Bayesian calibration of differentiable agent-based models

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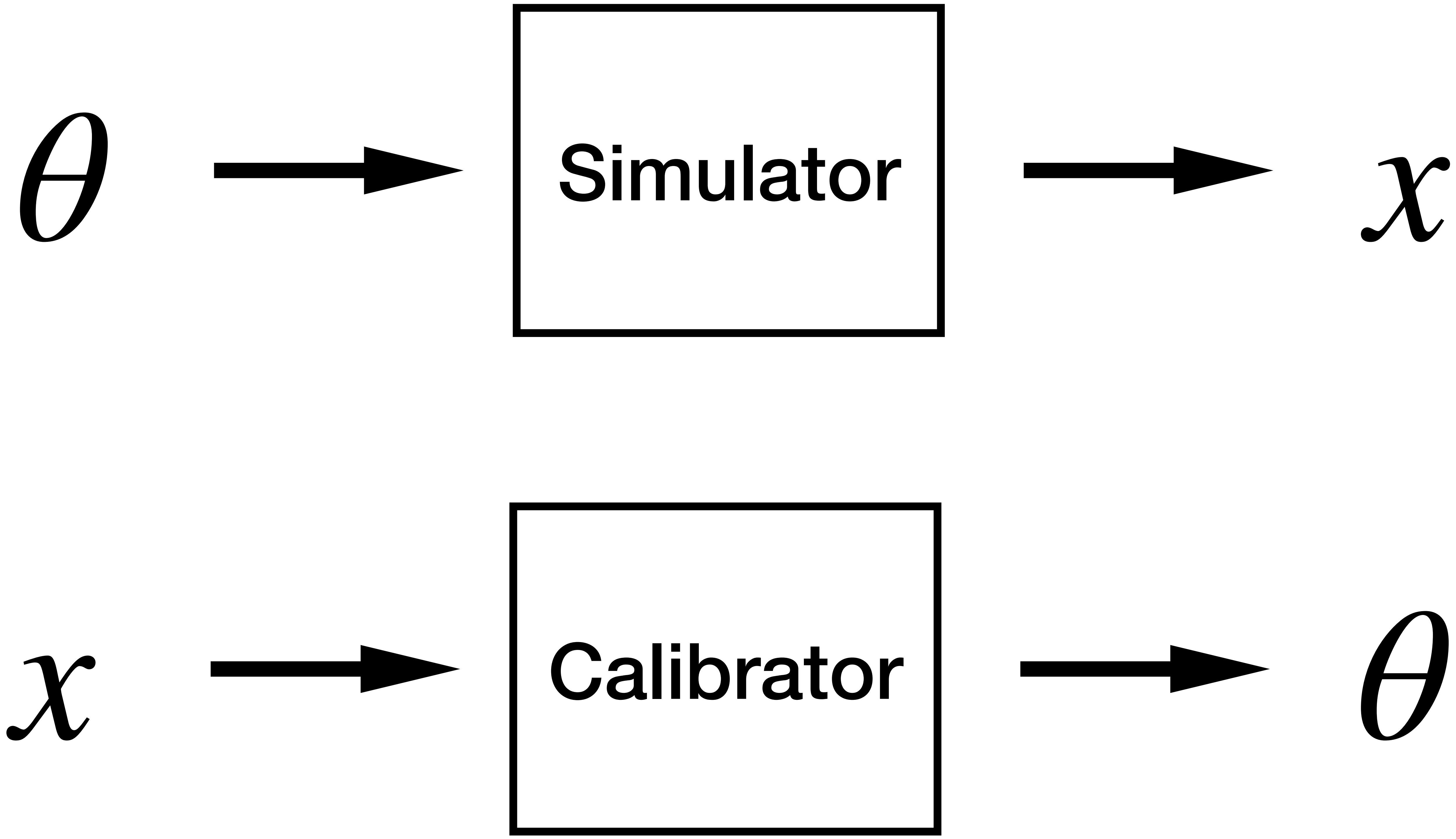
AI4ABM workshop — ICLR 2023

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Calibration of ABMs



Why is it hard?

- Expensive simulator

+

- Large parameter space

Calibration requirements

1. Uncertainty quantification

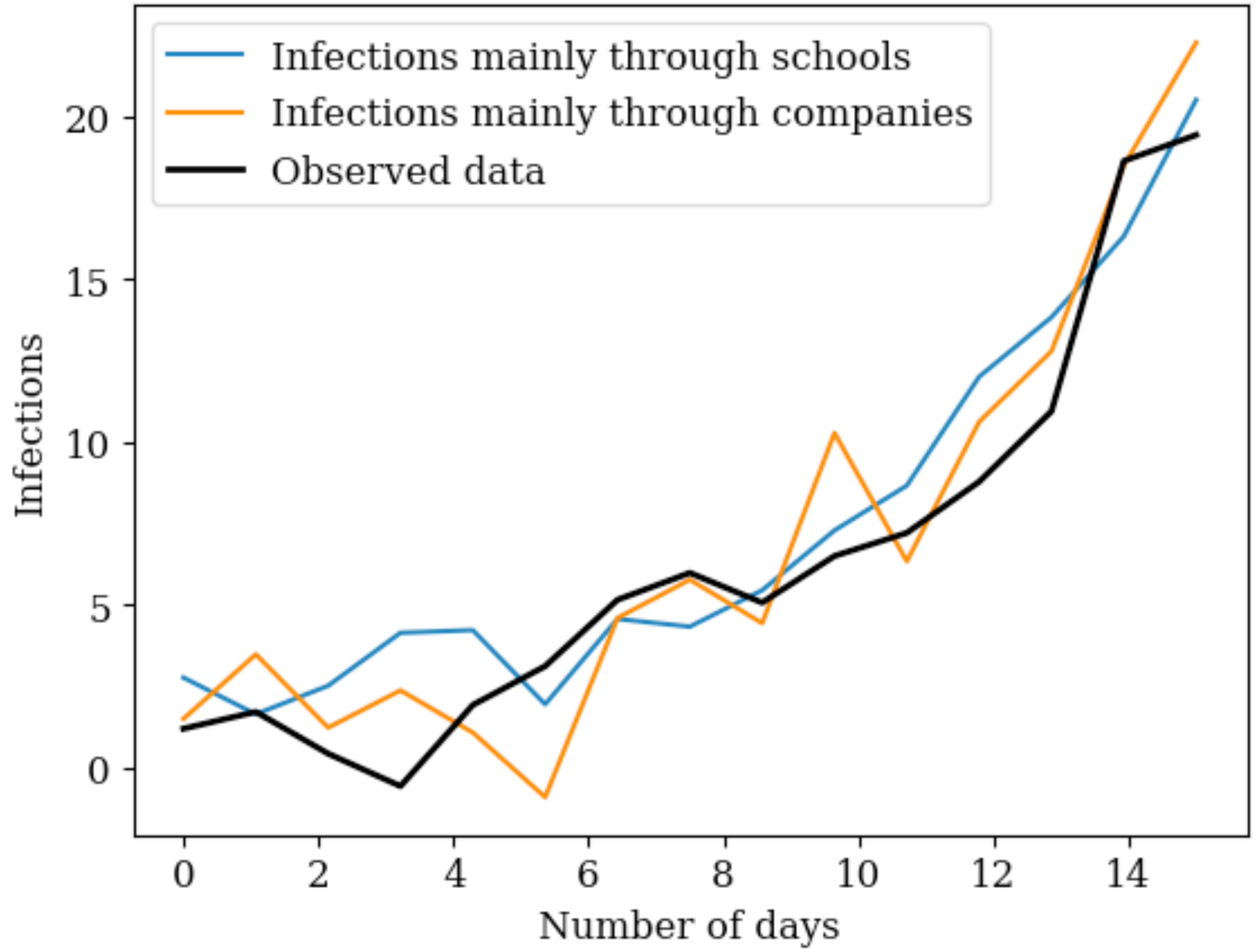
Ideally we want to get all θ that can generate *x* with a certain probability

Example

Epidemiological model with 2 parameters:

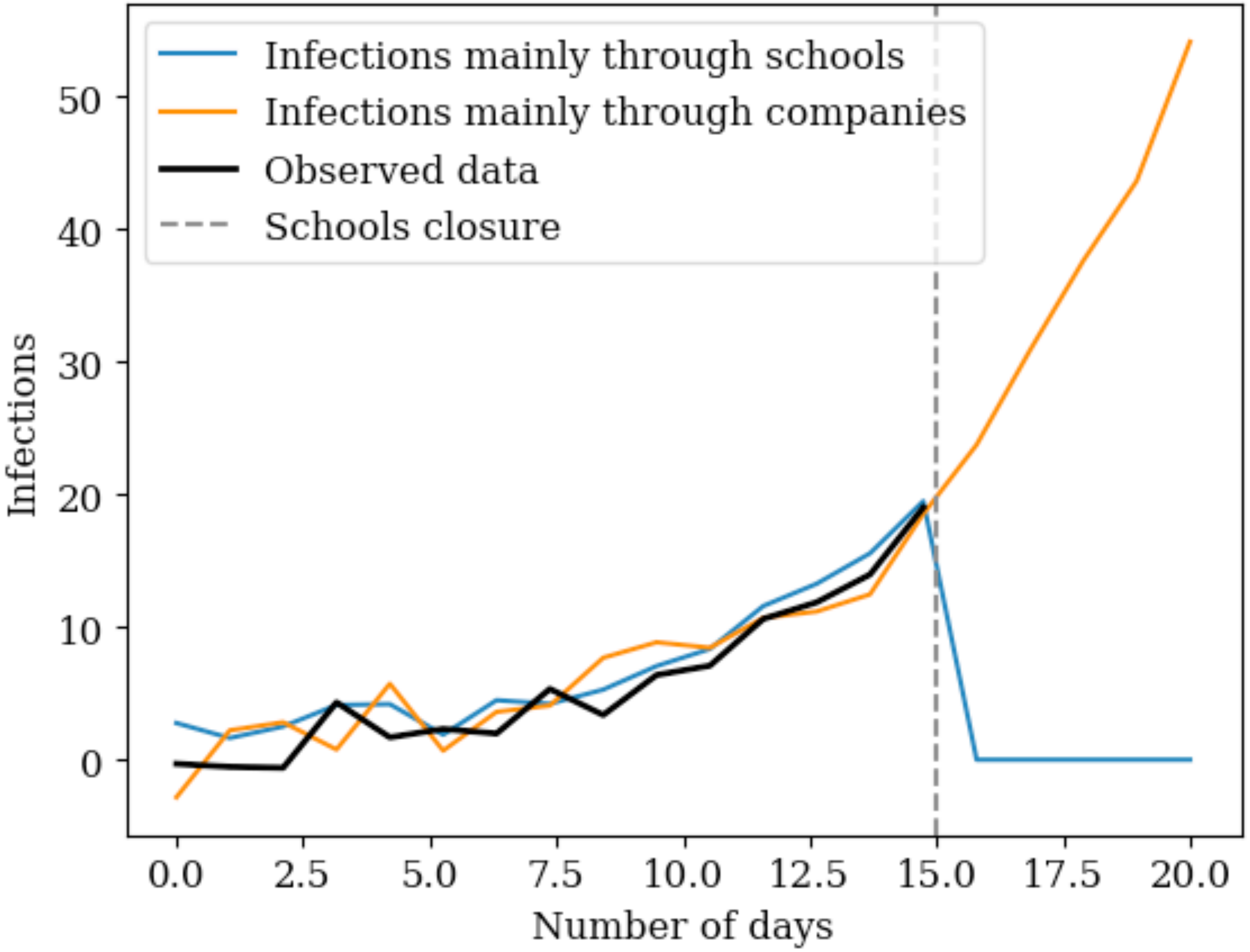
1. Reproduction number at schools

2. Reproduction number at companies



Calibration of ABMs

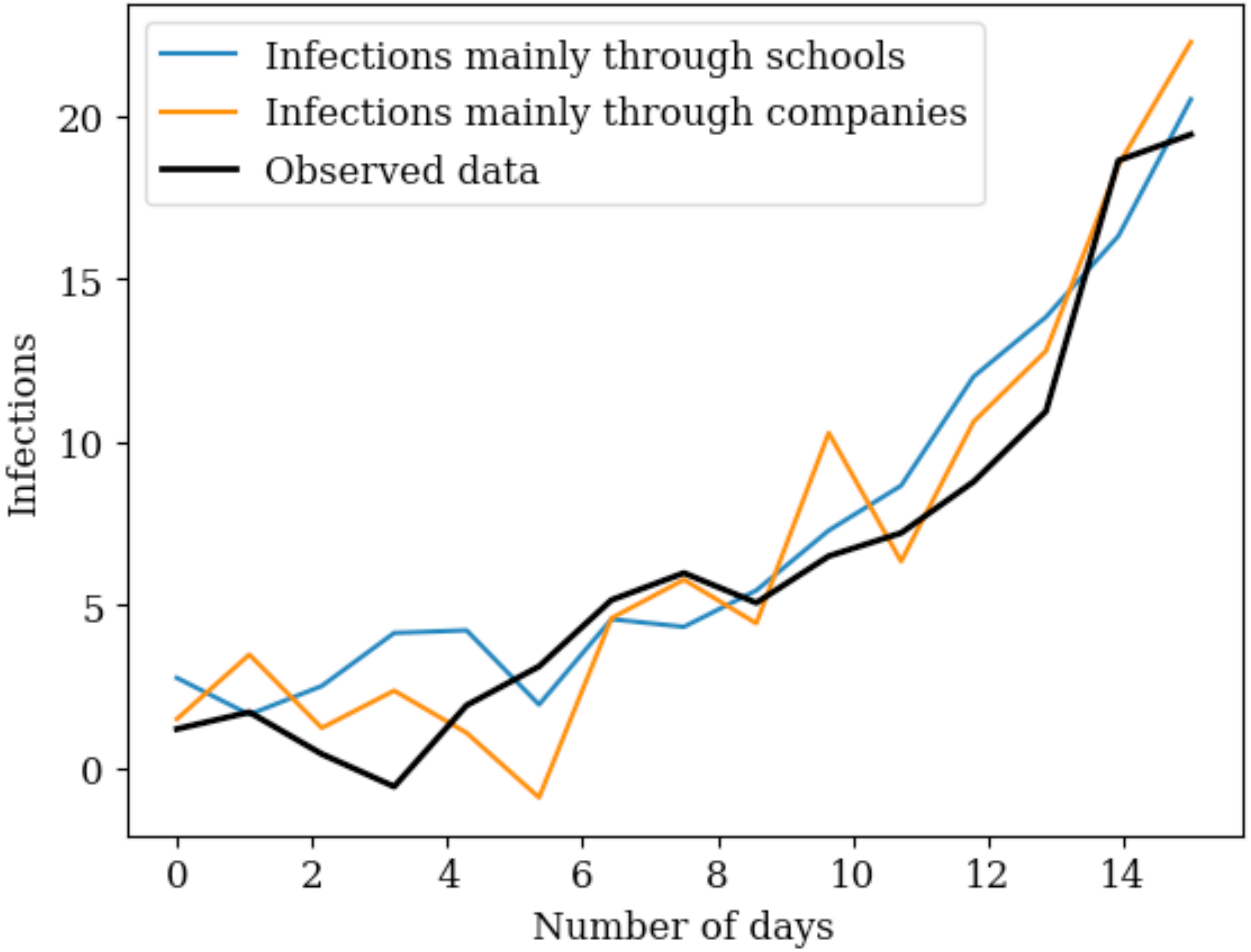
1. Uncertainty quantification (UQ)



Crucial for policy analysis

Calibration of ABMs

2. Expert (prior) knowledge



Need to include prior information in our calibration process

Bayesian inference

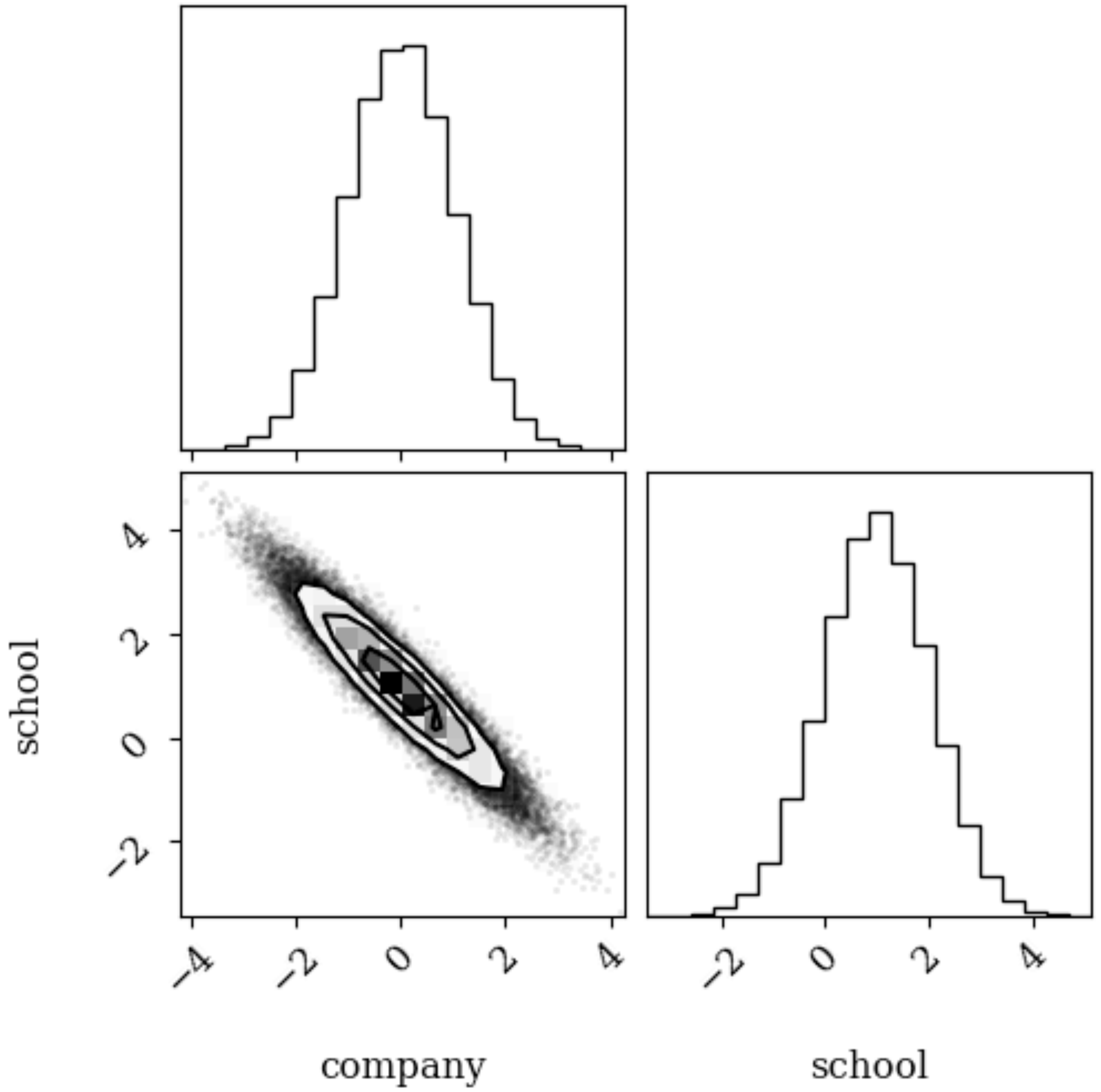
Allows to tackle both problems

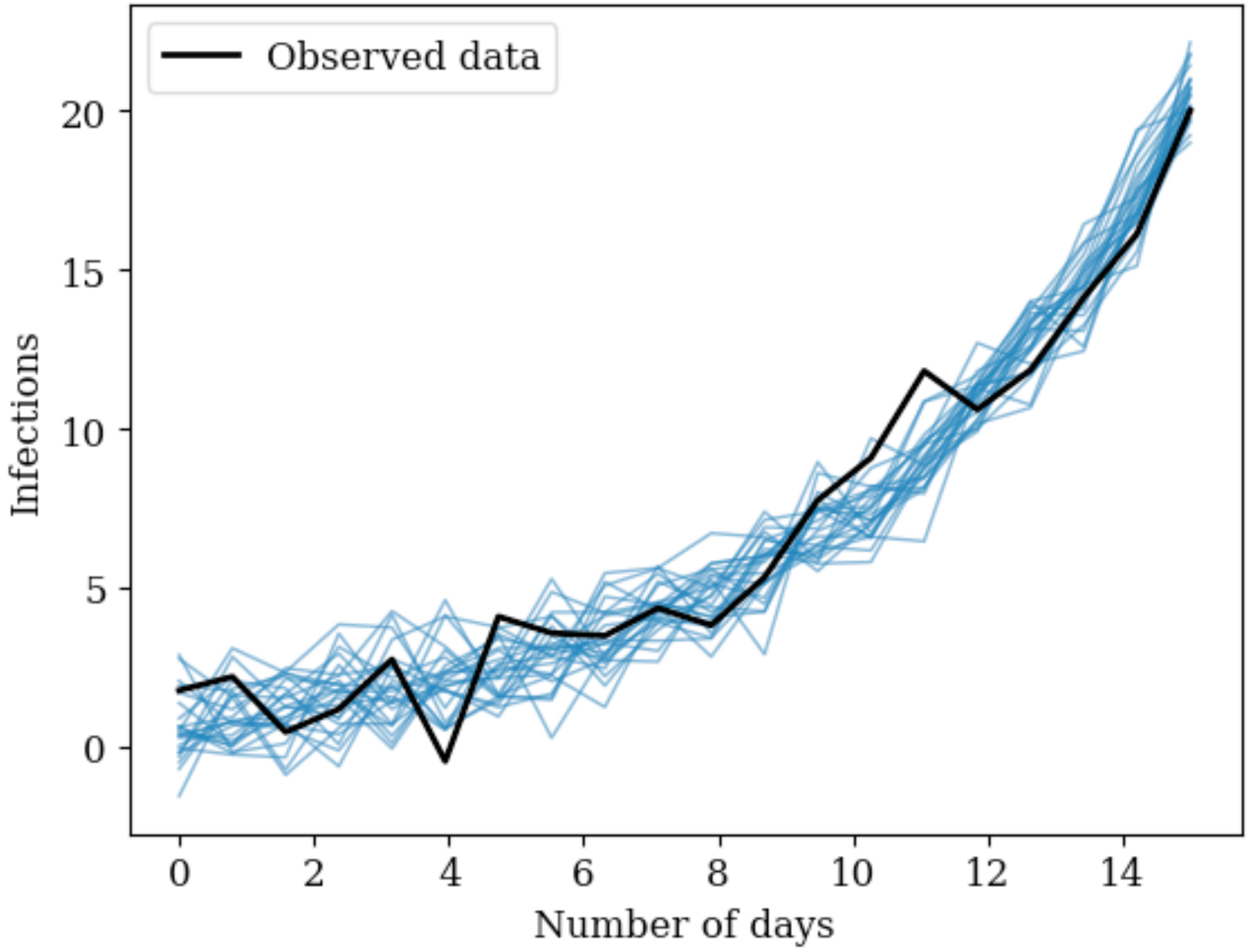
$$p(\theta \mid x) \propto p(x \mid \theta)\, p(\theta)$$

posterior

likelihood

prior





Likelihood $p(x \mid \theta)$ is intractable for ABMs

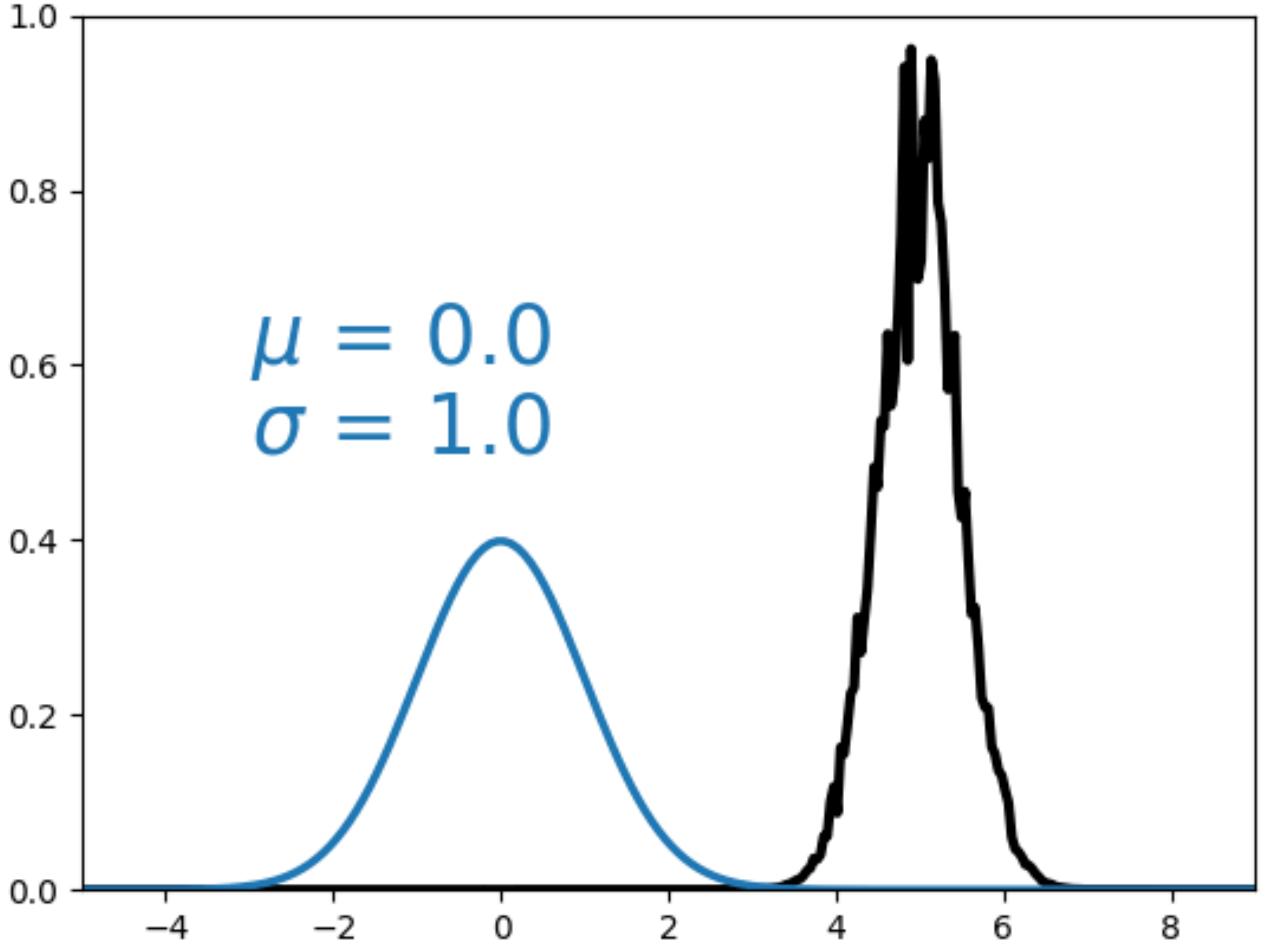
Proposed solutions include

Emulation

Approximate Bayesian Computation

Neural density ratio estimation

Variational Inference: Bayesian inference as an optimisation problem



1. Assume posterior can be approximated by a family of distributions

2. Optimise for optimal parameters

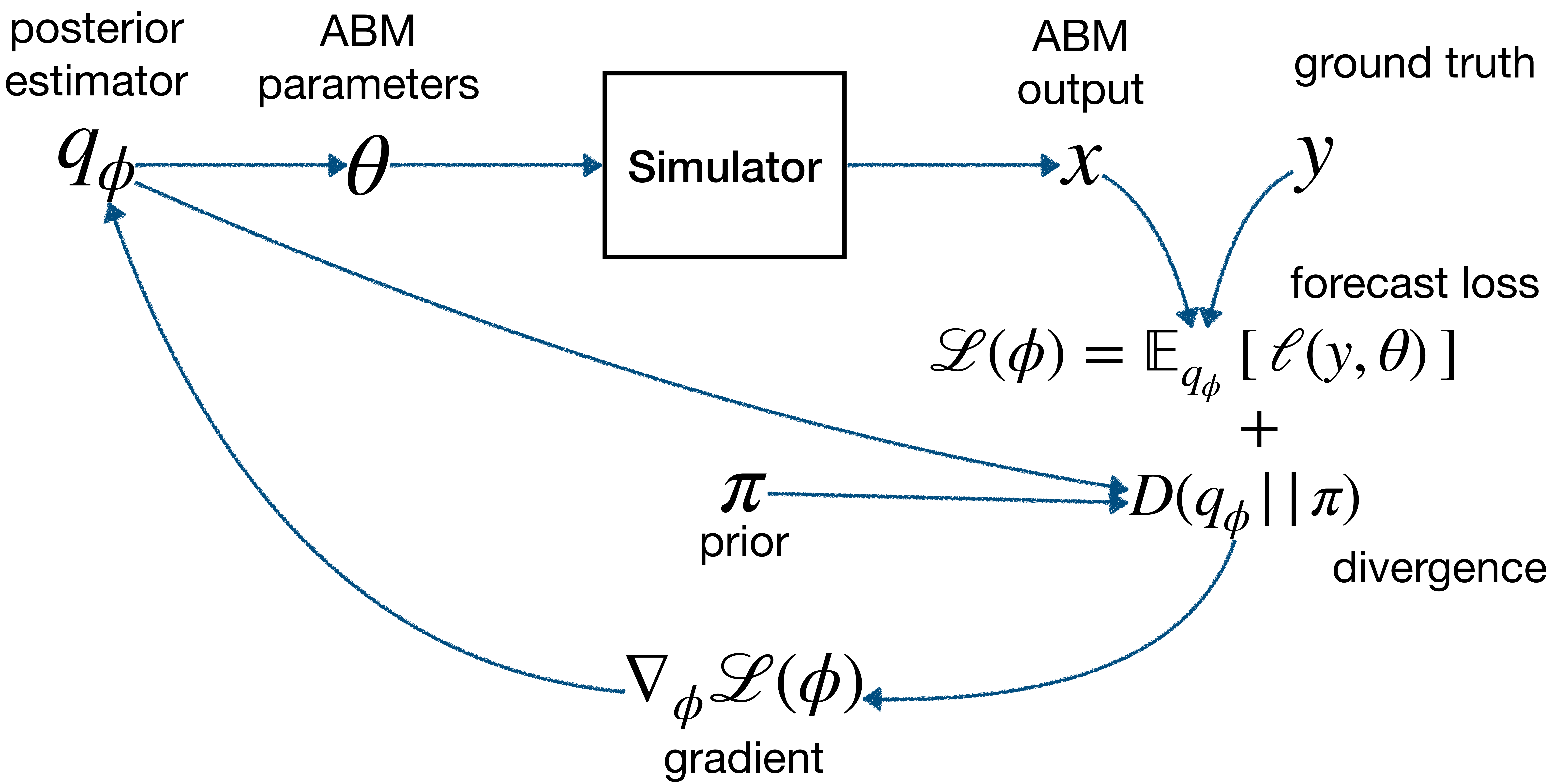
Generalized Variational Inference (GVI)

Knoblauch et al., (2022)

Target optimization to **generalised posterior**

More robust to model miss-specification than classical posterior

Generalised Variational Inference



Gradients: path-wise vs score

- Gradient-assisted calibration algorithms need

$$\nabla_{\phi}\mathbb{E}_{p(\theta\,;\,\phi)}\left[f(\theta)\right]$$

posterior estimator

simulator

- Two ways of obtaining the gradient:

1. Differentiating the measure (**score-based gradient**)
2. Differentiating the simulator (**path-wise gradient**)

Typically **path-wise gradient has (much) lower variance** (see Mohamed (2019))

Differentiable simulators

- Leverage Automatic Differentiation to build simulators

- Use "reparameterisation" techniques to differentiate through randomness.

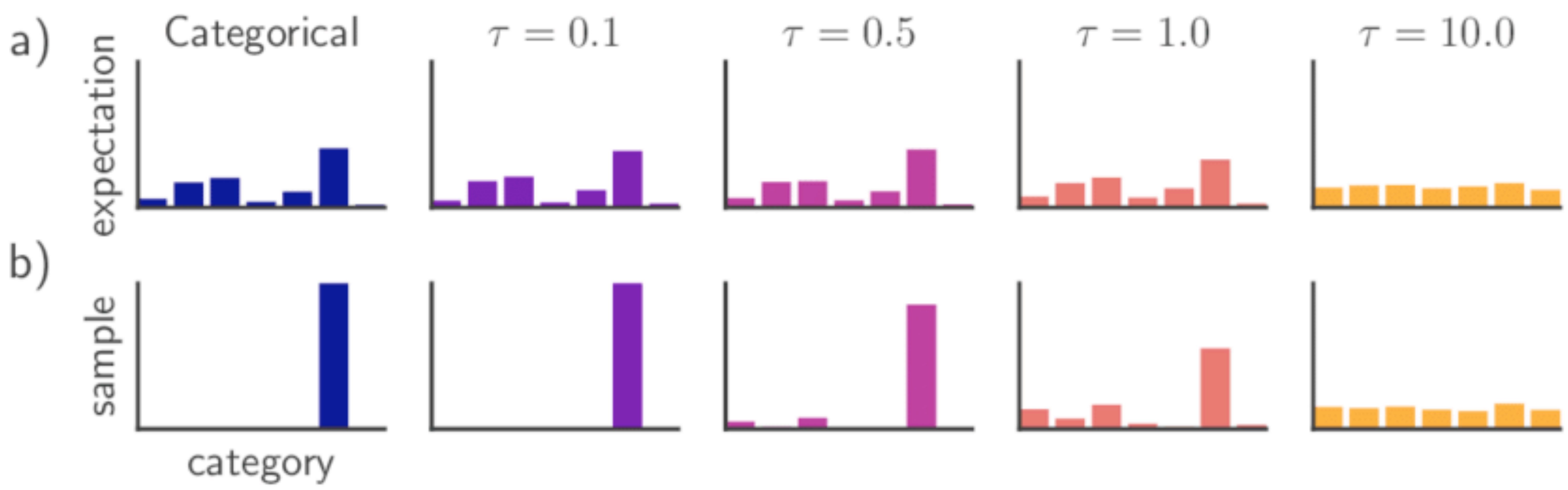
$$x \sim \mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma) \quad \iff \quad x = \mu + \sigma\, r \quad r \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1)$$

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}x}{\mathrm{d}\mu} = 1 \quad \frac{\mathrm{d}x}{\mathrm{d}\sigma} = r$$

Differentiable ABMs

The problem of discrete randomness

- Discrete sampling + flow control = no differentiability?
  - Gumbel-Softmax



Jang et al. (2016)

Differentiable Agent-Based Epidemiology

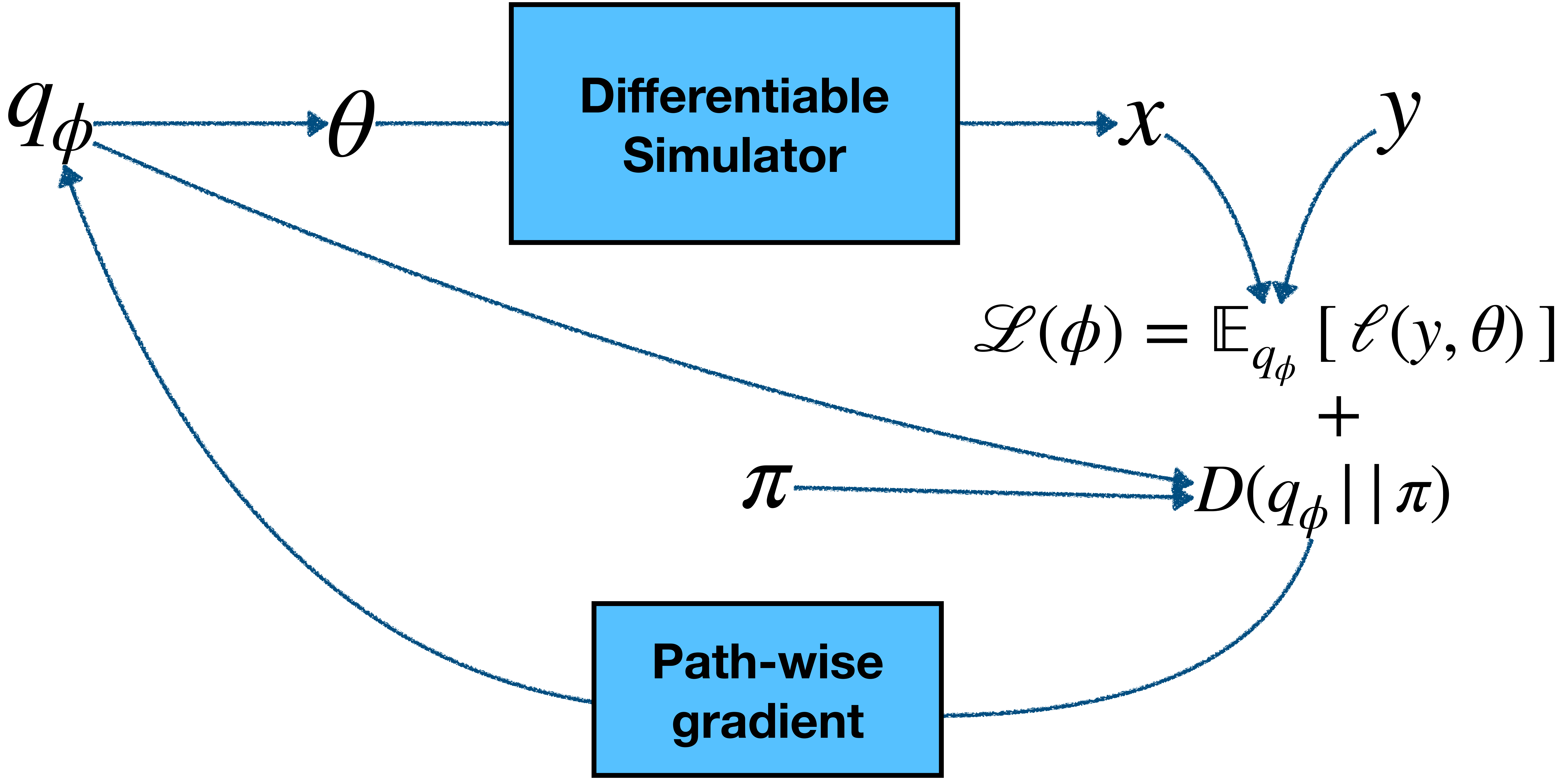
Chopra et al. (2023), Quera-Bofarull et al. (2023)

JUNE model
8 M agents (London)

	Simulation
JUNE	50 hours
GradABM-June (CPU)	5 minutes
GradABM-June (GPU)	5 seconds

x40,000 speed-up !

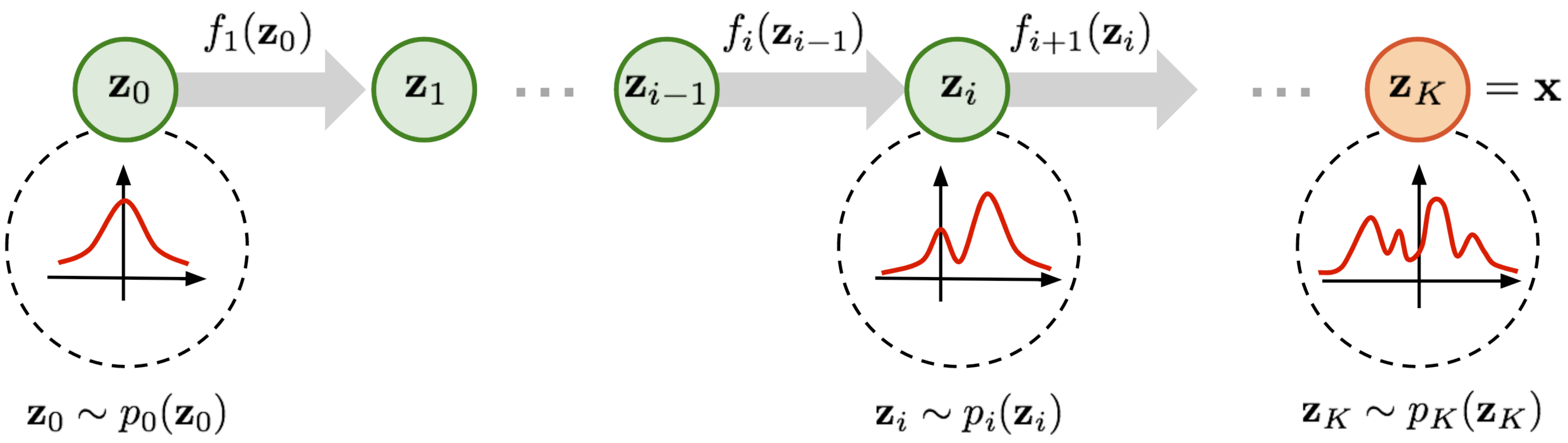
Bayesian Inference for Differentiable Simulators (BIRDS)

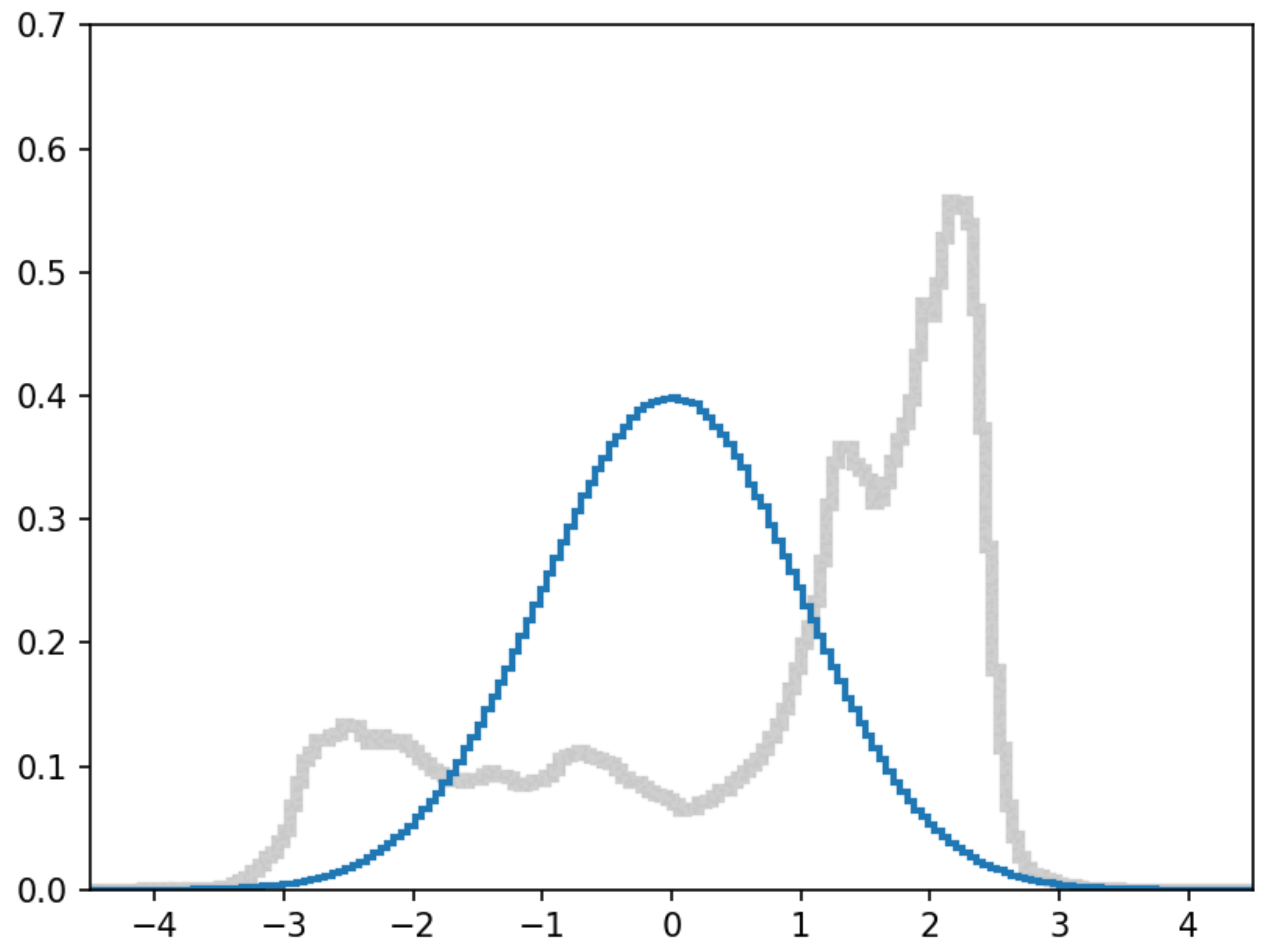


Normalizing Flows

What do we choose for q?

Image credit: Lilian Weng





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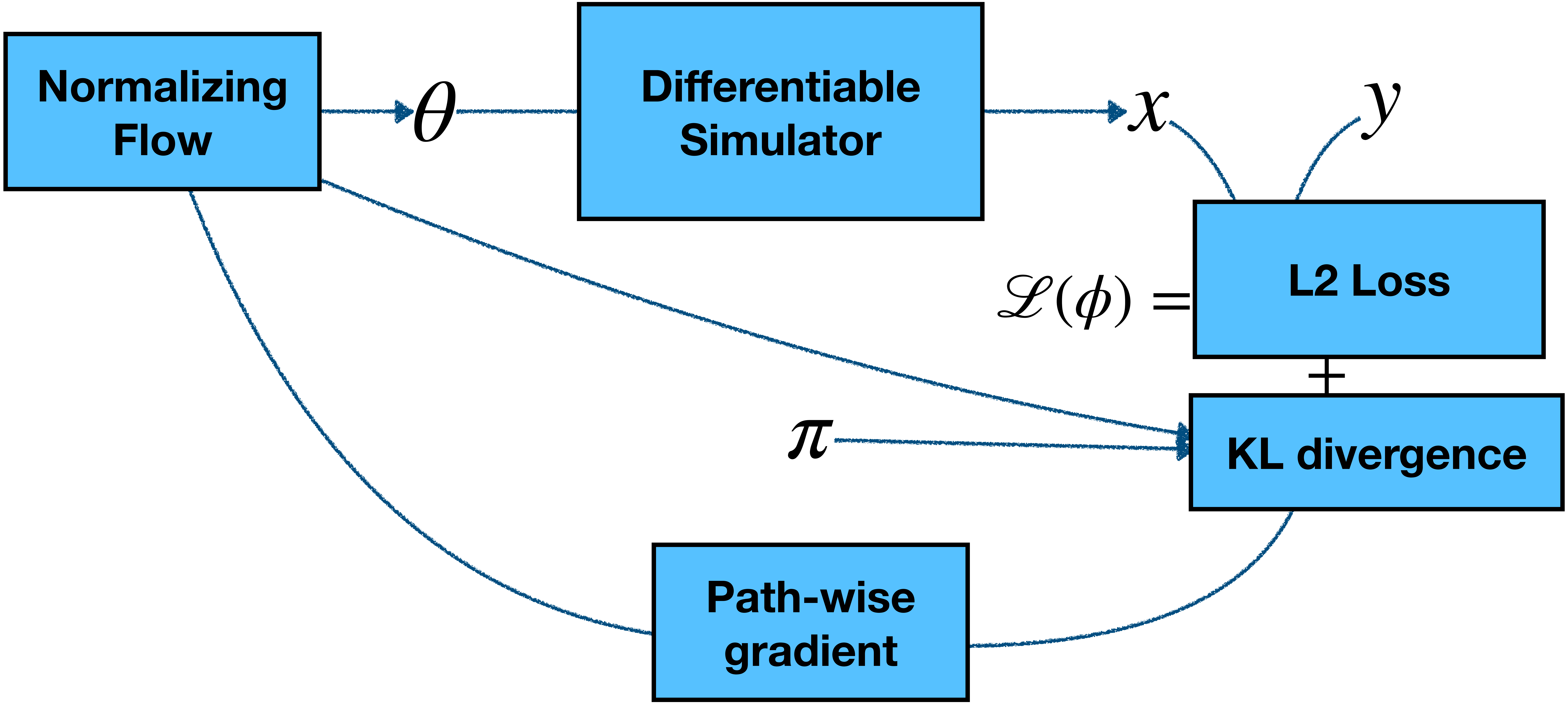

Experiment with JUNE

- ABM model of Covid19
- Model
  - ~200k agents
  - 3 layers of interactions (household, company, school)
  - Calibrate to synthetic data

Loss
Epoch
Cumulative Infections
Time-step
beta_household = $0.12^{+0.95}_{-0.90}$
beta_company = $0.35^{+0.96}_{-1.06}$
beta_school = $-0.05^{+0.99}_{-1.03}$
beta_household
beta_company
beta_school

Conclusions

1. **Bayesian approaches to calibrating ABMs have numerous benefits**

2. **ABMs can be made differentiable even with discrete randomness and control flow**

3. **Diff simulators + Bayesian inference (via Normalizing Flows) promising route to calibrate large-scale ABMs efficiently**

Paper + slides: www.arnau.ai/iclr