

First Search for Heavy Neutral Leptons with a Liquid-Argon Detector

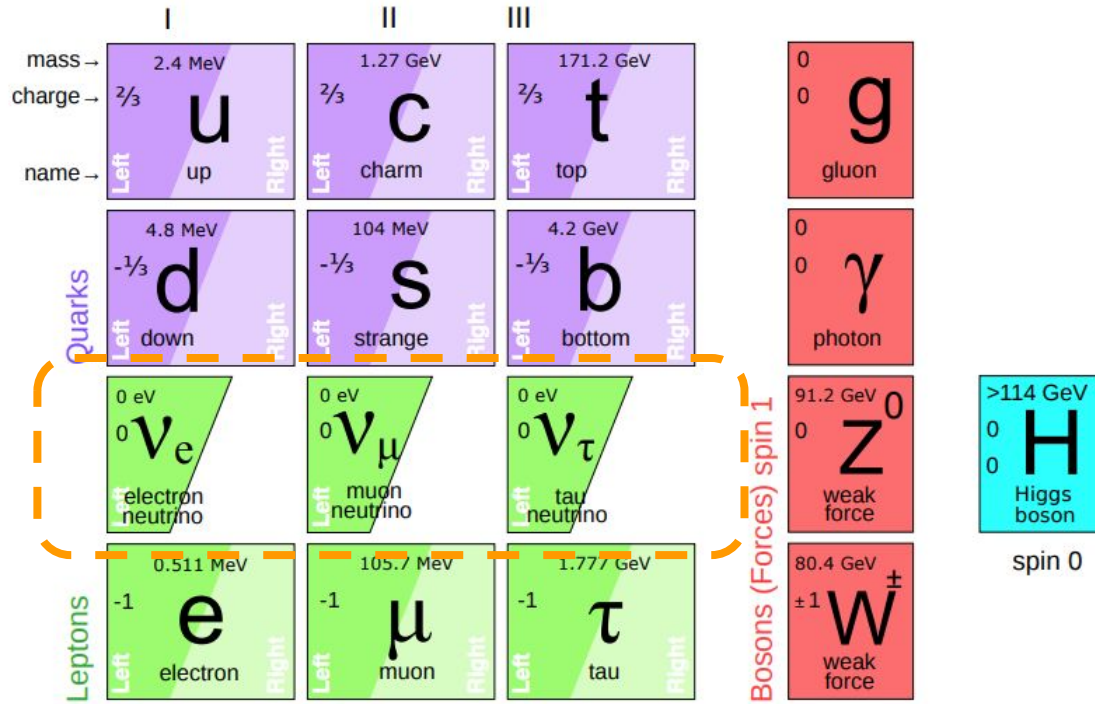
Warwick Elementary Particle
Physics Seminar - 14/05/2020

Owen Goodwin
University of Manchester

- Standard Model Neutrinos, what we know and don't know?
- What are Heavy Neutral Leptons (HNL)?
- The Short Baseline Neutrino program at Fermilab
 - MicroBooNE data taking

- Heavy Neutral Leptons at MicroBooNE
 - Production in neutrino beams
 - Visible final state decays
 - Using MicroBooNE LarTPC to perform first search for HNL
 - Outlook

Neutrinos in the SM



- Neutrinos are one of the least understood particles in the Standard Model (SM)
- Neutral leptons with tiny mass & very small interaction cross section
- Only Left Handed versions in the SM

- **Super-Kamiokande** and **SNO** established that neutrinos oscillate and therefore have mass
- Three-neutrino picture well established
- Mixing angles well measured by oscillation experiments
- Next generation long baseline experiments (**DUNE** & **Hyper-K**) will complete picture.

PMNS matrix

$$\begin{pmatrix} \nu_e \\ \nu_\mu \\ \nu_\tau \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \cos\theta_{23} & \sin\theta_{23} \\ 0 & -\sin\theta_{23} & \cos\theta_{23} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \cos\theta_{13} & 0 & \sin\theta_{13}e^{-i\delta} \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ -\sin\theta_{13}e^{i\delta} & 0 & \cos\theta_{13} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \cos\theta_{12} & \sin\theta_{12} & 0 \\ -\sin\theta_{12} & \cos\theta_{12} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \nu_1 \\ \nu_2 \\ \nu_3 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$P(\nu_\alpha \rightarrow \nu_\beta) = \sin^2 2\theta_{ij} * \sin^2 \left(1.27 \Delta m_{ij}^2 \frac{L}{E} \right)$$

$$\delta_{cp} = ?$$

$$\Delta m_{23} > 0 \text{ or } \Delta m_{23} < 0 ?$$

Which neutrino is the lightest?

Is there CP violation in neutrino oscillation?

Are there extra neutrinos (sterile)?

How is the neutrino mass generated (Dirac or Majorana)?

Can CP violation in leptons lead to the matter-antimatter asymmetry of the Universe today?

Heavy Neutral Leptons

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ν MSM: T.Asaka, M.Shaposhnikov PL B620 (2005) 17

Beyond Standard Model right-handed neutral leptons, known as *sterile neutrinos* or *Heavy Neutral Leptons (HNL)*

Their inclusion provides possible mechanisms for neutrino mass generation

Could play a role in Leptogenesis in the early universe to explain current matter-antimatter asymmetry

	I	II	III	
mass	2.4 MeV	1.27 GeV	171.2 GeV	0
charge	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	0
name	Left u Right up	Left c Right charm	Left t Right top	g gluon
Quarks	4.8 MeV $-\frac{1}{3}$	104 MeV $-\frac{1}{3}$	4.2 GeV $-\frac{1}{3}$	0 γ photon
	Left d Right down	Left s Right strange	Left b Right bottom	91.2 GeV 0 Z weak force
Leptons	0 ν_e N_1 electron neutrino sterile neutrino	0 ν_μ N_2 muon neutrino sterile neutrino	0 ν_τ N_3 tau neutrino sterile neutrino	>114 GeV 0 0 H Higgs boson
	0.511 MeV -1	105.7 MeV -1	1.777 GeV -1	80.4 GeV ± 1 W$^\pm$ weak force
	Left e Right electron	Left μ Right muon	Left τ Right tau	spin 0



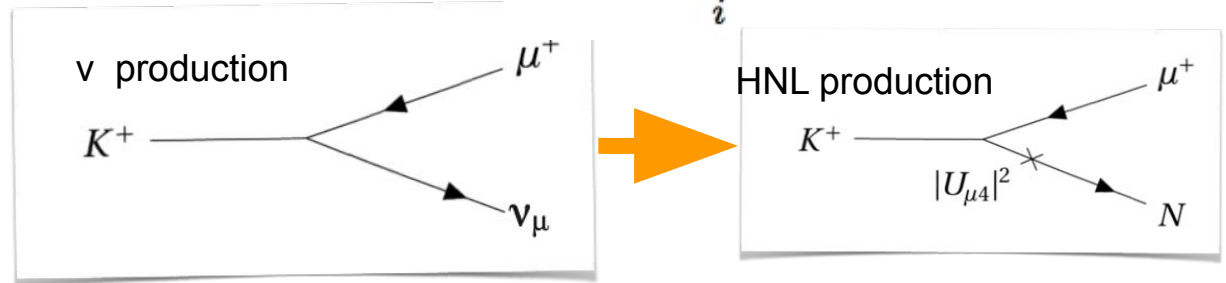
- HNL (shown as **N**) enter SM physics through **mass mixing**.
- Can substitute an HNL into any SM neutrino process via mass mixing through extended PMNS matrix element (if kinematically allowed).

Standard mixing

$$U_{\text{PMNS}}^{\text{Extended}} = \begin{pmatrix} \overbrace{\begin{pmatrix} U_{e1} & U_{e2} & U_{e3} \\ U_{\mu1} & U_{\mu2} & U_{\mu3} \\ U_{\tau1} & U_{\tau2} & U_{\tau3} \end{pmatrix}}^{U_{\text{PMNS}}^{3 \times 3}} & \cdots & \begin{pmatrix} U_{en} \\ U_{\mu n} \\ U_{\tau n} \end{pmatrix} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \underbrace{\begin{pmatrix} U_{s_n1} & U_{s_n2} & U_{s_n3} \end{pmatrix}}_{\text{New physics}} & \cdots & U_{s_n n} \end{pmatrix}$$

New physics

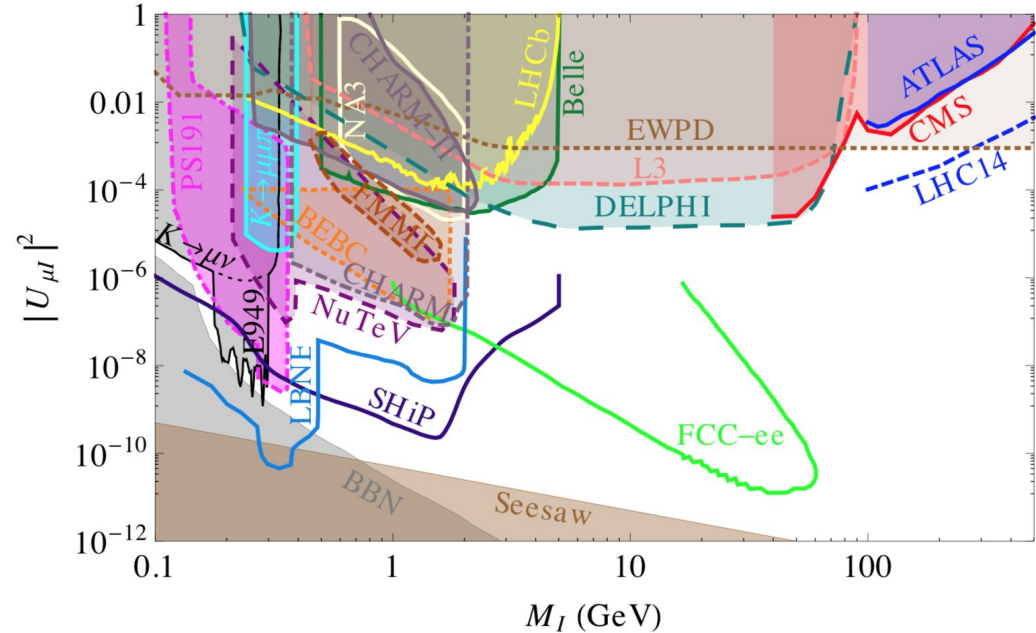
$$\nu_\alpha = \sum_i U_{\alpha i} \nu_i + U_{\alpha 4} N.$$



Possible mass of HNL spans many orders of magnitude

The mass mixing elements are known to be very small

O(100 MeV) mass HNL could be produced in high intensity neutrino beams, then decay to visible particles in detectors.



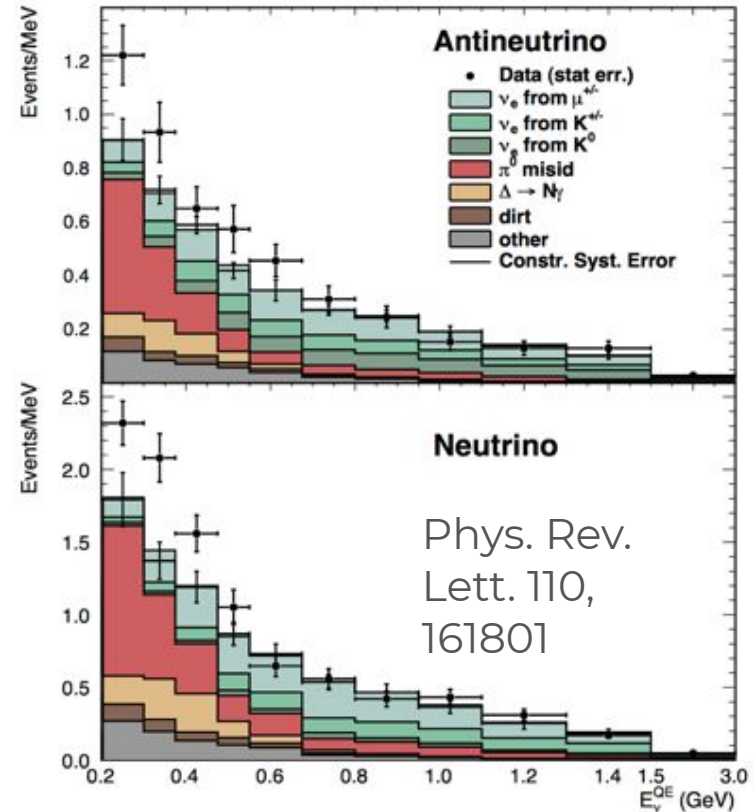


The Short Baseline Neutrino
program at Fermilab

1eV oscillation anomaly

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- Anomalies measured at short baseline (< 1km) neutrino experiments.
- LSND: measured a **3.8 σ** excess in $\nu_{\mu} \rightarrow \nu_e$ appearance channel
- Follow up experiment MiniBooNE measured a **4.7 σ** combined excess of electron neutrino like events at low energy.
- Can be interpreted as a “fast” oscillation not consistent with 3-flavour oscillation pattern.
 - \rightarrow New fourth “sterile” neutrino
 - $\Delta m_{41}^2 \approx 1 \text{ eV}^2$



SBN program

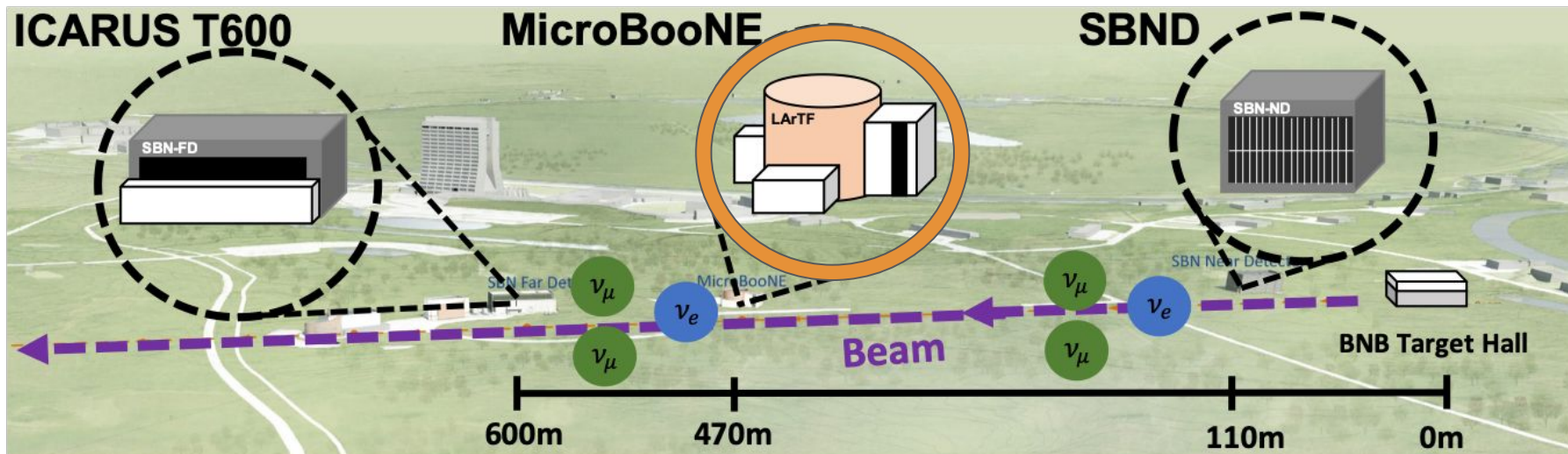
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3 detectors in ~800 MeV Neutrino Beam

All Liquid Argon Time Projection Chambers (LArTPC)

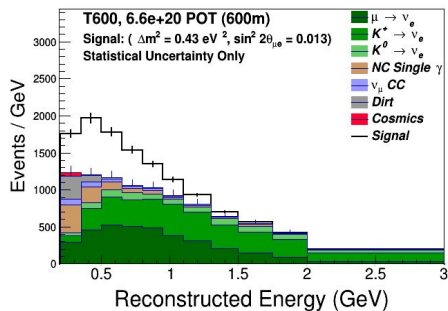
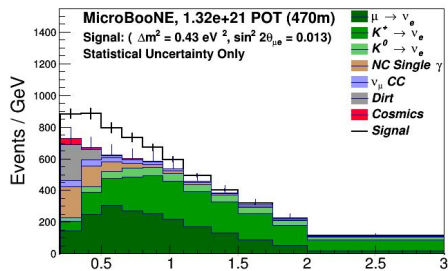
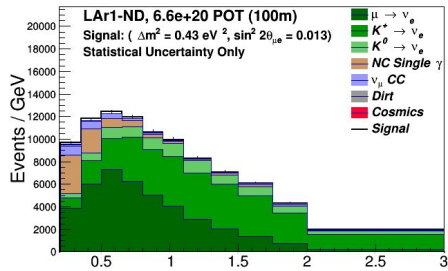
Measure flavour composition at different baselines

Detector	Baseline (m)	Active LAr mass (tonnes)
SBND	110	112
MicroBooNE	470	87
ICARUS T-600	600	476

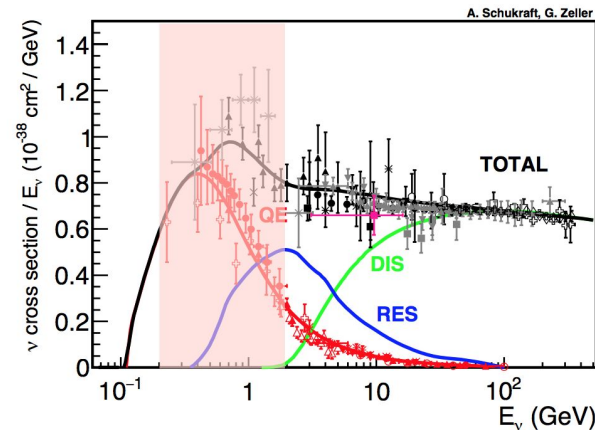


SBN program Physics Goals

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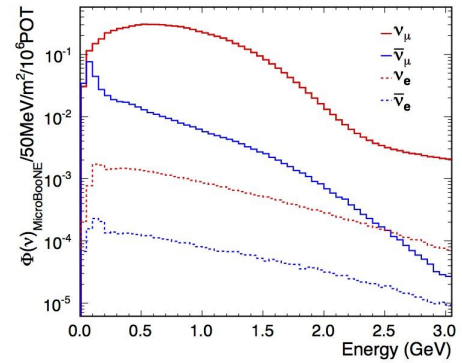
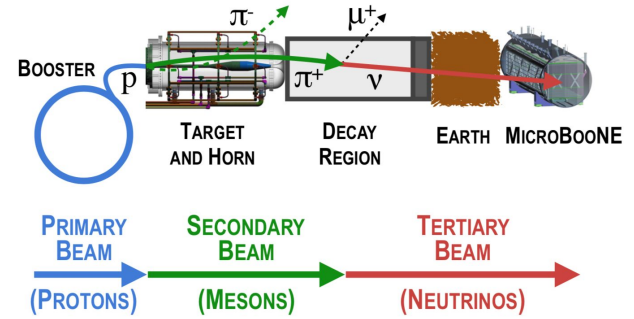
- Designed to comprehensively investigate the Miniboone low energy excess.
- Precise ν -LAr cross sections, pioneered in MicroBooNE, followed up with more stats in SBND. Feed into DUNE long-baseline oscillation experiment
- **Search for astroparticle and rare exotic events**



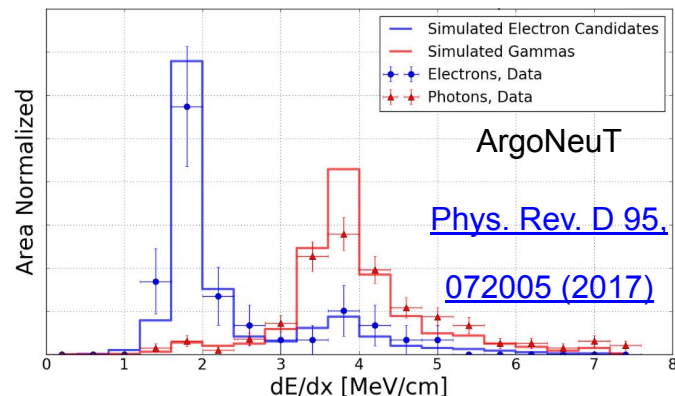
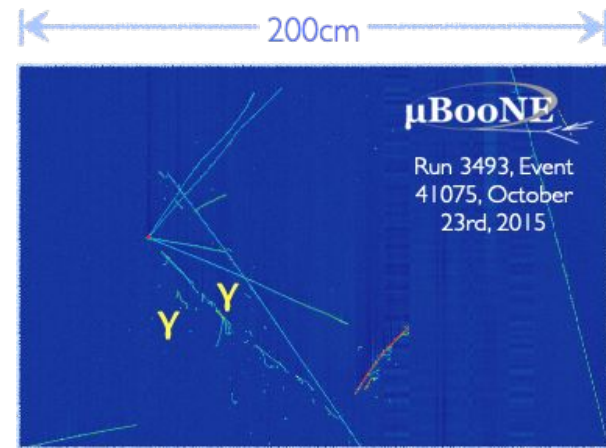
Booster Neutrino Beam (BNB)

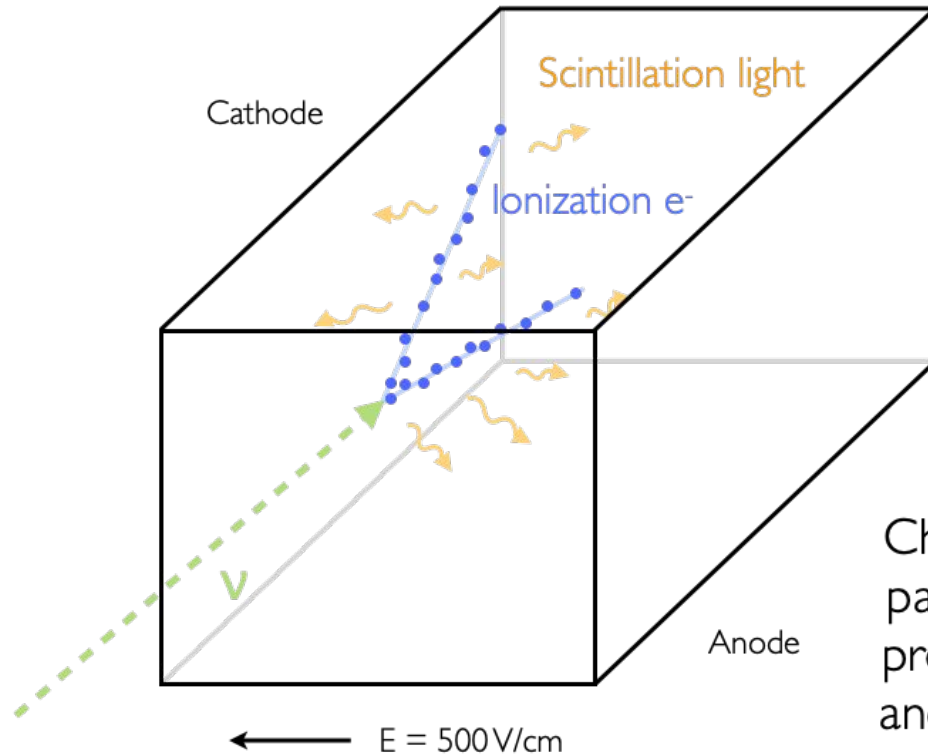
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- Protons accelerated to **8 GeV** onto a fixed target
- Focused beam of predominantly $\pi^{+/-}$ (>96 %) and $K^{+/-}$ (<4%) decays to neutrinos.
- Charge selection by focusing horn.
- Has been run in **neutrino mode** since 2015 when MicroBooNE came online



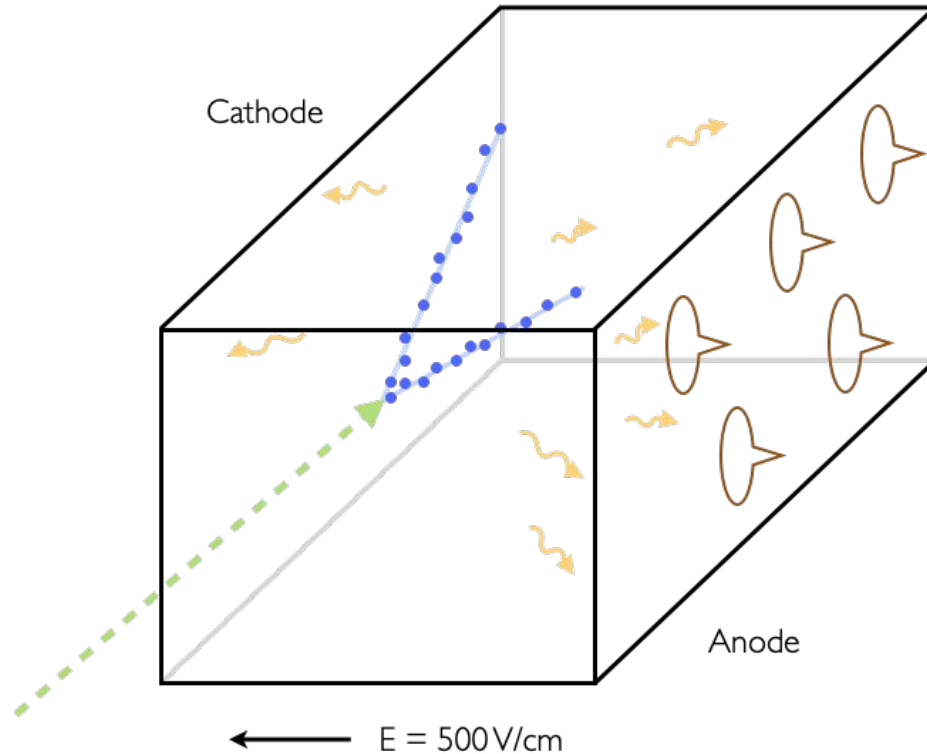
- LAr - inexpensive and dense, excellent neutrino target
- Bubble-chamber like images with excellent spatial resolution ($\sim 3\text{mm}$)
- Digital format images with automated reconstruction algorithms for large-scale analysis.
- Excellent calorimetric response and energy resolution



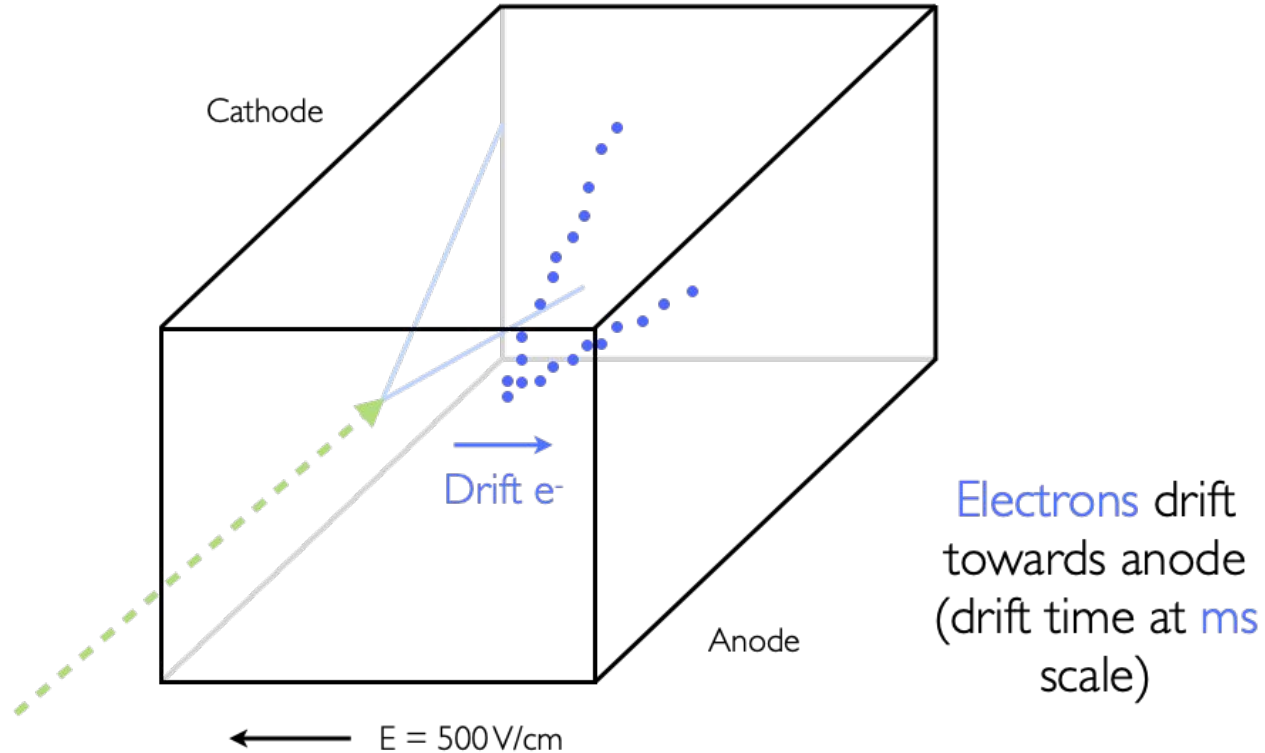


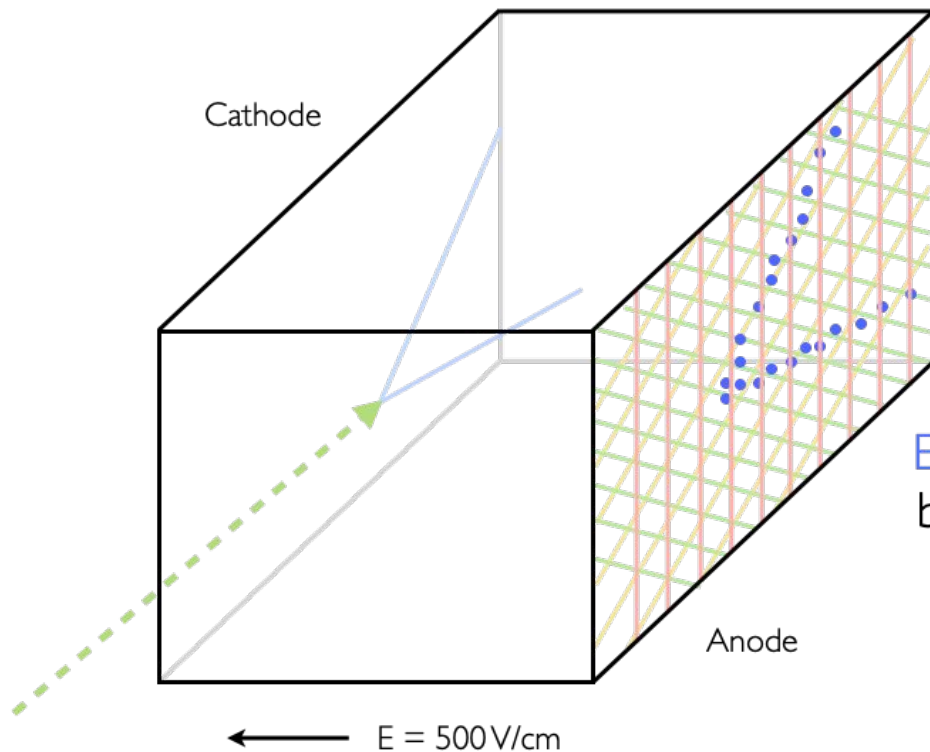
Incoming neutrino interacting with LAr

Charged secondary particles ionize LAr; producing **electrons** and **scintillation light**



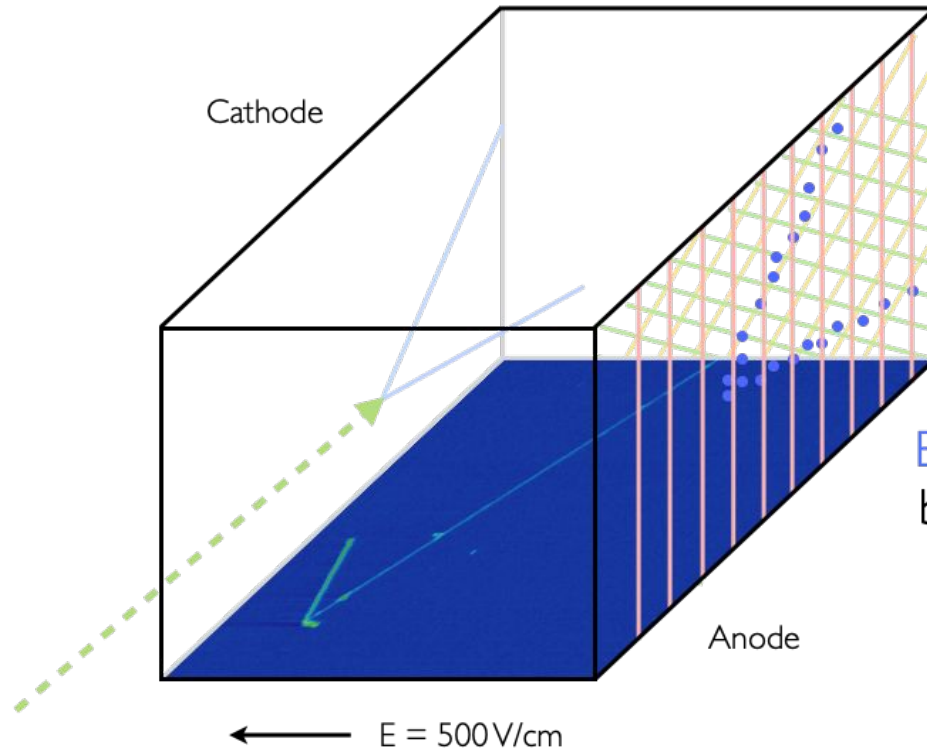
Light collected by
photon detectors
(10-100ns),
determining
event time t_0





2 induction planes
1 collection plane

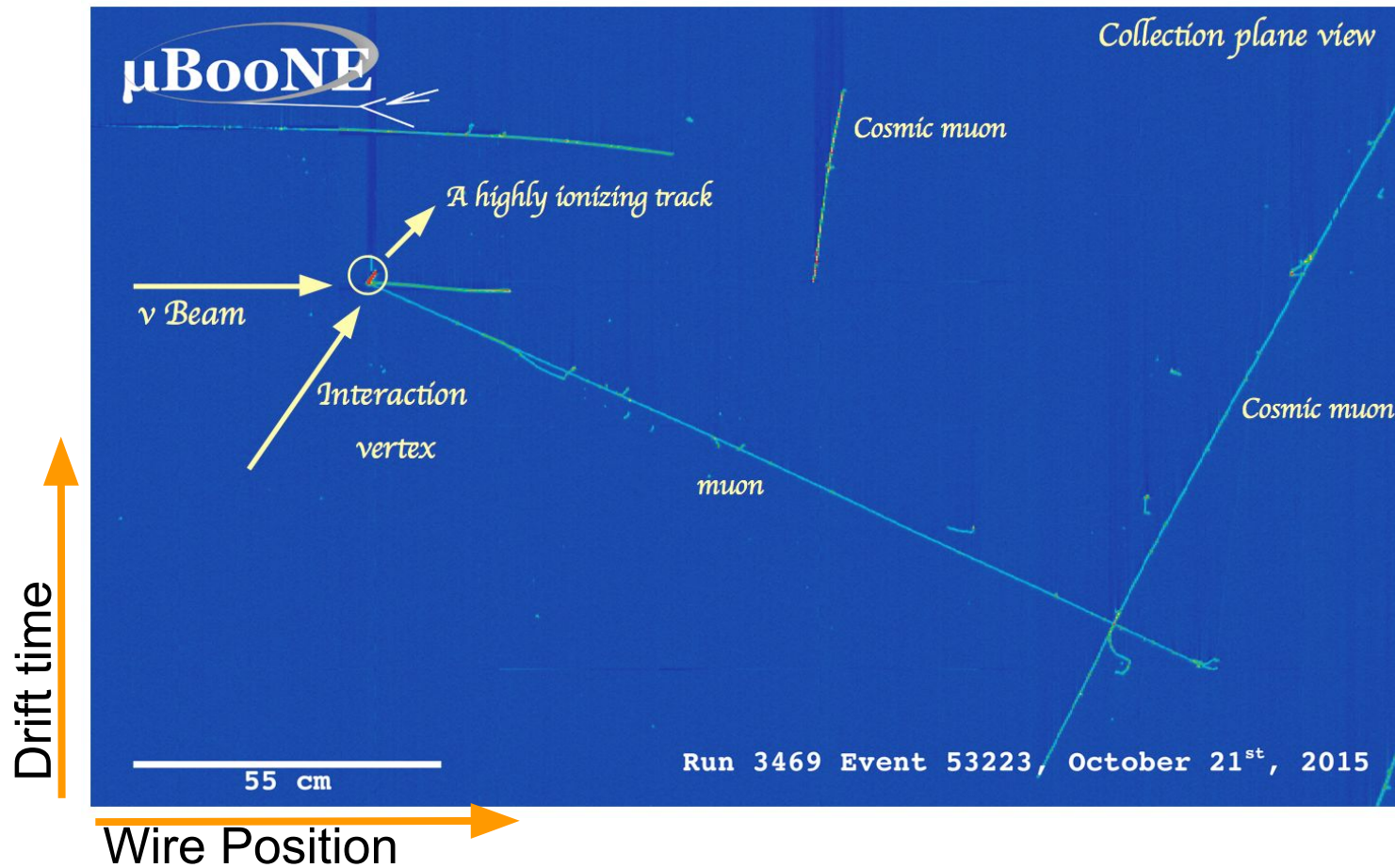
Electrons detected by the wire planes at anode, providing the spatial, kinematic information.



Electrons detected by the wire planes at anode, providing the spatial, kinematic information.

Interaction in LArTPC

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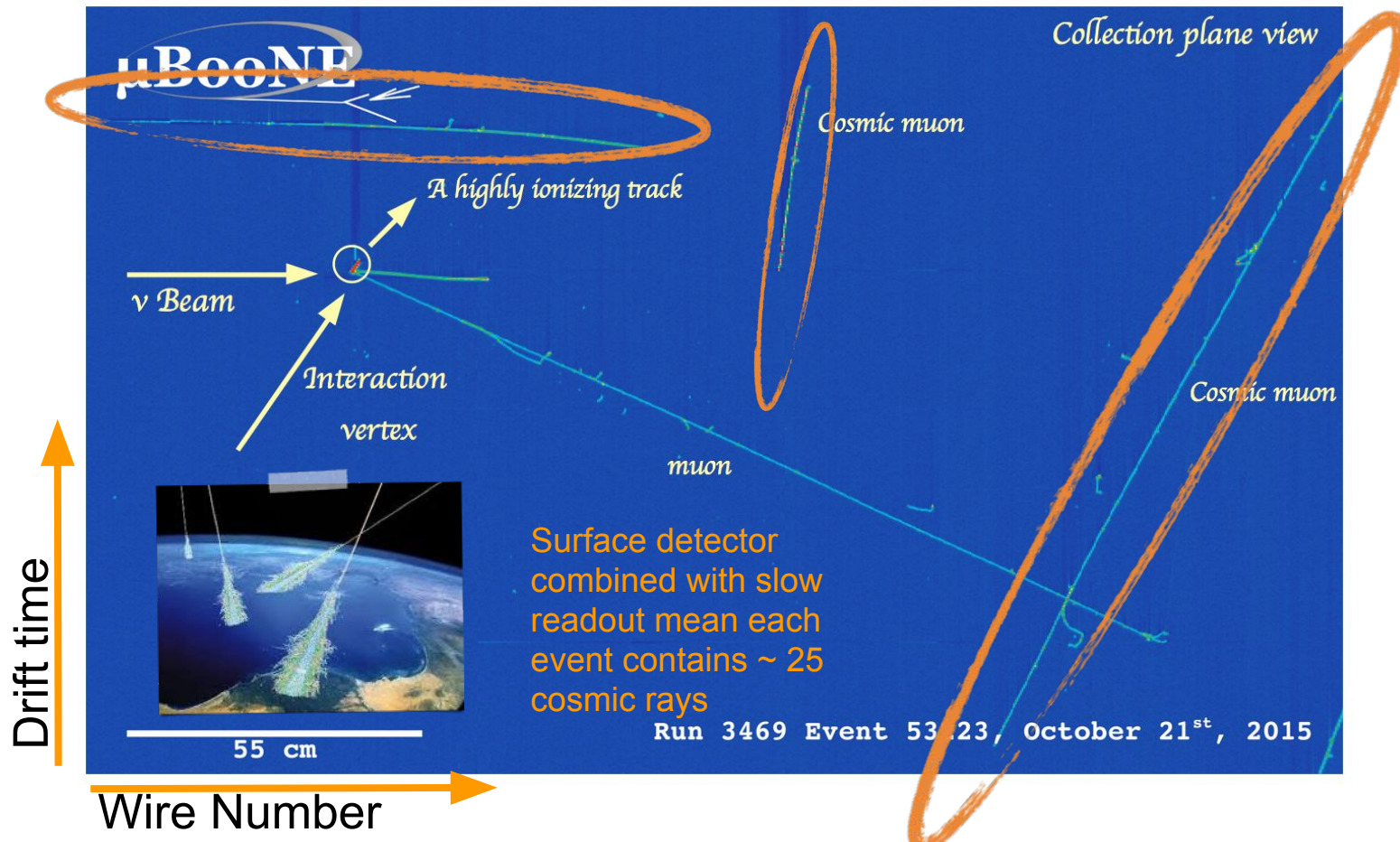
MicroBooNE

- Collecting neutrino data since 2015
- Longest running LAr neutrino experiment ($\sim 1.5 \times 10^{21}$ POT of beam exposure)



Cosmic Rays

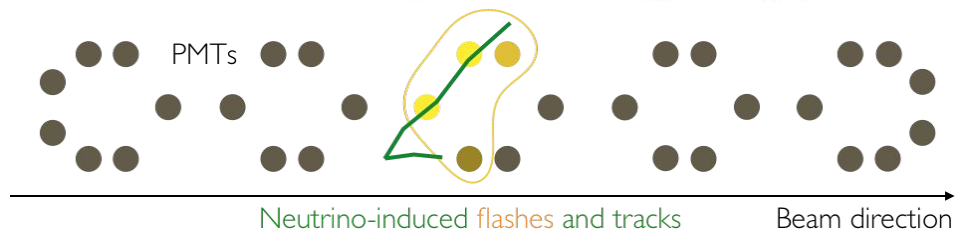
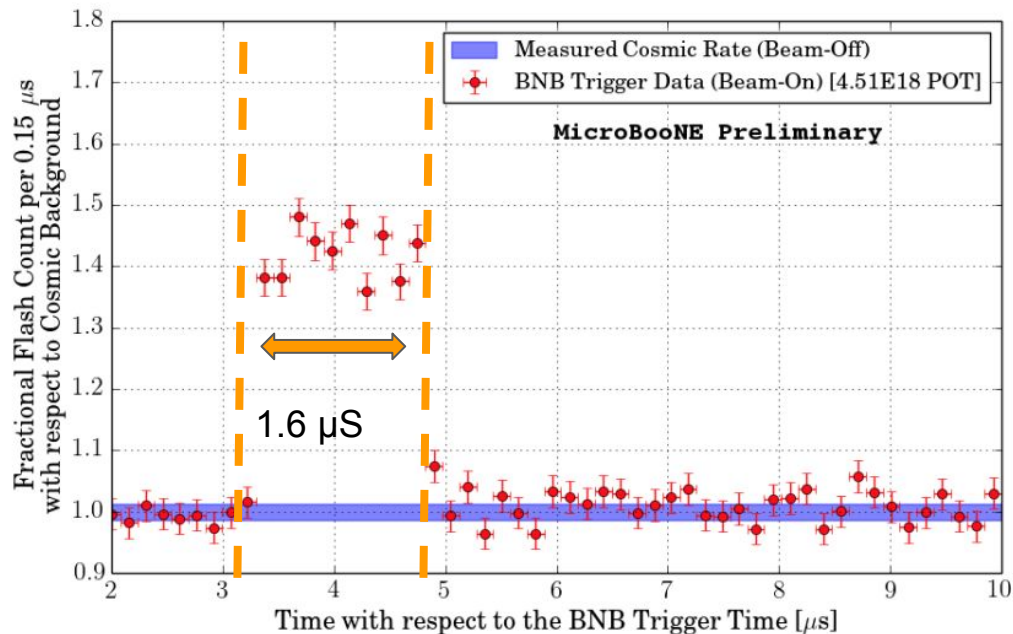
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Event timing and triggering

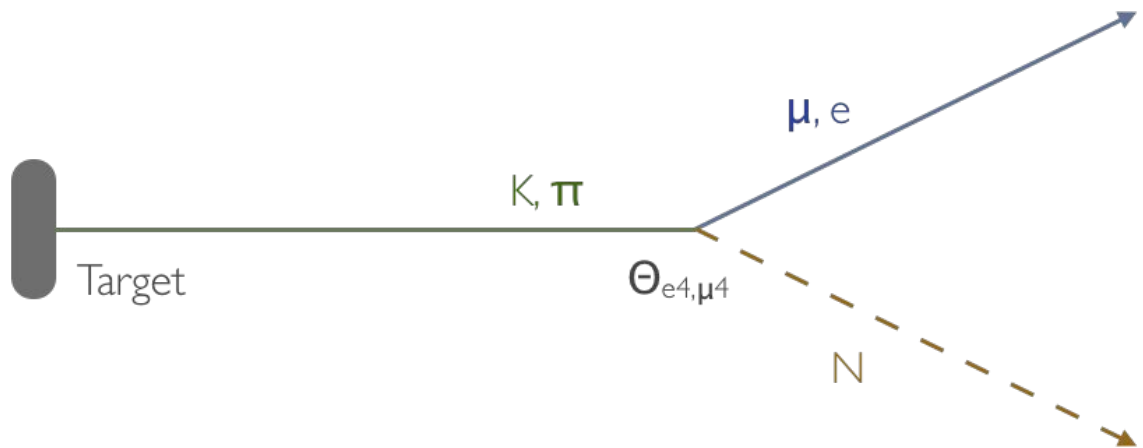
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- Neutrinos arrive in a beam spill which lasts for **1.6 μS**
- Only $\sim 1/600$ beam spills produces a neutrino interaction in MicroBooNE
- Trigger on optical flashes occurring in coincidence with the arrival time of neutrinos.
- Drifted charge matched to these flashes is likely to be beam-induced



MeV Scale Heavy Neutral Leptons in MicroBooNE

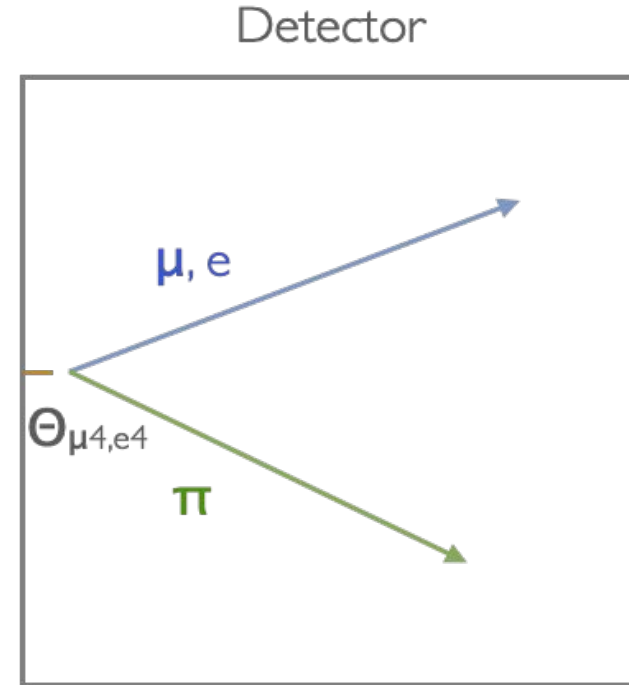
- HNLs are produced in meson decays in the beam line via mixing
- Production rate $\propto |U_{\alpha 4}|^2$
- Kaons heaviest meson produced in large quantities in BNB
- HNL with **mass < 495 MeV** could be produced in BNB



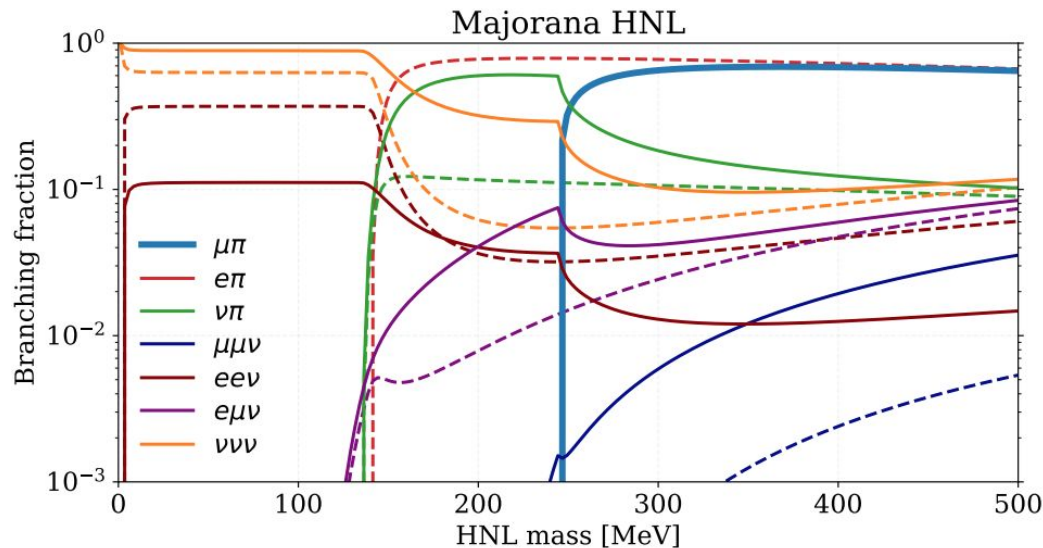
- Decay in flight inside detector
- Decay Rate $\propto |U_{\alpha 4}|^2$
- Decay length much longer than distance to MicroBooNE
- So event rate in detector is proportional to the product of production mixing angle and decay mixing angle

HNL travels along the neutrino beam line and decays in flight

N



Example decay channels



Two-body decays
 $N \rightarrow |\pm\pi^\mp$ dominate
 when $M_N > 250$ MeV

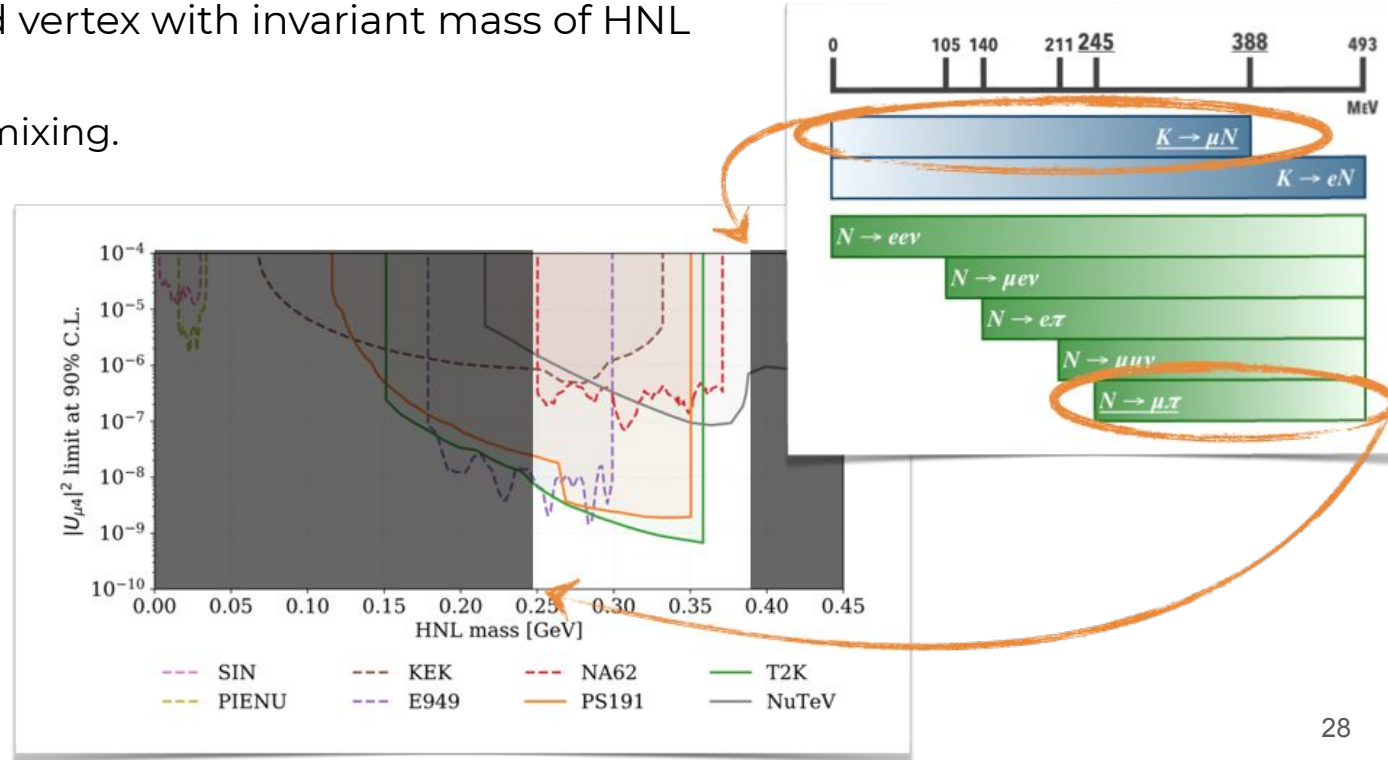
- Charged current: $N \rightarrow \gamma\nu$, $N \rightarrow \mu\nu$, $N \rightarrow e\pi$, $N \rightarrow \mu\pi$
- Charged and neutral current: $N \rightarrow 3\nu$, $N \rightarrow ee\nu$, $N \rightarrow \nu\pi^0$, $N \rightarrow \mu\mu\nu$

Decay to $\mu\pi$ pairs

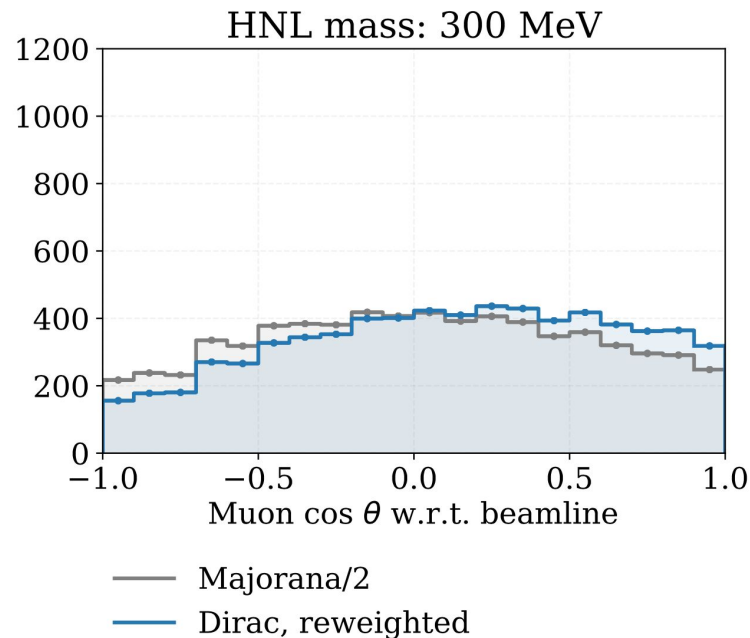
This analysis searches for $N \rightarrow \mu^\pm \pi^\mp$

Two tracks from shared vertex with invariant mass of HNL

Decay rate probes $|U_{\mu 4}|$ mixing.

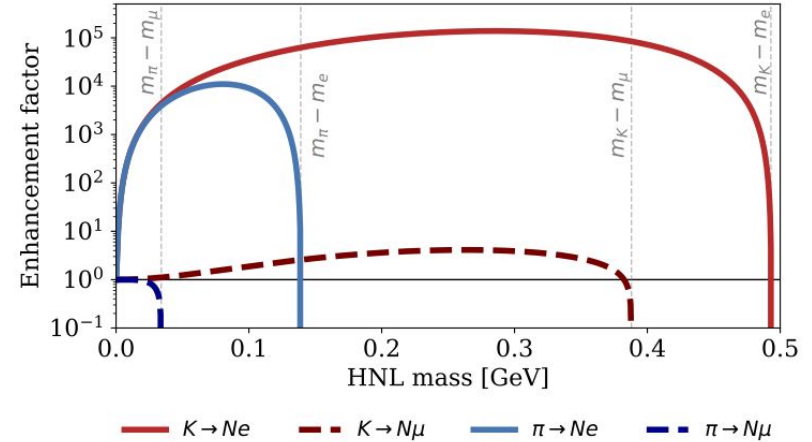


- HNLs could be a Majorana or Dirac particle
- Majorana HNL $\overline{N} = N$
 - $\mathbf{N} \rightarrow \mu^+ \pi^-$ and $\mathbf{N} \rightarrow \mu^- \pi^+$ in equal number
 - Combination of $\mu^+ \pi^-$ and $\mu^- \pi^+$ **isotropic** in HNL rest frame.
- Dirac HNL
 - $\mathbf{N} \rightarrow \mu^- \pi^+$ only
 - Decay rate half of Majorana
 - **Asymmetric** angles of decay in HNL rest frame (Muon more likely to be in direction of beam).

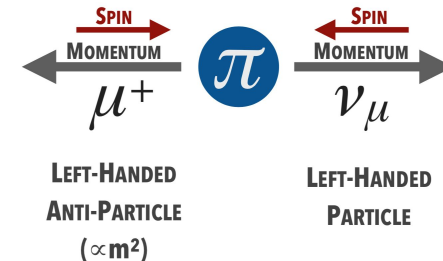


Work with Majorana assumption but reweight to Dirac distribution to produce results for both scenarios

- Consider non zero $|\mathbf{U}_{\mu 4}|$, ($|\mathbf{U}_{e 4}|=0$)
- HNL produced by $K^+ \rightarrow \mu^+ N$
- Flux calculated using parent meson (kaons) information from neutrino flux simulation for a mass M_N
 - Calculate HNL kinematics for each kaon decay
 - Weight by ratio of HNL and neutrino branching width
 - Weight by probability of HNL intersecting TPC.

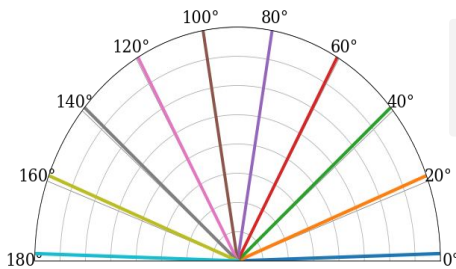


Adjusts for phase space change and enhancement due to helicity unsuppression



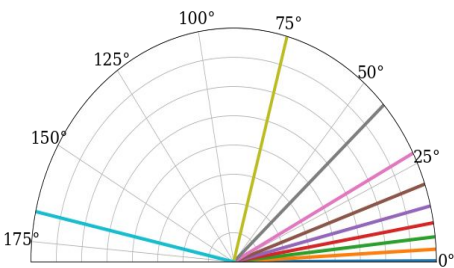
Meson decays to both **HNL** and ν are **isotropic** in rest frame

To MicroBooNE

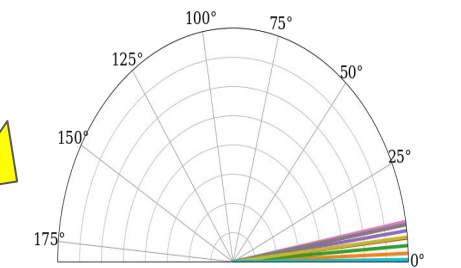


1.75 GeV kaon
 $K^+ \rightarrow \mu^+ + (\nu \text{ or } N)$

Isotropic Rest Frame Angle



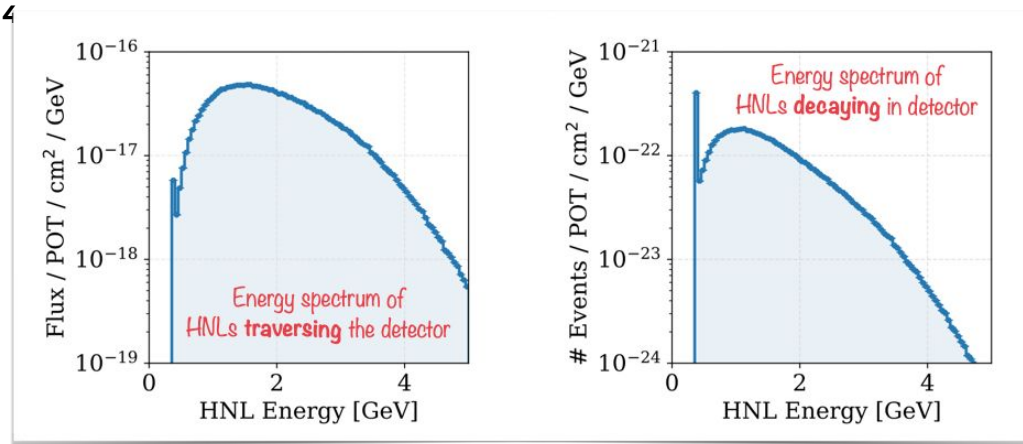
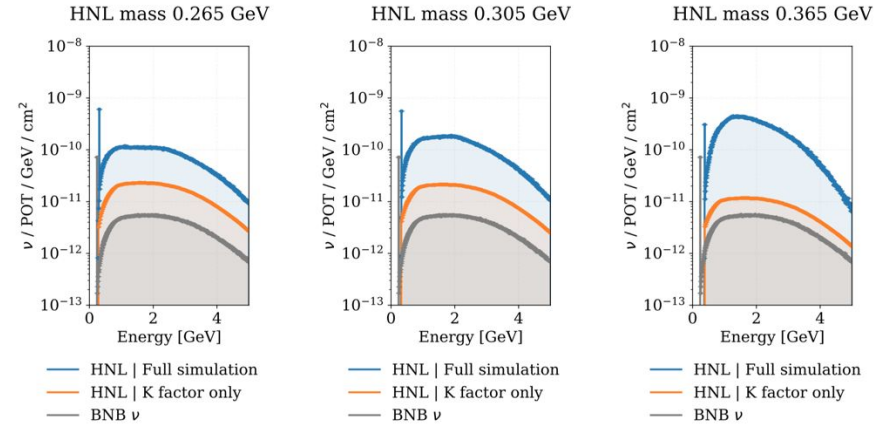
ν Lab Frame Angle



HNL (Mass 265 MeV) Lab Frame Angle

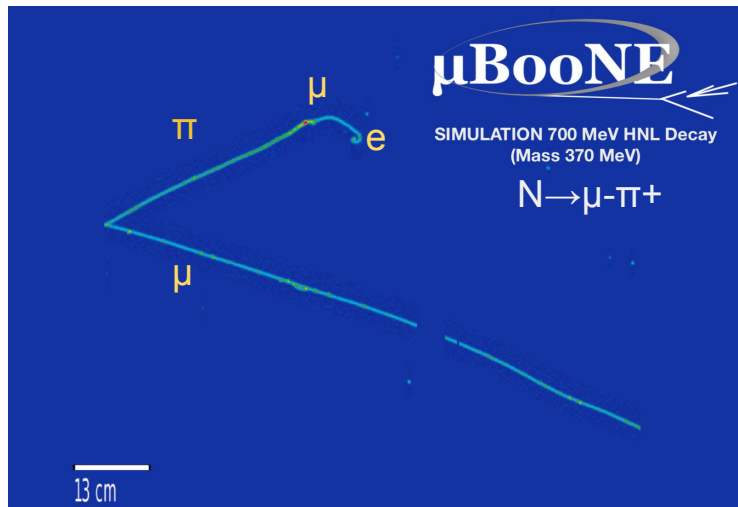
HNL significantly more **collimated** towards detector than neutrinos

- Event spectrum = flux x decay spectrum
- Decay rate $\propto 1/(\text{HNL Momentum})$
- Enhances low momentum HNL
- Event rate in MicroBooNE $\propto |U_{\mu 4}|^4$

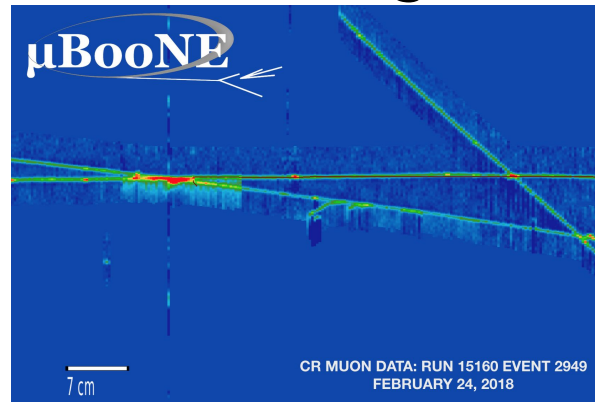


Signal

Simulated HNL decay



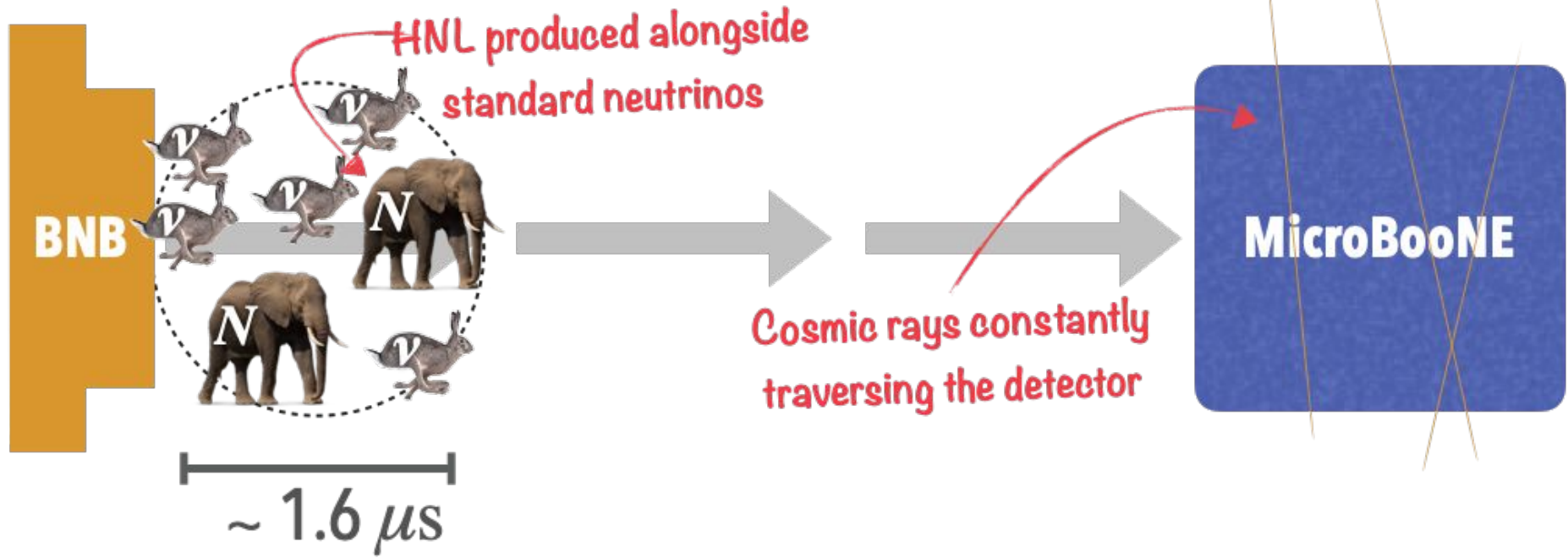
Backgrounds



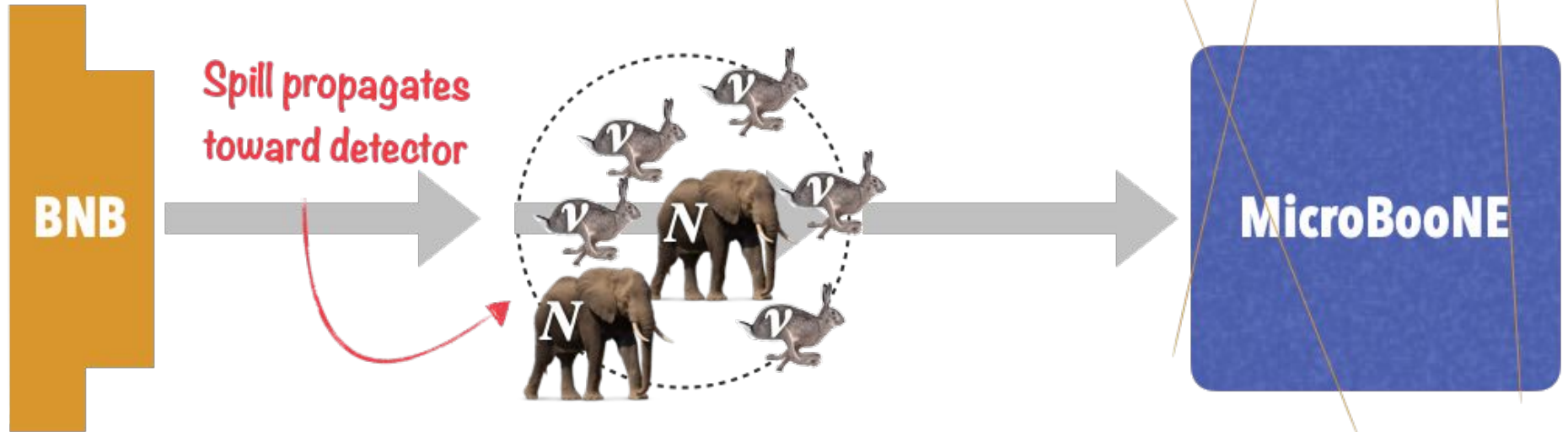
Data -
Cosmic
muon event

Data - ν_μ
charged current
interaction

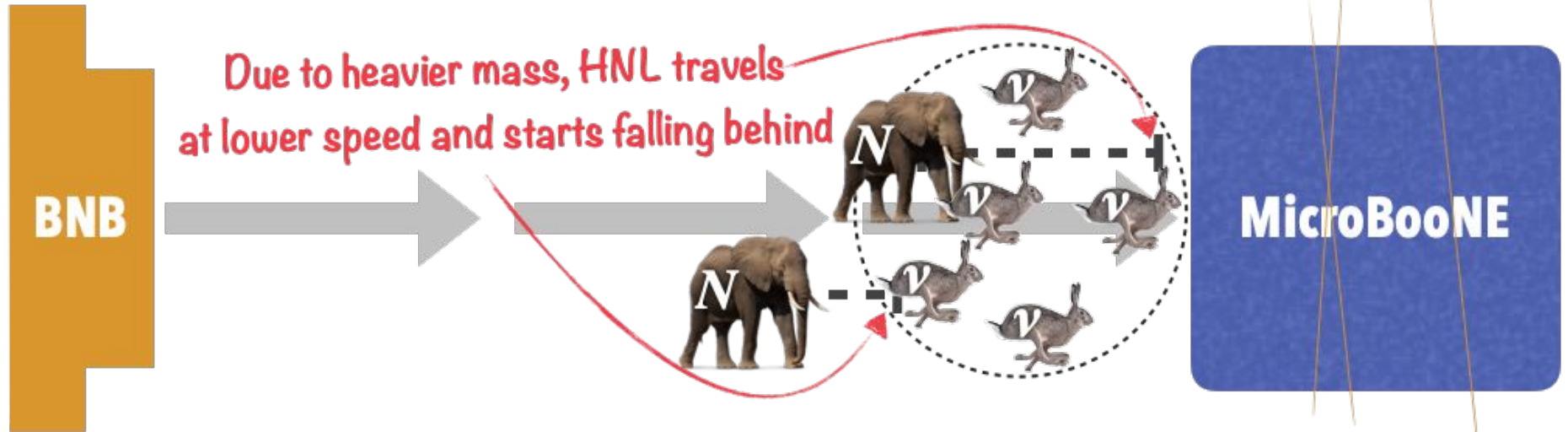




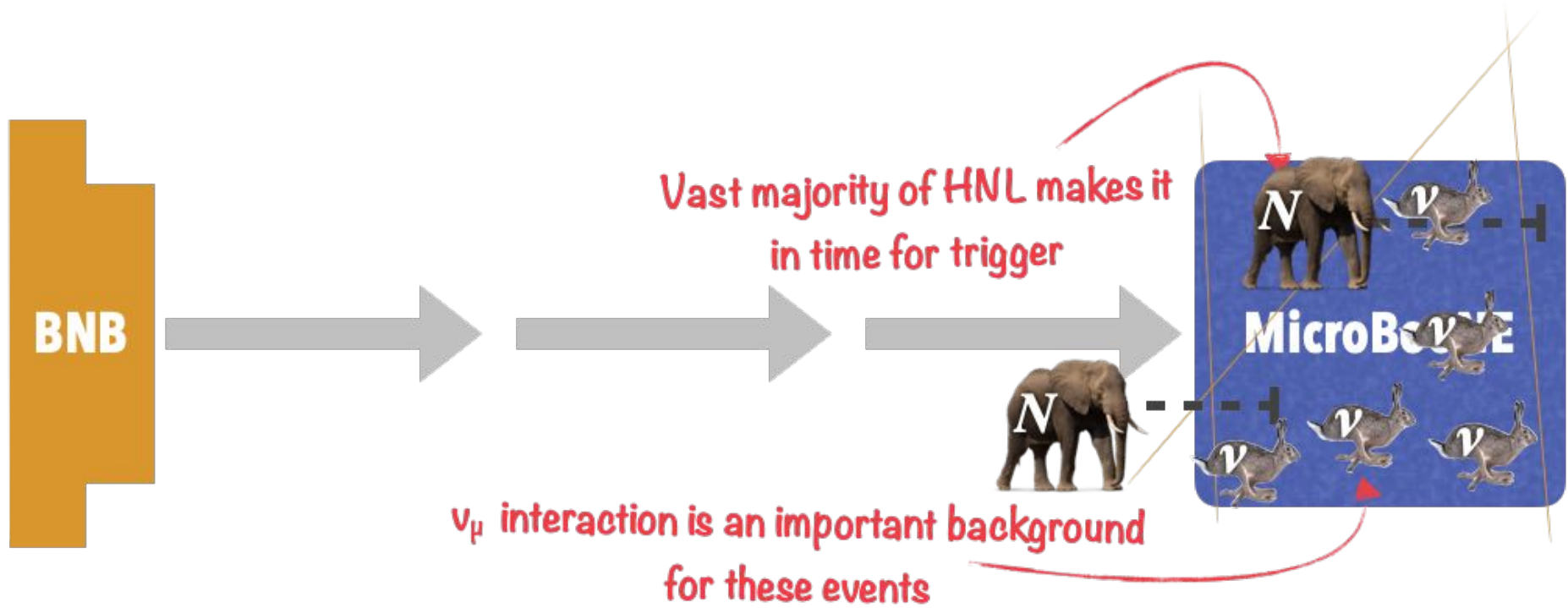
Courtesy of Davide Porzio



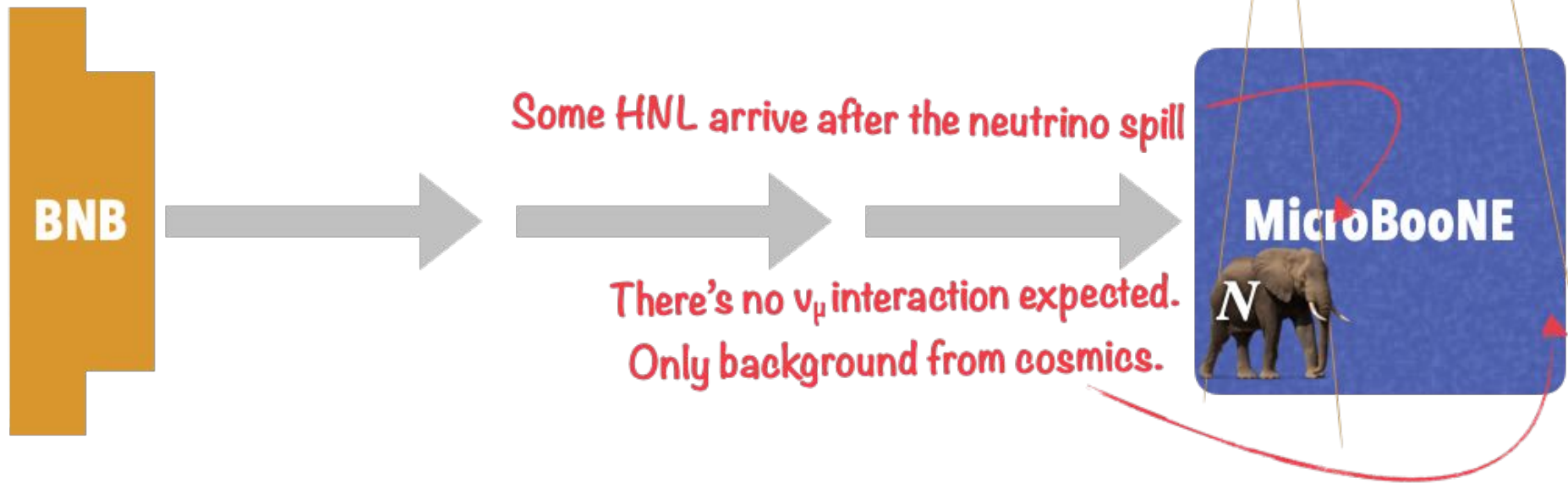
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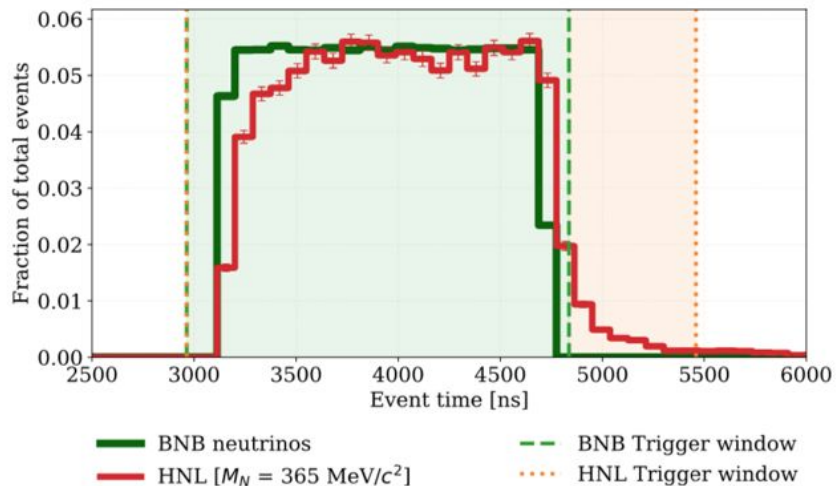
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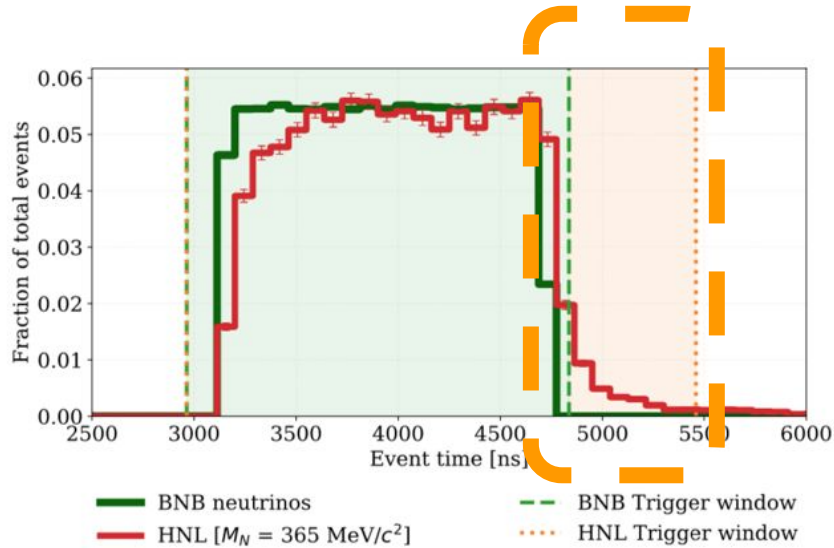


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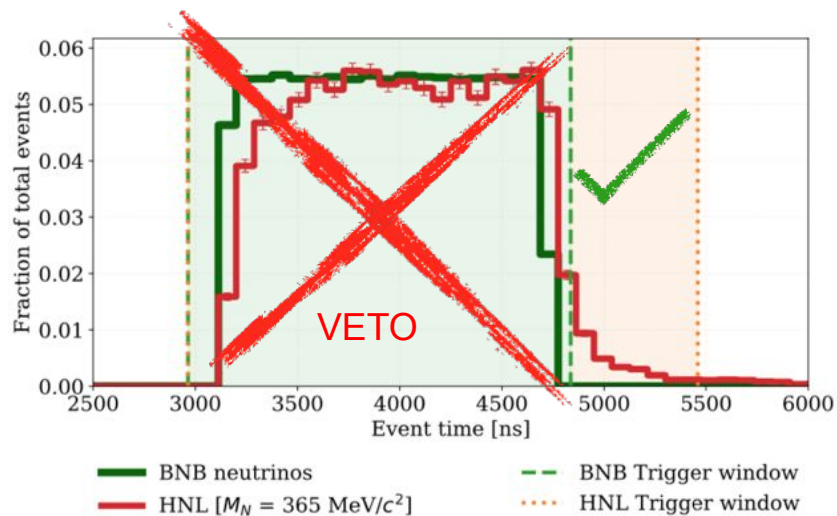


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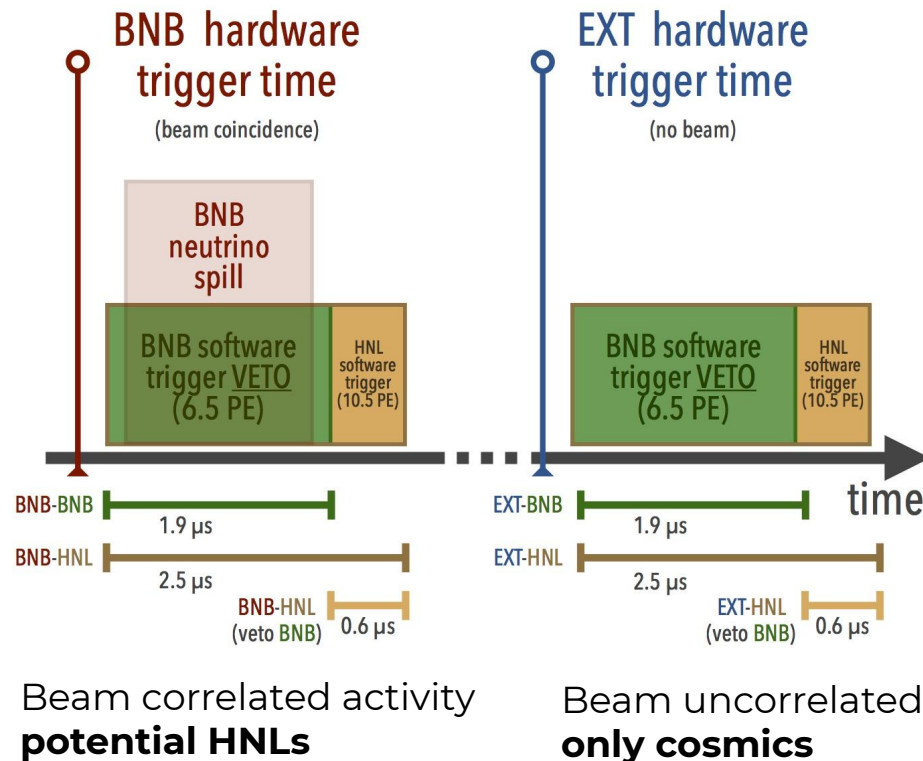


- ~10% of HNLs arrive “late”, fraction is mass dependent.
- Analysis focuses on late HNLs, no neutrino background
- Expect cosmic-ray background only.

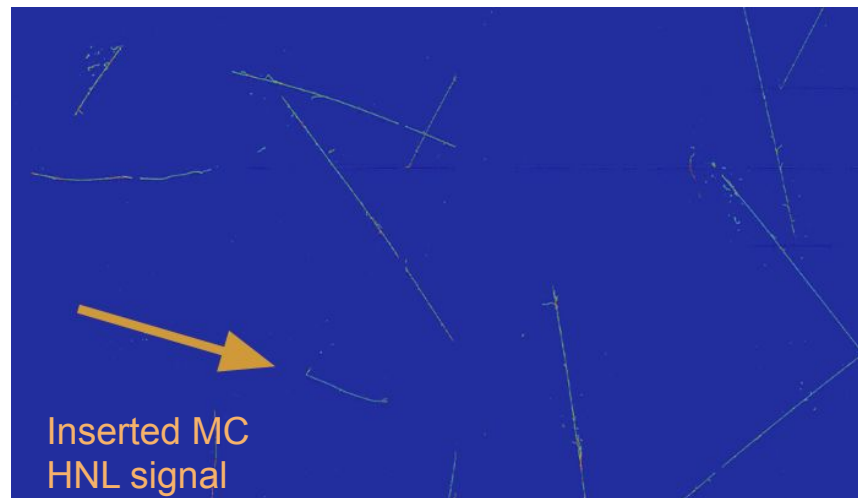
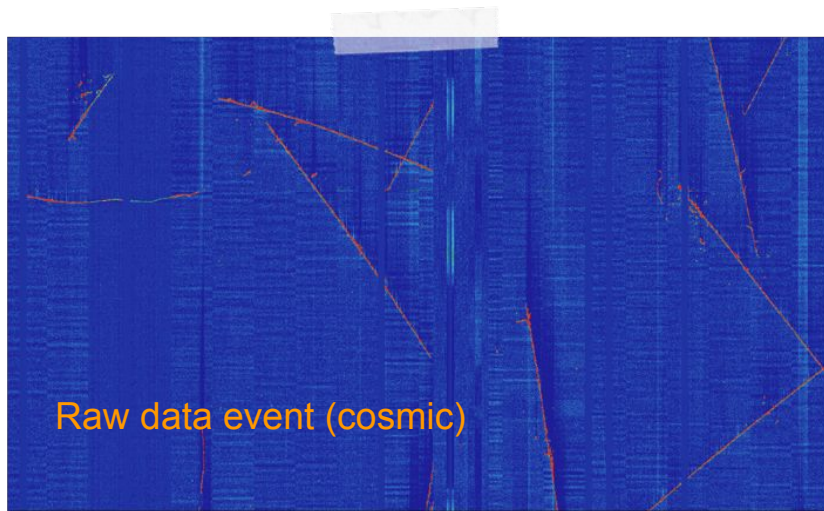


- Special **HNL trigger** operating since **June 2017**.
- Collected more than **4e20 POT** of data to date.
- This analysis uses the almost entire **Run 3 data** (1.97e20 POT)
- Trigger window extends 33% longer than **BNB** with **higher PE threshold (+60%)**
- HNL trigger collects data in the extended window and **VETOES the BNB trigger** (to reject BNB interaction background)

Identical HNL trigger runs when there is no beam spill to collect cosmics for background subtraction



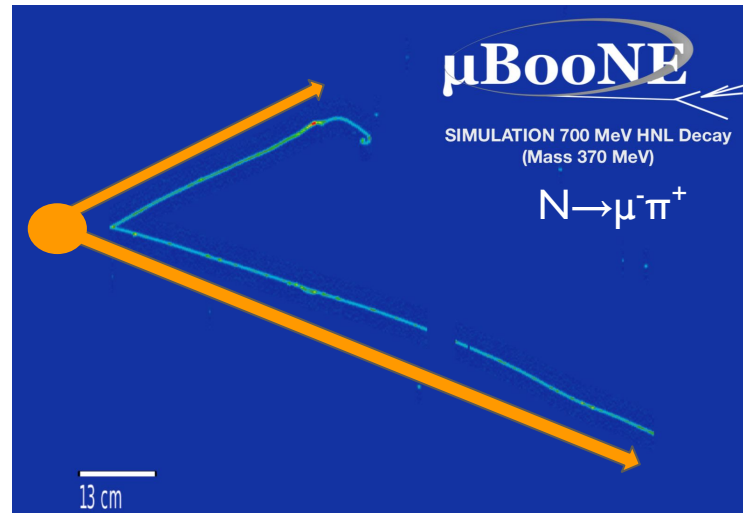
- The HNL Monte Carlo simulation makes use of a novel LArTPC MC approach: **MC Overlay**
- **MC** signal only simulation is combined with **real Comic Ray** (beam off data) to create a single event, signal processed and reconstructed together.



Event Selection

- The core of the HNL analysis is the search for an **excess of two-track** (μ and π) objects amongst a large number of **cosmic-ray muon tracks**, which constitutes the dominating background.

- Pandora pattern recognition* used to create reconstructed particles.
 - Using same tools as for neutrinos
- Select events containing a reconstructed vertex associated with **exactly two** reconstructed tracks.



- Use track lengths to reconstruct event kinematics
 - Continuous Slowing Down Approximation
 - Pion mass close to muon mass; at relevant energies they appear very similar in LArTPC
- Assume longer track of pair is the muon (correct ~70% of the time)
 - Relevant kinetic variables largely insensitive to incorrect labeling

Muon

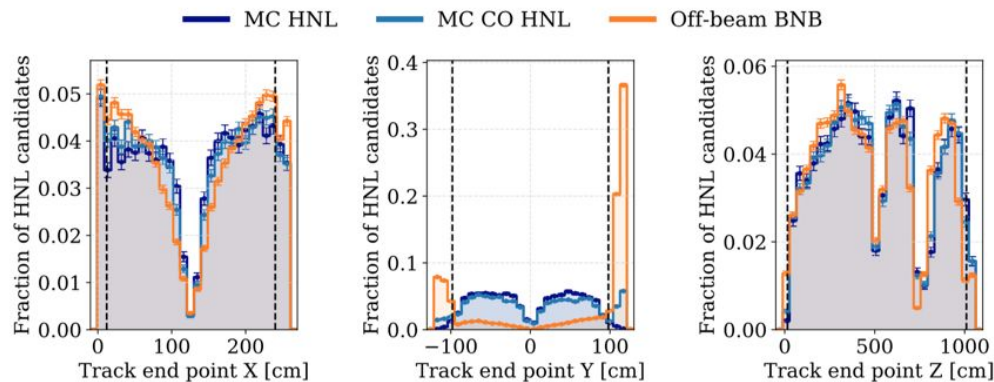
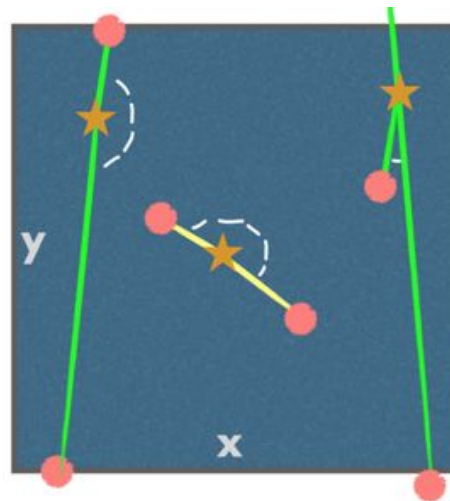
Pion

- Use track lengths to reconstruct event kinematics
 - Continuous Slowing Down Approximation
 - Pion mass close to muon mass; at relevant energies they appear very similar in LArTPC
- Assume longer track of pair is the muon (correct ~70% of the time)
 - Relevant kinetic variables largely insensitive to incorrect labeling

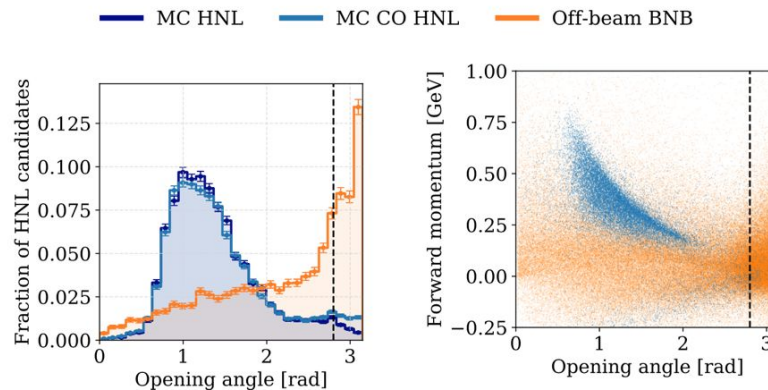
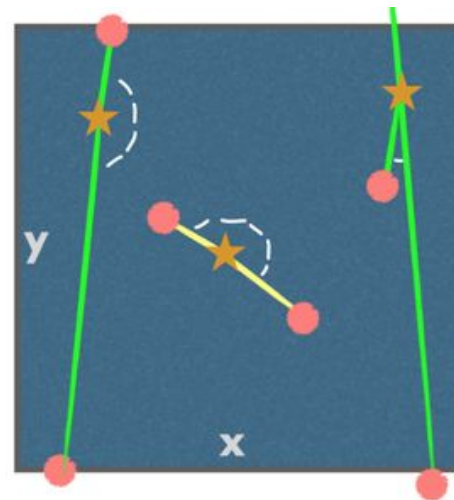
- Pre-selection requirements serve the double purpose of **increasing S/B ratio** and **improving reconstruction quality** of HNL candidates for further discrimination via **BDT** application
- Variables chosen to have **minimum dependency on HNL mass**.
- Mass-dependent information is reserved for BDT, which is **trained for each HNL mass**.

Pre-selection requirements		
Name	Variable Used	Requirement
Fiducial volume	HNL vertex x coordinate	>12 cm <i>and</i> < 244.35 cm
	HNL vertex y coordinate	> -80.5 cm <i>and</i> < 80.5 cm
	HNL vertex z coordinate	$(> 25$ cm <i>and</i> < 675 cm) <i>or</i> $(> 775$ cm <i>and</i> < 951.8 cm)
Vertex-track distance	Distance between vertex and farthest track start point	< 5 cm
Minimum number of hits	Number of hits of smallest track	> 30 hits on collection plane
Flash PE	PE of largest flash in event	> 0 PE
Vertex-flash distance	2-d distance between HNL and largest flash	< 150 cm
Track containment	x coordinate of end point farthest from centre	>12 cm <i>and</i> < 240 cm
	y coordinate of end point farthest from centre	> -98 cm <i>and</i> < 98 cm
	z coordinate of end point farthest from centre	> 15 cm <i>and</i> < 1010 cm
Opening angle	3-d angle between tracks	< 2.8 radians (160°)
Invariant mass	Range-calculated HNL candidate invariant mass	< 0.5 GeV

- Cosmics typically mimic HNL via a broken track or delta ray causing a vertex to be found.
- Containment cuts:
 - Since many CR muons are **through-going** and enter/exit the detector through the top/bottom panel, the Y-cut **reduces background** by a **factor of 6**.

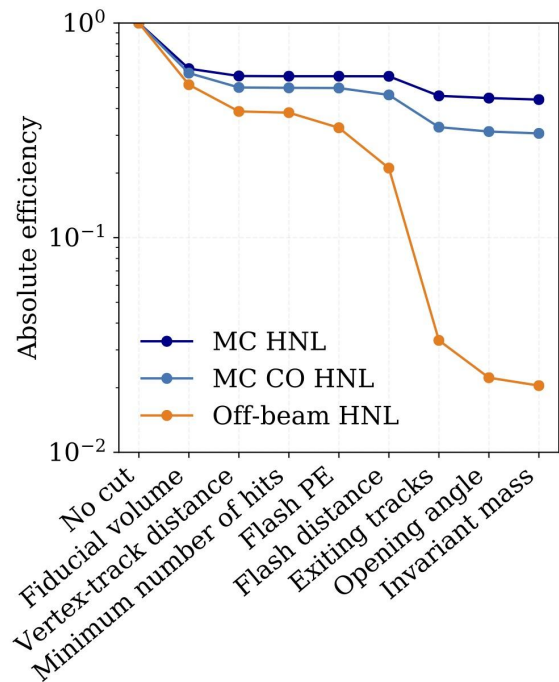


- Cosmics typically mimic HNL via a broken track or delta ray causing a vertex to be found.
- Angle Cut:
 - **Broken tracks** constitute most of the background (single CR muon track fragmented by the reconstruction).
 - A **cut** on an **almost-flat opening angle** (160°) is effective in removing CR background.

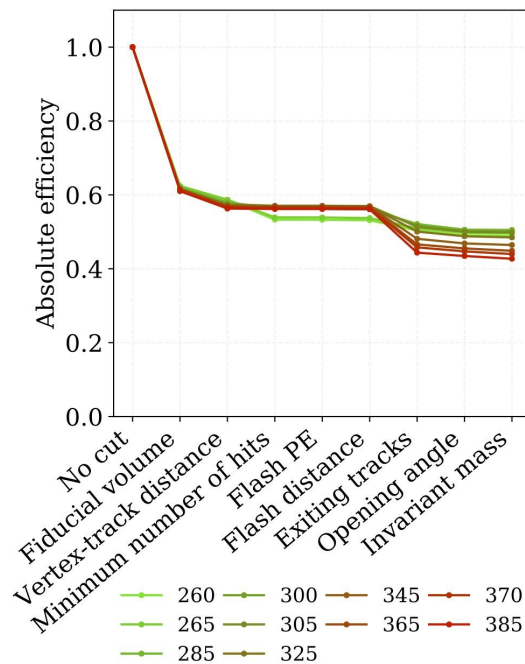


Selection efficiency

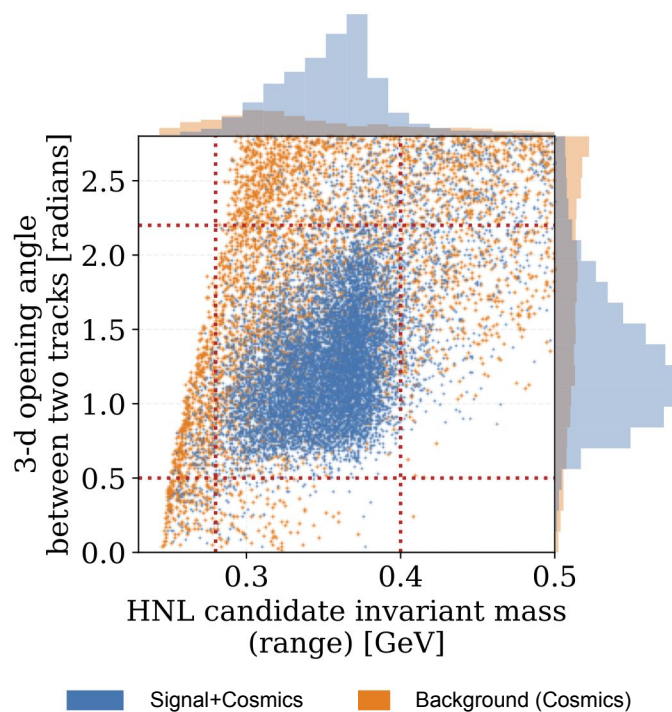
Combined pre-selection improves signal/background ratio by 25

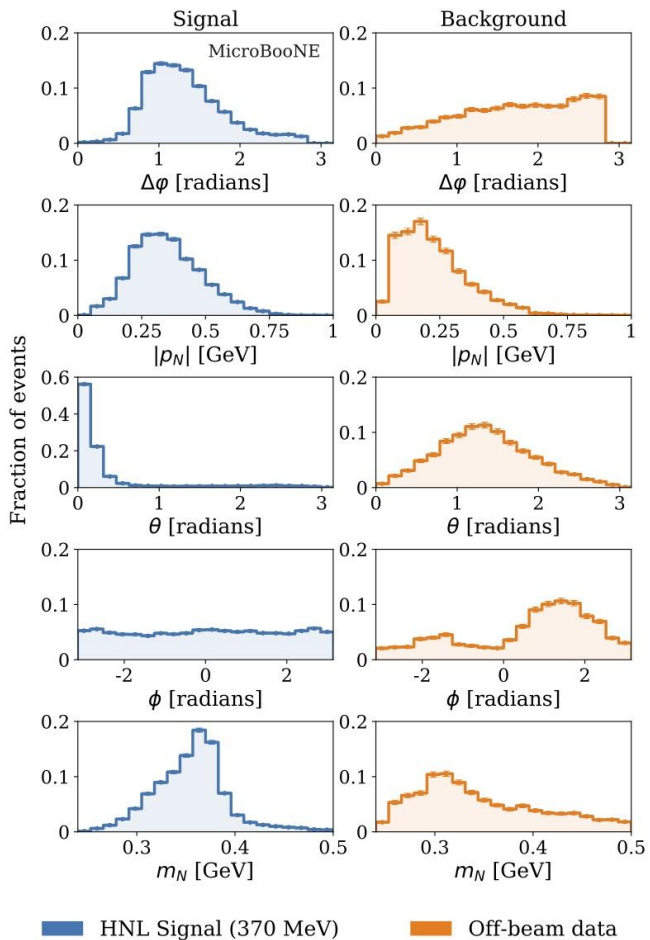


The efficiency is comparable across all the studied HNL masses.

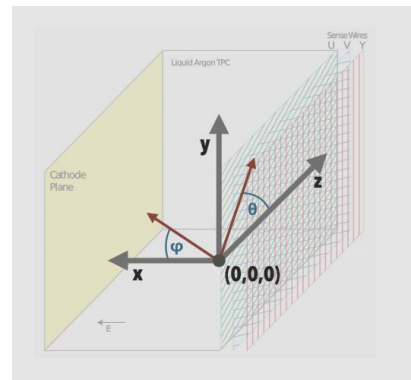


- Can harness correlations between kinematic variables as well as HNL mass dependent variables to further separate HNL and cosmics
- Train a Boosted Decision Tree (BDT) for each of the HNL masses studied.

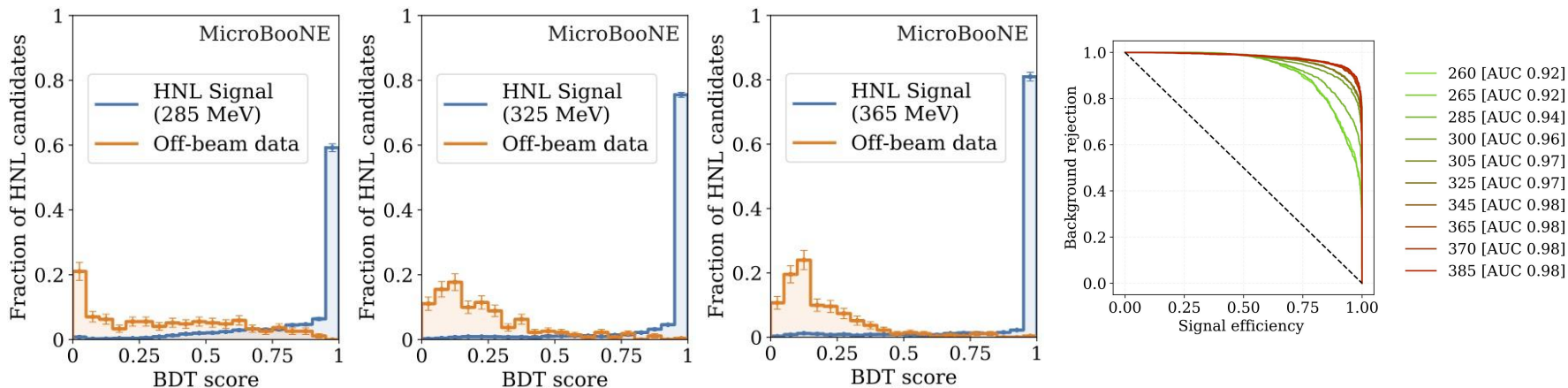




- Train BDT to discriminate between HNL and Cosmics.
- 5 input variables for each candidate
 - Opening Angle
 - Total Momentum
 - Angle from the beamline
 - Azimuthal Angle
 - Invariant mass



- BDT output score separates HNL and background well
- Better separation for higher HNL masses

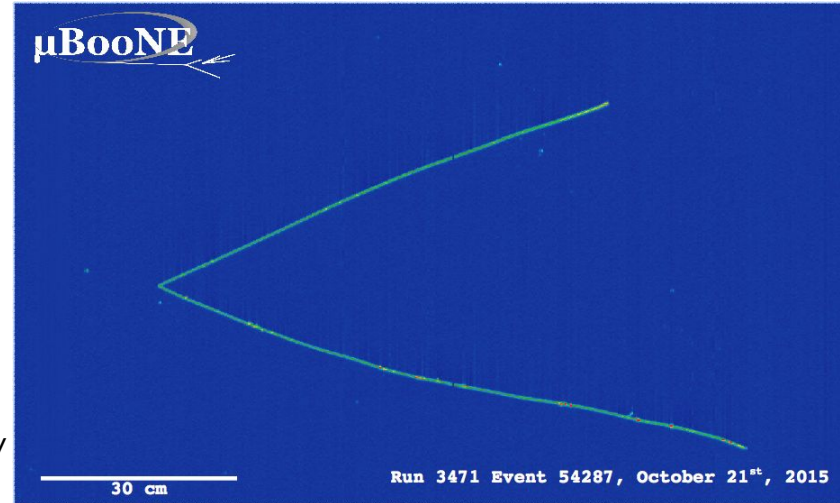


Validation

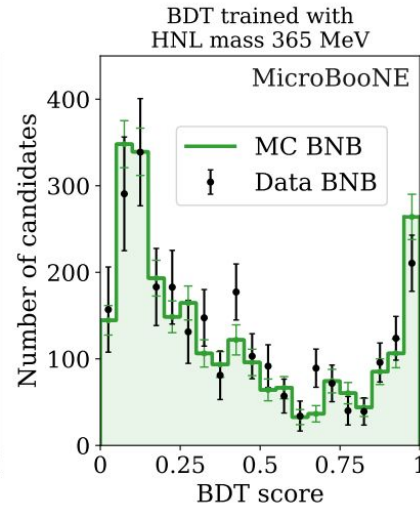
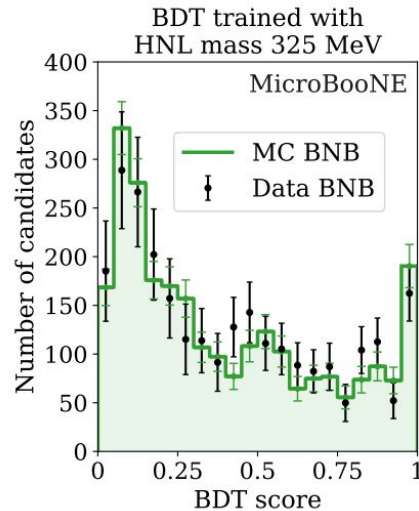
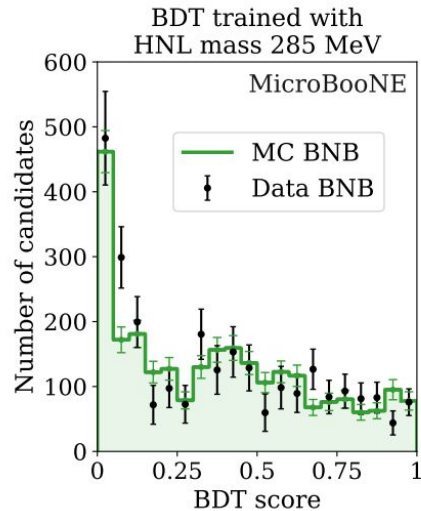
Validation of selection workflow is performed in data.

A “control sample” of BNB ν interaction data (and simulation) is used to verify that the candidate identification, pre-selection efficiency and BDT work in data and are not sensitive to data/MC differences.

- Will contain CC ν_{μ} events with similar topology to our events
- Additional cut to reject non-signal like events containing highly ionising tracks (protons)



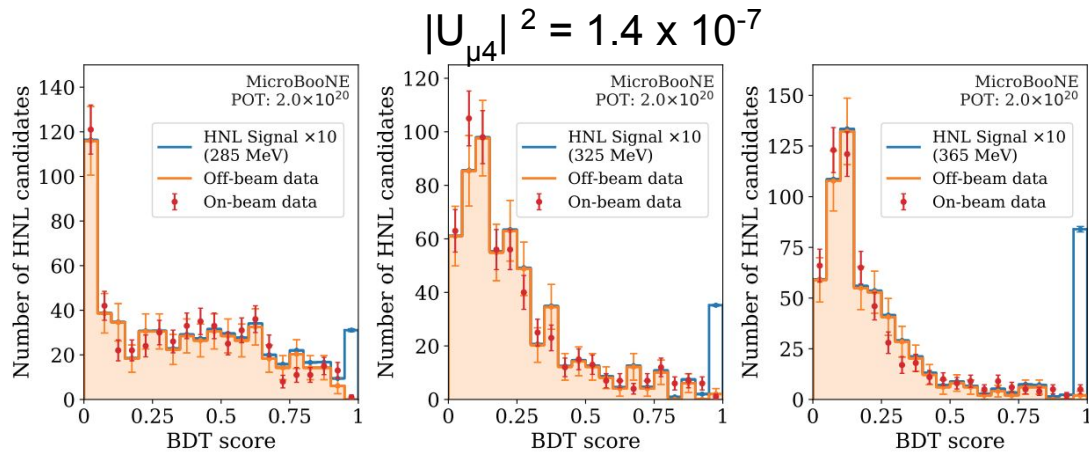
- Good agreement between data and MC
 - Validates workflow
 - Signal-like events appear at high BDT for trained with higher HNL mass.
 - ν_{μ} CC 1 pion events
 - Evidence that if HNL are present in data we would select them (at the rate we expect)



Results

Looking at the HNL Data

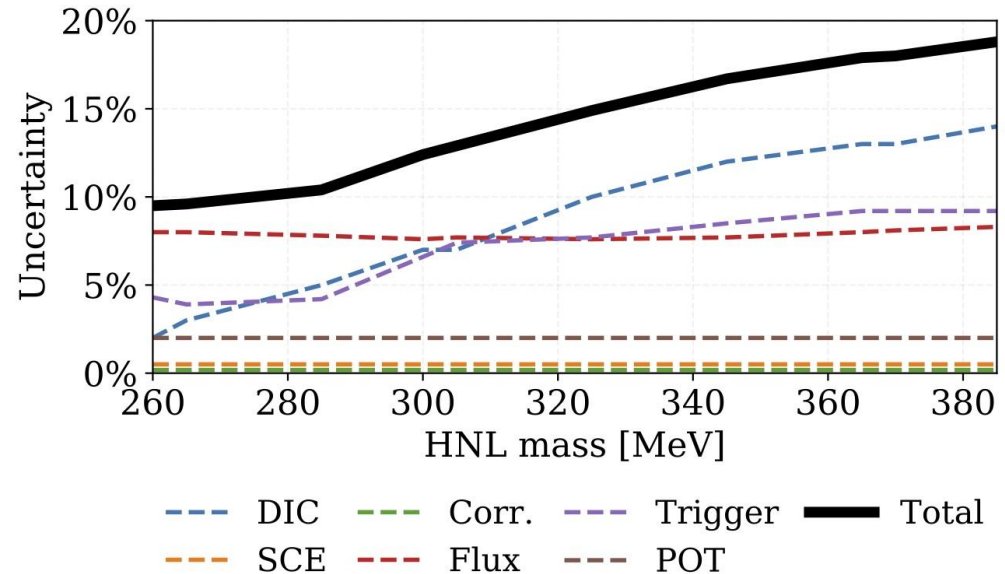
- Run BDT over data in beam correlated HNL window.
- Signal and background data samples show good agreement across BDT score
- No excess observed in signal like region (BDT score < 0.95)



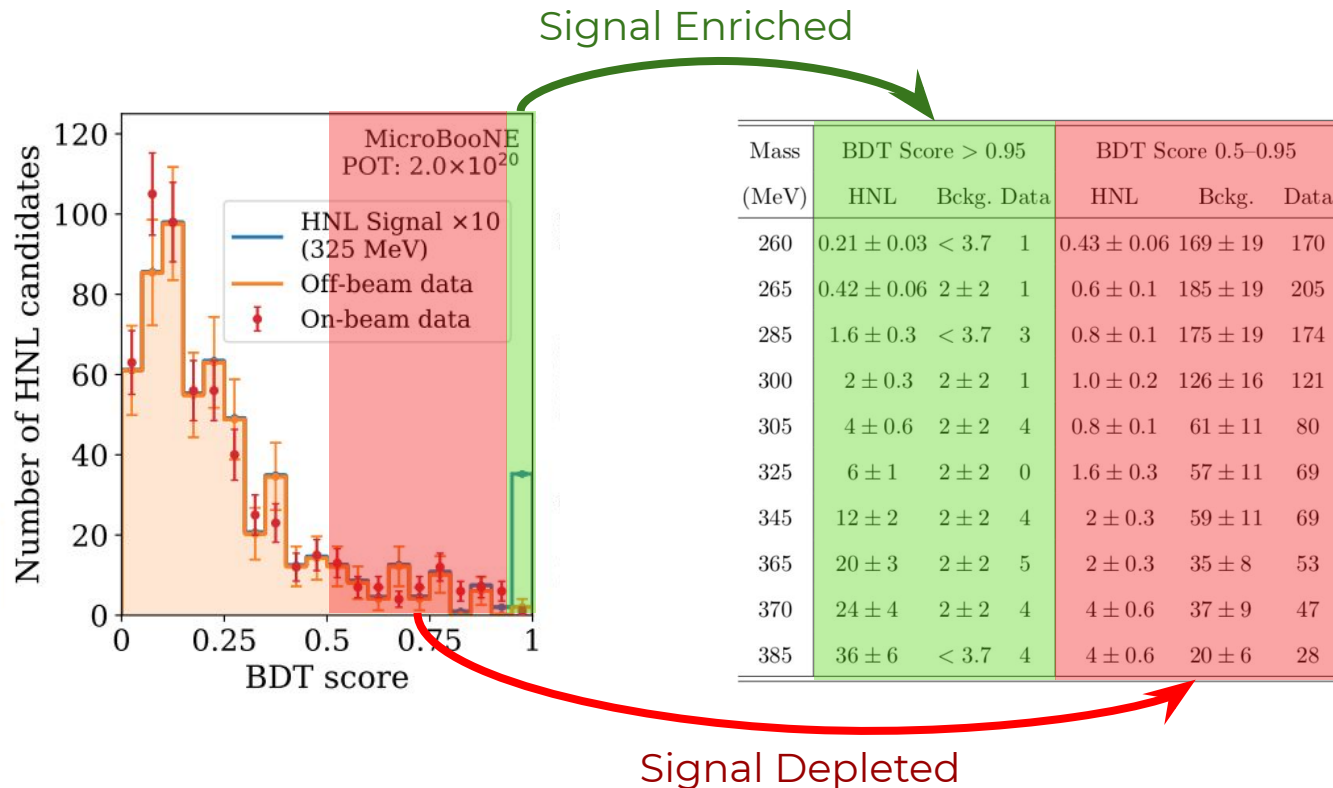
- **Set limits on $|U_{\mu 4}|^2$ as a function of HNL mass (M_N)**

Mass (MeV)	BDT Score > 0.95			BDT Score 0.5–0.95		
	HNL	Bkg.	Data	HNL	Bkg.	Data
260	0.21 ± 0.03	< 3.7	1	0.43 ± 0.06	169 ± 19	170
265	0.42 ± 0.06	2 ± 2	1	0.6 ± 0.1	185 ± 19	205
285	1.6 ± 0.3	< 3.7	3	0.8 ± 0.1	175 ± 19	174
300	2 ± 0.3	2 ± 2	1	1.0 ± 0.2	126 ± 16	121
305	4 ± 0.6	2 ± 2	4	0.8 ± 0.1	61 ± 11	80
325	6 ± 1	2 ± 2	0	1.6 ± 0.3	57 ± 11	69
345	12 ± 2	2 ± 2	4	2 ± 0.3	59 ± 11	69
365	20 ± 3	2 ± 2	5	2 ± 0.3	35 ± 8	53
370	24 ± 4	2 ± 2	4	4 ± 0.6	37 ± 9	47
385	36 ± 6	< 3.7	4	4 ± 0.6	20 ± 6	28

- Uncertainties come predominantly from
 - Flux (kaon production at target, horn focusing uncertainty)
 - Trigger efficiency (PMT timing resolution)
 - Detector effects (Dynamically Induced Charge - DIC, Space Charge Effects - SCE)



Follow a two-bin approach, used for modified frequentist CLs method.

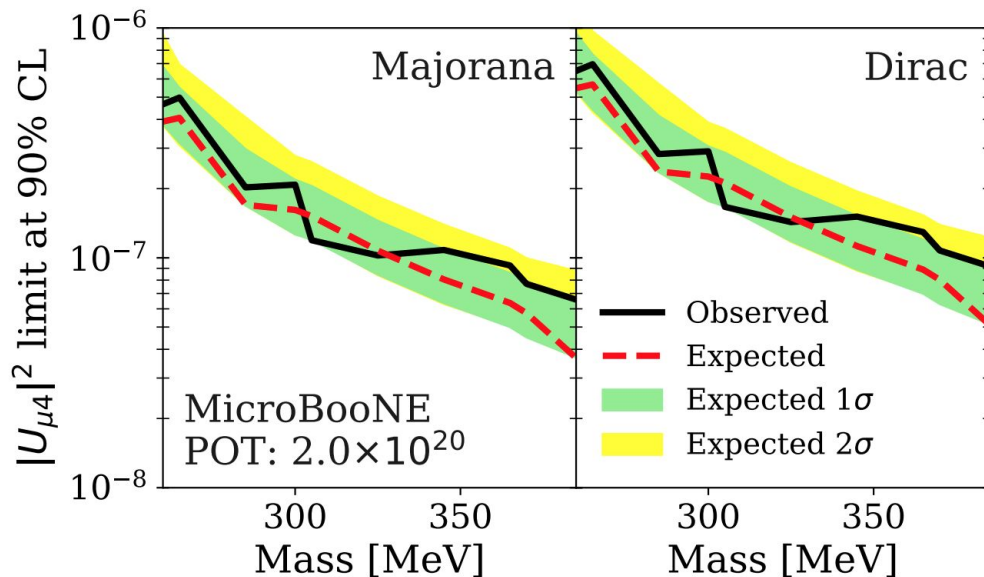


Observed and expected median **upper limits** at the 90% CL **agree within 1 standard deviation** over the entire mass range.

- Constraints on the **extended PMNS mass-mixing elements** are obtained in the range $(5-0.8) \times 10^{-7}$ (for Majorana).
- Limits for Dirac case are identical but reduced by a factor of $\sqrt{2}$ as $N_{\text{events}} \propto |U|^4$

- Published in PRD DOI: [10.1103/PhysRevD.101.052001](https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevD.101.052001)

HNL Exclusion Limit

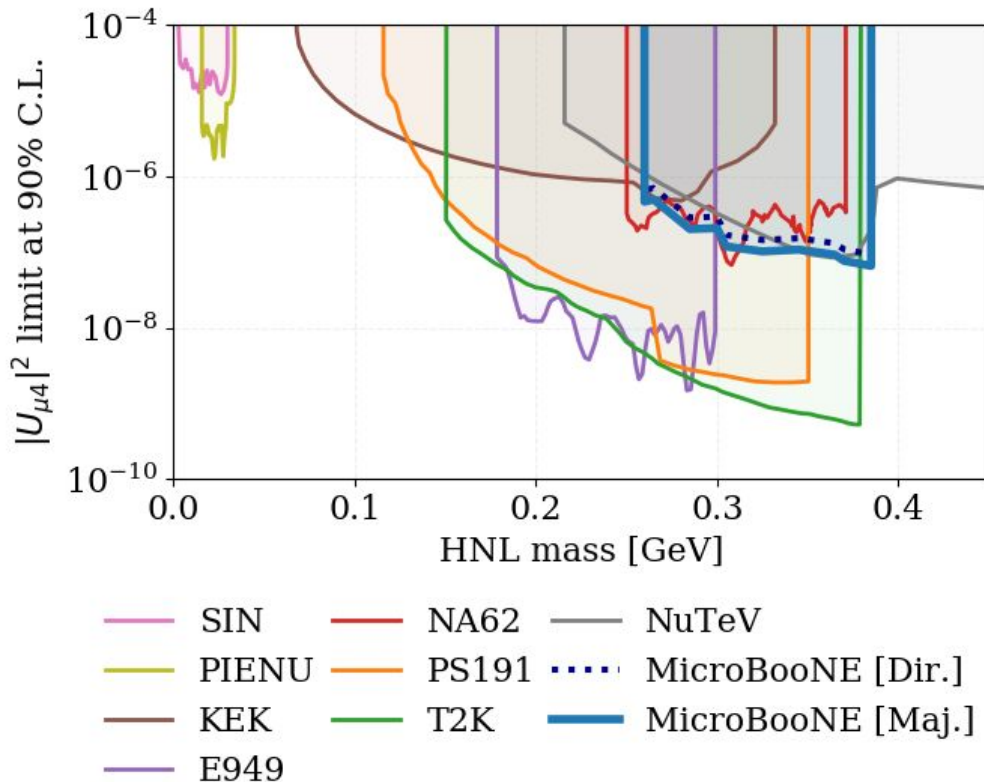


Limit Setting

Results similar sensitivity to NA62 and NuTeV for upper end of mass range

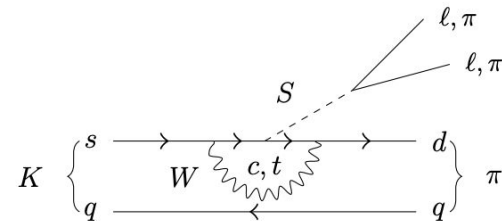
PS191 and T2K currently set more constraining limits for most of mass range.

MicroBooNE sets the most constraining limit up to 385 MeV



- This was the first search, more searches for HNL in MicroBooNE ongoing.
 - Collected almost 3 times more data in the late window than used in this analysis
 - Selections for different final states (**$N \rightarrow e\pi$** , **access to $|U_{e4}|$**)

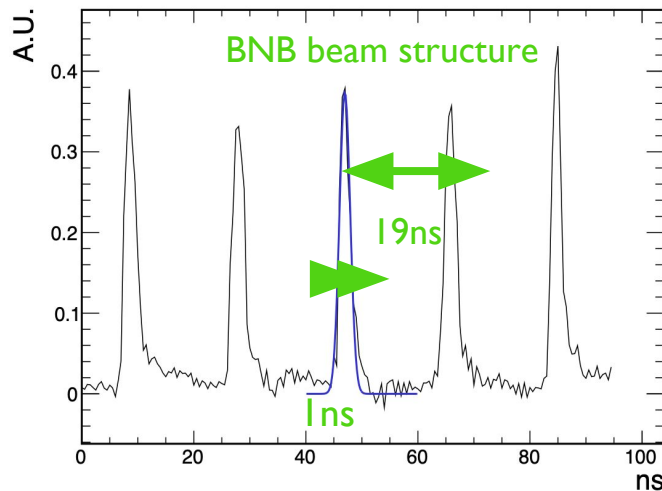
Late Window useful for other models. Eg Higgs Portal Scalars



- More MicroBooNE BSM search results coming.

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/1909.11670.pdf>

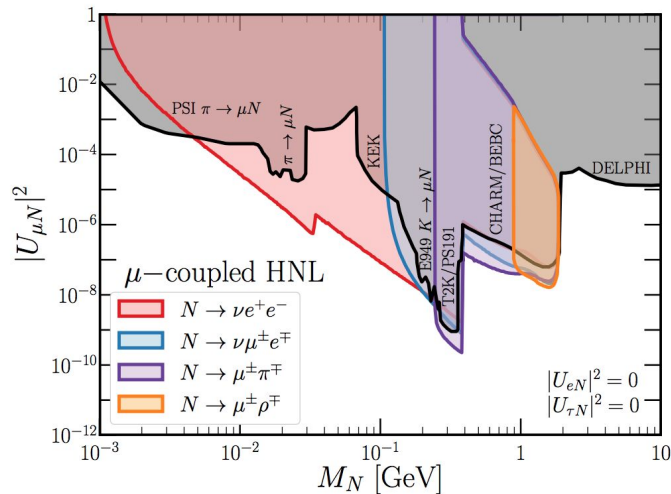
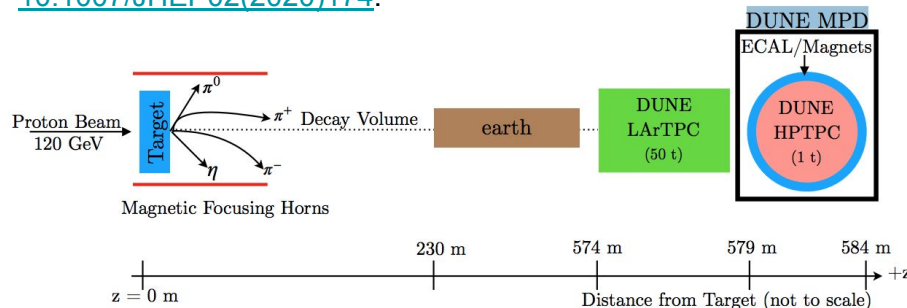
- Full SBN program will extend sensitivities
 - SBND ~110m from beam, higher flux.
 - ICARUS significantly larger TPC volume
 - Higher photon detector sampling rate, can potentially resolve beam bucket structure



Courtesy of En-Chuan Huang

[10.1007/JHEP02\(2020\)174](https://arxiv.org/abs/10.1007/JHEP02(2020)174).

- Very well suited to a HNL search
 - Charmed Mesons produced in beam giving greater mass reach
 - Gas TPC has lower density
 - $> \text{decay/interaction ratio}$
 - Magnet for sign selection and precise momentum determination.



- As well as neutrino measurements, LArTPCs provide sensitivity to unexplored parameter space for interesting beyond standard model scenarios.
- First search for HNLs in a LArTPC has been performed at MicroBooNE, results published in PRD DOI: [10.1103/PhysRevD.101.052001](https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevD.101.052001)
- Additional searches in progress with MicroBooNE
- Full SBN and DUNE offer excellent opportunities to extend searches for HNL and other BSM physics.

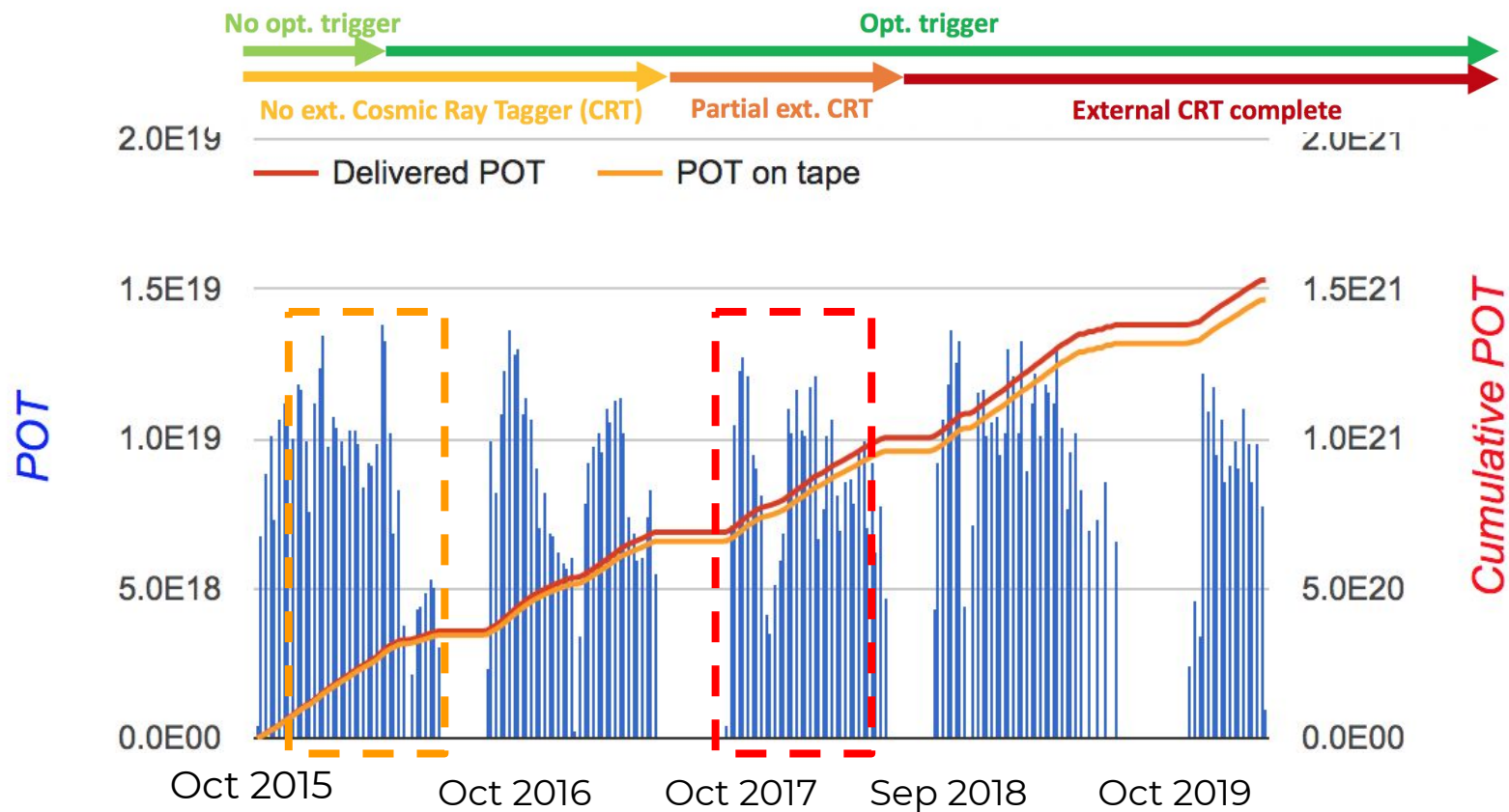
Backup

- Collecting neutrino data since 2015
- 89 tonnes LAr (active volume)
- Longest running LAr neutrino experiment ($\sim 1.5 \times 10^{21}$ POT of beam exposure)
- 8192 wires with 3mm pitch (2 x Induction - 2468 + Collection - 3456)
- 32 PMTs + 4 paddle PMTs



MicroBooNE data taking

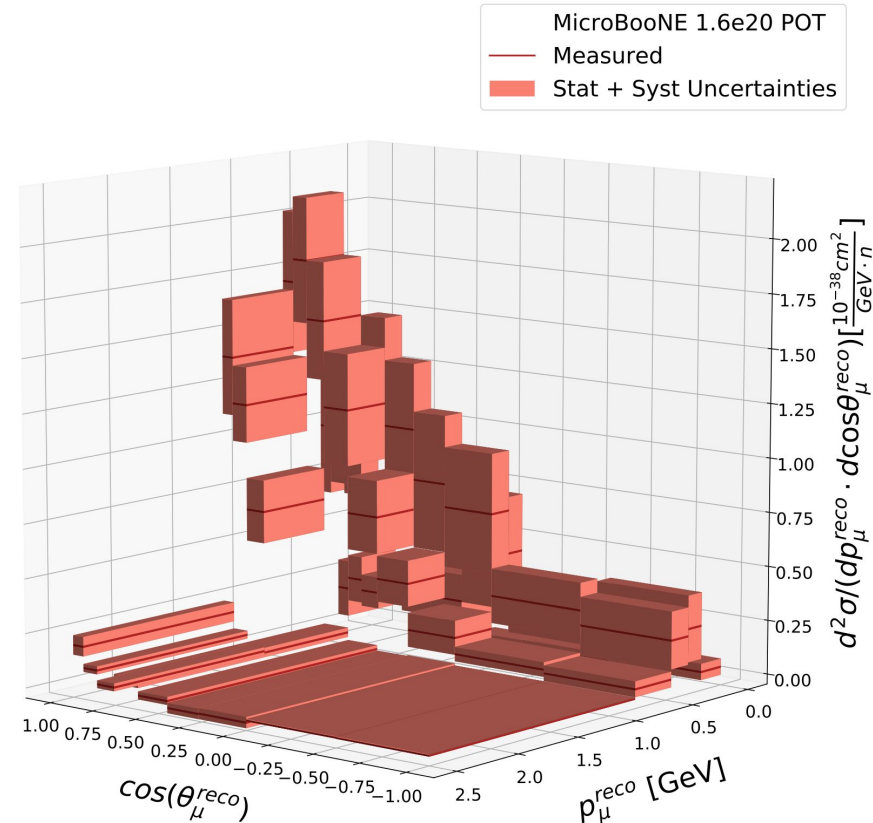
Owen Goodwin 14/05/2020



Cross section
results so far

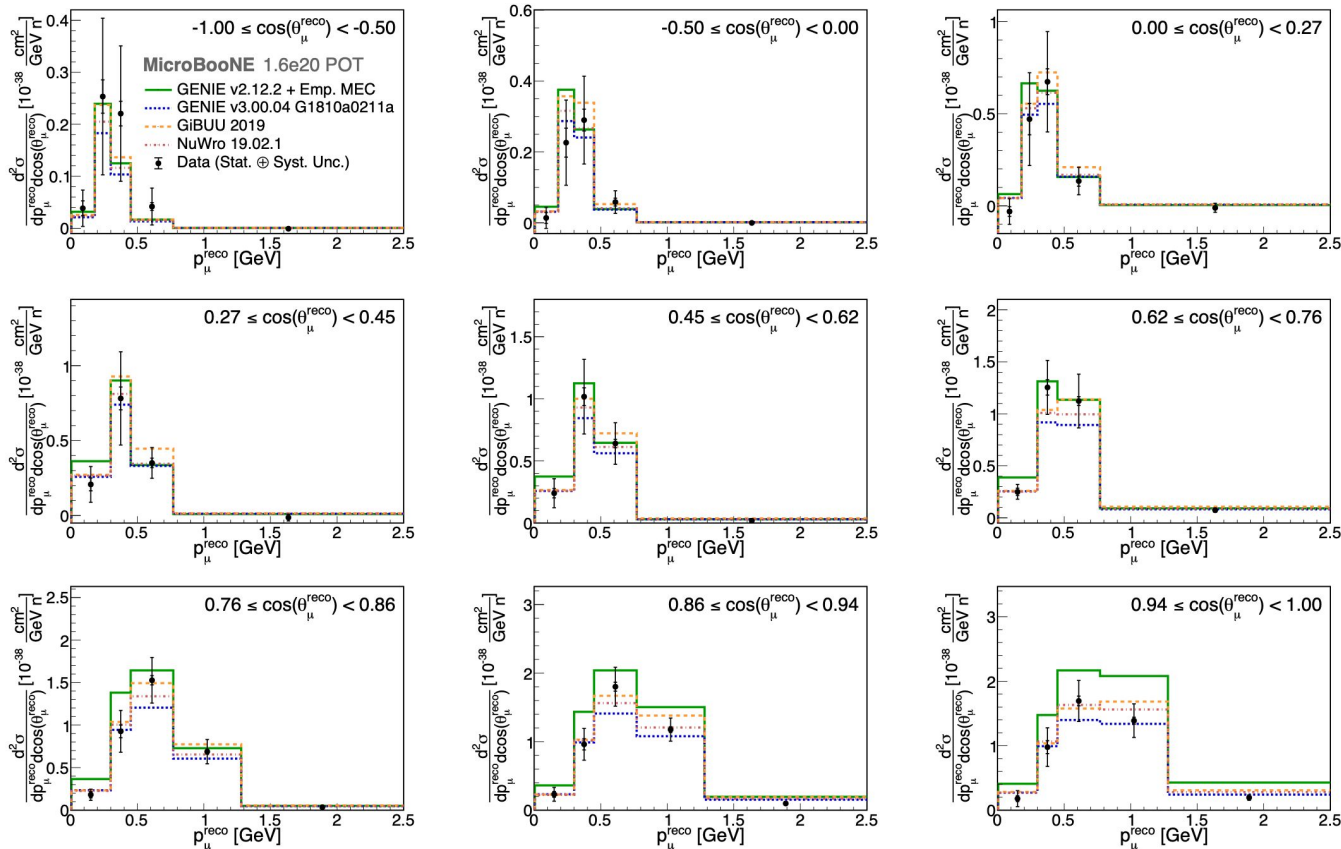
HNL results

- Main background: cosmic rays (CRs)
- Eliminate CRs: timing (optical flash matching) and topology (through-going tracks)
- Track length and calorimetry to identify muons
- First double differential ν_μ cross section measurement in argon, with full angular and momentum coverage
- Allow tests of event generators and ν_e constraints

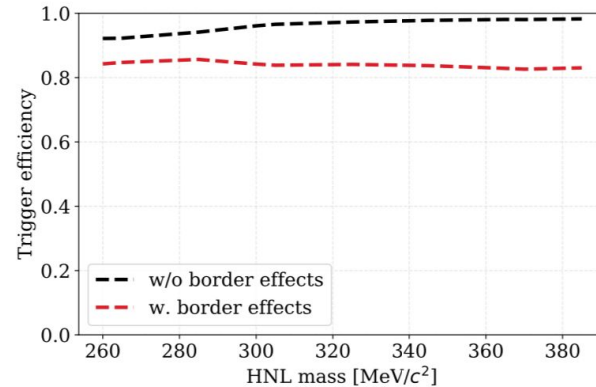
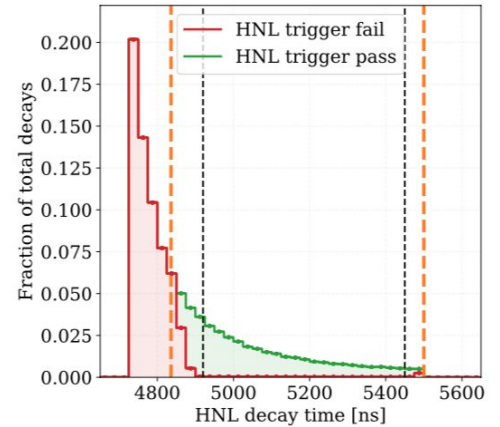
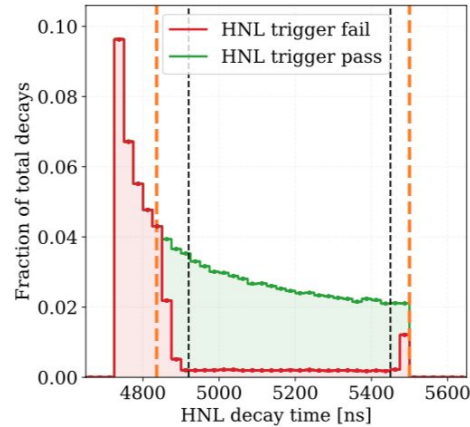


Double Differential ν_μ -Ar σ

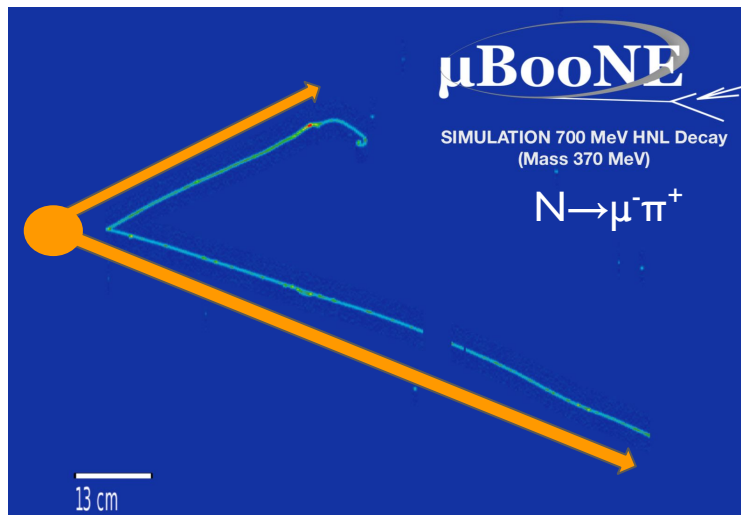
Owen Goodwin 14/05/2020



- MC input to simulate trigger
 - >95% of HNLs fire trigger
- Trigger pass rate has little dependence on **HNL mass**

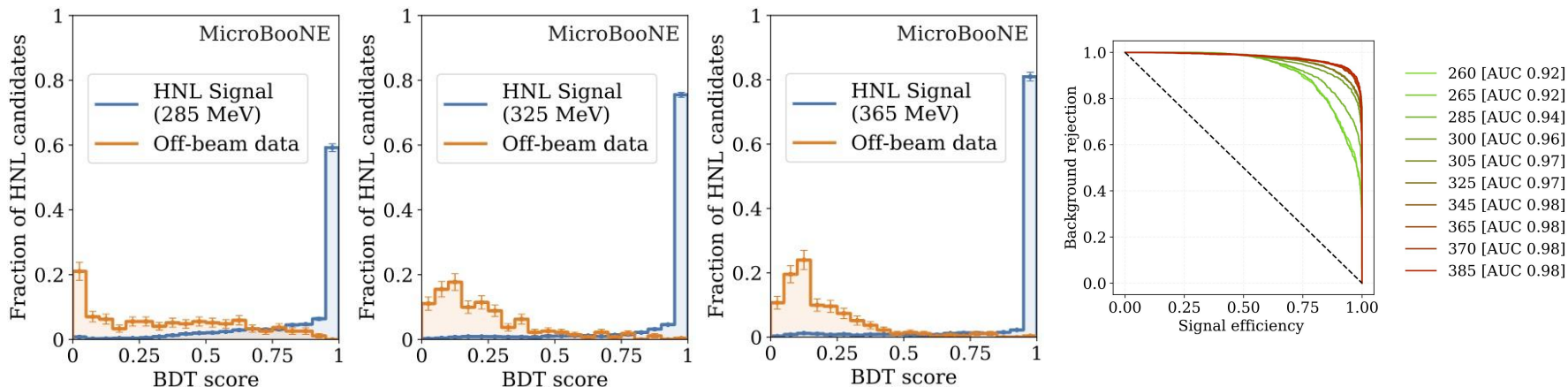


- Reconstruction quality cuts;
 - Vertex in fiducial volume
 - Vertex location matches optical flash
 - Distance between start of track and vertex < **5cm**
 - Each track has >**30 hits** on collection plane (**~20 MeV/c**)

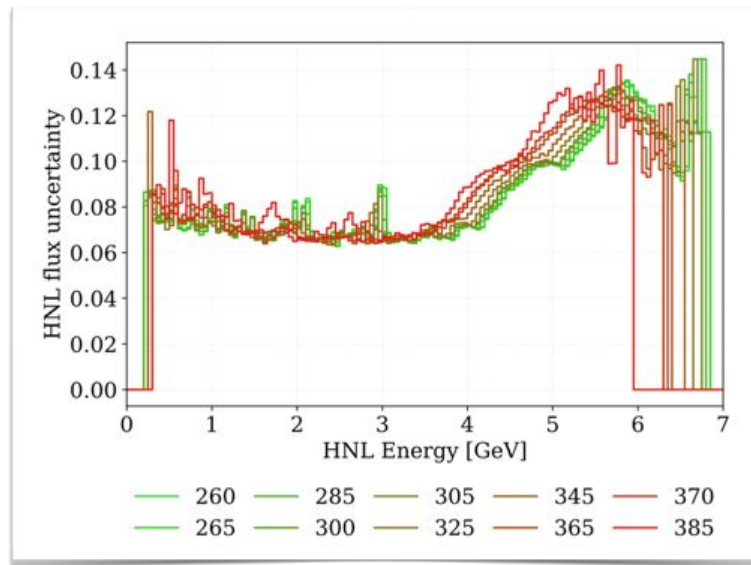


- BDT trained on HNL overlay and off-beam **BNB** data
- After pre-selections off-beam **HNL** and off-beam **BNB** samples have **same distributions**.
- Save smaller stats “off-beam HNL” testing.

BDT output score separates HNL and background well

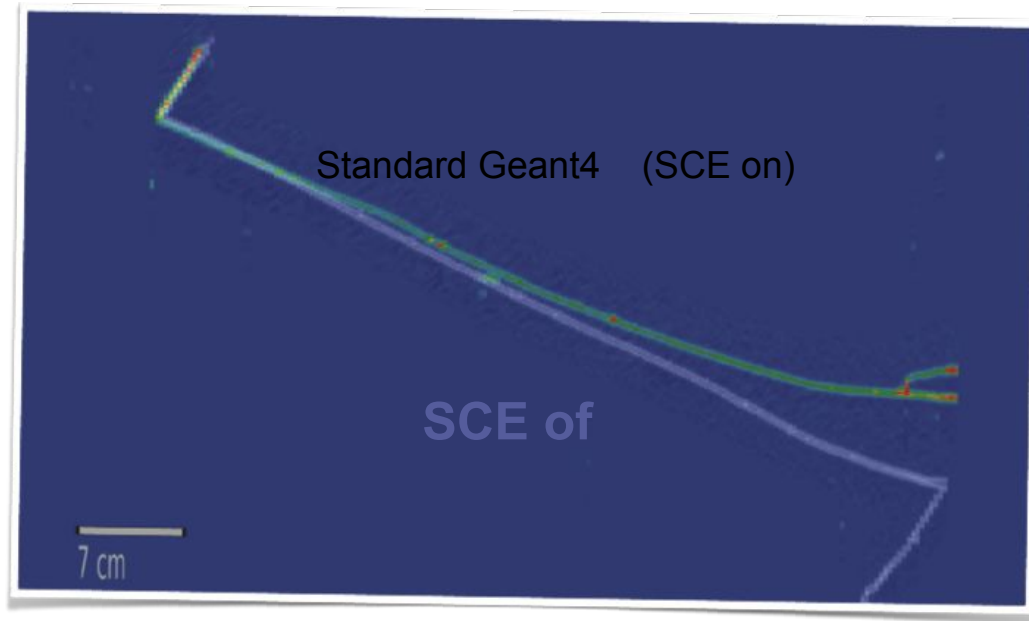


- Assessed using same multi-sim infrastructure as MicroBooNE neutrino analysis.
- Approximately an 8% flat uncertainty
- Predominantly due to uncertainties in the kaon production rate and horn current.



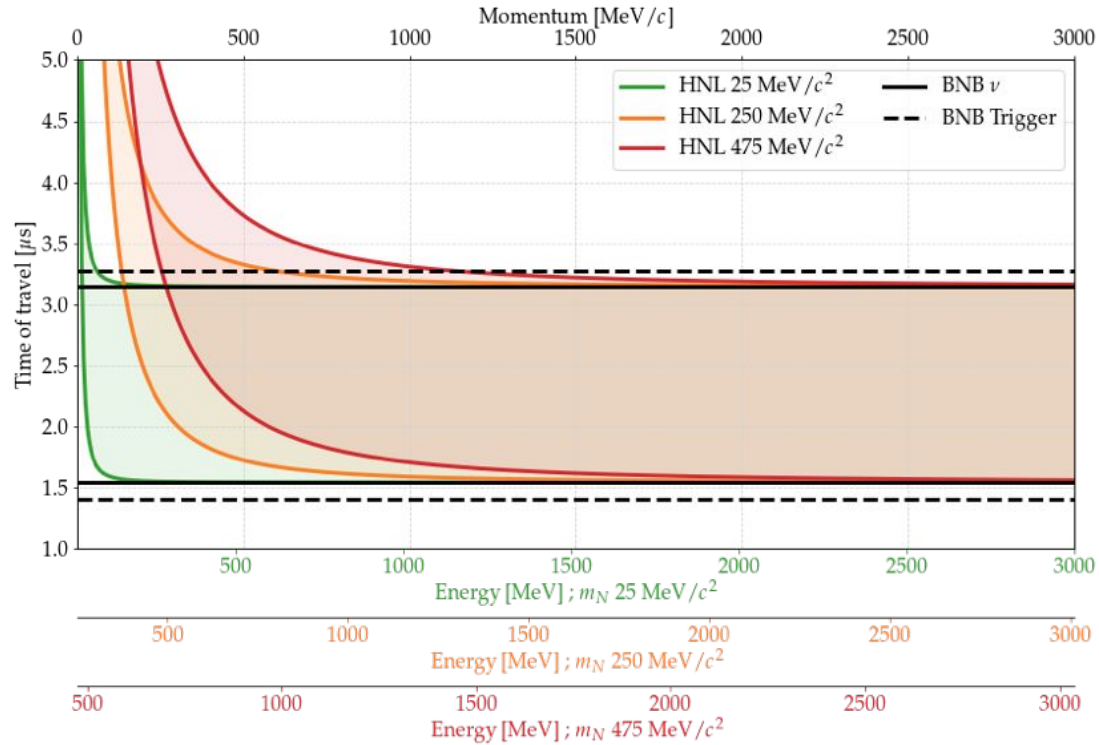
Assessed using uni-sims

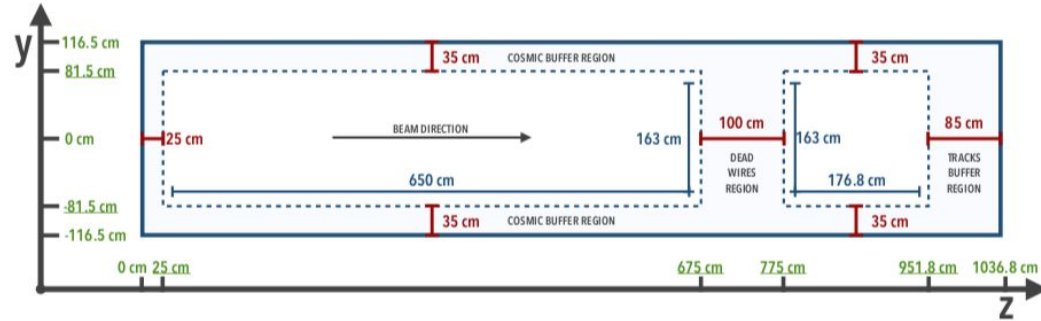
Dynamically Induced Charged (DIC) and Space charge effect on and off to assess impact



- MicroBooNE and ICARUS exposed to extreme off-axis flux from NuMI beam.
- Higher Energy
- Greater Kaon content in beam
- HNL flux dominated by Kaon decays at rest in the absorber







(a) Side view.

