

# The generative model for heavy-ion collisions

Jing-An Sun

**Collaborators: Li Yan,  
Sangyong Jeon, Charles Gale**

2025.11.02@南华大学

第四届全国核物理及核数据中的机器学习应用研讨会

- Accelerate: High-fidelity and Fast emulator.



- Inverse-engineering: Help solve inverse problems.



復旦大學

# The generative AI revolution

*Learn the distribution  $p(y | x)$  and generate new samples following such distribution.*

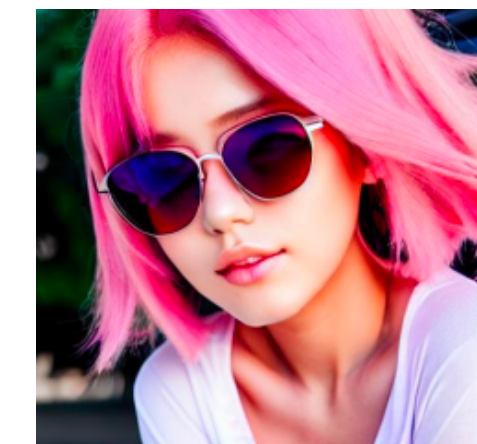
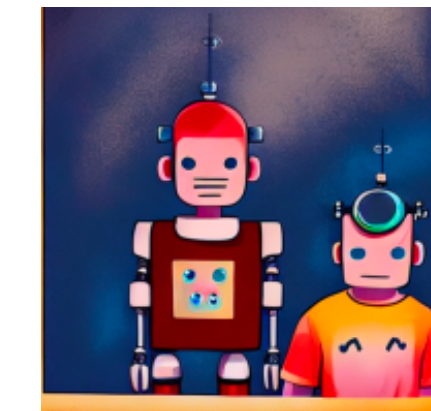
Kai Zhou Talk at 11.01

- Text generation:  OpenAI  deepseek
- **Text-to-Image generation: diffusion-based**

Prompts:

“An astronaut riding a pig”  
“The siblings are all robots”  
“An anime girl with pink hair and sunglasses”  
“A spotted dog, a cat and a bird on a round table”  
“Four cats surrounding a dog”  
.....

**Generative AI**



.....

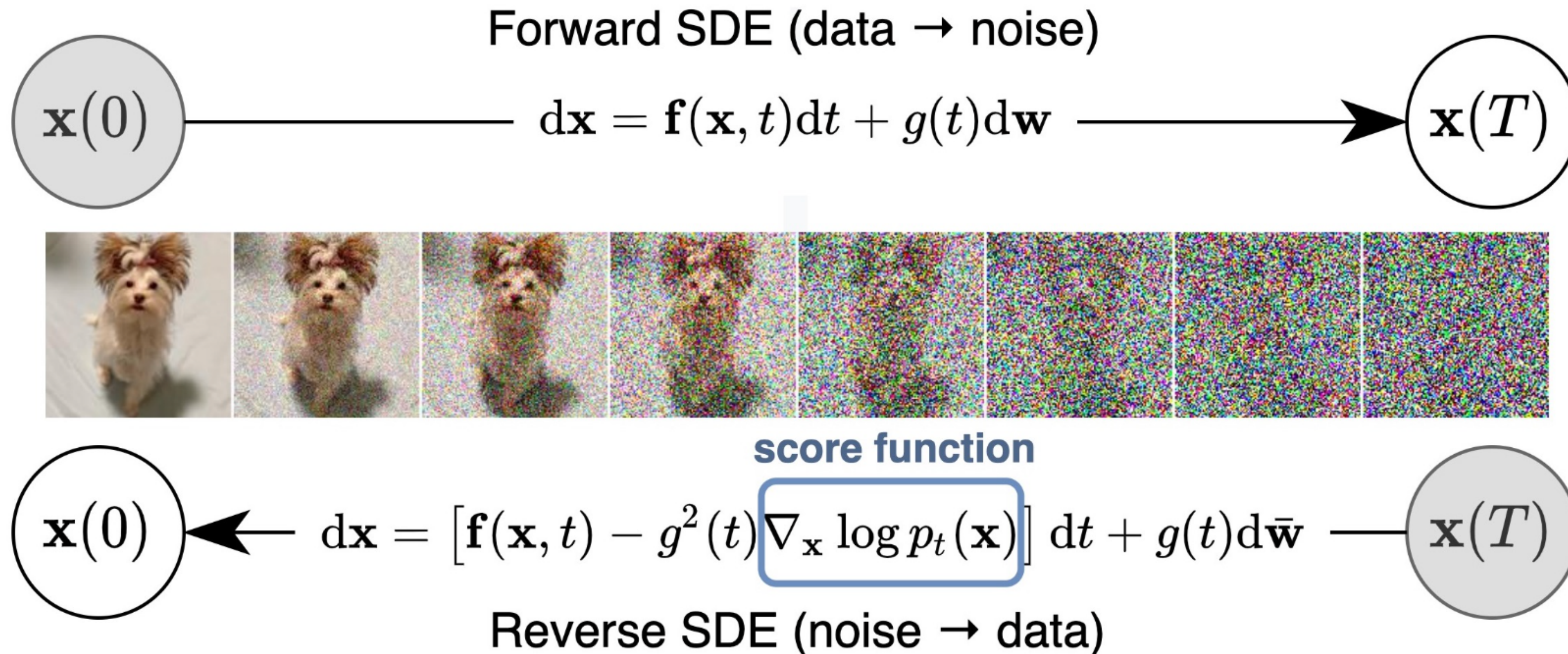
- Demonstrated powerful representative ability and flexibility.



# Diffusion generative model

- Learn the data distributions via noising and denoising.

Y. Song et.al ICLR 2021



*The only unknown term is the score function.*

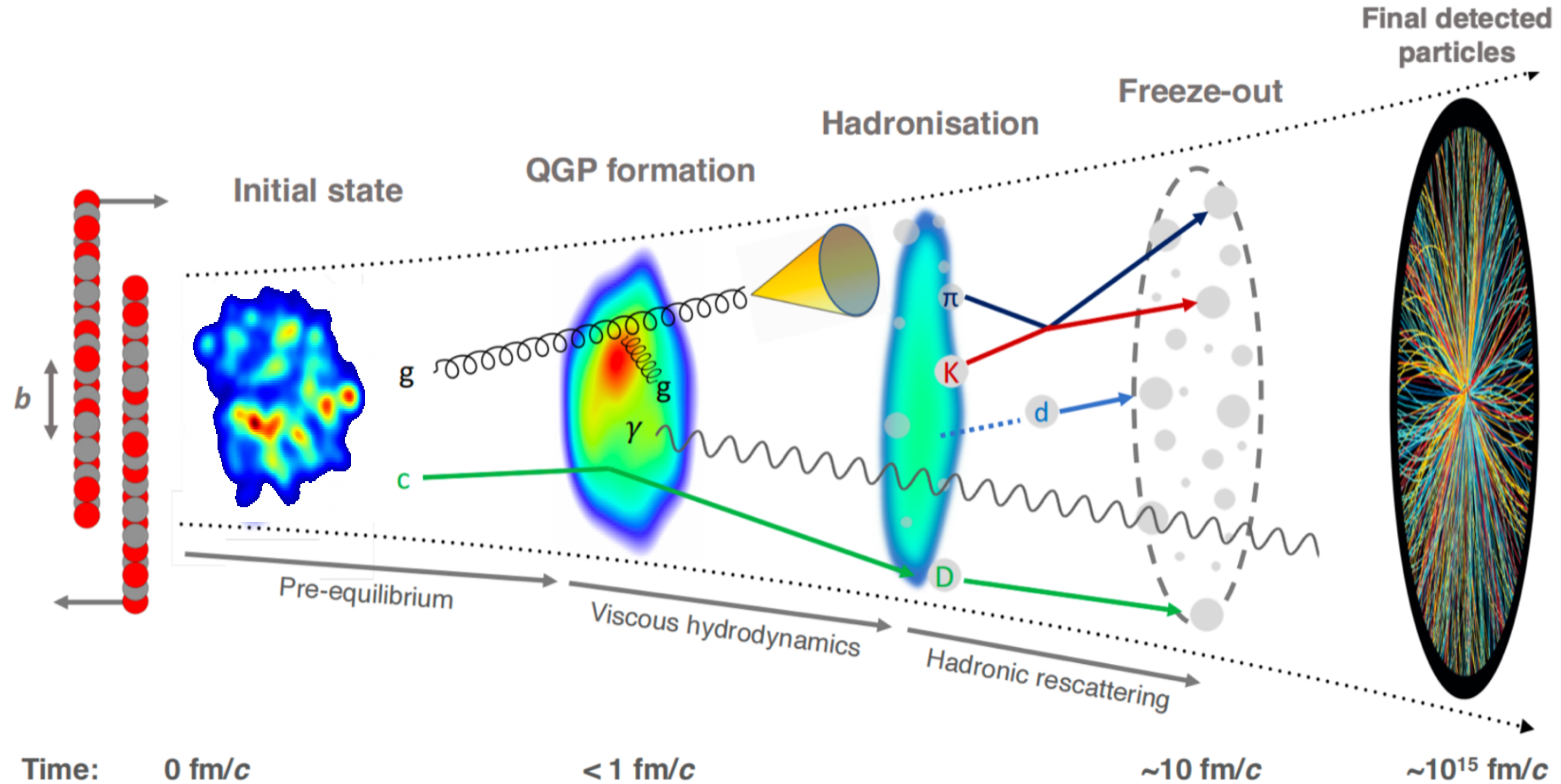
Train a network serving as **a proxy of score function**, one can generate the clean data from a standard norm distribution via **solution of the reverse stochastic differential equation(SDE)**.



# The hybrid modeling for heavy-ion collisions

- The hybrid modeling achieves tremendous success:

Particle spectra from experiment (collective flow, flow correlations, fluctuations) are accurately characterized.



ALICE Collaboration Eur.Phys.J.C 84 (2024) 8, 813

Trento+MUSIC+iSS+UrQMD



# Next generation demands

○ **Computational Limitation:**

L.G Pang et.al Phys.Rev.C 97 (2018) 6, 064918  
D Bazar et.al Comput.Phys.Commun. 225 (2018) 92-113

Method	Hardware	Time/Event	Scalability (1e6Events)
Hybrid	CPU (single-core)	~120 min	>20 years
GPU-accelerated	GeForce GTX Titan Z	~1 min	~2 months
Generative AI	NVIDIA GTX 4090	~0.1 sec	~1 day

- Imaging the nuclei shape:  $10^7 - 10^8$  events are typically selected. STAR Nature 635 (2024) 8037, 67-72
- Probing QGP thermodynamic properties (speed of sound) requires  $10^9 - 10^{10}$  statistics.
  - Experimentally accessible
  - **Computationally prohibitive for hybrid models** CMS Rept.Prog.Phys. 87 (2024) 7, 077801  
ALICE PoS ICHEP2024 (2025) 600

○ **Next-Generation Demands**

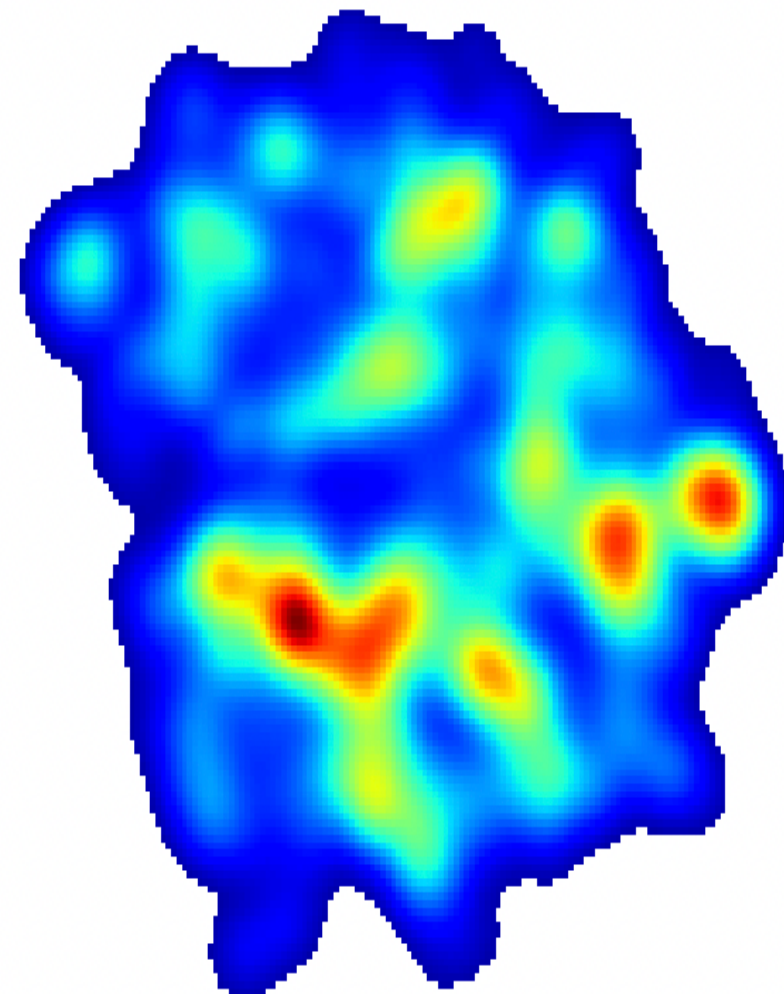
As heavy-ion collision physics enters **the high-precision era**:

- Current models require significant advancement to **meet growing computational demands**



# How can machine learning help us?

- **Goal:**
  - End-to-end (initial state to final state)
  - Fast and flexible
  - Keeping physical consistency and physical controllable
- **The challenges in deterministic machine learning**



**deterministic machine learning**



- sUnet: Solves hydrodynamic equations but **accumulates errors** in long-time evolution.
- Gaussian emulator in Bayesian analysis: Maps parameters to observables (digital to digital fit) but **lacks flexibility**.



*Learn the hard map from **parameter to parameter***

H.F Huang et.al Phys.Rev.Res. 3 (2021) 2, 023256

J.E Bernhard et.al Nature Phys. 15 (2019) 11, 1113-1117

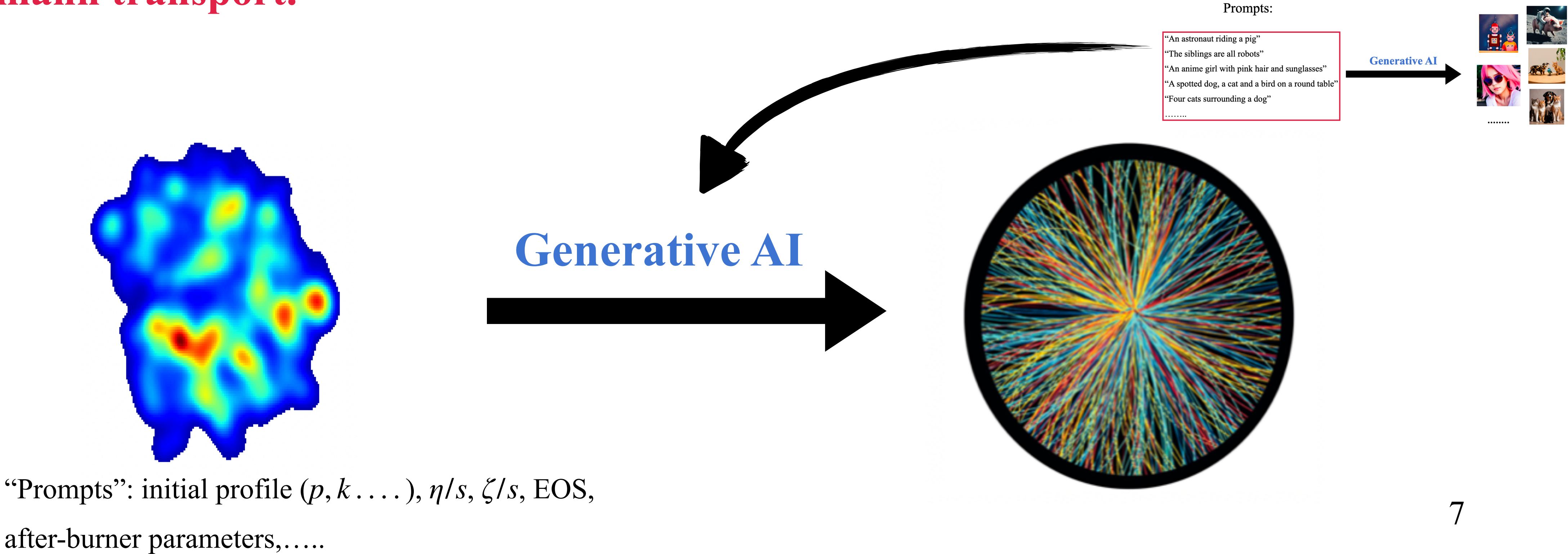


# The generative AI solution

- Problem setting

$$p(\text{particle spectra} \mid \text{initial state, transport coefficients, etc...})$$

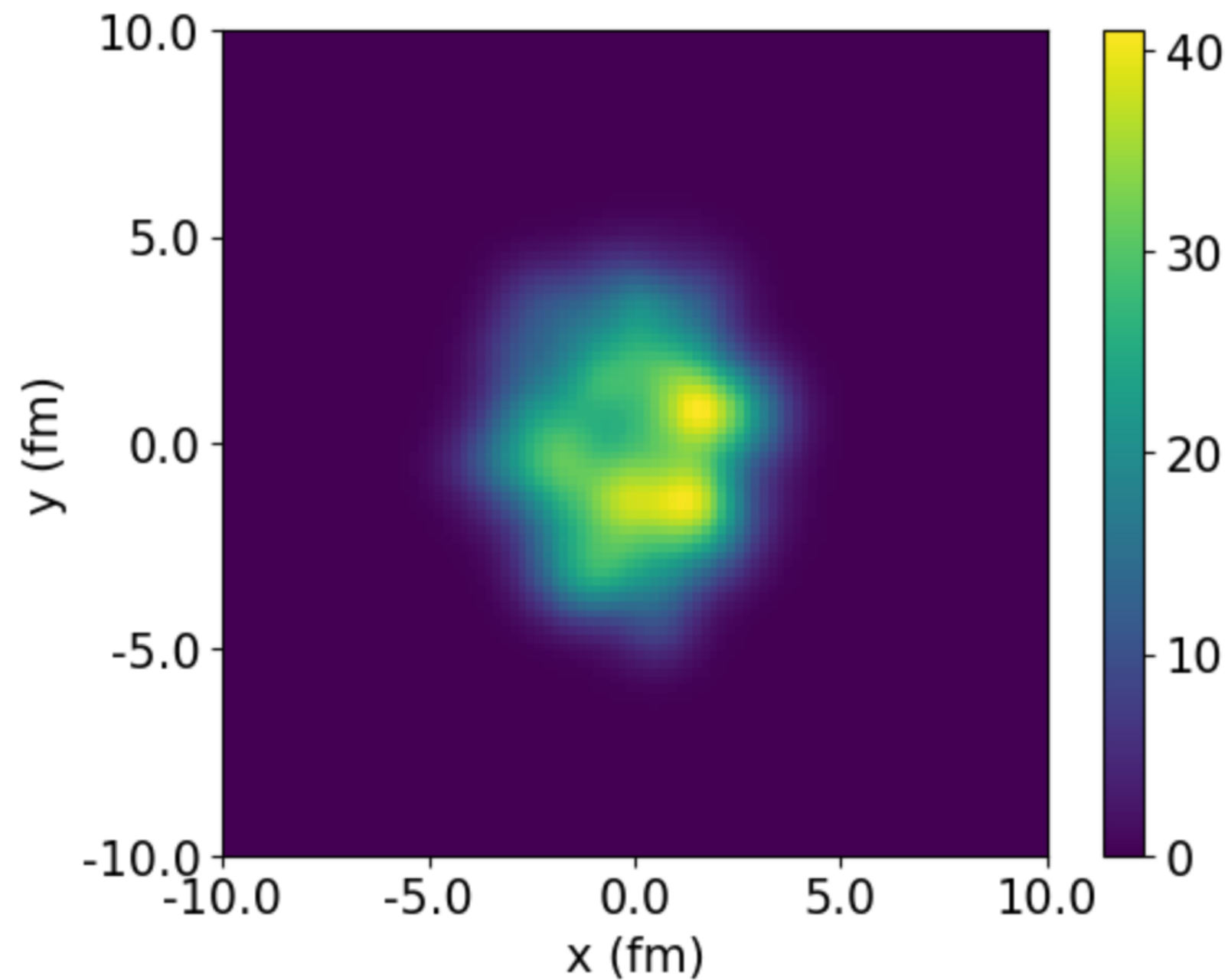
Generate the final particle spectra conditioned by the initial entropy density profile and the transport coefficients, a process is governed by hydrodynamic evolution and Boltzmann transport.





# Data preparation

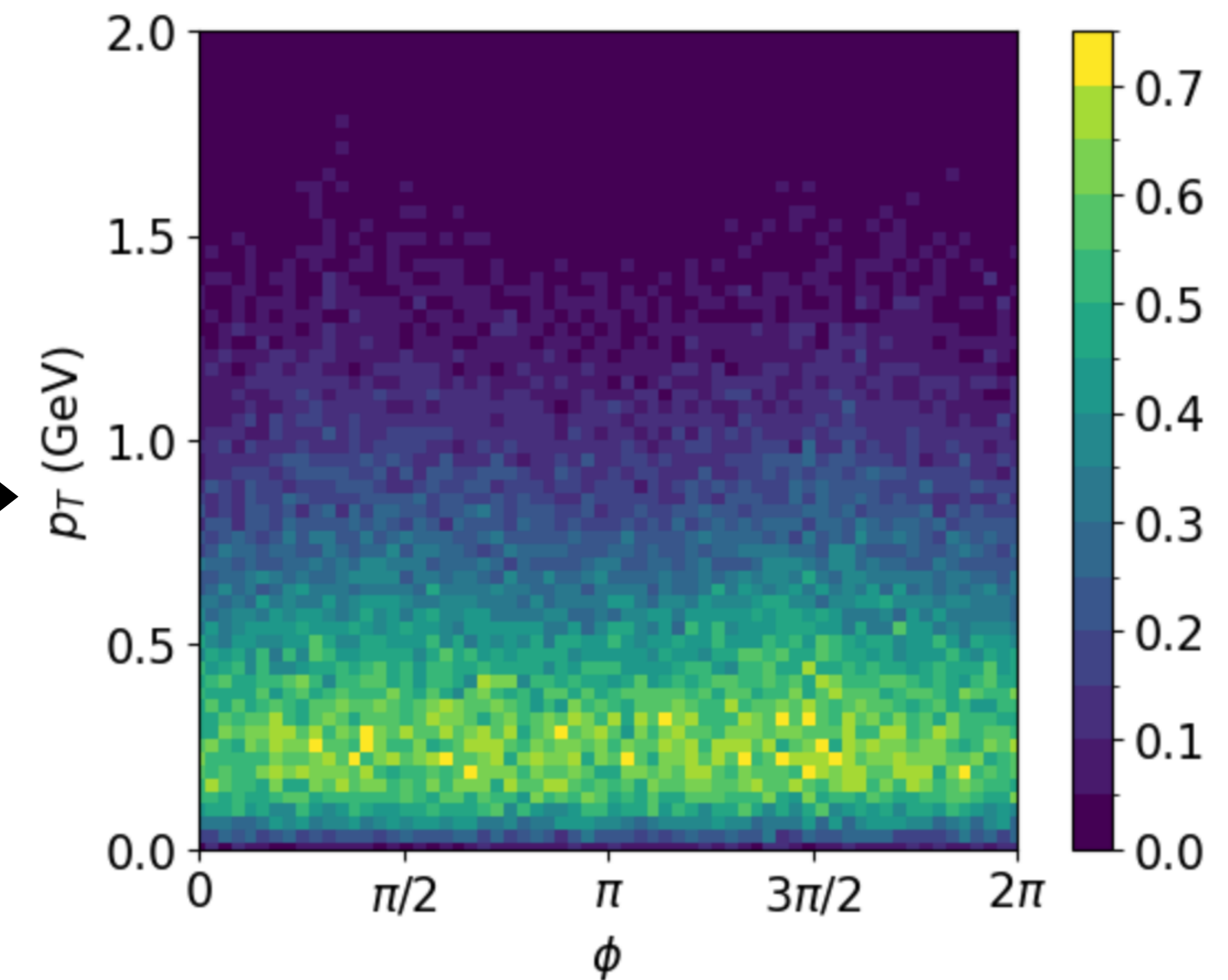
Initial entropy density profile



2+1 D hydrodynamics

**Trento+MUSIC+iSS+UrQMD**

charged particle spectra



- **Parameter set:** initial profile ( $p, k \dots$ ),  $\eta/s$ ,  $\zeta/s$ , EOS, after-burner parameters,.....

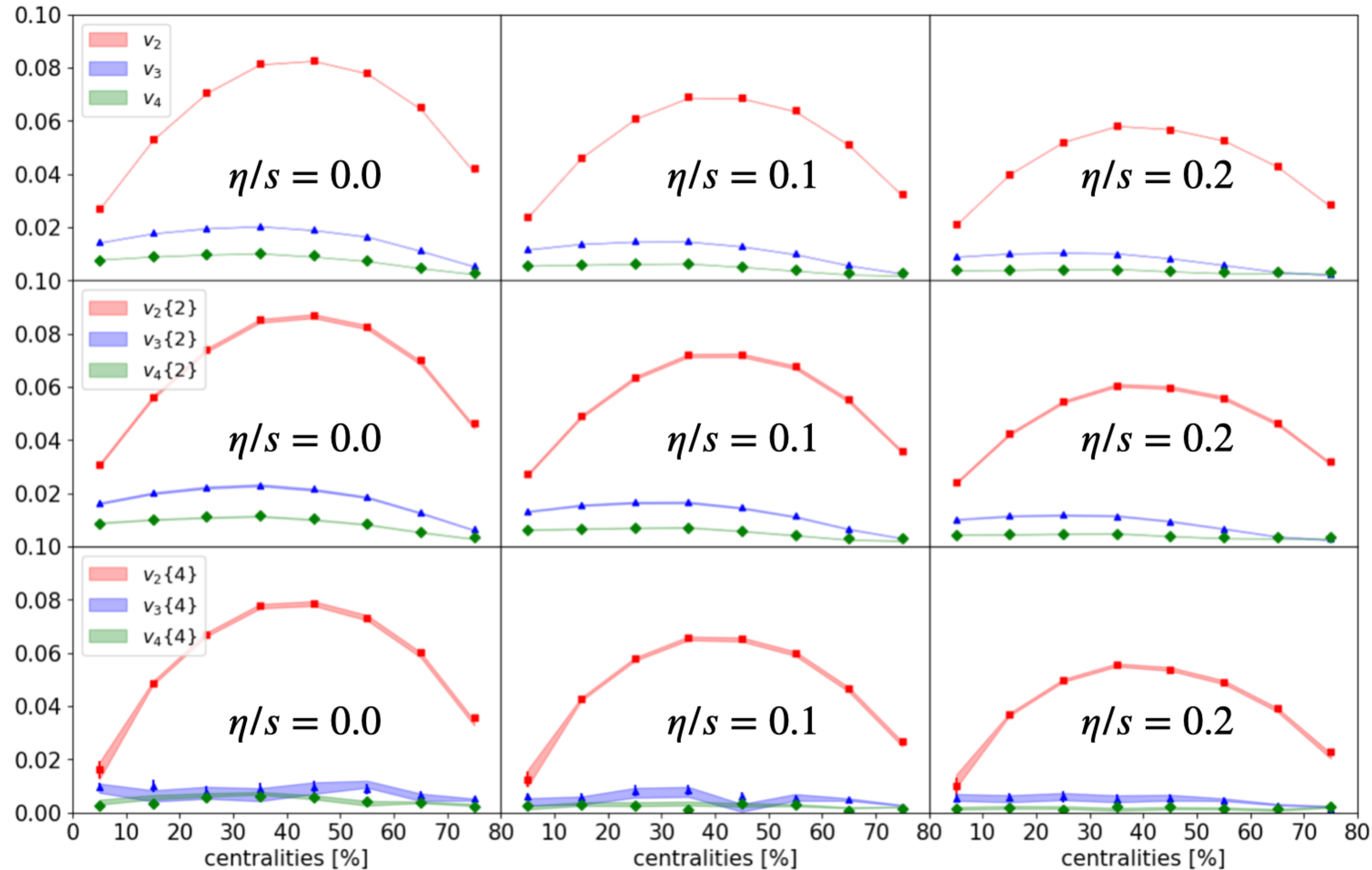
Kinetic cut:  
 $0 < p_T < 2 \text{ GeV}$ ,  
 $|y| < 0.5$

- We take three different shear viscosity  $\eta/s = 0, 0.1, 0.2$
- **For each  $\eta/s$ , we prepare 12,000 mini-bias events** for training.

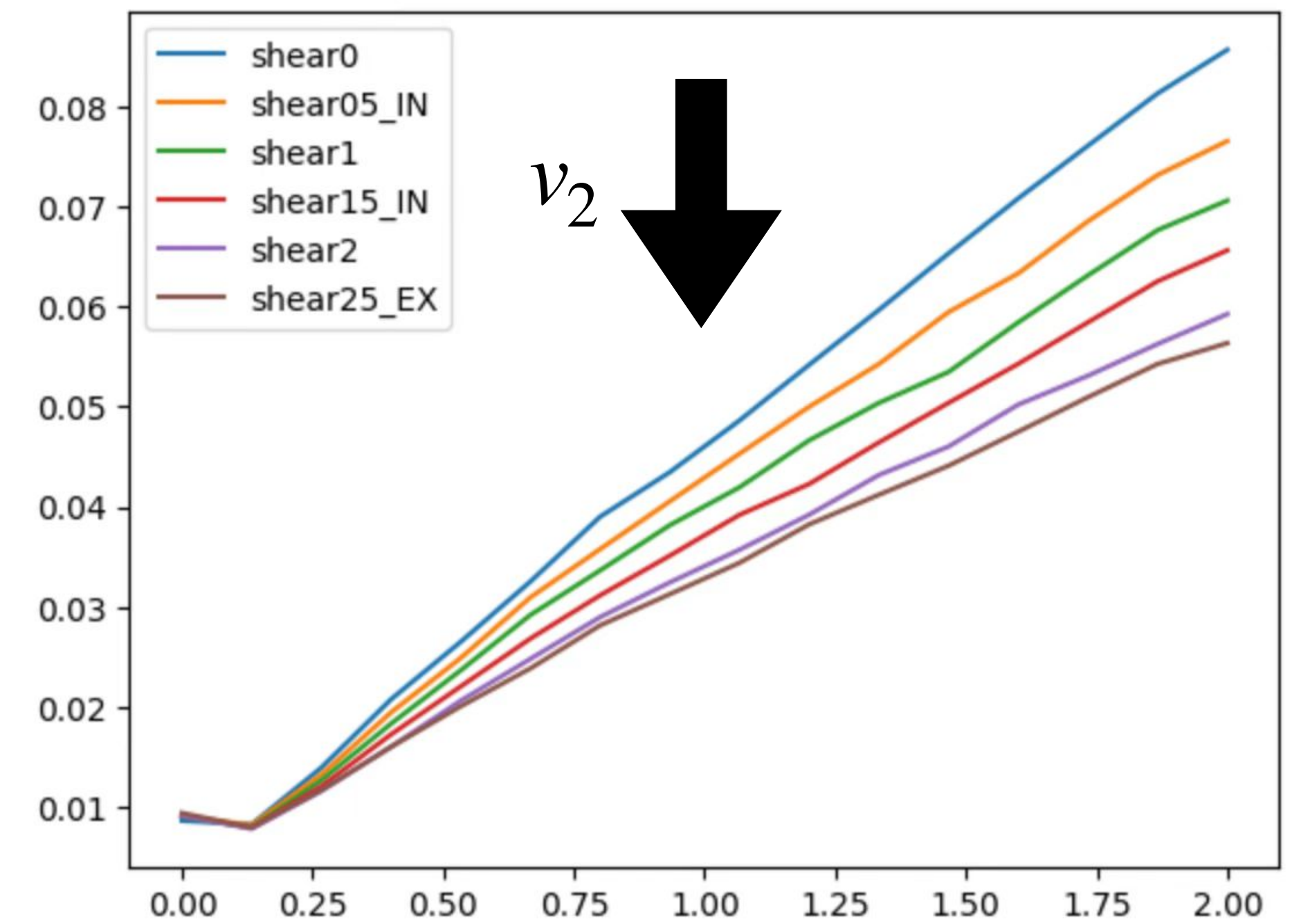
For test, we run **extra 10,000 events for each  $\eta/s$  at each centrality.**



# The integrated flow and cumulants



Symbols: Hydro  
Bands: Generative AI



Excellent performance for collective flow!

Physical expectation

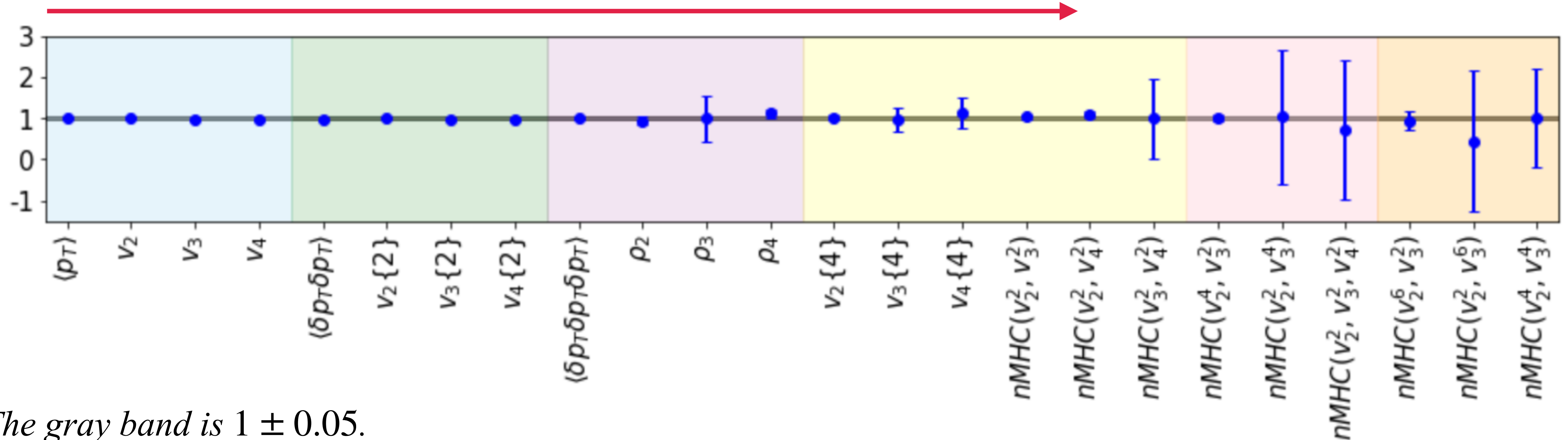


# The comprehensive comparison

## Generative

### Hydro

The increased number of particles involved (from 1 to 8)



The gray band is  $1 \pm 0.05$ .

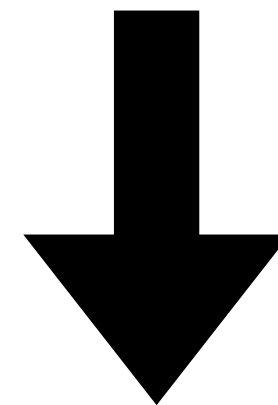
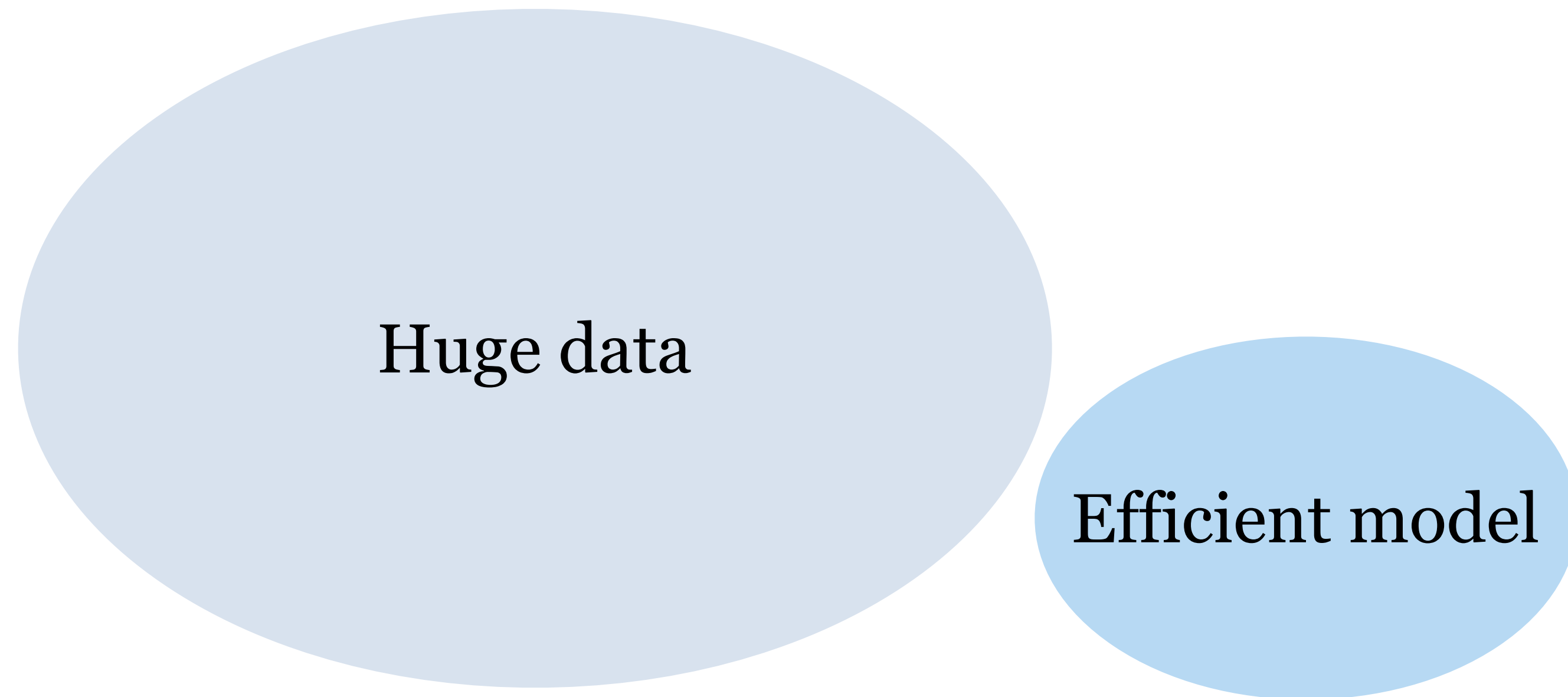
- These ratios are close to unity, indicating the validity of diffusion model.
- From left to right, model precision decreases systematically as the number of correlated particles increases.



# What if parameters are ‘out-of-distribution’?

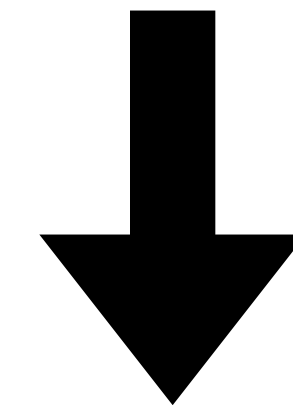
---

Xianping Zhong Talk at 10.31



ChatGPT moment for heavy-ion collisions

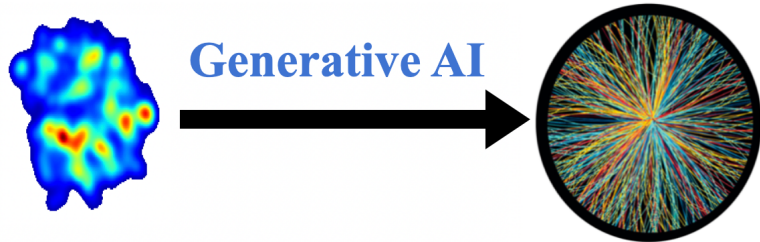
Not easy.



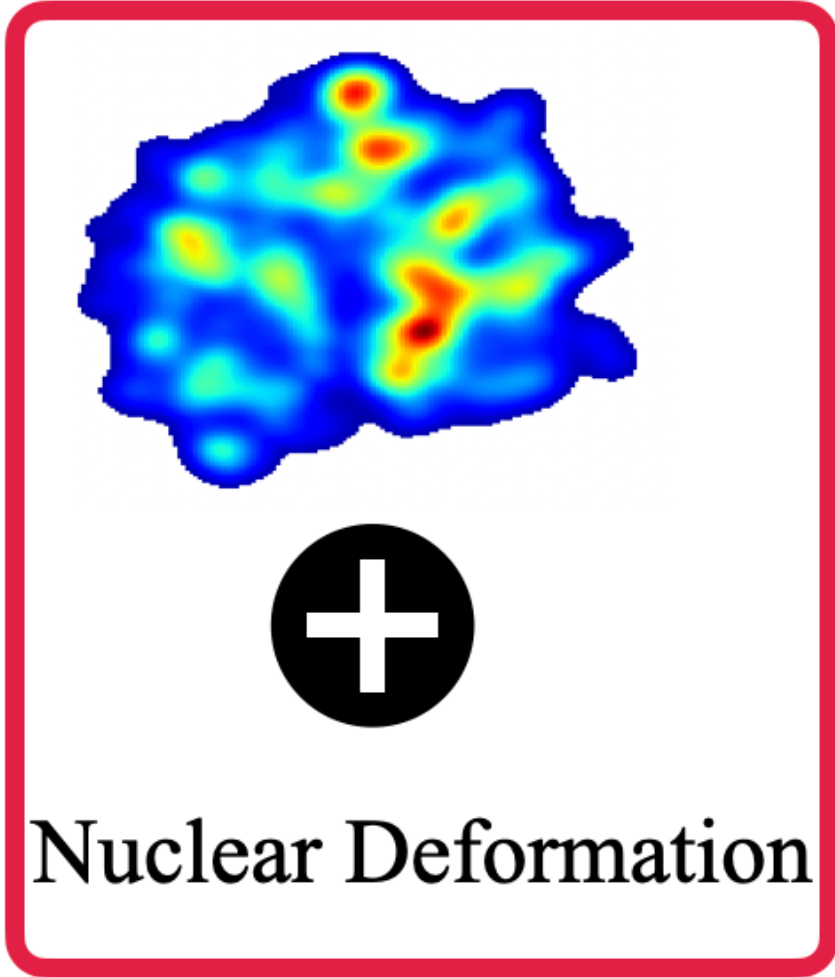
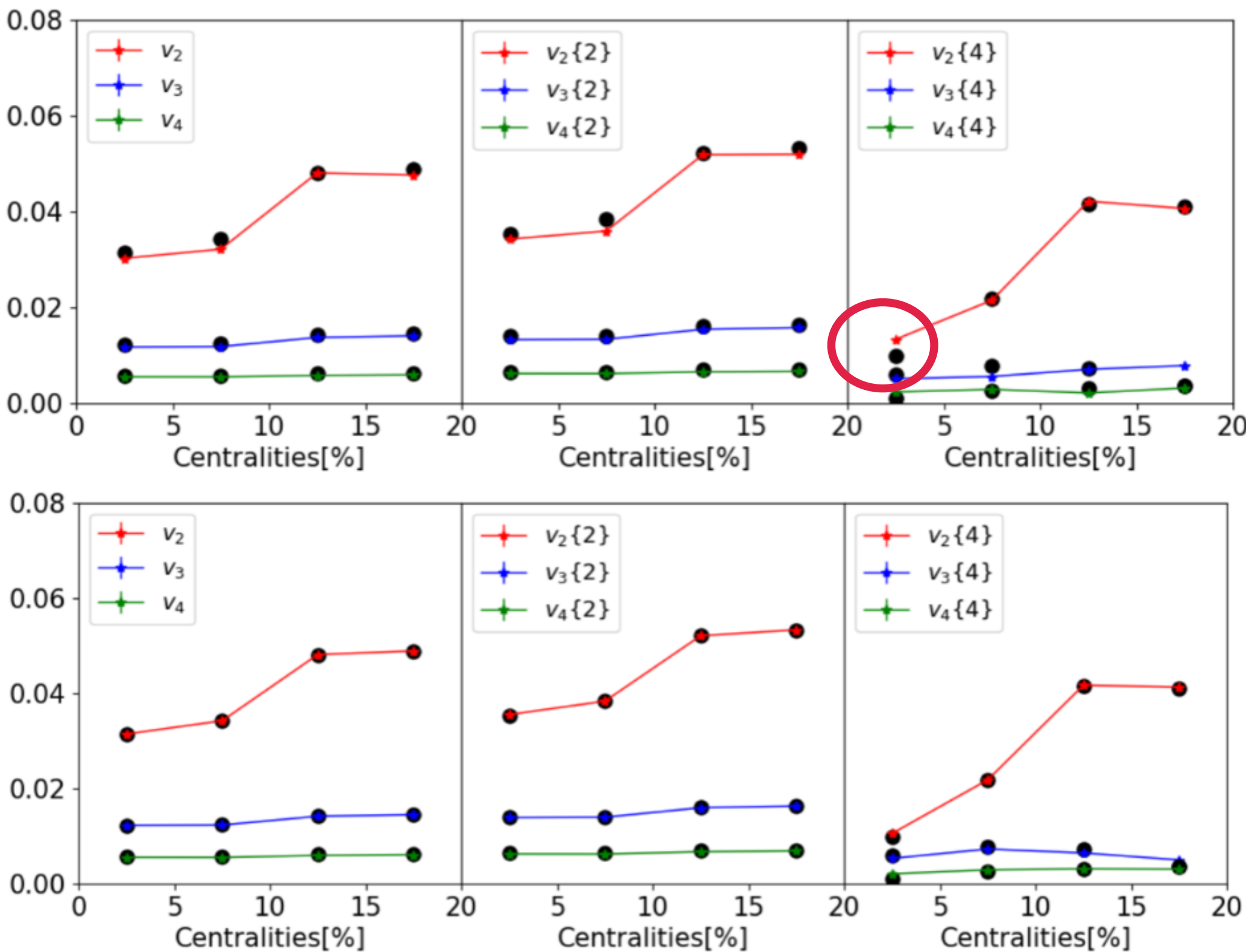
Pretrain-Finetune

More practical.

# Extension parameter set with fine-tuning



The nuclear deformation can be captured in Generative-AI.



Generative AI



STAR Nature 635 (2024) 8037, 67-72

Symbols: Hydro  
Lines: Generative AI

- The first row shows the results form pre-trained model
- The second row shows the results from fine-tuned model with new **500** events.



# Scale the model to more parameters and systems

Parameters:

AuAu@200GeV

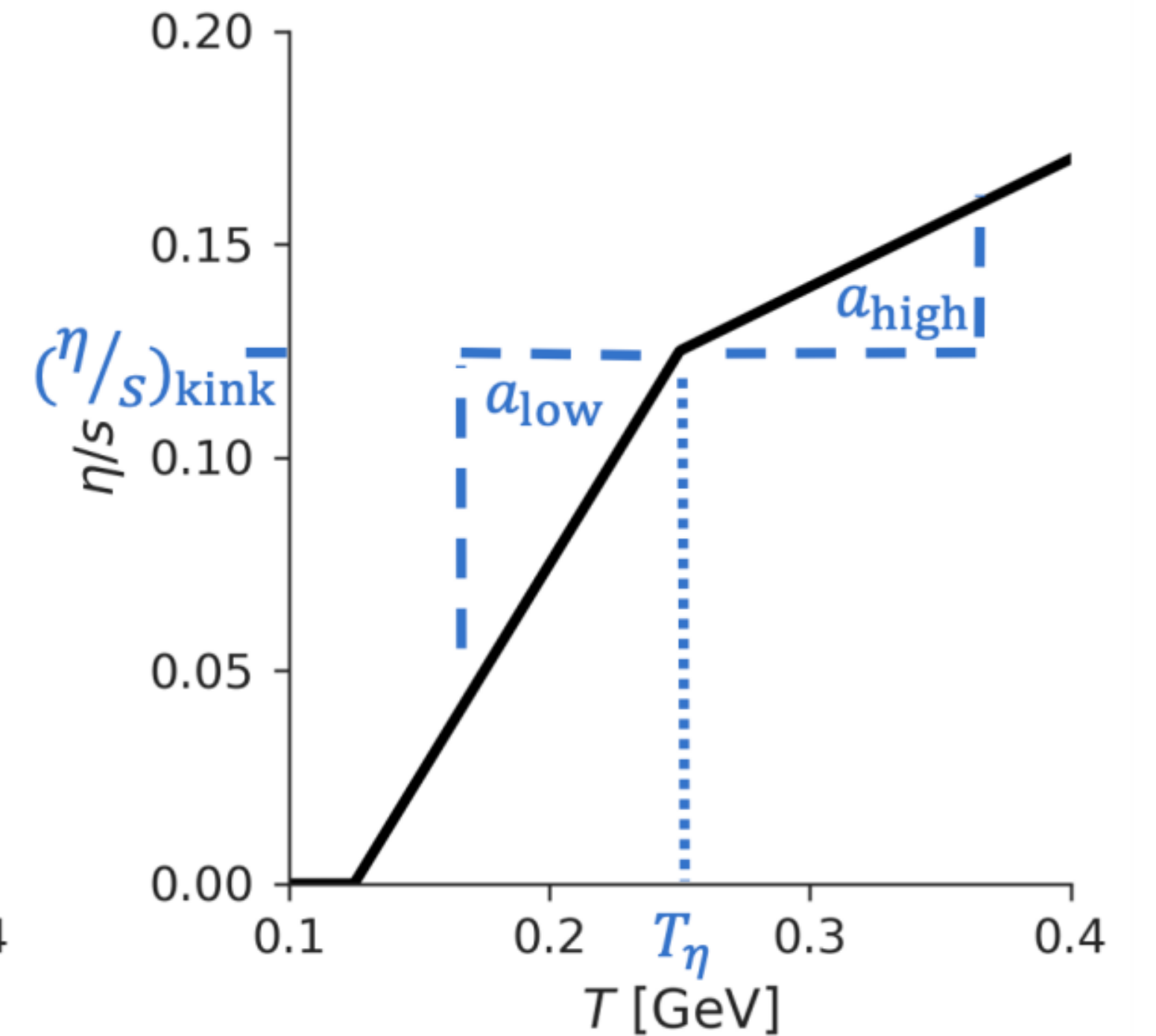
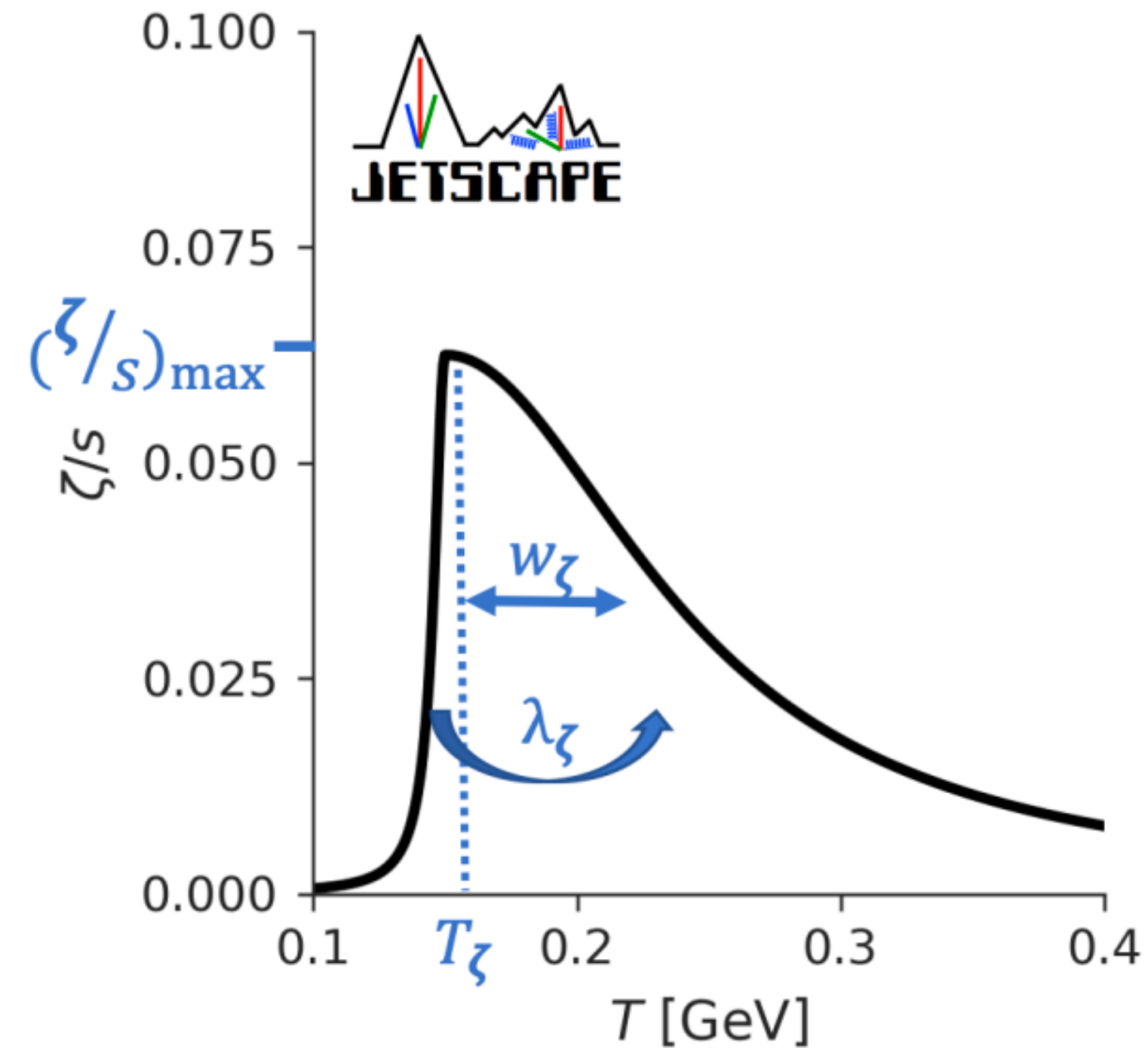
$\alpha$ : 0.45,0.50,0.55

$\beta_2$ :0.12,0.14,0.16

PbPb@2760GeV

$\alpha$ : 0.45,0.50,0.55

$\beta_2$ :0.00,0.05,0.10



Totally 100,000 events

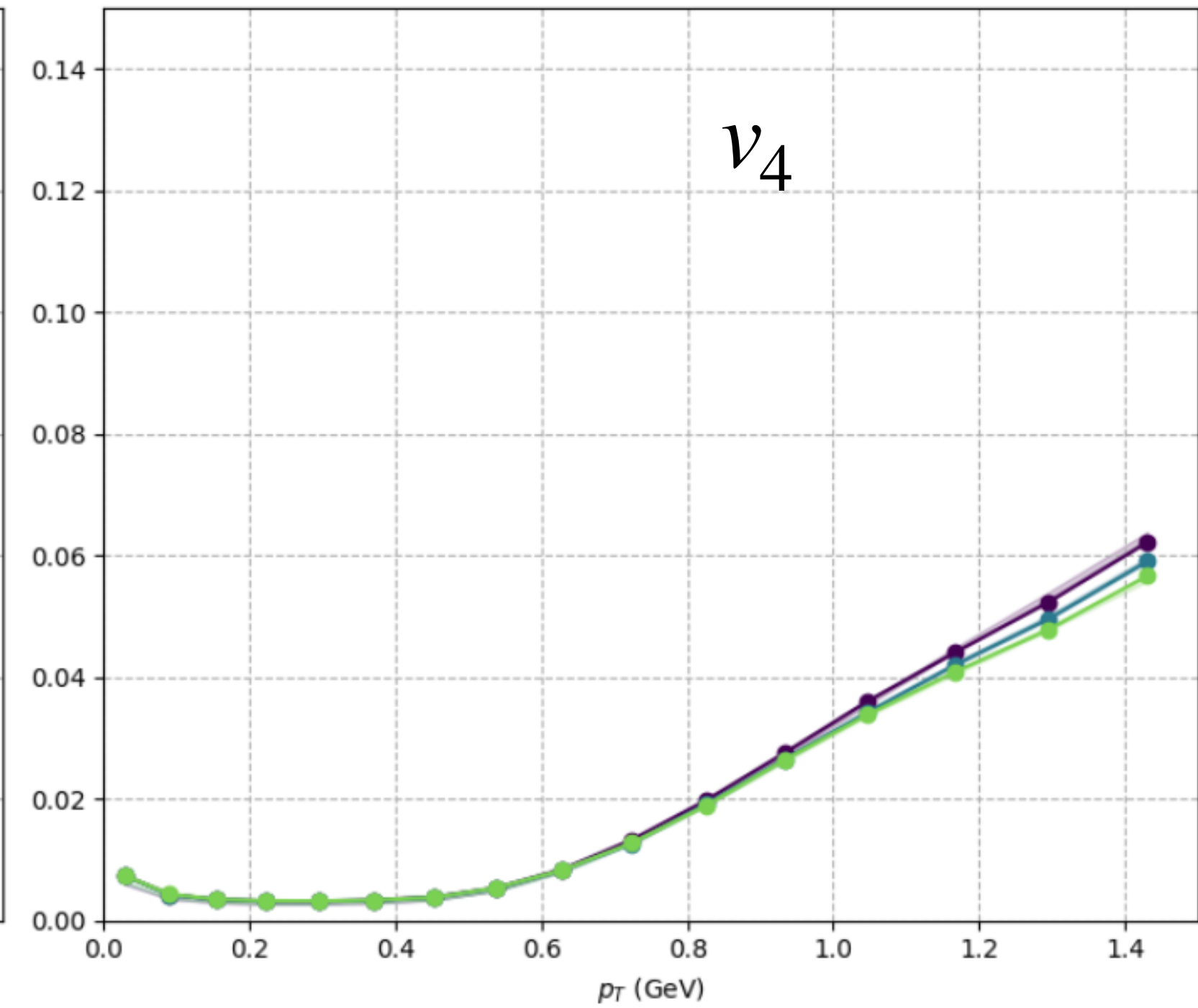
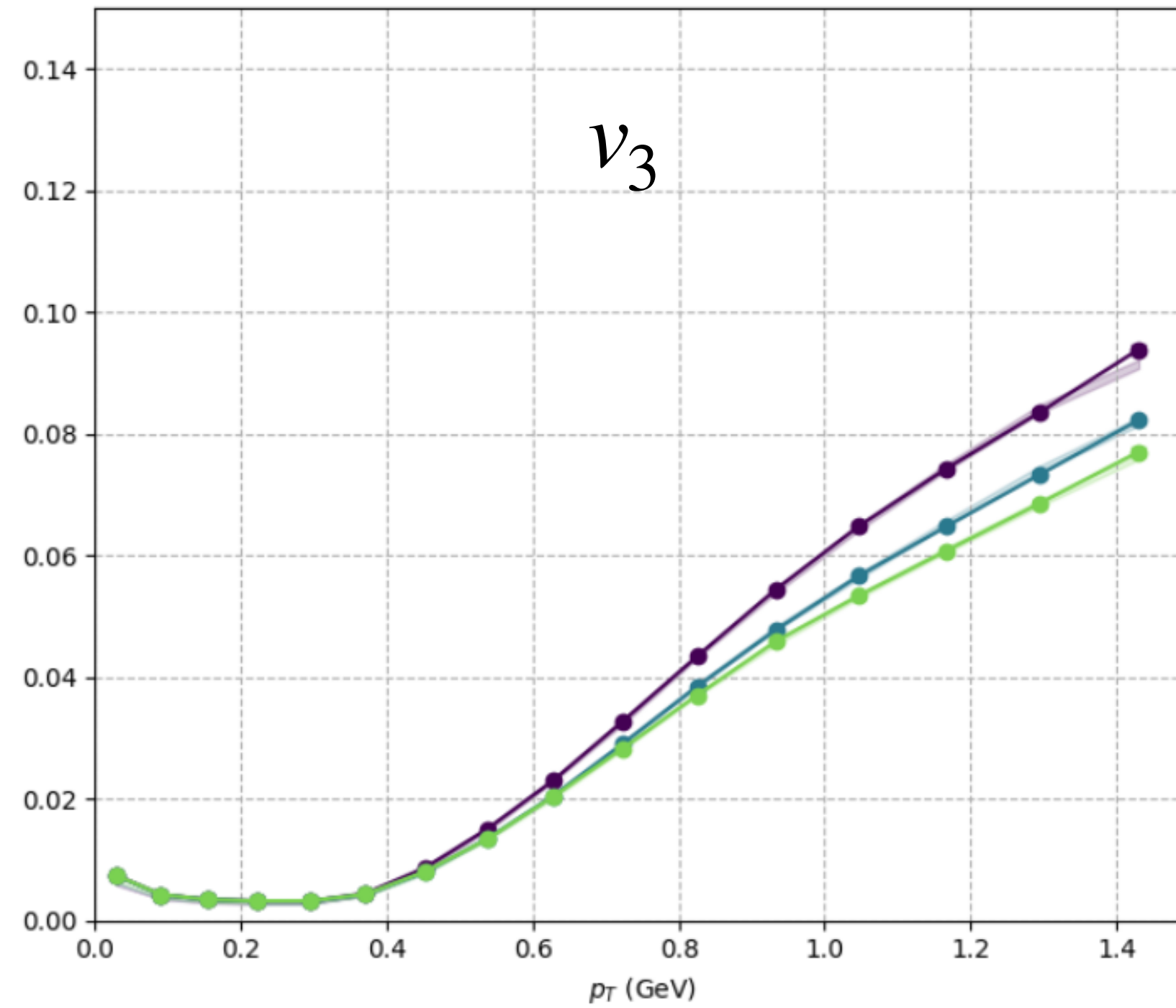
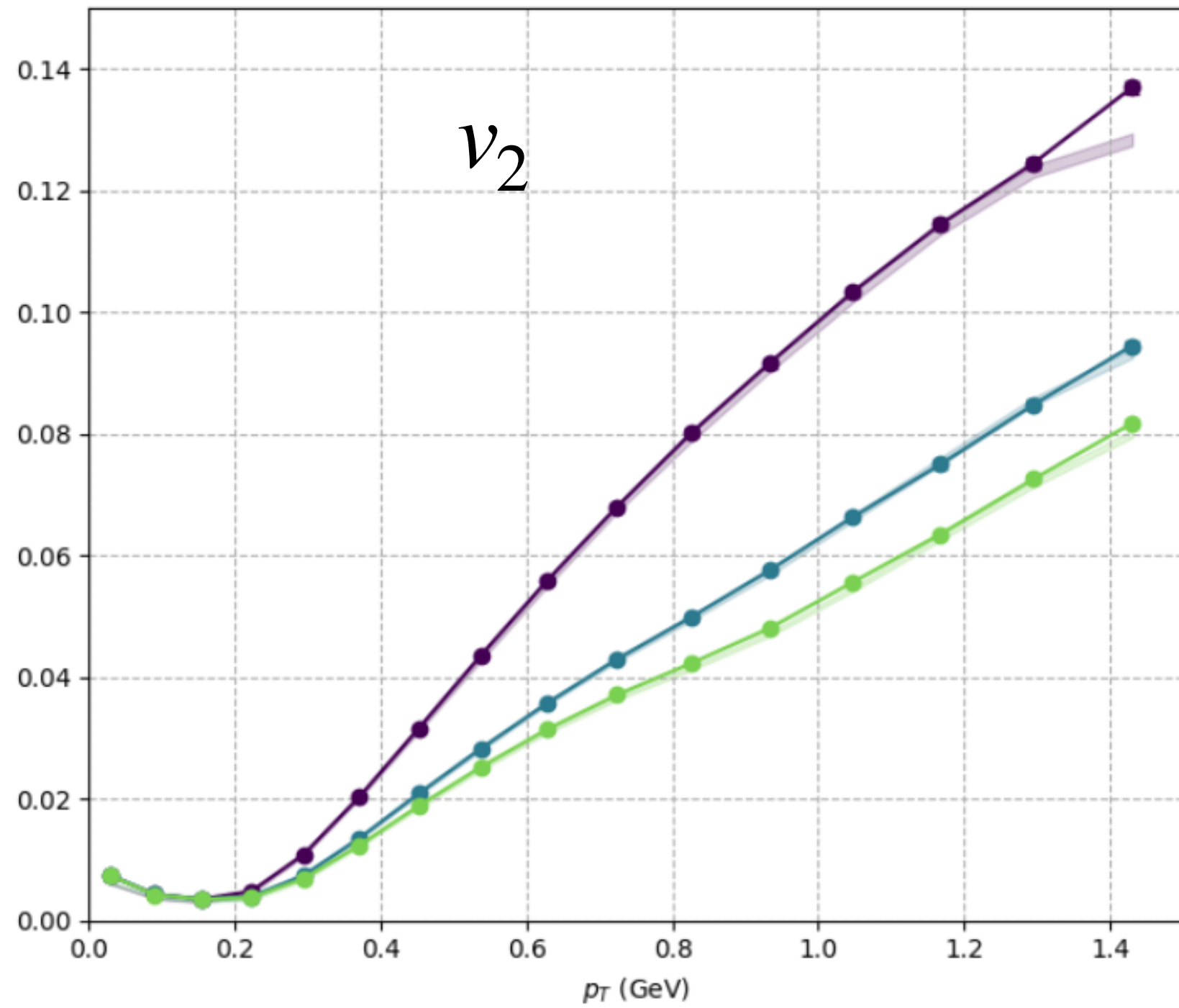
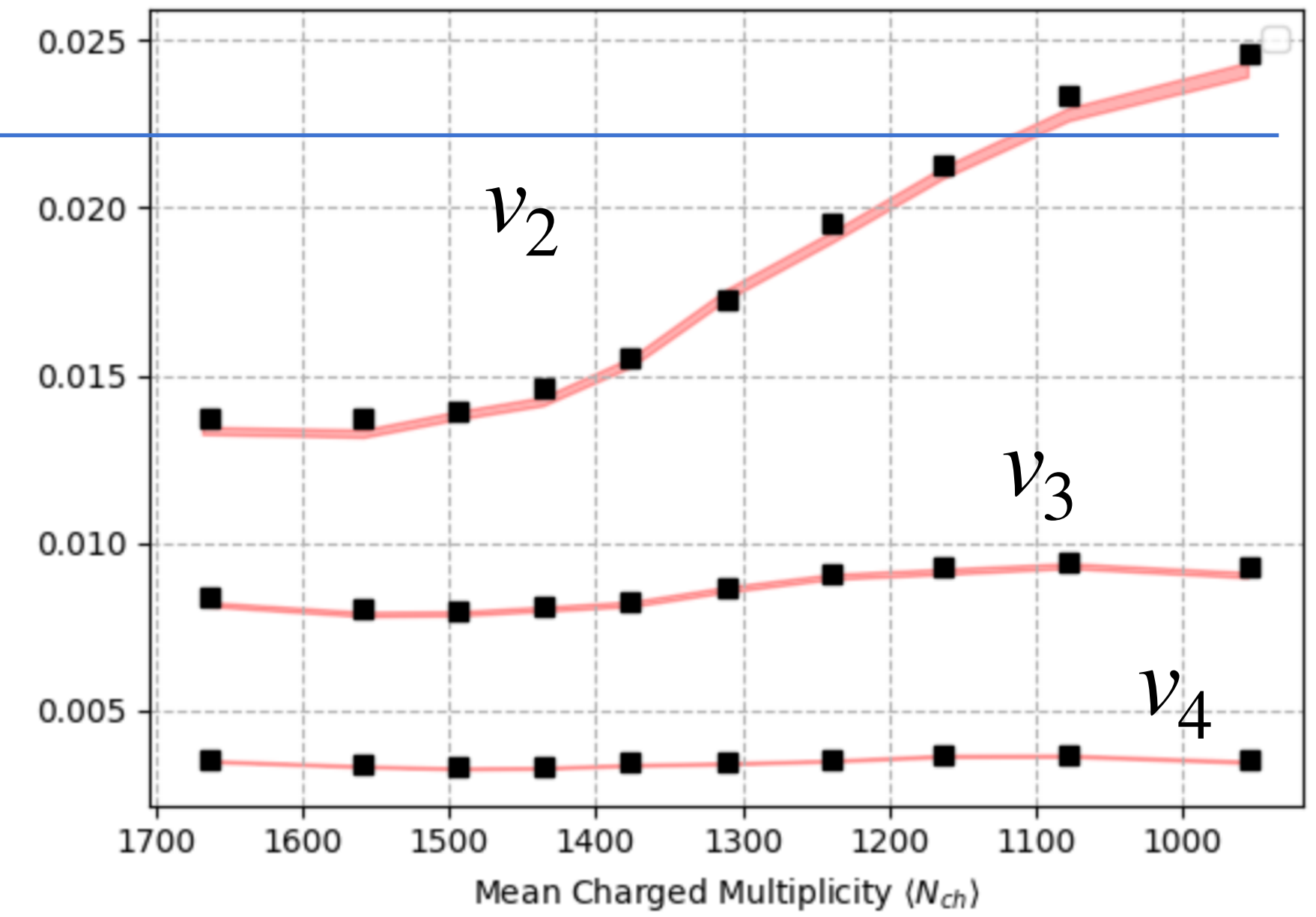
$$(\zeta/s)_{\max}, (\eta/s)_{\text{kink}} = [0.01, 0.05, 0.1, 0.15]$$

# Comparison results

PbPb@2760GeV

$$\alpha = 0.546, \beta_2 = 0.075$$

$$(\eta/s)_{kink} = 0.096, (\zeta/s)_{max} = 0.133$$



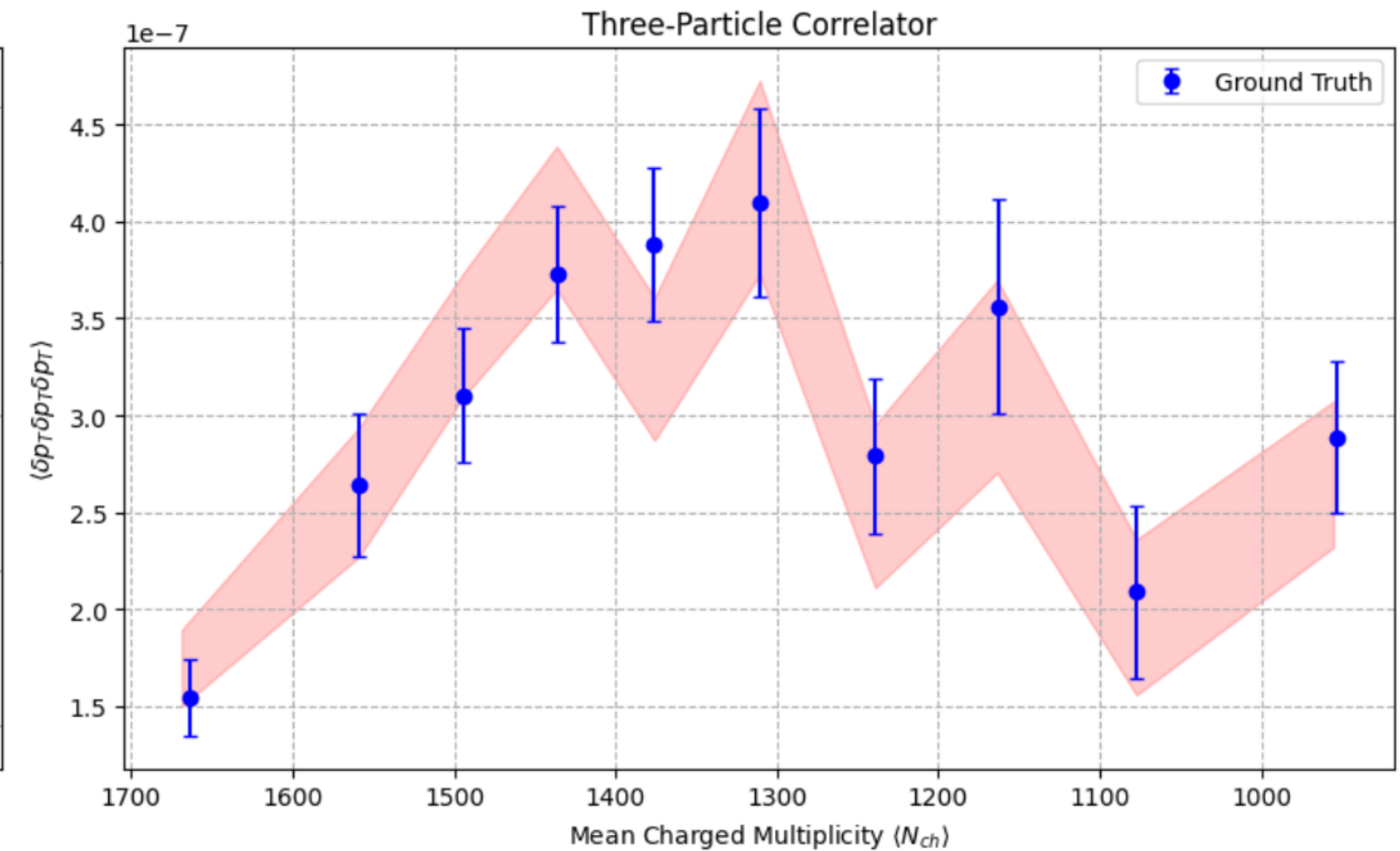
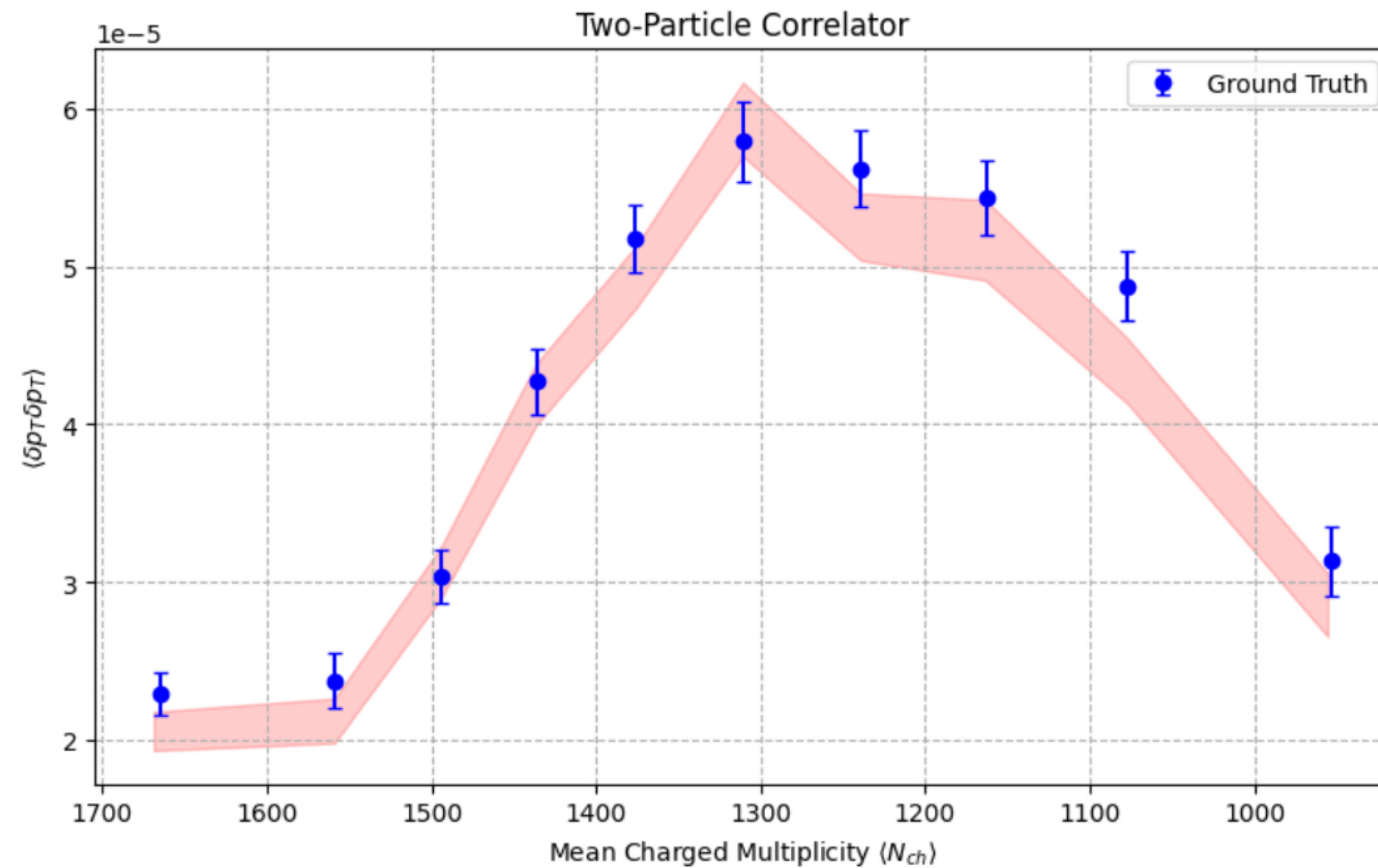
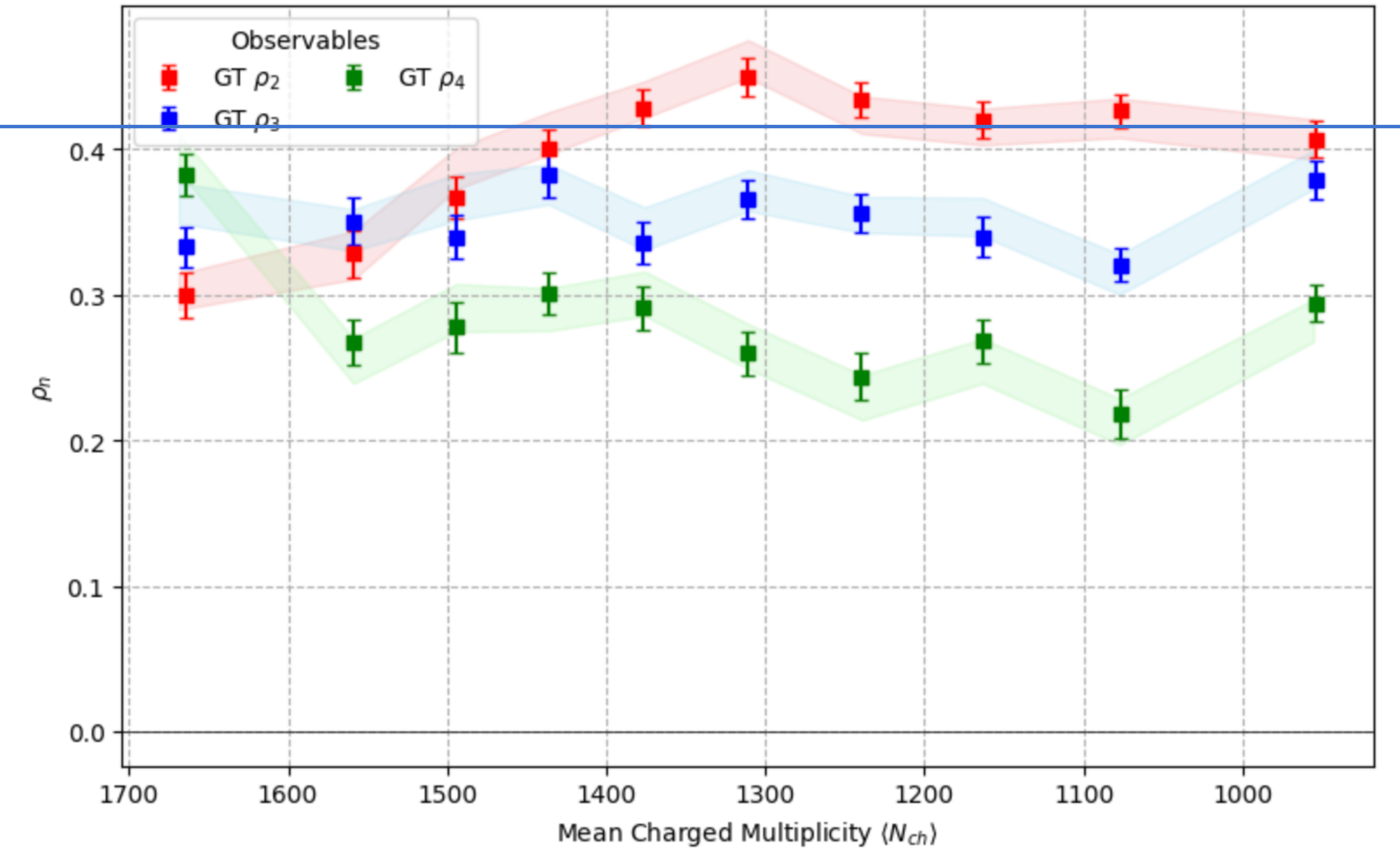


# Comparison results

$$\rho_n = \frac{\langle v_n^2 \{2\} \langle p_T \rangle \rangle - \langle v_n^2 \{2\} \rangle \langle \langle p_T \rangle \rangle}{\sigma_{v_n^2 \{2\}} \sigma_{\langle p_T \rangle}}$$

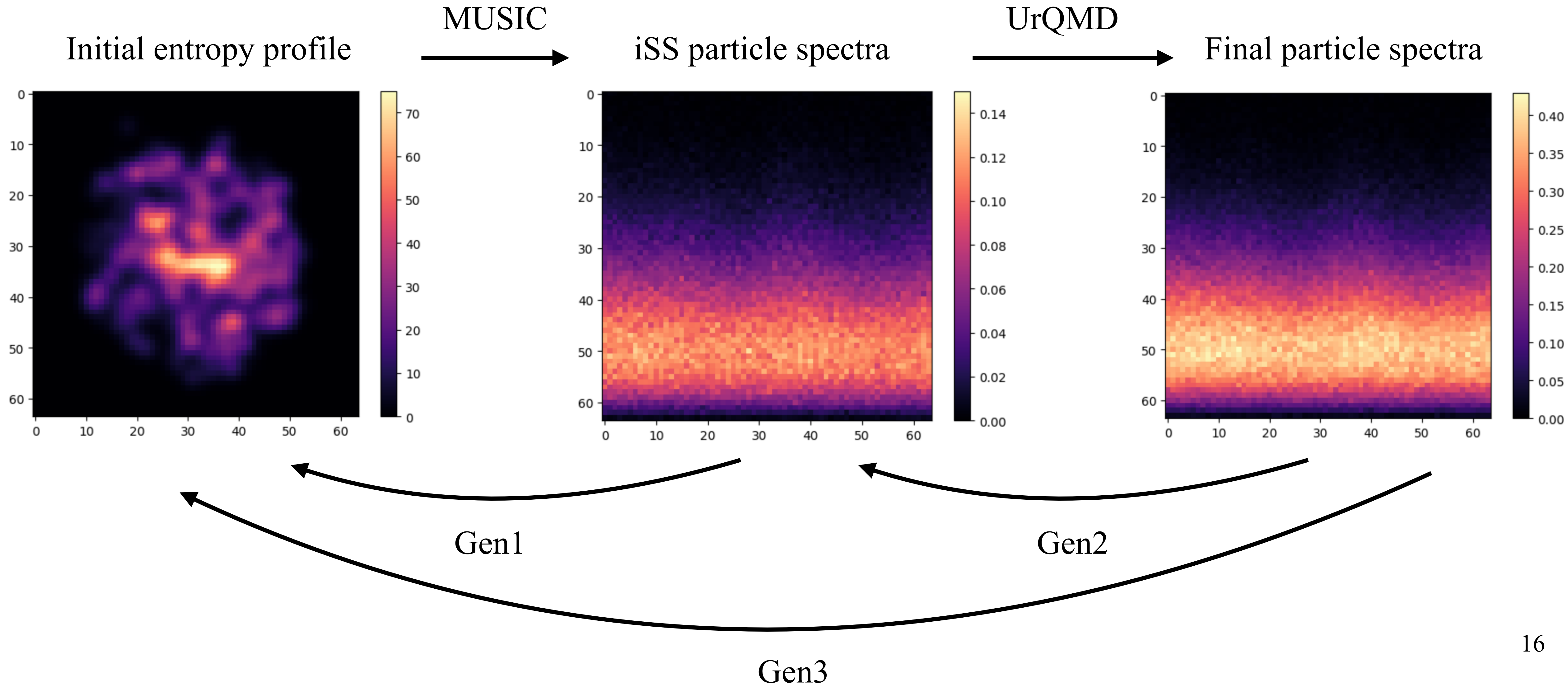
$$\langle \delta p_T \delta p_T \rangle = \left\langle \frac{\sum_{i \neq j} (p_i - \langle \langle p_T \rangle \rangle) (p_j - \langle \langle p_T \rangle \rangle)}{N_{ch}(N_{ch} - 1)} \right\rangle_{ev}$$

$$\langle \delta p_T \delta p_T \delta p_T \rangle = \left\langle \frac{\sum_{i \neq j \neq k} (p_i - \langle \langle p_T \rangle \rangle) (p_j - \langle \langle p_T \rangle \rangle) (p_k - \langle \langle p_T \rangle \rangle)}{N_{ch}(N_{ch} - 1)(N_{ch} - 2)} \right\rangle_{ev}.$$



# Inverse problem

Inverse: physical entropy decrease and information entropy increase.

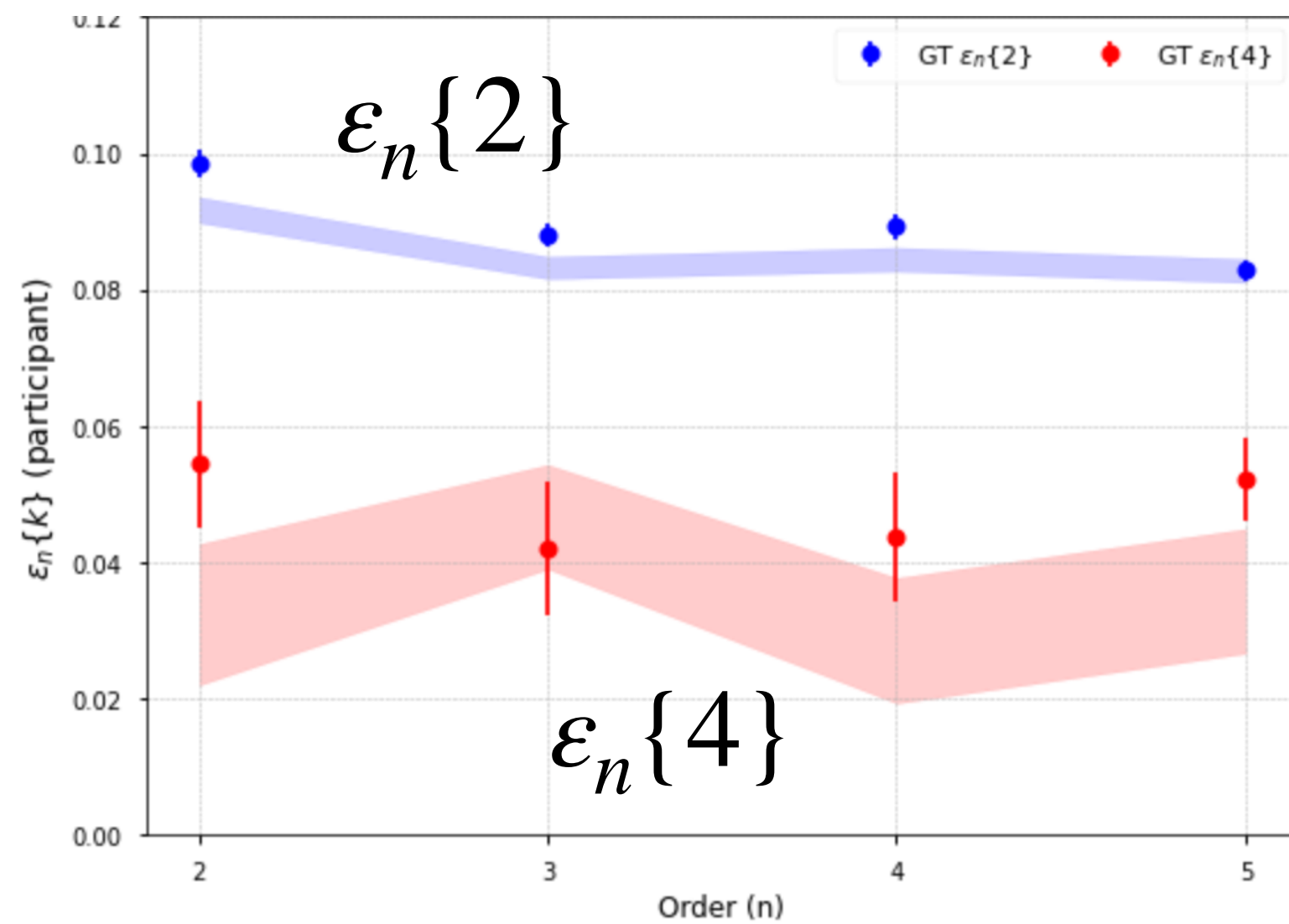




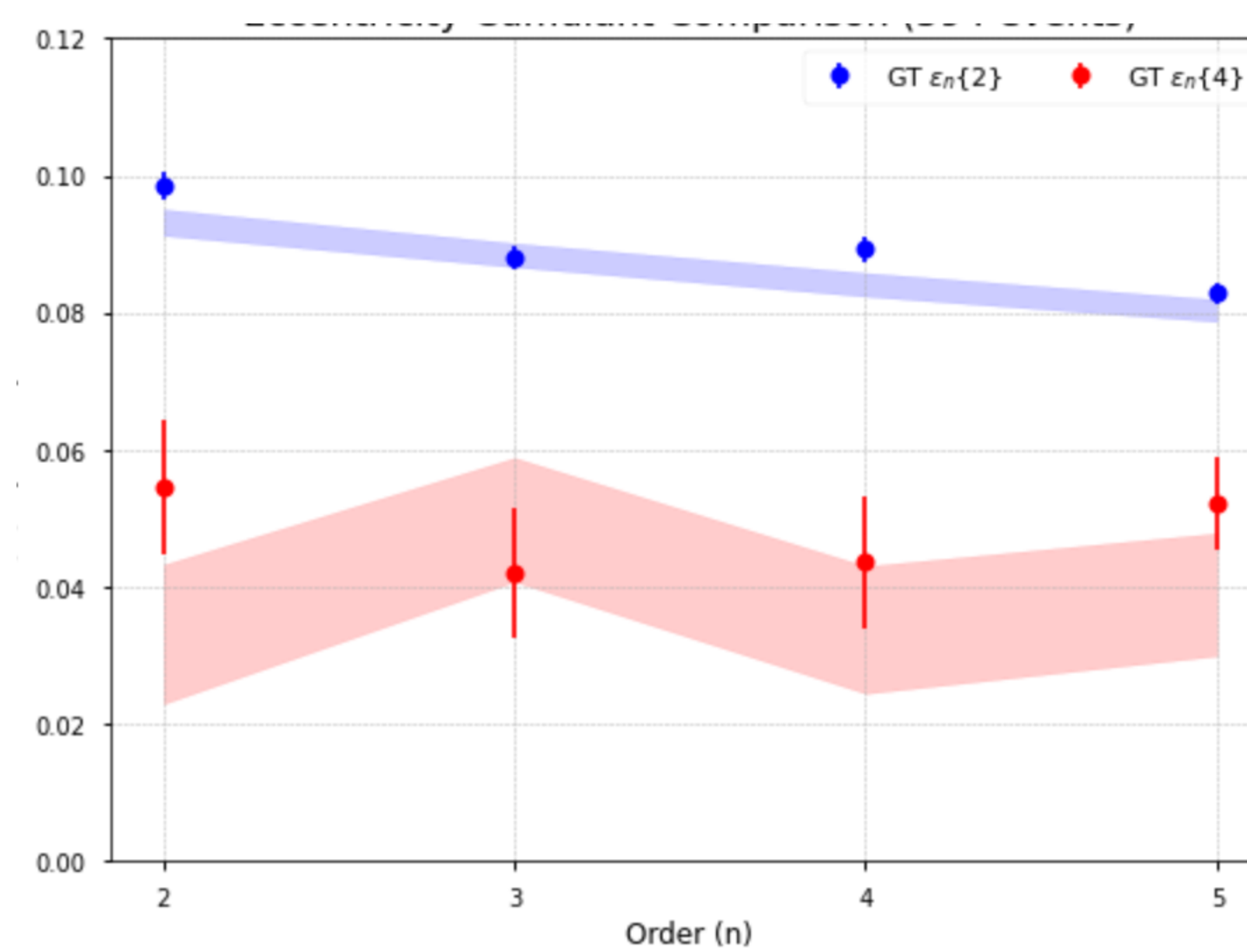
# Eccentricity comparison

- $\sim 5\%$  error
- Gen1: Reverse the **hydro part**. Best performance
- Gen2+Gen1: Reverse the UrQMD and hydro parts in a **cascade** way.
- Gen3: Reverse the (**UrQMD + hydro**) directly. Worst performance.

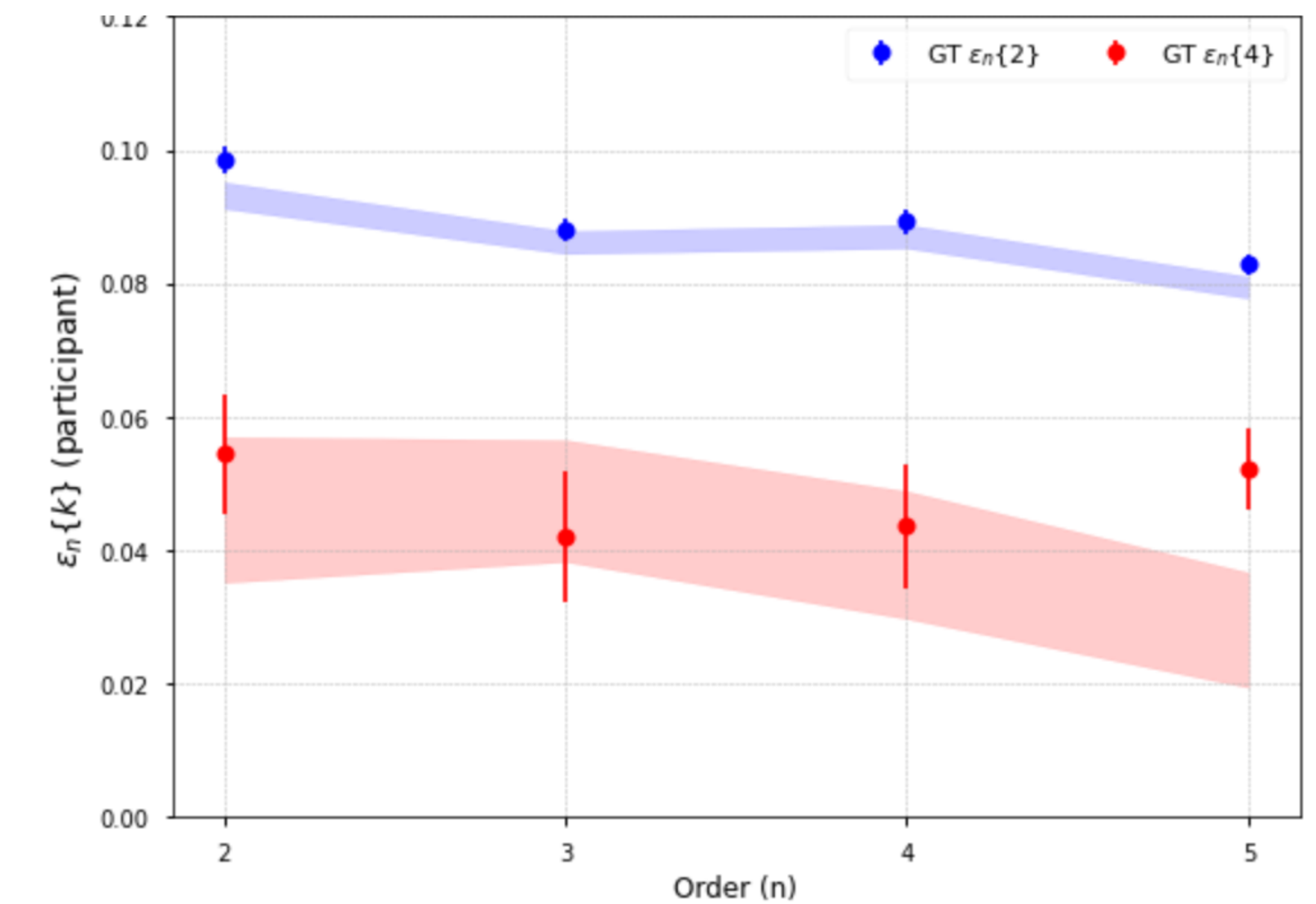
Gen3



Gen2+Gen1

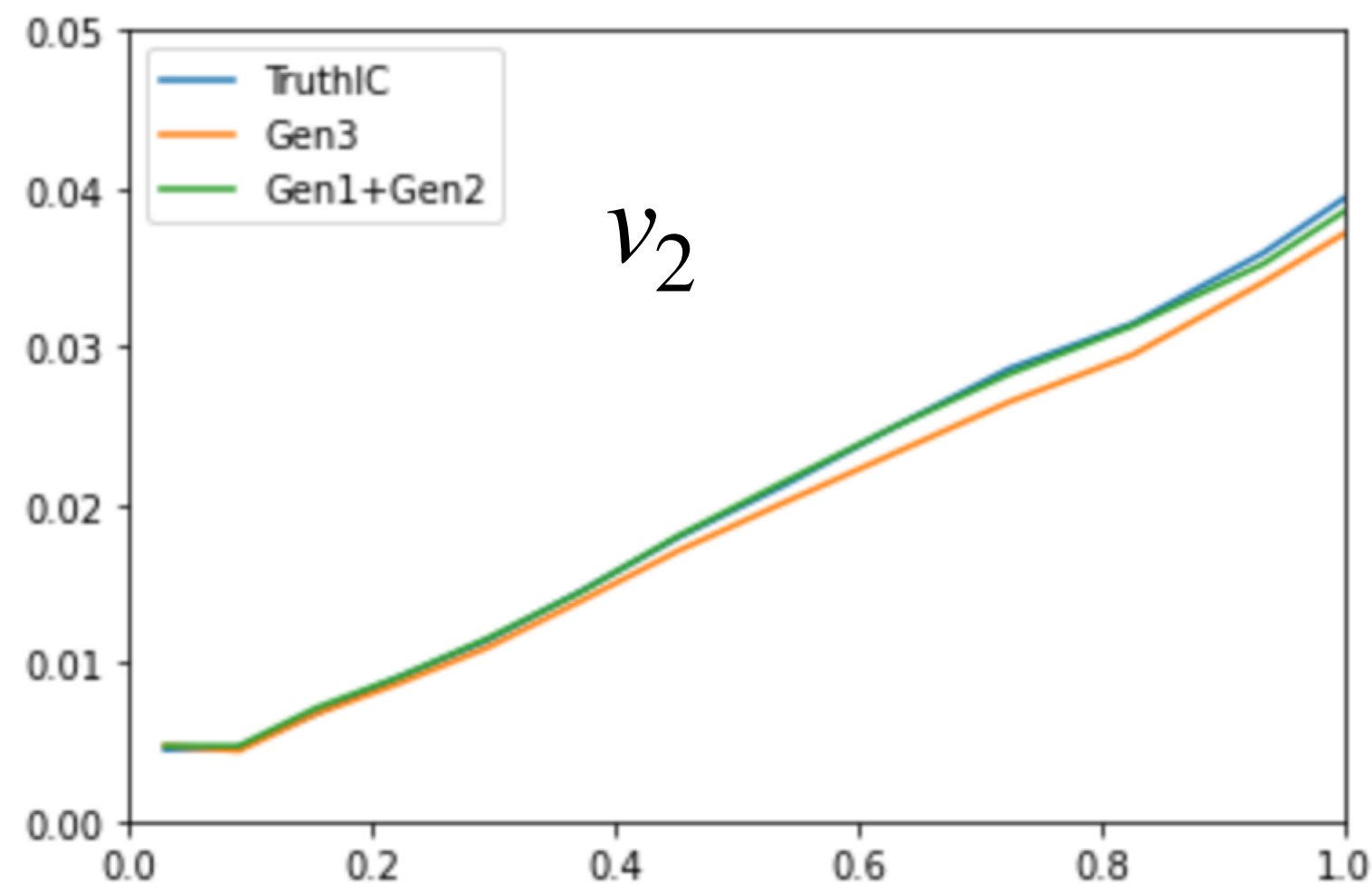


Gen1

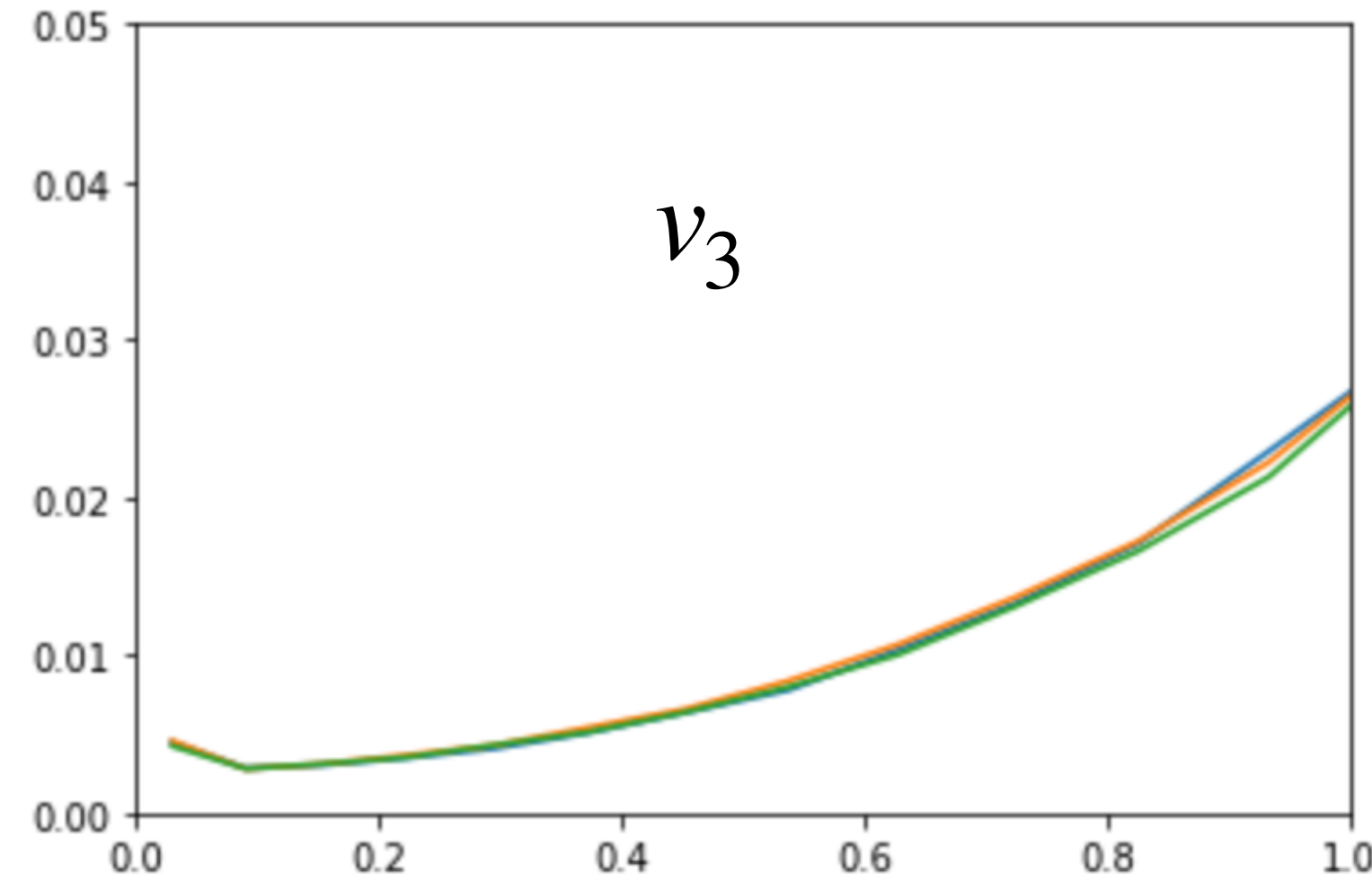


# Feed the generated initial profile to the emulator

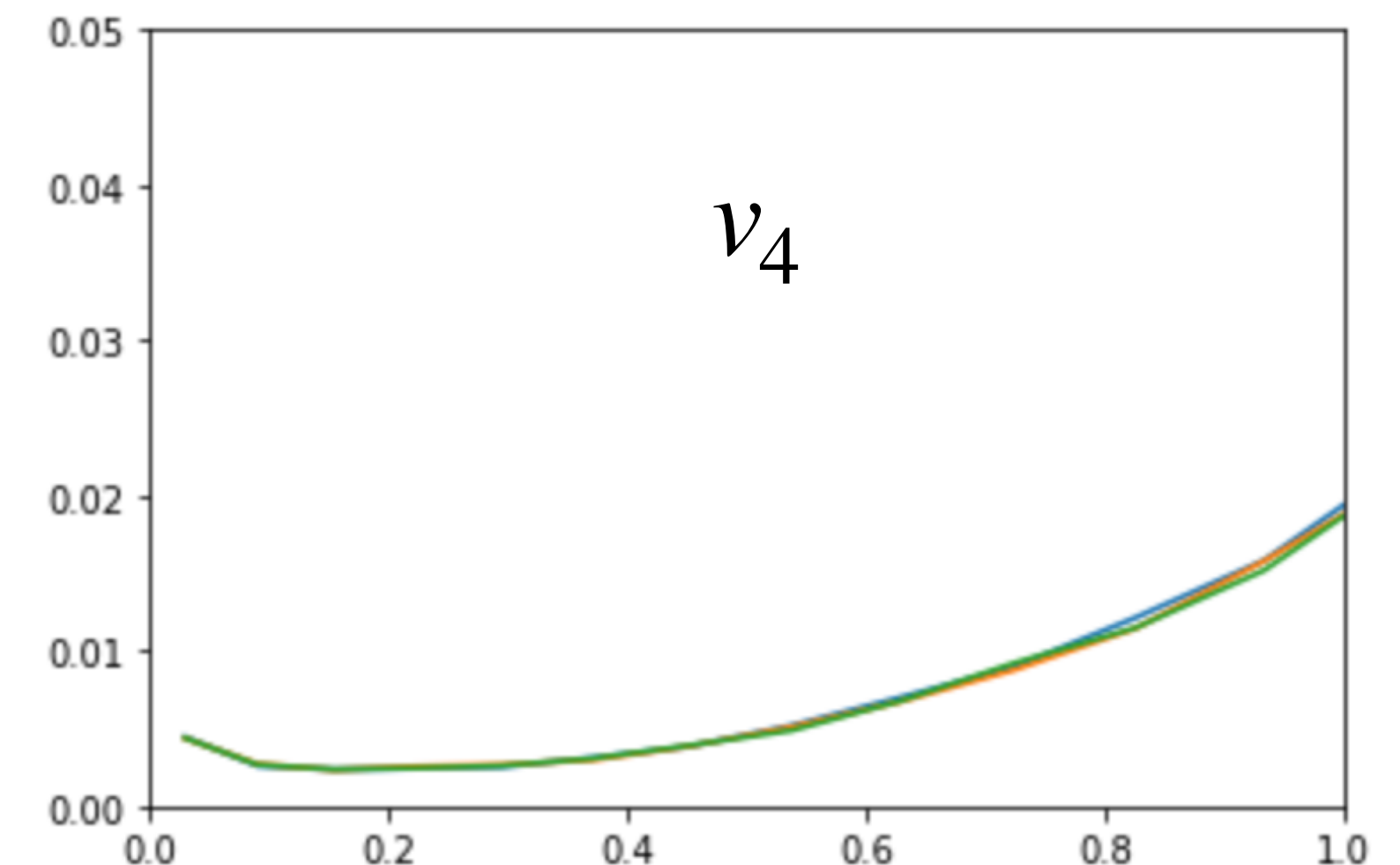
No strong difference.



$p_T$  (GeV)



$p_T$  (GeV)



$p_T$  (GeV)

Forward process: physical entropy increase and information entropy decrease.



# Summary and outlook

- End-to-end generation
- $\sim 10^5 \times$  speedup
- 2D particle spectra are well captured

- Scale or Finetune towards ‘out-of-distributions’
- Towards to **3D** hydrodynamic simulation and **particle cloud generation**.



- Inverse problems: if machine can learn a physically forbidden reverse dynamic process?

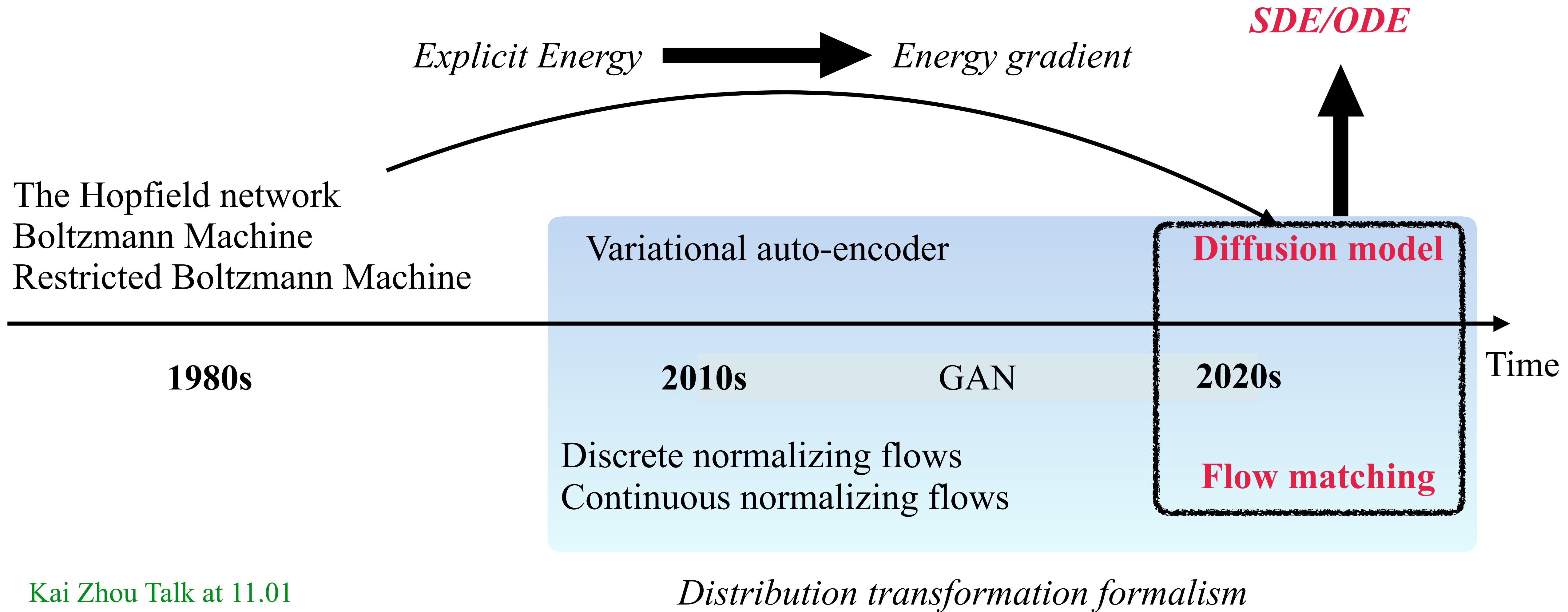
- Training optimization: embed the physical dynamics...
- Do diffusion in the latent space

.....

*Thanks for your attention.*



# The generative models map

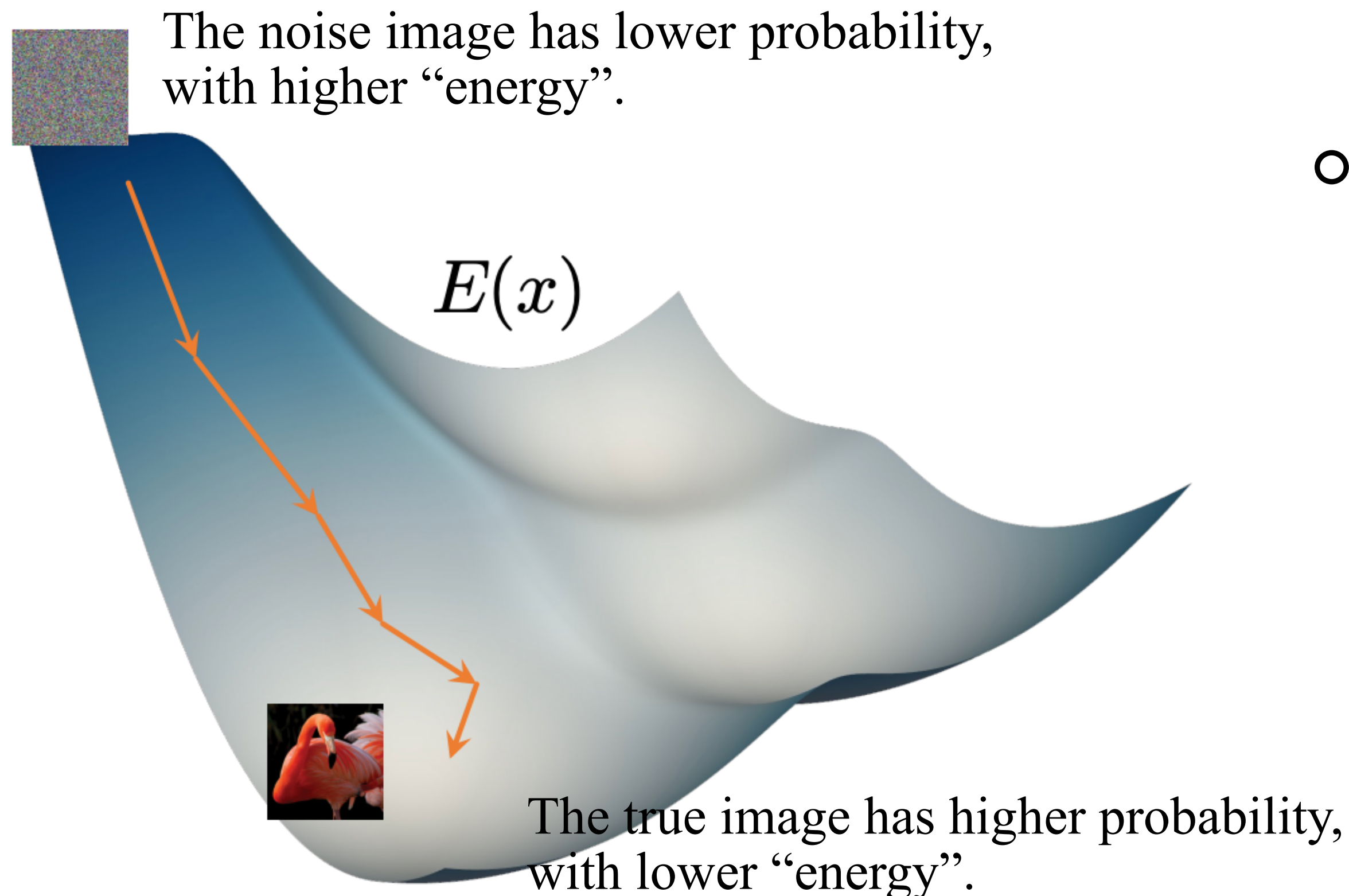


# Model data distribution using energy function

- Energy-based model training and inference involves **the large numbers of sampling** to estimate the averaged value.
- Not to learn the energy function but learn the gradient of the energy function, i.e., **gradient of log-likelihood or score function**

$$p_{\text{data}}(x) = \frac{\exp(-E(x))}{Z}$$

$$\nabla_x \log p(x) = \nabla_x \log \frac{\exp(-E(x))}{Z} = -\nabla_x E(x)$$



- With the score function, one can perform sampling via **Langevin dynamics**

$$d\mathbf{x} = -\nabla_x E(\mathbf{x})dt + \sqrt{2}dW$$

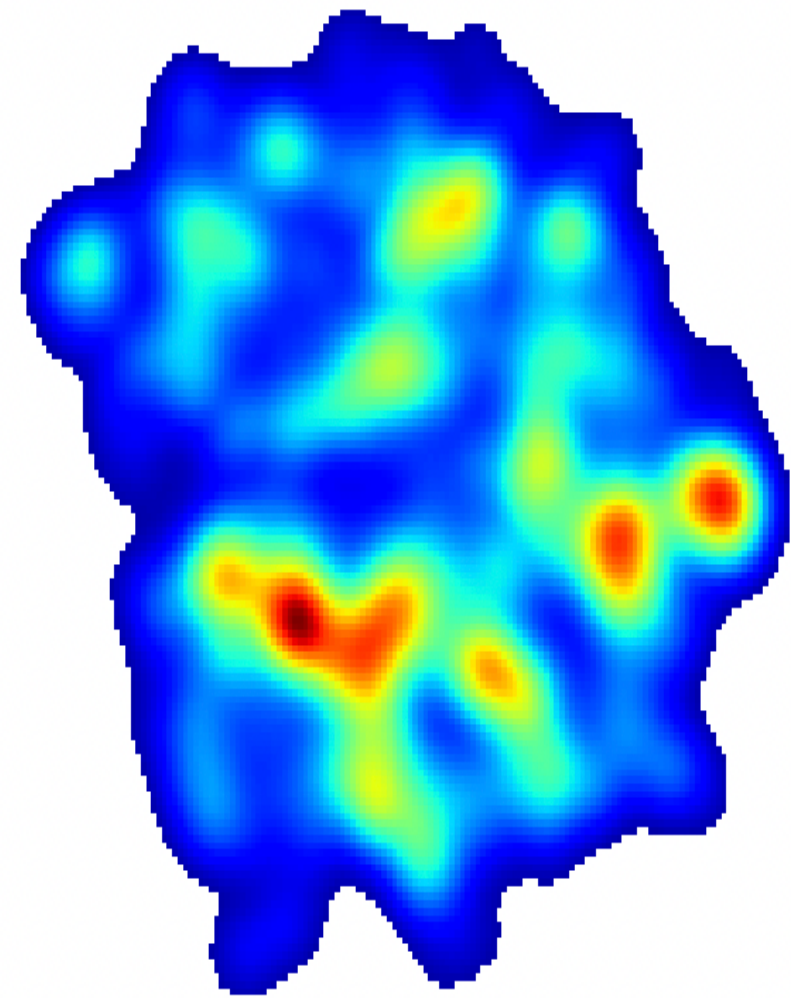
$$\mathbf{x}_i = \mathbf{x}_{i-1} + \Delta t \nabla \log p(\mathbf{x}) + \sqrt{2\Delta t}\epsilon$$



# How can machine learning help us?

- **Goal:**
  - End-to-end (initial state to final state)
  - Fast and flexible
  - Keeping physical consistency.
- **The challenges in deterministic machine learning**

*Learn the hard map from  $x$  to  $y$*



**deterministic machine learning**

- sUnet: Solves hydrodynamic equations but **accumulates errors** in long-time evolution.
- Gaussian emulator in Bayesian analysis: Maps parameters to observables (digital to digital fit) but **lacks flexibility**.



H.F Huang et.al Phys.Rev.Res. 3 (2021) 2, 023256

J.E Bernhard et.al Nature Phys. 15 (2019) 11, 1113-1117

# Score matching

- Explicit score matching

*Intractable*

$$\mathcal{L}_t^{\text{ESM}} \equiv \mathbb{E}_{p(\mathbf{x}_t)} ||\mathbf{s}_\theta(\mathbf{x}, t) - \boxed{\nabla_{\mathbf{x}} \log p_t(\mathbf{x})}||^2$$

- Denoising score matching

$$\mathcal{L}_t^{\text{DSM}} \equiv \mathbb{E}_{p(\mathbf{x}_t, \mathbf{x}_0)} ||\mathbf{s}_\theta(\mathbf{x}, t) - \nabla_{\mathbf{x}} \log p(\mathbf{x}_t | \mathbf{x}_0)||^2$$

$$\boldsymbol{\theta}^* = \operatorname{argmin}_{\boldsymbol{\theta}} \mathcal{L}_t^{\text{DSM}} = \operatorname{argmin}_{\boldsymbol{\theta}} \mathcal{L}_t^{\text{ESM}}$$

*The equivalence is promised by:*  $p_t(\mathbf{x}) = \int d\mathbf{x}_0 p(\mathbf{x} | \mathbf{x}_0)$

- From the forward SDE,  $p_t(\mathbf{x}_t | \mathbf{x}_0)$  (the noised data  $\mathbf{x}_t$  conditioned on clean data  $\mathbf{x}_0$ ) follows the gaussian distribution.



# Model data distribution using energy function

The noise image has lower probability, with higher “energy”.

$$E(\mathbf{x}) = - \sum_i a_i x_i - \sum_{ij} \frac{J_{ij}}{2} x_i x_j$$

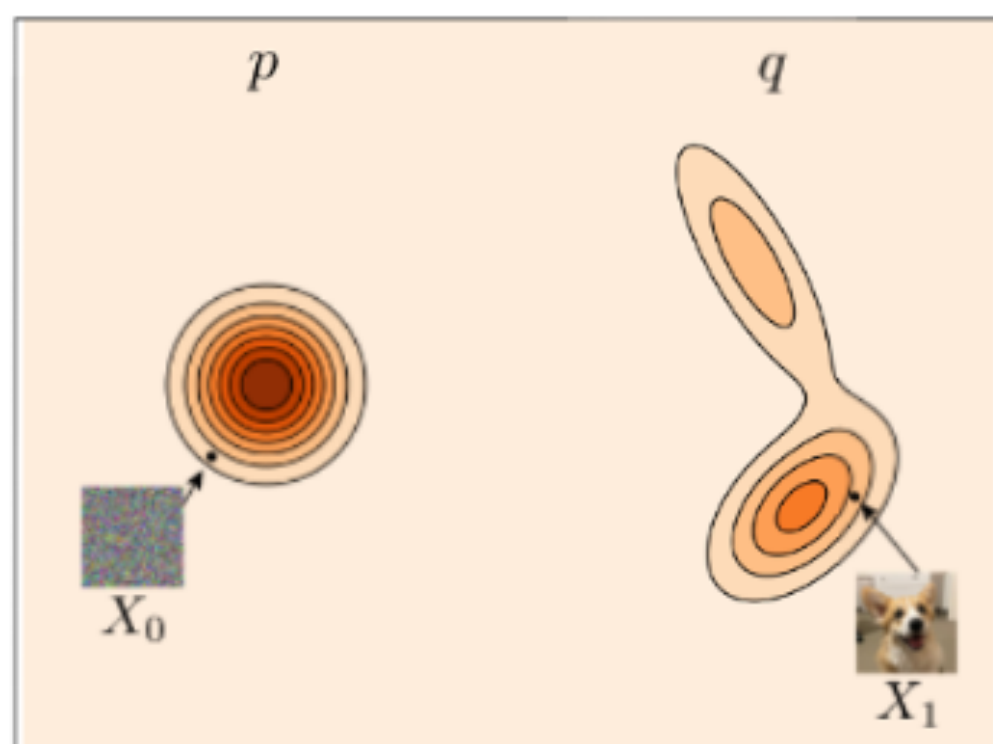
$$p_{\text{data}}(x) = \frac{\exp(-E(x))}{Z}$$

○ Along the path minimizing the energy function

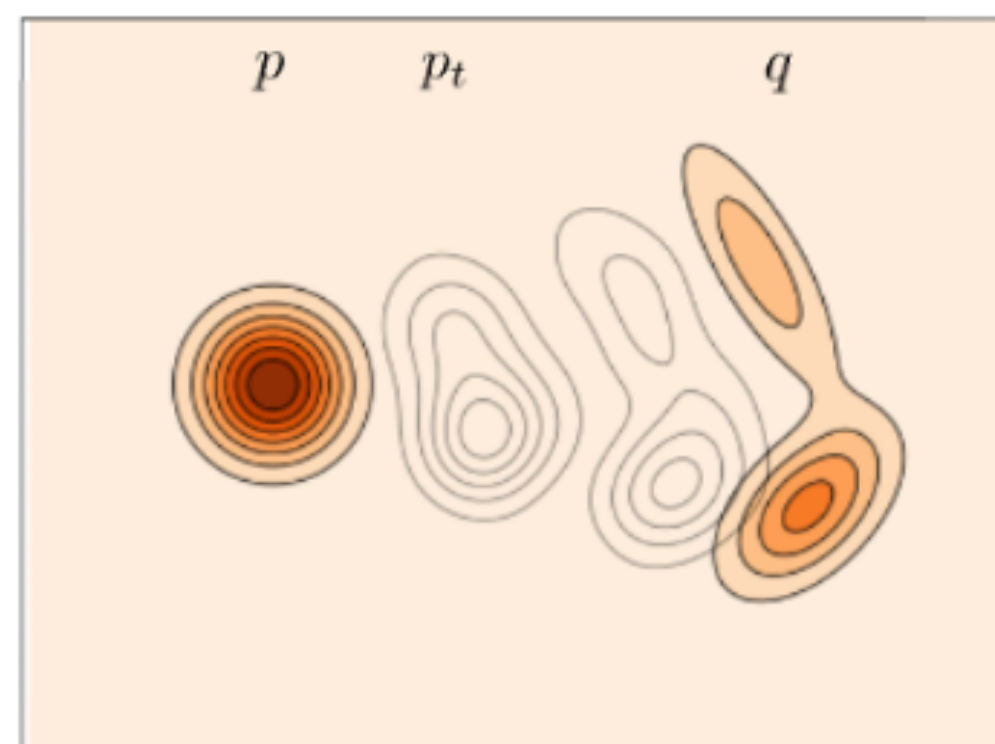
The true image has higher probability, with lower “energy”.

$$d\mathbf{x} = \left[ \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x}, t) - \frac{1}{2}g(t)^2 \nabla_{\mathbf{x}} \log p_t(\mathbf{x}) \right] dt$$

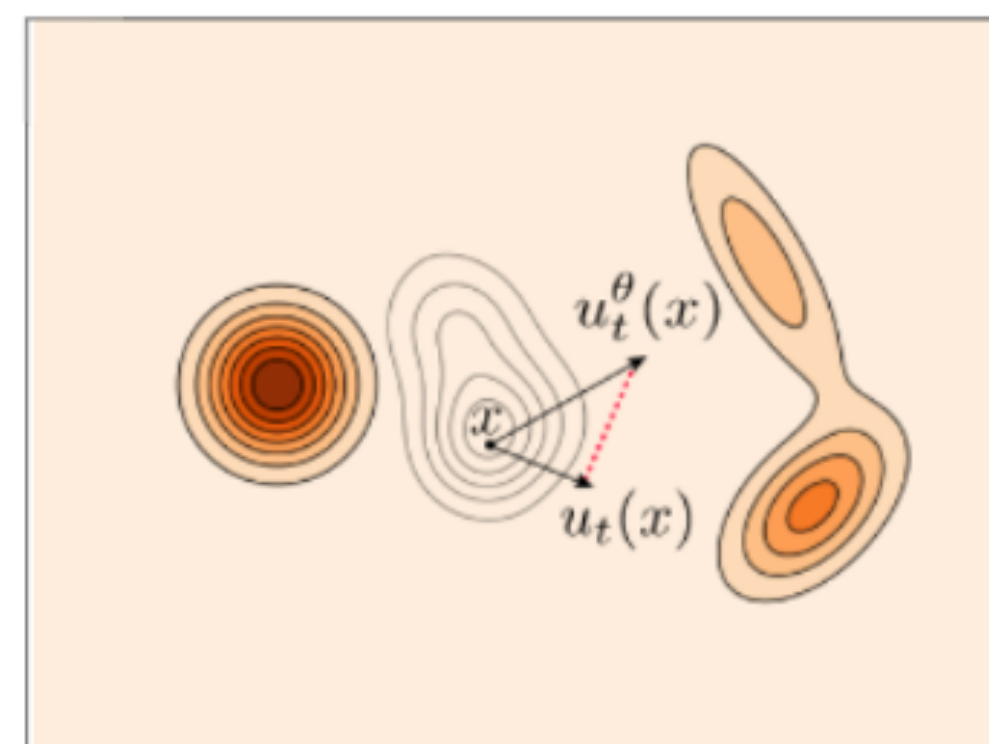
$$dx_t = u_t(x_t)dt$$



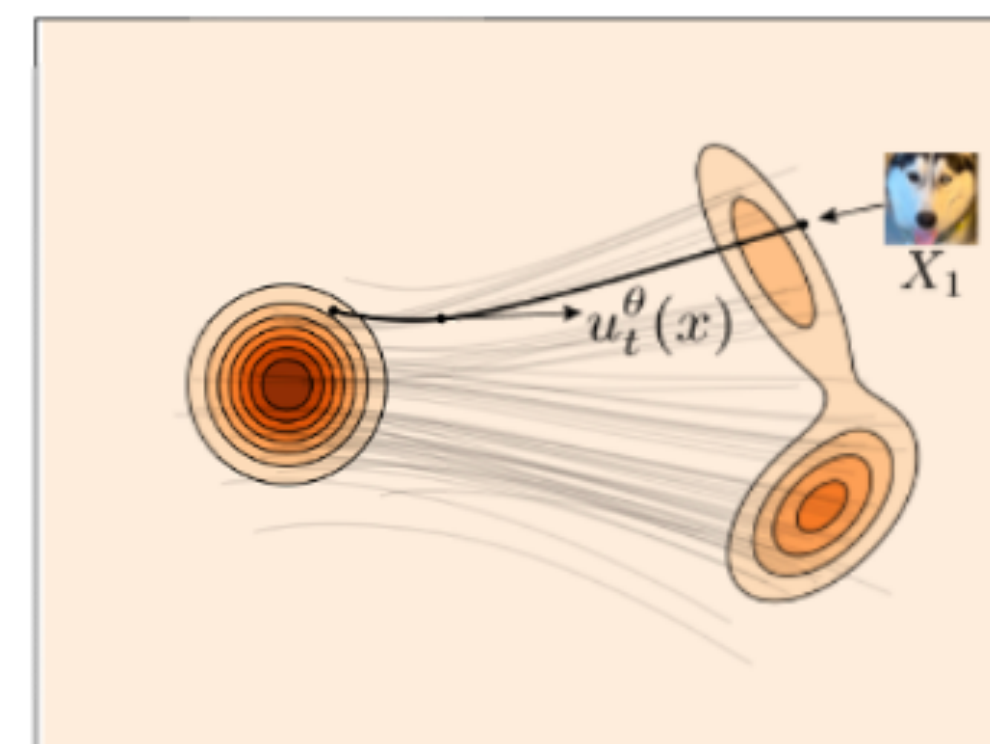
**(a)** Data.



**(b)** Path design.



**(c)** Training.



**(d)** Sampling.



AuAu@200GeV

$$\alpha = 0.535, \beta_2 = 0.098$$

$$(\eta/s)_{kink} = 0.096, (\zeta/s)_{max} = 0.133$$

