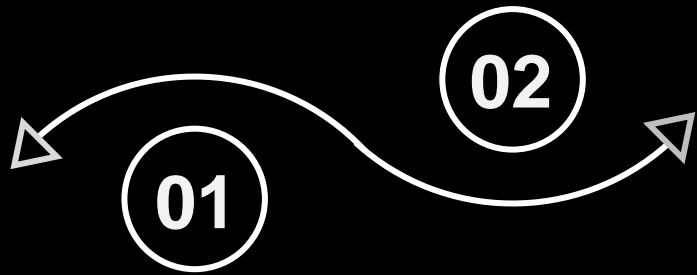
An asymmetric structure always swam toward its longer arm  
(field strength, frequency, and precession angle equaled 5 mT, 4 Hz, and 55°, respectively).



# Summary

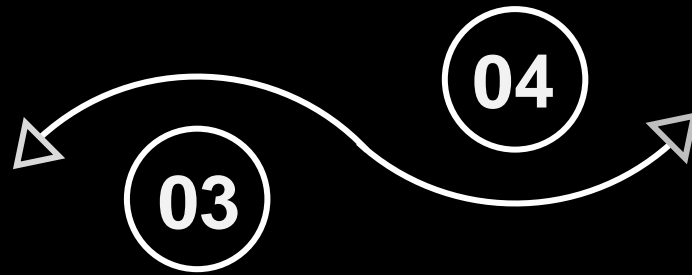
1. These 2D swimmers can indeed convert rotational motion into translational motion
2. Their swimming efficiency can be tuned by adjusting the precession angle
3. Asymmetric 2D swimmers were found to always swim toward their longer arms

**Motivations**



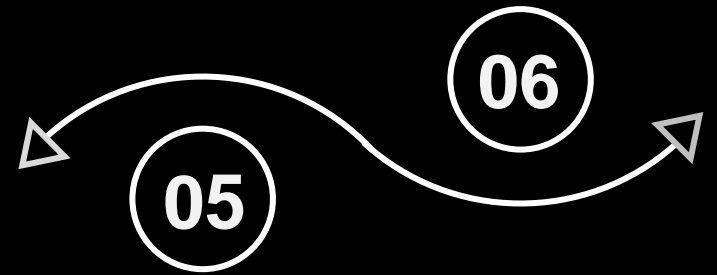
**Backgrounds**

**Objectives  
&  
Challenges**



**System  
Overview**

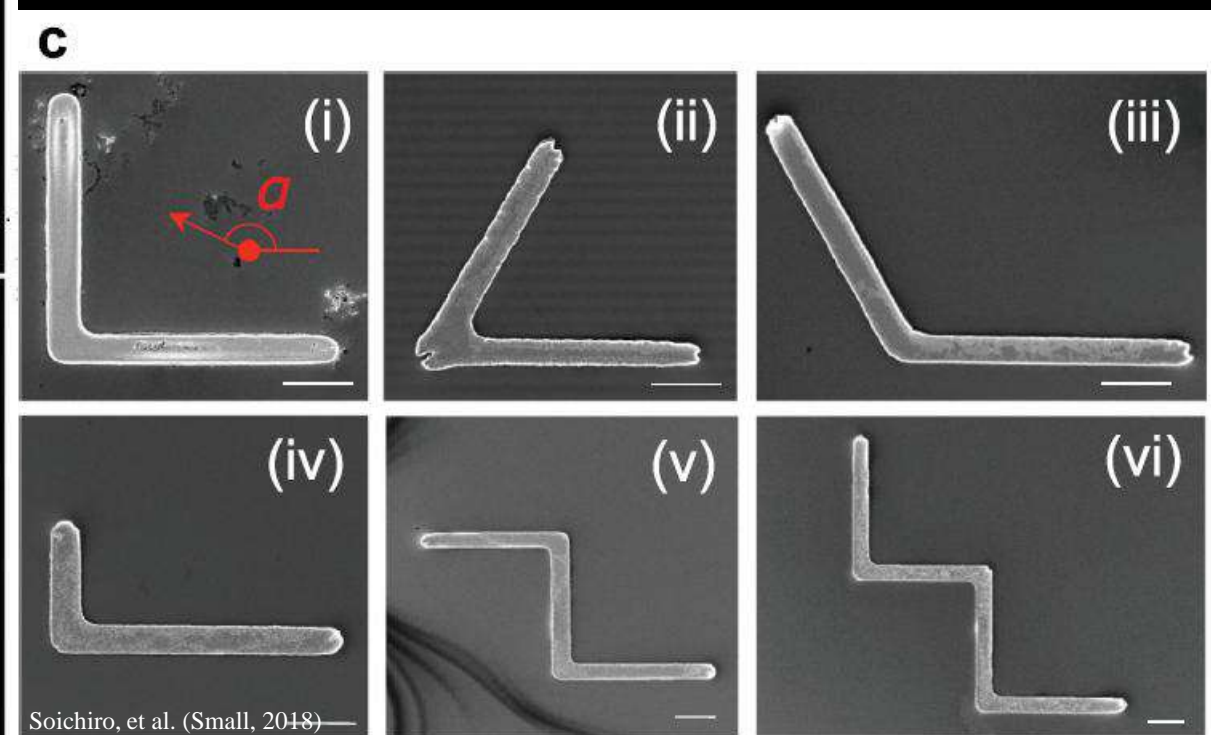
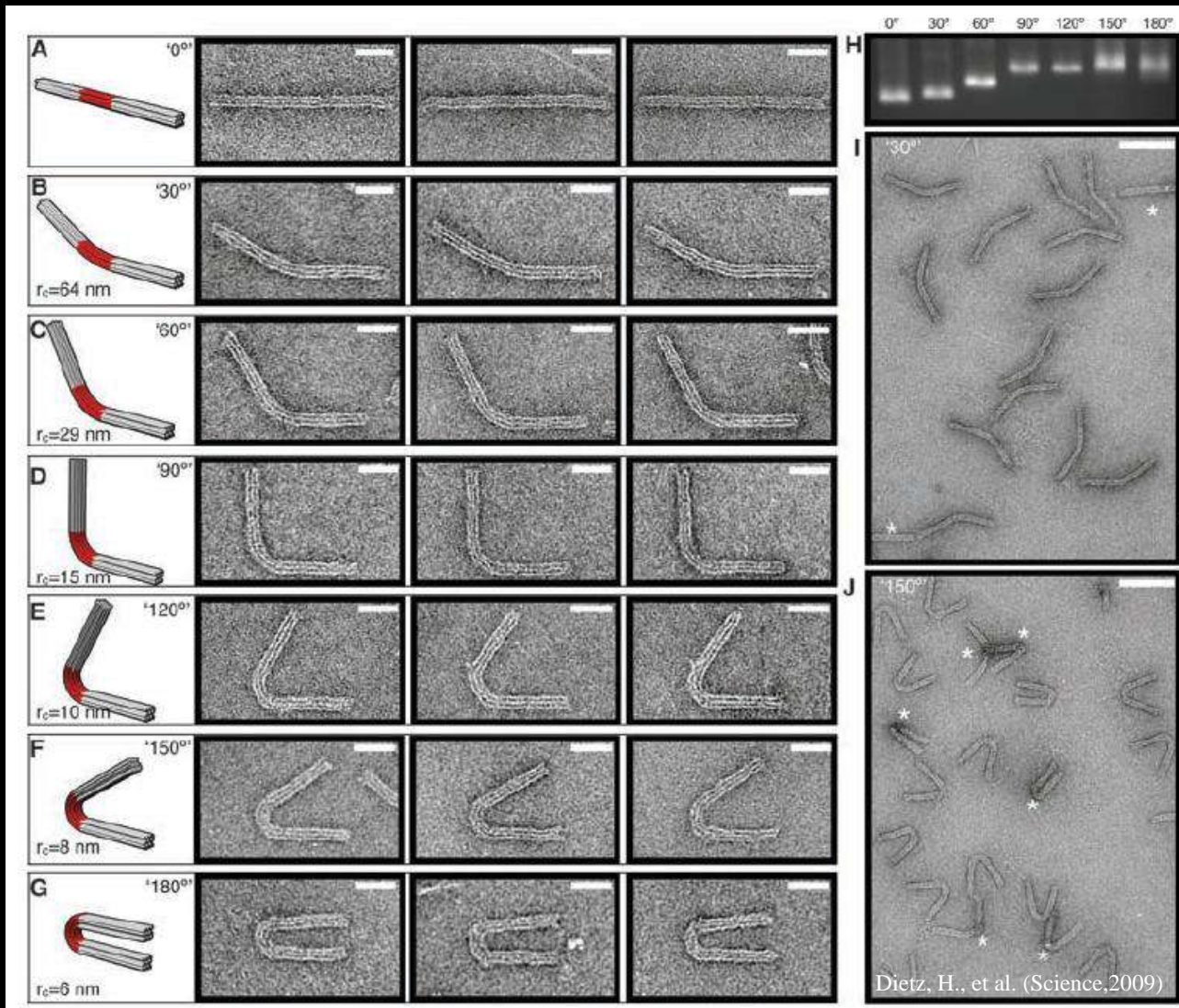
**Conclusion**



**Design  
&  
Experiments**



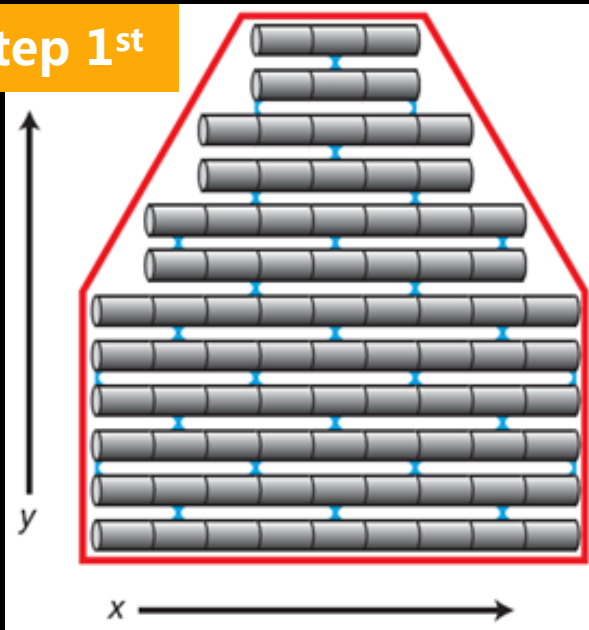
# Anticipation



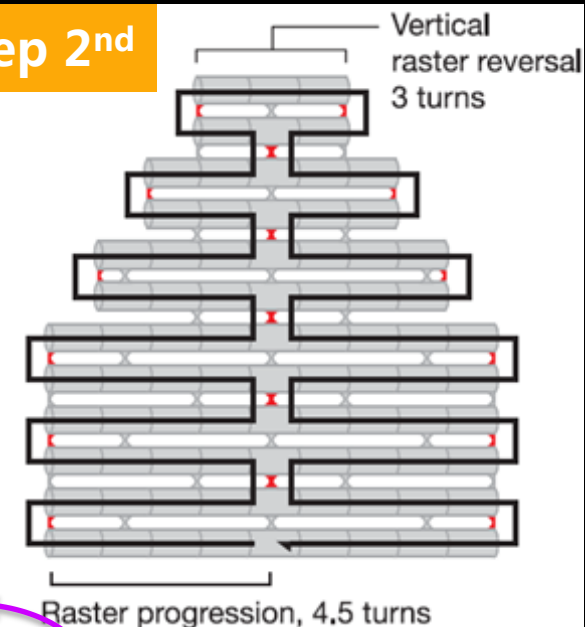




Step 1<sup>st</sup>



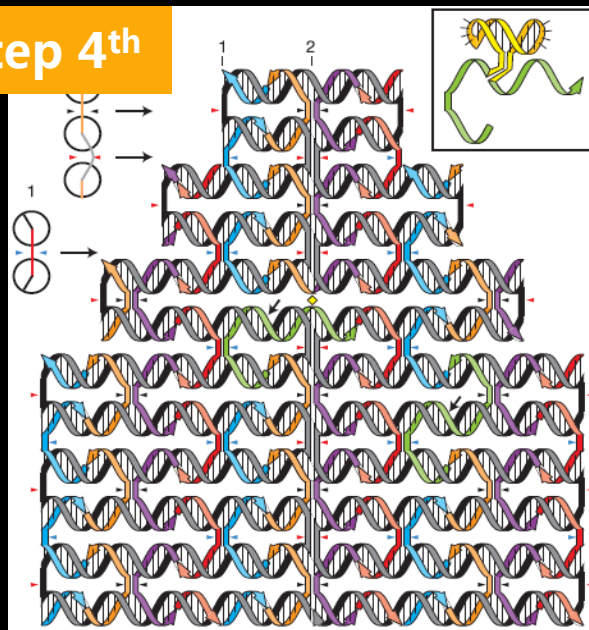
Step 2<sup>nd</sup>



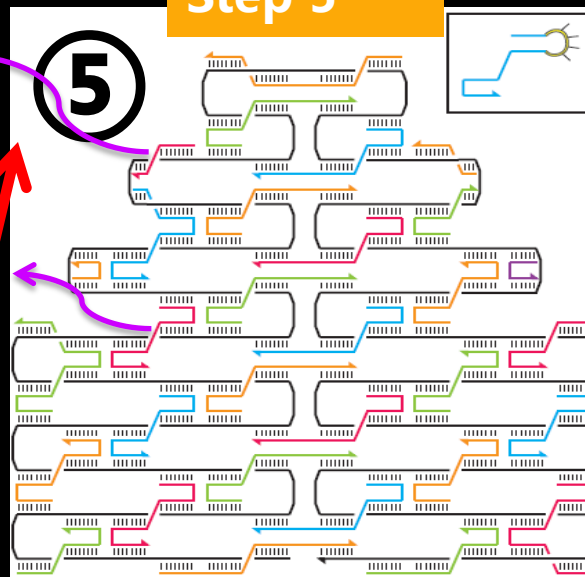
Step 3<sup>rd</sup>



Step 4<sup>th</sup>



Step 5<sup>th</sup>



① 5. To give the staples larger binding domains with the scaffold, pairs of adjacent staples are merged across nicks to yield fewer, longer, staples.

Nick  
(狭缝)

Staple  
(订书钉链)

Scaffold  
(脚手架链)

Staple  
(订书钉链)

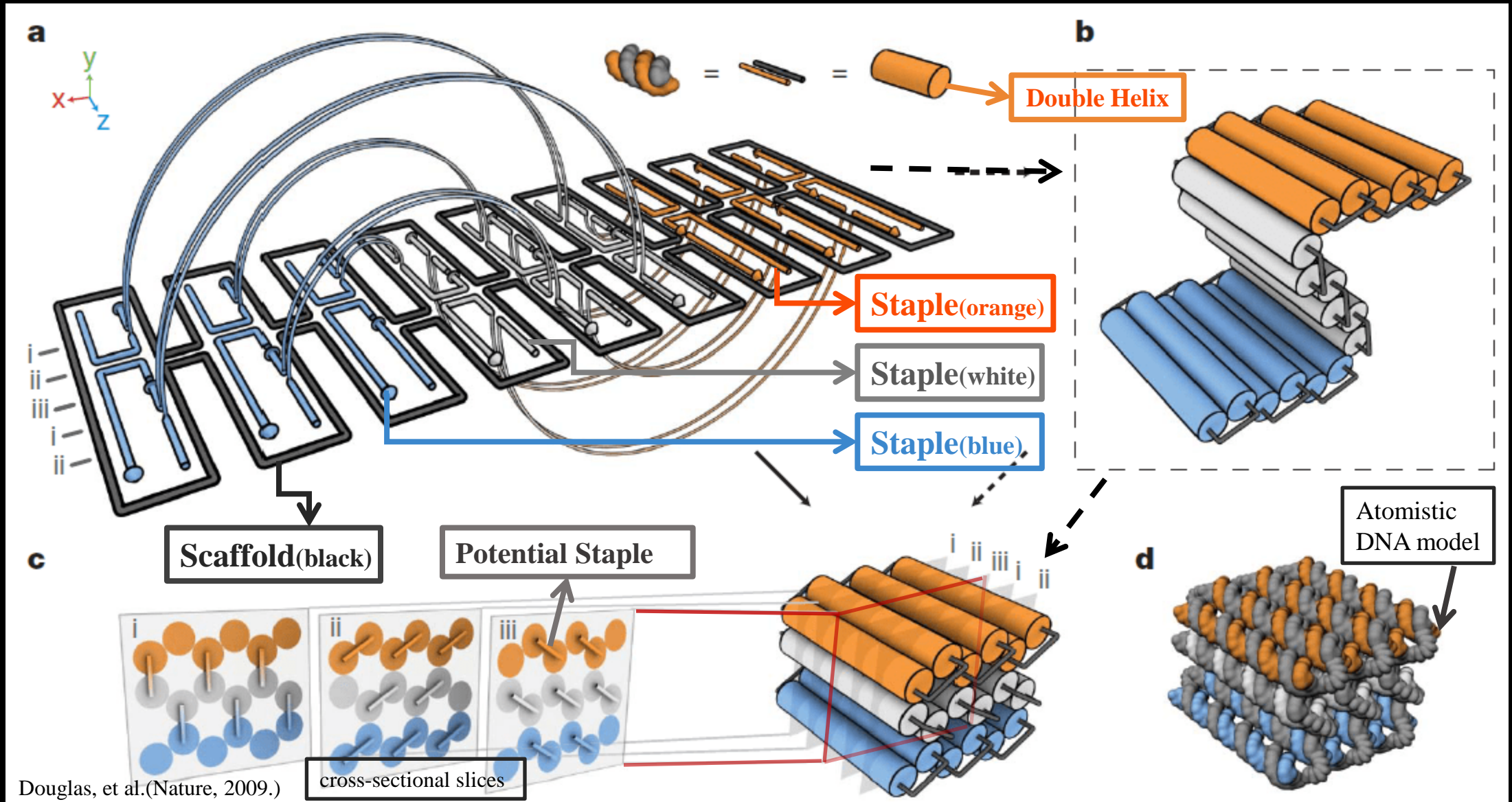
④ 4. Staple sequences are recomputed according to the position changes of scaffold crossover.

④

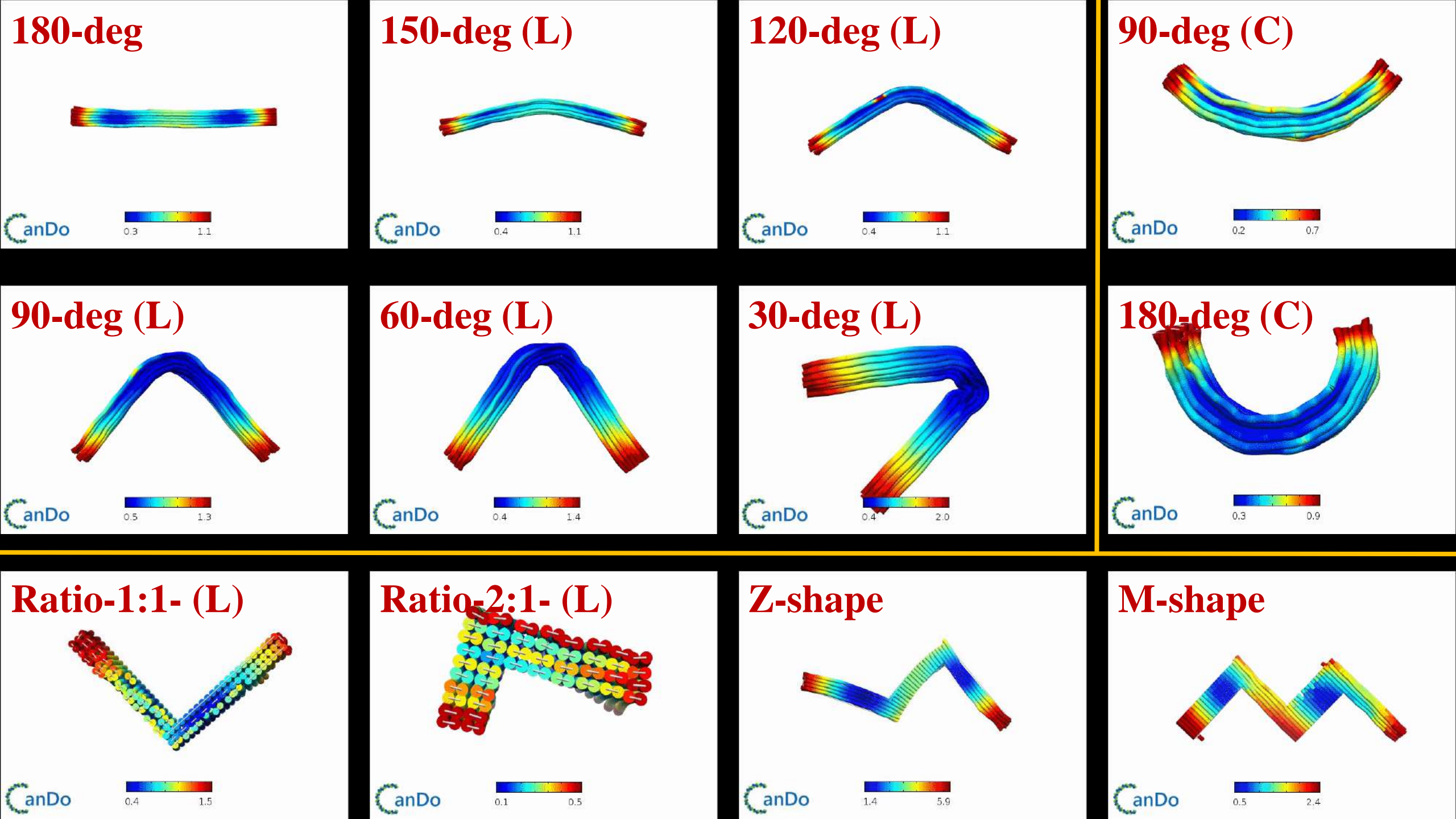
③



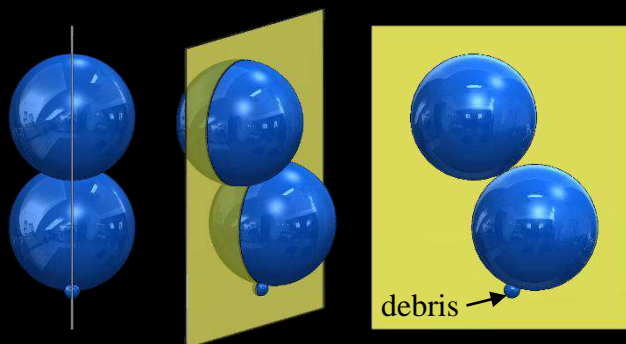
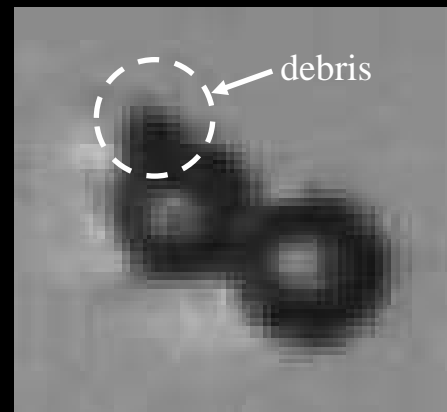
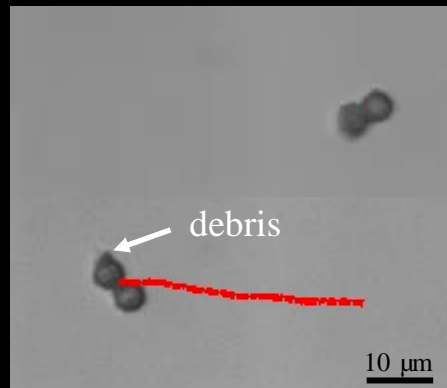
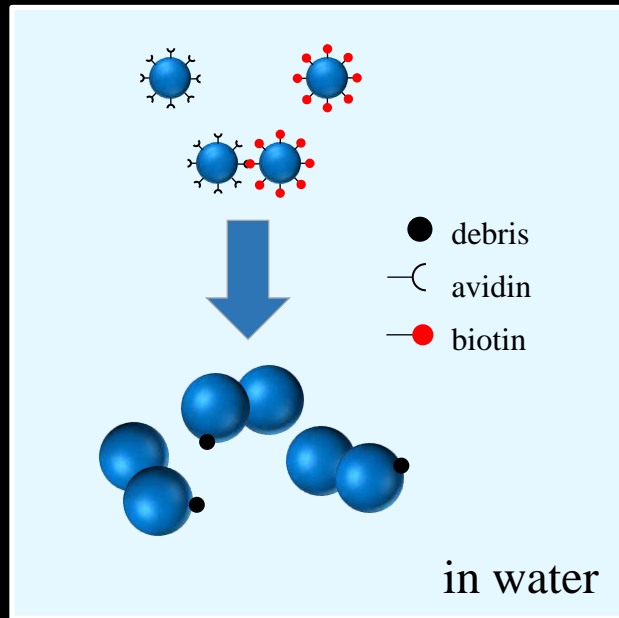
# 3D DNA Origami Design



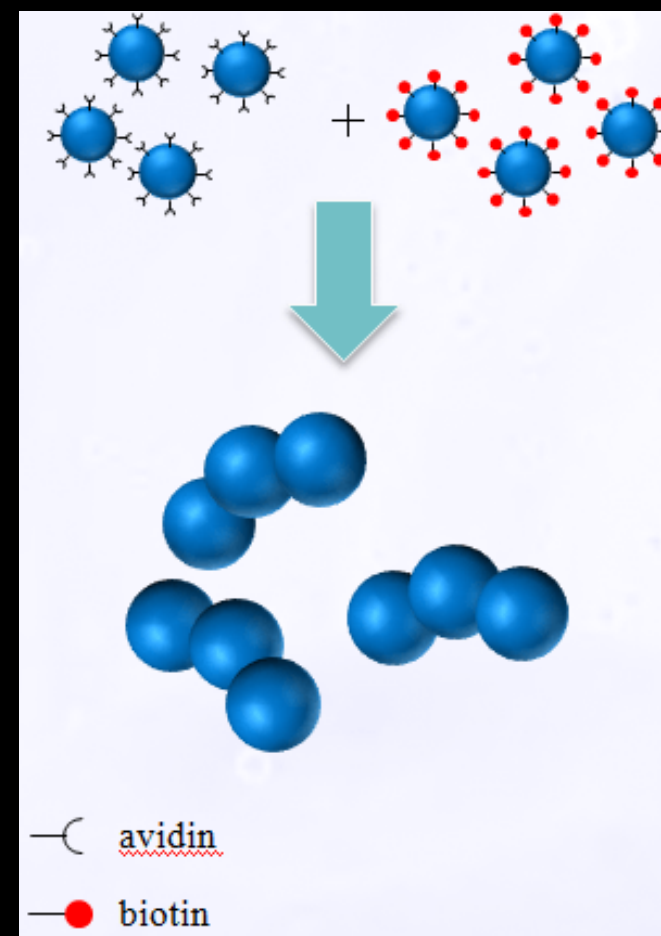




# Particle Based Microswimmers



Cheang, et.al.(Phys. Rev. 2014.)



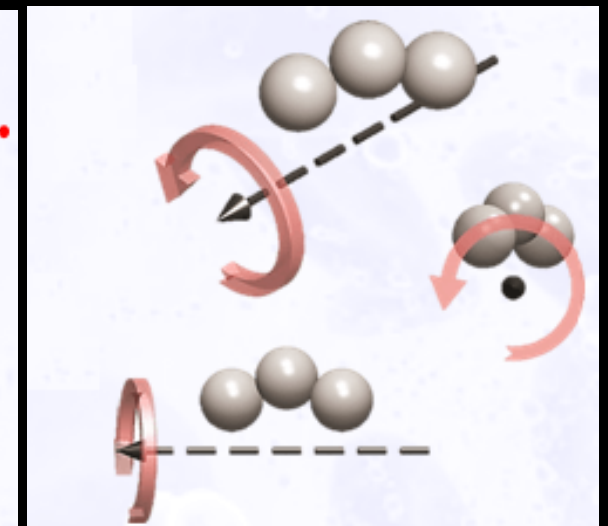
Cheang, et al.(APL, 2014)

**Actuation method**

→ rotating magnetic field

**Reynolds number**

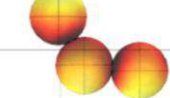
→  $Re = 1.53 \times 10^{-4}$



Isometric



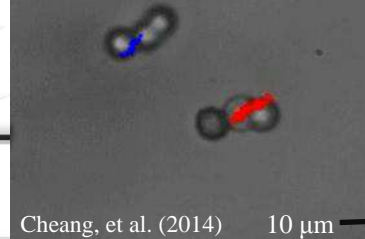
Side



Front



Achiral Microswimmers

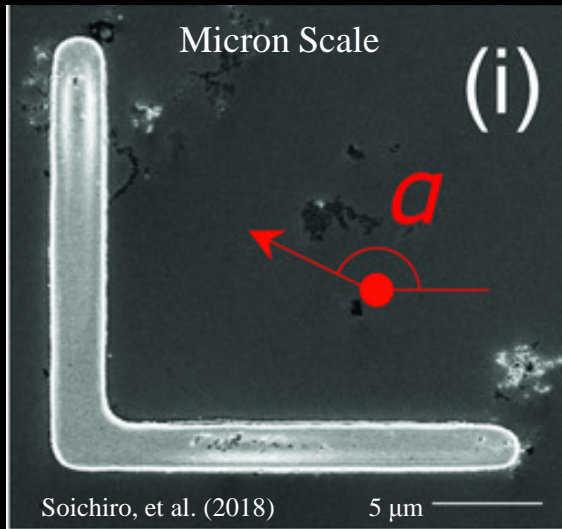




# Objectives Review

- Enable novel functions through leveraging mesoscopic physics
- Enable multimodal locomotion in complex environments through magnetic control
- Enable shape-changing functions of micro/nano-robotics inside the lipid membrane

## • Microrobotics

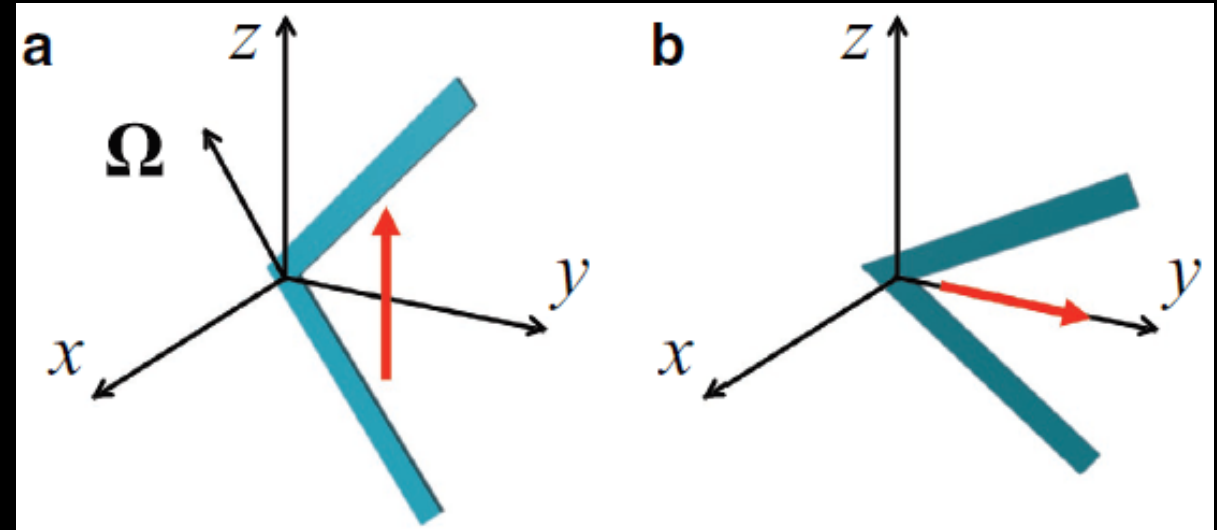


Low Reynolds Number  
Hydrodynamics



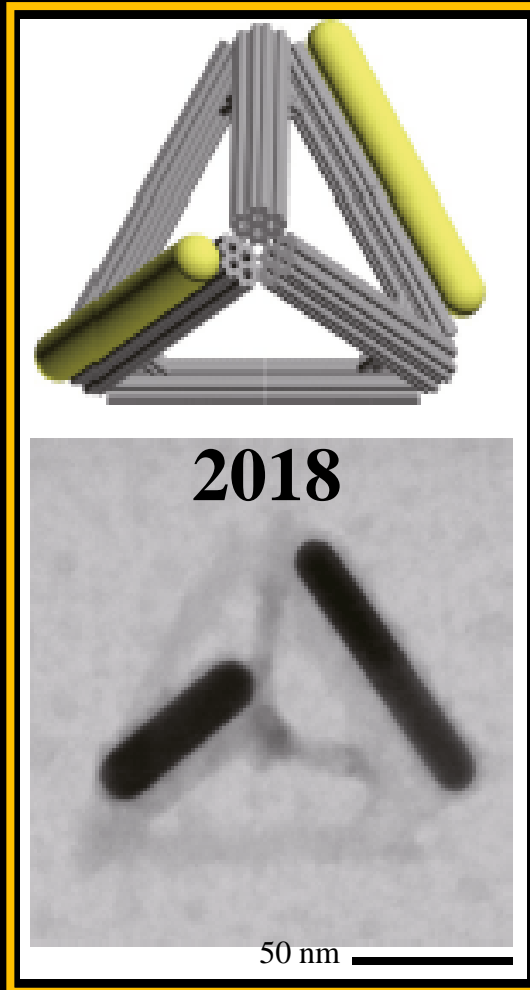
Magnetic Manipulation

## • Physics

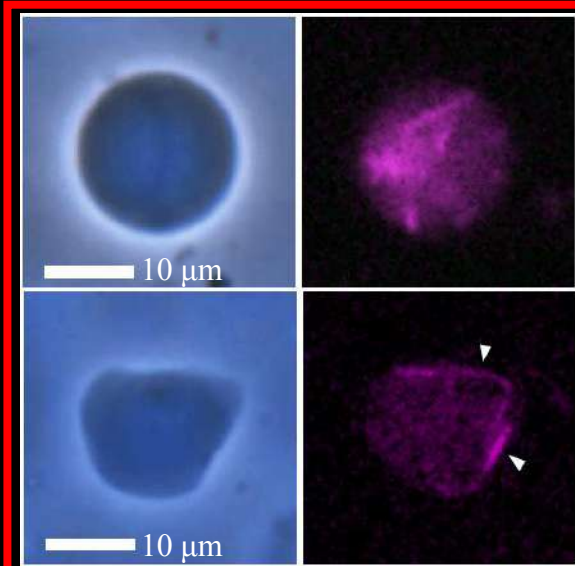


# Lipid Membrane Vesicles Deformation / In-cell Control

L

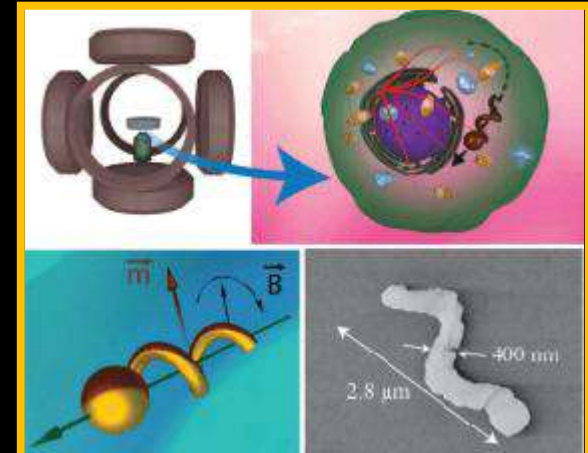
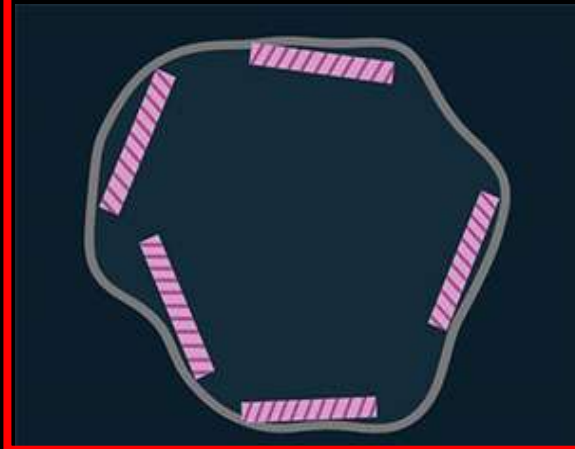


Liu, X., et al.(Nature, 2018.)



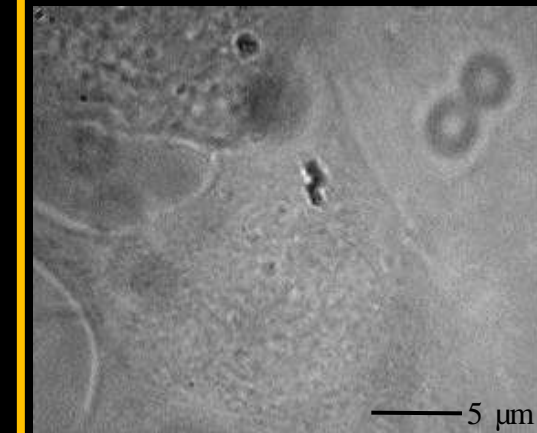
Sato, et al.(Sci. Robot., 2017.)

2017



Pal, et al. (Adv Mater, 2018.)

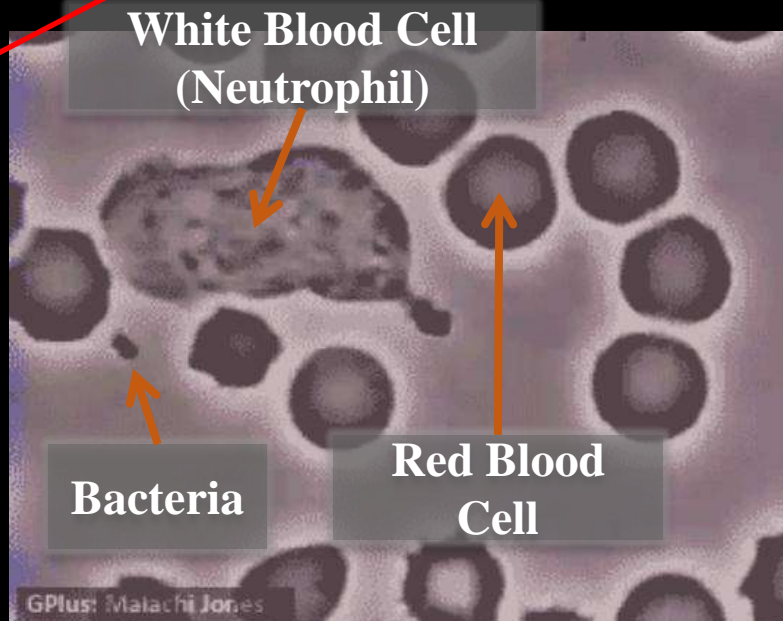
2018



# Future Work

## 1. Bionic

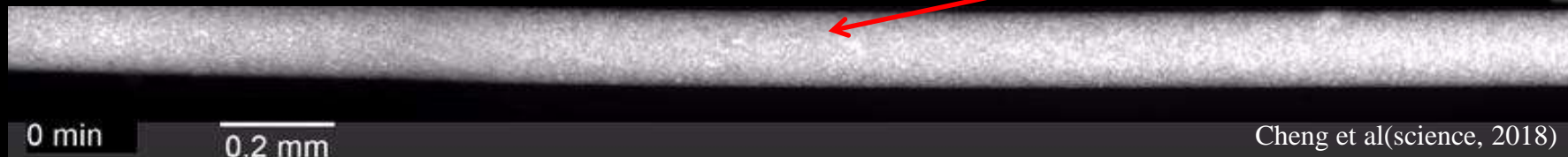
A white blood cell (neutrophil) is chasing a bacteria (1950)



## 2. Communication

A trigger wave bringing death to frog cells.

Wave velocity:  
30  $\mu\text{m}/\text{min}$

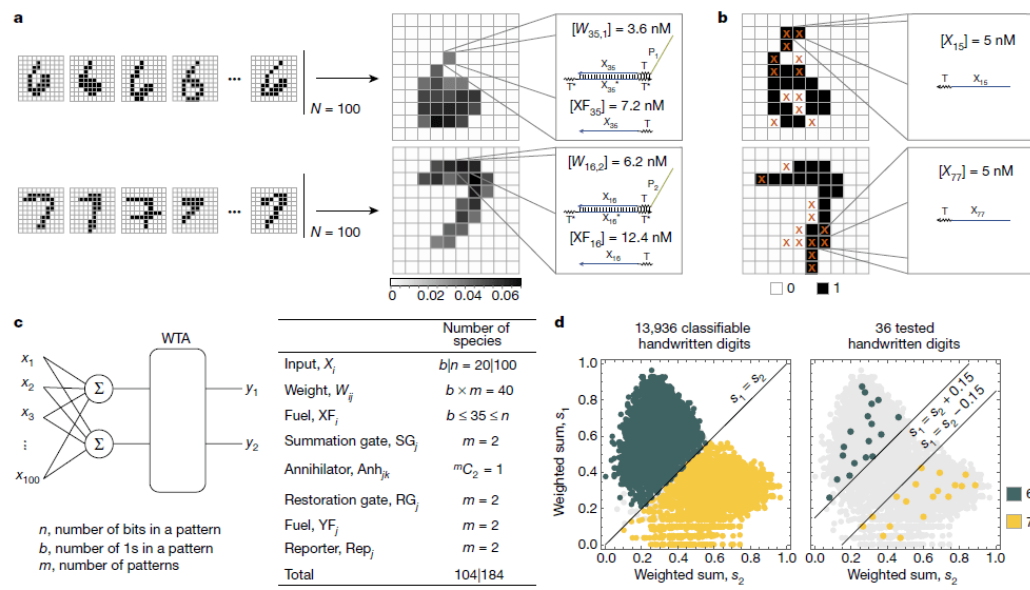
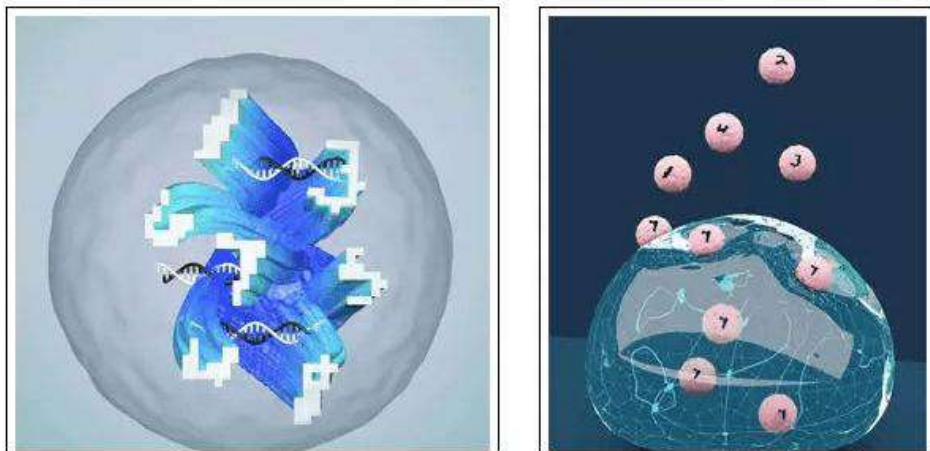




# DNA Organic AI

Artificial Intelligence

## Test Tube Artificial Neural Network Recognizes "Molecular Handwriting"

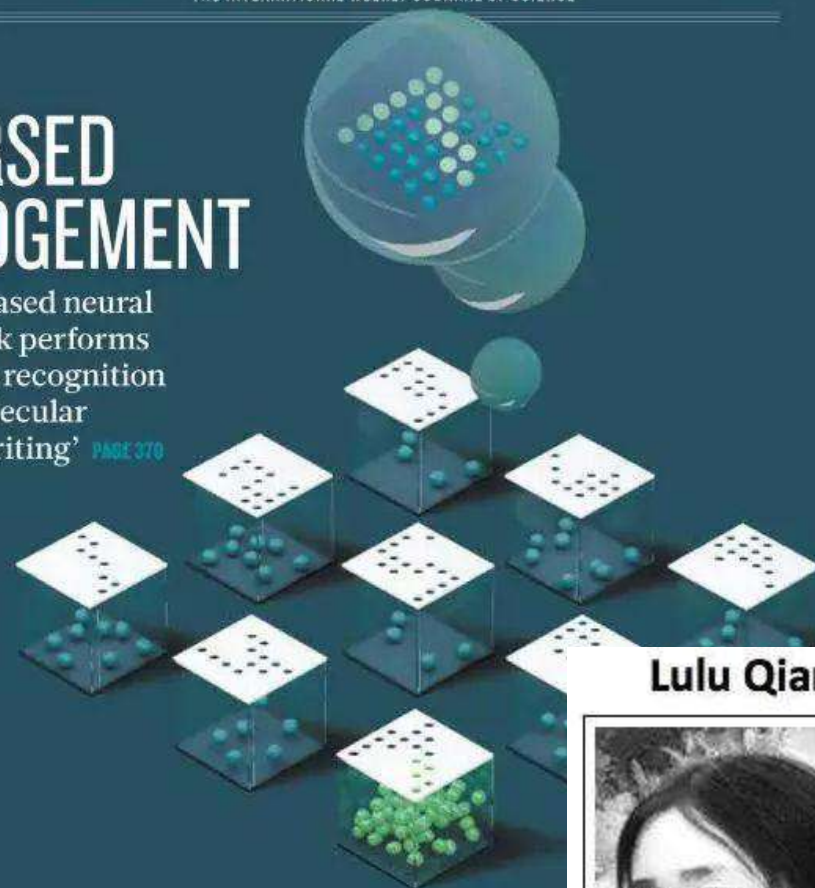


# nature

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE

## PARSED JUDGEMENT

DNA-based neural network performs pattern recognition on 'molecular handwriting' [PAGE 370](#)



Lulu Qian



BOOKS

### HOLIDAY READING

A refreshing selection of science for the summer

[PAGE 328](#)

IMAGING

### MOLECULAR RESOLUTION

Microscope sees deeper into the sub-ångström realm

[PAGES 334 & 343](#)

CAREER

### WINN STRE

The secrets of a spike in performance

[PAGE 3](#)



The background is a complex, abstract composition. A bright, golden-yellow beam of light or energy flows diagonally from the upper left towards the lower right. Scattered throughout the scene are numerous glowing spheres of varying sizes and colors, including white, grey, and red. Some of these spheres appear to be part of a larger, swirling structure on the right side. The overall color palette is dominated by warm tones like gold, brown, and red, with a semi-transparent grey band across the middle where the text is located.

**Thanks for the Listening**

## Group Members:

1. Jiyu Xie 谢济宇: Leader
2. Ting Chen 陈婷: Analysis, DNA Origami
3. Bolin He 何柏霖: Experiment
4. Kang Tang 唐康: Control, DNA Origami
5. Weijie Guo 郭伟杰: Fabrication & Observation System Design
6. Hao Liu 刘豪: Nanoimprinting
7. Yunbo Liu 刘运波: Control
8. Yuzhen Cai 蔡玉臻(R.A.): Experiment

## Mentor:

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## Funding:

Climbing Project, 攀登计划

SUSTech, 南方科技大学

U Kei Cheang's Micro/Nano-robotics Lab  
微纳机器人实验室