

# TOBIAS BUCK

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# DIFFERENTIABLE SIMULATORS

# OUTLINE OF TODAY

1. Day 5: Differentiable physics simulators cont.
  - A. Introduction to Differentiable Physics
  - B. Gradient based optimisation of computer programs
  - C. Training NNs with „the simulator in the loop“
  - D. reducing numerical errors with deep learning
  - E. solving inverse problems with NNs

# WHERE TO FIND THE LECTURE MATERIAL

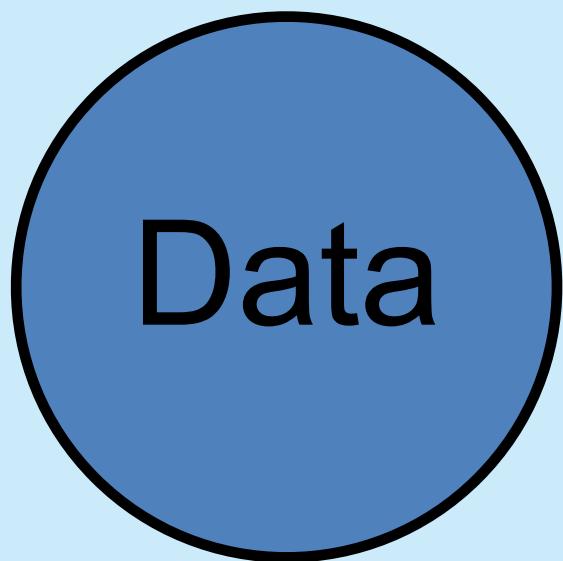


<https://github.com/TobiBu/graddays>

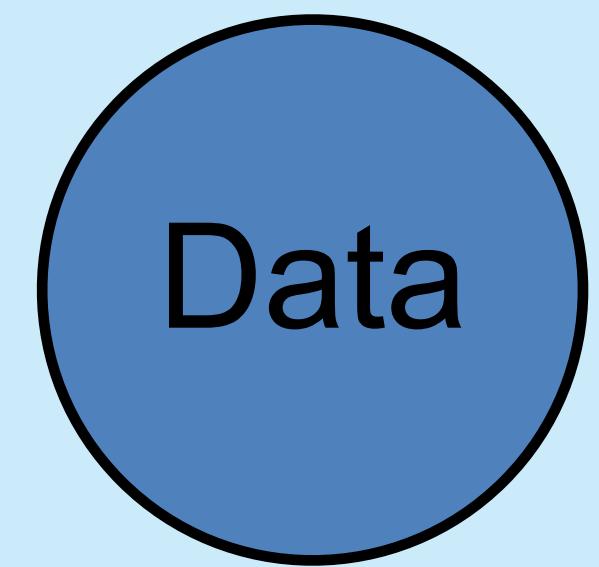
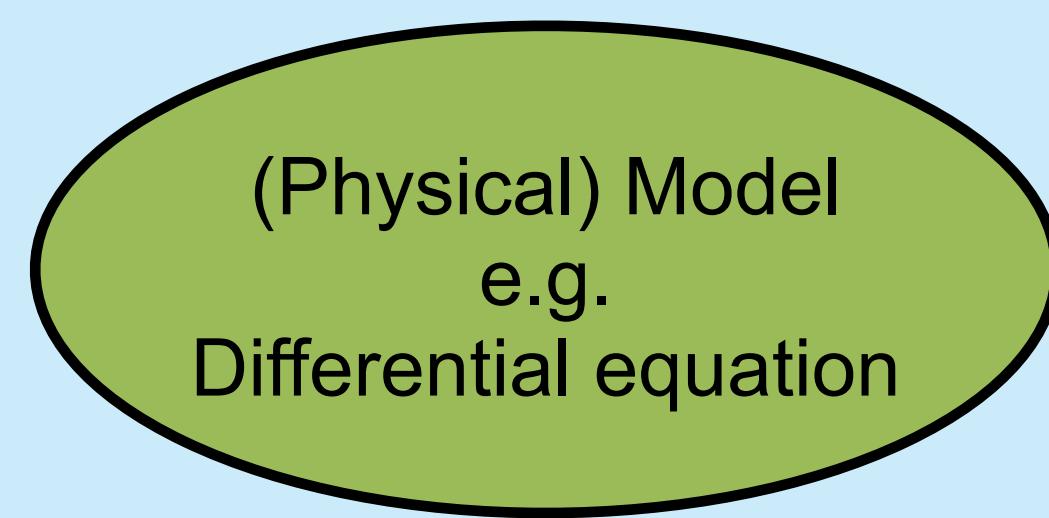
# WHY DO WE WANT A DIFFERENTIABLE PHYSICS SIMULATOR?

For Fun!

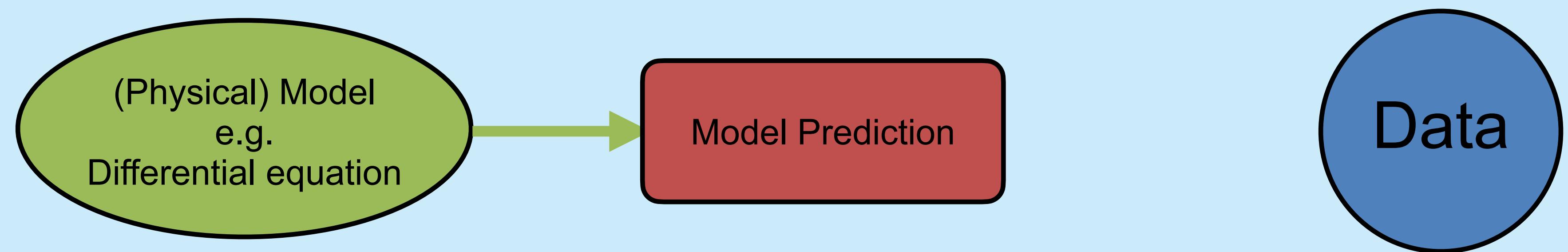
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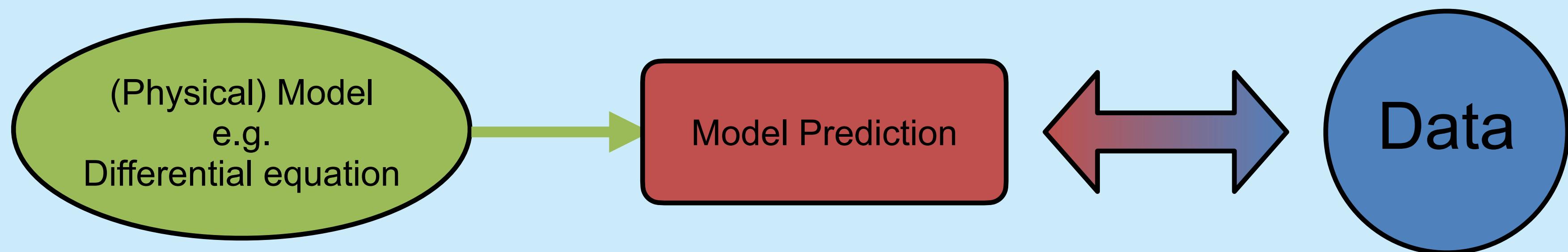
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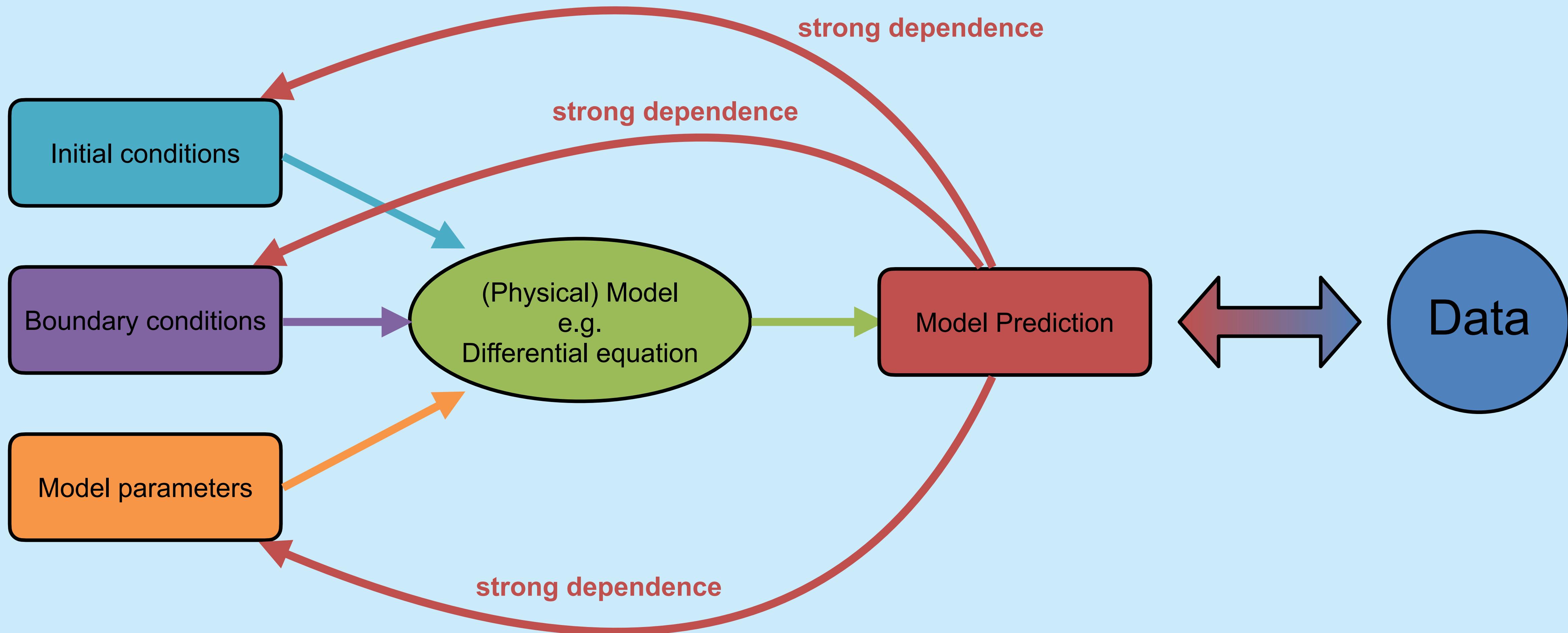
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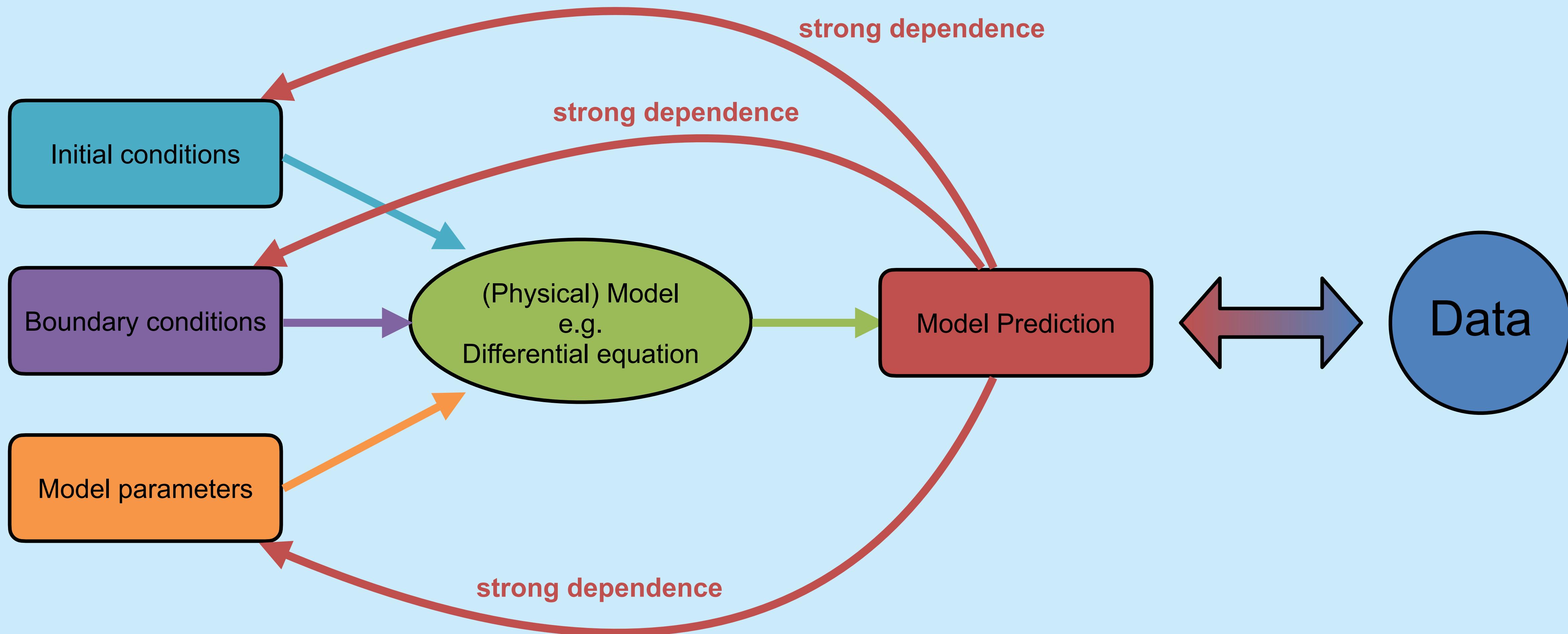
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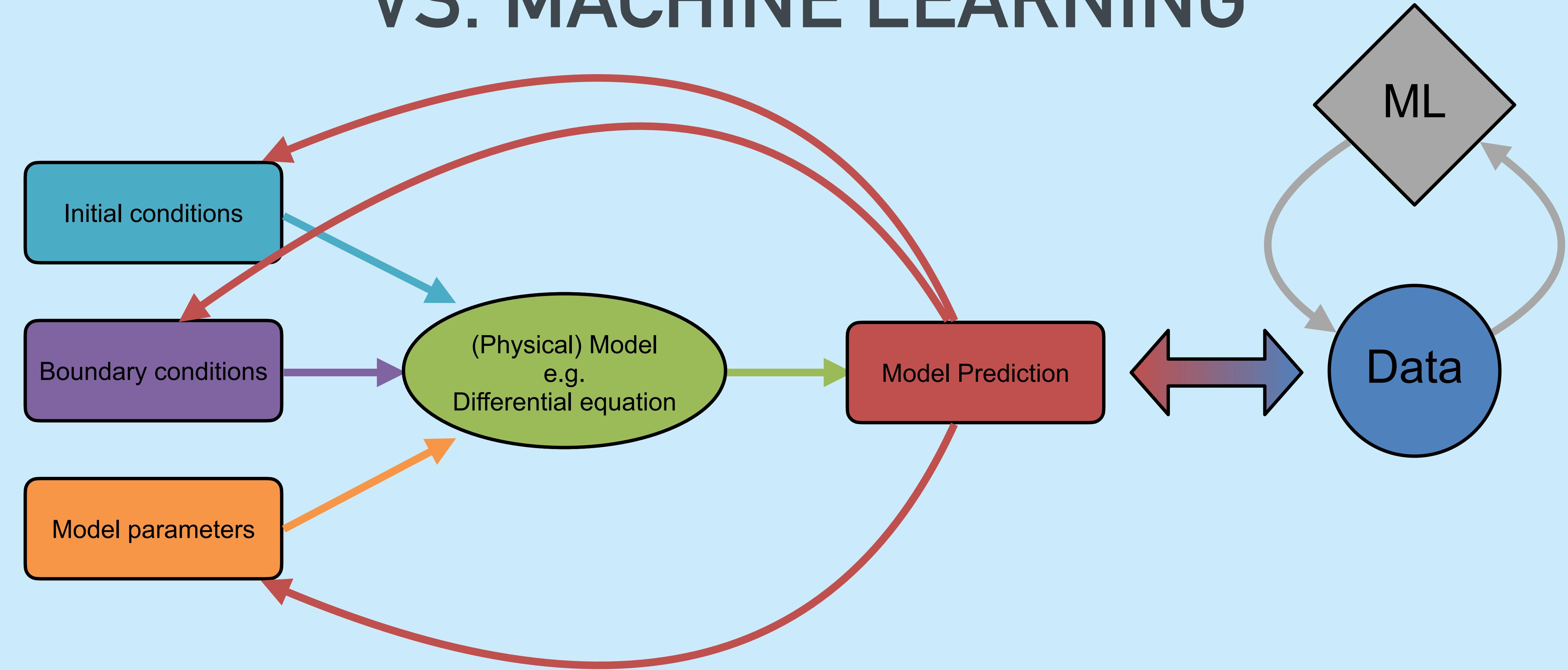
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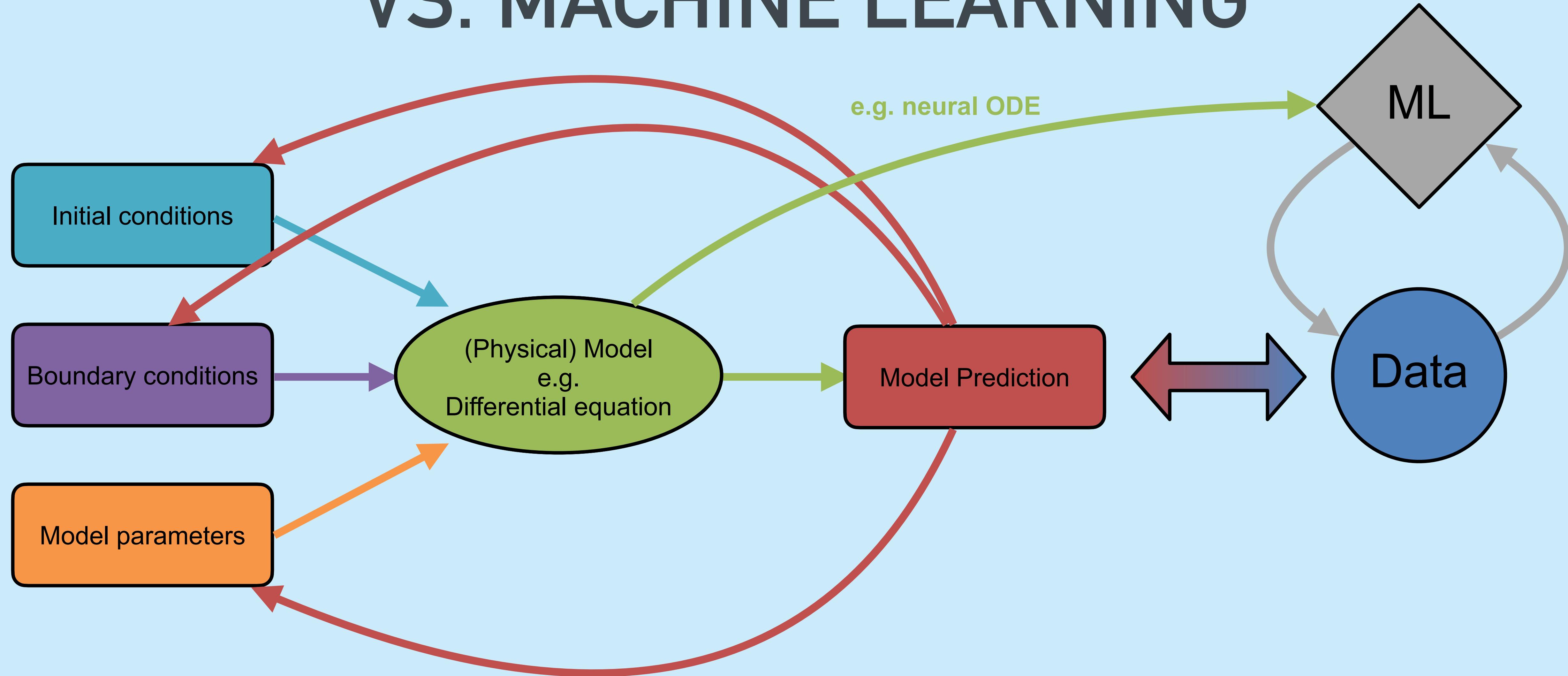
# CAN WE INVERT SOLVERS TO OPTIMISE ICS, BCS OR FIND OPTIMAL PARAMETERS?



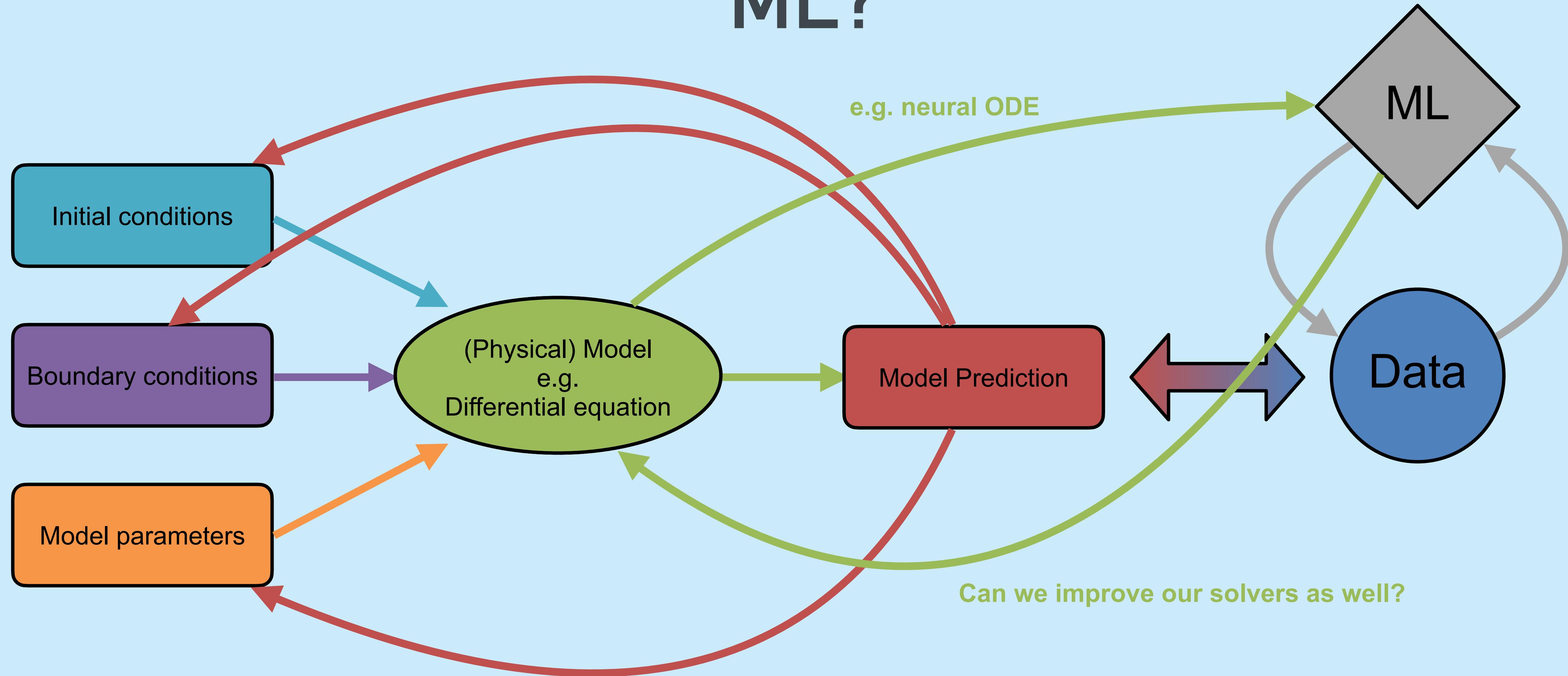
# DIFFERENTIABLE PHYSICS SIMULATOR VS. MACHINE LEARNING

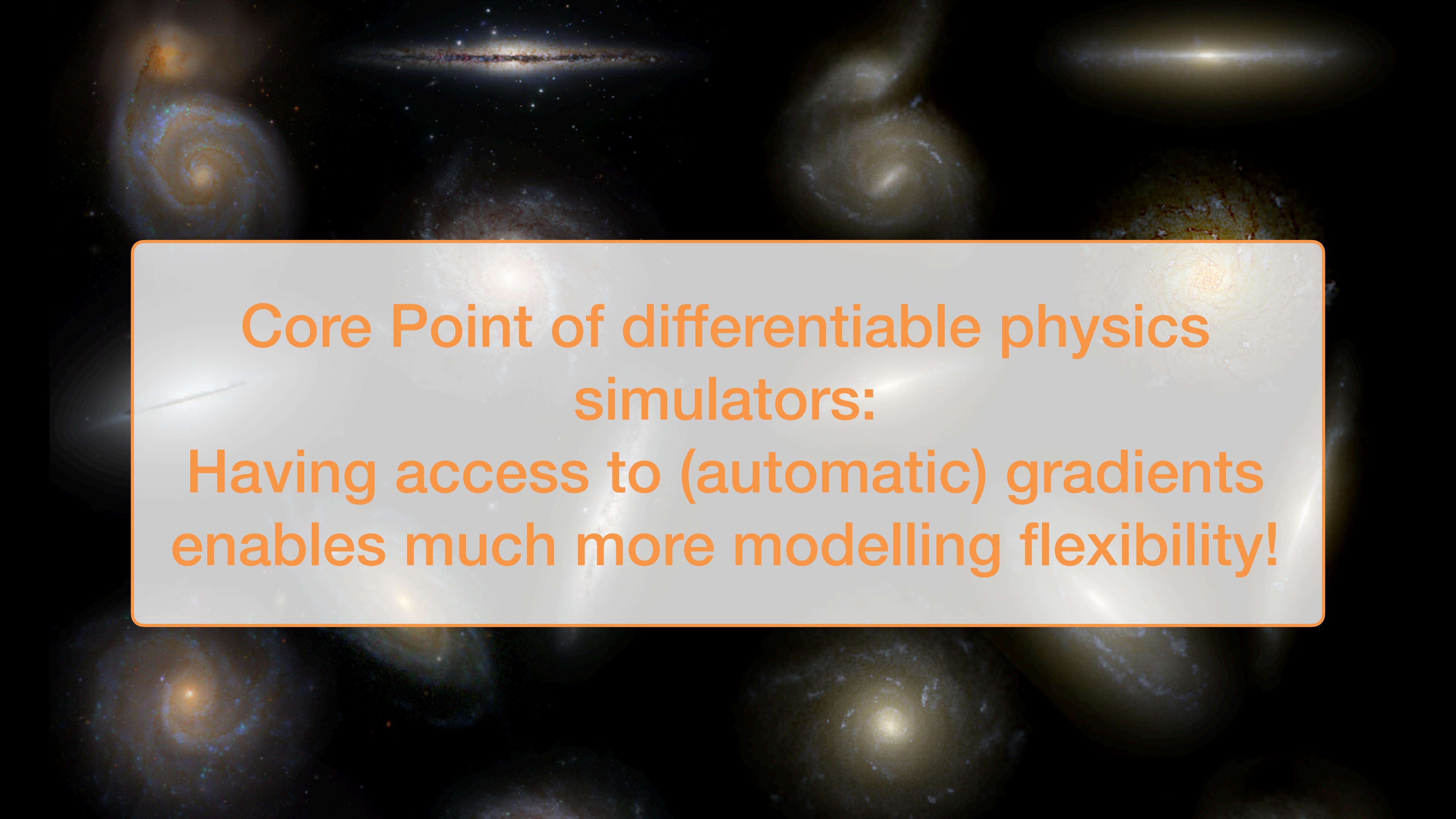


# DIFFERENTIABLE PHYSICS SIMULATOR VS. MACHINE LEARNING



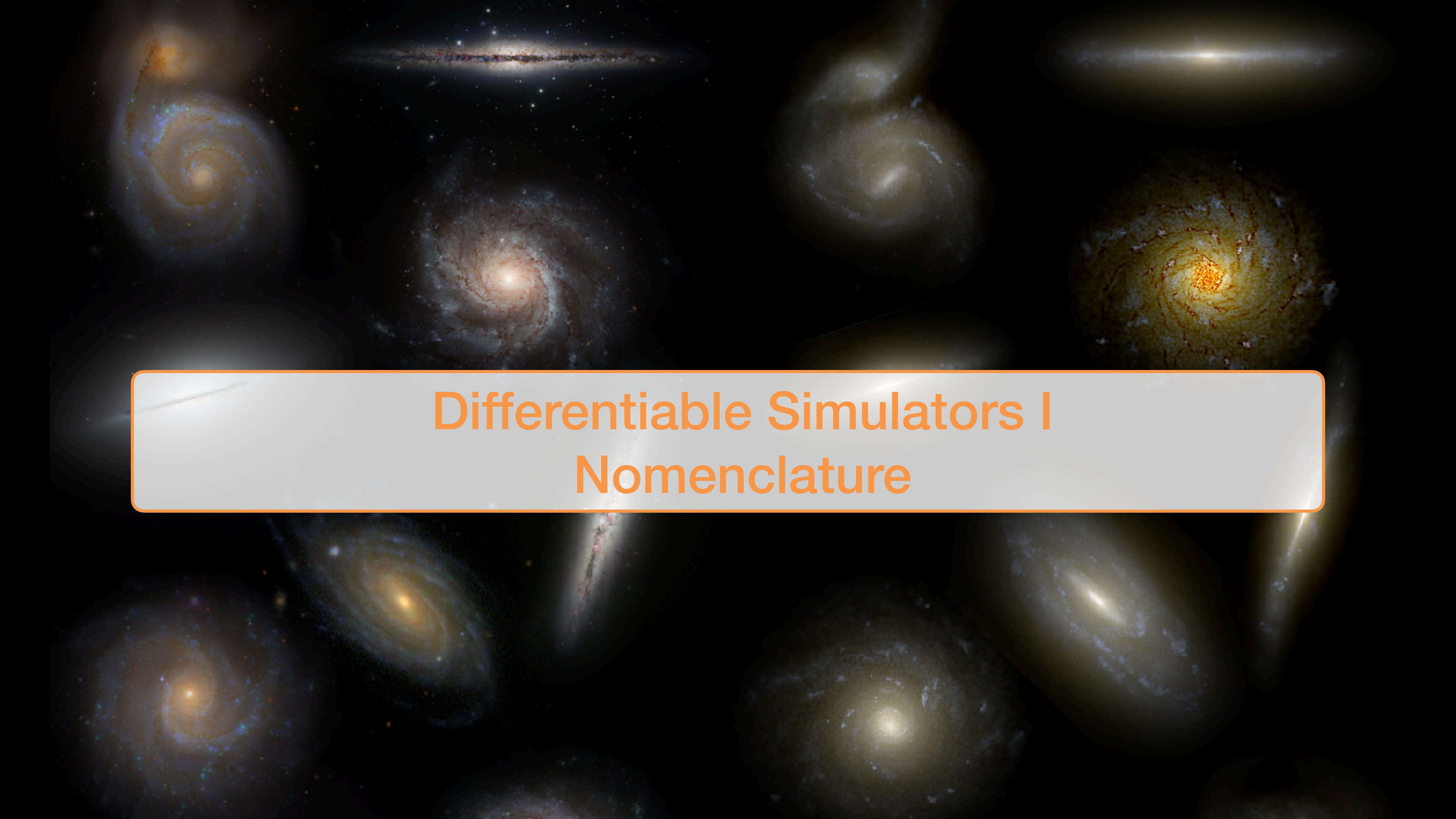
# CAN WE IMPROVE OUR SOLVERS WITH ML?





Core Point of differentiable physics  
simulators:

Having access to (automatic) gradients  
enables much more modelling flexibility!



# Differentiable Simulators I

## Nomenclature

# HOW DO WE BUILD DIFFERENTIABLE SIMULATORS?

remember autodiff from monday?

For all practical purposes, just rely on packages such as JAX, pytorch, Julia, phiflow, ...

and make use of their autodiff frameworks.

however, if you want to go deeper:

differentiable operators and implicit function theorem

<https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys.html>

Thürey et al. 2022

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2406.09699>

Sapienza et al. 2024

# WHAT DO WE WANT TO DIFFERENTIATE?

In the context of ML: A loss function

$$L(\theta) = \frac{1}{2} \|u(t_1; \theta) - u^{\text{target}}(t_1)\|_2^2$$

In the context of statistics or physics:

The likelihood function  $\mathcal{L}$  or the posterior distribution

Having gradients of  $\mathcal{L}$  enables more efficient sampling methods such as Hamilton Monte Carlo sampling instead of MCMC and even improves SBI

Simply a quantity of interest:

quantifying how the solution of the differential equation changes as we vary the parameter values

# SOME MORE NOMENCLATURE

$$L(\theta) = \frac{1}{2} \|u(t_1; \theta) - u^{\text{target}}(t_1)\|_2^2$$

Gradient based optimisation:

Find  $\theta$  such that  $\mathcal{L}(\theta)$  is minimised (e.g. using ADAM)

$$\theta^{m+1} = \theta^m - \alpha_m \frac{dL}{d\theta}(\theta^m),$$

# SOME MORE NOMENCLATURE

$$L(\theta) = \frac{1}{2} \|u(t_1; \theta) - u^{\text{target}}(t_1)\|_2^2$$

**Sensitivity matrix:**  
gradient of loss is typically given by

$$\frac{dL}{d\theta} = \frac{\partial L}{\partial u} \frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \theta}.$$

which results in

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial u} = u - u^{\text{target}}(t_1) \quad \frac{\partial L}{\partial \theta} = 0.$$

since  $L$  does not depend on  $\theta$  directly.

complicated derivative is  $\frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta}$ , also called **sensitivity**.

# SOME MORE NOMENCLATURE

$$\text{sensitivity } s = \frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta}$$

$$s = \frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial u_1}{\partial \theta_1} & \cdots & \frac{\partial u_1}{\partial \theta_p} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial u_n}{\partial \theta_1} & \cdots & \frac{\partial u_n}{\partial \theta_p} \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times p}.$$

sensitivity  $s$  is a Jacobian, the matrix of first derivatives of a vector-valued function

product  $sv$ , with  $v \in \mathbb{R}^p$ , is the directional derivative of the function  $u(\theta)$  in the direction  $v$

$$sv = \frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta} v = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{u(\theta + hv) - u(\theta)}{h},$$

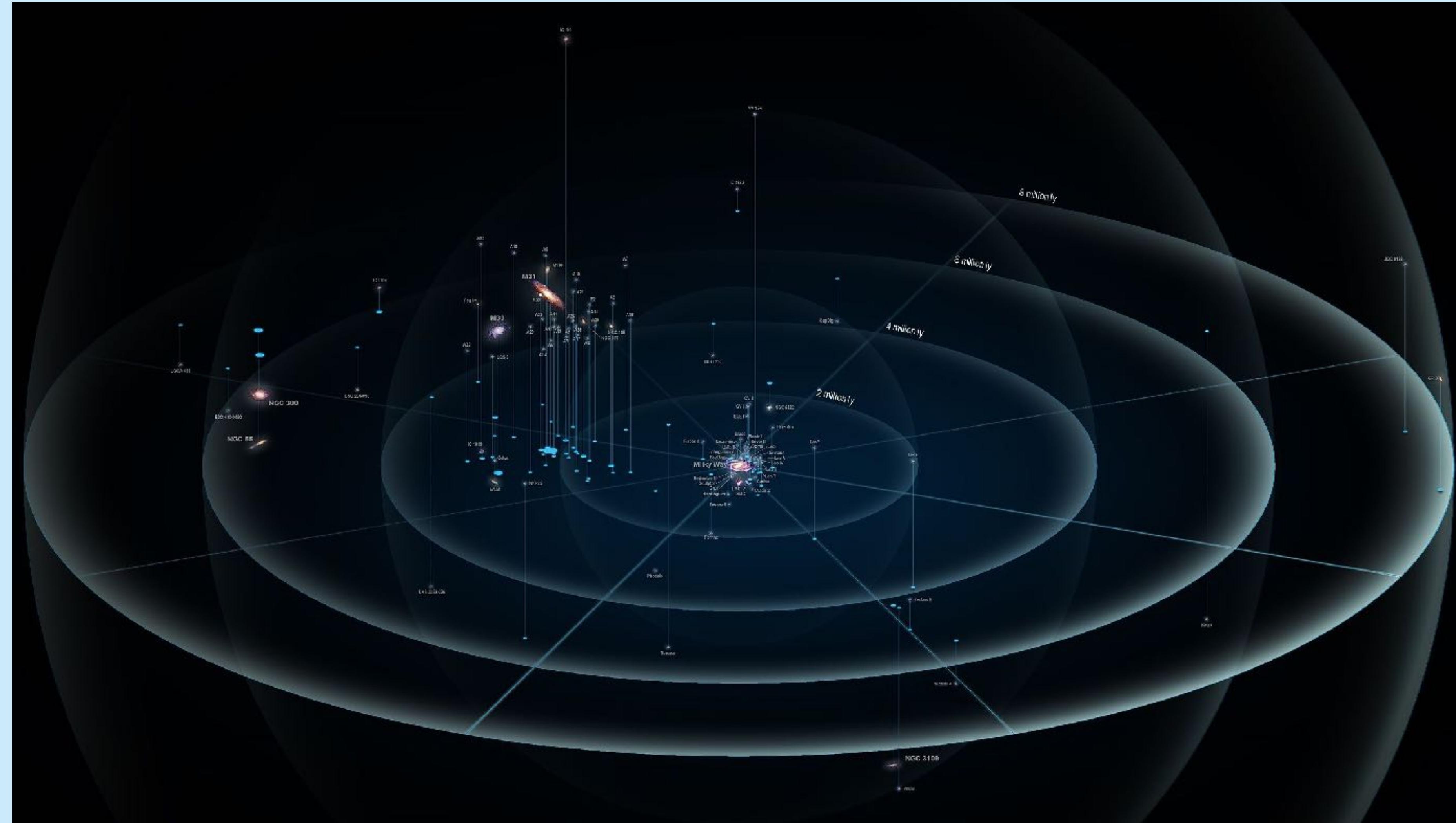
The background of the image is a deep space scene filled with numerous galaxies of various sizes and colors, including blue, orange, and yellow. Some galaxies have distinct spiral arms, while others are more diffuse. A prominent, bright galaxy with a visible central bulge and spiral arms is located in the upper left quadrant. Another large, luminous galaxy is visible in the lower right quadrant. The overall atmosphere is dark and star-filled.

# Differentiable Simulators II

## Optimisation of initial conditions

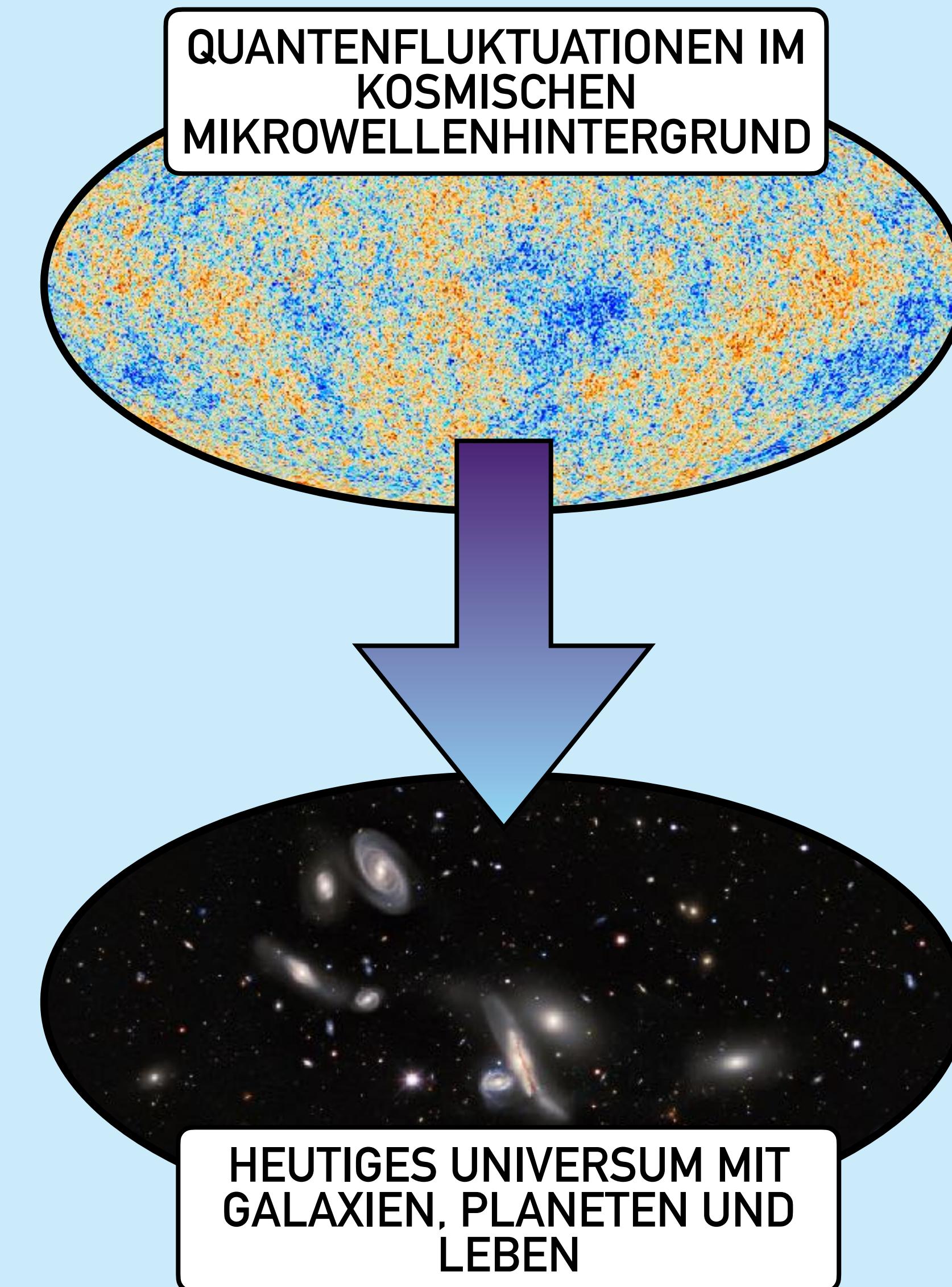
# OPTIMISING INITIAL CONDITIONS

One important question in cosmology: what are the ICs of the local group?



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One important question in cosmology: what are the ICs of the local group?



# PMWD: A COSMOLOGICAL DIFFERENTIABLE GRAVITY SOLVER

<https://github.com/eelregit/pmwd/tree/master?tab=readme-ov-file>

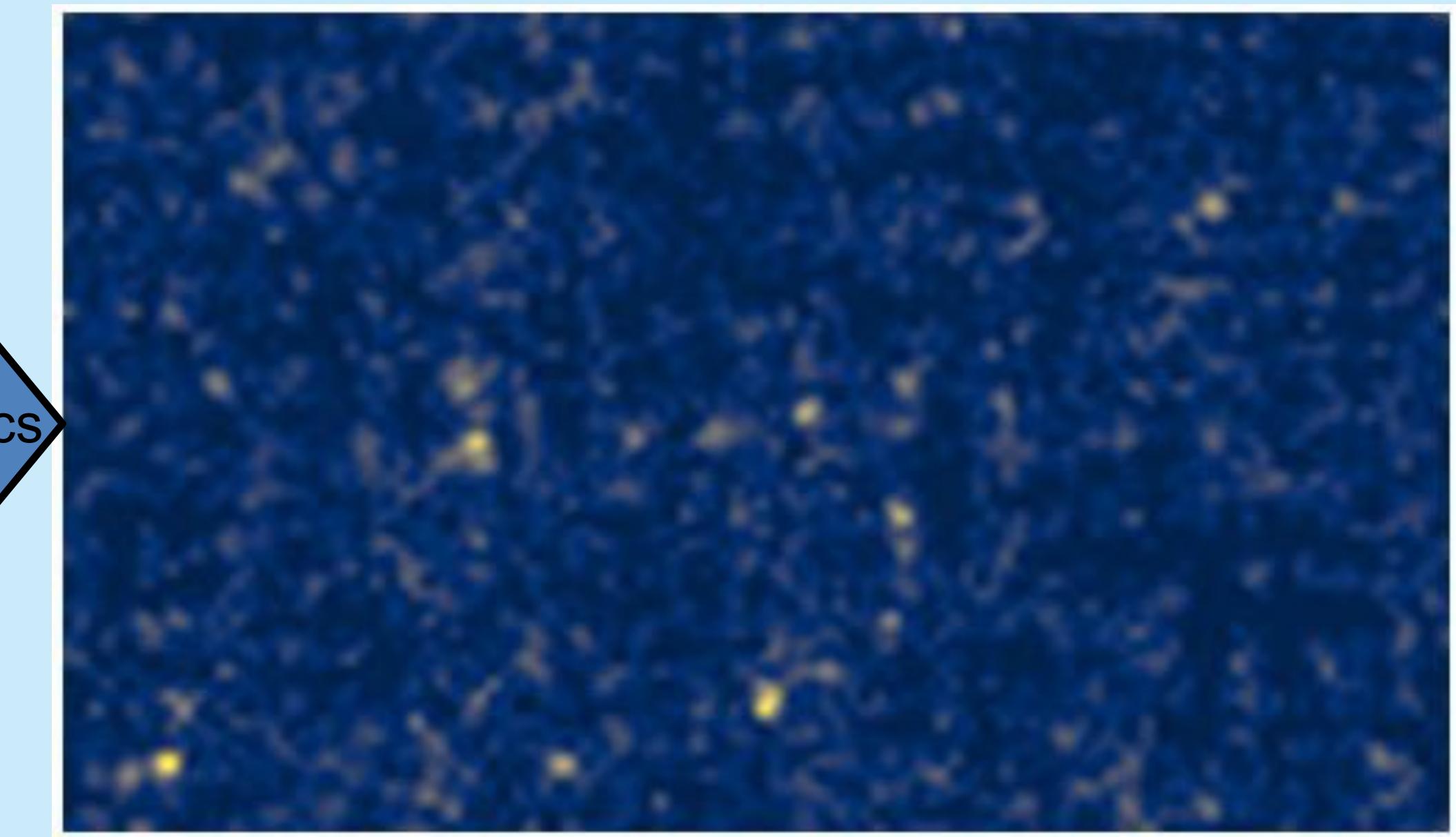
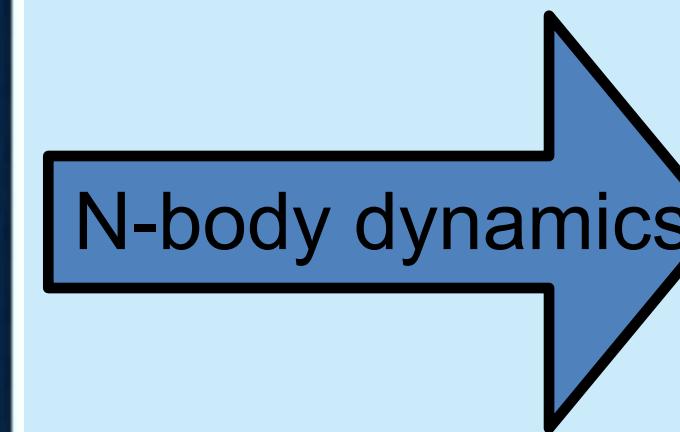
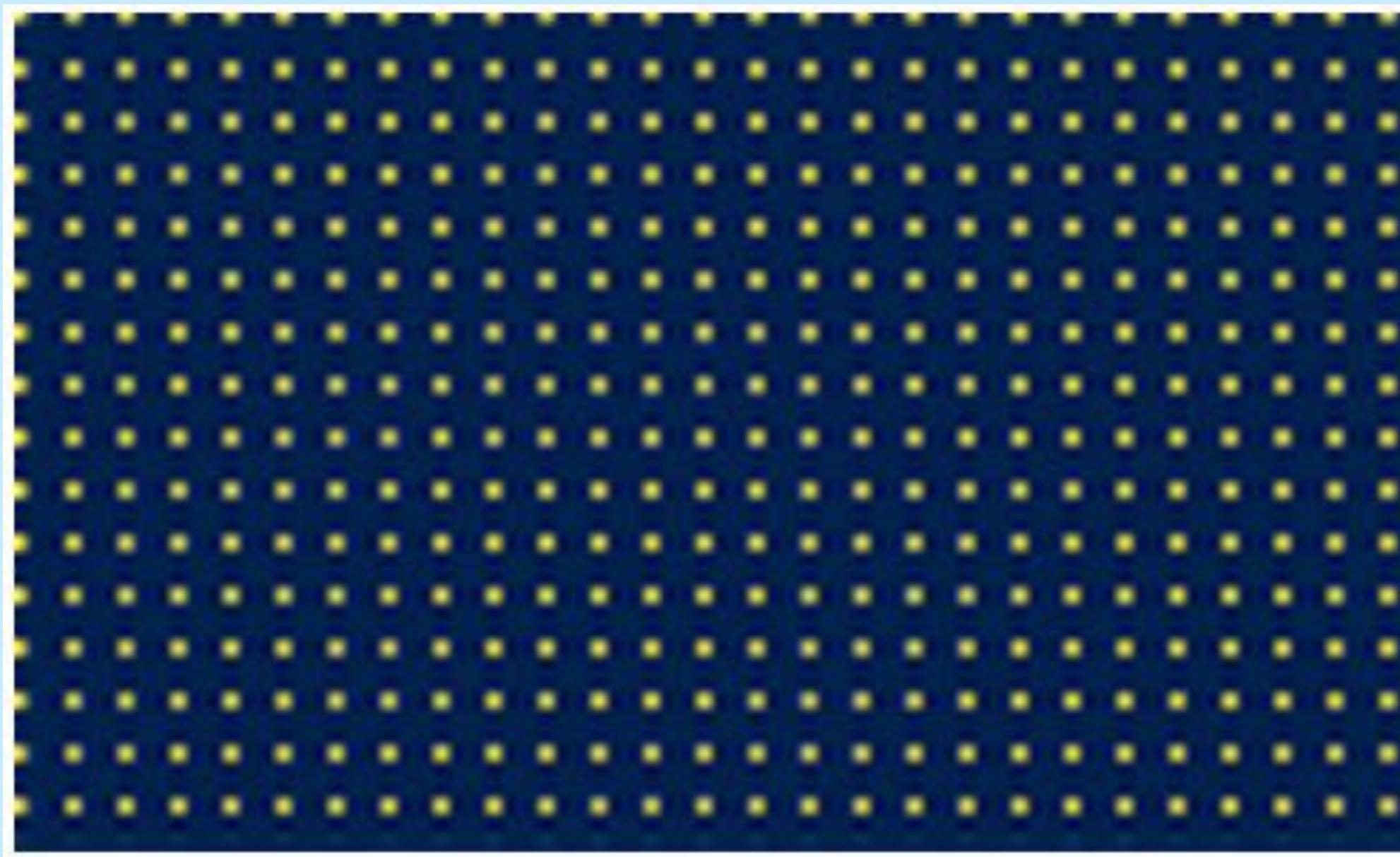
written in JAX



# PMWD: A COSMOLOGICAL DIFFERENTIABLE GRAVITY SOLVER

Example:

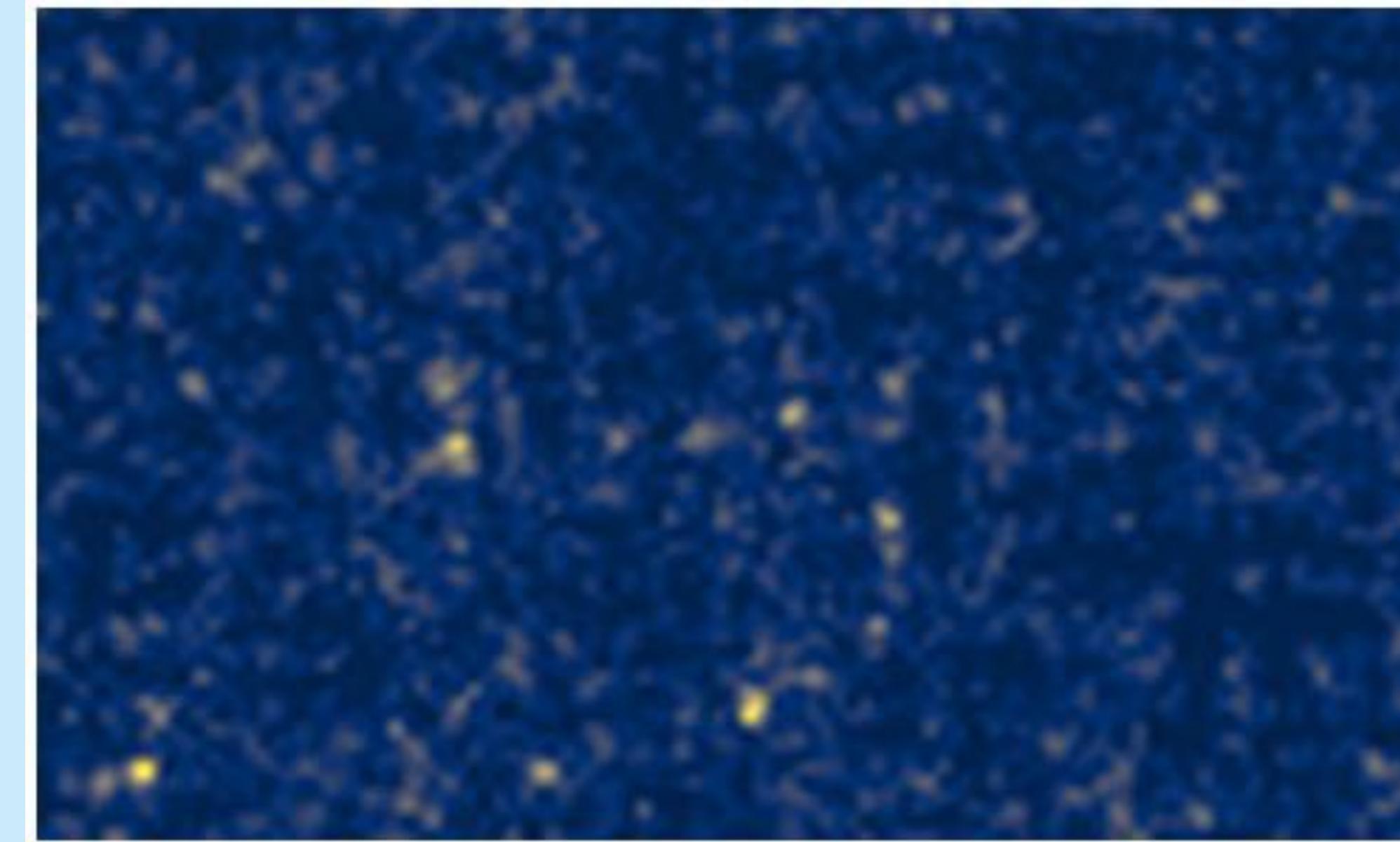
$16 \times 27 \times 16 = 6912$  particles, in a  $160 \times 270 \times 160 \text{ Mpc}^3/\text{h}^3$  box, evolving with a 2x mesh ( $32 \times 54 \times 32$ ) from  $a=1/64$  to  $a=1$  to match the 2D projection to the target image below at 4x resolution ( $64 \times 108$ )



# PMWD: LOSS FUNCTION

Example:

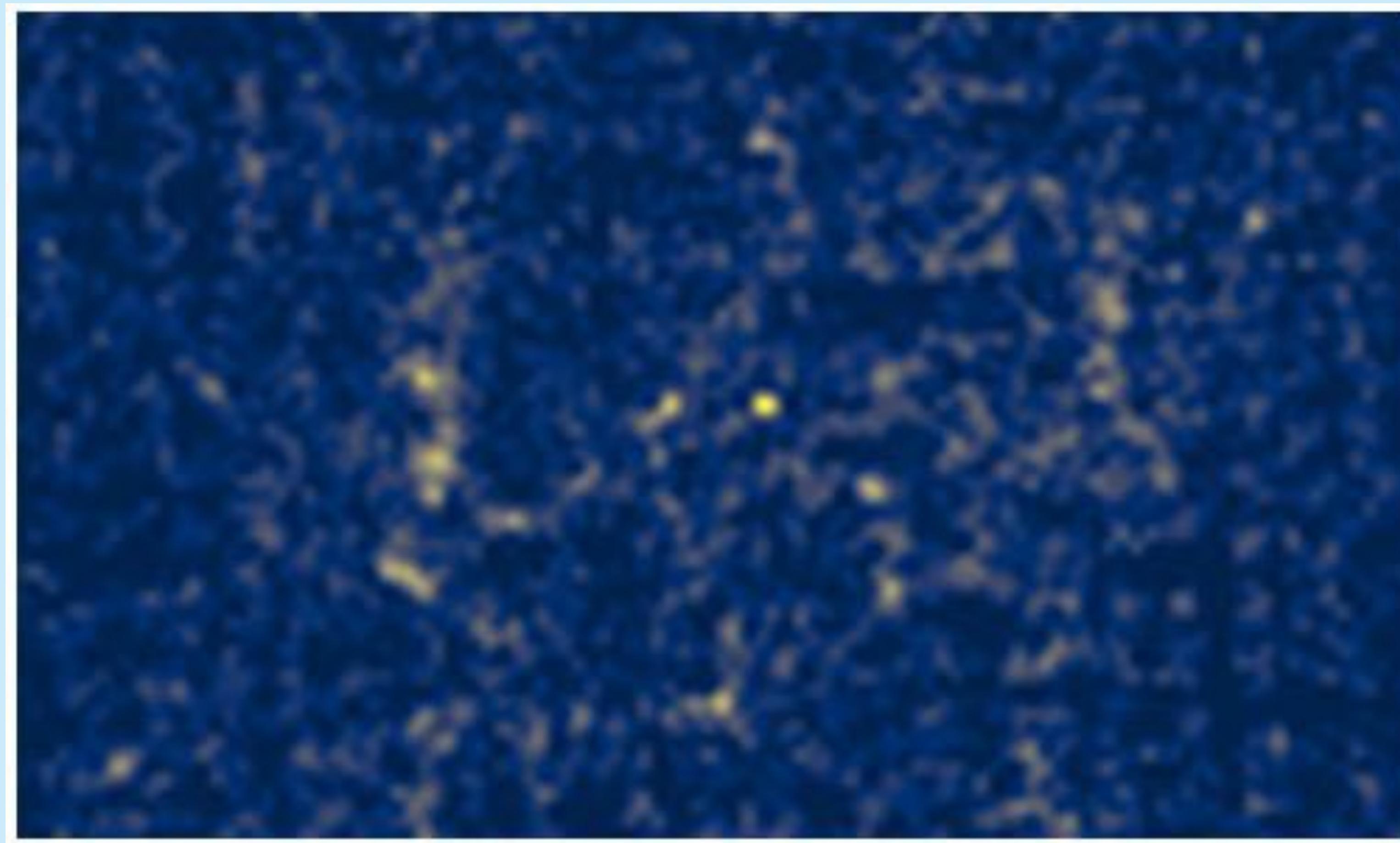
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-  $\rho mwd = 0$

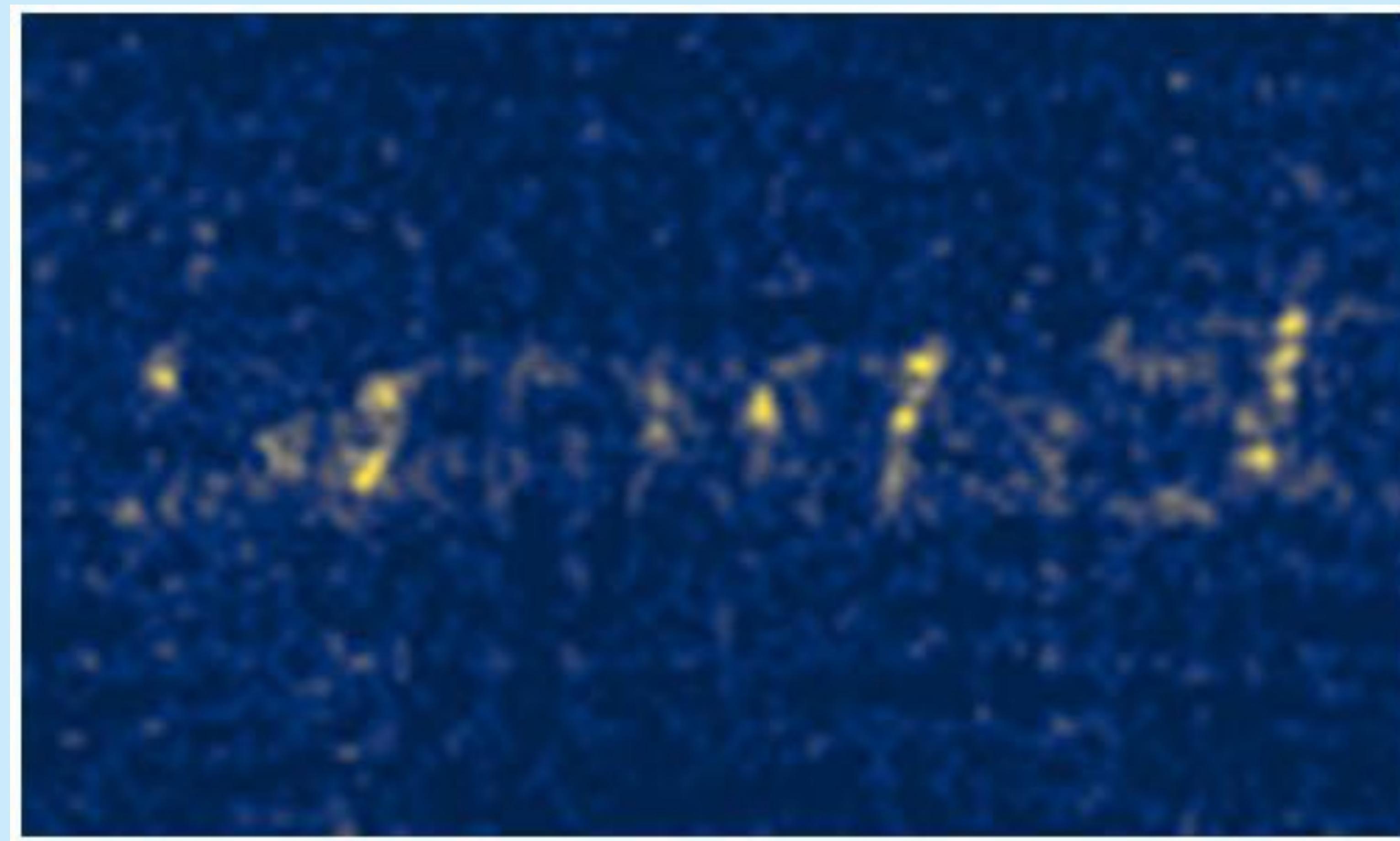
# PMWD: ONE GRADIENT STEP

pull gradient through gravity solve, update ICs and rerun simulation!



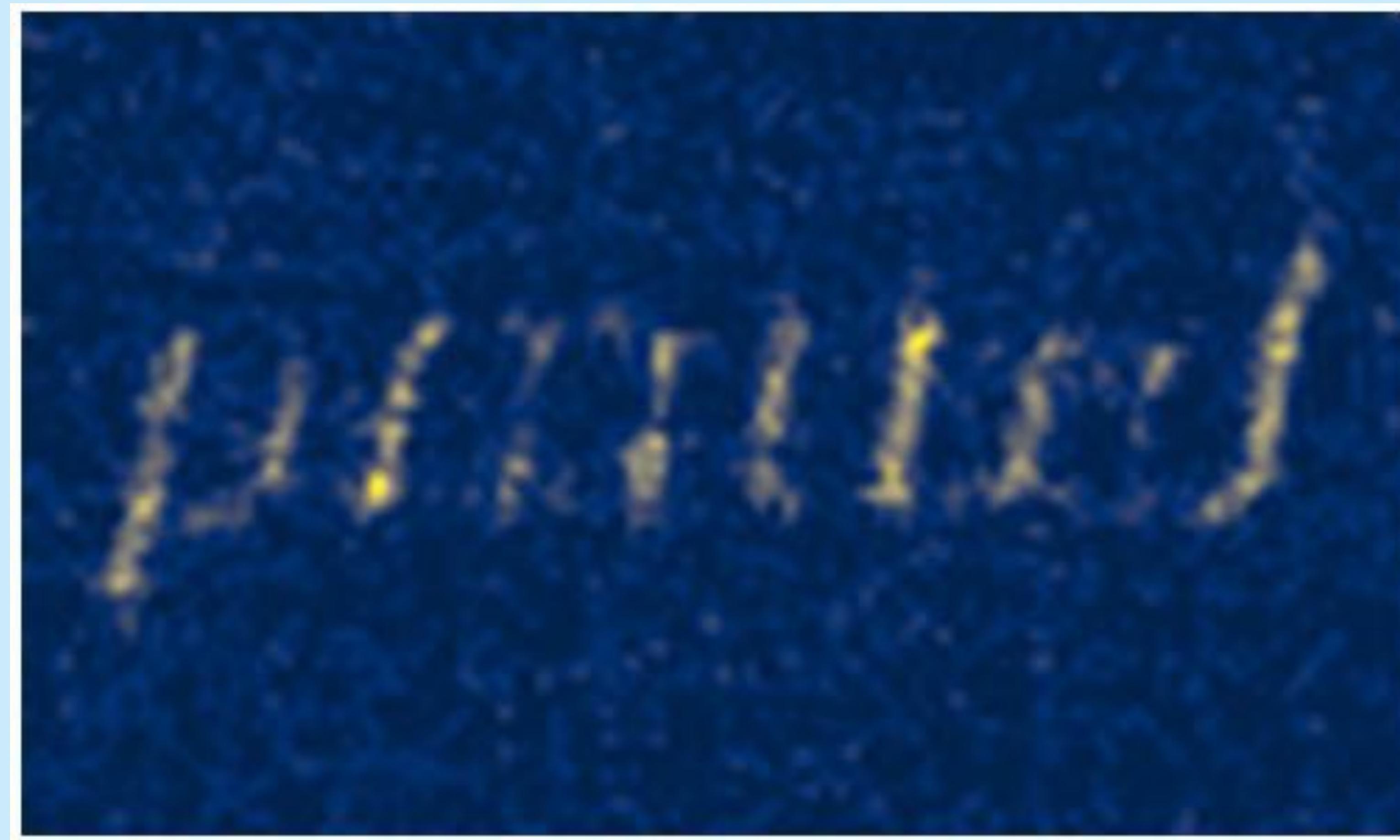
# PMWD: TEN GRADIENT STEPS

pull gradient through gravity solve, update ICs and rerun simulation!



# PMWD: 30 GRADIENT STEPS

pull gradient through gravity solve, update ICs and rerun simulation!



# PMWD: 100 GRADIENT STEPS

pull gradient through gravity solve, update ICs and rerun simulation!



# PMWD: 300 GRADIENT STEPS

pull gradient through gravity solve, update ICs and rerun simulation!



# PMWD: 1000 GRADIENT STEPS

pull gradient through gravity solve, update ICs and rerun simulation!



# PMWD: 3000 GRADIENT STEPS

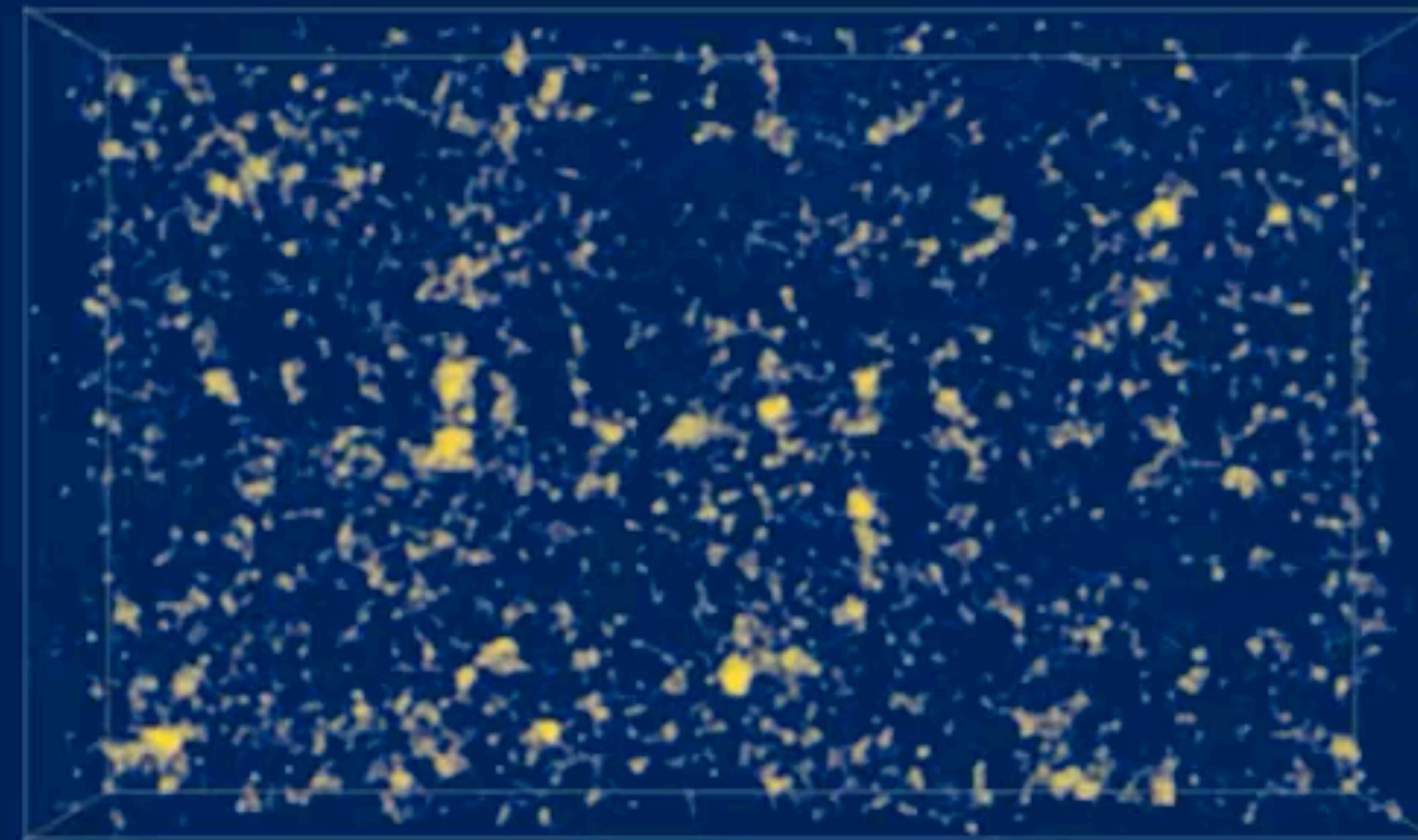
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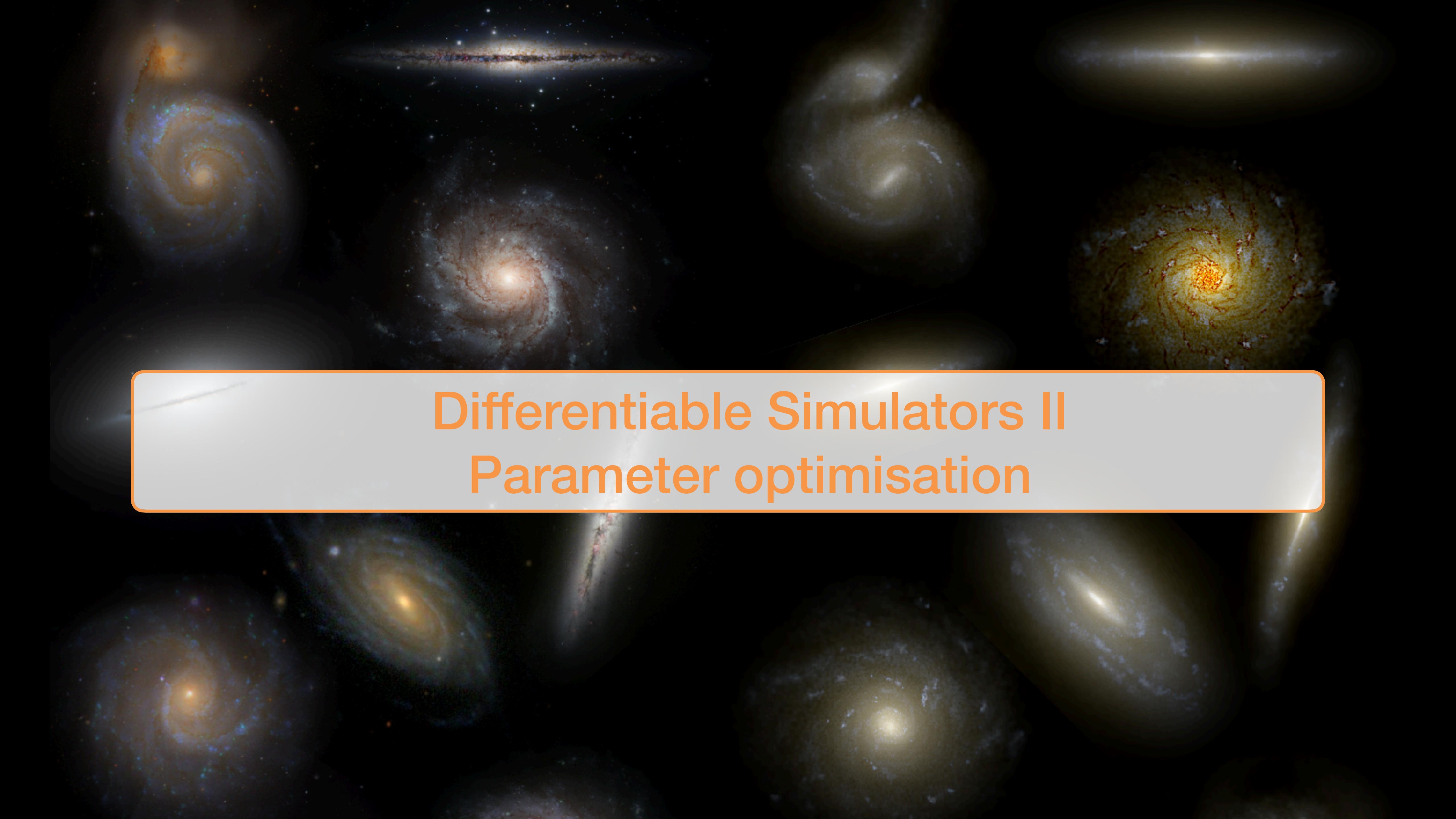
# PMWD: TWO PERPENDICULAR CONSTRAINTS!

let the ICs be constrained by two perpendicular projections.

Optimizing initial conditions



Optimization iteration: 1

The background of the image is a deep space scene filled with numerous galaxies of various sizes and colors, including blue, orange, and yellow. Some galaxies are more prominent than others, creating a sense of depth and scale.

# Differentiable Simulators II

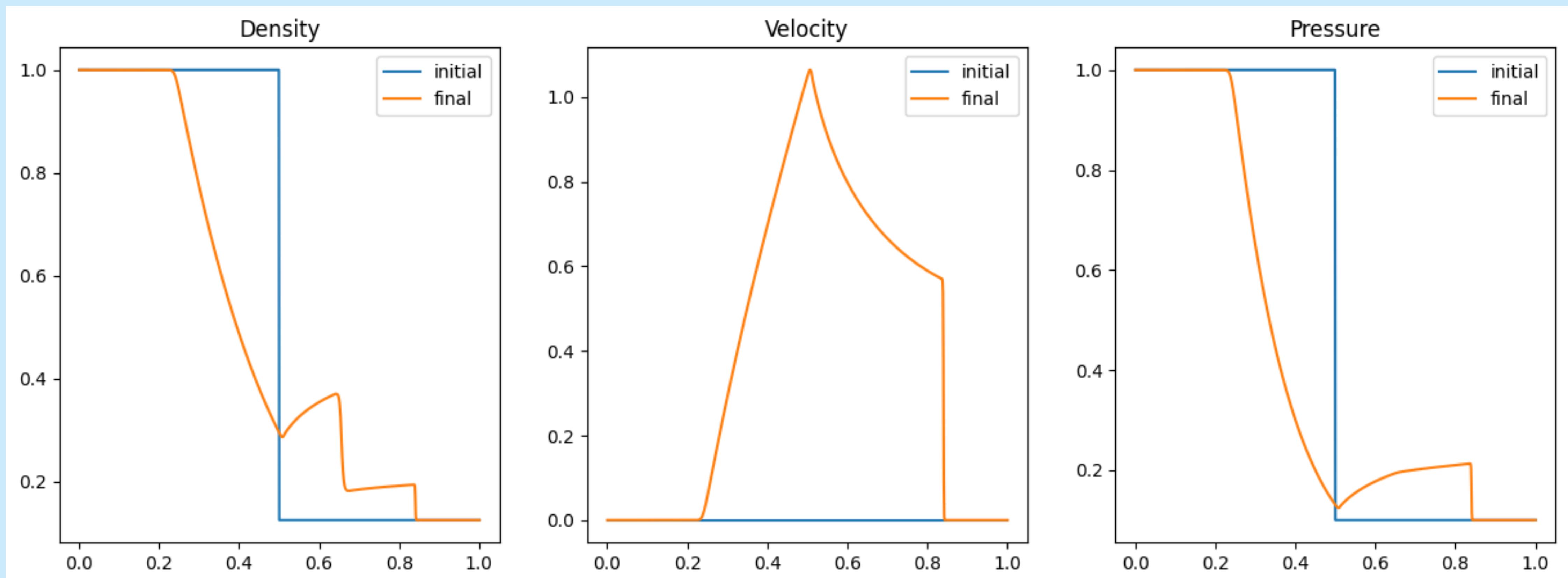
## Parameter optimisation

# JF1UIDS: A 1D RADIAL FLUID SOLVER WRITTEN IN JAX

<https://github.com/leo1200/jf1uids/tree/dev>

Leonard Storcks

simple shock example

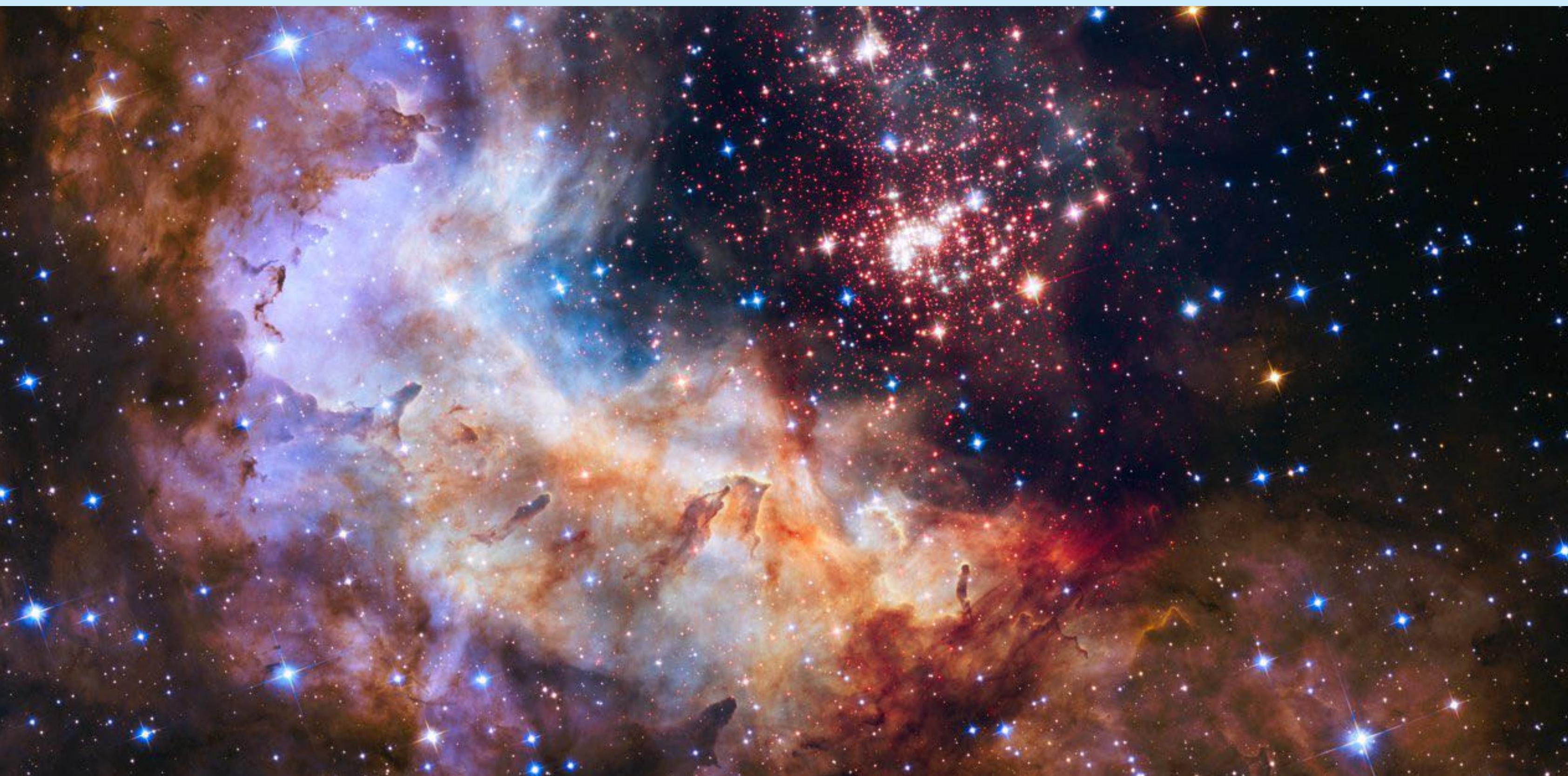


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Leonard Storcks

simple stellar wind example



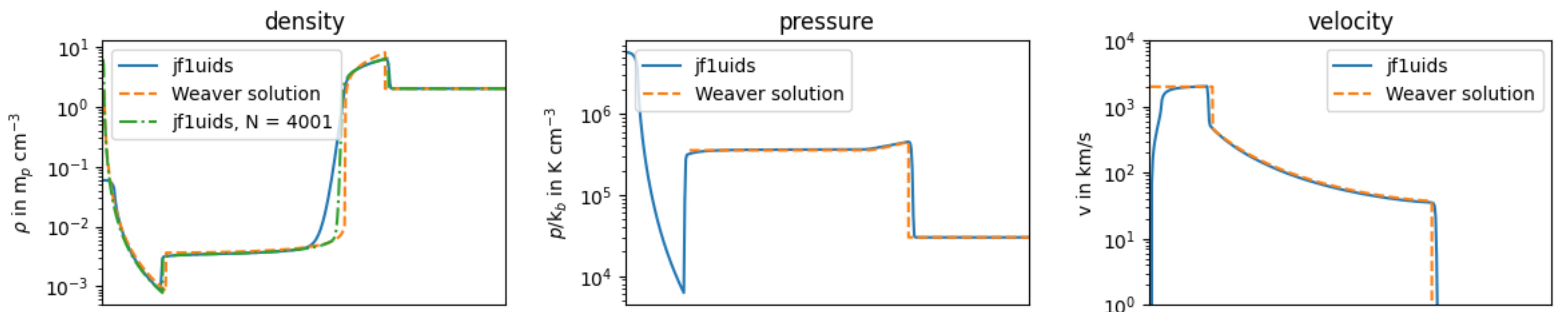
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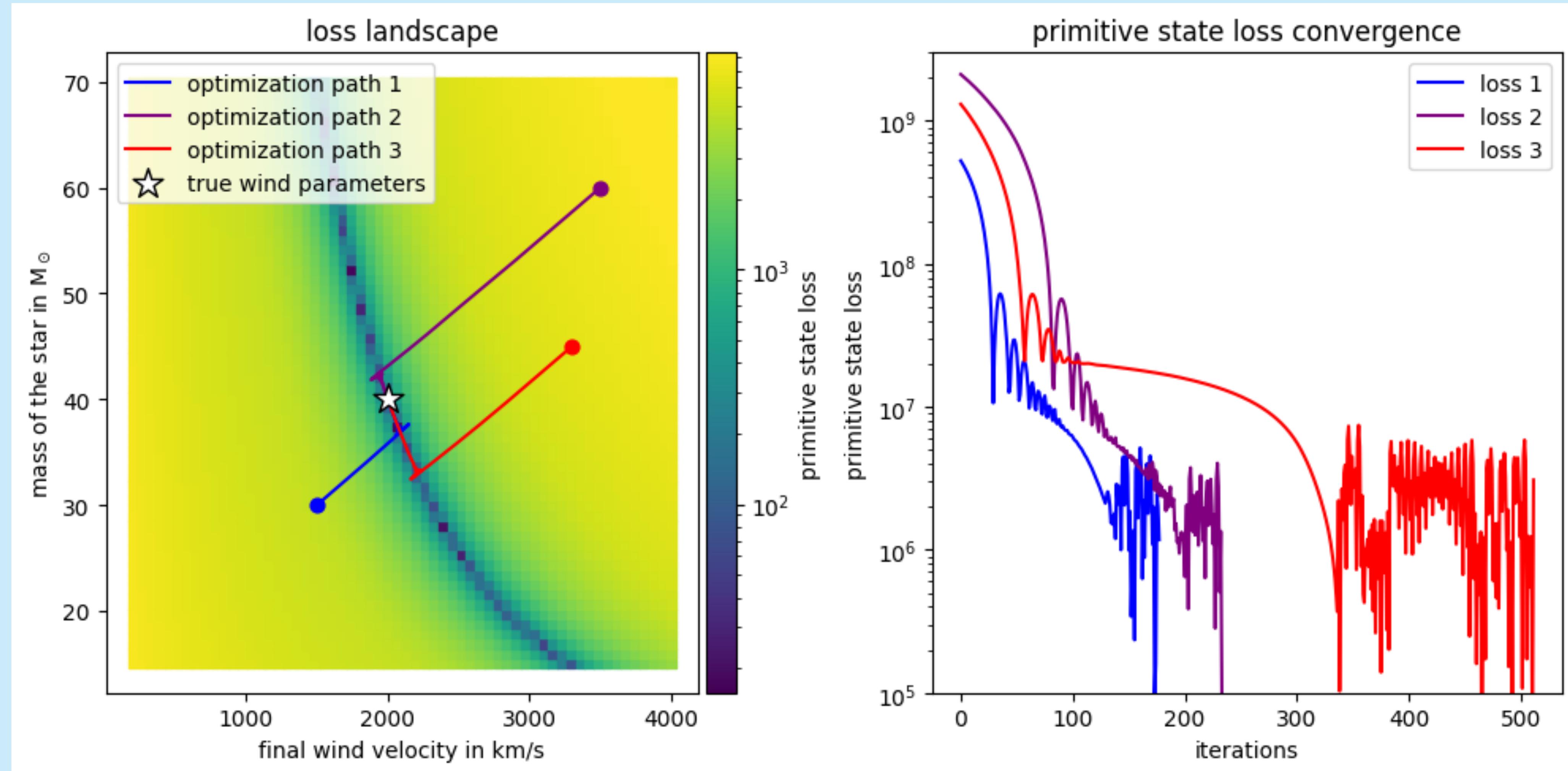
homogeneous medium of 2 particle per ccm  
40 Msun star with 2000 km/s terminal wind velocity and mass loss rate of ~0.1 Msun/Myr

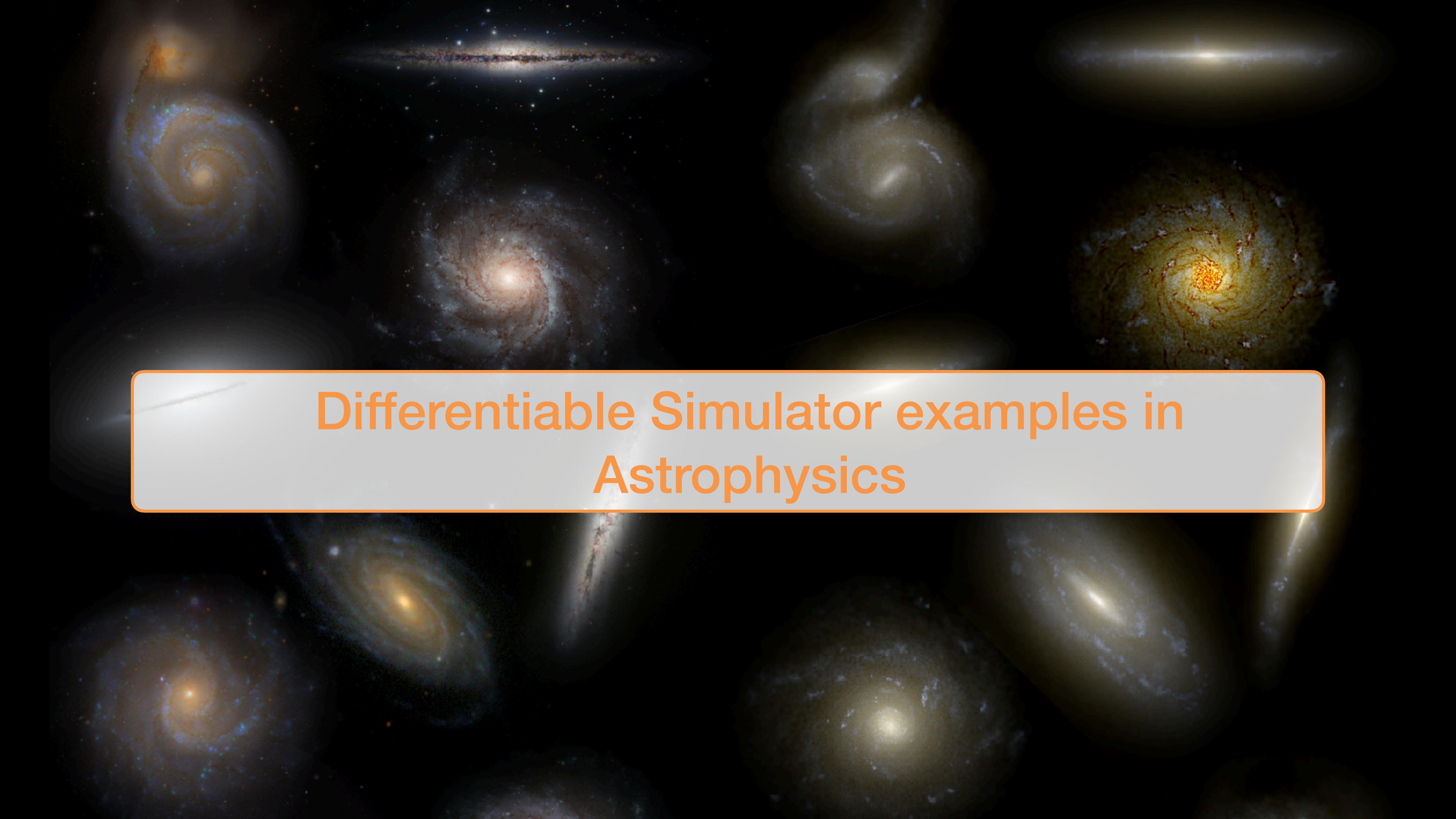


# JF1UIDS: WIND PARAMETER OPTIMISATION

objective:

start from unknown stellar wind parameters and recover true parameters just from final simulation state



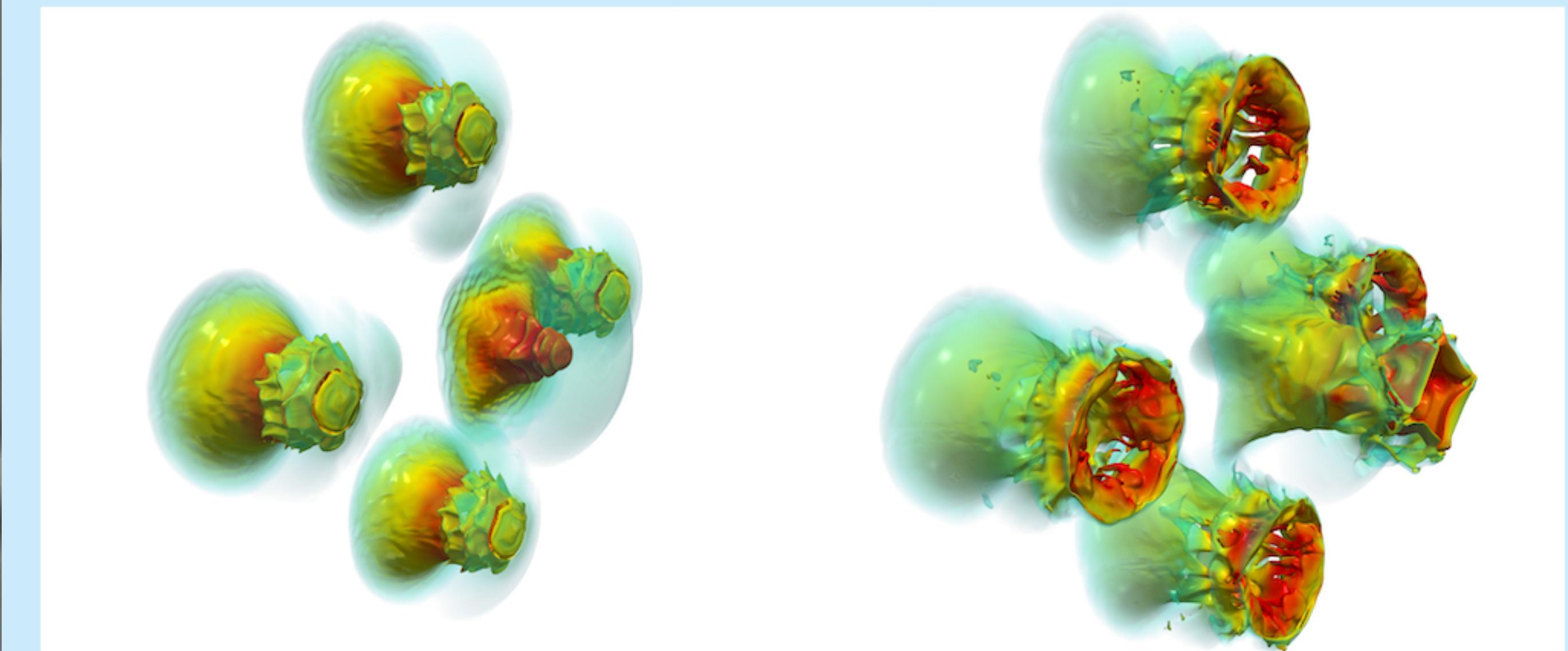
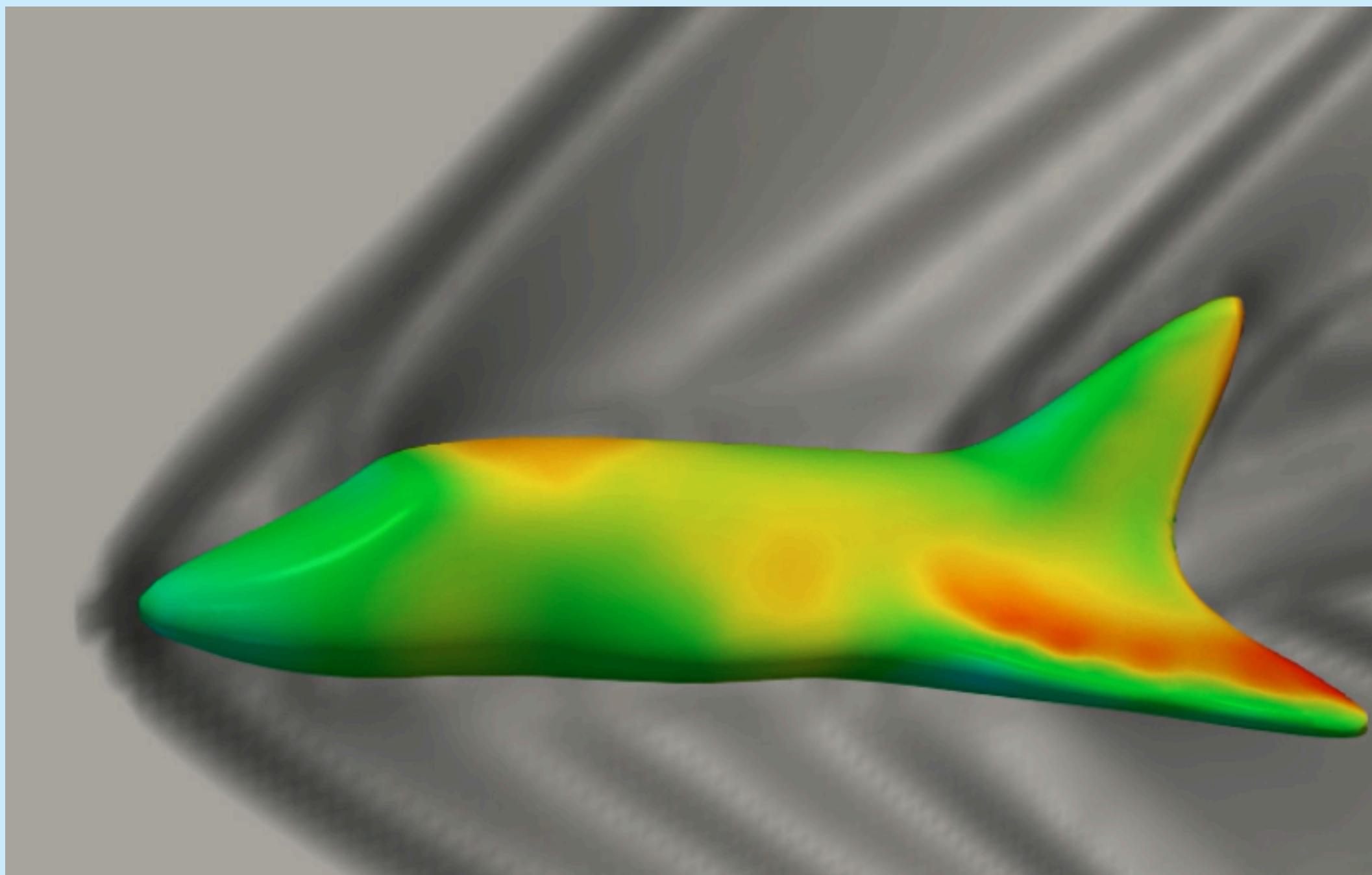


# Differentiable Simulator examples in Astrophysics

# JAXFLUIDS

<https://github.com/tumaer/JAXFLUIDS?tab=readme-ov-file>

general purpose fluid solver written in jax

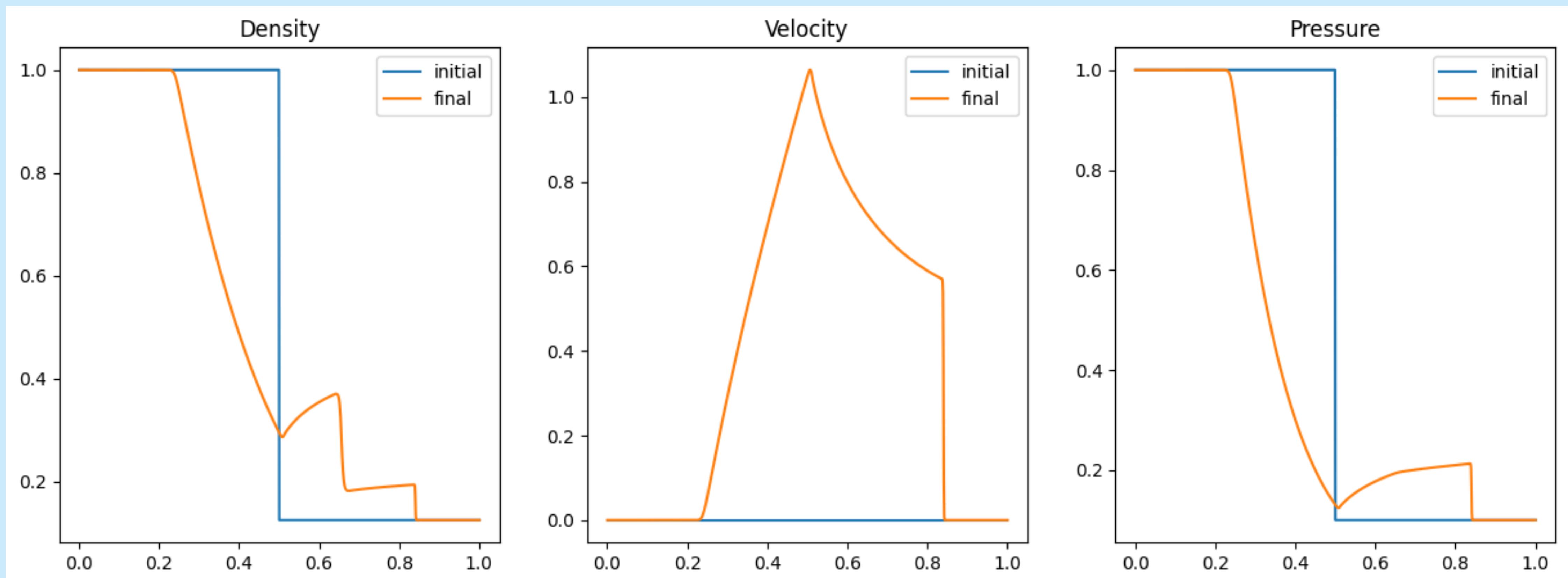


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simple shock example



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written in JAX



# JAX-COSMO

[https://github.com/DifferentiableUniverseInitiative/jax\\_cosmo](https://github.com/DifferentiableUniverseInitiative/jax_cosmo)

differentiable cosmology library

# DIFFSTAR

<https://github.com/ArgonneCPAC/diffstar>

differentiable library for simple stellar population synthesis

# DIFFMAH

<https://github.com/ArgonneCPAC/diffmah>

differentiable model for mass assembly history of dark matter halos

# RUBIX

Differentiable simulator for Integral field spectroscopic observations of galaxies  
(Çakir, Schaible, Buck + 2024)



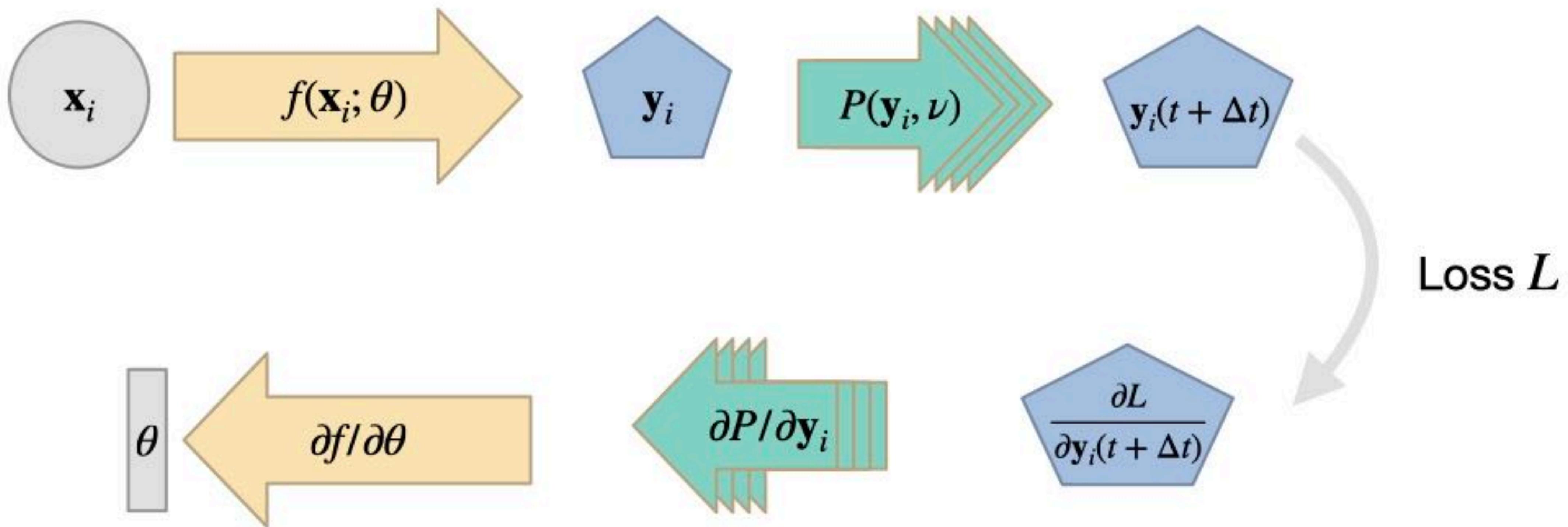
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# Differentiable Simulators III

## Combining DP and NN training

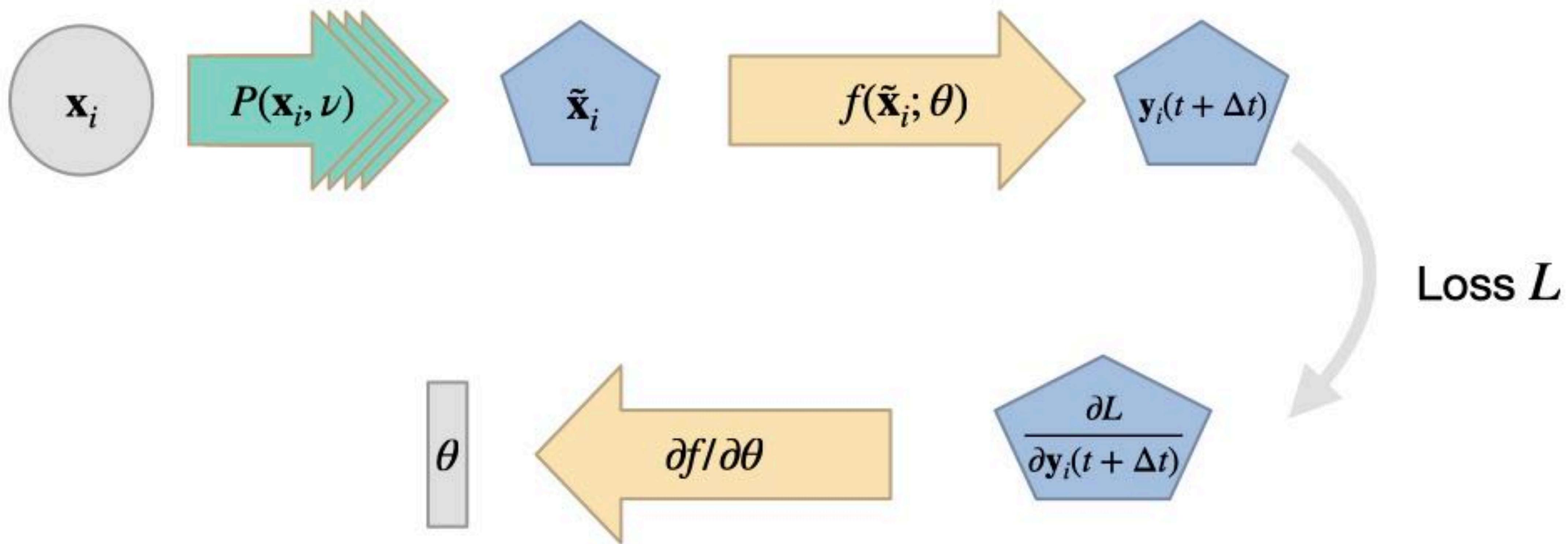
# DIFFERENTIABLE SIMULATORS WITH NN

DP approach I: A network produces an input to a PDE solver  $\mathcal{P}$ , which provides a gradient for training during the backpropagation step



# DIFFERENTIABLE SIMULATORS WITH NN

A PDE solver produces an output which is processed by an NN

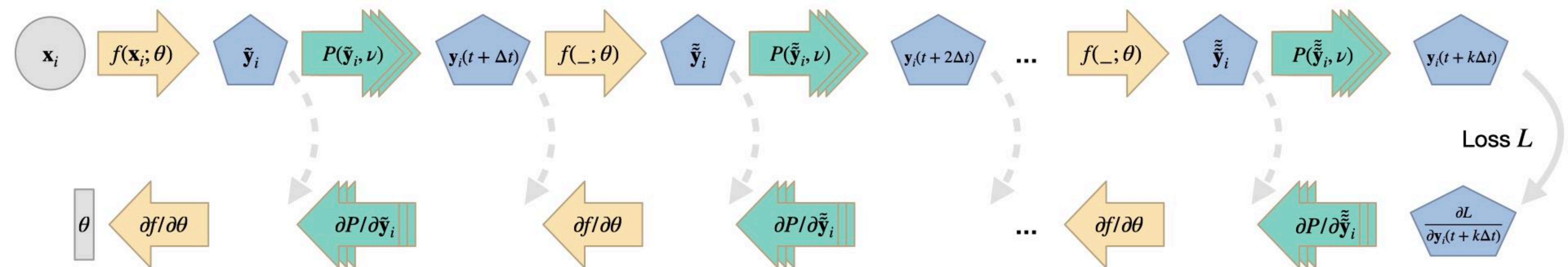


taken from <https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys-examples.html>

Thürey+2022

# DIFFERENTIABLE SIMULATORS WITH NN

Time stepping with interleaved DP and NN operations for  $k$  solver iterations. The dashed gray arrows indicate optional intermediate evaluations of loss terms (similar to the solid gray arrow for the last step  $k$ ), and intermediate outputs of the NN are indicated with a tilde



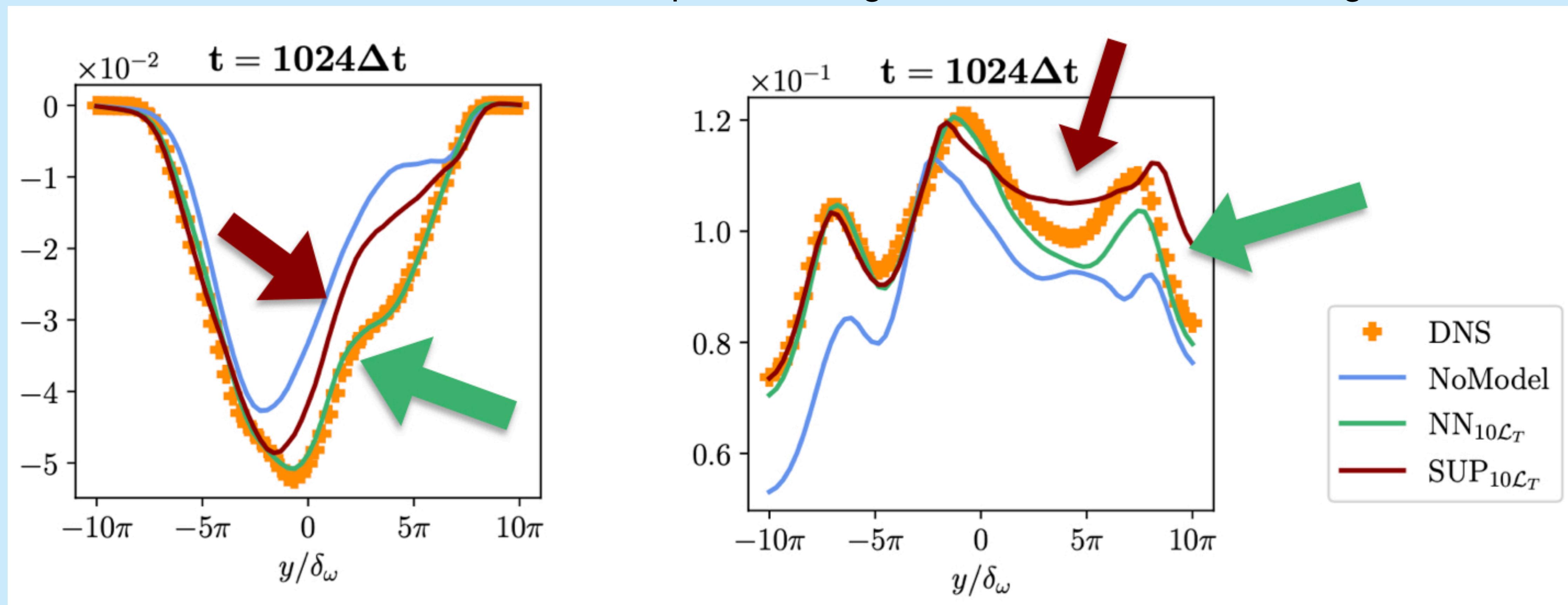
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Thürey+2022

# IS COMBINING A NN AND A DP ANY USEFUL?

Short answer: Quite a lot!

Unrollment over 10 time steps adds long time information into training

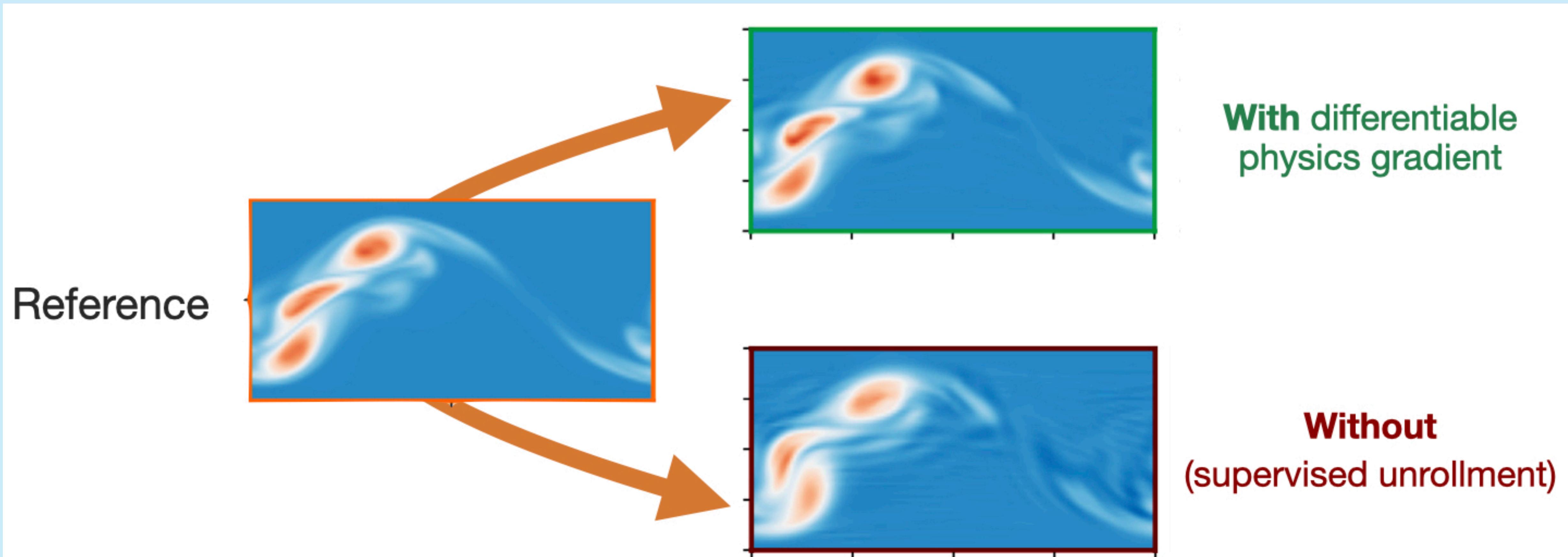


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Thürey+2022, List+2022

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Thürey+2022

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# Reducing numerical errors with deep learning

# MOTIVATION: DISCRETIZATION ERRORS

Pretty much all numerical methods contain some form of iterative process: repeated updates over time for explicit solvers, or within a single update step for implicit solvers.

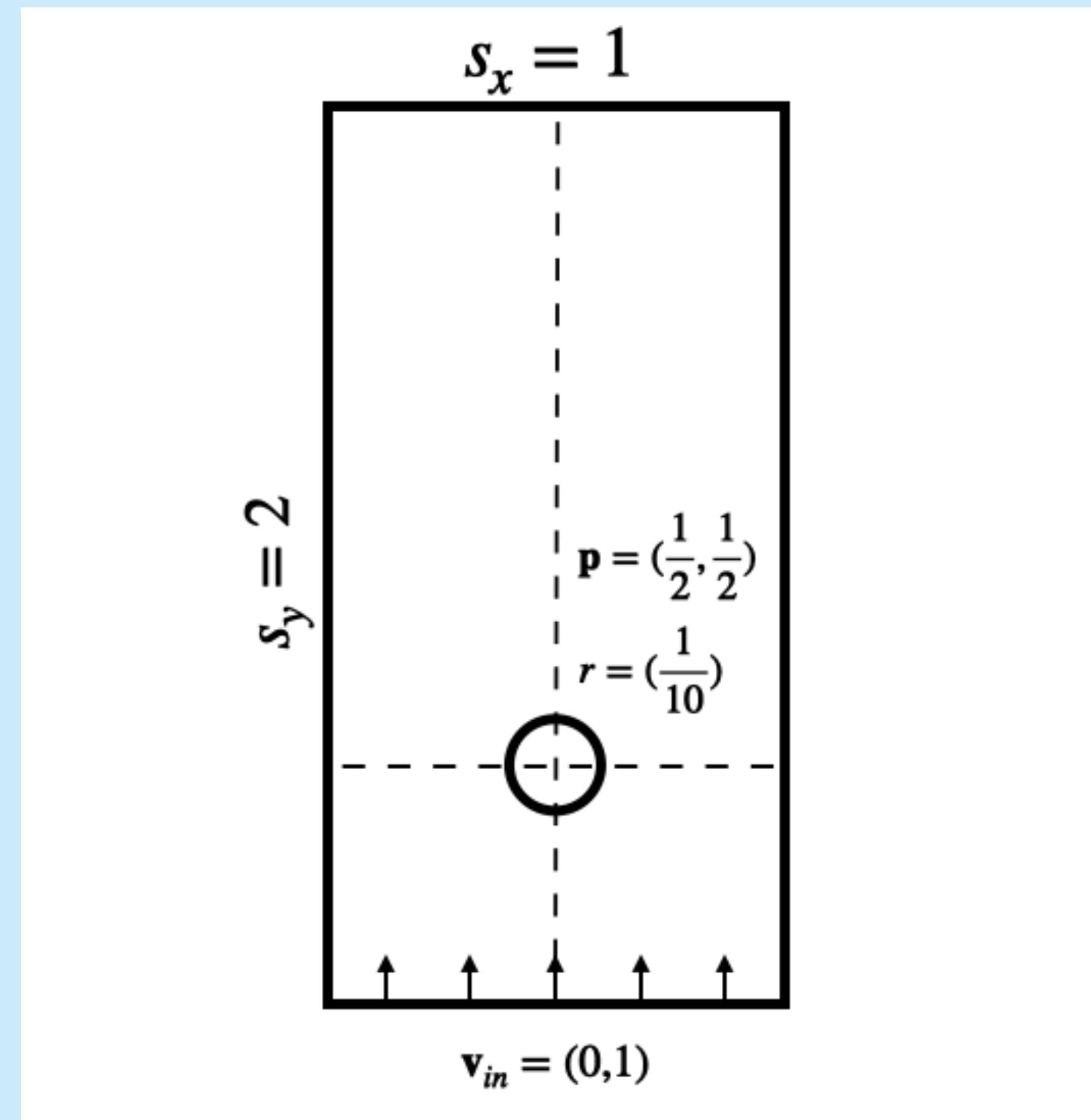
simplest example: Discretisation in space and time

Let's consider two different discretizations of the same PDE  
(e.g. two different spatial discretizations)

easy to imagine that higher spatial resolution will result in better accuracy  
similar for time discretisation

but also: fixed grid vs. mesh refinement vs. square or rectangular or unstructured mesh

# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW



for this advanced example there  
is a collar notebook here:  
[https://colab.research.google.com/  
github/tum-pbs/pbdll-book/blob/  
main/diffphys-code-sol.ipynb](https://colab.research.google.com/github/tum-pbs/pbdll-book/blob/main/diffphys-code-sol.ipynb)

# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW

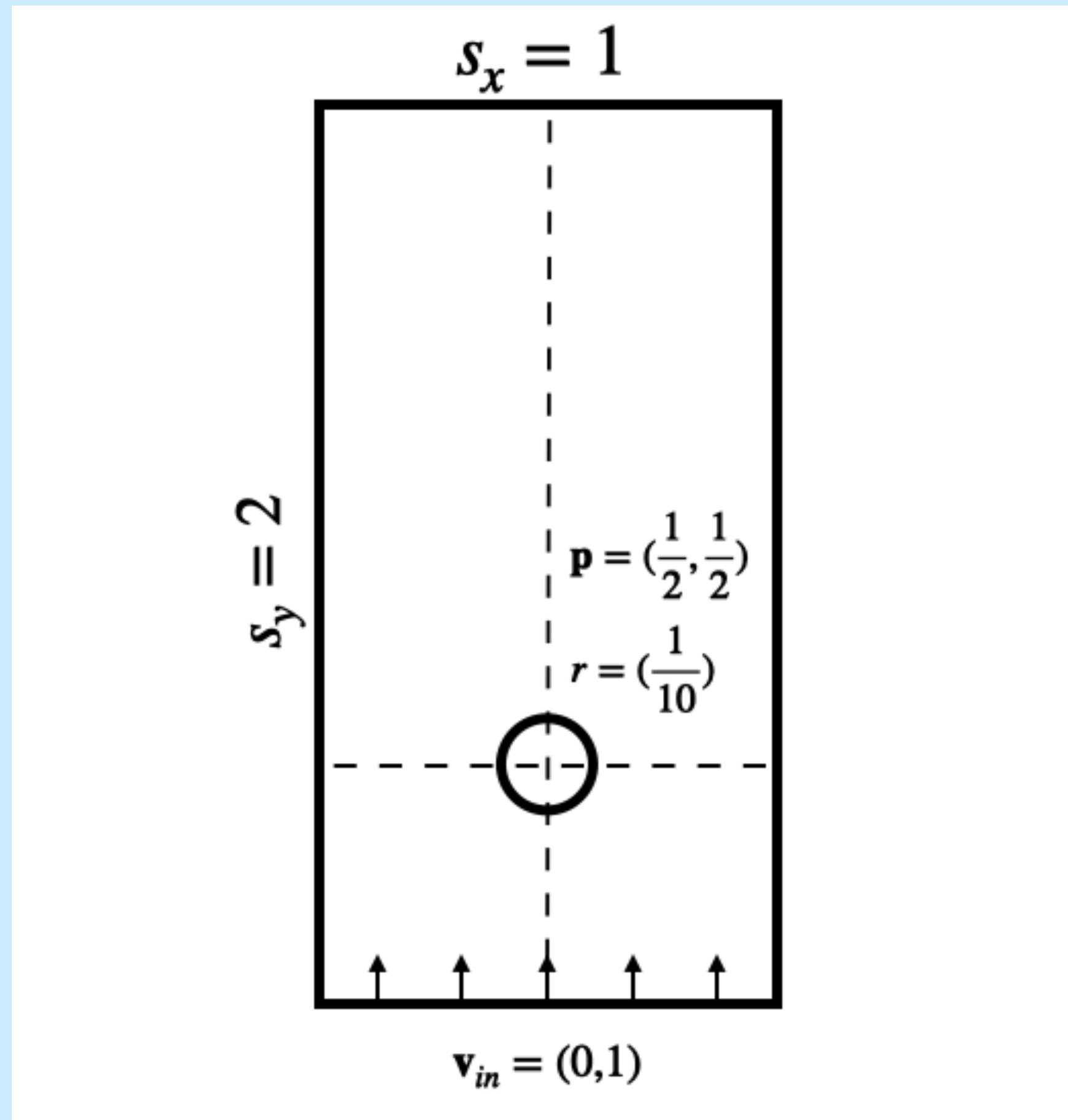
Problem setup:

ground truth high-res simulation

lower resolution solver: source

NN to „correct“ the source

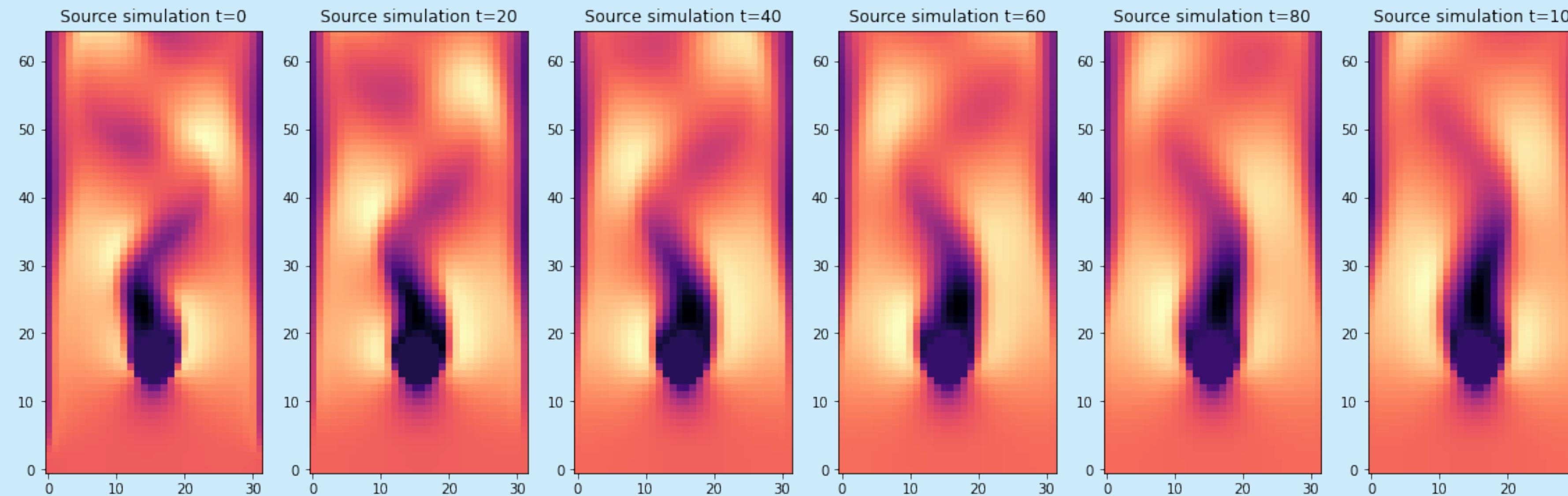
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[https://colab.research.google.com/  
github/tum-pbs/pbdll-book/blob/  
main/diffphys-code-sol.ipynb](https://colab.research.google.com/github/tum-pbs/pbdll-book/blob/main/diffphys-code-sol.ipynb)



taken from <https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys-examples.html>

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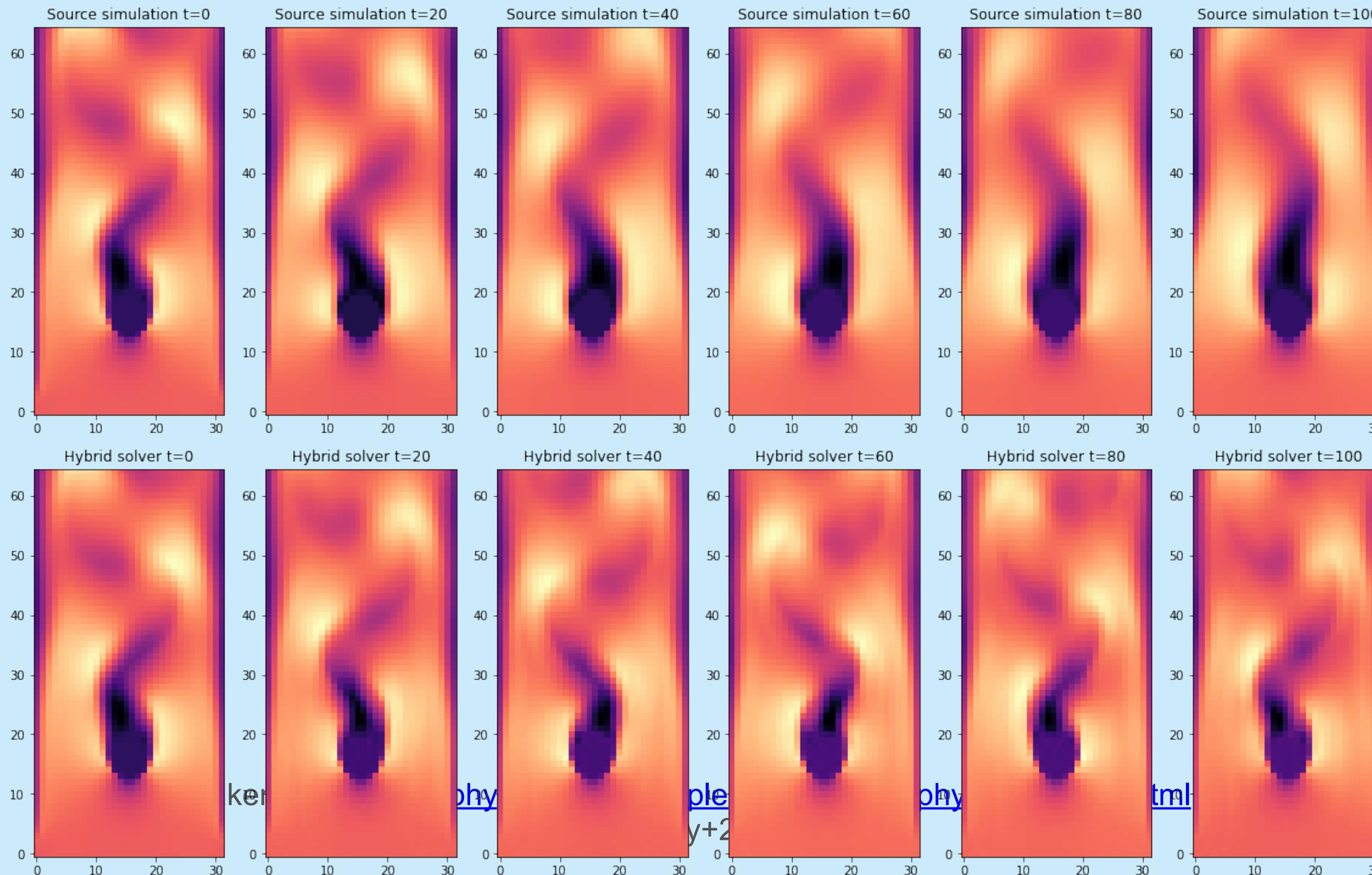
# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW: SOURCE SOLVER RESULT



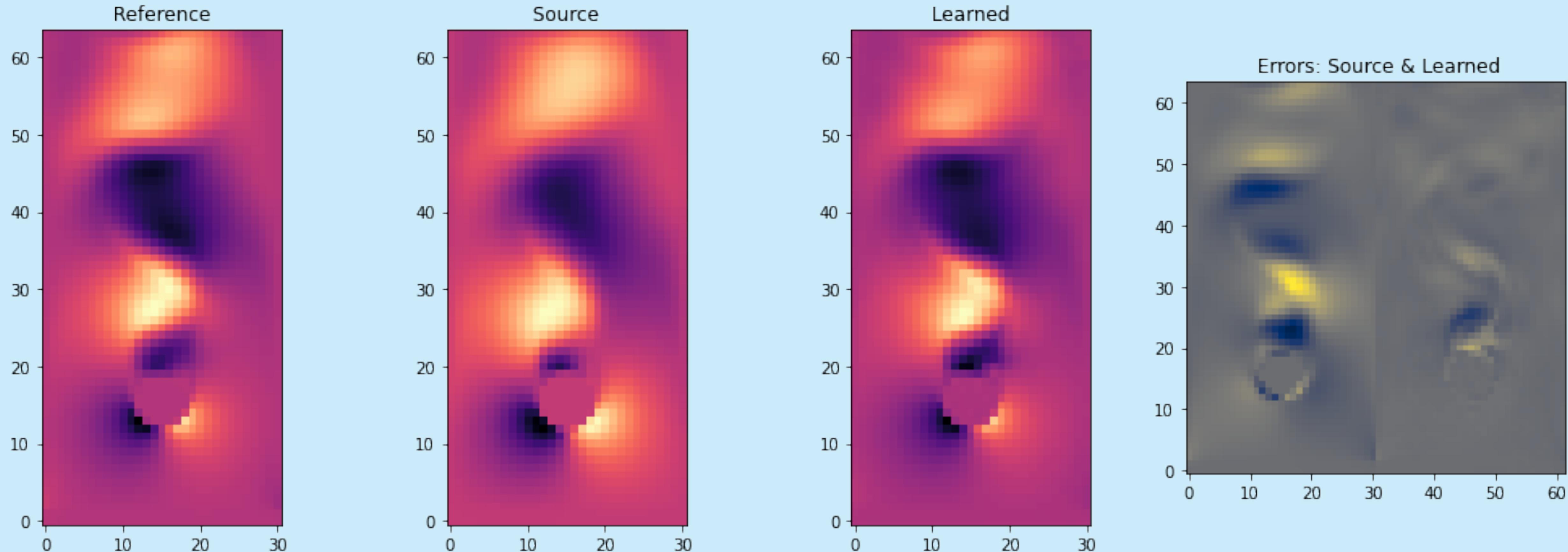
taken from <https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys-examples.html>

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# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW: HYBRID SOLVER RESULT



# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW: COMPARISON AFTER 50 STEPS



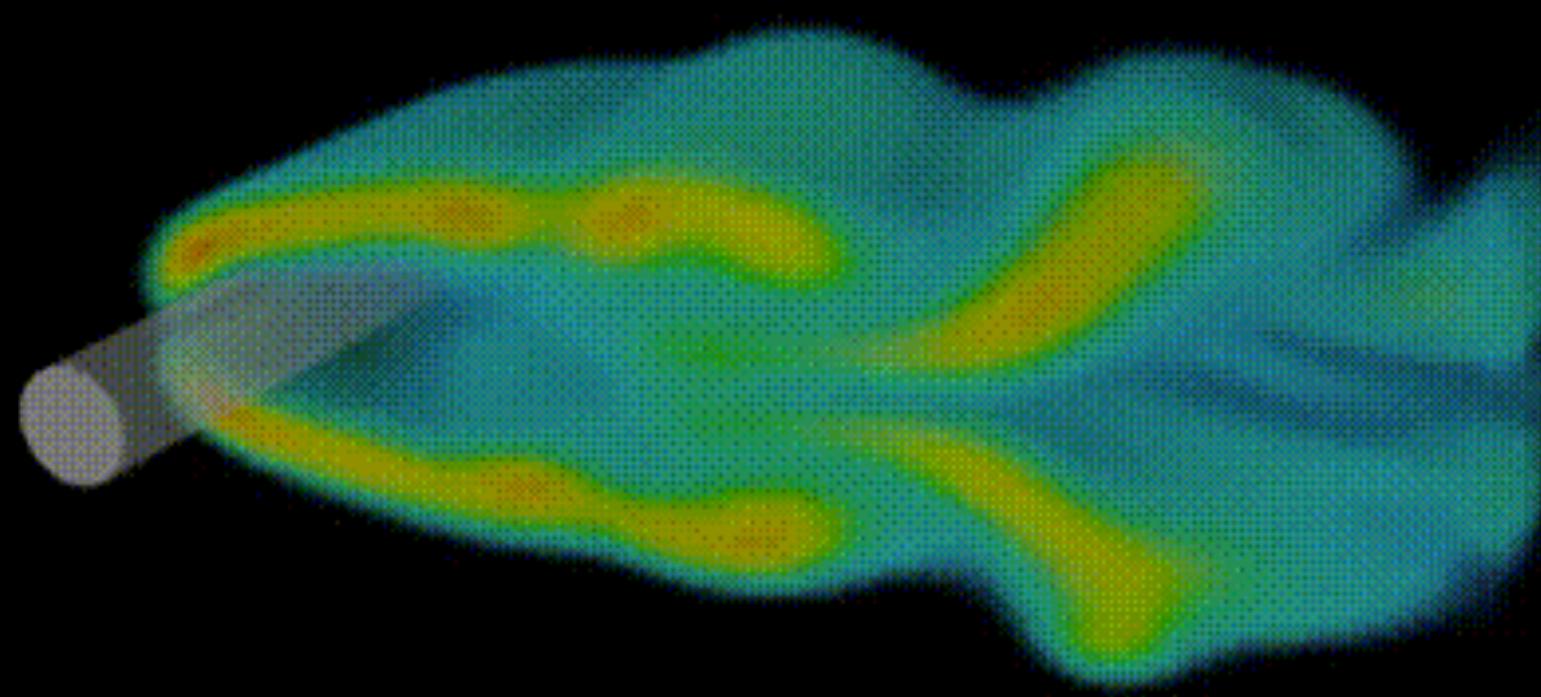
taken from <https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys-examples.html>

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# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW: COMPARISON AFTER 50 STEPS

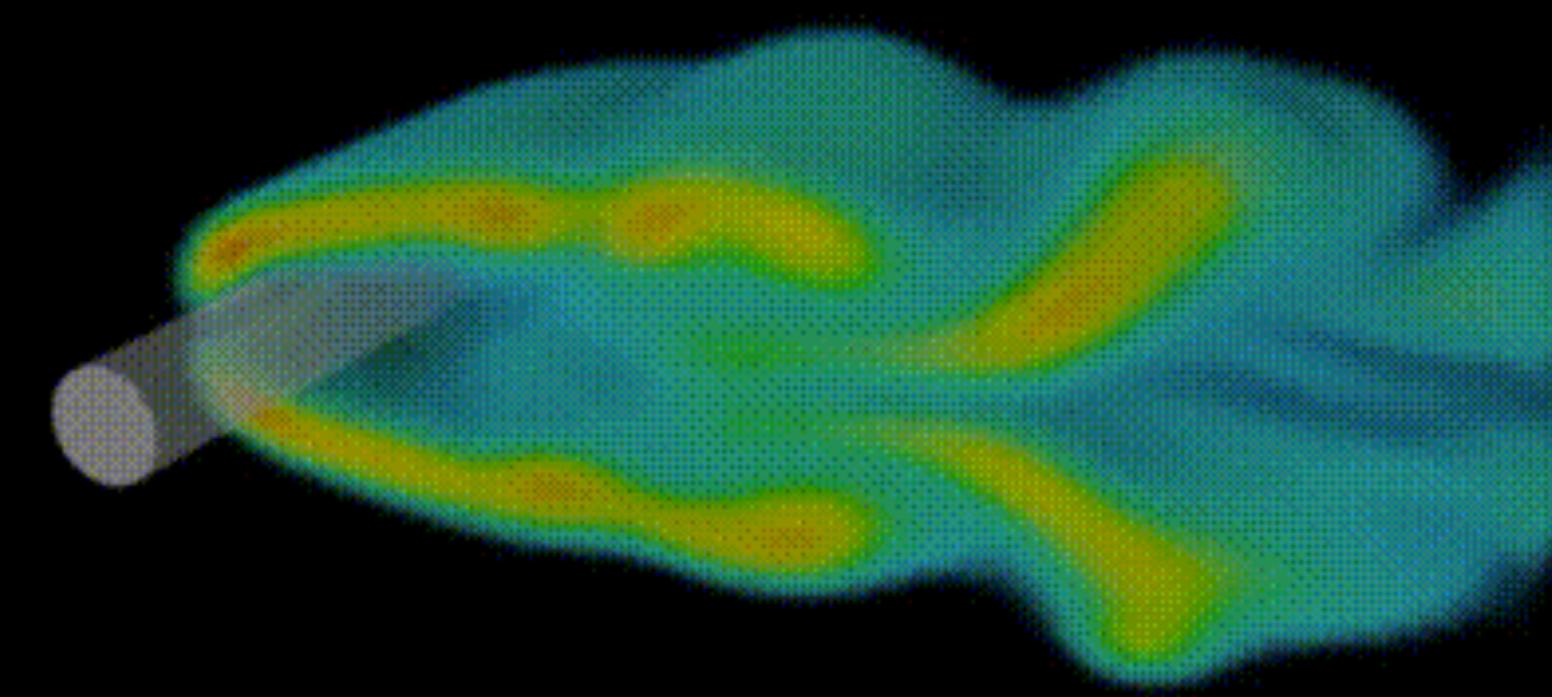
Test Case  $Re=390$

Source



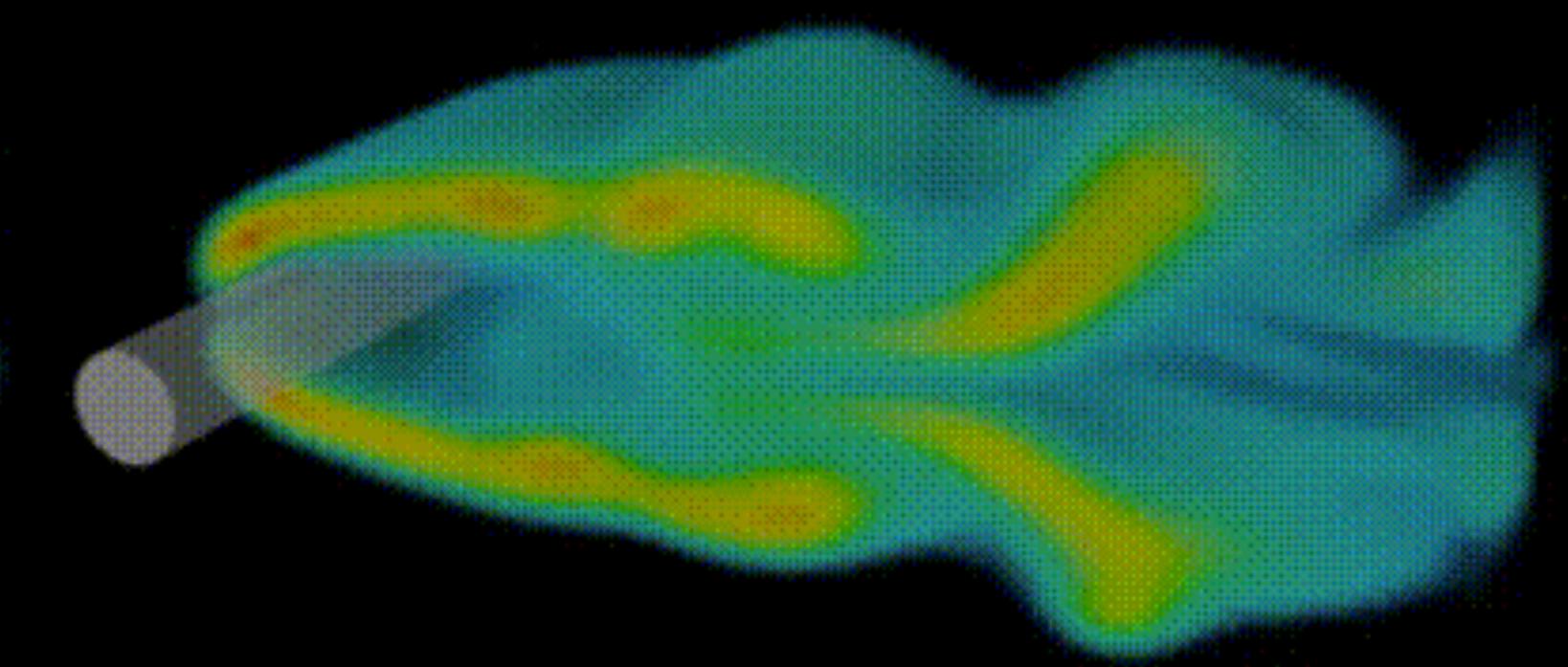
MAE=0.167

Differentiable Physics



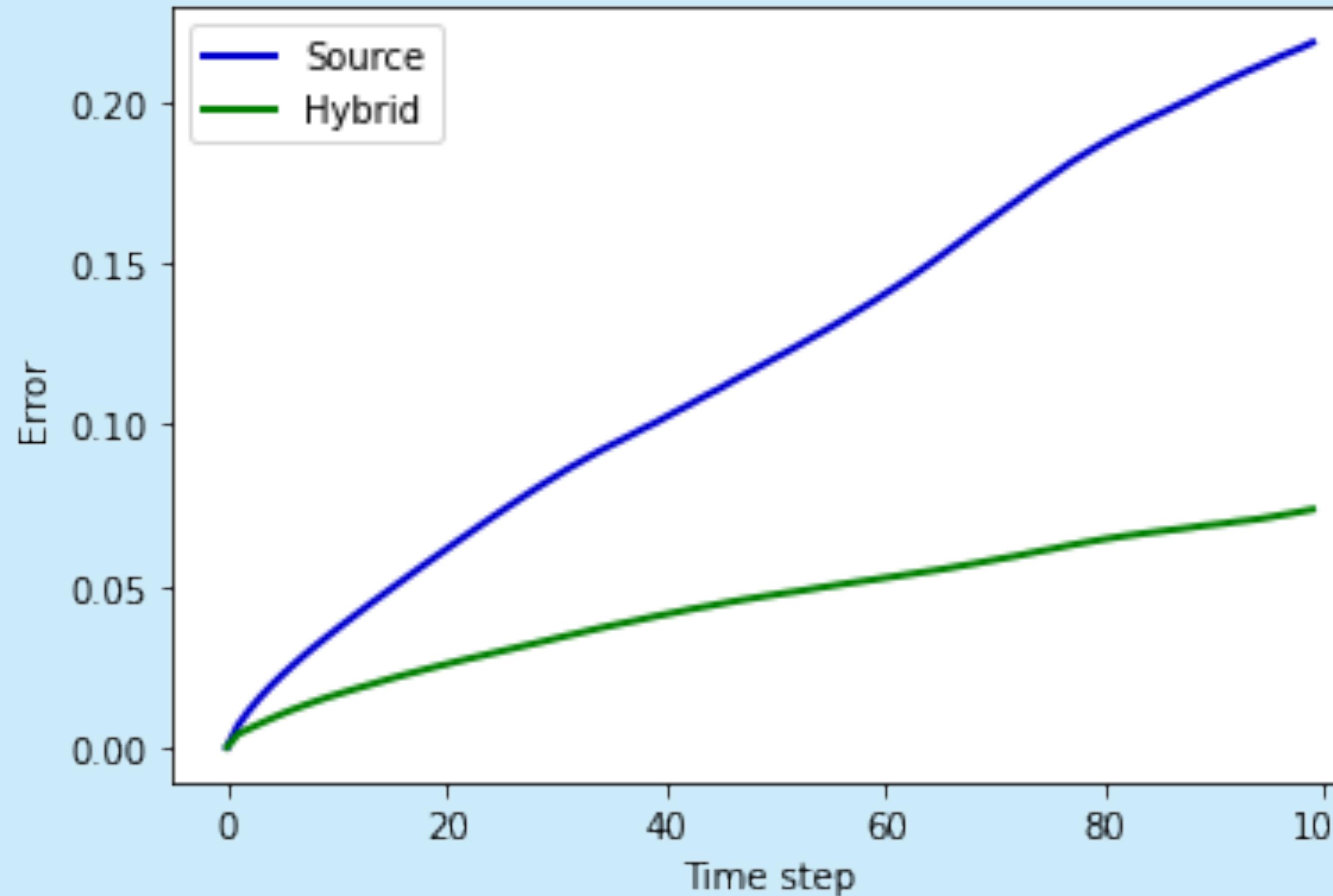
MAE=0.130

Reference



A vertical color bar on the right side of the figure, showing a gradient from blue at the bottom to red at the top. The scale is labeled with 0.0, 0.3, and 0.6, corresponding to the color transitions.

# DISCRETIZATION ERRORS IN KARMANFLOW: SOURCE SOLVER RESULT



taken from <https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys-examples.html>

Thürey+2022

# Solving Inverse Problems with NNs

# INVERSE PROBLEM FOR PREDICTOR-CORRECTOR SETUPS

Problem setup:

computing a high dimensional control function that exerts forces over the full course of an incompressible fluid simulation in order to reach a desired goal state for a passively advected marker in the fluid

incompressible Navier-Stokes equations in two dimensions

$$\frac{\partial u_x}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla u_x = -\frac{1}{\rho} \nabla p$$

$$\frac{\partial u_y}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla u_y = -\frac{1}{\rho} \nabla p$$

$$\text{s.t. } \nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} = 0,$$

for this advanced example  
there is a collar notebook here:  
<https://colab.research.google.com/github/tum-pbs/pbdl-book/blob/main/diffphys-code-control.ipynb>

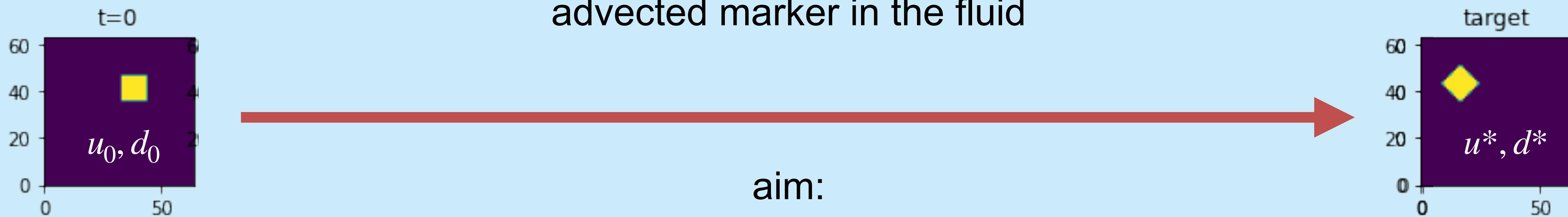
Plus additional equation for marker density

$$\frac{\partial d}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla d = 0.$$

# INVERSE PROBLEM FOR PREDICTOR-CORRECTOR SETUPS

Problem setup:

computing a high dimensional control function that exerts forces over the full course of an incompressible fluid simulation in order to reach a desired goal state for a passively advected marker in the fluid



train two networks OP and CFE such that

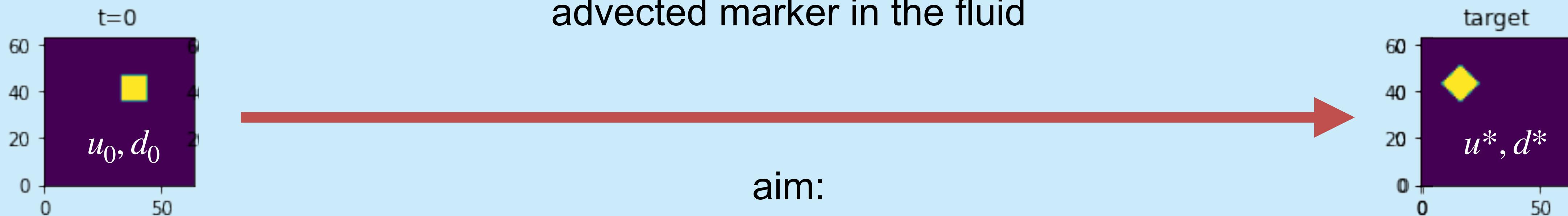
$$\mathbf{u}_n, \mathbf{d}_n = \mathcal{P}(\text{CFE}(\mathcal{P}(\text{CFE}(\cdots \mathcal{P}(\text{CFE}(\mathbf{u}_0, \mathbf{d}_0, \mathbf{d}_{OP})) \cdots)))) = (\mathcal{P} \text{CFE})^n(\mathbf{u}_0, \mathbf{d}_0, \mathbf{d}_{OP}).$$

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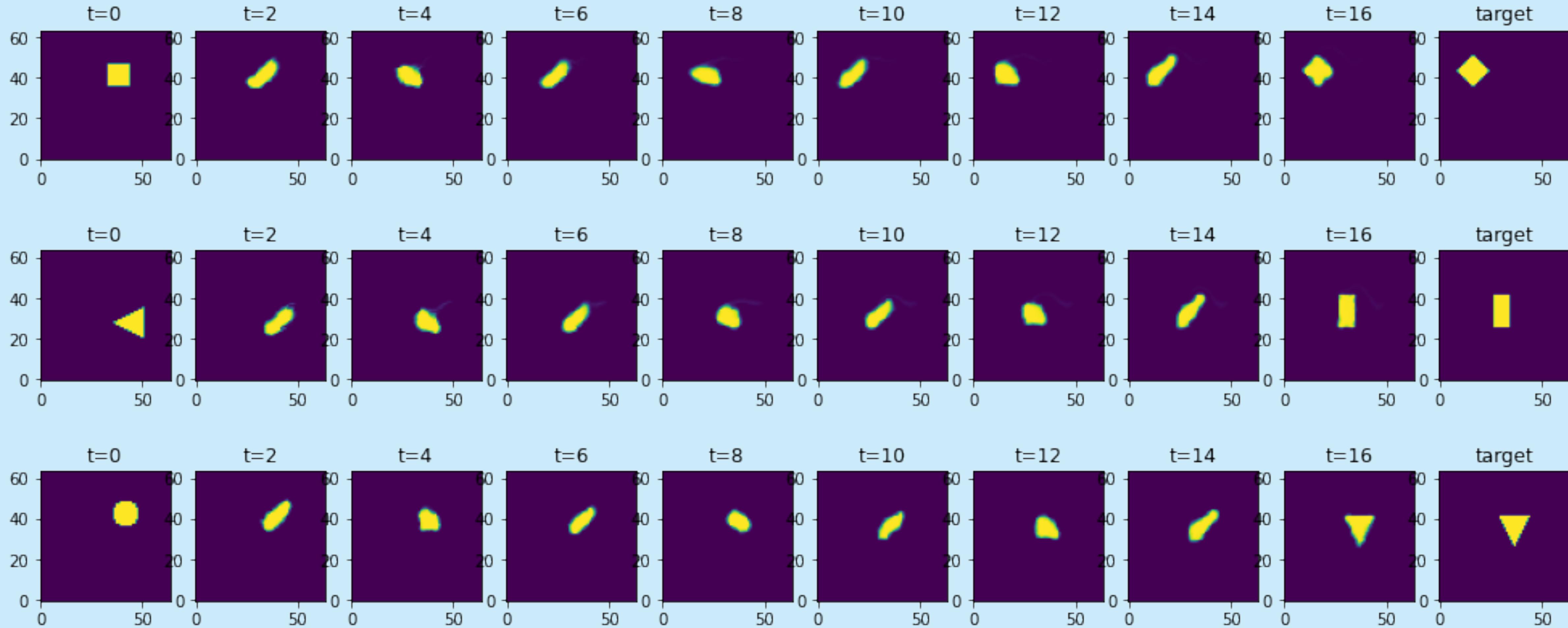
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$$d_{OP} = \text{OP}(d, d^*) = f_{OP}(d, d^*; \theta_{OP}).$$

$$\mathbf{u} + f_{\text{CFE}}(\mathbf{u}, d, f_{OP}(d, d^*; \theta_{OP}); \theta_{\text{CFE}})$$

# INVERSE PROBLEM FOR PREDICTOR-CORRECTOR SETUPS



taken from <https://physicsbaseddeeplearning.org/diffphys-examples.html>

Thürey+2022

# WHERE TO FIND THE LECTURE MATERIAL



<https://github.com/TobiBu/graddays>

# SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Main take away:

Differentiable physics simulations offer a new versatile approach to scientific modelling.

Let's try and explore it in the context of Astrophysics!

THIS IS YOUR MACHINE LEARNING SYSTEM?

YUP! YOU POUR THE DATA INTO THIS BIG  
PILE OF LINEAR ALGEBRA, THEN COLLECT  
THE ANSWERS ON THE OTHER SIDE.

WHAT IF THE ANSWERS ARE WRONG?

JUST STIR THE PILE UNTIL  
THEY START LOOKING RIGHT.

