

# Artificial intelligence and machine learning in physics

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Department of Physics and Astronomy colloquium, University of  
Catania and celebrating MARCELLO BALDO'S 80th birthday

# What is this talk about?

The main emphasis is to give you a short and pedestrian introduction to the whys and hows we can use (with several examples) machine learning methods in physics. And why this could (or should) be of interest.

## Additional info

Parts of this talk are based on [Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Nuclear Physics](#), Amber Boehnlein et al., Reviews Modern of Physics 94, 031003 (2022)

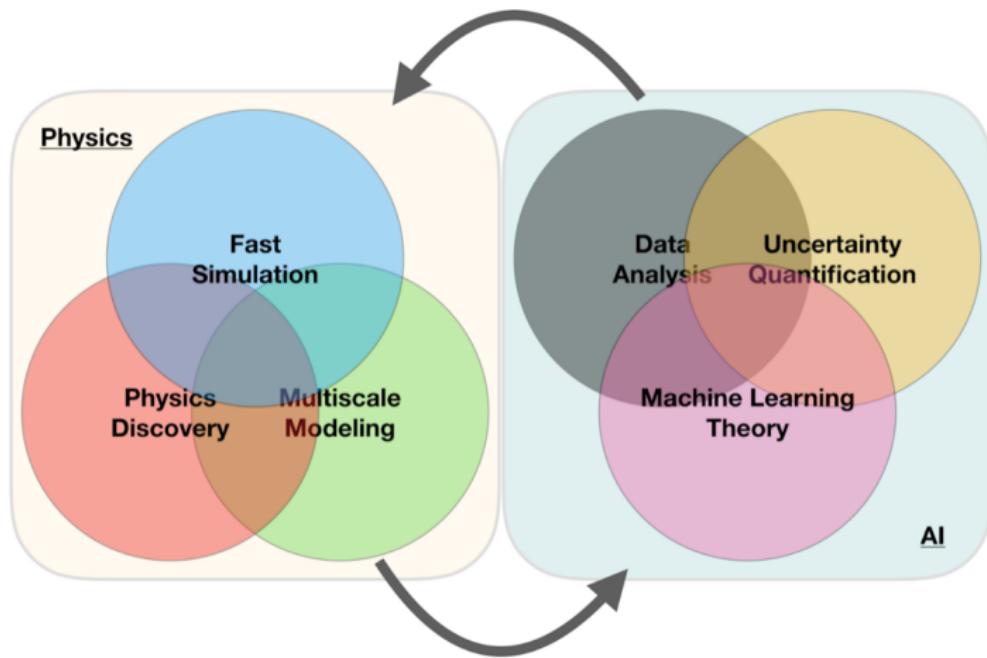
## Thanks to many

Jane Kim (MSU), Julie Butler (MSU), Patrick Cook (MSU), Danny Jammooa (MSU), Daniel Bazin (MSU), Dean Lee (MSU), Witek Nazarewicz (MSU), Michelle Kuchera (Davidson College), Even Nordhagen (UiO), Robert Solli (UiO, Expert Analytics), Bryce Fore (ANL), Alessandro Lovato (ANL), Stefano Gandolfi (LANL), Francesco Pederiva (UniTN), and Giuseppe Carleo (EPFL). Niyaz Beysengulov and Johannes Pollanen (experiment, MSU); Zachary Stewart, Jared Weidman, and Angela Wilson (quantum chemistry, MSU) Jonas Flaten, Oskar, Leinonen, Øyvind Sigmundson Schøyen, Stian Dysthe Bilek, and Håkon Emil Kristiansen (UiO). Marianne Bathen and Lasse Vines (experiments (UiO). Excuses to those I have omitted.

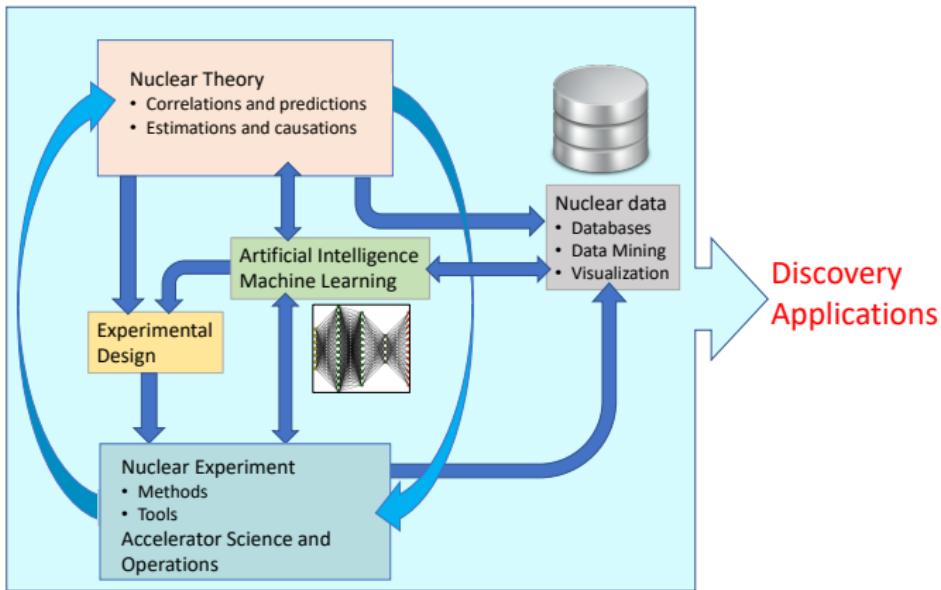
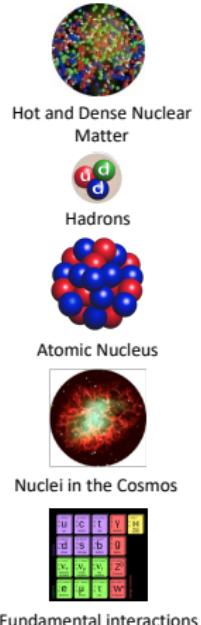
One of the first many-body workshops, summer 1997



# Machine learning. A simple perspective on the interface between ML and Physics



# ML in Nuclear Physics



## AI/ML and some statements you may have heard (and what do they mean?)

1. Fei-Fei Li on ImageNet: **map out the entire world of objects** ([The data that transformed AI research](#))
2. Russell and Norvig in their popular textbook: **relevant to any intellectual task; it is truly a universal field** ([Artificial Intelligence, A modern approach](#))
3. Woody Bledsoe puts it more bluntly: **in the long run, AI is the only science** (quoted in Pamilla McCorduck, [Machines who think](#))

If you wish to have a critical read on AI/ML from a societal point of view, see [Kate Crawford's recent text Atlas of AI](#)

Here: with AI/ML we intend a collection of machine learning methods with an emphasis on statistical learning and data analysis

## Scientific Machine Learning

An important and emerging field is what has been dubbed as scientific ML, see the article by Deiana et al [Applications and Techniques for Fast Machine Learning in Science](#), arXiv:2110.13041

The authors discuss applications and techniques for fast machine learning (ML) in science – the concept of integrating power ML methods into the real-time experimental data processing loop to accelerate scientific discovery. The report covers three main areas

1. applications for fast ML across a number of scientific domains;
2. techniques for training and implementing performant and resource-efficient ML algorithms;
3. and computing architectures, platforms, and technologies for deploying these algorithms.

## Types of machine learning

The approaches to machine learning are many, but are often split into two main categories. In *supervised learning* we know the answer to a problem, and let the computer deduce the logic behind it. On the other hand, *unsupervised learning* is a method for finding patterns and relationship in data sets without any prior knowledge of the system. Some authours also operate with a third category, namely *reinforcement learning*. This is a paradigm of learning inspired by behavioural psychology, where learning is achieved by trial-and-error, solely from rewards and punishment.

## Main categories

Another way to categorize machine learning tasks is to consider the desired output of a system. Some of the most common tasks are:

- ▶ Classification: Outputs are divided into two or more classes. The goal is to produce a model that assigns inputs into one of these classes. An example is to identify digits based on pictures of hand-written ones. Classification is typically supervised learning.
- ▶ Regression: Finding a functional relationship between an input data set and a reference data set. The goal is to construct a function that maps input data to continuous output values.
- ▶ Clustering: Data are divided into groups with certain common traits, without knowing the different groups beforehand. It is thus a form of unsupervised learning.

## Machine learning and nuclear theory (my bias): Why?

1. ML tools can help us to speed up the scientific process cycle and hence facilitate discoveries
2. Enabling fast emulation for big simulations
3. Revealing the information content of measured observables w.r.t. theory
4. Identifying crucial experimental data for better constraining theory
5. Providing meaningful input to applications and planned measurements
6. ML tools can help us to reveal the structure of our models
7. Parameter estimation with heterogeneous/multi-scale datasets
8. Model reduction
9. ML tools can help us to provide predictive capability
10. Theoretical results often involve ultraviolet and infrared extrapolations due to Hilbert-space truncations
11. Uncertainty quantification essential
12. Theoretical models are often applied to entirely new nuclear systems and conditions that are not accessible to experiment

## The plethora of machine learning algorithms/methods

1. Deep learning: Neural Networks (NN), Convolutional NN, Recurrent NN, Boltzmann machines, autoencoders and variational autoencoders and generative adversarial networks
2. Bayesian statistics and Bayesian Machine Learning, Bayesian experimental design, Bayesian Regression models, Bayesian neural networks, Gaussian processes and much more
3. Dimensionality reduction (Principal component analysis), Clustering Methods and more
4. Ensemble Methods, Random forests, bagging and voting methods, gradient boosting approaches
5. Linear and logistic regression, Kernel methods, support vector machines and more
6. Reinforcement Learning
7. Generative models and more

## Examples of Machine Learning methods and applications in nuclear physics

- ▶ **Machine learning for data mining:** Oftentimes, it is necessary to be able to accurately calculate observables that have not been measured, to supplement the existing databases.
- ▶ **Nuclear density functional theory:** Energy density functional calibration involving Bayesian optimization and ML.
- ▶ **Nuclear properties with ML:** Improving predictive power of nuclear models by emulating model residuals.
- ▶ **Effective field theory and A-body systems:** Truncation errors and low-energy coupling constant calibration, nucleon-nucleon scattering calculations, variational calculations with ANN for light nuclei, NN extrapolation of nuclear structure observables
- ▶ **Nuclear shell model UQ:** ML methods have been used to provide UQ of configuration interaction calculations.

## Examples of Machine Learning methods and applications in nuclear physics, continues

- ▶ **Low-energy nuclear reactions UQ:** Bayesian optimization studies of the nucleon-nucleus optical potential, R-matrix analyses, and statistical spatial networks to study patterns in nuclear reaction networks.
- ▶ **Neutron star properties and nuclear matter equation of state:** constraining the equation of state by properties on neutron stars and selected properties of finite nuclei
- ▶ **Experimental design:** Bayesian ML provides a framework to maximize the success of an experiment based on the best information available on existing data, experimental conditions, and theoretical models.

## More examples

The large amount of degrees of freedom pertain to both theory and experiment in nuclear physics. With increasingly complicated experiments that produce large amounts data, automated classification of events becomes increasingly important. Here, deep learning methods offer a plethora of interesting research avenues.

- ▶ Reconstruction of particle trajectories or classification of events are typical examples where ML methods are being used. However, since these data can often be extremely noisy, the precision necessary for discovery in physics requires algorithmic improvements. Research along such directions, interfacing nuclear physics with AI/ML is expected to play a significant role in physics discoveries related to new facilities. The treatment of corrupted data in imaging and image processing is also a relevant topic.
- ▶ Design of detectors represents an important area of applications for ML/AI methods in nuclear physics.

## And more

- ▶ An important application of AI/ML methods is to improve the estimation of bias or uncertainty due to the introduction of or lack of physical constraints in various theoretical models.
- ▶ In theory, we expect to use AI/ML algorithms and methods to improve our knowledge about correlations of physical model parameters in data for quantum many-body systems. Deep learning methods show great promise in circumventing the exploding dimensionalities encountered in quantum mechanical many-body studies.
- ▶ Merging a frequentist approach (the standard path in ML theory) with a Bayesian approach, has the potential to infer better probability distributions and error estimates. As an example, methods for fast Monte-Carlo- based Bayesian computation of nuclear density functionals show great promise in providing a better understanding
- ▶ Machine Learning and Quantum Computing is a very interesting avenue to explore.

## Selected references

- ▶ Mehta et al. and Physics Reports (2019).
- ▶ Machine Learning and the Physical Sciences by Carleo et al
- ▶ Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Nuclear Physics, Amber Boehnlein et al., Reviews Modern of Physics 94, 031003 (2022)
- ▶ Dilute neutron star matter from neural-network quantum states by Fore et al, Physical Review Research 5, 033062 (2023)
- ▶ Neural-network quantum states for ultra-cold Fermi gases, Jane Kim et al, Nature Physics Communcication, submitted
- ▶ Message-Passing Neural Quantum States for the Homogeneous Electron Gas, Gabriel Pescia, Jane Kim et al. arXiv.2305.07240,
- ▶ Efficient solutions of fermionic systems using artificial neural networks, Nordhagen et al, Frontiers in Physics 11, 2023
- ▶ Report from the A.I. For Nuclear Physics Workshop by Bedaque et al., Eur J. Phys. A 57, (2021)

## What are the basic ingredients?

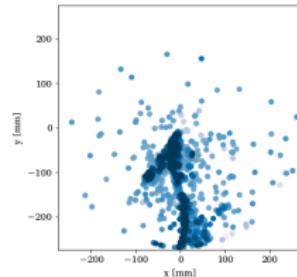
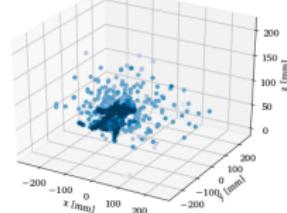
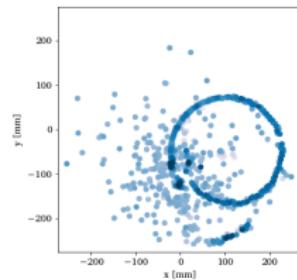
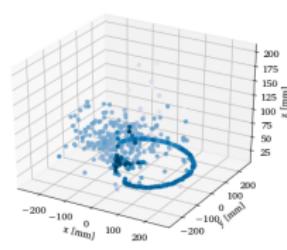
Almost every problem in ML and data science starts with the same ingredients:

- ▶ The dataset  $x$  (could be some observable quantity of the system we are studying)
- ▶ A model which is a function of a set of parameters  $\alpha$  that relates to the dataset, say a likelihood function  $p(x|\alpha)$  or just a simple model  $f(\alpha)$
- ▶ A so-called **loss/cost/risk** function  $\mathcal{C}(x, f(\alpha))$  which allows us to decide how well our model represents the dataset.

We seek to minimize the function  $\mathcal{C}(x, f(\alpha))$  by finding the parameter values which minimize  $\mathcal{C}$ . This leads to various minimization algorithms. It may surprise many, but at the heart of all machine learning algorithms there is an optimization problem.

# Argon-46 by Solli et al., NIMA 1010, 165461 (2021)

Representations of two events from the Argon-46 experiment. Each row is one event in two projections, where the color intensity of each point indicates higher charge values recorded by the detector. The bottom row illustrates a carbon event with a large fraction of noise, while the top row shows a proton event almost free of noise.



## Many-body physics, Quantum Monte Carlo and deep learning

Given a hamiltonian  $H$  and a trial wave function  $\Psi_T$ , the variational principle states that the expectation value of  $\langle H \rangle$ , defined through

$$\langle E \rangle = \frac{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi_T^*(\mathbf{R}) H(\mathbf{R}) \Psi_T(\mathbf{R})}{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi_T^*(\mathbf{R}) \Psi_T(\mathbf{R})},$$

is an upper bound to the ground state energy  $E_0$  of the hamiltonian  $H$ , that is

$$E_0 \leq \langle E \rangle.$$

In general, the integrals involved in the calculation of various expectation values are multi-dimensional ones. Traditional integration methods such as the Gauss-Legendre will not be adequate for say the computation of the energy of a many-body system. **Basic philosophy:** Let a neural network find the optimal wave function

## Quantum Monte Carlo Motivation

Given a hamiltonian  $H$  and a trial wave function  $\Psi_T$ , the variational principle states that the expectation value of  $\langle H \rangle$ , defined through

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# Quantum Monte Carlo Motivation

## Basic steps

Choose a trial wave function  $\psi_T(\mathbf{R})$ .

$$P(\mathbf{R}, \alpha) = \frac{|\psi_T(\mathbf{R}, \alpha)|^2}{\int |\psi_T(\mathbf{R}, \alpha)|^2 d\mathbf{R}}.$$

This is our model, or likelihood/probability distribution function (PDF). It depends on some variational parameters  $\alpha$ . The approximation to the expectation value of the Hamiltonian is now

$$\langle E[\alpha] \rangle = \frac{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi_T^*(\mathbf{R}, \alpha) H(\mathbf{R}) \Psi_T(\mathbf{R}, \alpha)}{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi_T^*(\mathbf{R}, \alpha) \Psi_T(\mathbf{R}, \alpha)}.$$

## Quantum Monte Carlo Motivation

Define a new quantity

$$E_L(\mathbf{R}, \alpha) = \frac{1}{\psi_T(\mathbf{R}, \alpha)} H \psi_T(\mathbf{R}, \alpha),$$

called the local energy, which, together with our trial PDF yields

$$\langle E[\alpha] \rangle = \int P(\mathbf{R}) E_L(\mathbf{R}, \alpha) d\mathbf{R} \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N E_L(\mathbf{R}_i, \alpha)$$

with  $N$  being the number of Monte Carlo samples.

## The trial wave function

We want to perform a Variational Monte Carlo calculation of the ground state of two electrons in a quantum dot well with different oscillator energies, assuming total spin  $S = 0$ . Our trial wave function has the following form

$$\psi_T(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = C \exp(-\alpha_1 \omega(r_1^2 + r_2^2)/2) \exp\left(\frac{r_{12}}{(1 + \alpha_2 r_{12})}\right), \quad (1)$$

where the variables  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_2$  represent our variational parameters. Why does the trial function look like this? How did we get there? **This is one of our main motivations** for switching to Machine Learning.

## The correlation part of the wave function

To find an ansatz for the correlated part of the wave function, it is useful to rewrite the two-particle local energy in terms of the relative and center-of-mass motion. Let us denote the distance between the two electrons as  $r_{12}$ . We omit the center-of-mass motion since we are only interested in the case when  $r_{12} \rightarrow 0$ . The contribution from the center-of-mass (CoM) variable  $\mathbf{R}_{\text{CoM}}$  gives only a finite contribution. We focus only on the terms that are relevant for  $r_{12}$  and for three dimensions. The relevant local energy operator becomes then (with  $l = 0$ )

$$\lim_{r_{12} \rightarrow 0} E_L(R) = \frac{1}{\mathcal{R}_T(r_{12})} \left( -2 \frac{d^2}{dr_{ij}^2} - \frac{4}{r_{ij}} \frac{d}{dr_{ij}} + \frac{2}{r_{ij}} \right) \mathcal{R}_T(r_{12}).$$

In order to avoid divergencies when  $r_{12} \rightarrow 0$  we obtain the so-called **cusp** condition

$$\frac{d\mathcal{R}_T(r_{12})}{dr_{12}} = \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{R}_T(r_{12}) \quad r_{12} \rightarrow 0$$

## Resulting ansatz

The above results in

$$\mathcal{R}_T \propto \exp(r_{ij}/2),$$

for anti-parallel spins and

$$\mathcal{R}_T \propto \exp(r_{ij}/4),$$

for anti-parallel spins. This is the so-called cusp condition for the relative motion, resulting in a minimal requirement for the correlation part of the wave function. For general systems containing more than say two electrons, we have this condition for each electron pair  $ij$ .

## Energy derivatives

To find the derivatives of the local energy expectation value as function of the variational parameters, we can use the chain rule and the hermiticity of the Hamiltonian.

Let us define (with the notation  $\langle E[\alpha] \rangle = \langle E_L \rangle$ )

$$\bar{E}_{\alpha_i} = \frac{d\langle E_L \rangle}{d\alpha_i},$$

as the derivative of the energy with respect to the variational parameter  $\alpha$ ; We define also the derivative of the trial function (skipping the subindex  $T$ ) as

$$\bar{\Psi}_i = \frac{d\Psi}{d\alpha_i}.$$

## Derivatives of the local energy

The elements of the gradient of the local energy are then (using the chain rule and the hermiticity of the Hamiltonian)

$$\bar{E}_i = 2 \left( \langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} E_L \rangle - \langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} \rangle \langle E_L \rangle \right).$$

From a computational point of view it means that you need to compute the expectation values of

$$\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} E_L \rangle,$$

and

$$\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} \rangle \langle E_L \rangle$$

These integrals are evaluated using MC integration (with all its possible error sources). We can then use methods like stochastic gradient or other minimization methods to find the optimal variational parameters.

## How do we define our objective/cost function?

We have a model, our likelihood function.

How should we define the objective/cost function?

## Meet the variance and its derivatives

### Why the variance?

Suppose the trial function (our model) is the exact wave function.  
The action of the hamiltonian on the wave function

$$H\Psi = \text{constant} \times \Psi,$$

The integral which defines various expectation values involving moments of the hamiltonian becomes then

$$\langle E^n \rangle = \langle H^n \rangle = \frac{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi^*(\mathbf{R}) H^n(\mathbf{R}) \Psi(\mathbf{R})}{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi^*(\mathbf{R}) \Psi(\mathbf{R})} = \text{constant} \times \frac{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi^*(\mathbf{R}) \Psi(\mathbf{R})}{\int d\mathbf{R} \Psi^*(\mathbf{R}) \Psi(\mathbf{R})}$$

This gives an important information: If I want the variance, the exact wave function leads to zero variance! The variance is defined as

$$\sigma_E = \langle E^2 \rangle - \langle E \rangle^2.$$

Variation is then performed by minimizing both the energy and the variance.

## The variance defines the cost function

We can then take the derivatives of

$$\sigma_E = \langle E^2 \rangle - \langle E \rangle^2,$$

with respect to the variational parameters. The derivatives of the variance can then be used to define the so-called Hessian matrix, which in turn allows us to use minimization methods like Newton's method or standard gradient methods.

This leads to however a more complicated expression, with obvious errors when evaluating integrals by Monte Carlo integration. Less used, see however [Filippi and Umrigar](#). The expression becomes complicated

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{E}_{ij} = & 2 \left[ \left\langle \left( \frac{\bar{\Psi}_{ij}}{\Psi} + \frac{\bar{\Psi}_j}{\Psi} \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} \right) (E_L - \langle E \rangle) \right\rangle - \left\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} \right\rangle \bar{E}_j - \left\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_j}{\Psi} \right\rangle \bar{E}_i \right] \quad (2) \\ & + \left\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} E_{Lj} \right\rangle + \left\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_j}{\Psi} E_{Li} \right\rangle - \left\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_i}{\Psi} \right\rangle \langle E_{Lj} \rangle \left\langle \frac{\bar{\Psi}_j}{\Psi} \right\rangle \langle E_{Li} \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Evaluating the cost function means having to evaluate the above

## Monte Carlo methods and Neural Networks

Machine Learning and the Deuteron by Kebble and Rios and  
Variational Monte Carlo calculations of  $A \leq 4$  nuclei with an  
artificial neural-network correlator ansatz by Adams et al.

Adams et al:

$$H_{LO} = - \sum_i \frac{\vec{\nabla}_i^2}{2m_N} + \sum_{i < j} (C_1 + C_2 \vec{\sigma}_i \cdot \vec{\sigma}_j) e^{-r_{ij}^2 \Lambda^2 / 4} + D_0 \sum_{i < j < k} \sum_{\text{cyc}} e^{-(r_{ik}^2 + r_{ij}^2) \Lambda^2 / 4}, \quad (3)$$

where  $m_N$  is the mass of the nucleon,  $\vec{\sigma}_i$  is the Pauli matrix acting on nucleon  $i$ , and  $\sum_{\text{cyc}}$  stands for the cyclic permutation of  $i$ ,  $j$ , and  $k$ . The low-energy constants  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  are fit to the deuteron binding energy and to the neutron-neutron scattering length

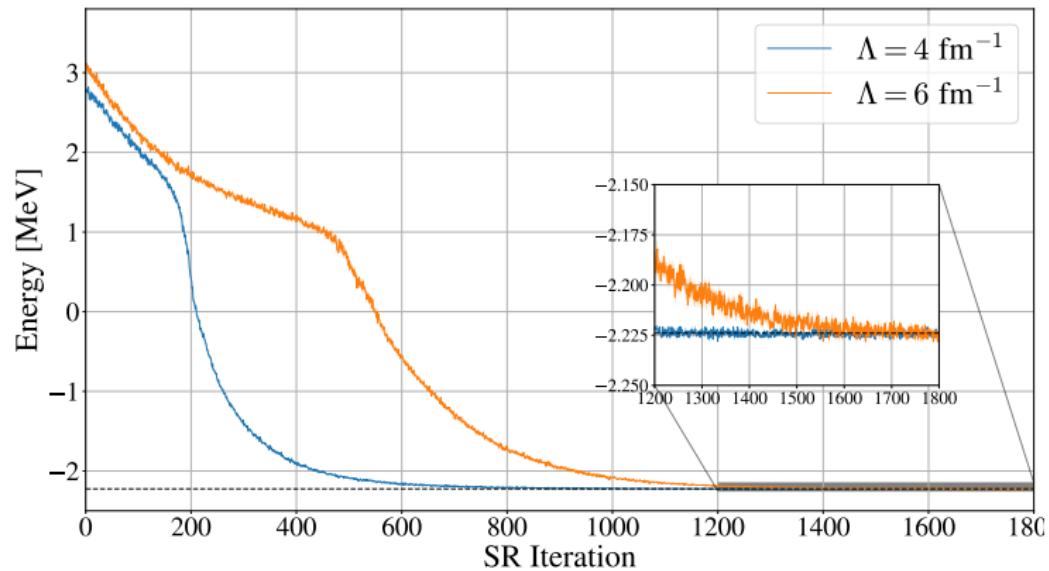
Deep learning neural networks, Variational Monte Carlo calculations of  $A \leq 4$  nuclei with an artificial neural-network correlator ansatz by Adams et al.

An appealing feature of the neural network ansatz is that it is more general than the more conventional product of two- and three-body spin-independent Jastrow functions

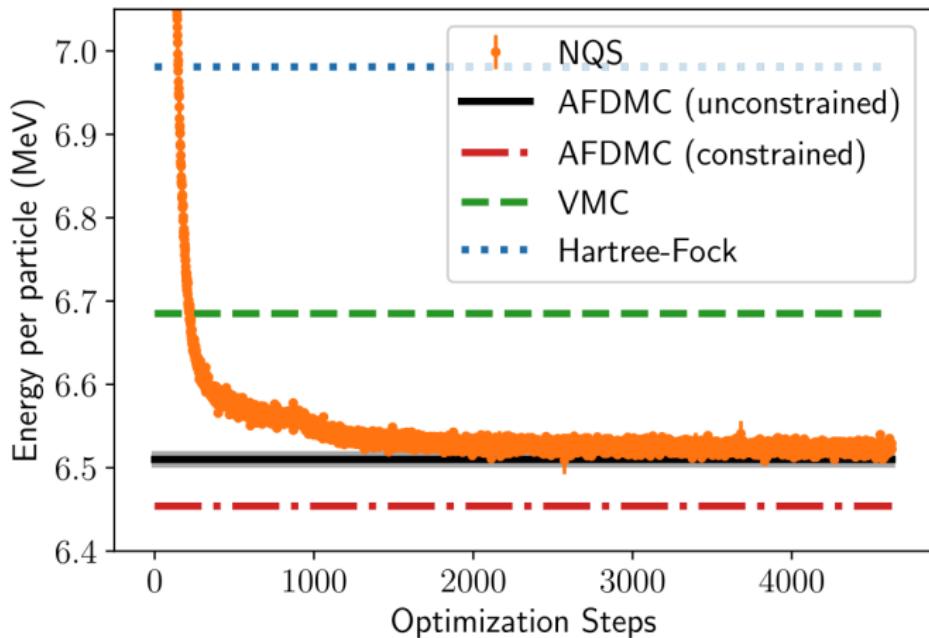
$$|\Psi_V^J\rangle = \prod_{i < j < k} \left(1 - \sum_{\text{cyc}} u(r_{ij})u(r_{jk})\right) \prod_{i < j} f(r_{ij}) |\Phi\rangle, \quad (4)$$

which is commonly used for nuclear Hamiltonians that do not contain tensor and spin-orbit terms. The above function is replaced by a four-layer Neural Network.

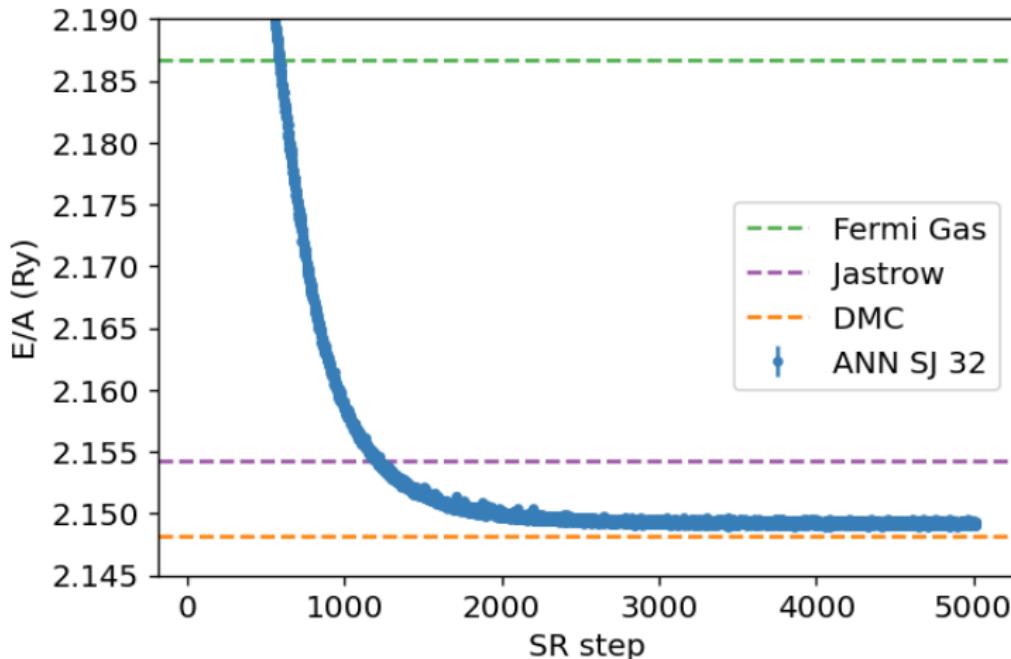
## Explicit results



Dilute neutron star matter from neural-network quantum states by Fore et al, Physical Review Research 5, 033062 (2023) at density  $\rho = 0.04 \text{ fm}^{-3}$



The electron gas in three dimensions with  $N = 14$  electrons  
(Wigner-Seitz radius  $r_s = 2$  a.u.), Gabriel Pescia, Jane Kim  
et al. arXiv.2305.07240,



## Efficient solutions of fermionic systems using artificial neural networks, Nordhagen et al, Frontiers in Physics 11, 2023

The Hamiltonian of the quantum dot is given by

$$\hat{H} = \hat{H}_0 + \hat{V},$$

where  $\hat{H}_0$  is the many-body HO Hamiltonian, and  $\hat{V}$  is the inter-electron Coulomb interactions. In dimensionless units,

$$\hat{V} = \sum_{i < j}^N \frac{1}{r_{ij}},$$

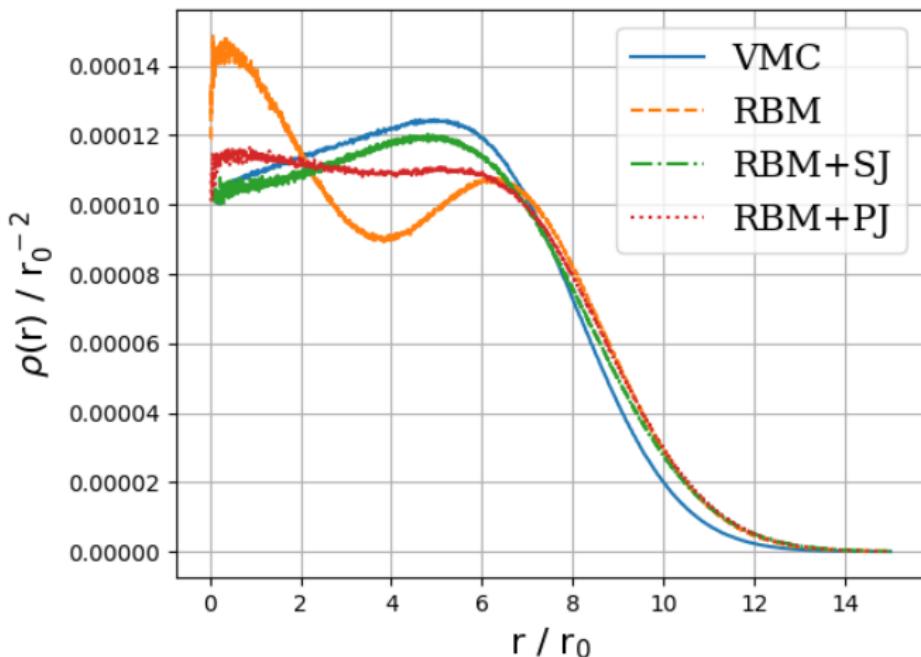
with  $r_{ij} = \sqrt{r_i^2 - r_j^2}$ .

This leads to the separable Hamiltonian, with the relative motion part given by ( $r_{ij} = r$ )

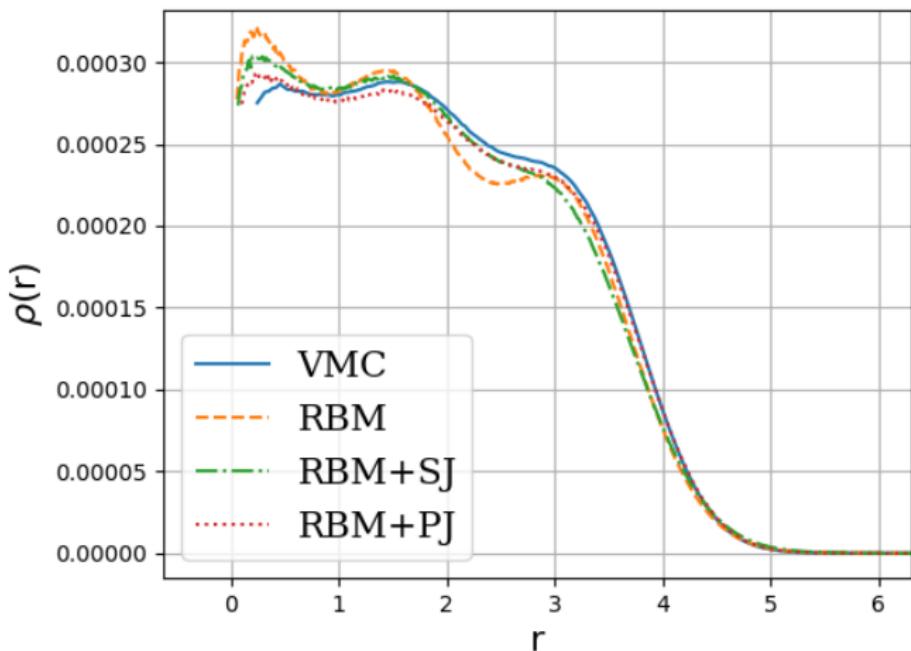
$$\hat{H}_r = -\nabla_r^2 + \frac{1}{4}\omega^2 r^2 + \frac{1}{r},$$

plus a standard Harmonic Oscillator problem for the center-of-mass motion. This system has analytical solutions in two and three dimensions (M. Taut 1993 and 1994).

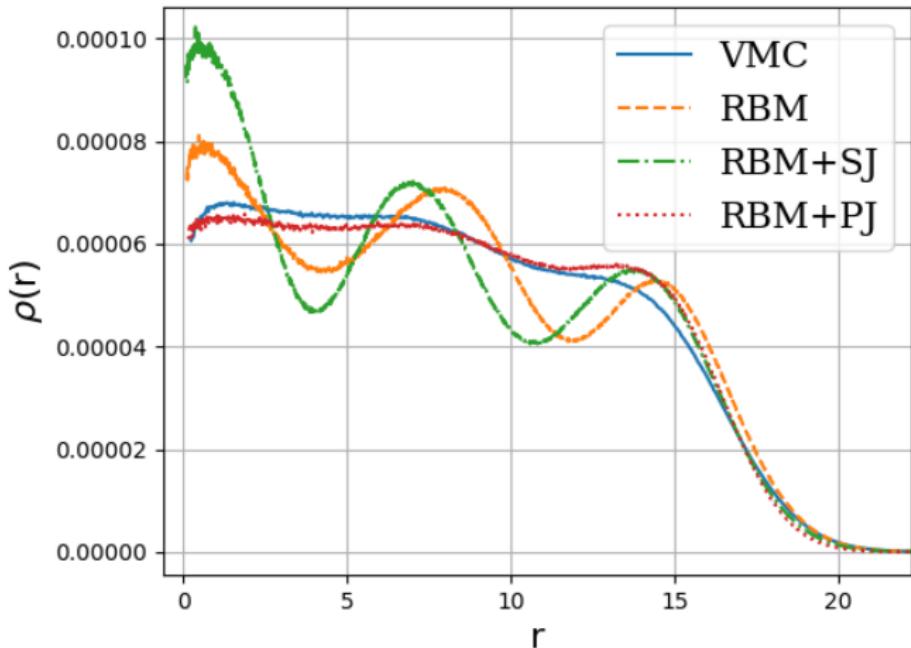
Quantum dots and Boltzmann machines, onebody densities  
 $N = 6$ ,  $\hbar\omega = 0.1$  a.u.



# Onebody densities $N = 30$ , $\hbar\omega = 1.0$ a.u.

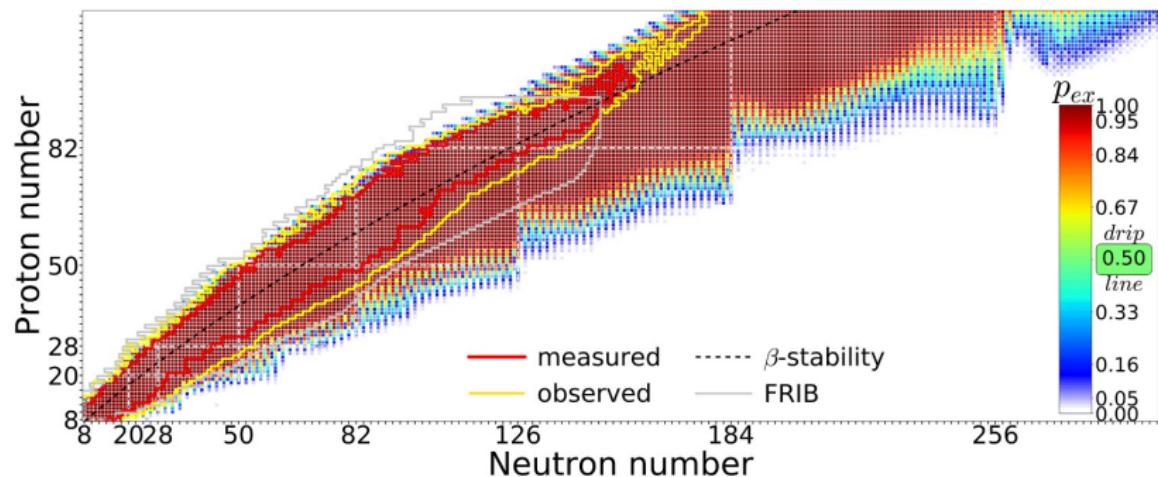


# Onebody densities $N = 30$ , $\hbar\omega = 0.1$ a.u.



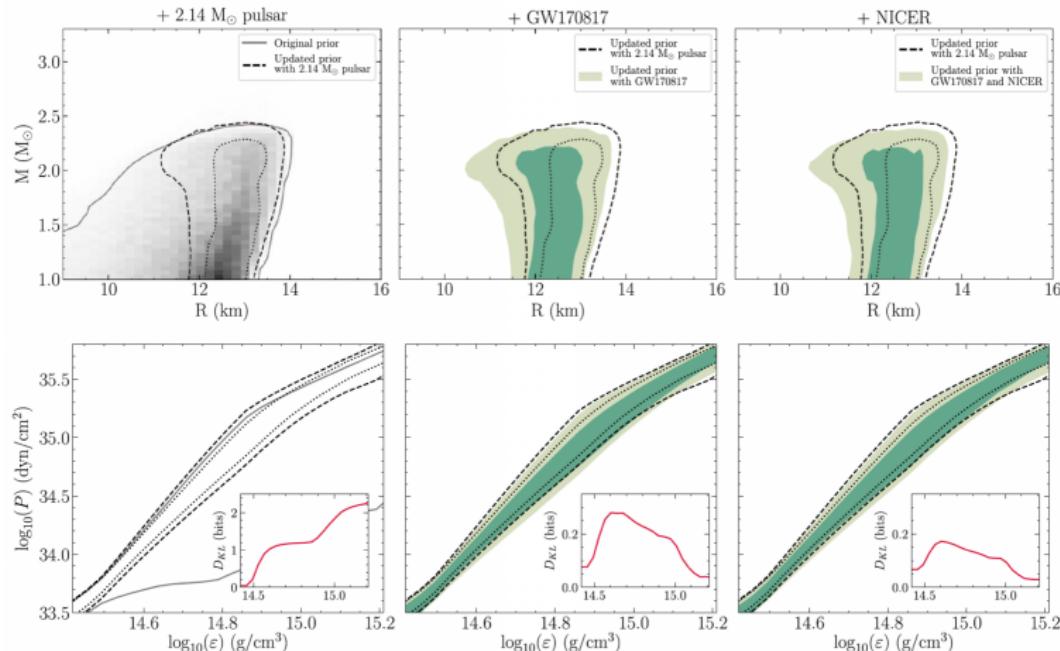
# Quantified limits of the nuclear landscape

Neufcourt et al., Phys. Rev. C 101, 044307 (2020) Predictions  
made with eleven global mass model and Bayesian model averaging



# Constraining the equation of state for dense nuclear matter

G. Raaijmakers et al., Constraining the Dense Matter Equation of State with Joint Analysis of NICER and LIGO/Virgo Measurements, AJ Letters, 893, L21 (2020)



## Experimental design

Beam time and compute cycles are expensive!

- ▶ Bayesian experimental design provides a framework in which experiments can be designed using the best experimental and theoretical information available
- ▶ The utility function is designed to encode the goals of the experiment and the constraints inherent in carrying it out.
- ▶ Once the utility function and the possible designs have been specified, the optimal design is simply the scenario that maximizes the expected utility function over the domain of possible designs.

## Observations and perspectives

- ▶ Need for AI/Machine Learning in nuclear physics, lots of ongoing activities
- ▶ To solve many complex problems in the field and facilitate discoveries, multidisciplinary efforts efforts are required involving scientists in nuclear physics, statistics, computational science, and applied math.
- ▶ There is a need for focused AI/ML learning efforts that will benefit accelerator science and experimental and theoretical programs

# How can we use ML in Nuclear Science?

- ▶ How do we develop insights, competences, knowledge in statistical learning that can advance our field?
  - ▶ For example: Can we use ML to find out which correlations are relevant and thereby diminish the dimensionality problem in standard many-body theories?
  - ▶ Can we use AI/ML in detector analysis, accelerator design, analysis of experimental data and more?
  - ▶ Can we use AL/ML to carry out reliable extrapolations by using current experimental knowledge and current theoretical models?
  - ▶ Future research may have a strong focus on generative models
- ▶ The community needs to invest in relevant educational efforts and training of nuclear physicists with knowledge in AI/ML
- ▶ Most likely tons of things we have forgotten

## Possible start to raise awareness about ML in our field

- ▶ Make an ML challenge in nuclear physics a la Learning to discover: the Higgs boson machine learning challenge.  
Alternatively go to kaggle.com at  
<https://www.kaggle.com/c/higgs-boson>
- ▶ HEP@CERN and HEP in general have made significant impacts in the field of machine learning and AI. Something to learn from