

Uthpala Herath

Department of Physics and Astronomy
West Virginia University
135 Willey St, Morgantown
Morgantown, WV 26506
☎ +1 (304)-216-2535

✉ ukh0001@mix.wvu.edu
🐙 [uthpalaherath.github.io](https://github.com/uthpalaherath)
🐙 github.com/uthpalaherath
in [linkedin.com/in/uthpalaherath](https://www.linkedin.com/in/uthpalaherath)
🆔 orcid.org/0000-0002-4585-3002

SUMMARY

- Ph.D. candidate in computational materials science research with a demonstrated history in employing High-Performance Computing (HPC) and High-Throughput Computing (HTC) to perform first principles *ab-initio* electronic structure calculations for bulk material and heterostructures, primarily focusing on strongly correlated materials (SCMs) using beyond-DFT quantum many body methods including Green's functions methods and Dynamical Mean Field Theory (DMFT).
- Expertise includes calculating electronic, magnetic, optical, elastic, mechanical, thermal and vibrational properties of both strongly correlated and weakly correlated material.
- Experienced in the design and characterization of state-of-the-art novel material with remarkable emergent properties.
- Interested in materials useful for high-temperature superconductivity, magnetism, colossal magnetoresistance, metal to insulator transitions, ferromagnetism, thermomagnetic, spintronics and energy applications.
- Experienced in the study of defects, vacancies and alloying in strongly correlated materials.
- Skilled in the development of frameworks to facilitate of electronic structure calculations along with their pre and post-processing. E.g.- PyProcar, DMFTwDFT
- Experienced with multi-disciplinary research in fields including Materials Science, Space Physics and Agriculture; a portrayal of versatility and multifacetedness.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy (Physics) 2017–2021 (Exp.)

Department of Physics and Astronomy, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26508, USA

Thesis: *“Development of computational methods for electronic structural characterization of strongly correlated materials: from different ab-initio perspectives.”*

Advisor: Aldo H. Romero

Master of Science (Physics) 2015–2017

Department of Physics and Astronomy, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26508, USA

Bachelor of Science (Physics major and Mathematics minor) 2010–2014

Department of Physics, Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

West Virginia University 2017 –current

Graduate Research Assistant (Computational Materials Science)

- Developed the DMFTwDFT framework; an open-source, user-friendly framework to calculate electronic, vibrational and elastic properties in strongly correlated materials (SCMs) using beyond-DFT methods such as DFT+U, DFT+Hybrids and DFT+DMFT (Dynamical Mean Field Theory) with a variety of different DFT codes including VASP, Siesta and Quantum Espresso interfaced through Maximally Localized Wannier Functions (MLWF) and a Continuous Time Quantum Monte Carlo (CTQMC) impurity solver. Based on the original implementation by Dr. Hyowon Park at the University of Illinois at Chicago.
- Maintained the code repository and community forum for the DMFTwDFT project.
- Implemented full charge self-consistent DFT+DMFT calculations within the DMFTwDFT framework for the DFT code Siesta in collaboration with Dr. Javier Junquera, a lead developer for Siesta.
- Performed electronic structure calculations to study the electronic properties of transition and rare-earth correlated nickelates using DMFTwDFT.
- Studied the effect of symmetrically induced oxygen vacancies based on their Wychoff positions in strongly correlated rare earth nickelates using a combination of DFT and DMFT and identified potential metal-to-insulator transitions. Further studied the minimum energy pathways for oxygen vacancy diffusion using Nudged Elastic Band theory (NEB) within DMFT for these vacancies.
- Studied the dependence of the electronic properties of strongly correlated oxynitrides perovskites and Heusler alloys.
- Studied alloying/ defects in strongly correlated materials using virtual crystal approximation (VCA) within DMFT.
- Development of PyProcar; a robust, open-source Python library used for pre- and post-processing of the electronic structure data coming from DFT calculations. Based on the original implementation by Dr. Aldo Romero and Dr. Francisco Muñoz. Additionally, maintained the code repository and community forum for the project.
- Contributed to MechElastic; An open-source Python library to calculate elastic properties of materials. Implemented the Equation of State analysis and Abinit interface along with pressure corrections in VASP. Maintained the code repository and the community forum. Original implementation by Dr. Sobhit Singh.
- Contributed to MDWC; our in-house command line open-source Python program for constrained molecular dynamics simulations. Involved in debugging and post-processing tool development. Based on the implementation by Dr. Arturo Hernandez.
- Contributed to PyChemia; our in-house open-source Python library for materials structural search. Based on the implementation by Dr. Guillermo Avendano-Franco.
- Assisted in grant proposals writing.
 - XSEDE proposal for allocation of computing resources in Stampede2 and Bridges super-computing clusters. (2018-current)
 - DOE-EPSCOR Project: Searching optimal strongly correlated materials for neuromorphic computing. (2019)

West Virginia University

2016 –2017

Graduate Research Assistant (Computational Space Physics))

- Project title: “The effect of magnetic field line curvature scattering on the rapid loss of ring current ions”
Advisor : Dr. Weichao Tu
- Performed test particle simulations to quantify cumulative FLC scattering of ring current ions. Based on these simulation results, a physical parameterization for the FLC scattering was attempted to be incorporated into the RAM-SCB model.
- Received hands-on experience with a C, C++ based in-house particle tracer code.
- Presented preliminary results at the 2017 GEM conference in Portsmouth, VA.

Arthur C. Clarke Institute of Modern Technologies, Sri Lanka

2014

Intern- Space Applications Division

- Project title: “Identification of Blue Stragglers in the globular cluster M53 using CCD photometry”
Advisors : Mr. S. Gunasekara, Dr. T. Ranawake

- Worked in conjunction with an expert team of scientists at the Space Applications division of ACCIMT to perform an extensive study of globular cluster characteristics using Aperture Photometry and PSF (Point Spread Function) Fitting Photometry methods with the IRAF (Image Reduction and Analysis Facility) system.
- Telescopic data of the globular cluster M53 was used to construct a novel Color-Magnitude Diagram (CMD) of the cluster, which was in turn utilized to study its stellar population, mainly focusing on the Blue Straggler Star population.

University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

2012-2013

Undergraduate Research Student- Department of Physics, Faculty of Science

- Project title: “Nano Magnets and their Applications”
- Investigated the traits, synthesis methods, functionalization and applications of Nano Magnets.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **Volunteer Instructor**, Department of Physics and Astronomy at West Virginia University 2017-present
Occasionally covered for Dr. Aldo Romero’s (thesis advisor) graduate level Quantum Mechanics class.
- **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, Department of Physics and Astronomy at West Virginia University 2015-2017
Conducted lab and office hours on electrostatics, electromagnetism and optics for STEM undergraduate students in Physics 112. Graded exams and homework.
- **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, Department of Physics at University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka 2014-2015
Conducted lab and tutorial sessions for STEM undergraduate students. Graded exams and homework.

SKILLS

- **First principles *ab-initio* calculations :**
 - Density Functional Theory (DFT) codes - *VASP, Siesta, Abinit, Elk, Quantum Espresso for DFT, DFT+U, Hybrid functionals, GW calculations*
 - Electronic, vibrational, magnetic, mechanical, elastic, thermal and optical properties of bulk material and heterostructures.
- **Materials Research Methods and Tools :**
 - DMFTwDFT - *An open-source framework to perform Dynamical Mean Field Theory (DMFT) calculations to study strongly correlated materials (SCMs), Mott transitions, mass renormalization effects, spectral functions*
 - Impurity Solvers and Quantum Monte Carlo Methods
 - PyProcar - *A robust, open-source Python library used for pre- and post-processing of the electronic structure data coming from DFT calculations.”*
 - PyChemia - *An open-source Python library for materials structural search.*
 - MDWC - *A command line open-source Python program for constrained molecular dynamics simulations.*
 - MechElastic - *An open-source Python library to calculate elastic properties of materials.*
 - VTST Tools - *Minimum Energy Pathways calculations*
 - Wannier90 - *Maximally Localized Wannier Functions*
 - Molecular Dynamics Simulations with mdwc, VMD, qAgate, Jmol
 - Graphical tools - *VESTA (Visualization for Electronic Structure Analysis), gnuplot, Xmgrace, xcrysden*
 - Vacancy, defect and alloying methods - *sod (site occupation disorder), Virtual Crystal Approximation (VCA), Coherent Potential Approximation (CPA), SPRKKR*
 - Tightbinding Hamiltonians - *Employing Tightbinding Hamiltonians to study strongly correlated material.*
- **Programming languages :** C, C++, Fortran, Python, Bash, Matlab, Java, SQL
- **Computational methods :** High-performance computing (HPC), High-throughput computing (HTC), Parallel computing with OpenMP and MPI, Regression analysis, Statistical algorithms, Finite element methods, Differential solvers and Integrators, Numerical analysis algorithms, Object-oriented and Procedural programming paradigms
- **Libraries :** PyMatgen, phonopy, DiSPy, sod (site occupation disorder), numpy, scipy, pandas, matplotlib, BLAS, LAPACK, FFTW3, GSL

- **Operating systems** : Linux, MacOS, Windows
- **Graphics and Publishing** : Latex, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premiere, Adobe After Effects, Adobe Illustrator
- **Version Control** : git, GitHub
- **Utilities** : vim, tmux, globus
- **Communications** : Slack, Zoom, Skype
- **Languages** : English (Full professional proficiency), Sinhala (Native or bilingual proficiency), Tamil (Elementary proficiency)

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

- **Ovshinsky Travel Award for the APS March Meeting 2021** 2021
Awarded by the American Physical Society to fund registration for the APS March Meeting in March, 2021.
- **Robert T. Bruhn Physics Research Award at West Virginia University** 2020
Awarded by the Department of Physics and Astronomy to extend support to the research effort of a graduate or undergraduate student in the department in nanotechnology and material science.
- **Office of the Provost Graduate Student Travel Award** 2018, 2019
Awarded by the Office of the Provost, West Virginia University to fund travel to research conferences.
- **Eberly College of Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Travel Award** 2018, 2019
Awarded by the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences, West Virginia University to fund travel to research conferences.

PUBLICATIONS

1. **Herath, U.**, Tavadze, P., He, X., Bousquet, E., Singh, S., Muñoz, F. & Romero, A. H. PyProcar: A Python library for electronic structure pre/post-processing. *Computer Physics Communications* **251**, 107080. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpc.2019.107080> (2020).
2. Singh, V., **Herath, U.**, Wah, B., Liao, X., Romero, A. H. & Park, H. DMFTwDFT: An Open-Source Code Combining Dynamical Mean Field Theory with Various Density Functional Theory Packages. *Computer Physics Communications*, 107778. doi:10.1016/j.cpc.2020.107778 (Dec. 2020).
3. Singh, S., Lang, L., Dovale-Farelo, V., **Herath, U.**, Tavadze, P., Coudert, F.-X. & Romero, A. H. *MechElastic: A Python Library for Analysis of Mechanical and Elastic Properties of Bulk and 2D Materials* 2020. arXiv: 2012.04758 [cond-mat.mtrl-sci].
4. Herath, A. & **Herath, U.** Developing an Expert System for Plant Pest Diagnosis. *Annals of the Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture* **15**, 381 (2012).

Please visit my Google Scholar profile for an updated list of publications.

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=m6VPFYoAAAAJ&hl=en&authuser=1>

PUBLICATIONS IN PROGRESS

5. **Herath, U.**, Singh, V., Wah, B., Park, H. & Romero, A. H. A site occupation disorder study of oxygen vacancies in LaNiO₃.
6. **Herath, U.**, Singh, V., Wah, B., Park, H. & Romero, A. H. The effect of oxygen vacancies on strongly correlated nickelate perovskite oxides.
7. **Herath, U.**, Singh, V., Wah, B., Park, H. & Romero, A. H. A study of strongly correlated alloys through virtual crystal approximation within dynamical mean field theory.
8. Tavadze, P., Farah, F., Lang, L., Romestan, Z., Dovale-Farelo, V., **Herath, U.**, Singh, S. & Romero, A. H. Fermi3D: Expanding PyProcar's Fermi surface implementations.

PRESENTATIONS

- **Uthpala Herath**, Vijay Singh, Benny Wah, Xingyu Liao, Hyowon Park and Aldo H. Romero
“DMFTwDFT: An open-source code combining Dynamical Mean Field Theory with various Density Functional Theory packages”
APS Mid Atlantic Section Meeting, December 4-6, 2020 (VIRTUAL TALK)
- **Uthpala Herath**, Pedram Tavadze, Xu He, Eric Bousquet, Sobhit Singh, Francisco Muñoz, and Aldo H. Romero
“Recent developments in PyProcar: A Python library for electronic structure pre/post-processing”
Carolina Science Symposium, Nov 12-13, 2020 (VIRTUAL TALK)
- **Uthpala Herath**, Pedram Tavadze, Xu He, Eric Bousquet, Sobhit Singh, Francisco Muñoz, and Aldo H. Romero
“PyProcar: A Python library for electronic structure pre/post-processing”
Electronic Structure Workshop, June, 2020, University of California, Merced (VIRTUAL TALK)
- **Uthpala Herath**, Pedram Tavadze, Xu He, Eric Bousquet, Sobhit Singh, Francisco Muñoz, and Aldo H. Romero
“PyProcar: A Python library for electronic structure pre/post-processing”
APS March Meeting, March 4-8, 2019, Boston, MA (TALK)
- **Uthpala Herath**, Hyowon Park and Aldo H. Romero
“Development of computational methods for the characterization of novel strongly correlated materials”
International Summer School on Computational Quantum Materials, June 2018, Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada (POSTER)
- **Uthpala Herath** and Weichao Tu
“The Effect of Magnetic Field Line Curvature Scattering on the Rapid Loss of Ring Current Ions”
Geospace Environment Modeling (GEM) conference, July 2017, Portsmouth, VA (POSTER)

CONTRIBUTION TO CODE DEVELOPMENT

See full list on <https://uthpalaherath.github.io/projects>.

- **PyProcar**
“PyProcar is a robust, open-source Python library used for pre- and post-processing of the electronic structure data coming from DFT calculations.”
🔗 <https://github.com/romerogroup/pyprocar>
- **DMFTwDFT**
“An open-source computational package (and a library) combining DMFT with various DFT codes interfaced through the Wannier90 package.”
🔗 <https://github.com/DMFTwDFT-project/DMFTwDFT>
- **MechElastic**
“An open-source Python library to calculate elastic properties of materials.”
🔗 <https://github.com/romerogroup/mechelatic>
- **PyChemia**
“PyChemia is an open-source Python library for materials structural search.”
🔗 <https://github.com/MaterialsDiscovery/PyChemia>
- **mdwc**
“The molecular dynamics with constraints (mdwc3) package is a command line open-source Python program for constrained molecular dynamics simulations.”
🔗 <https://github.com/romerogroup/mdwc3>
- **pymatgen**
“Pymatgen (Python Materials Genomics) is a robust, open-source Python library for materials analysis.”
🔗 <https://github.com/materialsproject/pymatgen>

WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

- BerkeleyGW Tutorial Workshop, Jan 4–6, 2021 (Virtual)
- 2nd Berkeley Excited States Conference (BESC2021), Jan 7–8, 2021 (Virtual)
- Texas A&M University Summer School On Computational Materials Science Across Scales, June 29 –July 10, 2020 (Virtual)
- School on Wannier90 v3.0: new features and applications, March 25-27, 2020 (Virtual)
- School on Stochastic Approaches to Electronic Structure Calculations, University of Pittsburgh, PA, July 29th –August 2nd, 2019
- 3rd Summer School on Materials Growth and Design: Exotic Magnetic States in Quantum Mechanics, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, June 17 –June 22, 2018
- International Summer workshop on Computational Quantum Materials, Sherbrook, Québec, Canada, May 27 –June 8, 2018
- CISM Space Weather Summer School, Boulder, CO, July 11 –July 22, 2016

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Judge - Virtual Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium, WVU July, 2020
- Volunteered as a graduate student judge at the 2020 Virtual Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium organized by the Office of Undergraduate Research in the Mathematics and Physics Category
- Coordinator - Condensed Matter Seminar, Department of Physics and Astronomy, WVU 2018–Current
- Coordinated the Condensed Matter Seminar sessions at the Department of Physics and Astronomy, West Virginia University.
- Outreach Volunteer - Physics and Astronomy Graduate Student Organization, WVU (PAGSO) 2015–Current
- Conducted physics outreach programs to enlighten the public on science in West Virginia.
- Member - Sri Lankan Student's Organization, WVU (SLSA) 2018–Current
- SLSA is a student body of Sri Lankan students at West Virginia University aiming to share the Sri Lankan cultural and heritage experience with the rest of the world.
- Took a leading role in organizing a vigil in memory of the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks that occurred in Sri Lanka in April, 2019.
- President - Astronomy Society of University of Peradeniya 2013–2014
- Organized “Water Rocket Challenge 2014”; the first-ever water rocket competition held at University of Peradeniya
- Conducted regular astronomy lectures, planetary and deep sky observation sessions and workshops in the university as well as in local schools aiming to promote astronomy among students and the general public.
- Volunteered for United Nations World Space Week- Sri Lanka (2014)
- Junior Editor - Physical Society of University of Peradeniya 2012–2013
- Compiled academic articles for the “Echo” magazine which is the annual scientific journal issued by the society
- Faculty Representative - The Ceylon Drama Society of University of Peradeniya 2011–2012
- Represented the Faculty of Science in the Ceylon Drama Society of the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
- Volunteer - Let Them Smile 2010–2014

-Volunteered in “Let Them Smile”, an annual charity event organized by the undergraduates of the Faculty of Science of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka to facilitate the education of under privileged students in rural schools around the country.

URL: <https://www.facebook.com/letsmile14>

- Volunteer Software Developer - Department of Agriculture, Sri Lanka 2012
-Took part in an auxiliary research project conducted by the Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture to develop a system for plant disease diagnosis. This would allow farmers around the island to use a software framework to self-diagnose and treat plant diseases. Assisted in computational aspects of this system.

REFERENCES

- **Dr. Aldo H. Romero**
Department of Physics and Astronomy
West Virginia University
✉ aldo.romero@mail.wvu.edu
☎ +1 (304) 293-6317
- **Dr. T. Ranawaka**
Department of Physics
Faculty of Science
University of Peradeniya
Peradeniya (20400), Sri Lanka
✉ tpranawa@gmail.com
☎ +94 812394612
- **Prof. P. Samarasekara**
Department of Physics
Faculty of Science
University of Peradeniya
Peradeniya (20400), Sri Lanka
✉ pubudus@pdn.ac.lk
☎ +94 812394610
- **Dr. Weichao Tu**
Department of Physics and Astronomy
West Virginia University
✉ wetu@mail.wvu.edu
☎ +1 (304) 293-3349
- **Mr. S. Gunasekara**
Senior Research Scientist
Space Applications Division
Arthur C. Clarke Institute for Modern
Technologies
Moratuwa (10400), Sri Lanka
✉ saraj@accmt.ac.lk
☎ +94 714415243