

Low Noise Preamplifiers for Detectors in Nuclear Physics

AKHIL JHINGAN

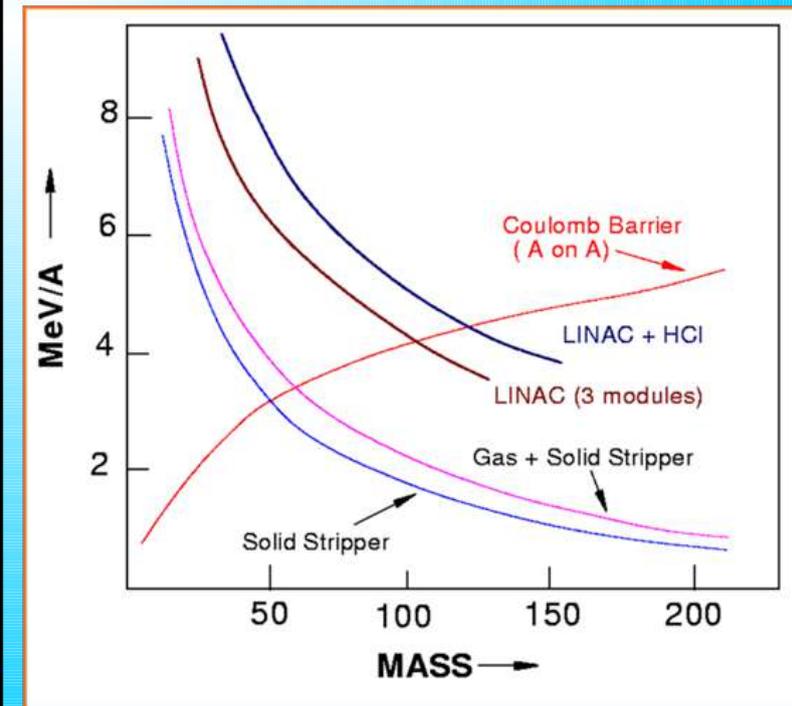
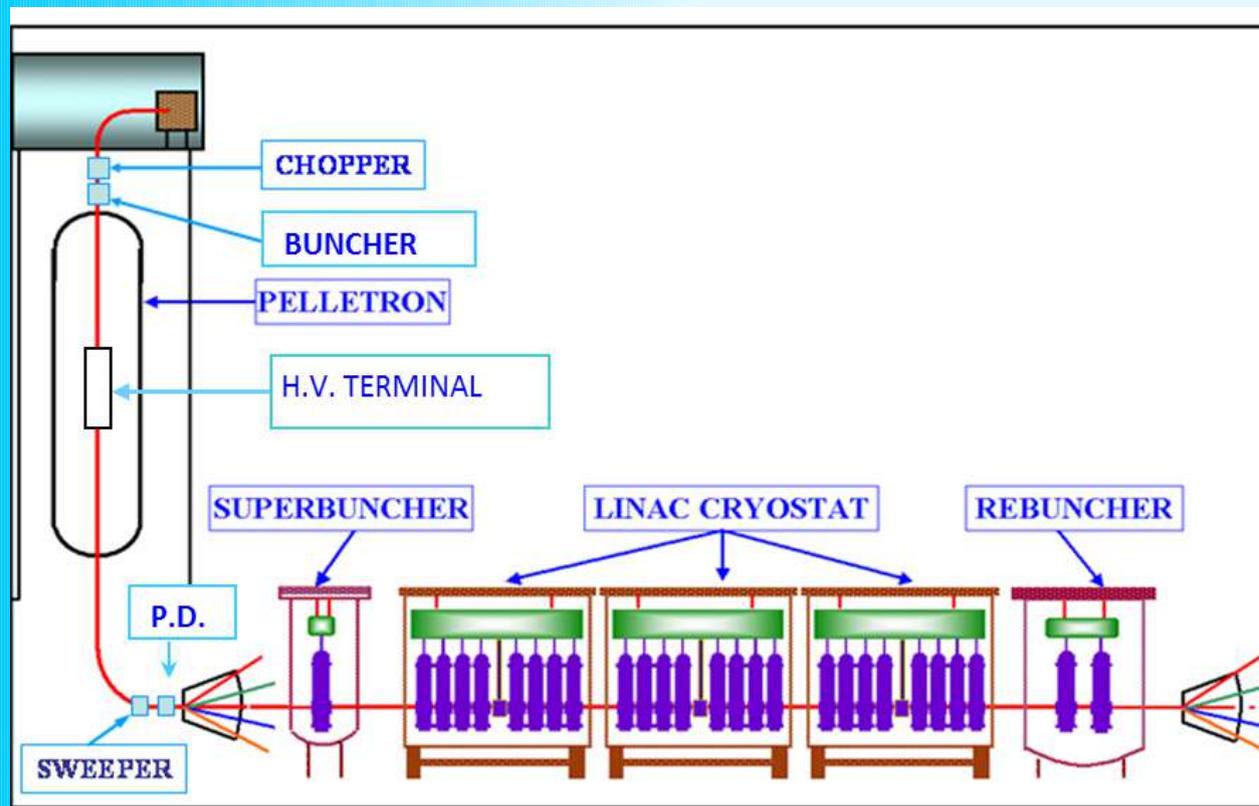
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"Exploring the Positronium Frontier: Precision Tests, New Physics, and Entanglement", TIFR - Mumbai, 12 – 14 February 2026

Accelerator

- IUAC is equipped with a 15 UD Pelletron accelerator
- Delivers beams from H-Pb with energies from tens to hundreds of MeV (wide velocity range)
- With Pelletron energy, coulomb barrier for symmetric system can be achieved up to mass ~ 50
- Decided to boost up the energy so that the energy to exceed Coul. Bar. will be extended up to $\sim \text{Ag}$ (107) and that demands to double the energy obtained from Pelletron.



Experiments

Fusion

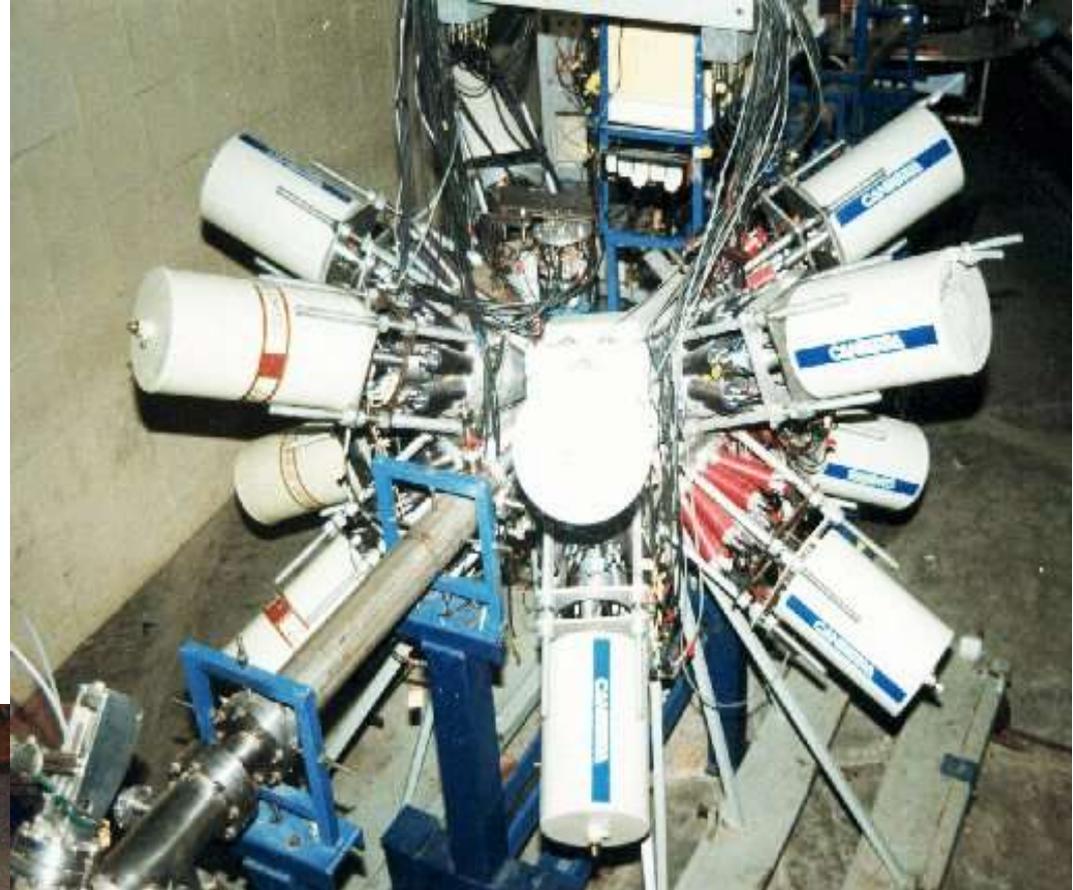
Quasi-elastic scattering, MNT

Fission

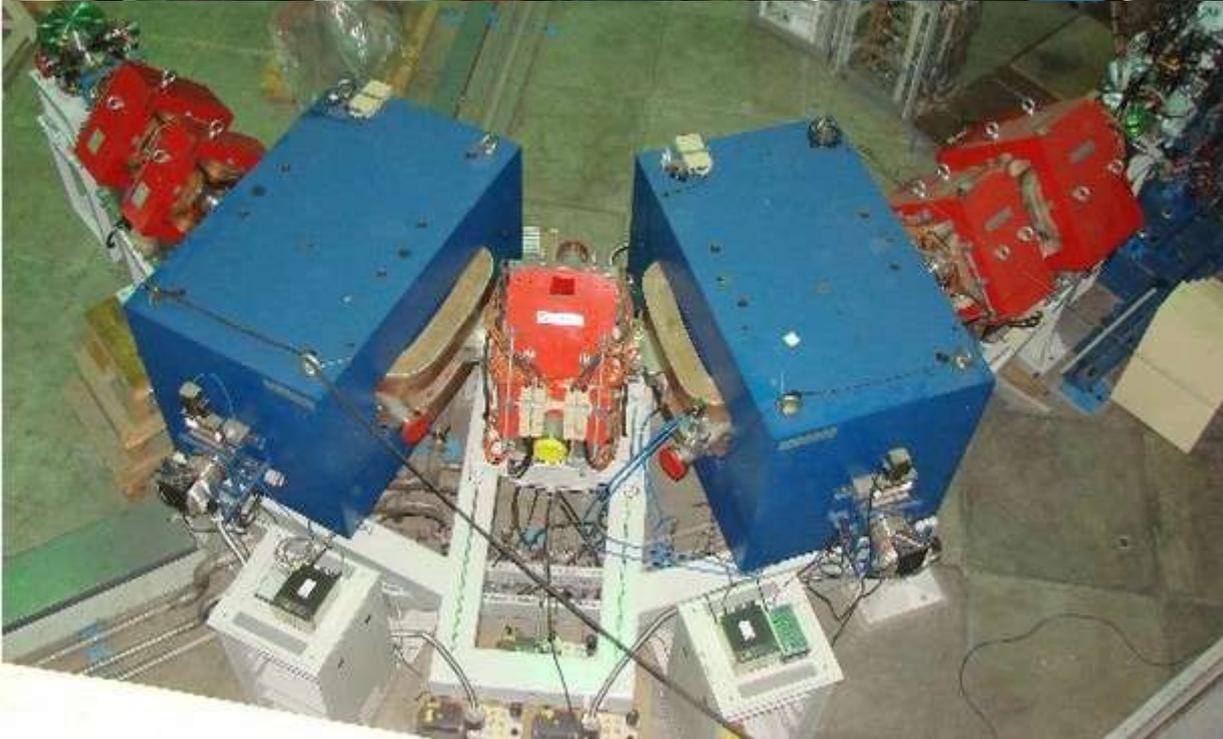
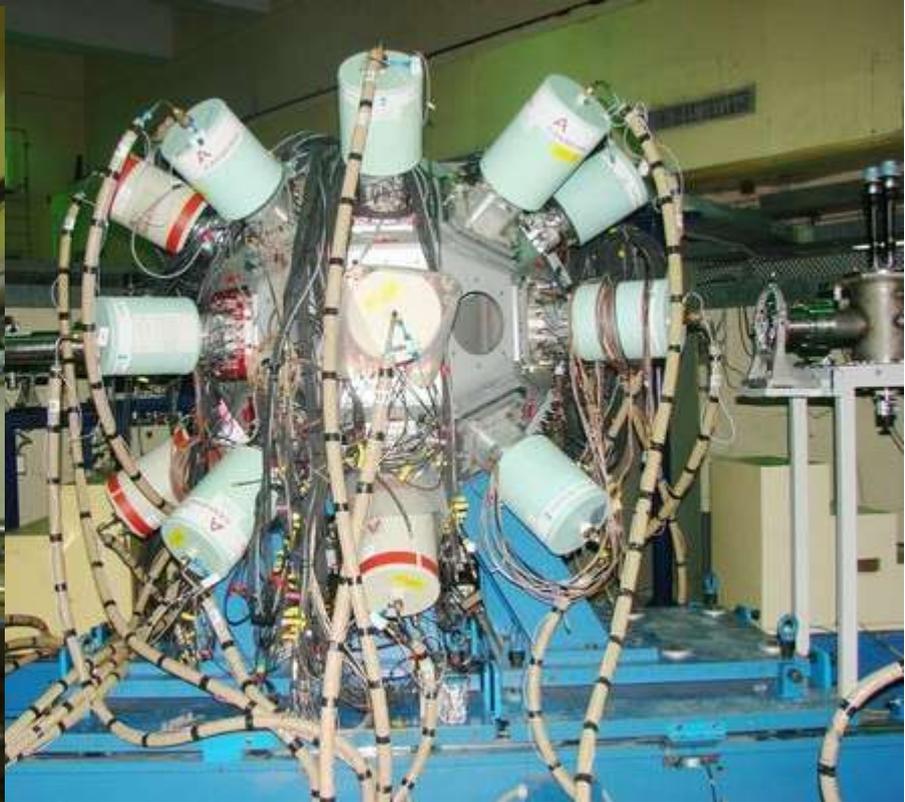
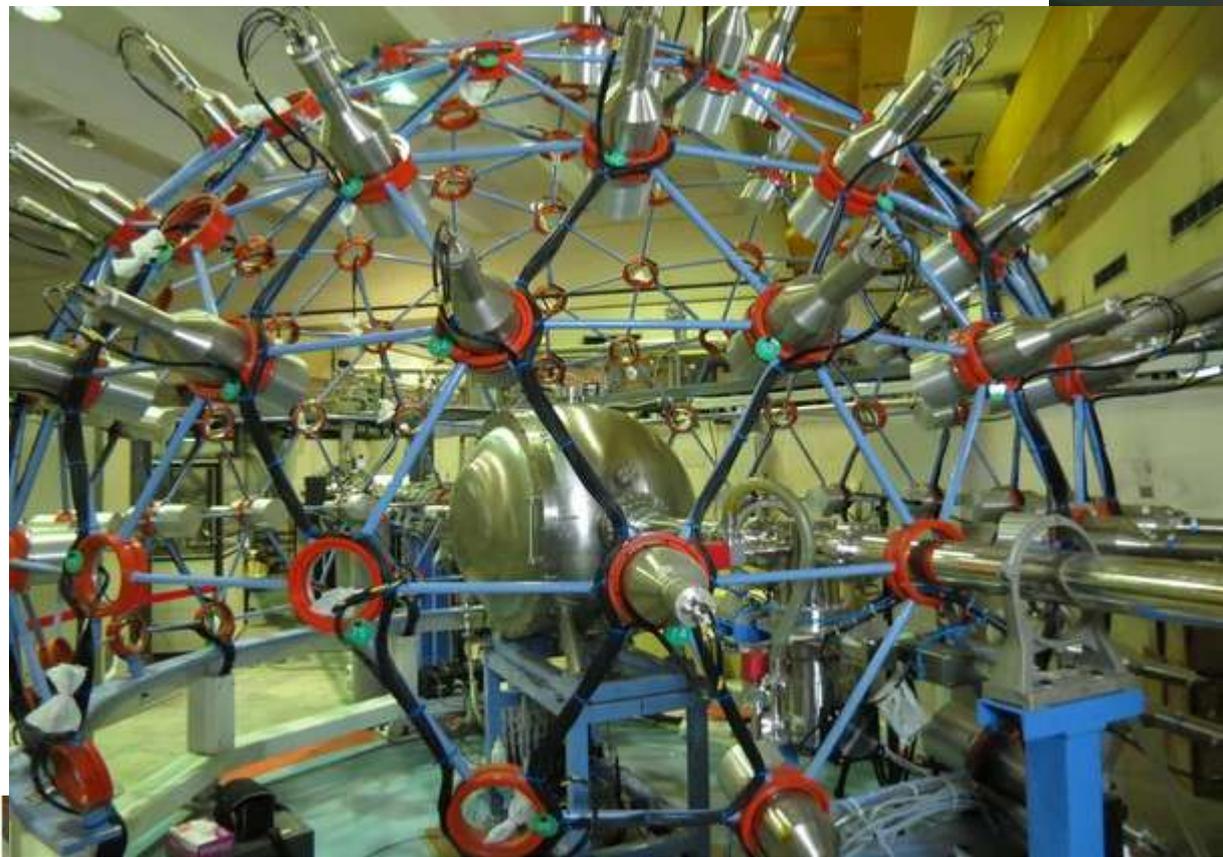
Mass distributions, Angular Distributions,
Mass gated Neutron multiplicity, Charge Particle Multiplicity

Coulomb Excitation

Gamma spectroscopy



Beam Hall I facility



Beam Hall II Facilities

Nuclear physics facilities and experiments

Nuclear reaction and structure studies using experimental facilities at Inter-University Accelerator Centre (IUAC)

Eur. Phys. J. A (2022) 58:250

<https://doi.org/10.1140/epja/s10050-022-00855-y>

Detectors and front-end electronics for nuclear physics research at IUAC

Eur. Phys. J. A (2025) 61:64

<https://doi.org/10.1140/epja/s10050-025-01526-4>

Detector Development for Nuclear Physics experiments

Gas Detectors

Multi Wire Proportional Counters (MWPC)

Gas ionization Chambers for particle identification

Silicon detector systems

Position sensitive silicon detectors

Gas – Silicon Hybrid telescopes for particle identification

Scintillators

CsI coupled to photo-diode

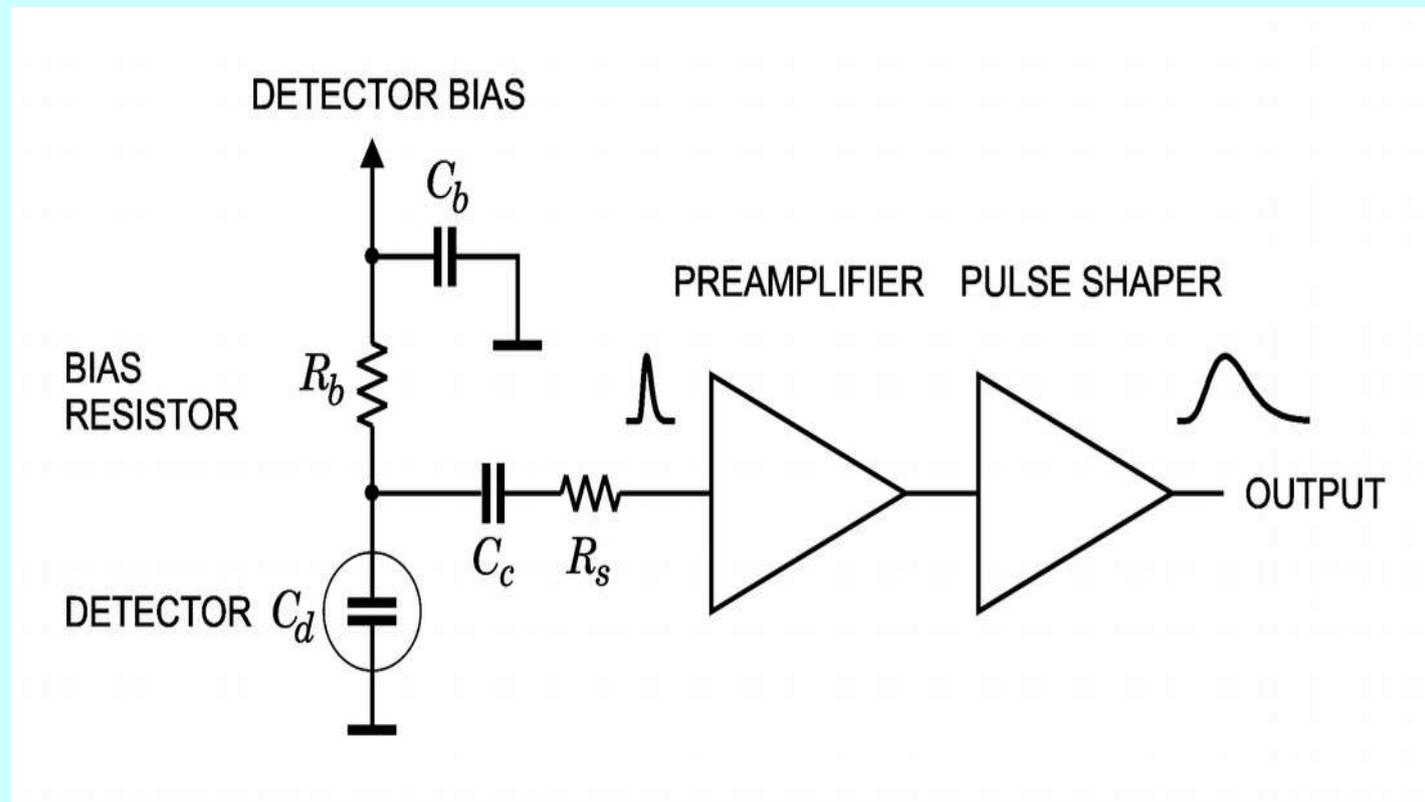
Liquid Scintillators (BC 501) for Neutron detection

Preamplifiers for these detectors

Charge sensitive Preamplifiers for energy measurement

Current sensitive for Timing measurements

DETECTOR FRONT END



- Detector output : high impedance, affected by detector capacitance
- To transport the signal, a 'PREAMPLIFIER' of low output impedance is inserted between detector and pulse shaper
- Detector mounted directly on the preamplifier or through a short cable to minimize capacitance

Preamplifiers for detectors

Charge Sensitive Pre-Amplifiers or CSPA (Low Noise preferred)

Provides Energy Information or net charge or light output (converted into charge by PMT or photo-diode) generated by the detector by processing or integrating the entire pulse area.

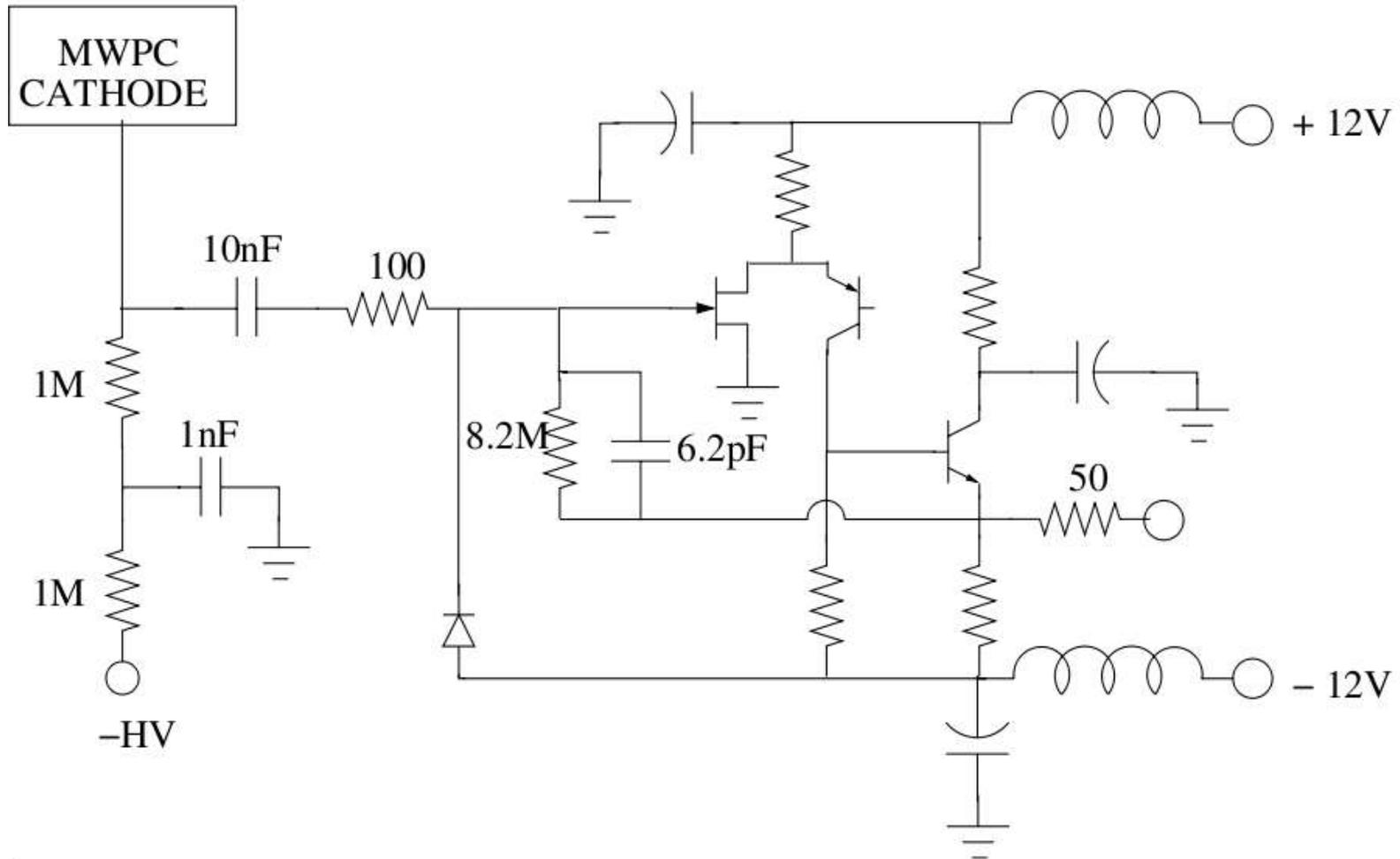
Amplitude contains energy information, Rising edge can provide TOF and Particle identity : Bandwidth & Detector dependent

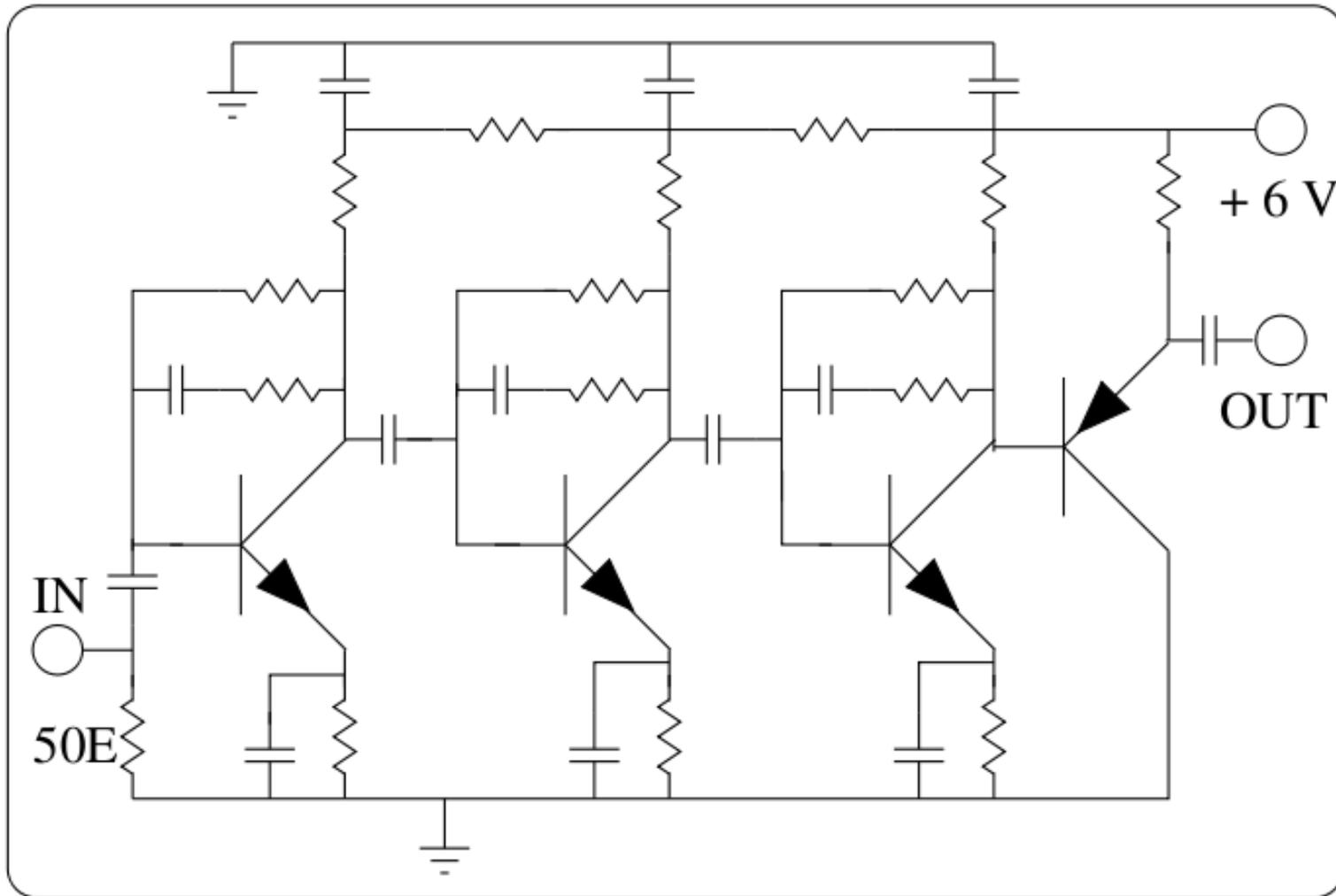
Useful for all kind of detectors (Gas, Semiconductors, Scintillators etc.)

Current Sensitive Amplifiers or FTA (Low Noise preferred)

Processes generally the rising edge or leading edge for Timing/TOF. Falling or trailing edge may provide identity of the particle type

Useful for fast detectors only (< 5 ns rise times)
Proportional Counters, MCP, Fast Scintillators





Schematic of FTA based on Beeskov's circuit [1]

[1] U. Lynen, H. Stelzer, NIM 162 (1979) 657
GSI Internal report



Charge sensitive preamplifier



Photo-multiplier-tube base



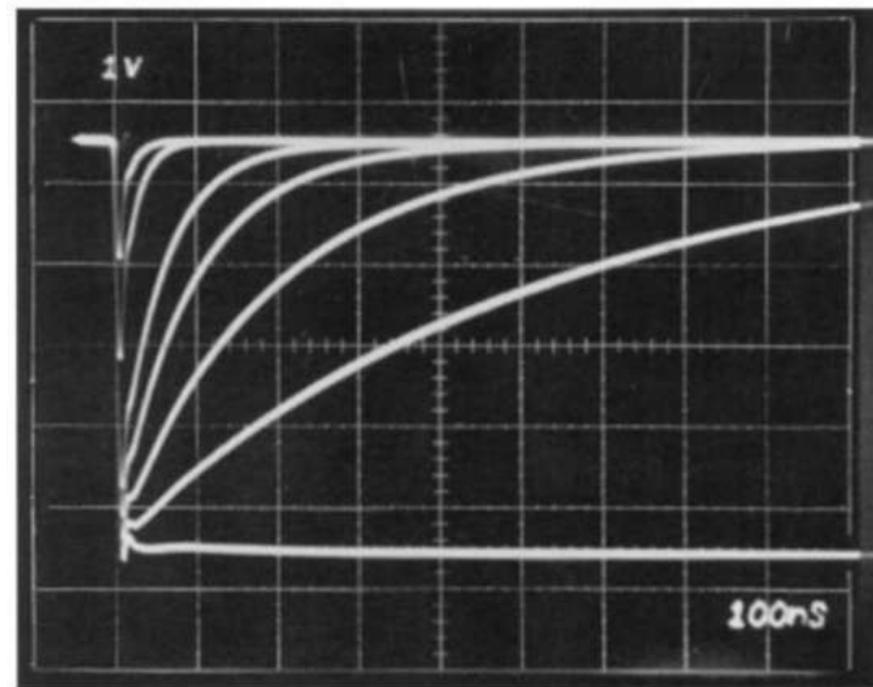
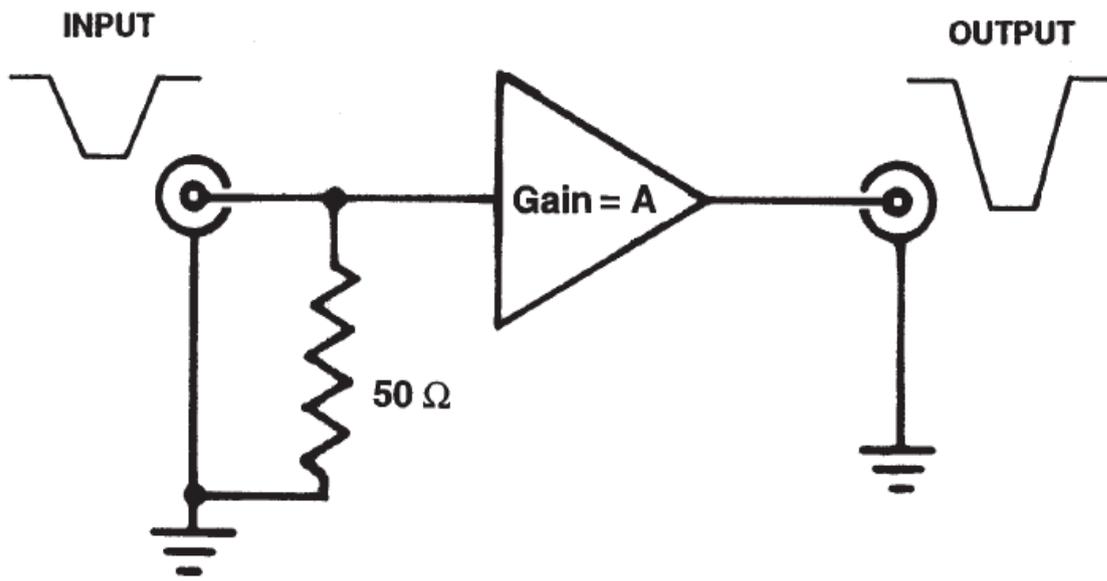
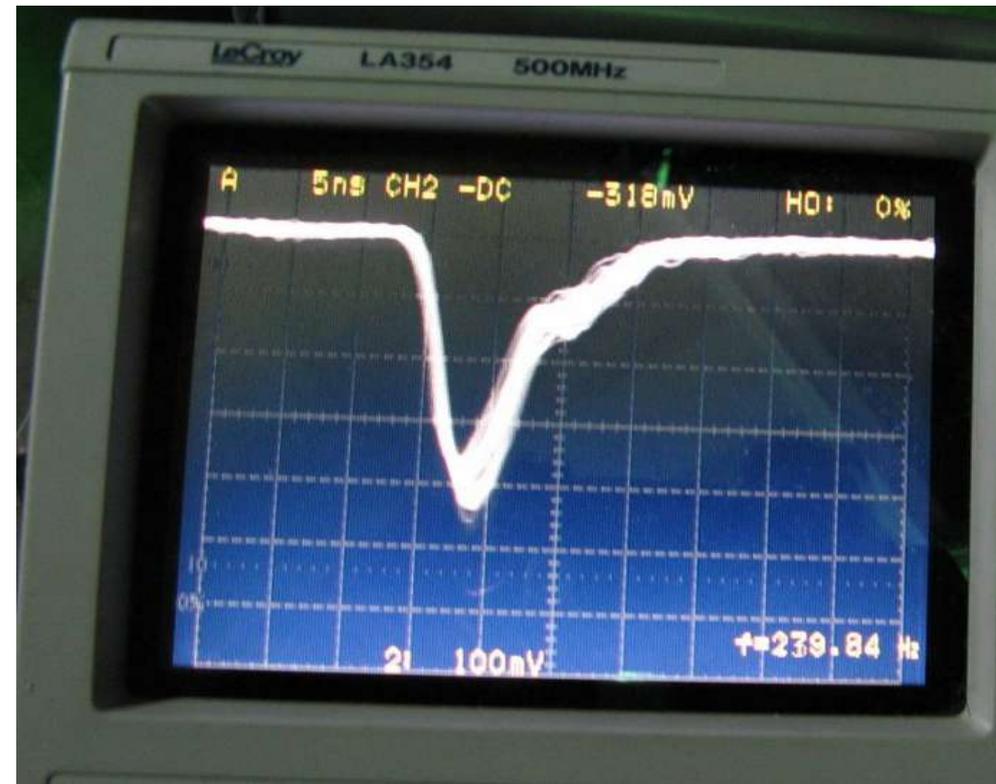
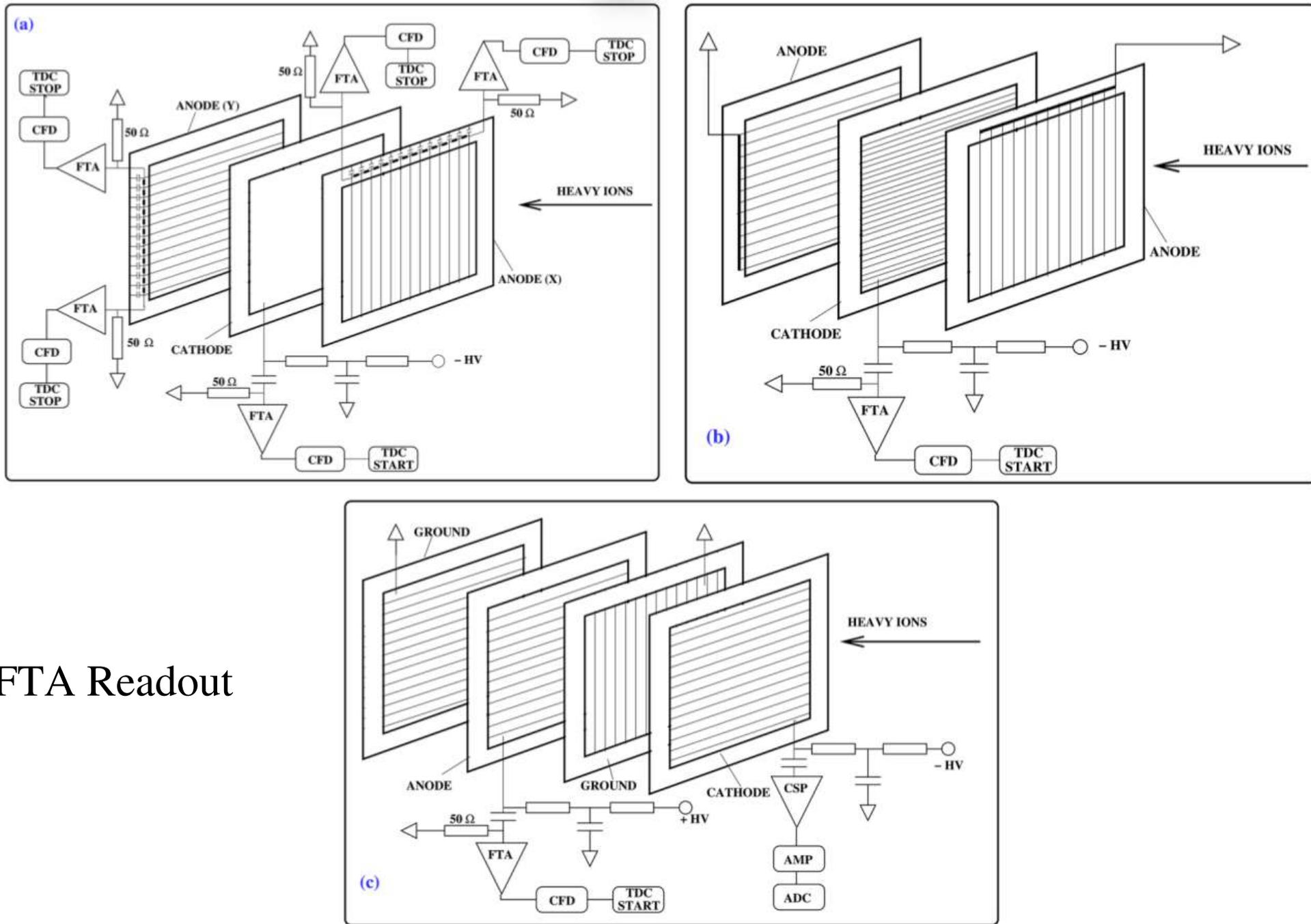


Fig. 4. Model 579 Output Signals for $\tau_i = \text{Out}$ and $\tau_D = \text{Out}$, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 ns.

Use of fast current sensitive preamplifier
And
Time filter amplifiers

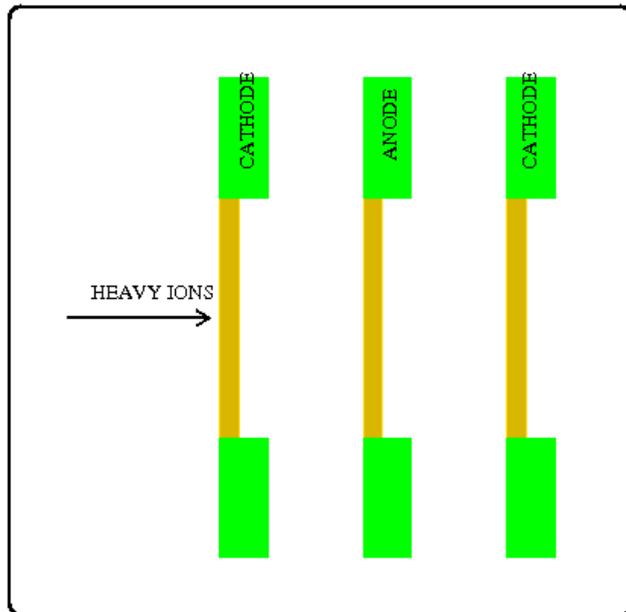
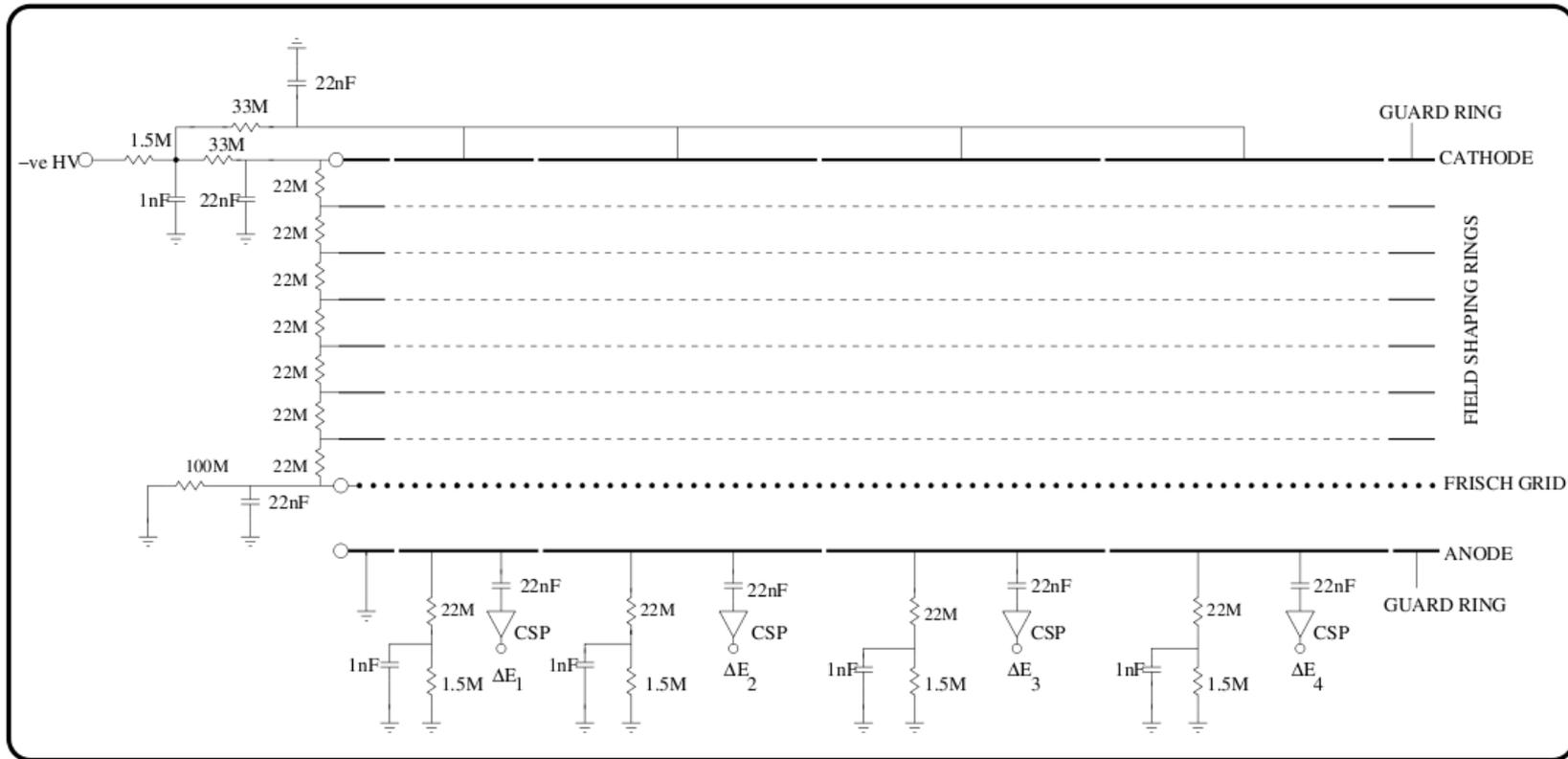




FTA Readout

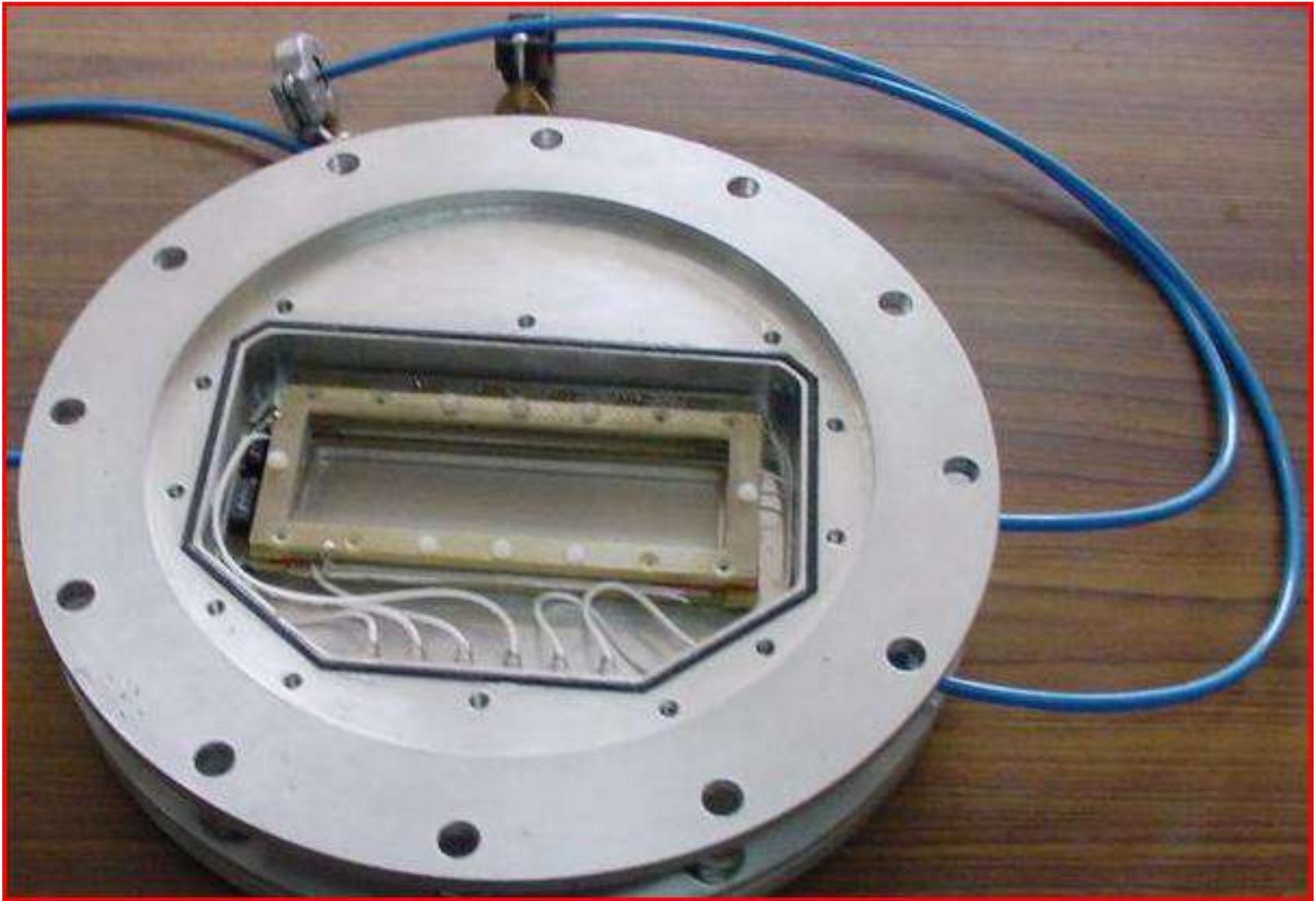
FIG. 1. (a) Schematic layout of the three electrode MWPC with the readout scheme having a central cathode (aluminized mylar) sandwiched between two anode wire frames. For position sensitive MWPC, wires are interconnected by a delay line (as shown here). For the start detector, these wires are shorted and electrically grounded. (b) Schematic layout of the start detector with a wire frame cathode. (c) Schematic layout of the multi-step counter with all wire frame electrodes.

Transverse field IC with segmented anodes, Frisch grid and cathode



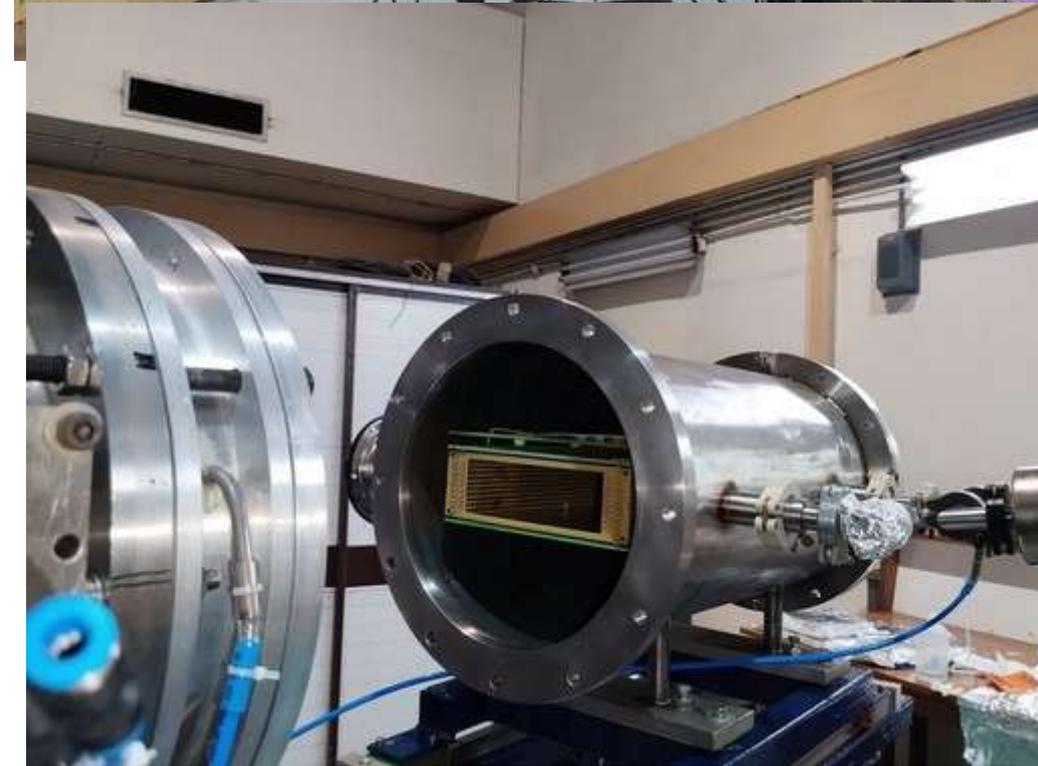
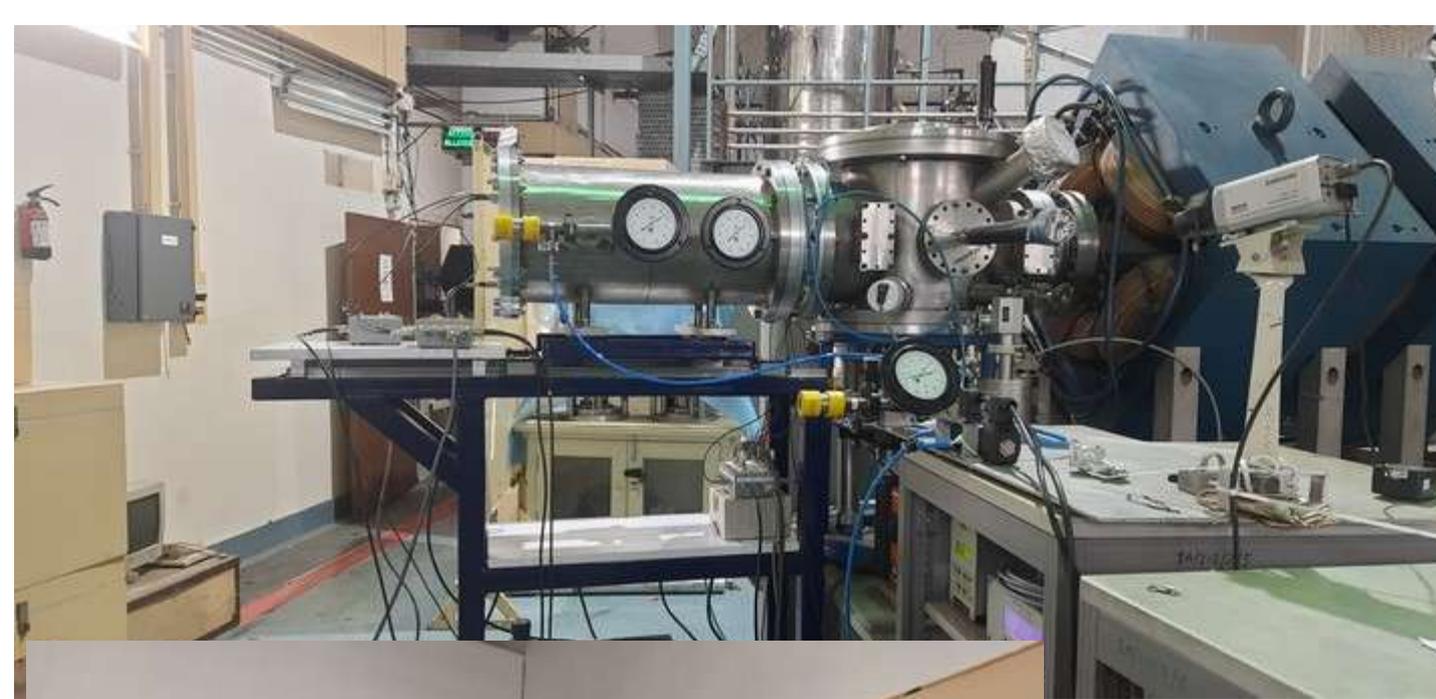
Axial field IC with anode sandwiched between two cathodes

CSPA Readout

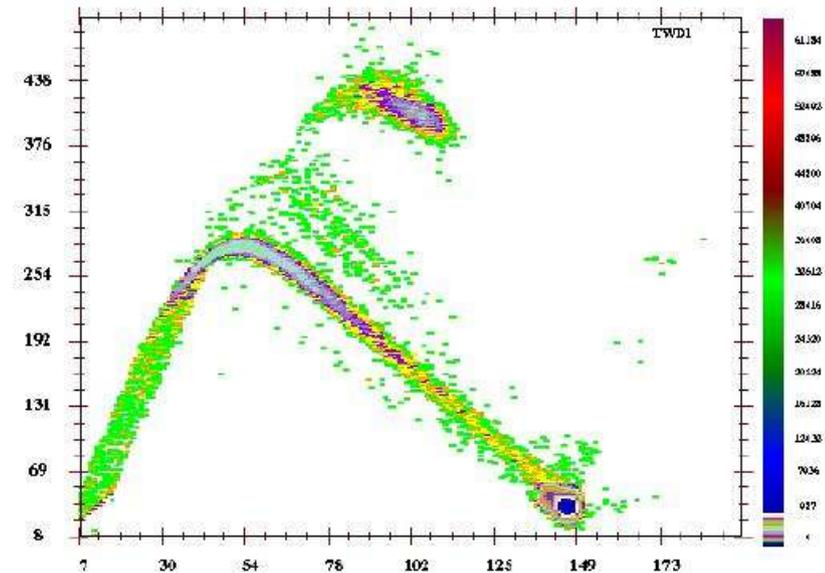
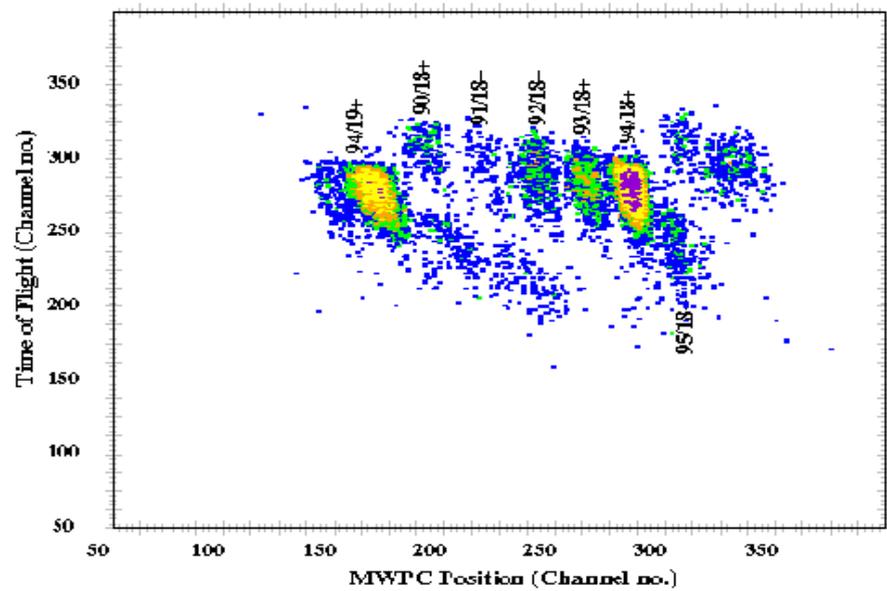
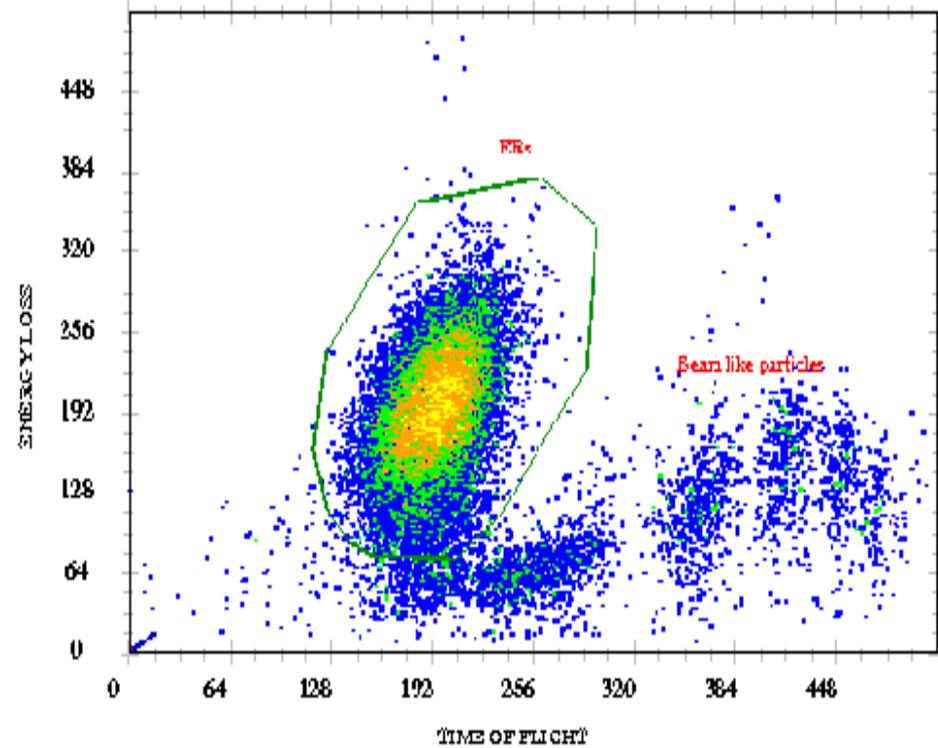
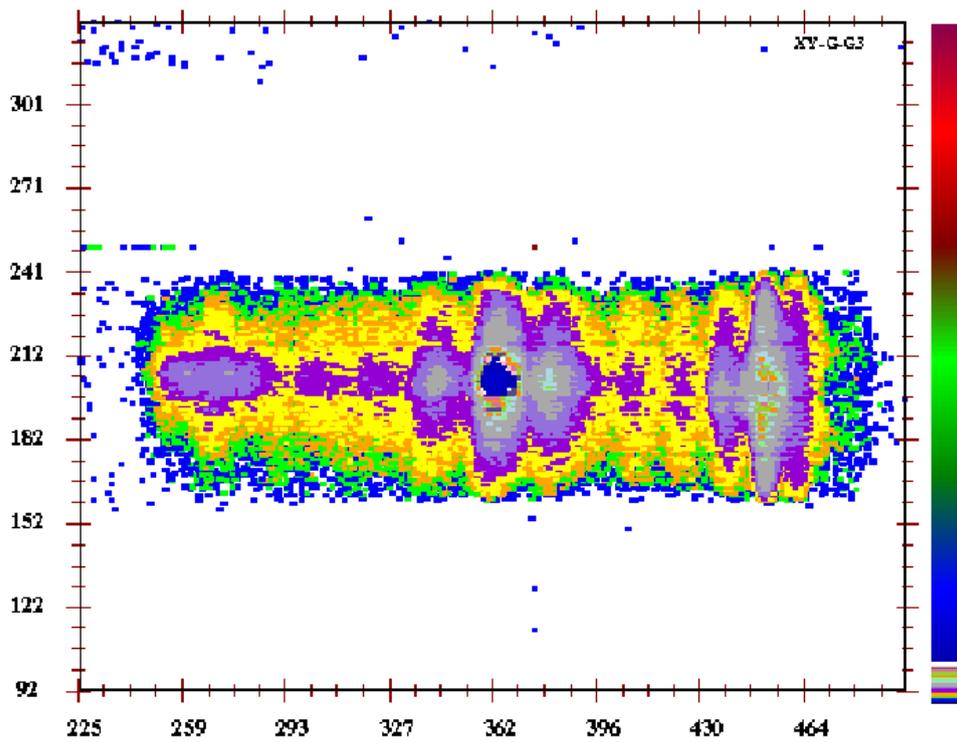


5 electrode MWPC (6" x 2", 1.27 mm wire pitch) at HIRA focal plane

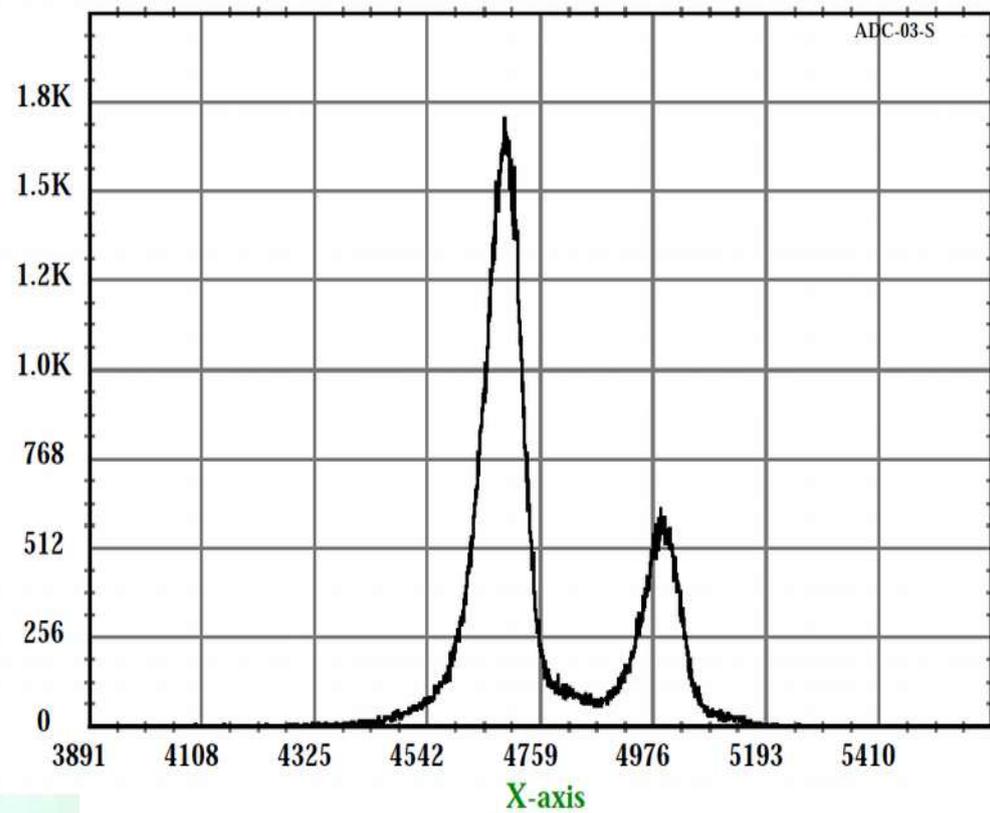
A. Jhingan et al., Proc. DAE-BRNS Symp. Nuc. Phys. 52(2007)585



Large Area IC at HIRA focal llane
(behind MWPC)
Active Area $15 \times 5 \text{ cm}^2$, Depth~ 40 cm

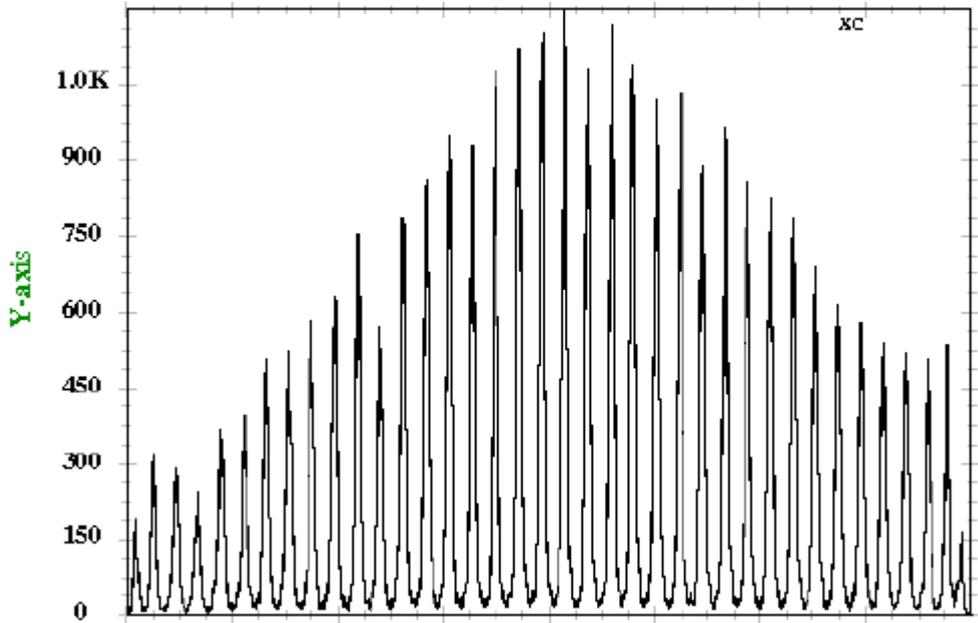


S. Kalkal et al, Phys. Rev. C 81, 044610 (2010)
 S. Kalkal et al, Phys. Rev. C 83, 054607 (2011)

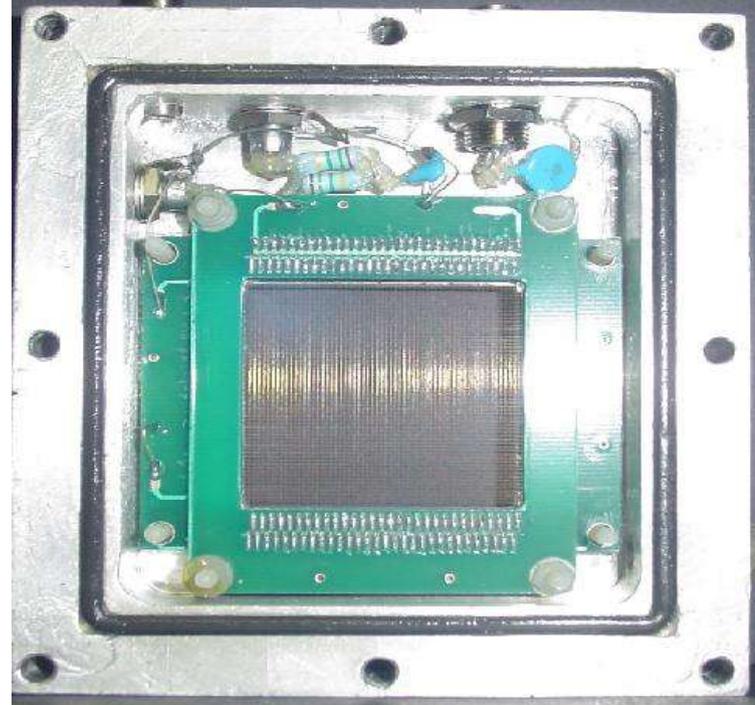


Tested with Pu-Am source
Resolution ~ 75 keV @5.48 MeV

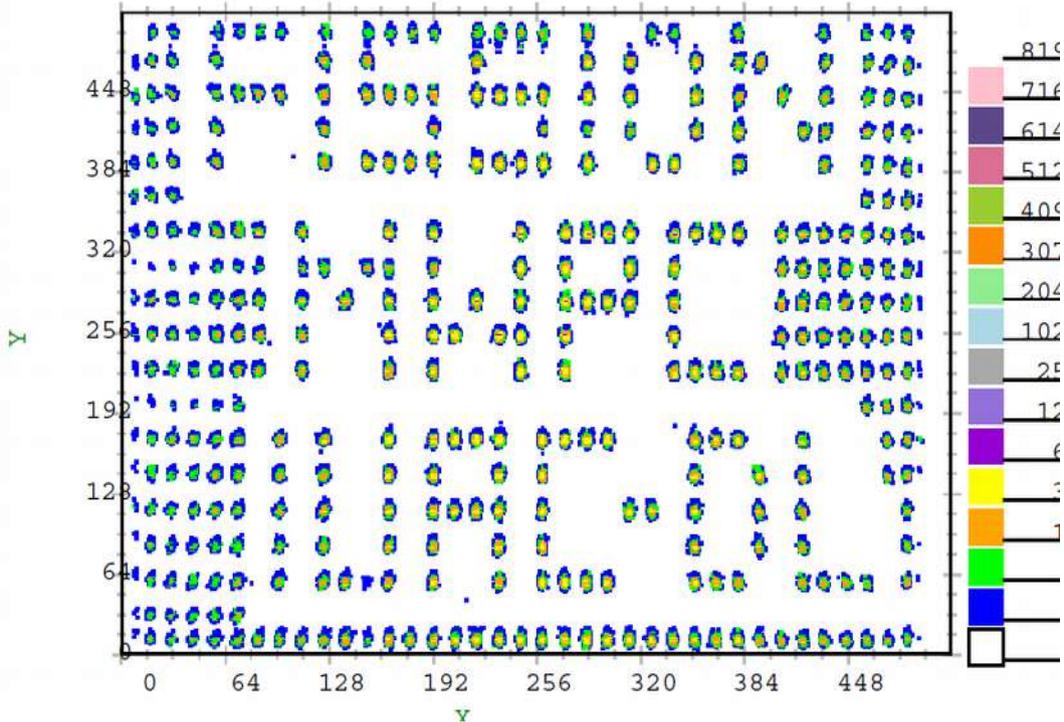
XPOS



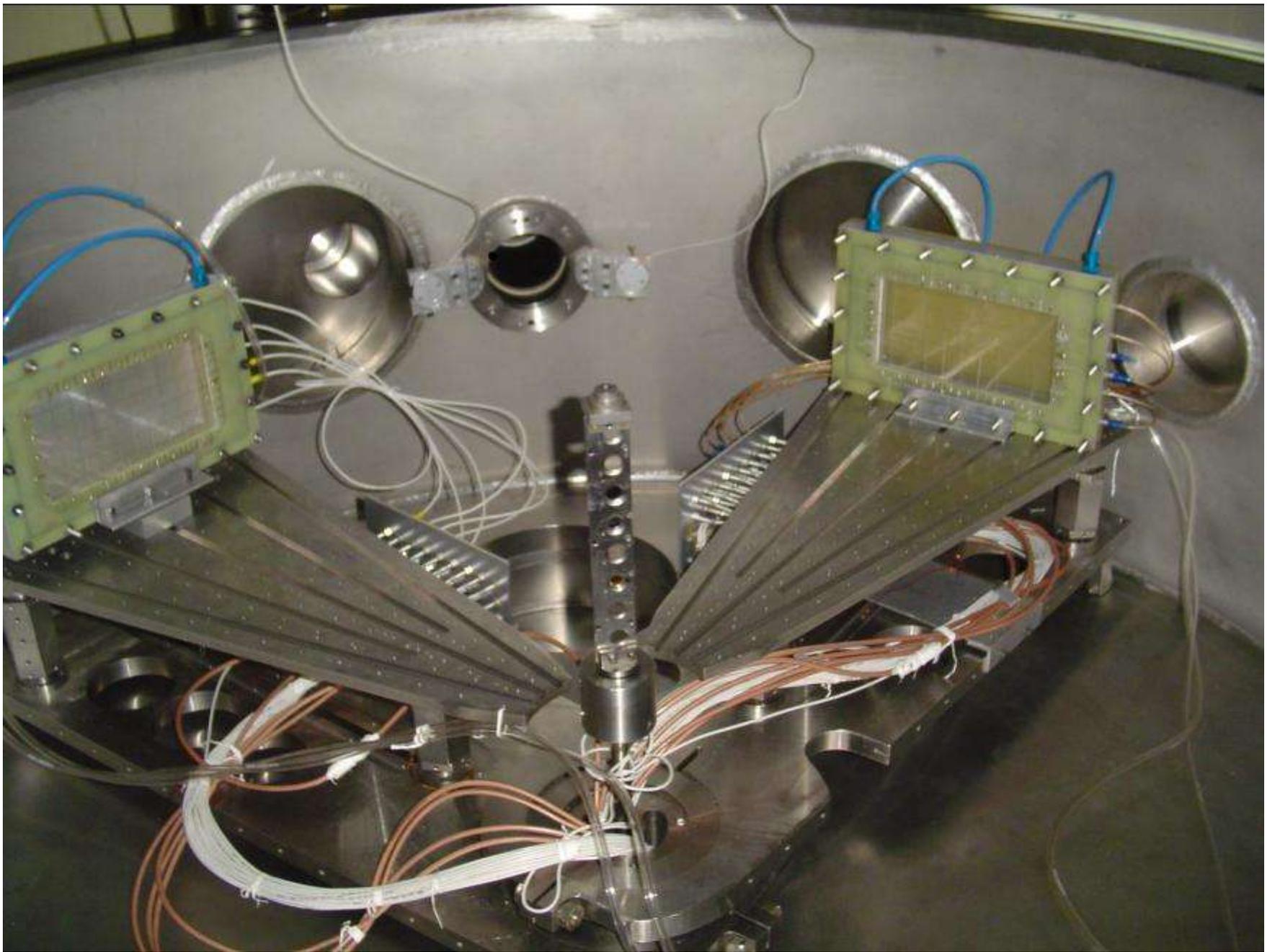
Markers



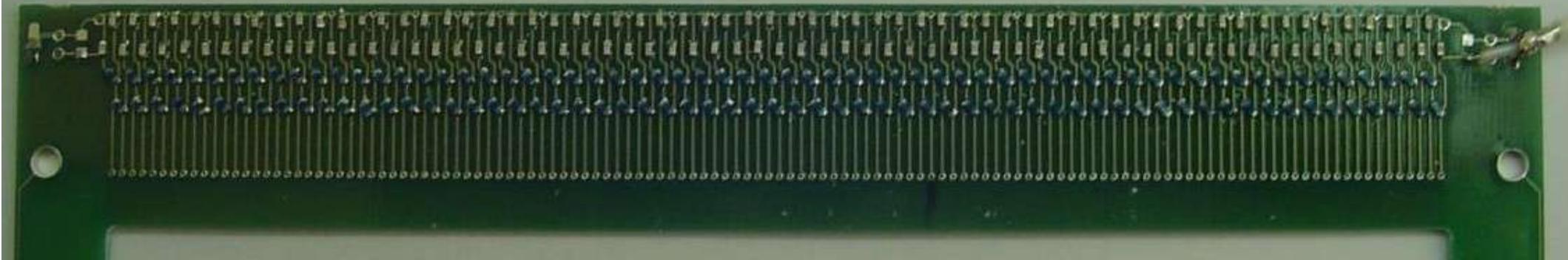
1.5" x 1.5", 0.63 mm pitch, 4 electrode



5 electrode, 8"x4", 1.27 mm for GPSC

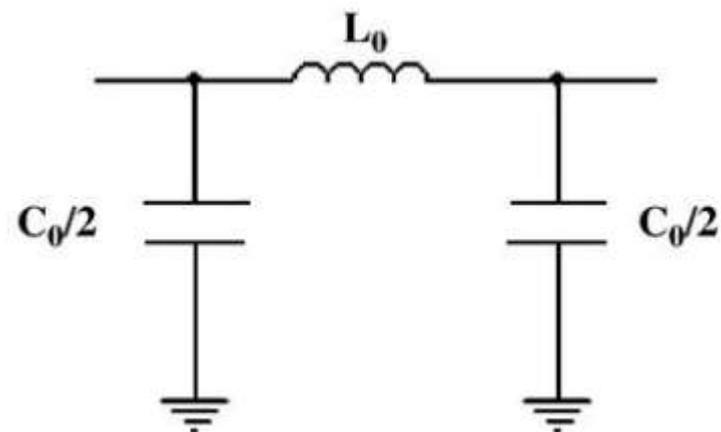
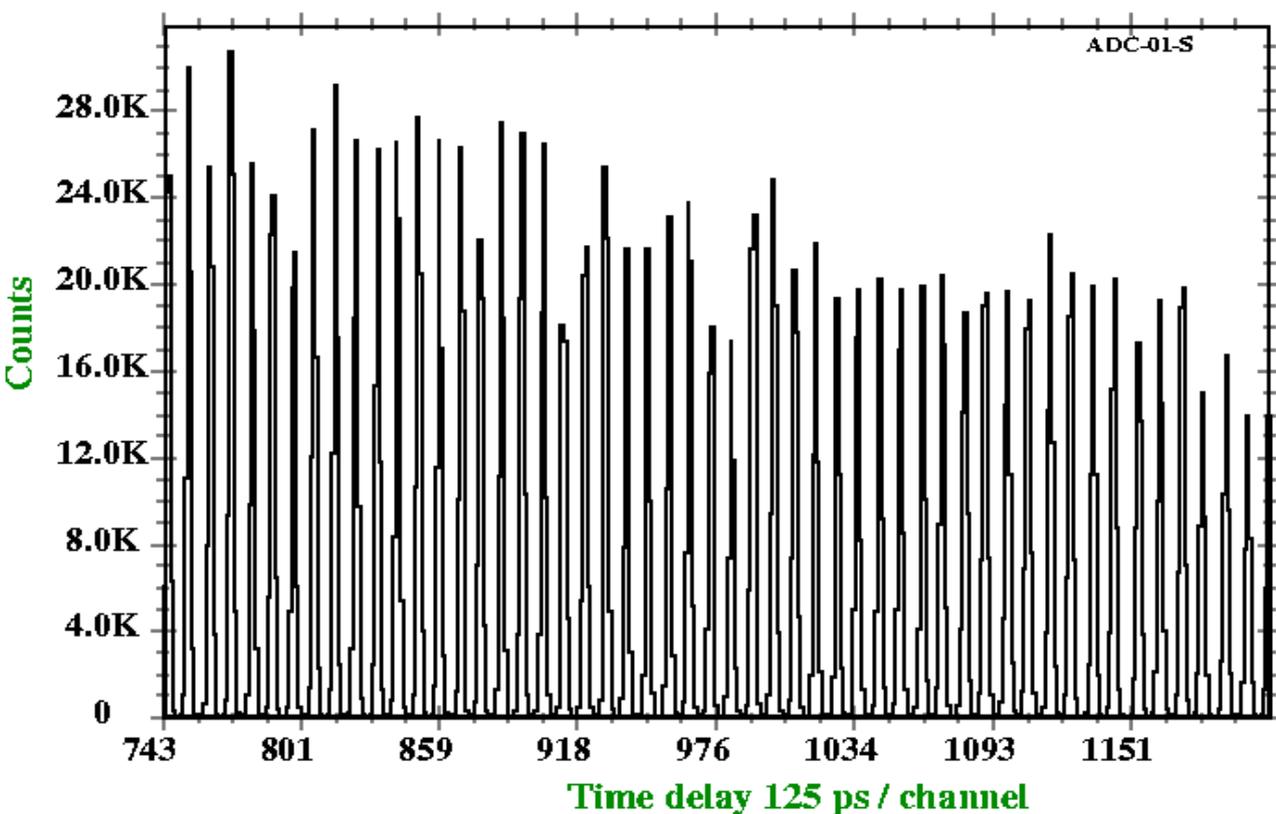


MWPC set up in GPSC for fission experiments



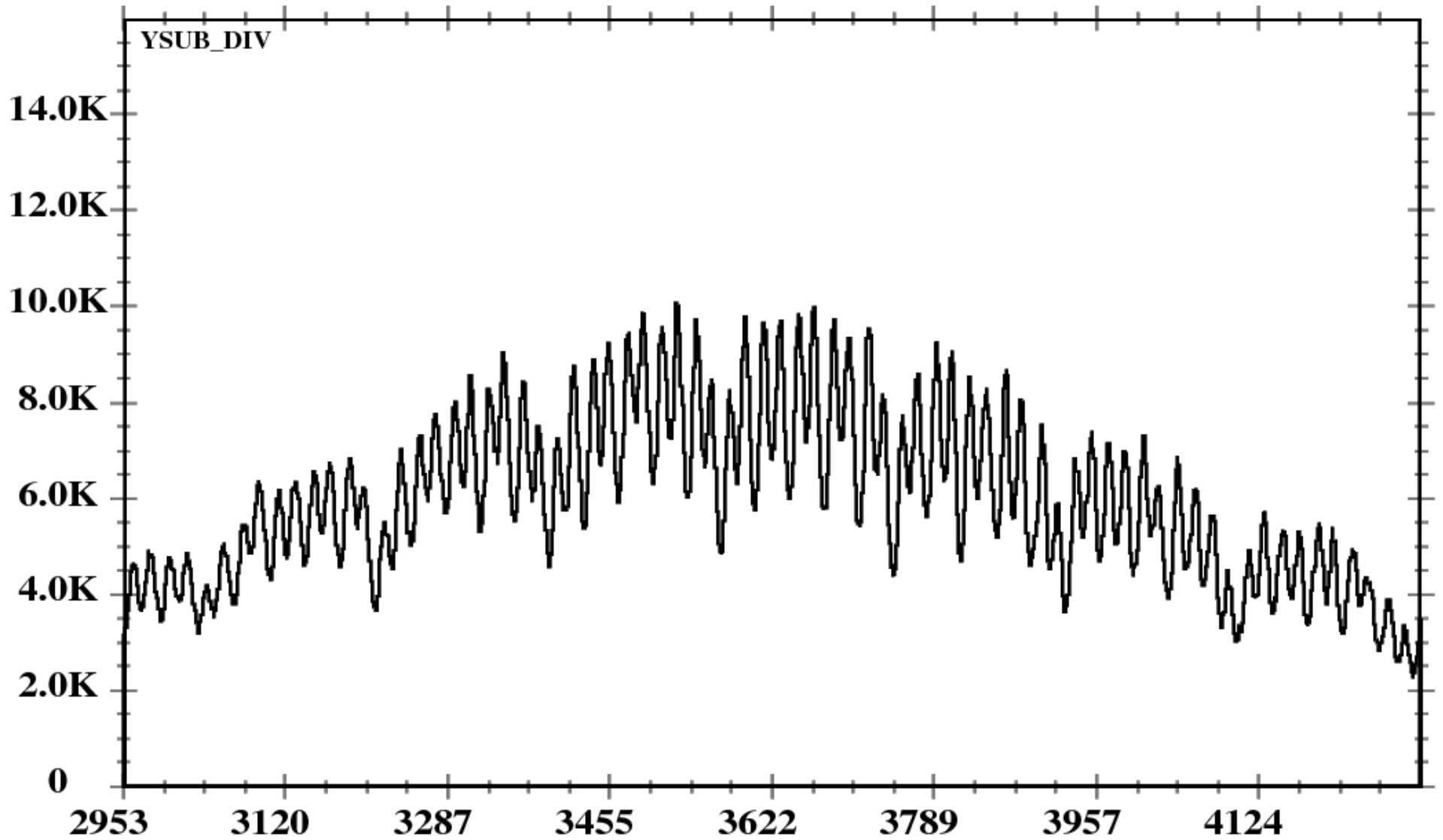
X-position wire frame delay line

LC discrete delay line



Electrical scheme of a
Single delay line cell

Phillips 7120 charge time calibrator

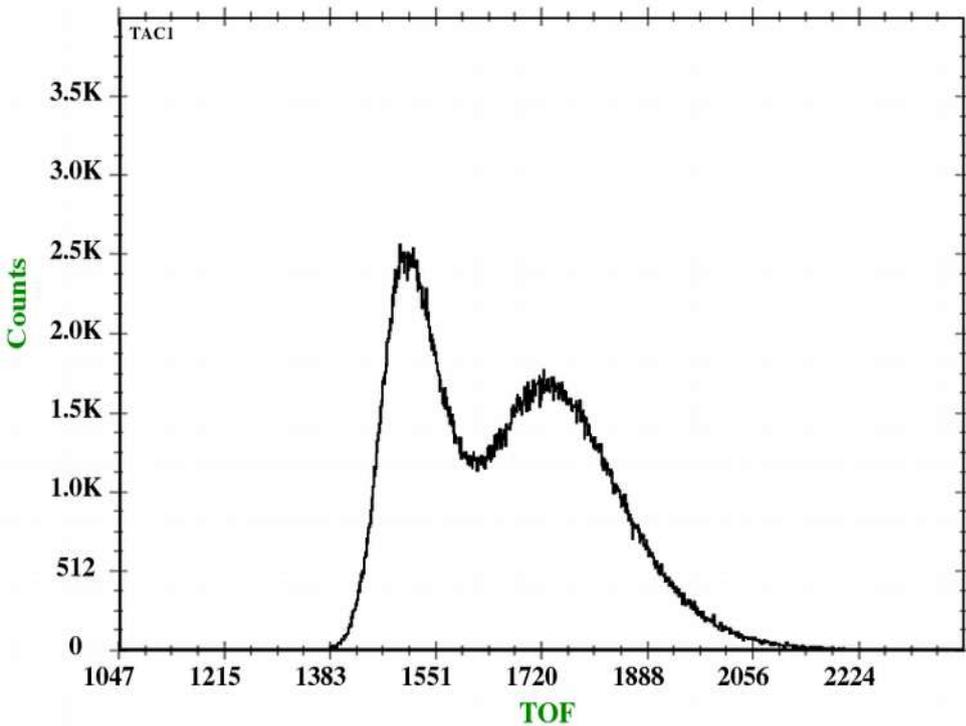


X-position spectra with ^{241}Am alphas
FWHM of each peak ~ 500 ps

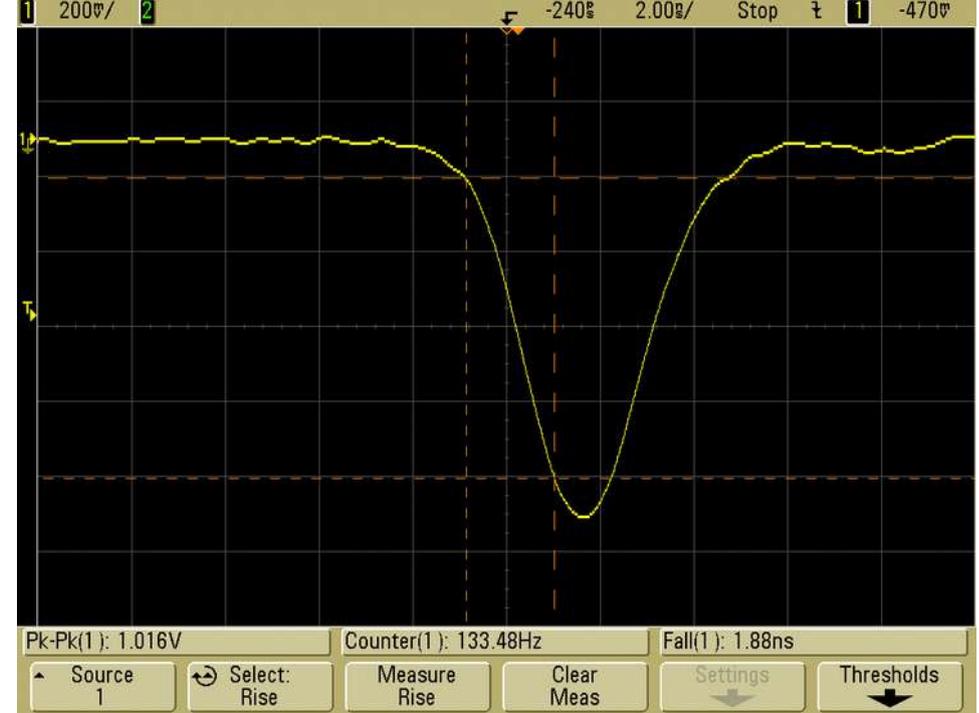


Double Arm fission TOF set up at GPSC-IUAC

TOF-fission



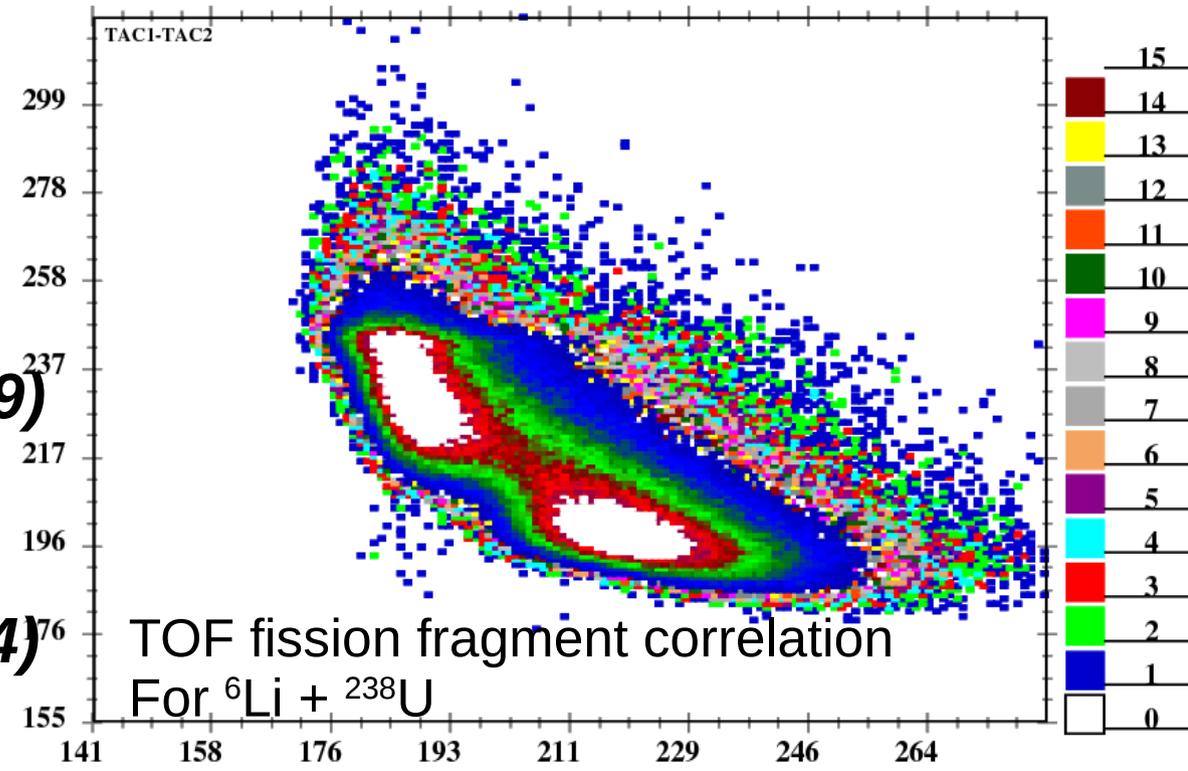
TOF spectra

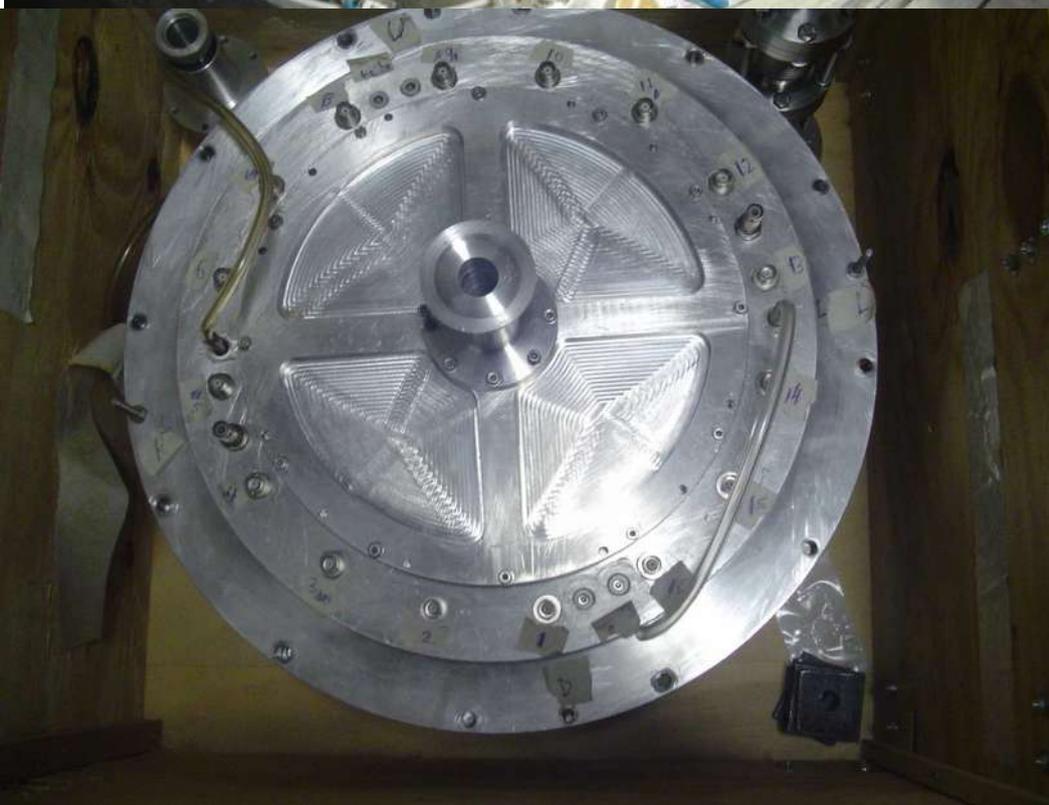
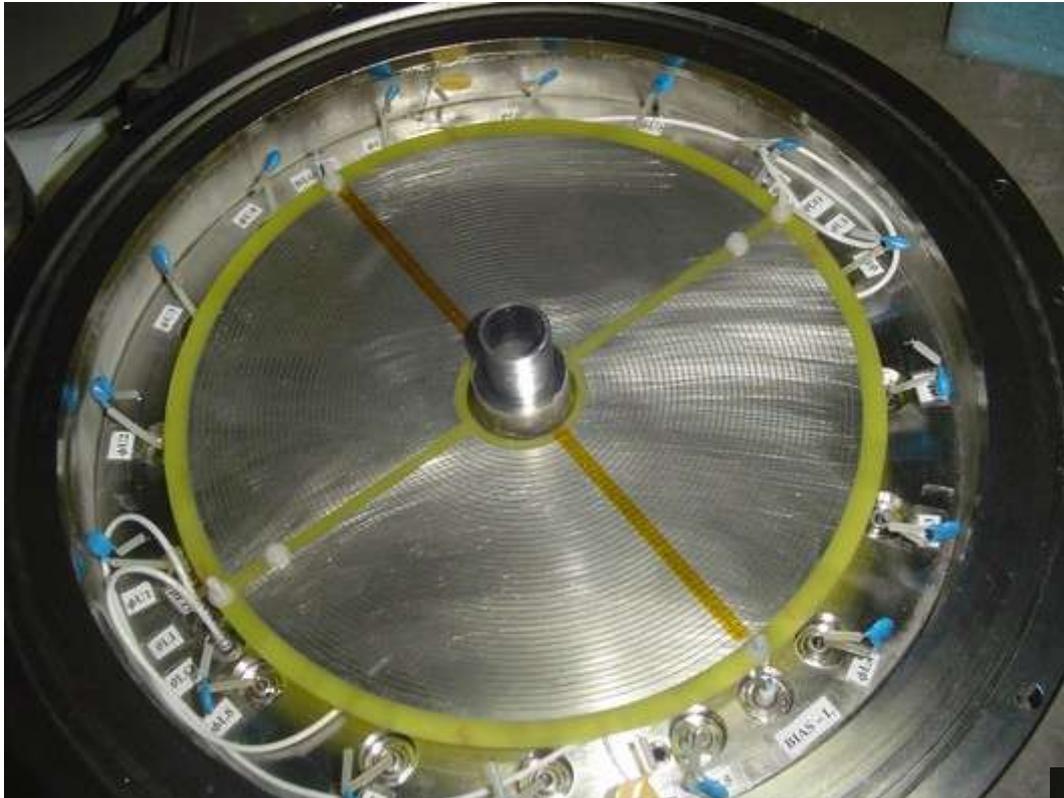


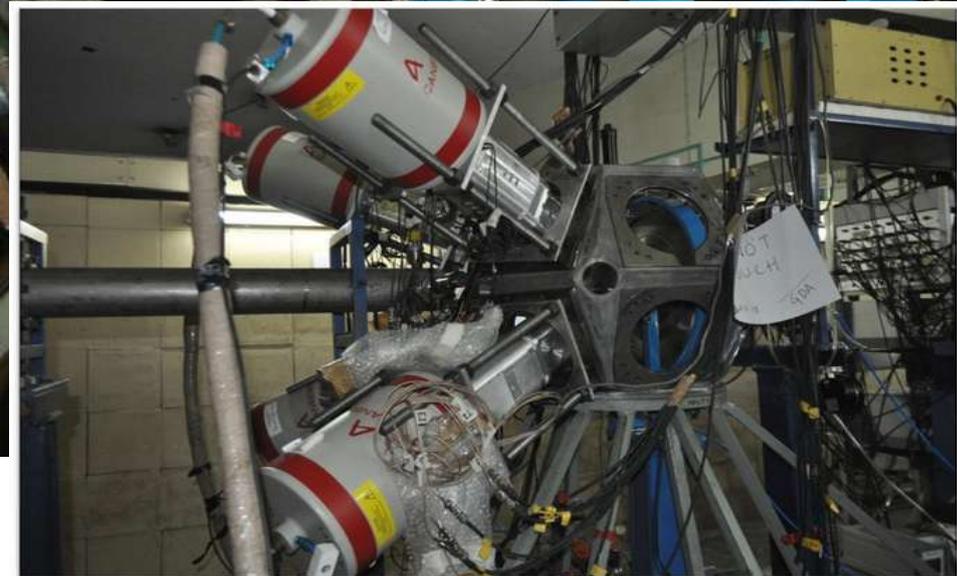
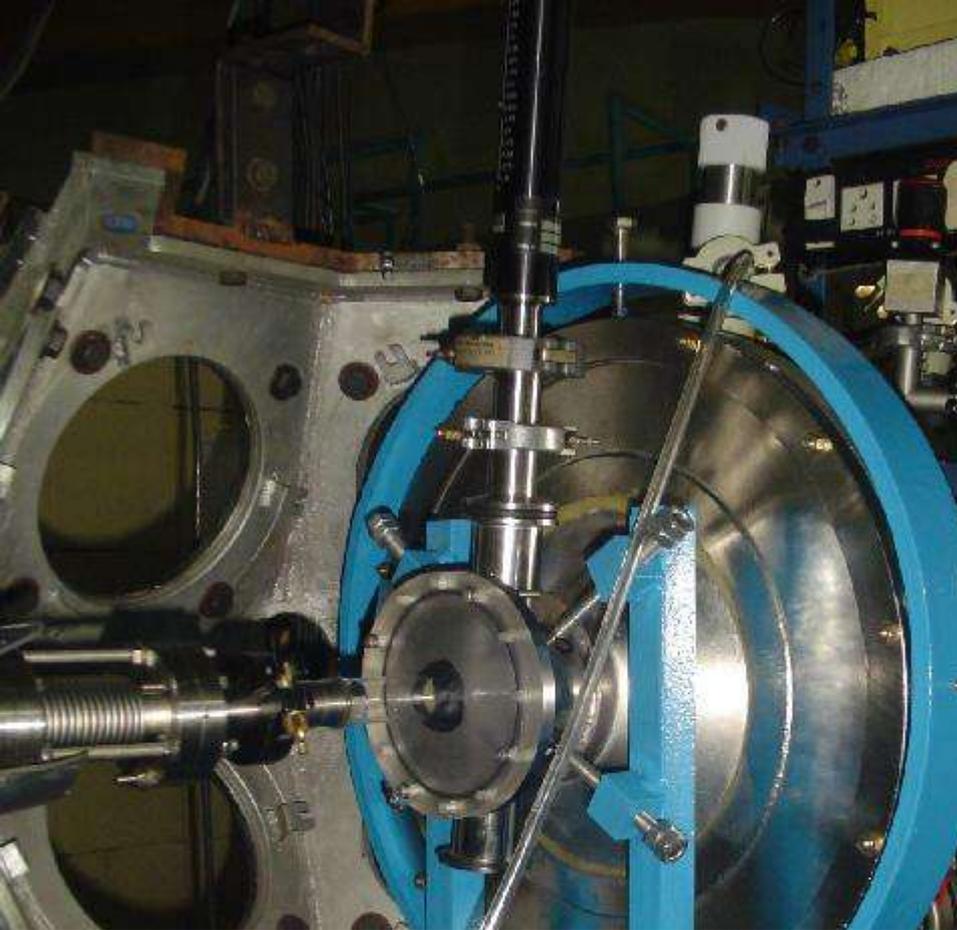
MWPC Pulse ~ 2 ns rise time

**A. Pal, S. Santra et al.,
Phys. Rev. C 99, 024620 (2019)**

**S. Santra et al.,
Phys. Rev. C 90, 064620 (2014)**

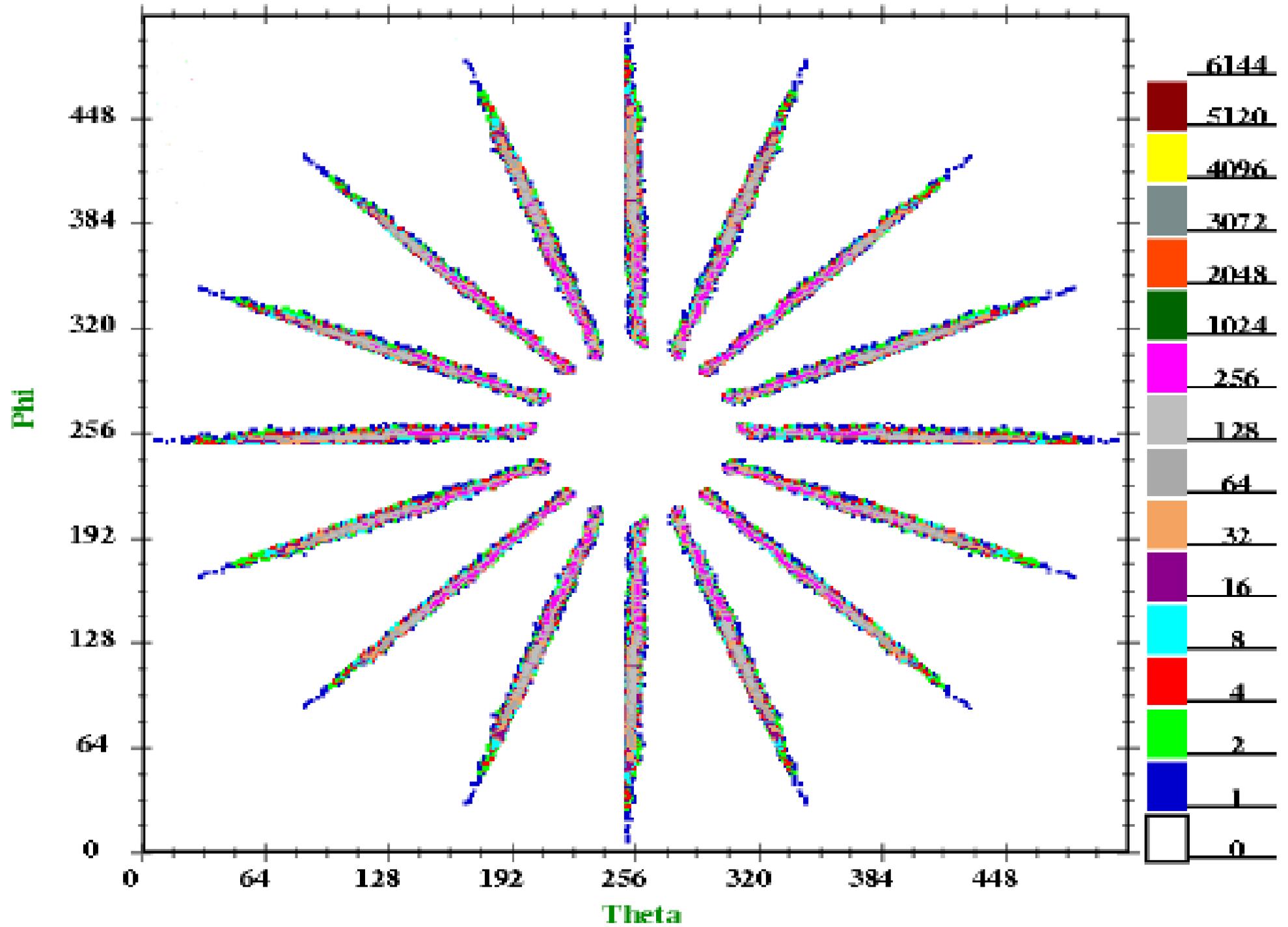




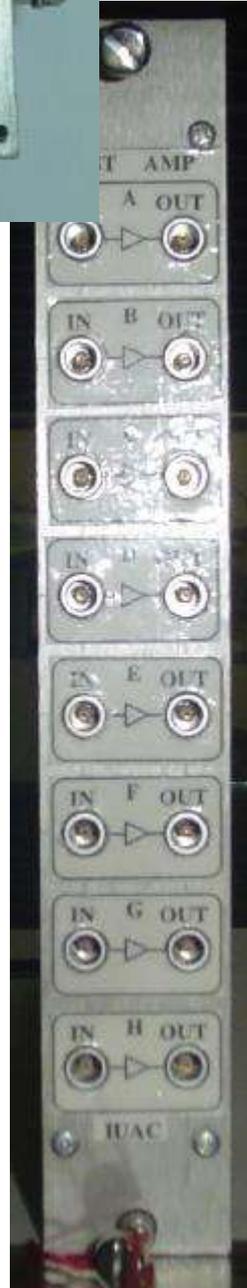
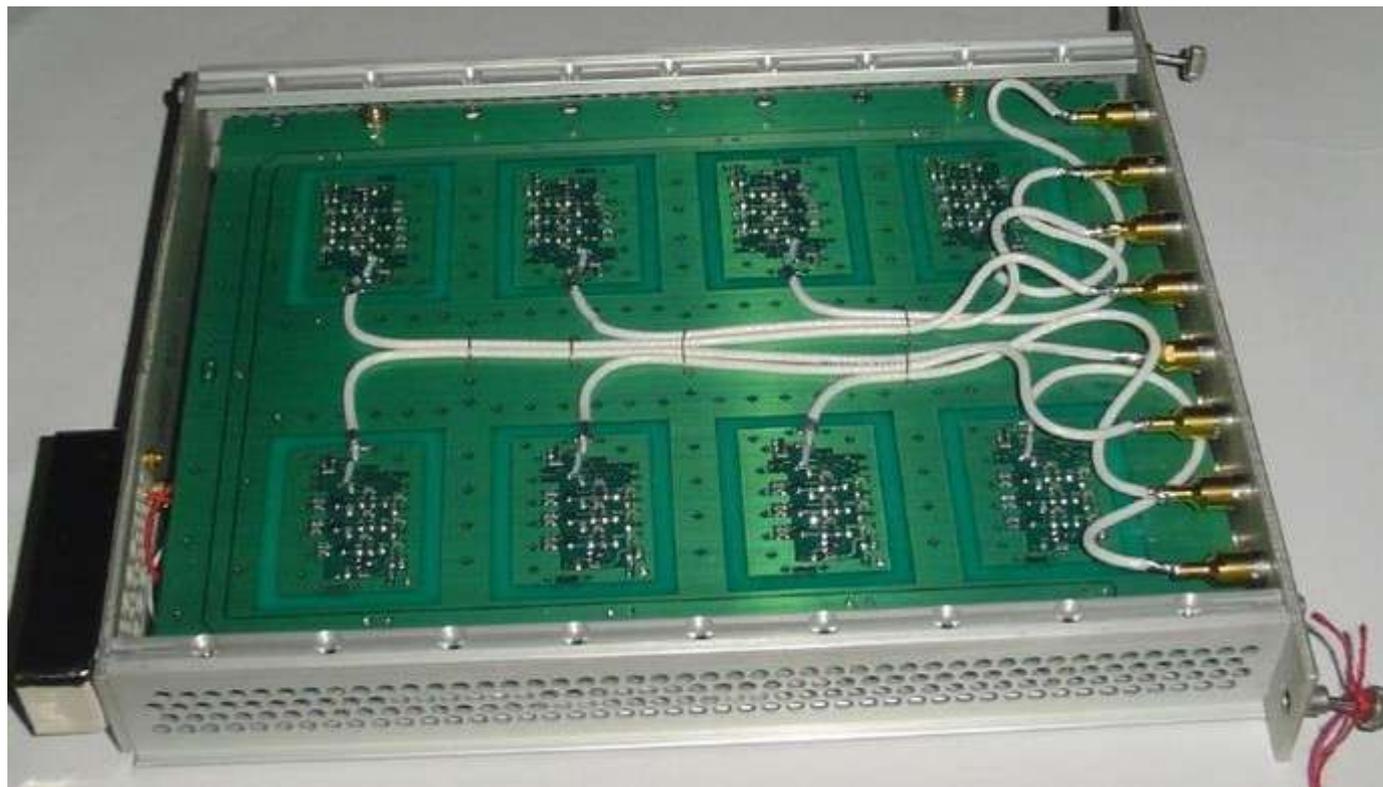
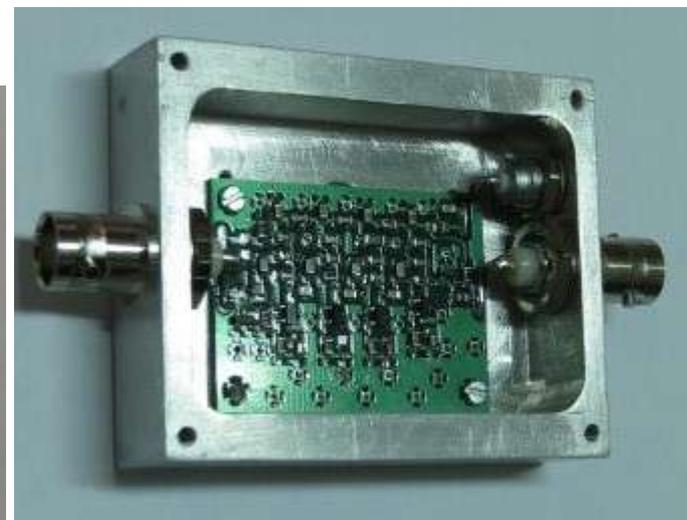


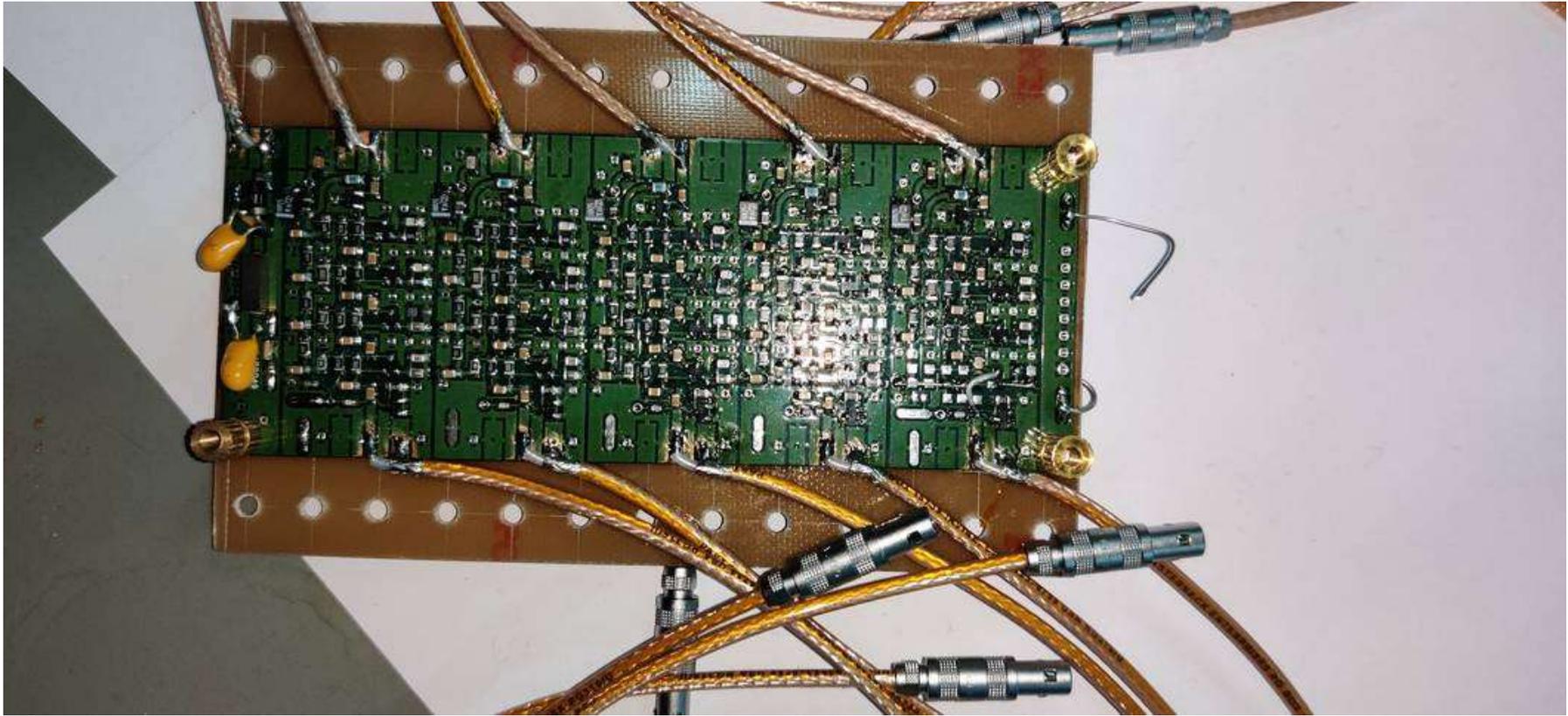
Coulex set up at GDA, IUAC

Annular PPAC

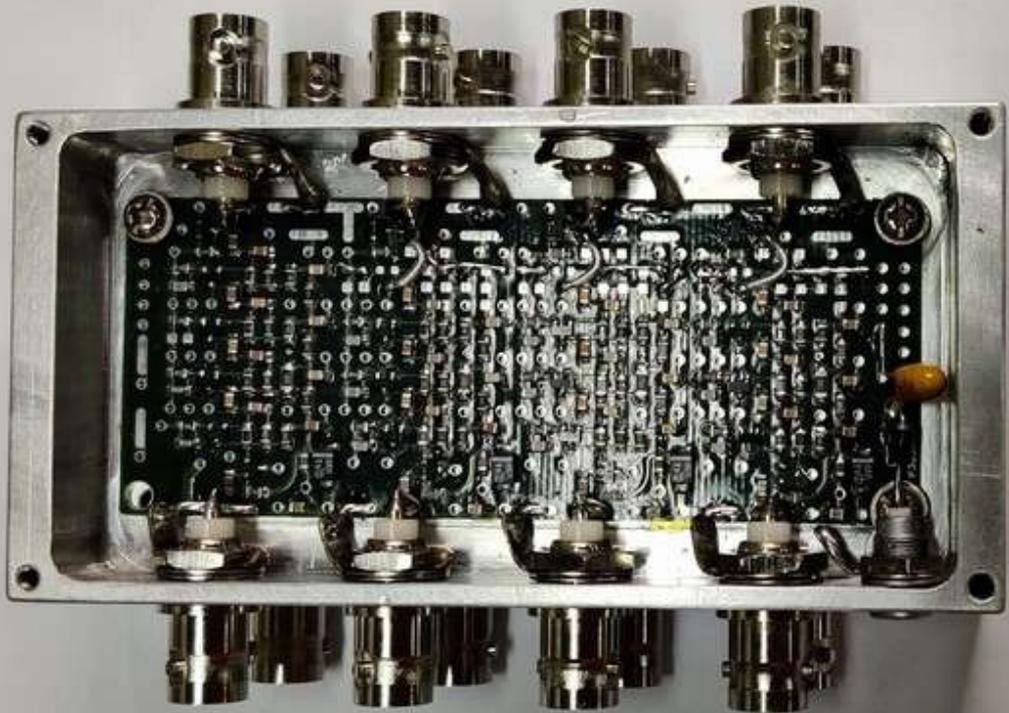


Fast timing preamplifiers of PPAC readout





Fabrication of two units of 5-channel timing amplifiers.
Light weight with no metal frame and in-vacuum operation.
Assembled on copper clad FR4 board.
Replaced the older units (10 year old)

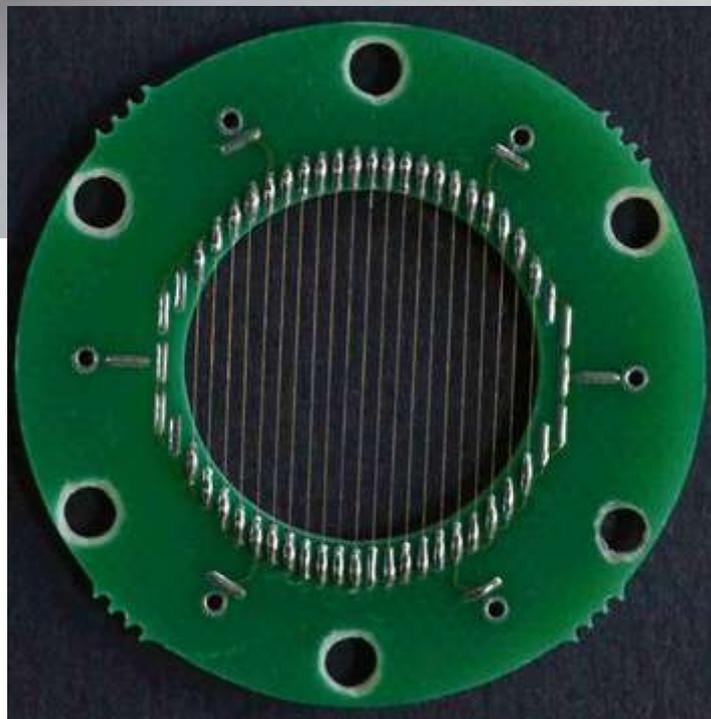
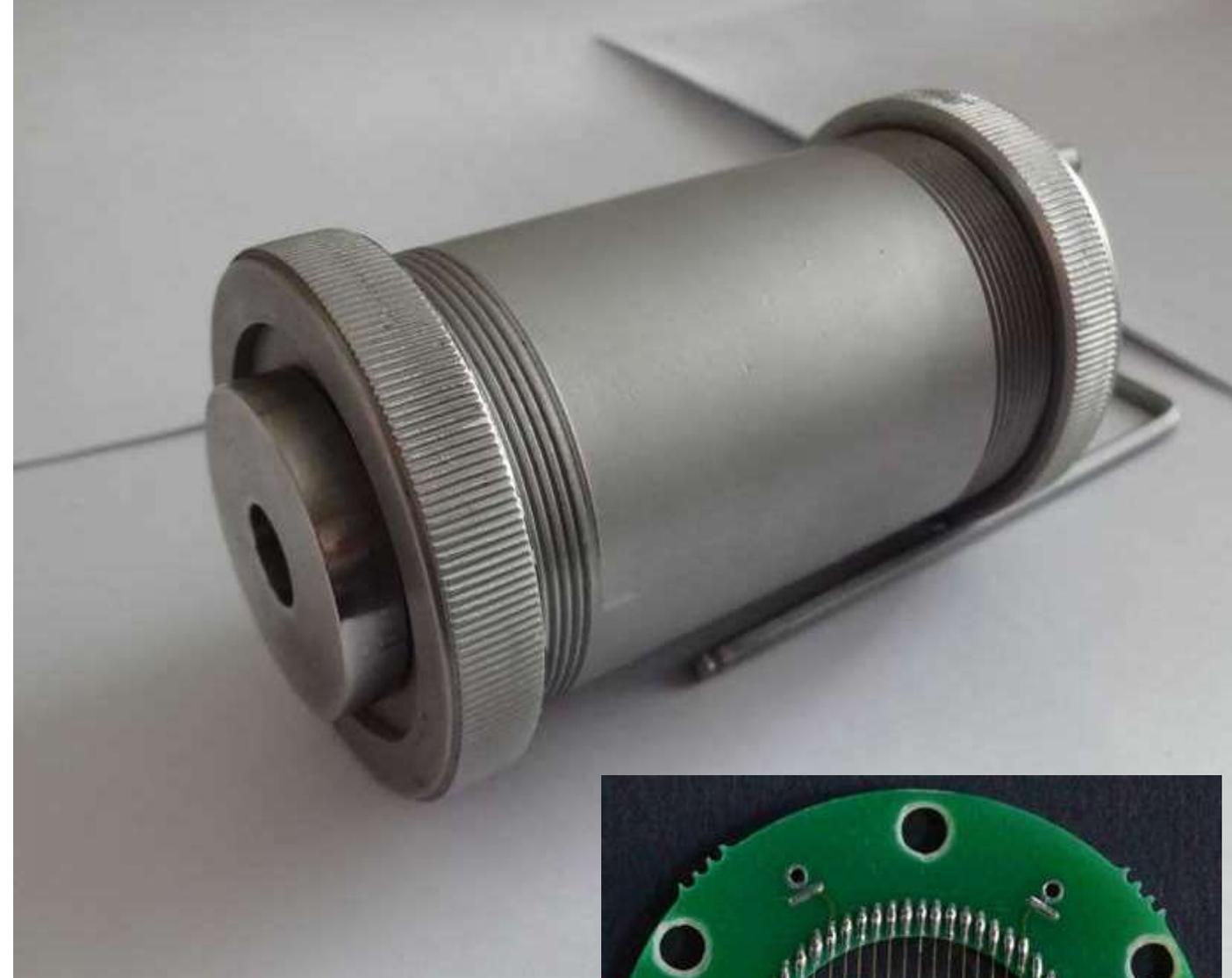


LEIBF Molecular Physics

Development of 8 channel fast timing amplifier for HEX-anode MCP

A. Jhingan, M. Kumar, C. P. Safvan, Pragya, Mech. Workshop IUAC

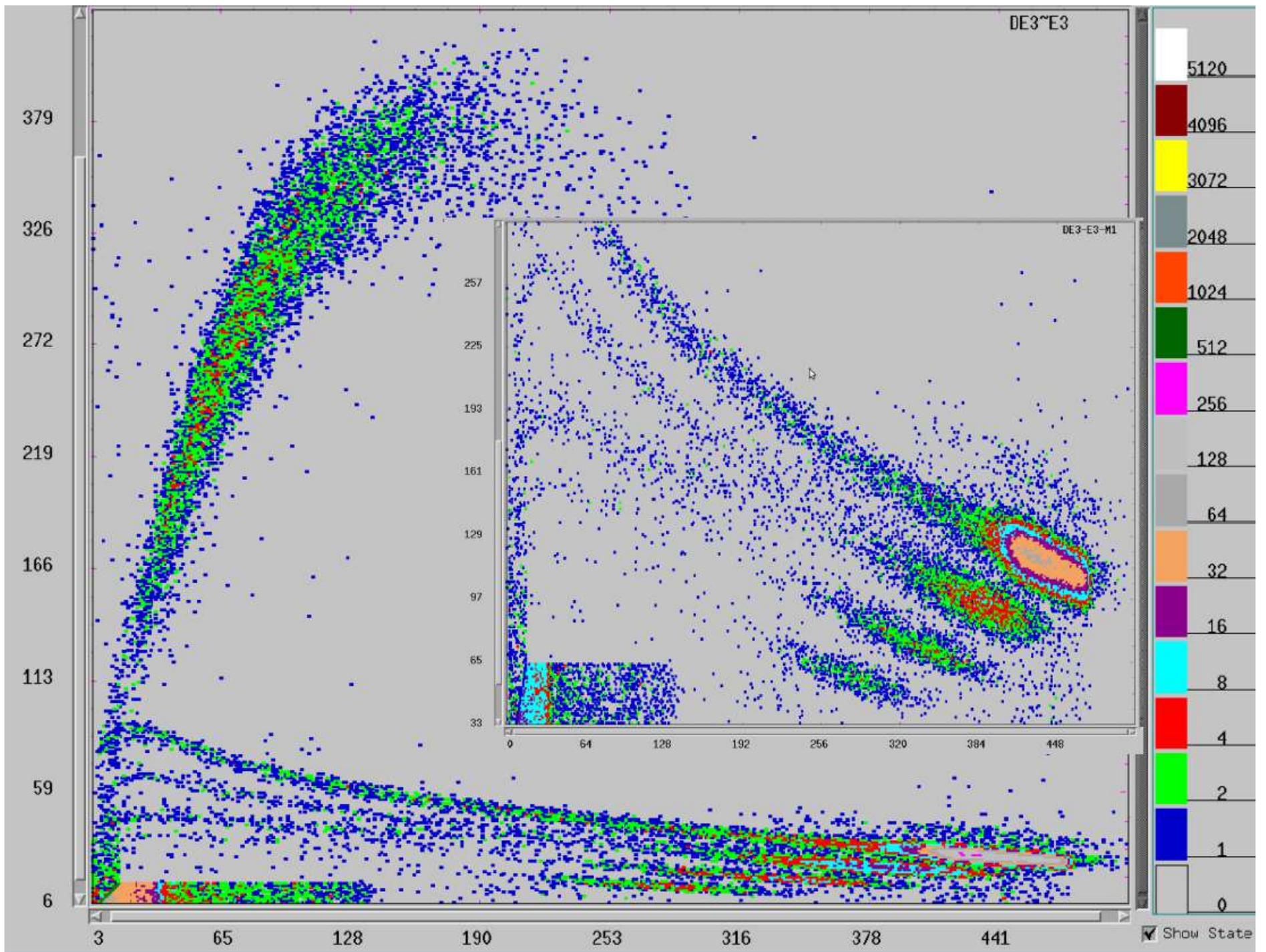
8 channel (4 x 2) FTA developed. 6 inverting and 2 non-inverting channel.
Final assembly to proceed.



Various parts of Hybrid telescope



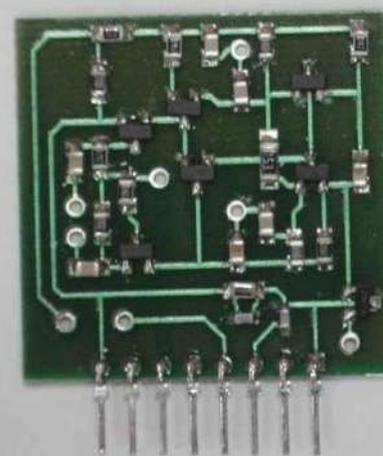
Setup for quasi-elastic scattering and angular/barrier distribution 2014



19F + 194Pt



Charge Sensitive Preamplifiers



Detector system for Multi-nucleon Transfer (MNT) Reactions in GPSC

Absolute *TOF* measurements using start stop MWPC

Ionization chambers (IC) for ΔE - E measurements to identify Z (projectile-like)

MWPC prepared with 0.3 *mm* wire pitch for faster timing.

Angular distribution, velocity, energy and total energy, along with kinematic

Coincidence between projectile and target like particles

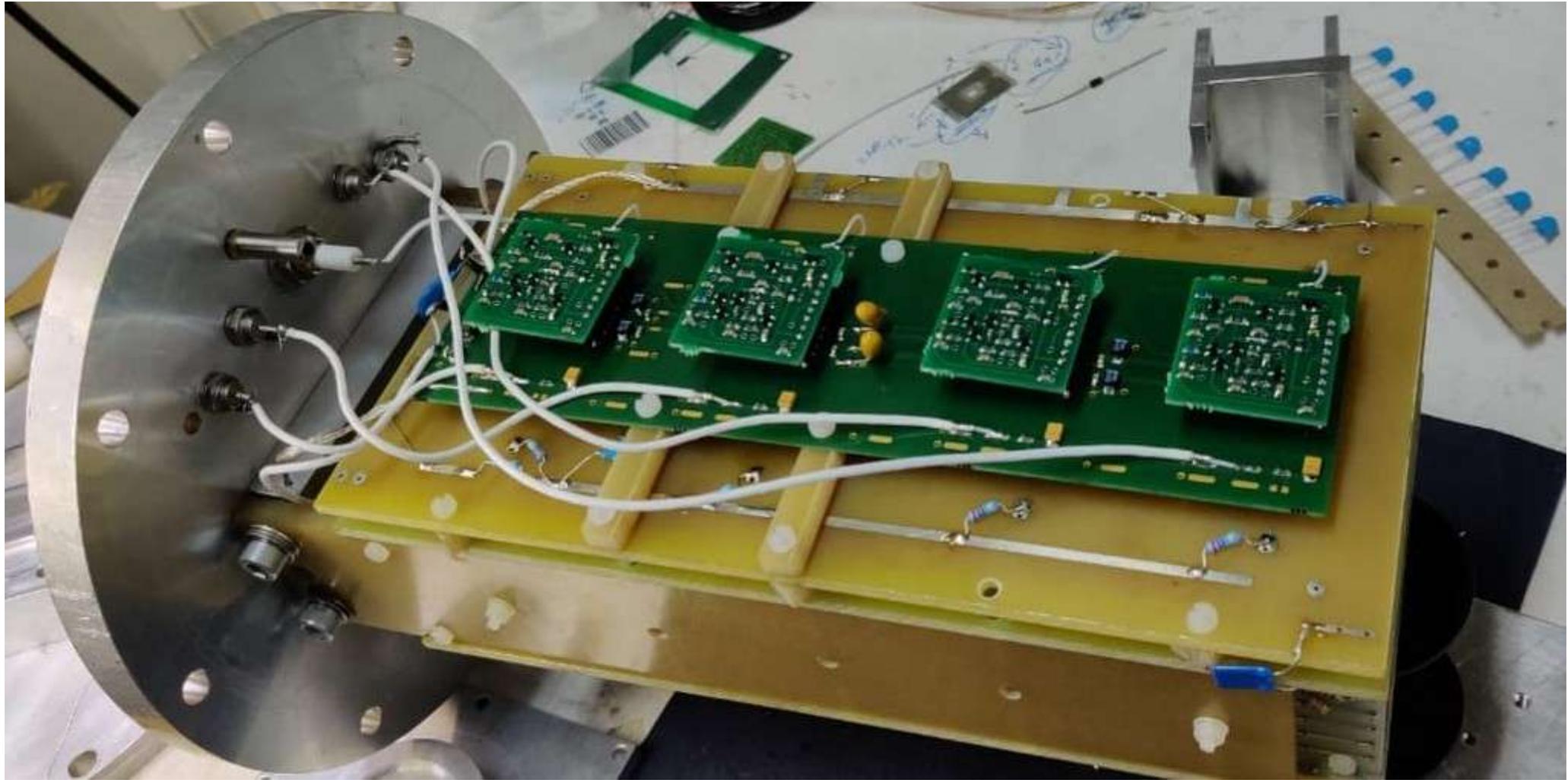


MNT setup for below barrier



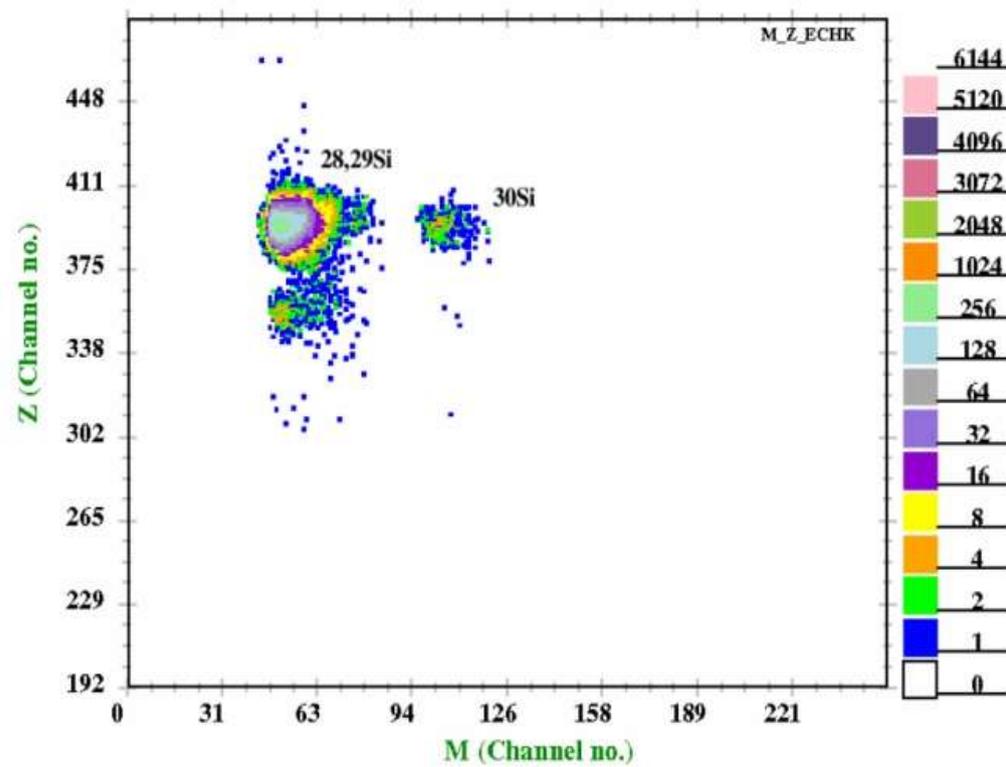
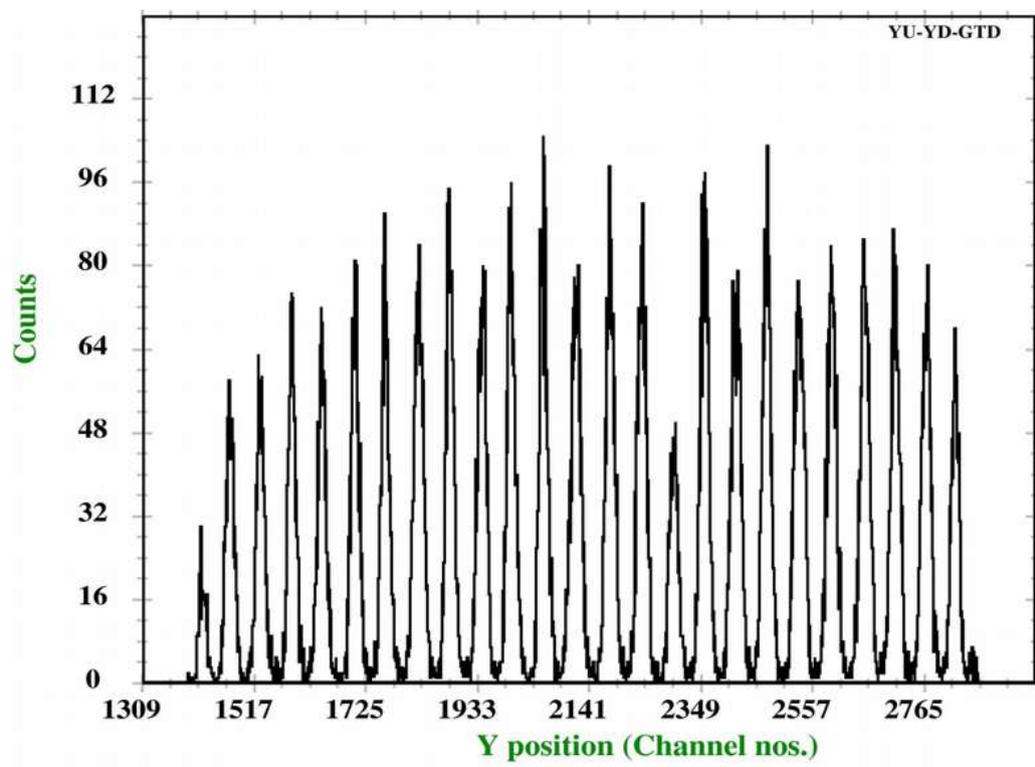
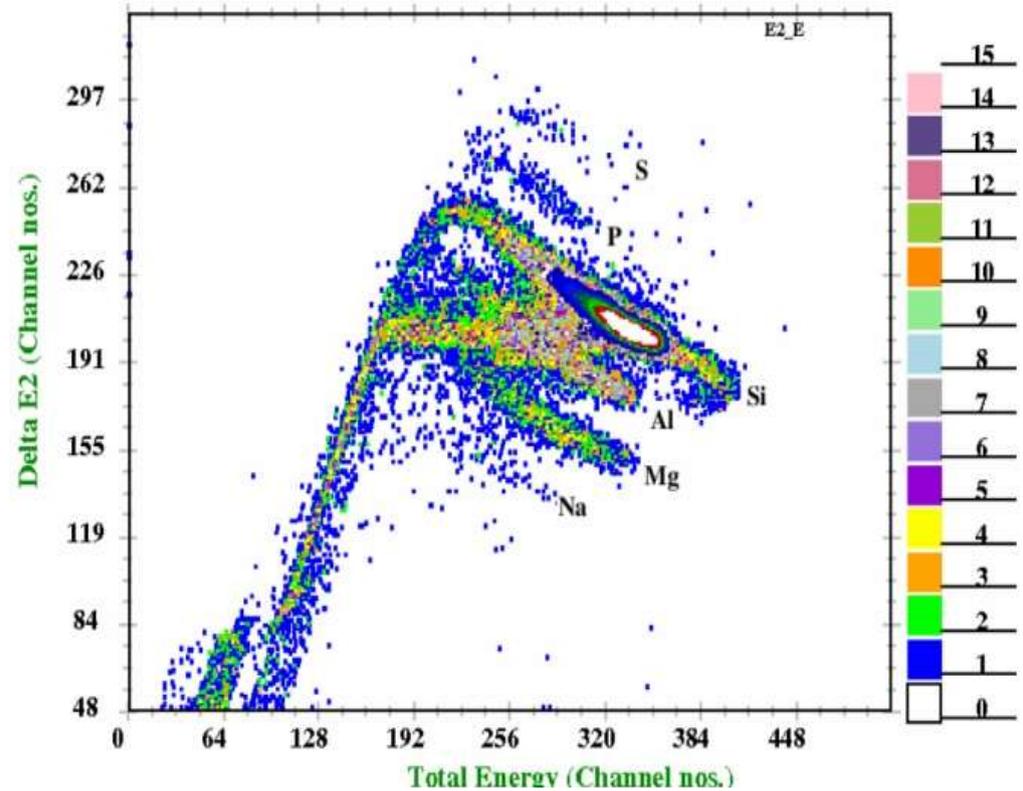
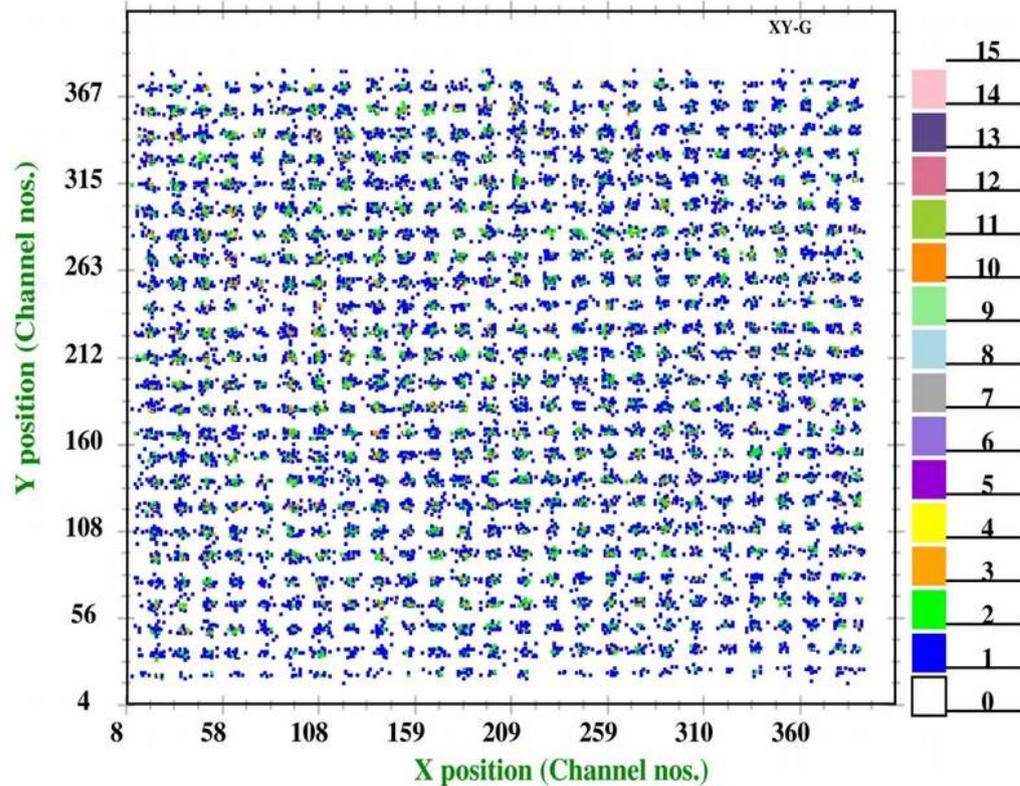
MNT setup for above barrier

Testing of CSPA units in gas volume with transverse field IC

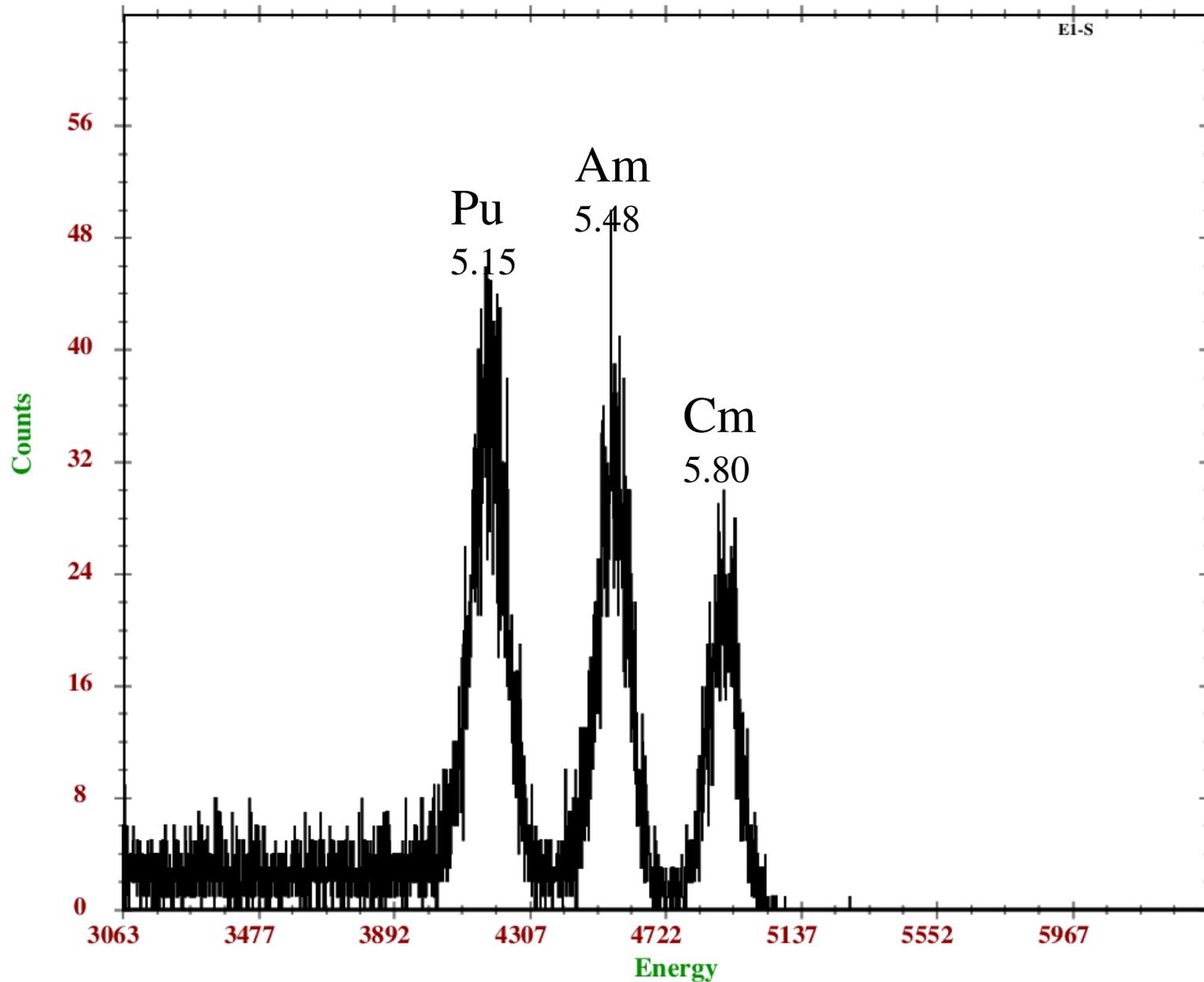


Transverse field segmented anode IC with integrated CSPA
4 segments: 3,6,6,6 *cm*

Detector operated with iso-butane @ 90 – 125 *mbar*



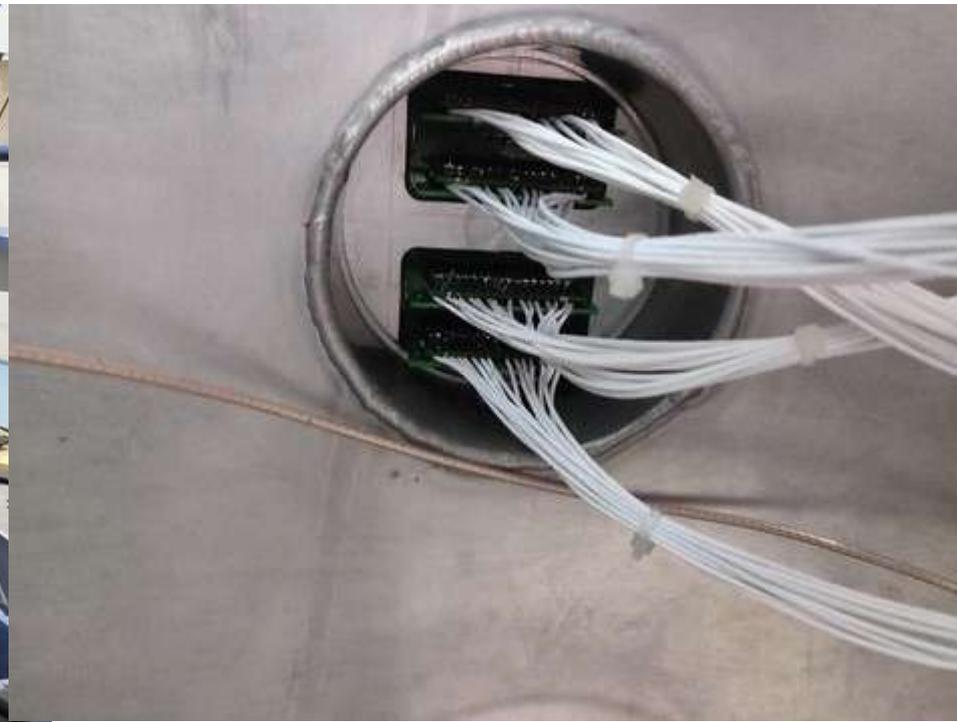
Pu-Am-Cm



Energy Resolution: 2% (108 keV) for 5.48 MeV ^{241}Am , 90 mbar iso-butane
Improvement by a factor of $\sim 20\%$ in comparison with external CSPA units

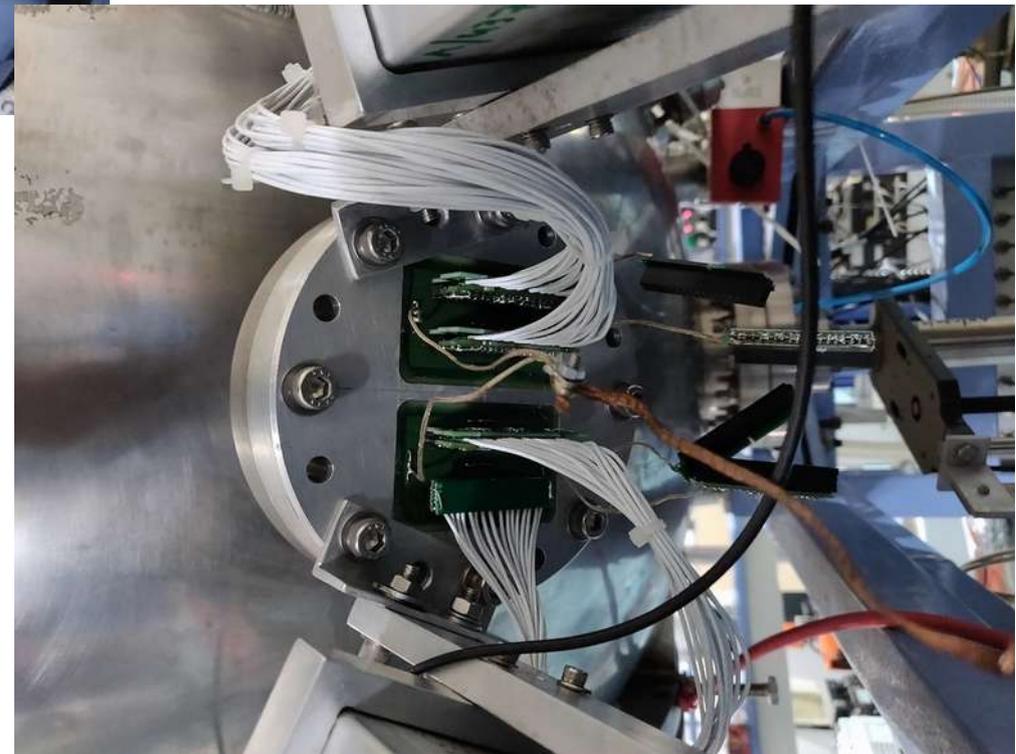


Experimental setup for Transfer Induced Fission

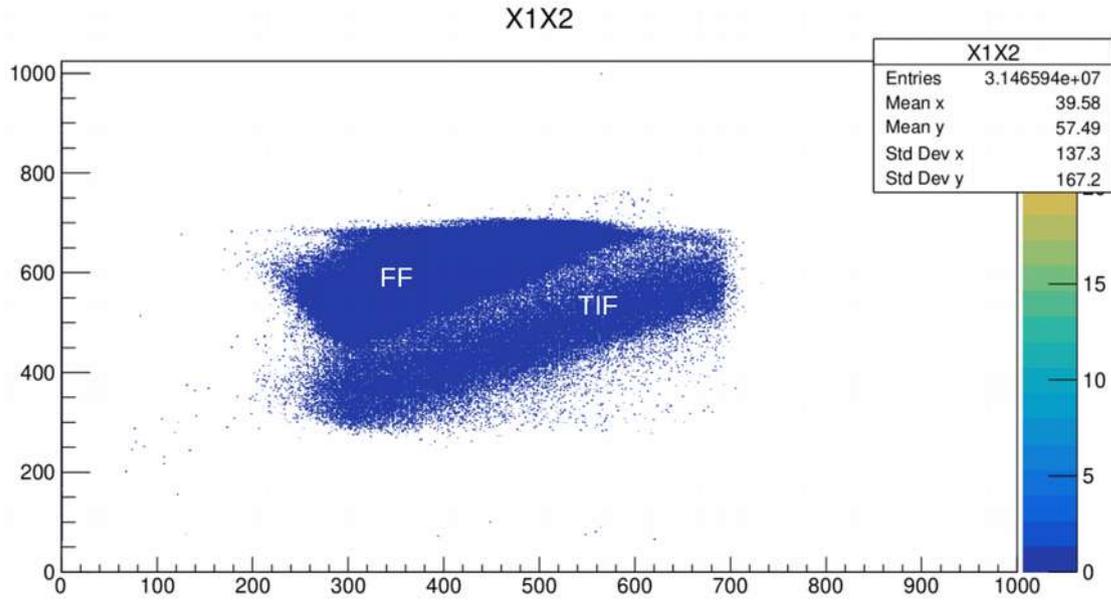


Preamplifier System, Feehthru flange and signal cabling system.

Acknowledgement:
Mechanical Workshop IUAC

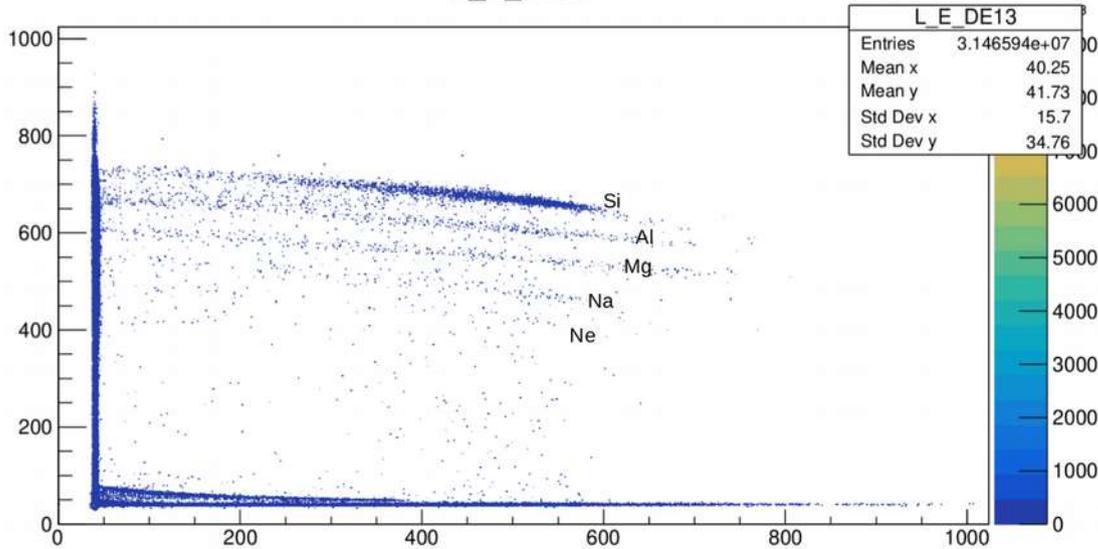


Fission fragment folding angle correlation

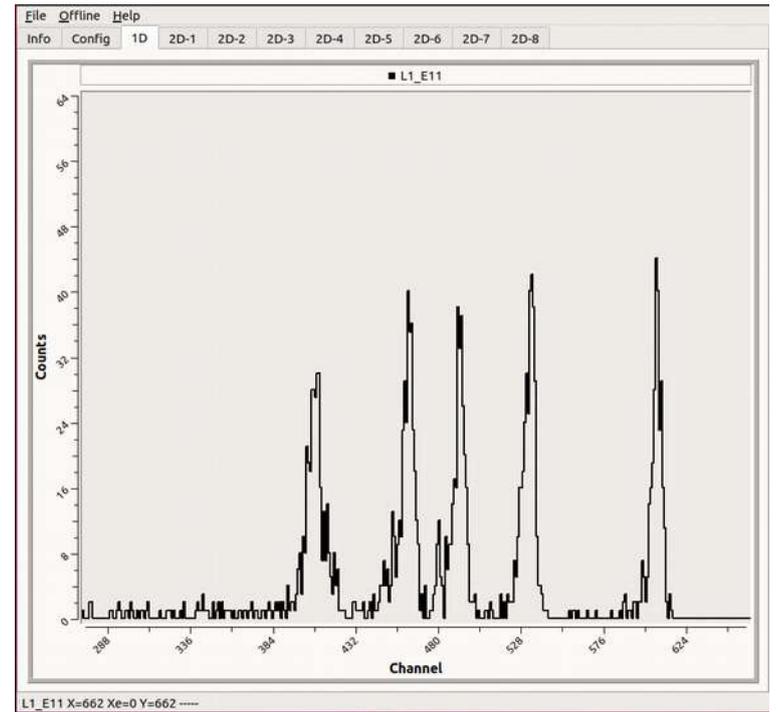


FF: Fusion-Fission, TIF: Transfer Induced Fission

L_E_DE13

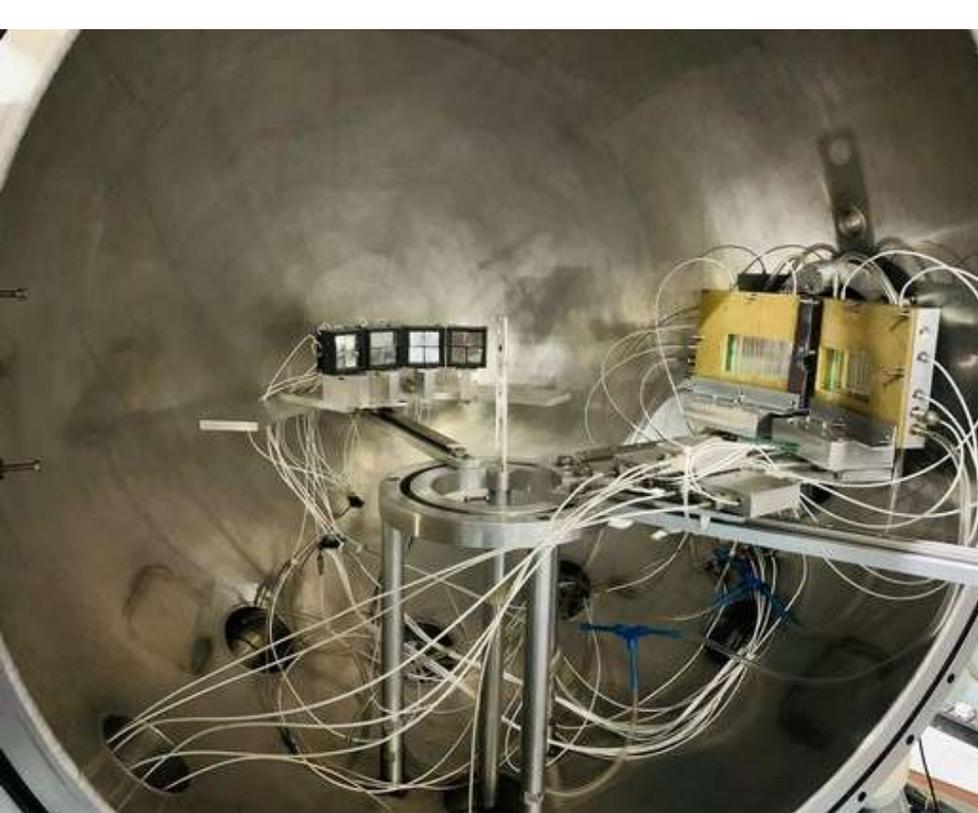


ΔE -E plot for one pixel of strip detector (16x16) telescope
Transfer channels for projectile (^{28}Si) like particles



α - spectrum with ^{229}Th

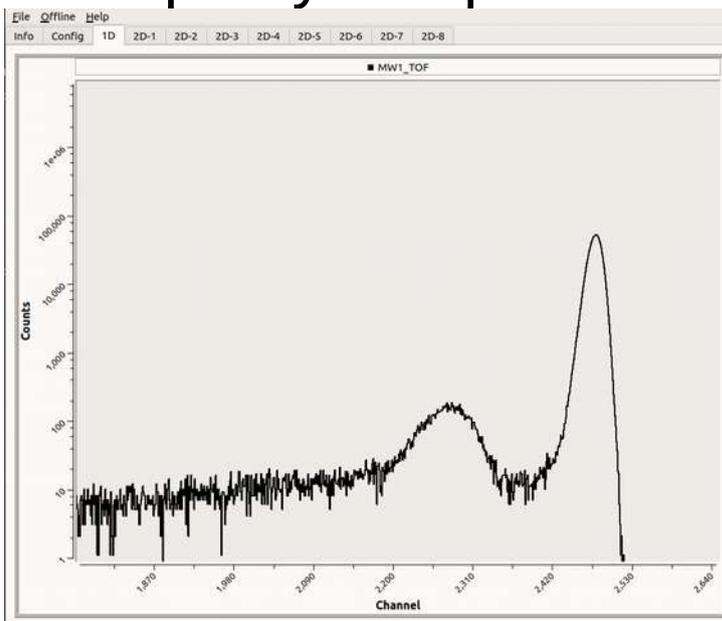
Data from $^{28}\text{Si} + ^{232}\text{Th}$



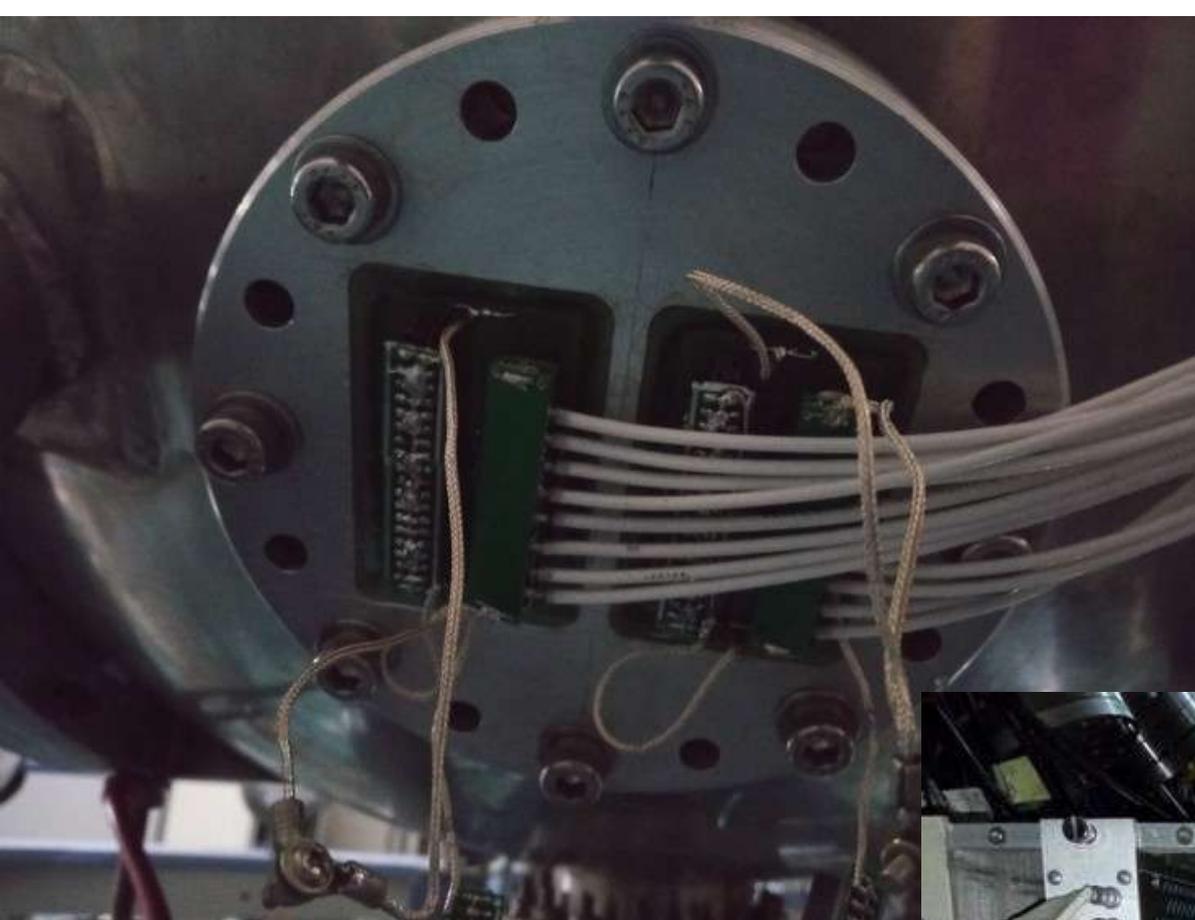
ER gated light charge particle multiplicity setup.



Fission gated light charge particle multiplicity setup.



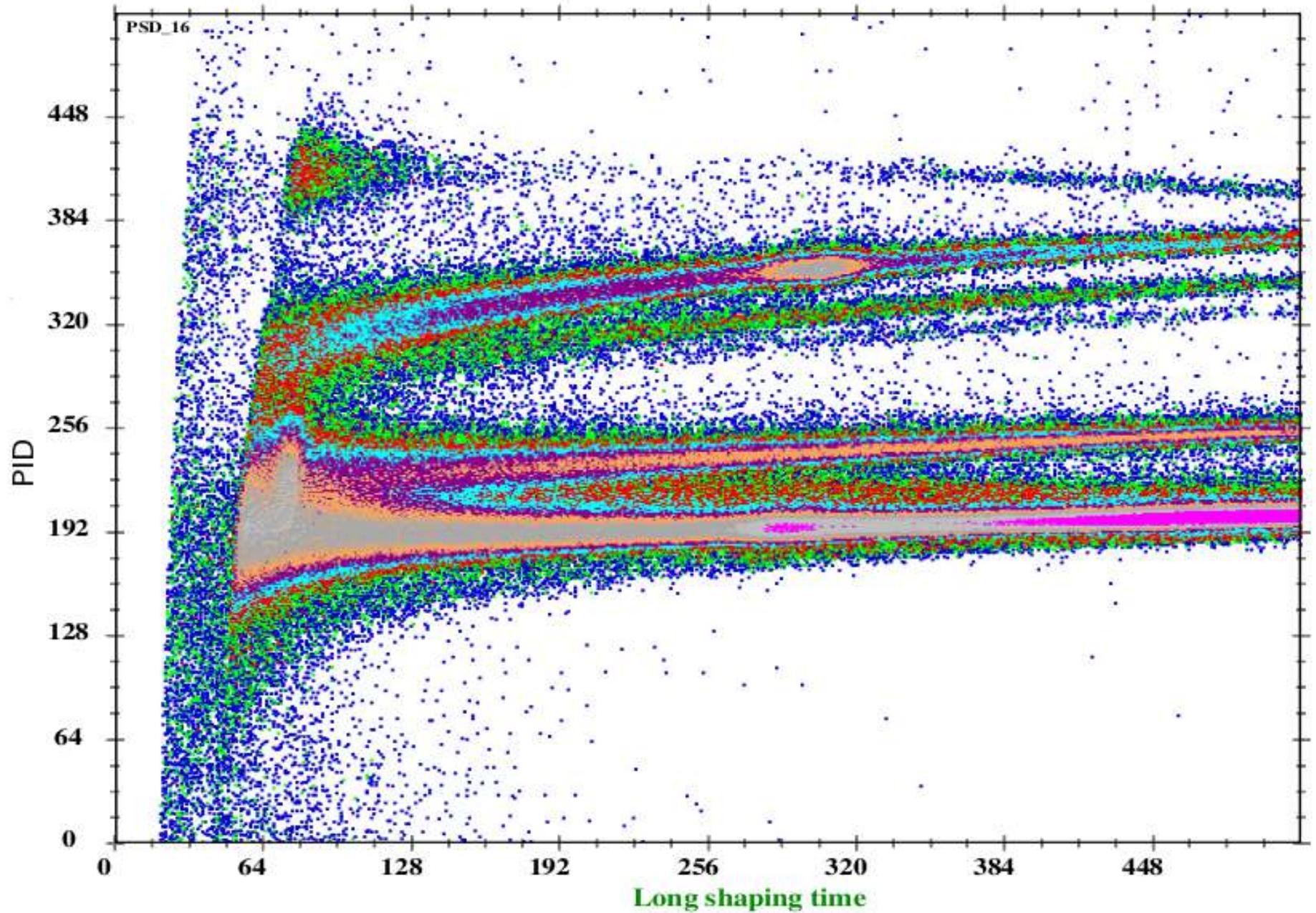
TOF spectrum at ~ 100k count rates



Signal processing

Signal extraction: CsI detectors

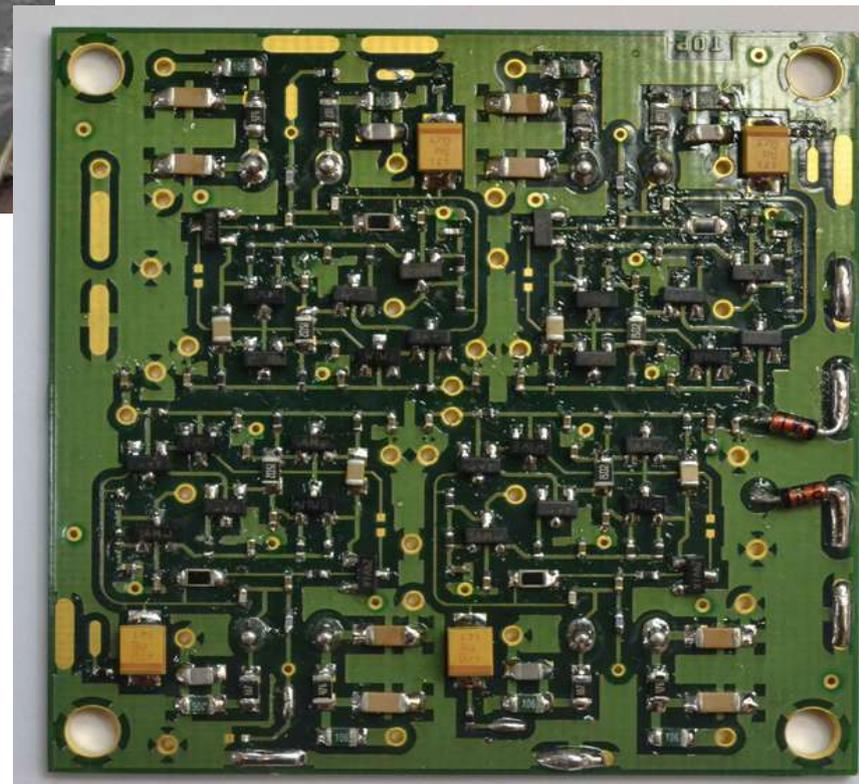


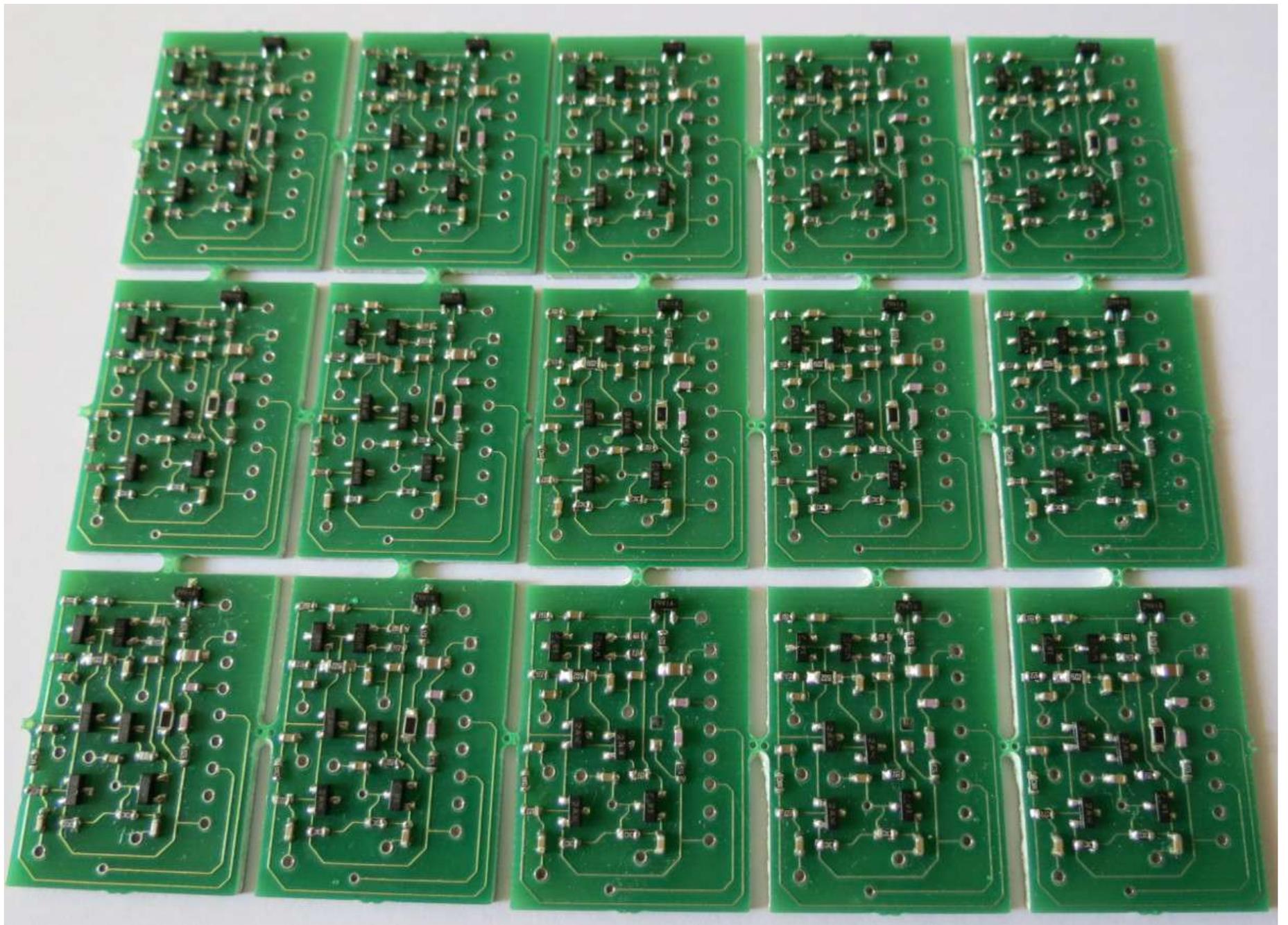




CSPA for CsI-photo-diode detectors
4 channels with bias ckt., test inputs
Area 5.5 x 5.5 cm²
Fabricated using 0402 Resistor/Capacitor

Detector target distance 15 cm





CPDA for INGA

For light charged particle gated gamma spectroscopy

Currently 32 detectors in the array mounted in Rhombicuboctahedron geometry
20 mm x 20 mm x 3 mm CsI coupled to 10 x 10 mm²

16 detectors in front hemisphere and 16 in back hemisphere

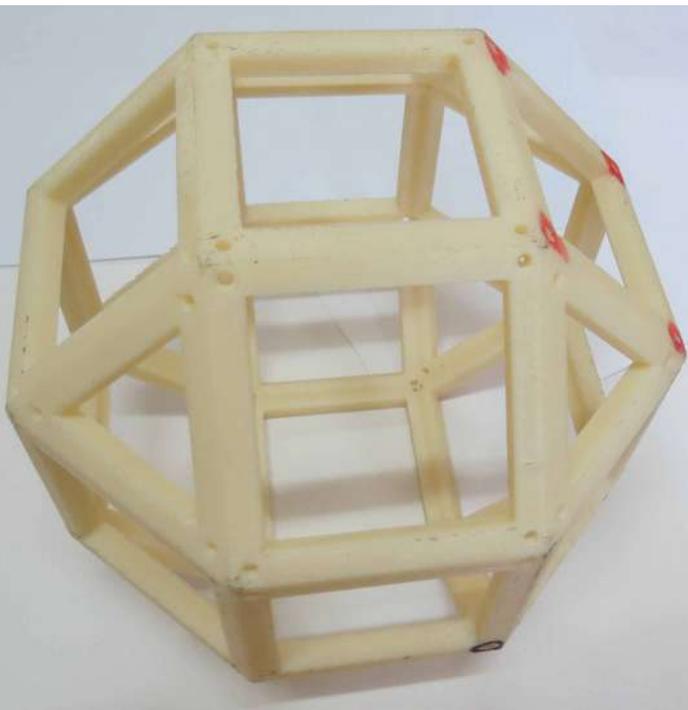
In-house developed low power charge sensitive preamplifier (CSPA) units

Low noise CSPA units (~ 30 mW/unit) operated inside vacuum

Particle identification performed using ballistic deficit technique using
Long (3 μ s) and Short (0.5 μ s) shaping times.

Differential driver units developed for driving signals.

Array used in experiments recently



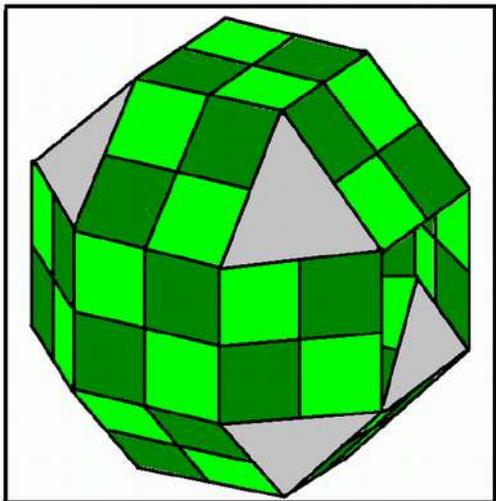
Rhombicuboctahedron
Plastic mounting



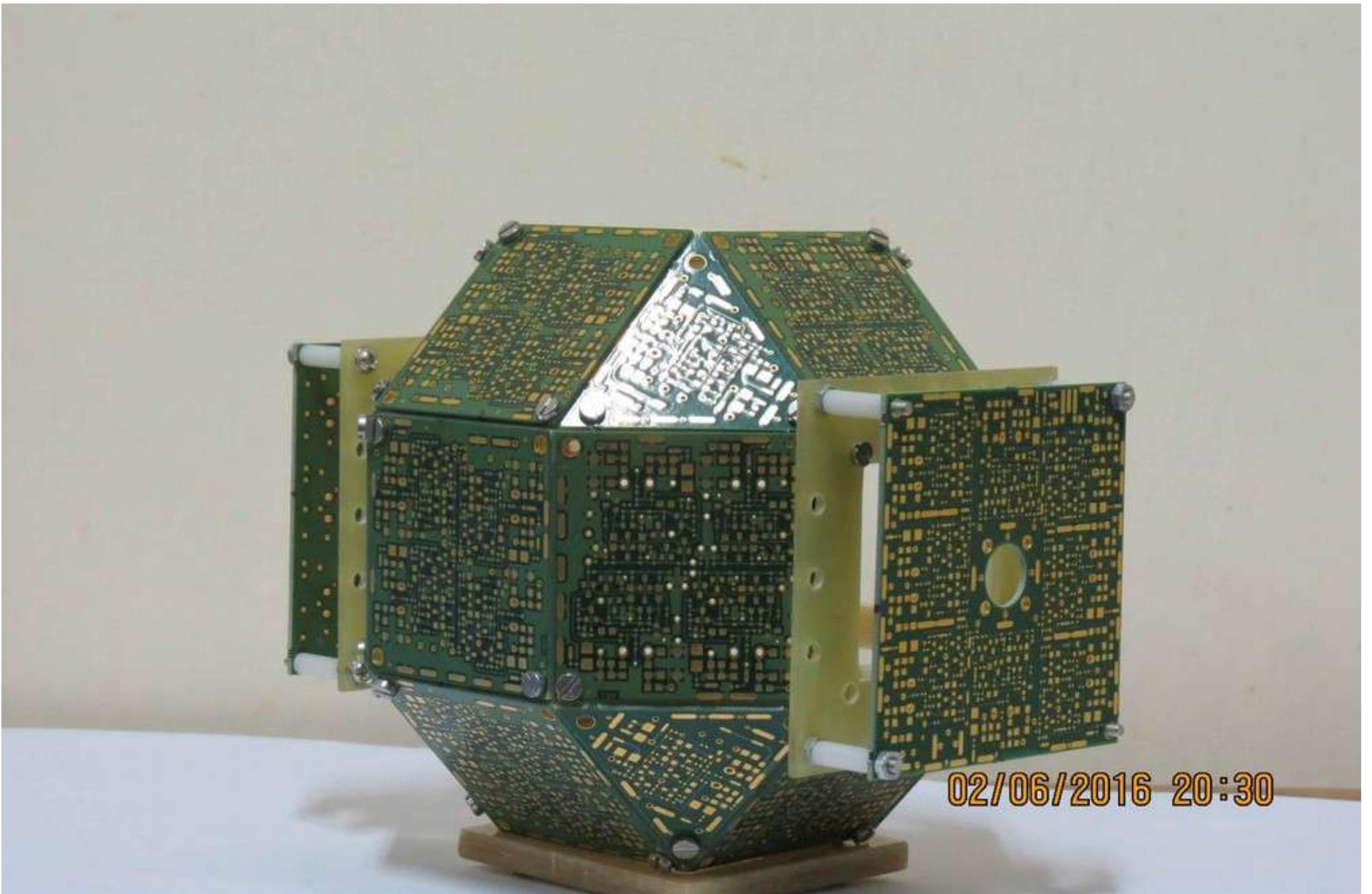
4-channel preamplifier
Card. CsI detectors
Plugged on the other side



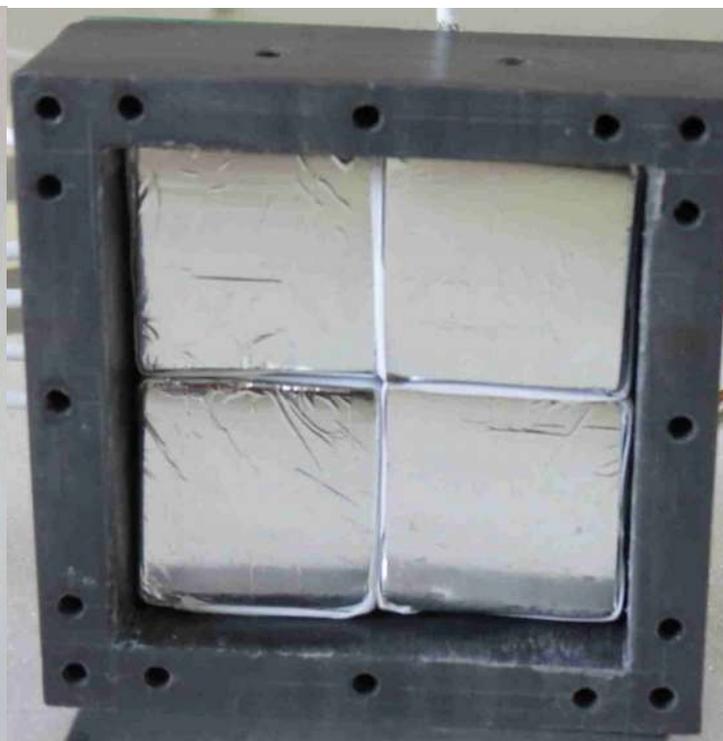
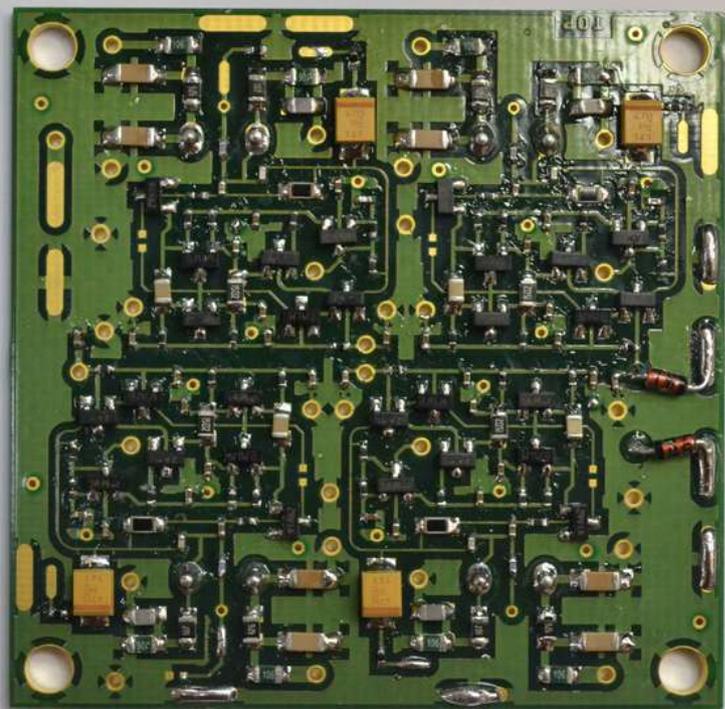
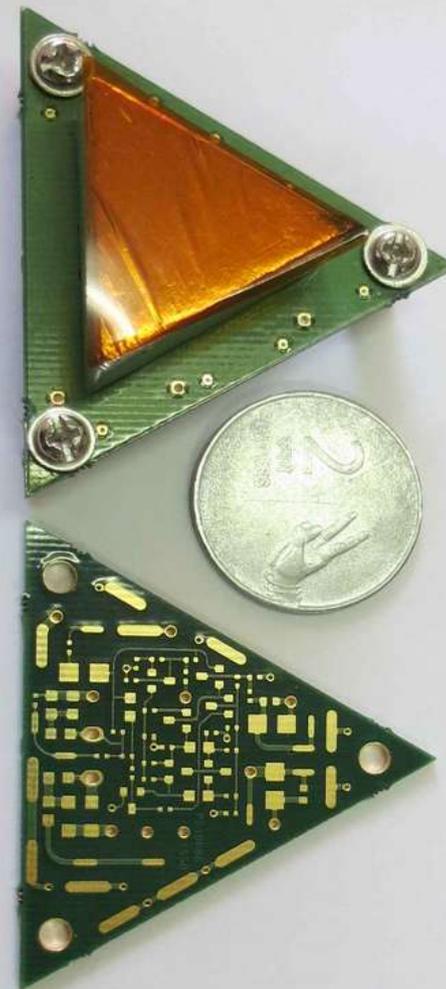
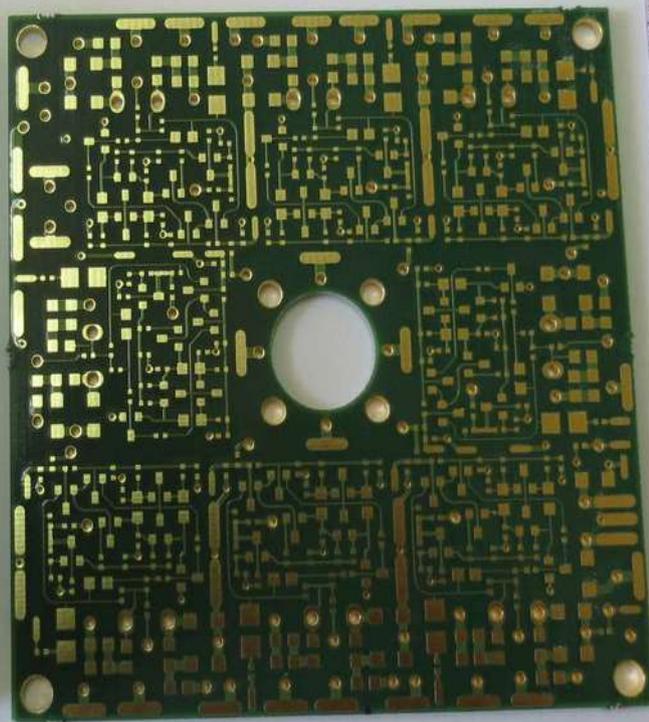
4 CsI detectors plugged
on the CSPA board.



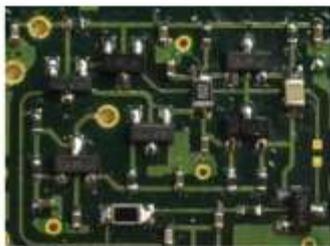
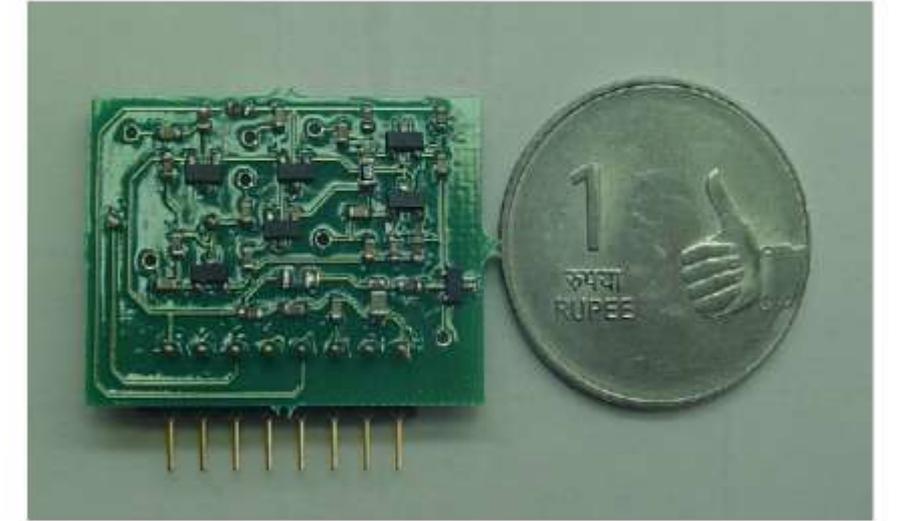
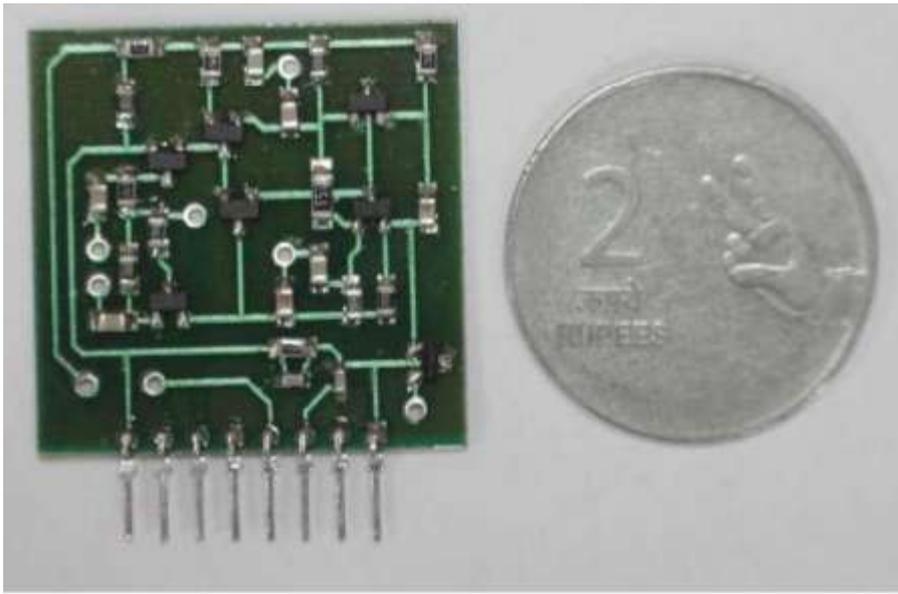
Mounting scheme of CsI Detectors
4 detectors on each face of rhombicuboctahedron structure



Rhombicuboctahedron structure for CsI

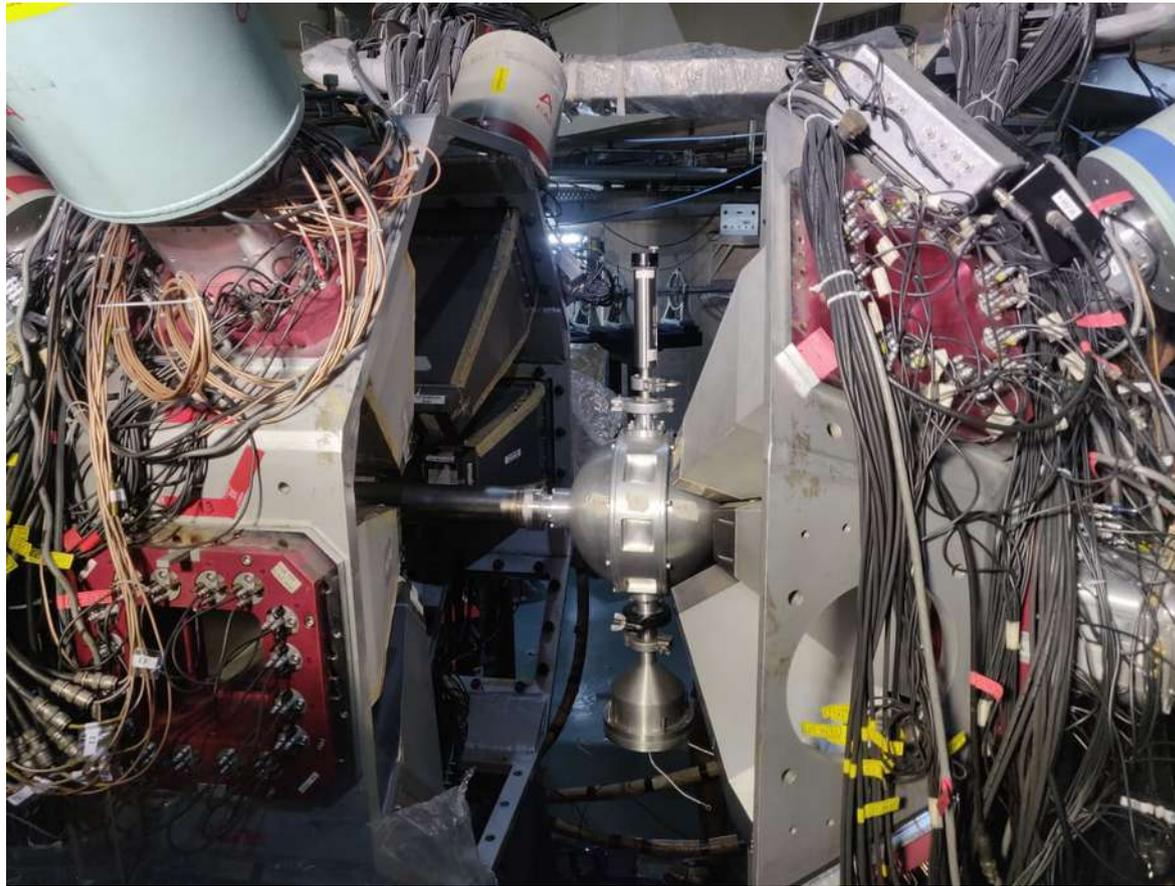


Assembly Config.
of CsI coupled to
Photo diode

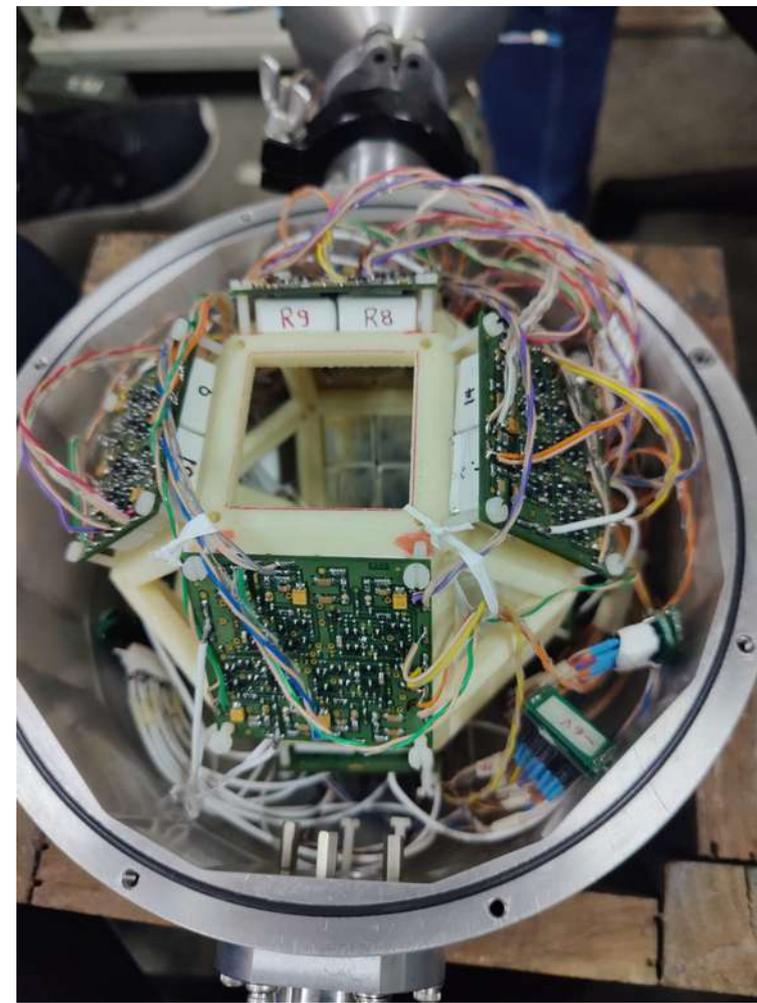


CSPA Hybrids

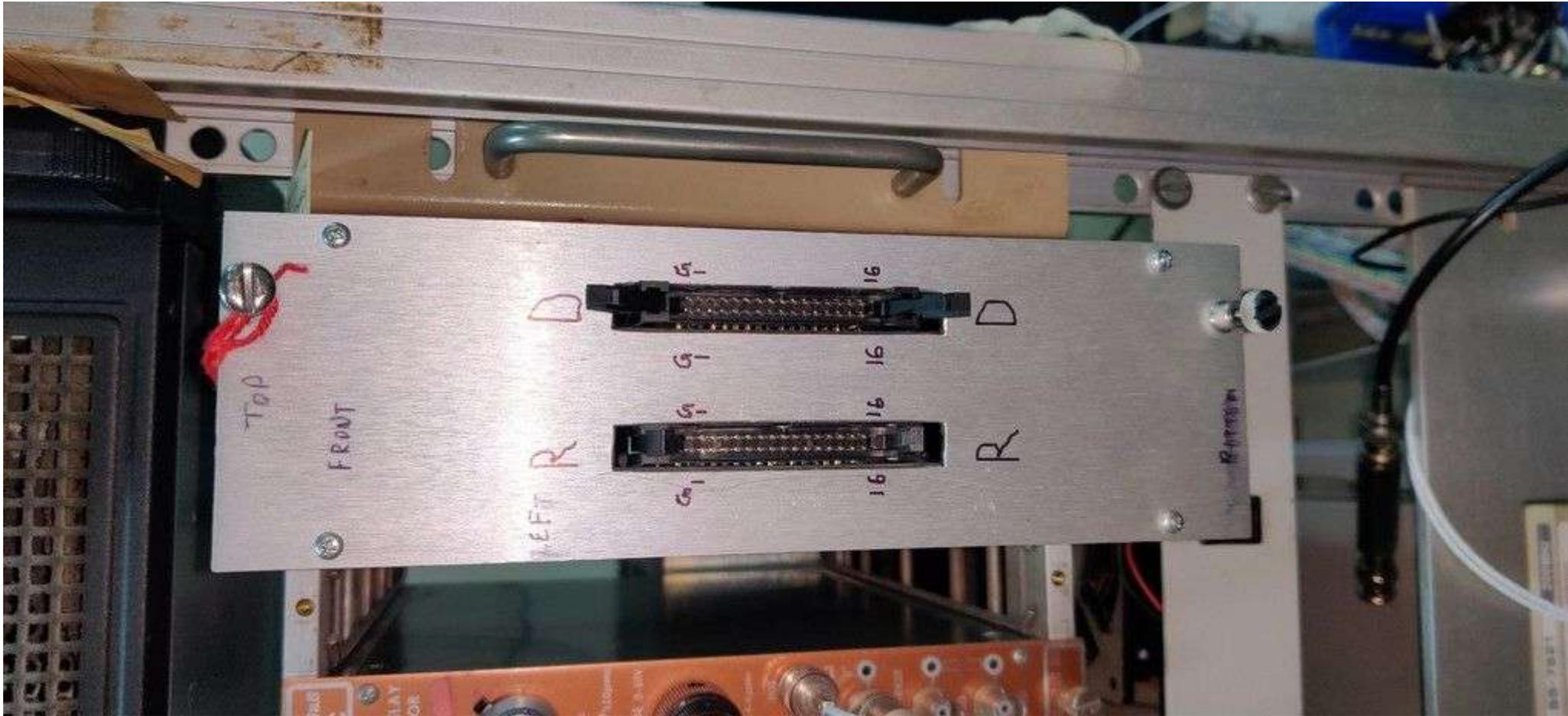




Spherical CPDA target chamber
Mounted inside INGA

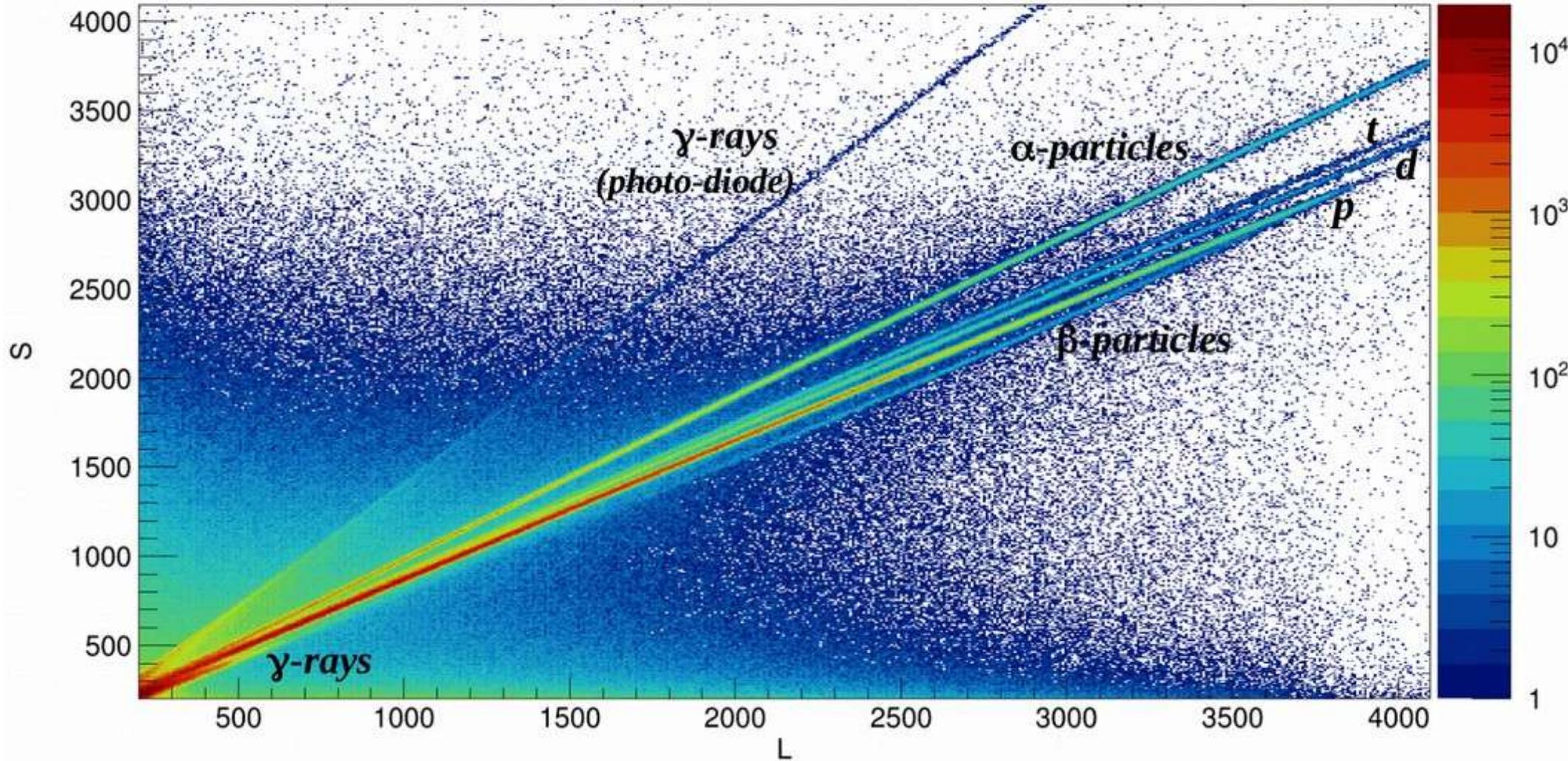


Detectors along with
preamplifiers mounted
Inside target chamber

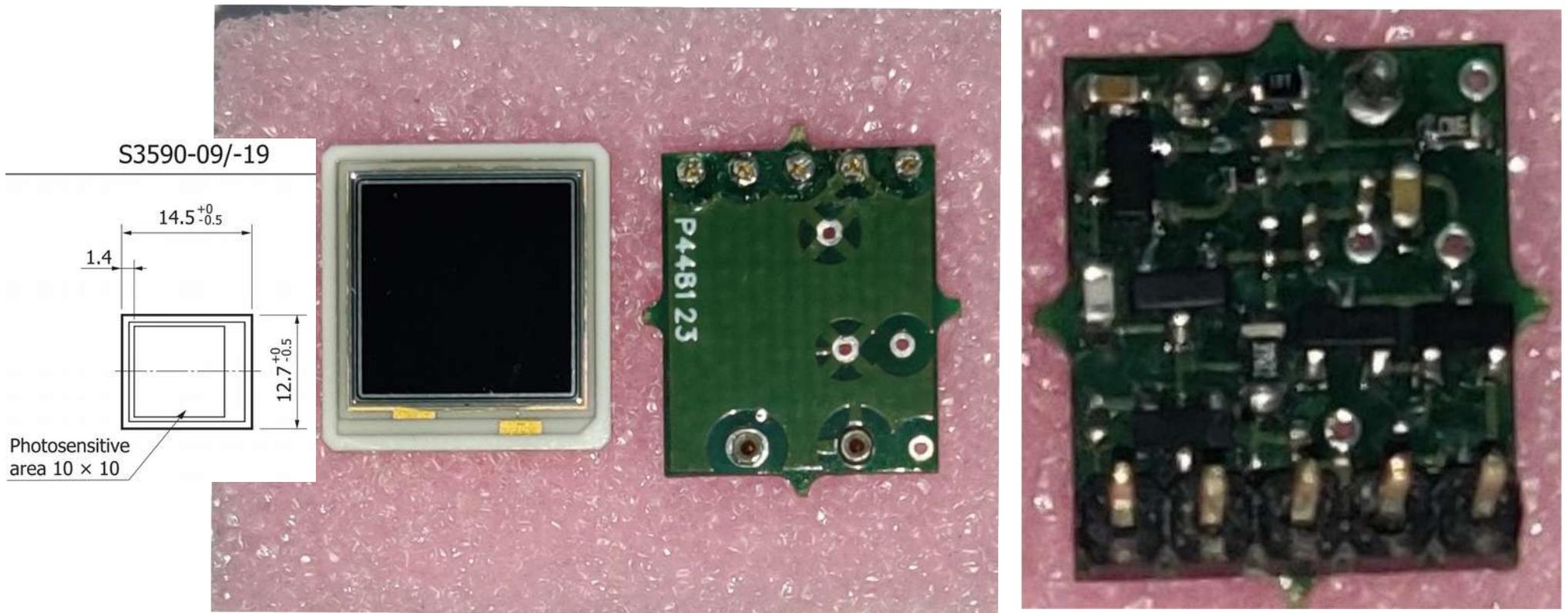


Differential receiver-driver unit for twisted pair cable signals.

L vs S



Plot between long and Short shaping time for particle identification using ballistic Deficit technique.



Miniaturized CSPA units

Area $13 \times 16 \text{ mm}^2$, Power consumption 20 mW

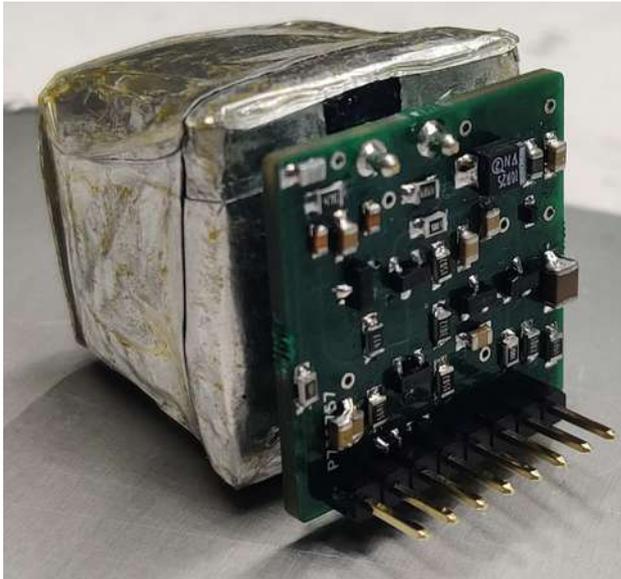
Compatible with plug in type PIN diodes (S-3590) from Hamamatsu

Tested with radioactive sources, good performance observed

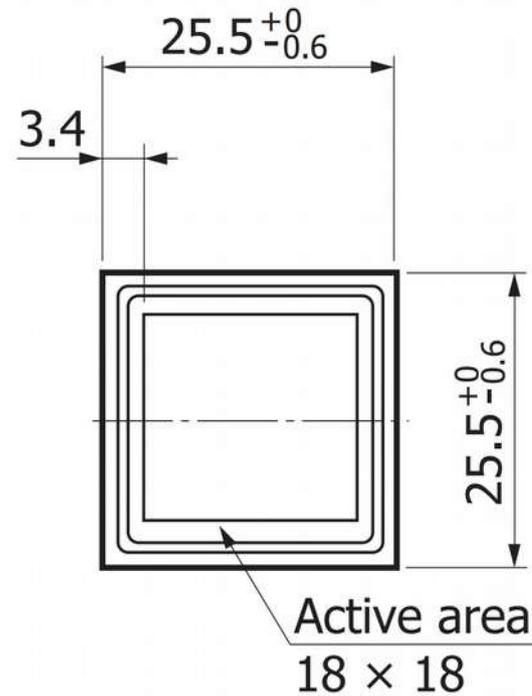
In-beam experiments to be performed

Useful for array of PIN diode and photo-diodes coupled to scintillator

S3204-08

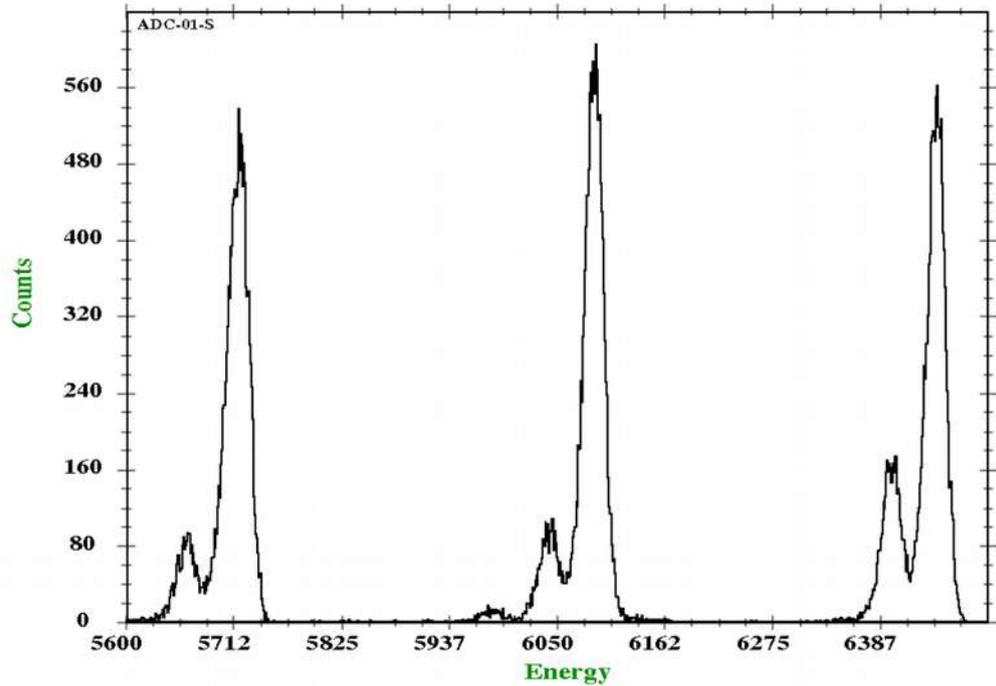


Power consumption 140 mW



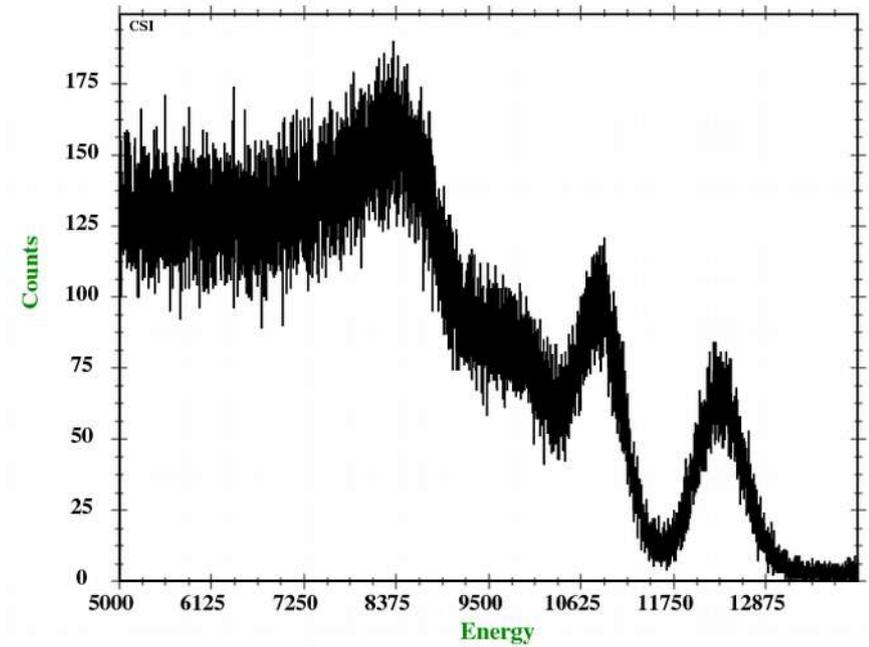
CsI – photo-diode with integrated CSPA

Pu-Am-Cm mixed alpha source

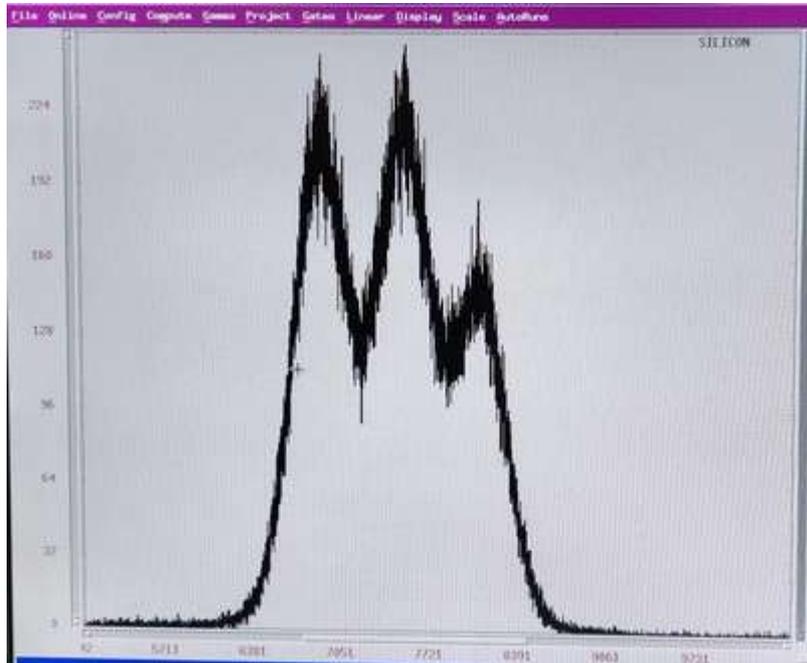


α -particle spectrum with PIN diode

CsI-15 mm crystal-Co60



γ -ray spectrum with 15 x 15 mm CsI
Coupled to 10 x 10 mm PIN diode



α -particle spectra with CsI-PIN diode
20x20 mm diode with 20x20 mm CsI

Future

Use of APDs and SiPM as replacement for PMT

APD and SiPM: efficiently used with NaI, CsI, plastic scintillators etc.

Close packed arrays possible near the target within vacuum in large scattering chambers.

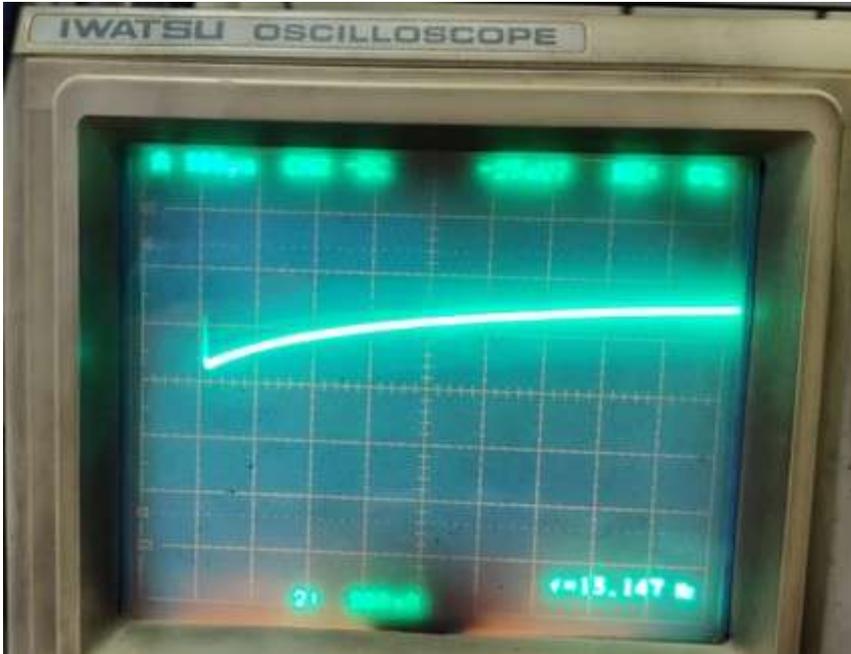
Segmented SiPM provides position sensitivity in small area crystals

Energy resolution compatible with PMT

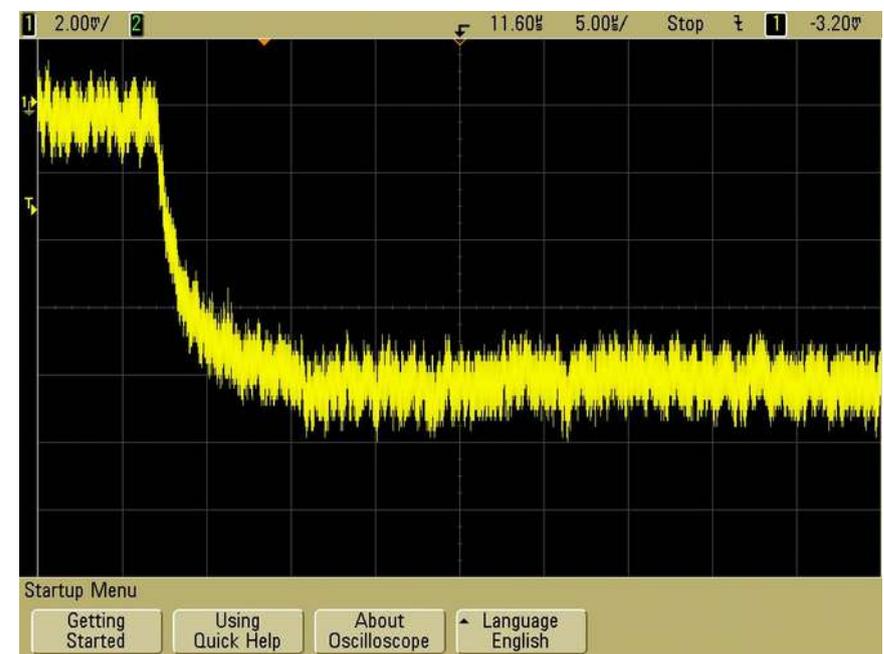
Possible to go to lower energy thresholds (~ 50 keV) with CsI-APD

Timing resolutions inferior w.r.t. PMT

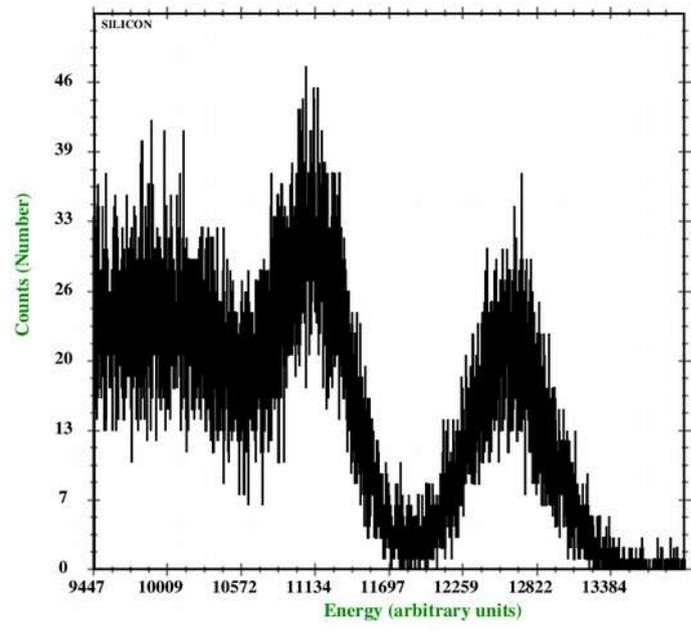
Testing of CsI with APD (IUAC + TIFR)



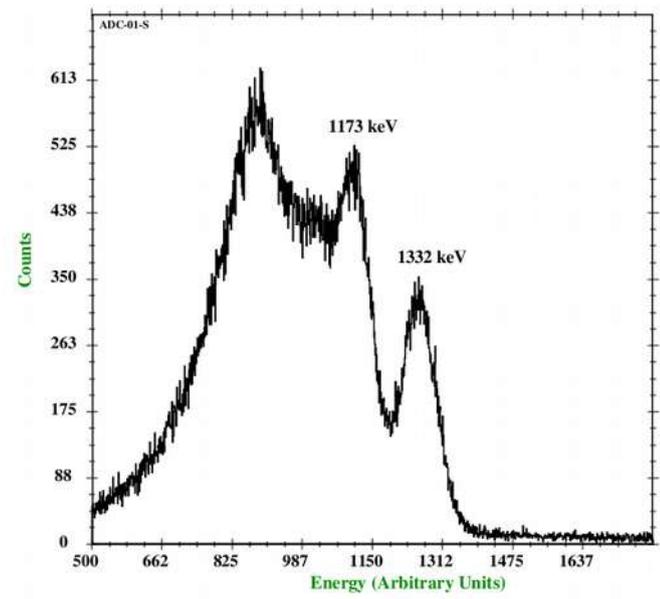
60Co-APD-CsI



60Co-CsI detector

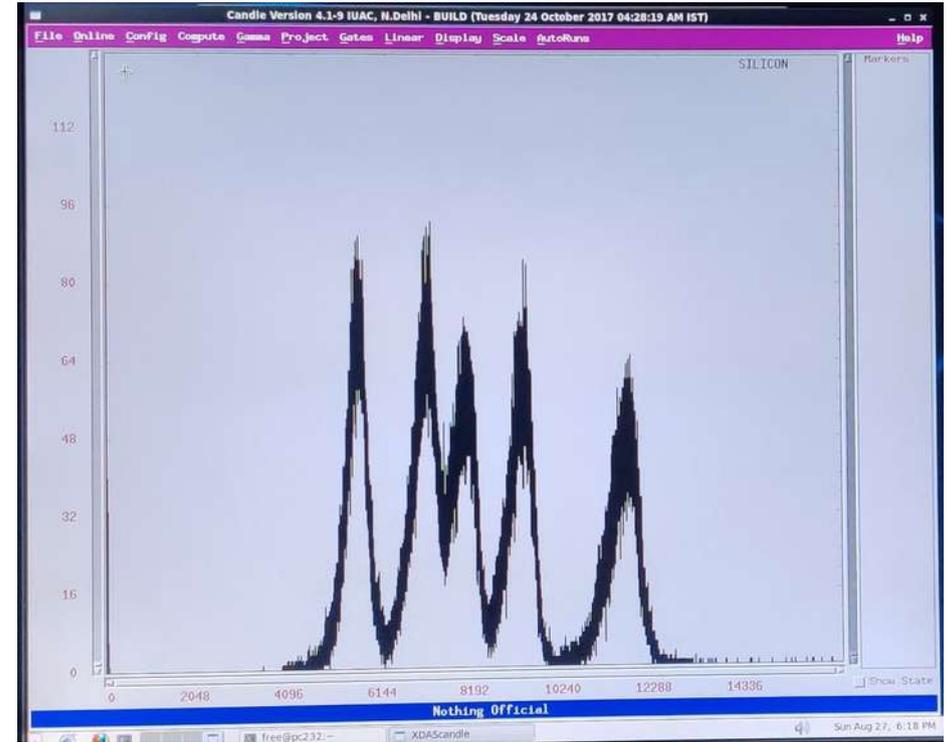
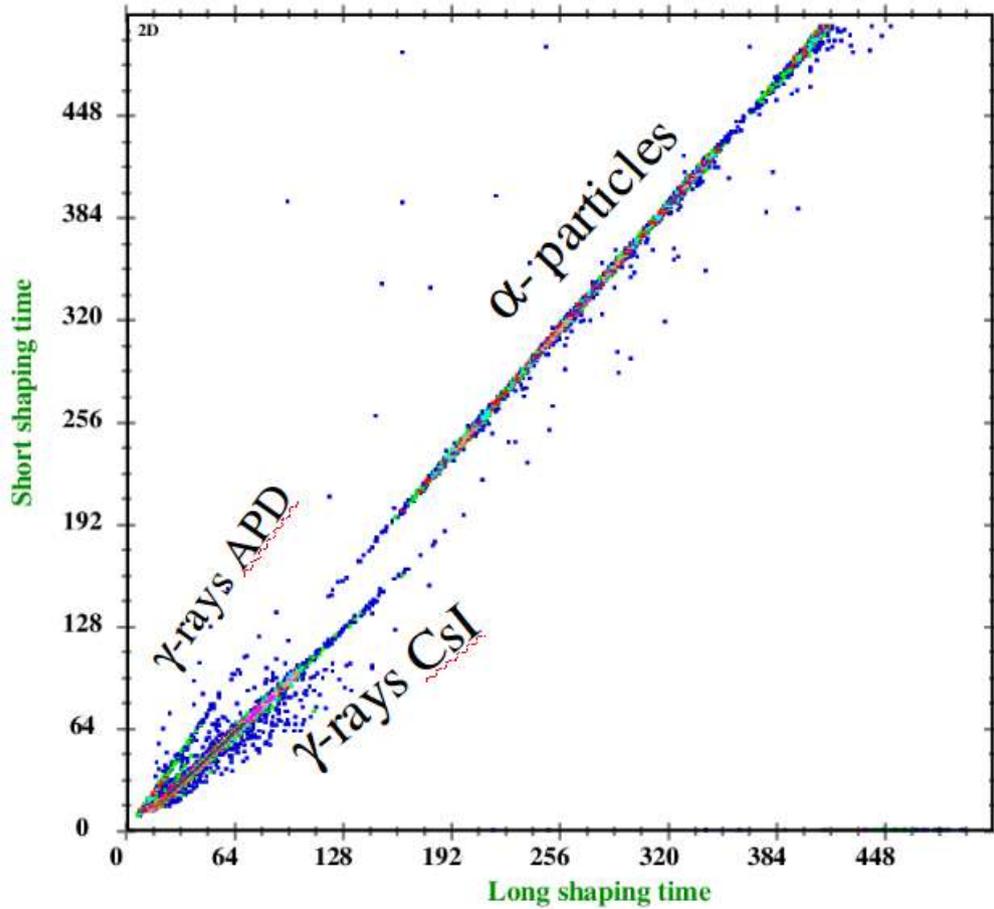


APD + CsI



APD + photo-diode

Ballistic Deficit plot



α -particles Energy spectrum with ^{229}Th

PID plot with α -particles
& γ -rays

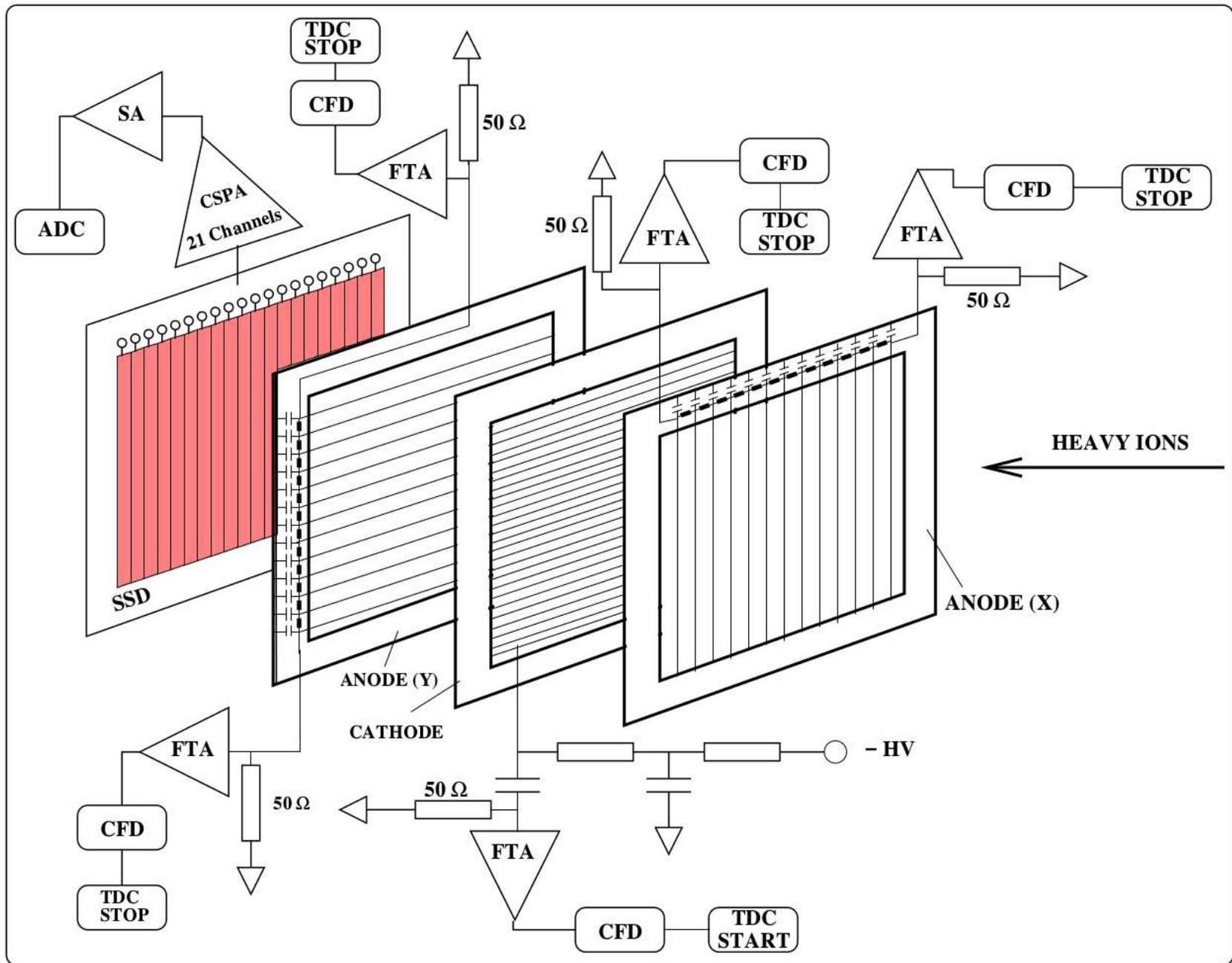
Integrated MWPC-Silicon detectors (2v-2E)

Detectors developed in collaboration with GANIL

MCP/MWPC as start detector or Pulsed beam

Stop detector MWPC followed by SSD (thin dead layer)

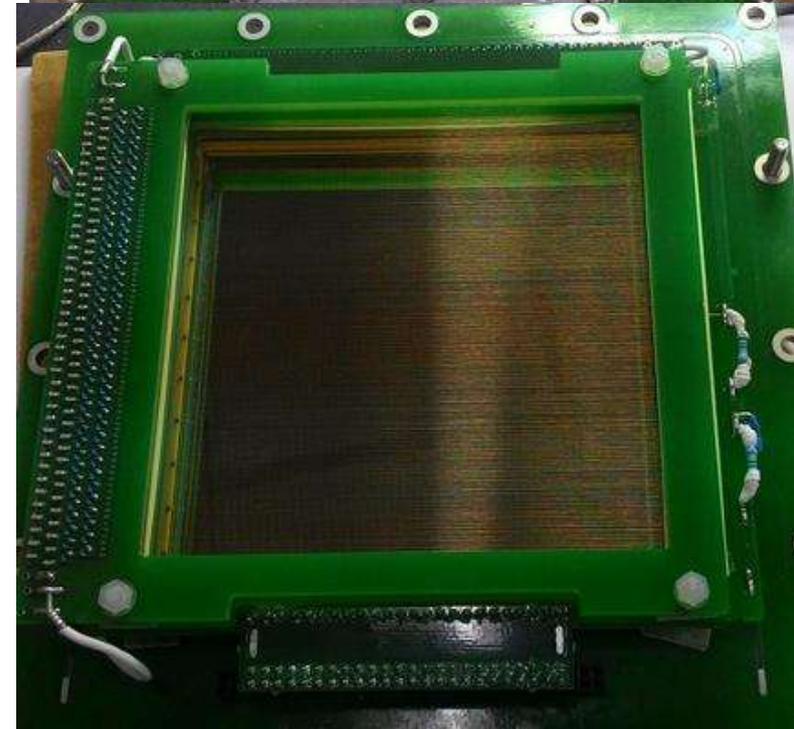
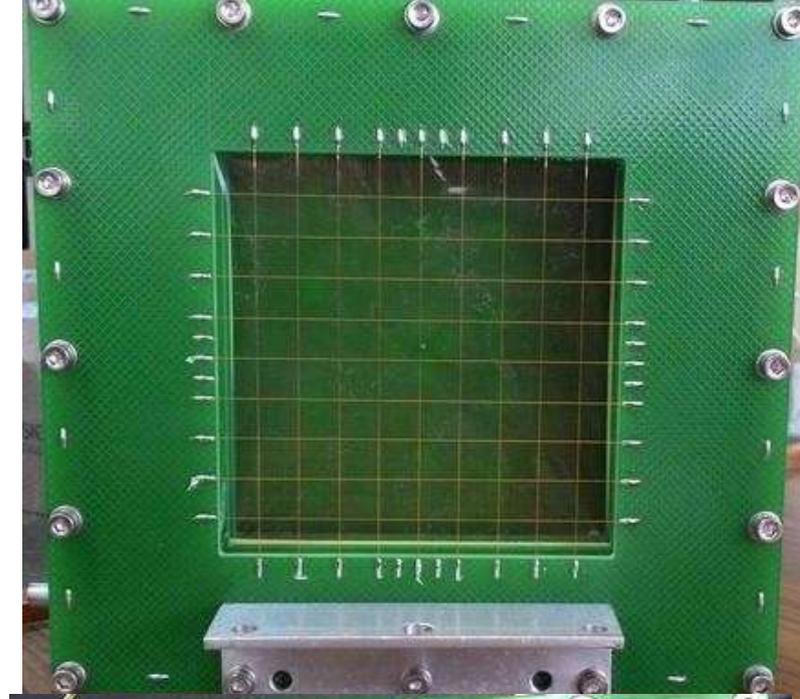
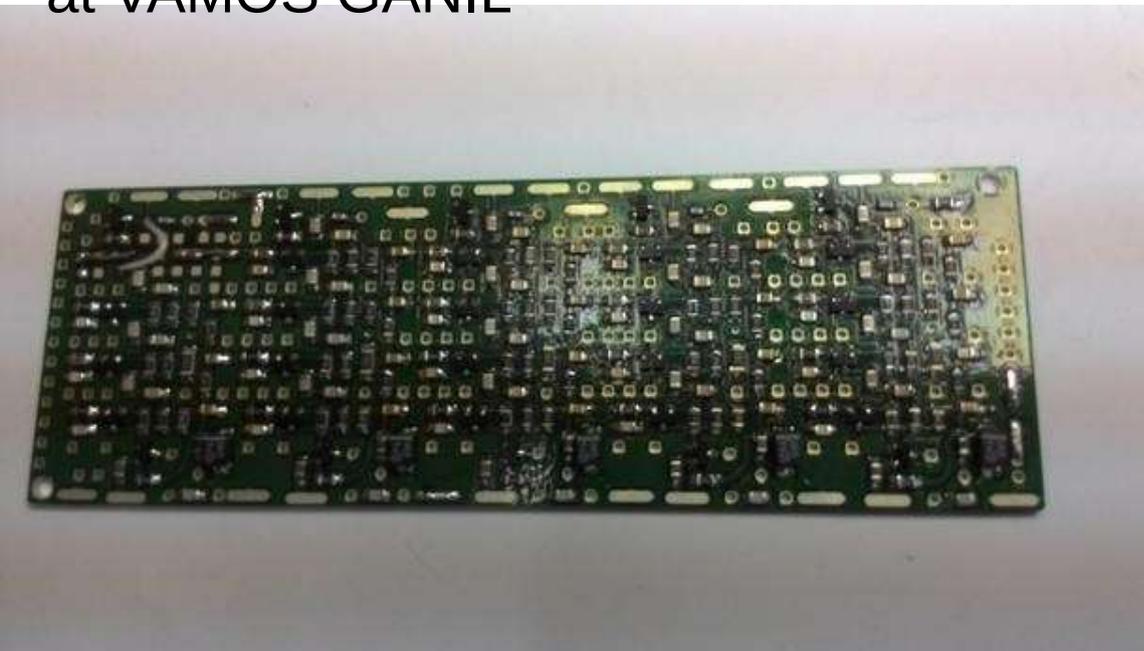
Integrated SSD in MWPC chamber to avoid exit foil



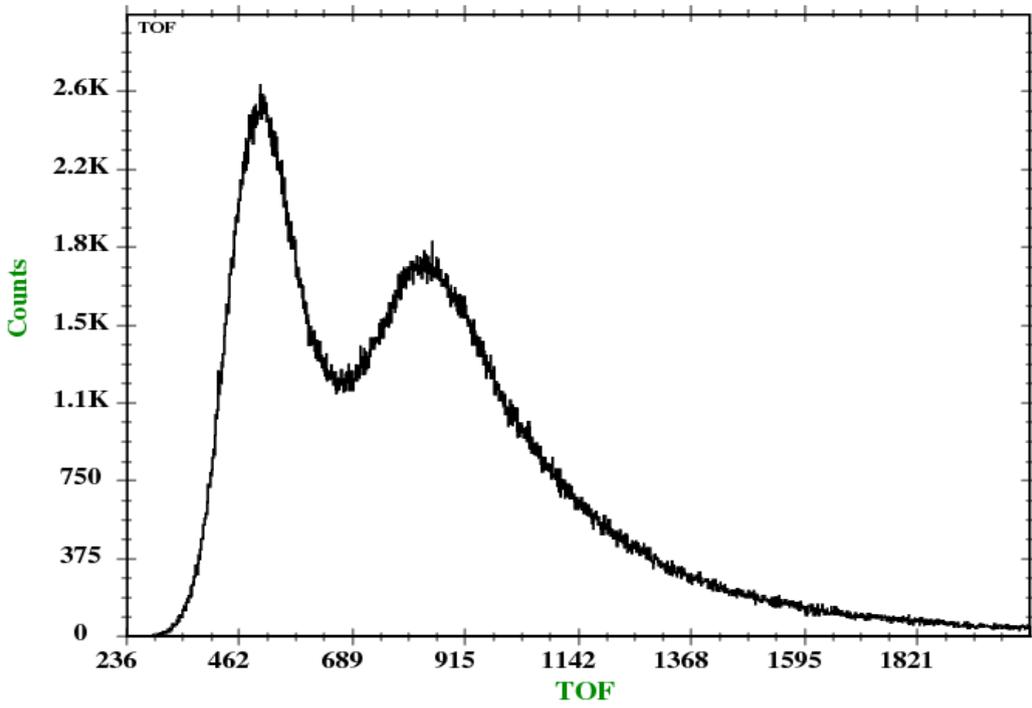
Schematic of 3 electrode start detector with central Timing electrode made from wire frame of 0.3 mm pitch



Mass distribution : $^{124}\text{Xe} + ^{54}\text{Fe} \rightarrow ^{178}\text{Hg}$
at VAMOS GANIL

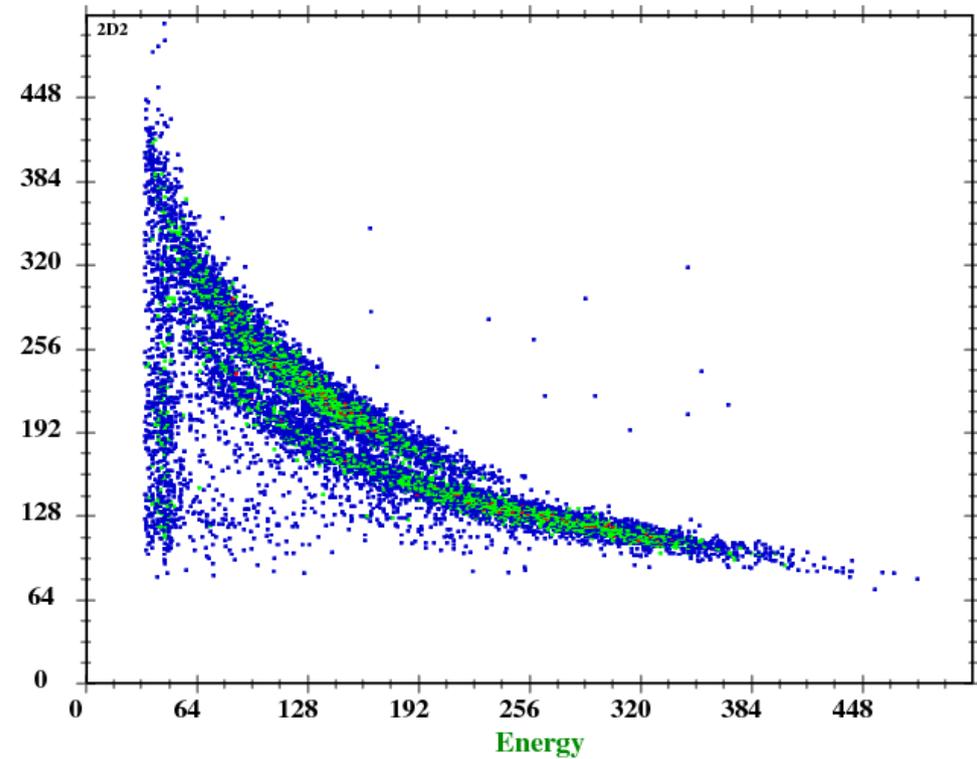


252Cf:TOF

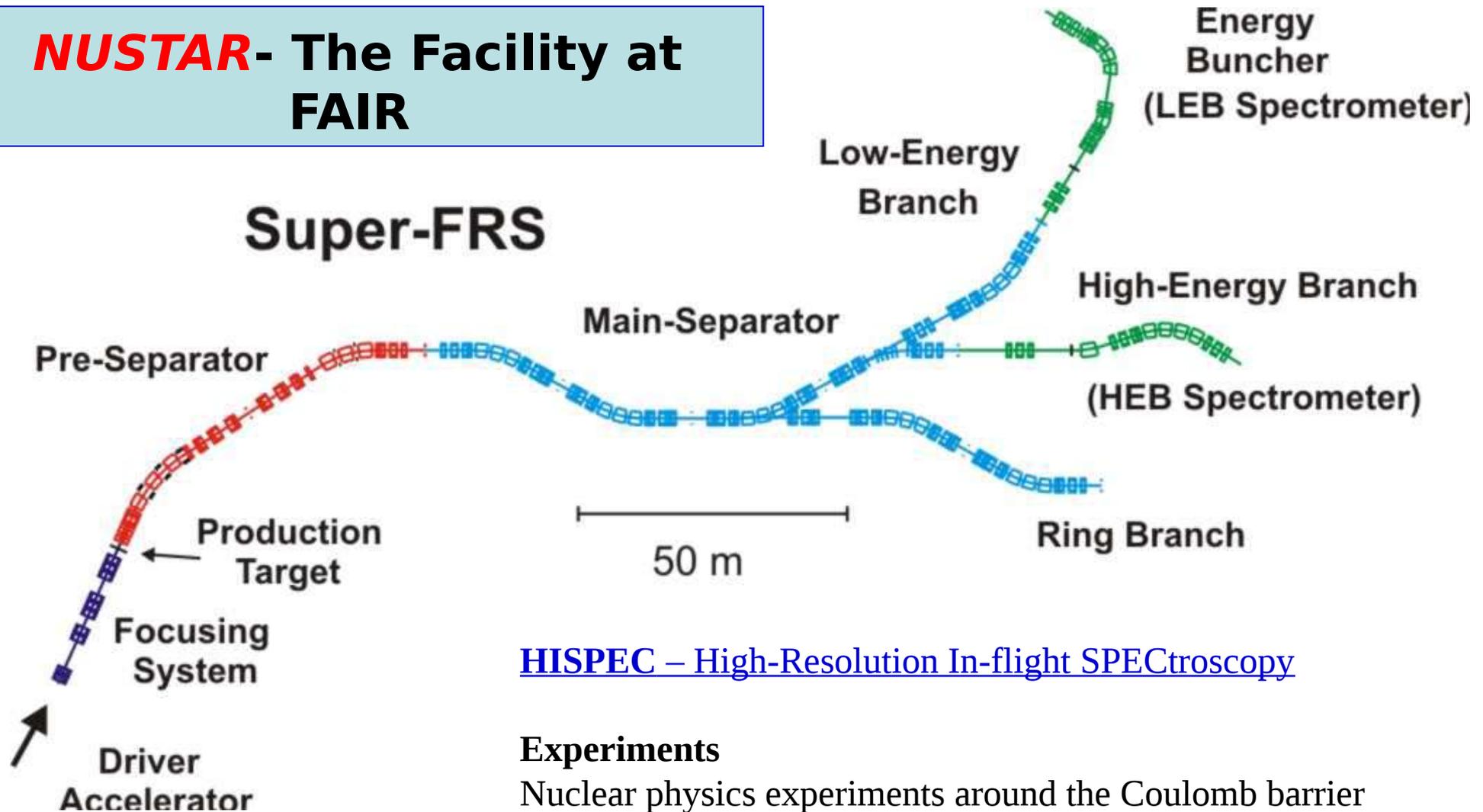


TOF between two MWPC, 5 cm flight path
Estimated resolution ~ 100 ps

252Cf:TOF - E



NUSTAR- The Facility at FAIR



[HISPEC – High-Resolution In-flight SPECTroscopy](#)

Experiments

Nuclear physics experiments around the Coulomb barrier using slowed down beams (**poor beam quality**)

Type of experiments planned:

- Multi-Nucleon Transfer
- Deep-Inelastic Scattering
- Coulomb Excitation

Tilted Electrode Gas Ionization Chamber (TEGIC)

Electrodes tilted at an angle *w.r.t.* normal to the beam trajectory

Allows different trajectory for charge carriers and beam particles

Reduced drift length for charge carriers with same active length

Faster induced charge

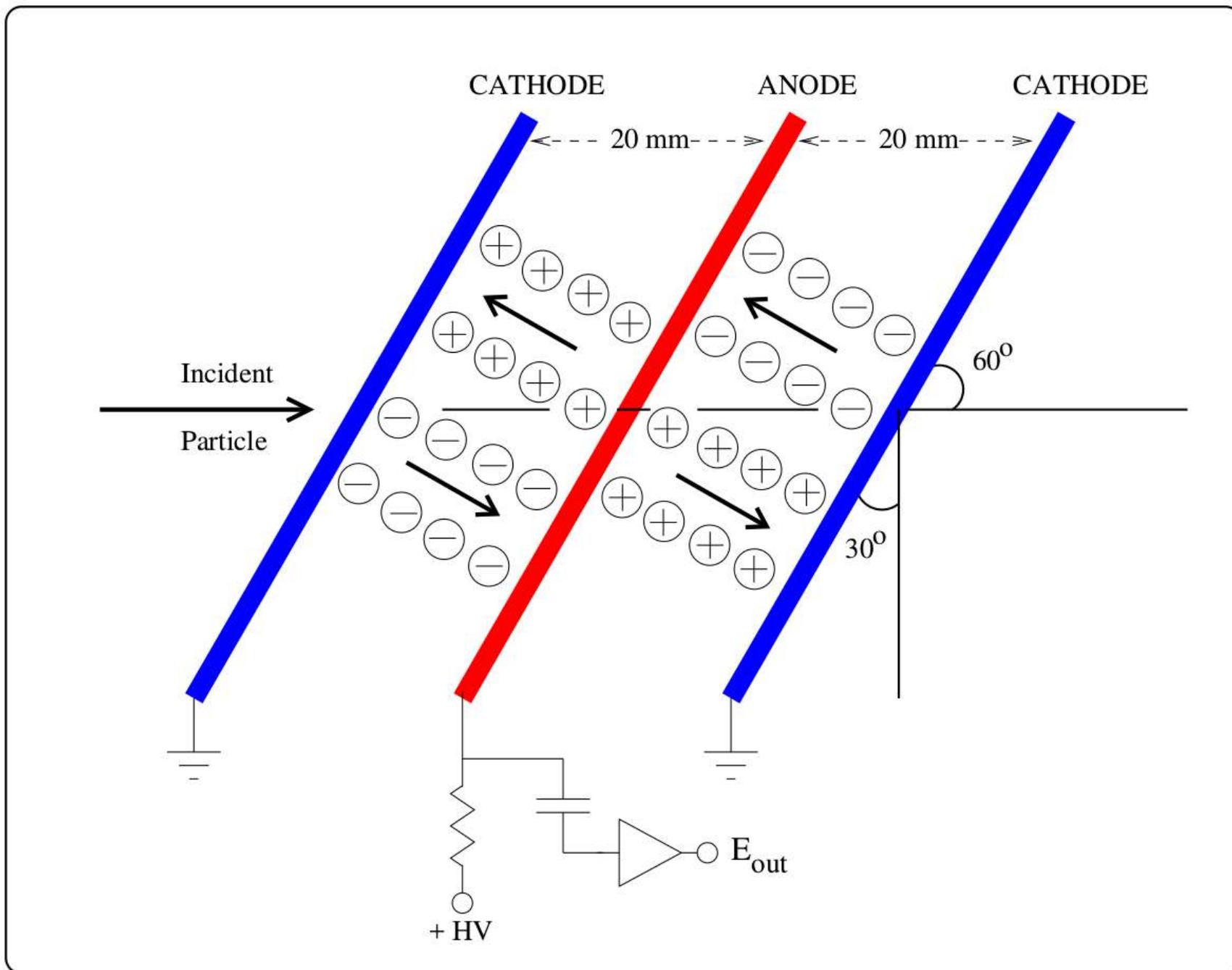
Count rates $\sim 10^6$ pps

Reduced probability of recombination/loss of charge carriers

Reduced space charge electric field distortion effects

Improved energy and ΔZ resolutions

Design established at BIG-RIPS (RIKEN) and ORNL



Schematic of TEGIC electrode config. with movement of charge carriers.

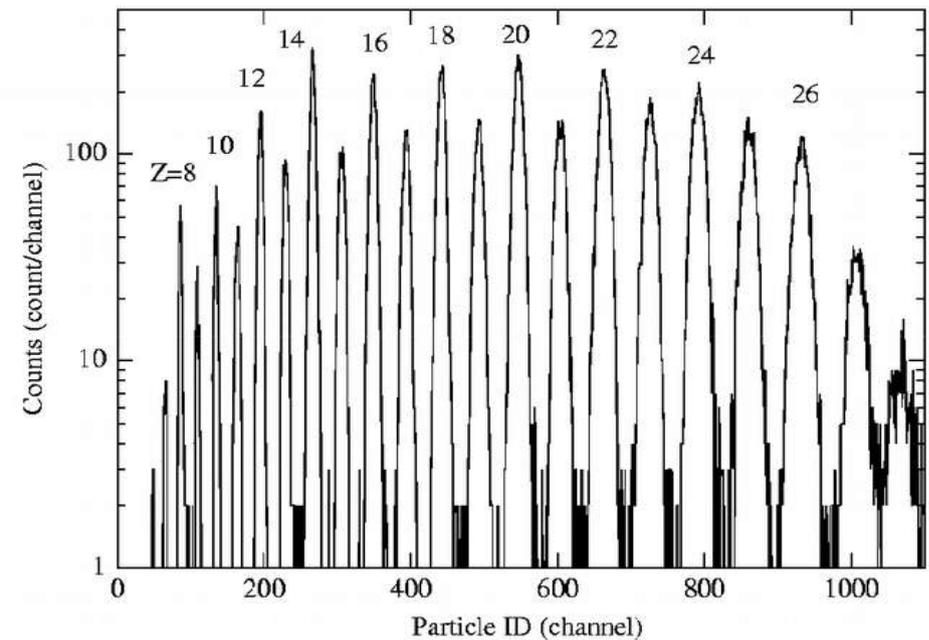


Fig. 4. Particle identification spectrum for $A/Z=2$ nuclides produced by fragmentation of ^{56}Fe at 90 A MeV.

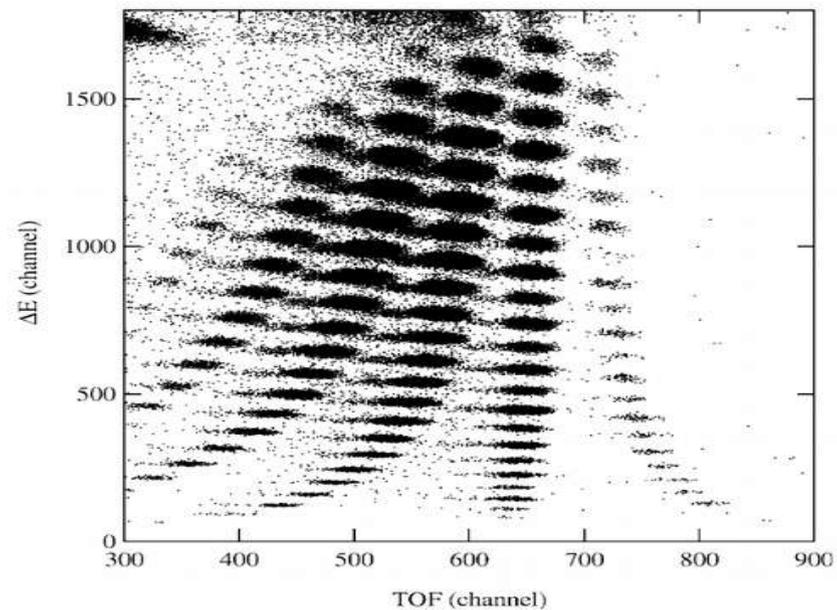
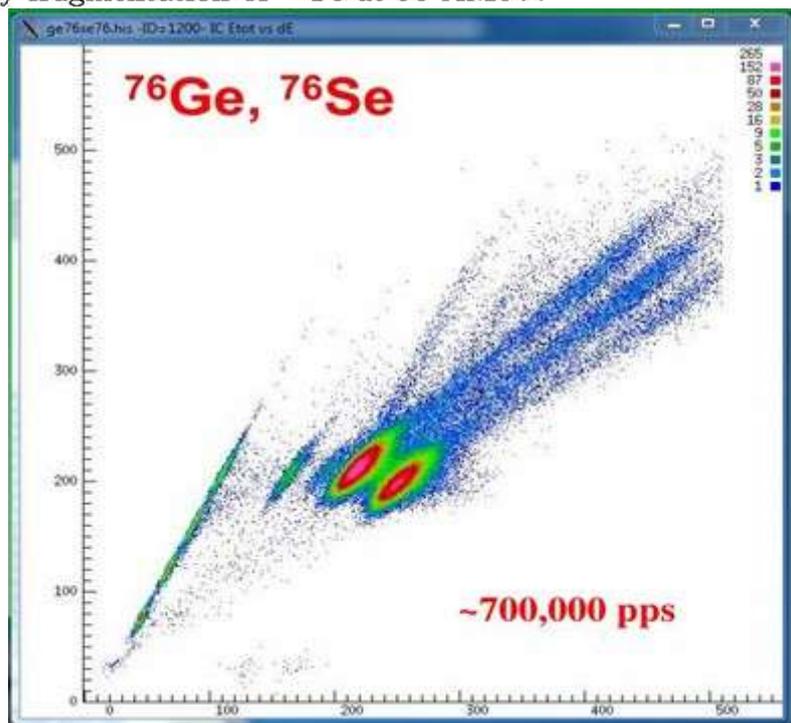


Fig. 2. Two-dimensional scatter plot of ΔE vs. TOF for the secondary beam produced by nuclear fragmentation of ^{56}Fe at 90 A MeV.



Chae et al, NIM A 751(2014)6

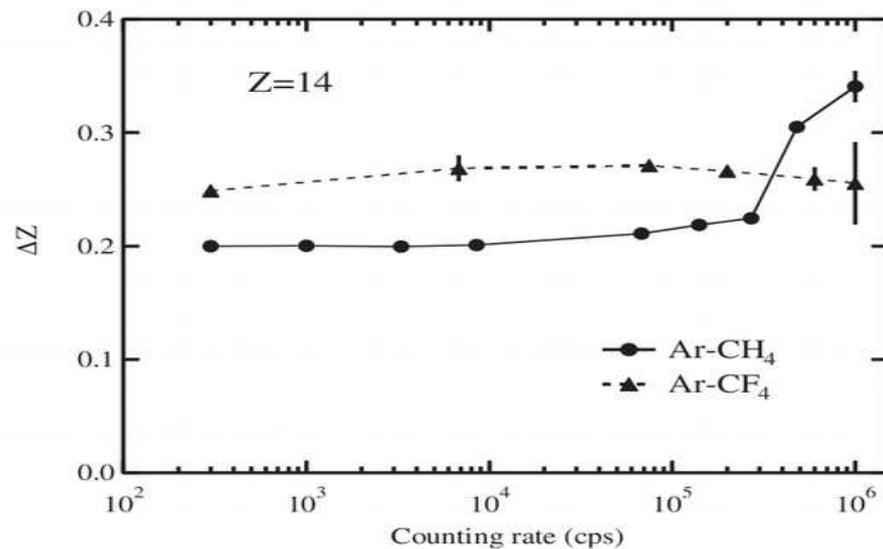


Fig. 8. Dependence of Z -resolutions on the intensities of the secondary beam produced by nuclear fragmentation of ^{40}Ar at 95 A MeV. Performances of two kinds of counter gas, Ar- CH_4 (90%, 10%) and Ar- CF_4 (90%, 10%), are compared.

Kimura et al, NIM A 538(2005)608

Design Features TEGIC (IUAC - GSI)

21 electrodes: 10 *anodes* and 11 *cathodes*

Electrodes: 3 μm mylar (aluminized on both sides)
stretched and pasted on FR frames.

Active area of frame: 25 x 12 cm^2 .

Inter-electrode separation: 2 cm

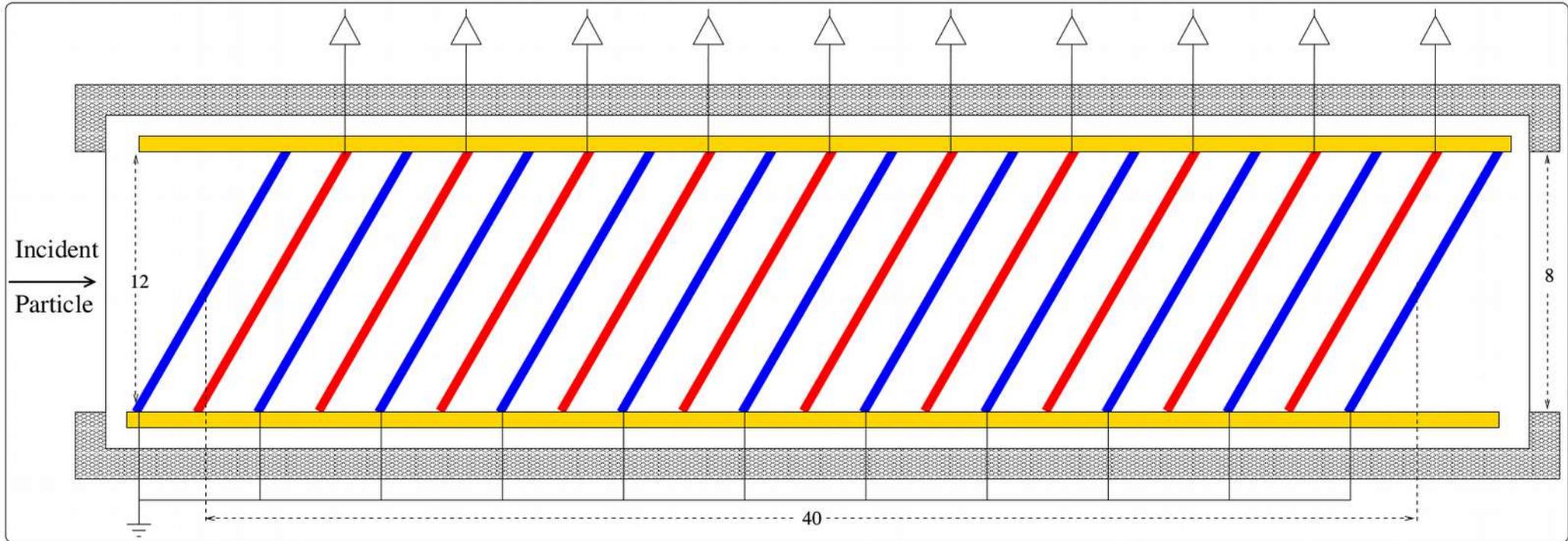
Active Length: 40 cm

Housed in aluminium cuboid chamber: 60 x 38 x 24 cm^3

Gas Medium: CF_4 or P-10 at 1 atm .

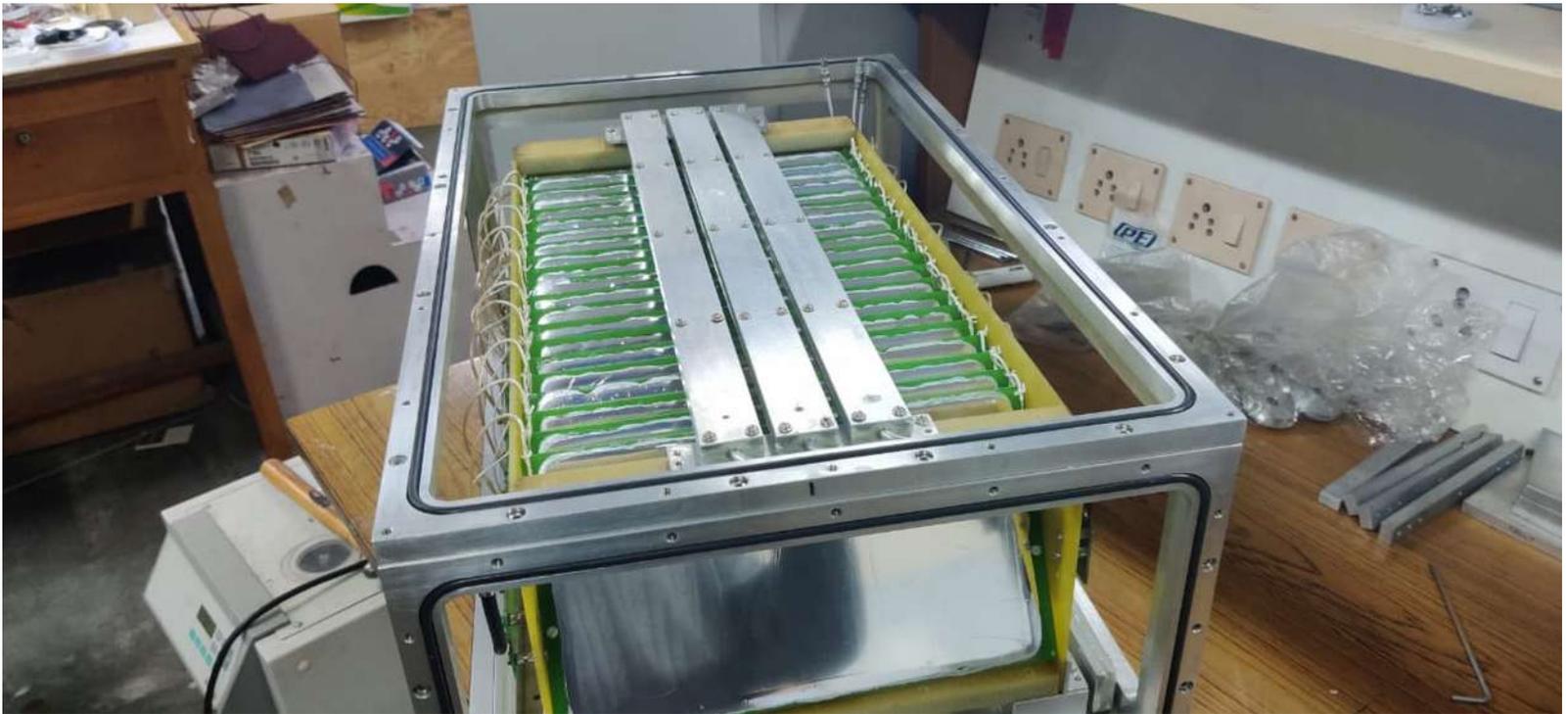
Detector to be operated at reduced field of 0.25 – 1 V/cm/mbar

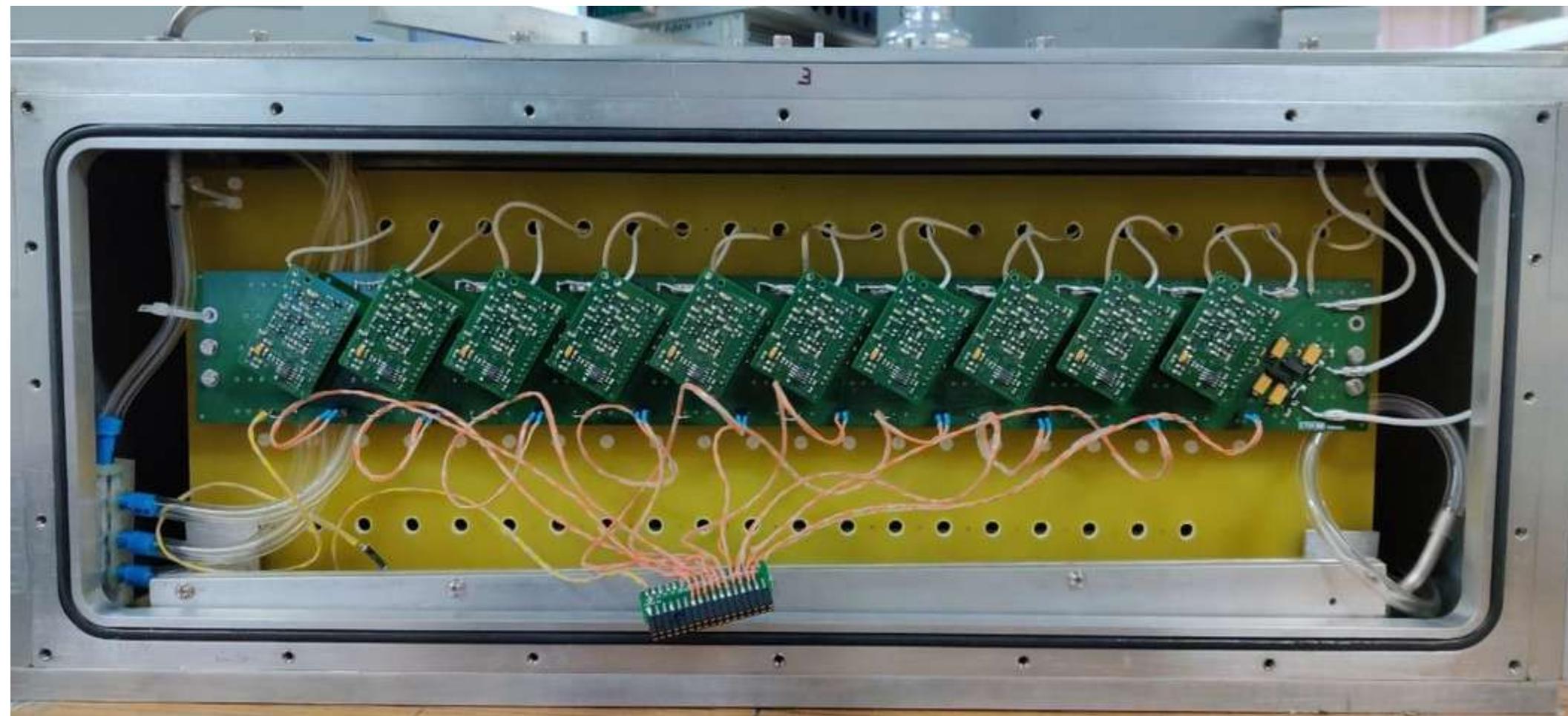
Schematic layout of the TEGIC with 21 stacked electrodes



10 *Anodes* : Red colored

11 grounded *Cathodes* : Blue colored

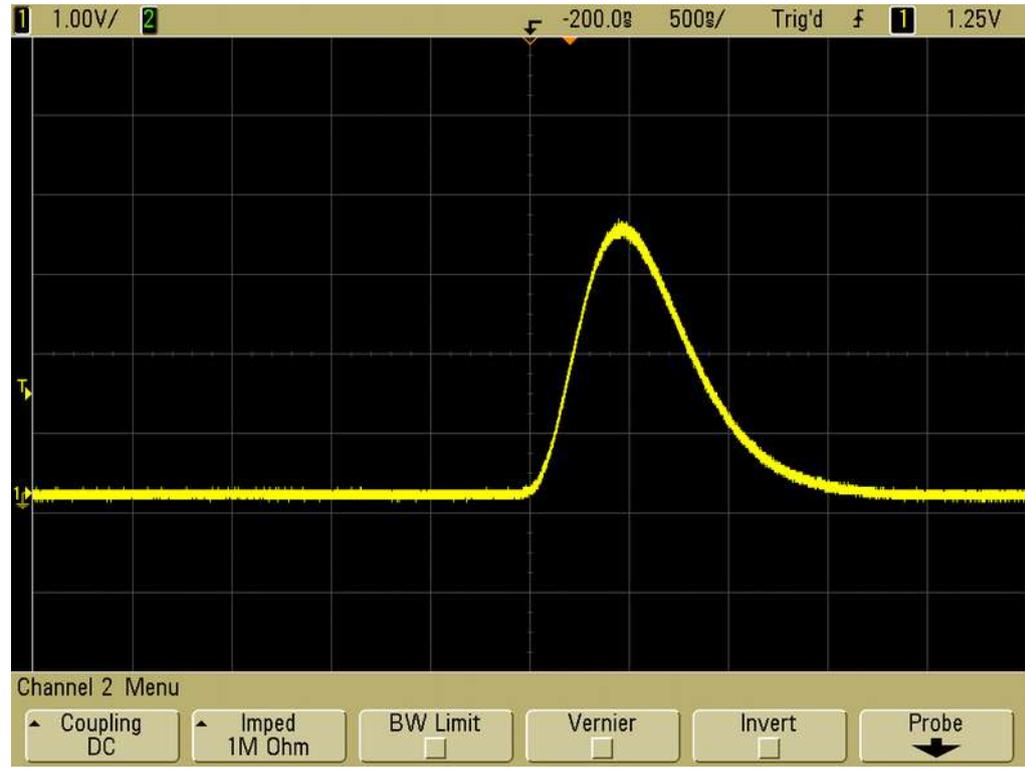




TEGIC with integrated CSPA units having differential outputs



CSPA output with 5.48 *MeV* alpha
using silicon PIPS detector (CANBERRA)

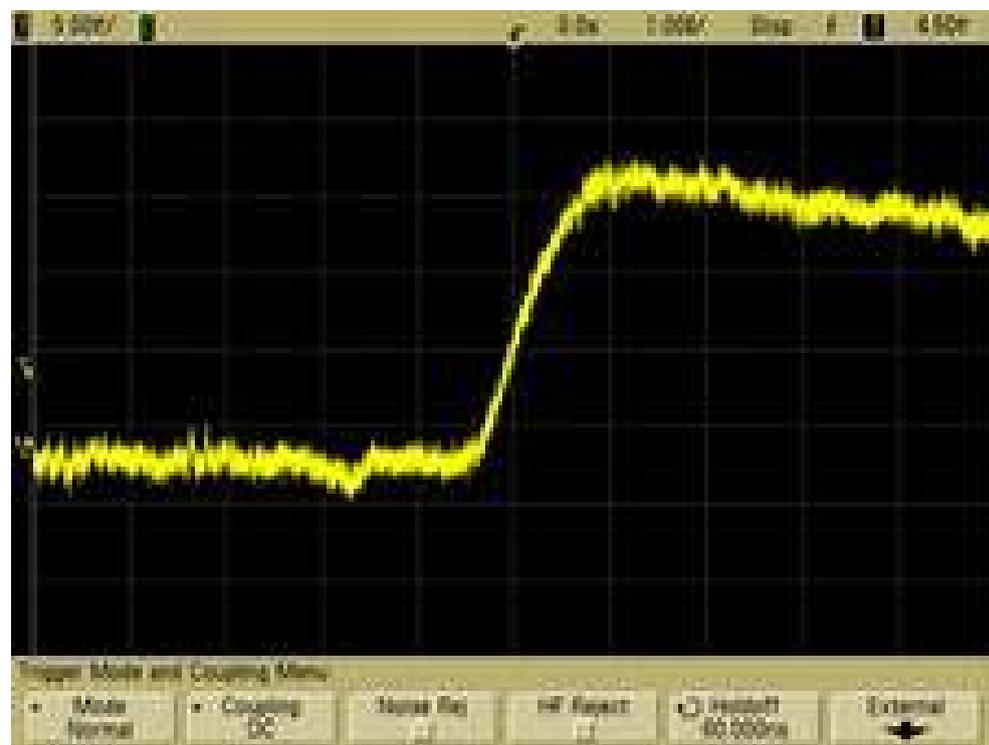


Spectroscopy Amplifier output
Shaping time: 0.25 µs

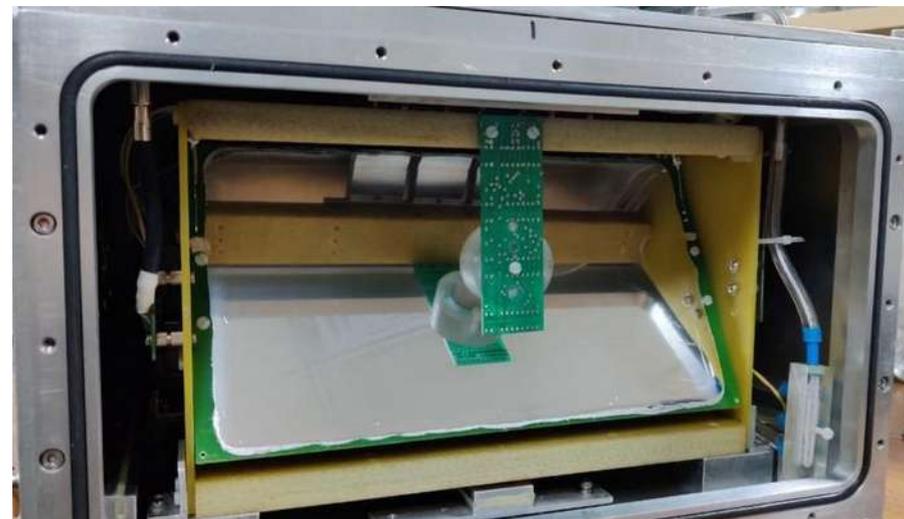
Testing of TEGIC detector with alpha source



TEGIC mounted inside Scattering chamber for off-line alpha particle test
Tests performed with iso-butane gas at 50 – 300 mbar



CSPA output-alpha



TEGIC with α -particle source

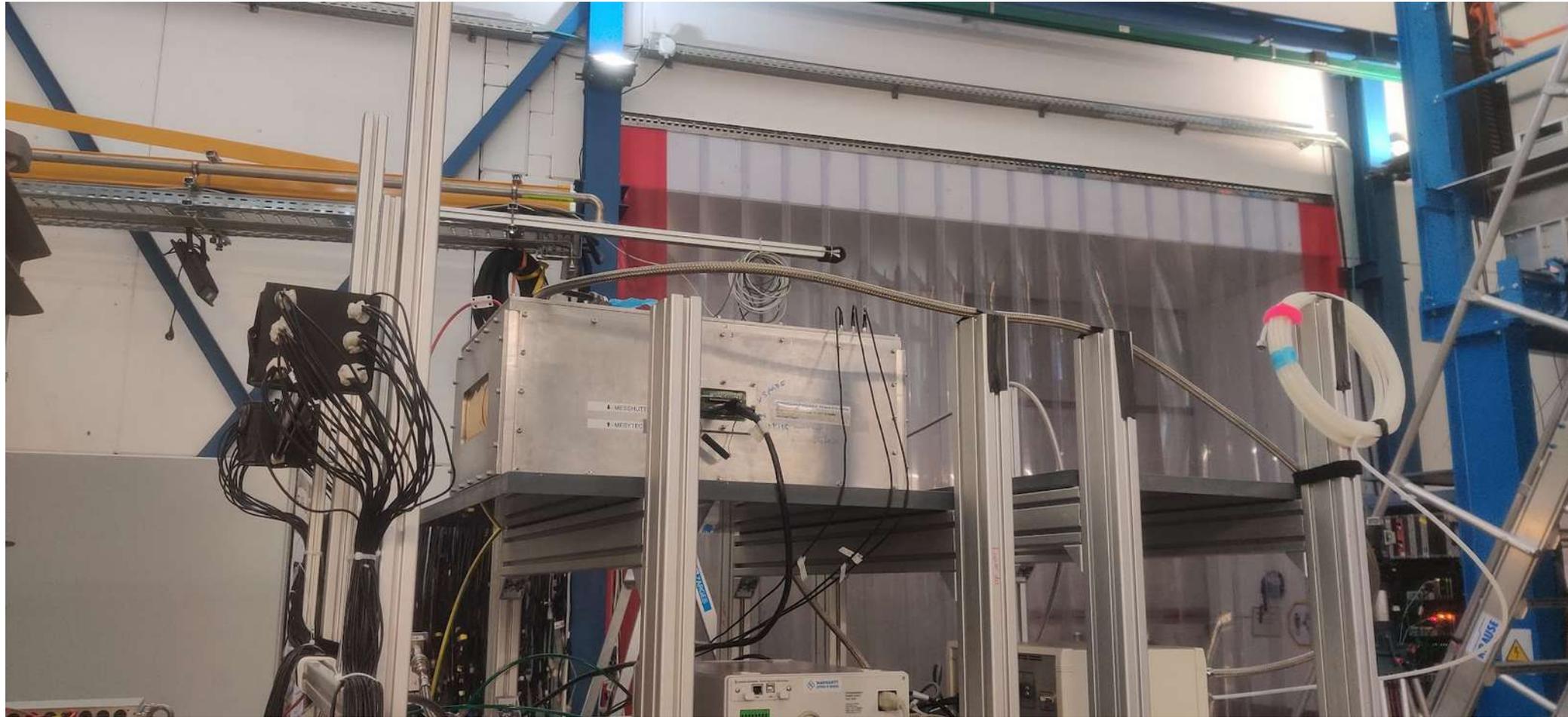


SA: 0.4 μ s



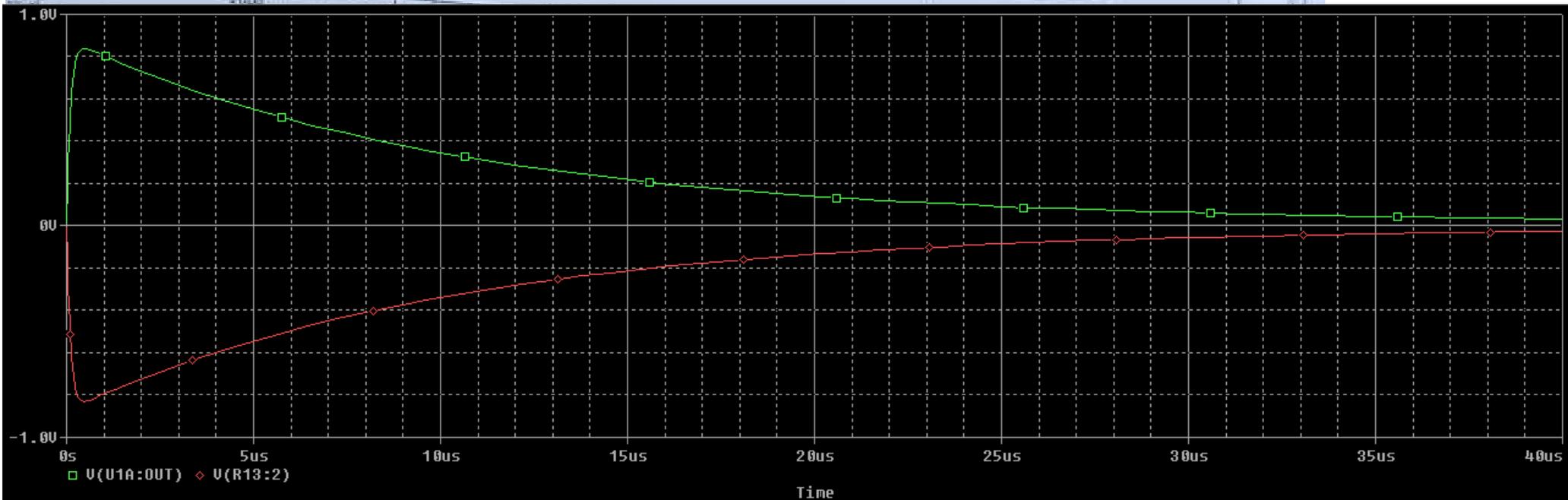
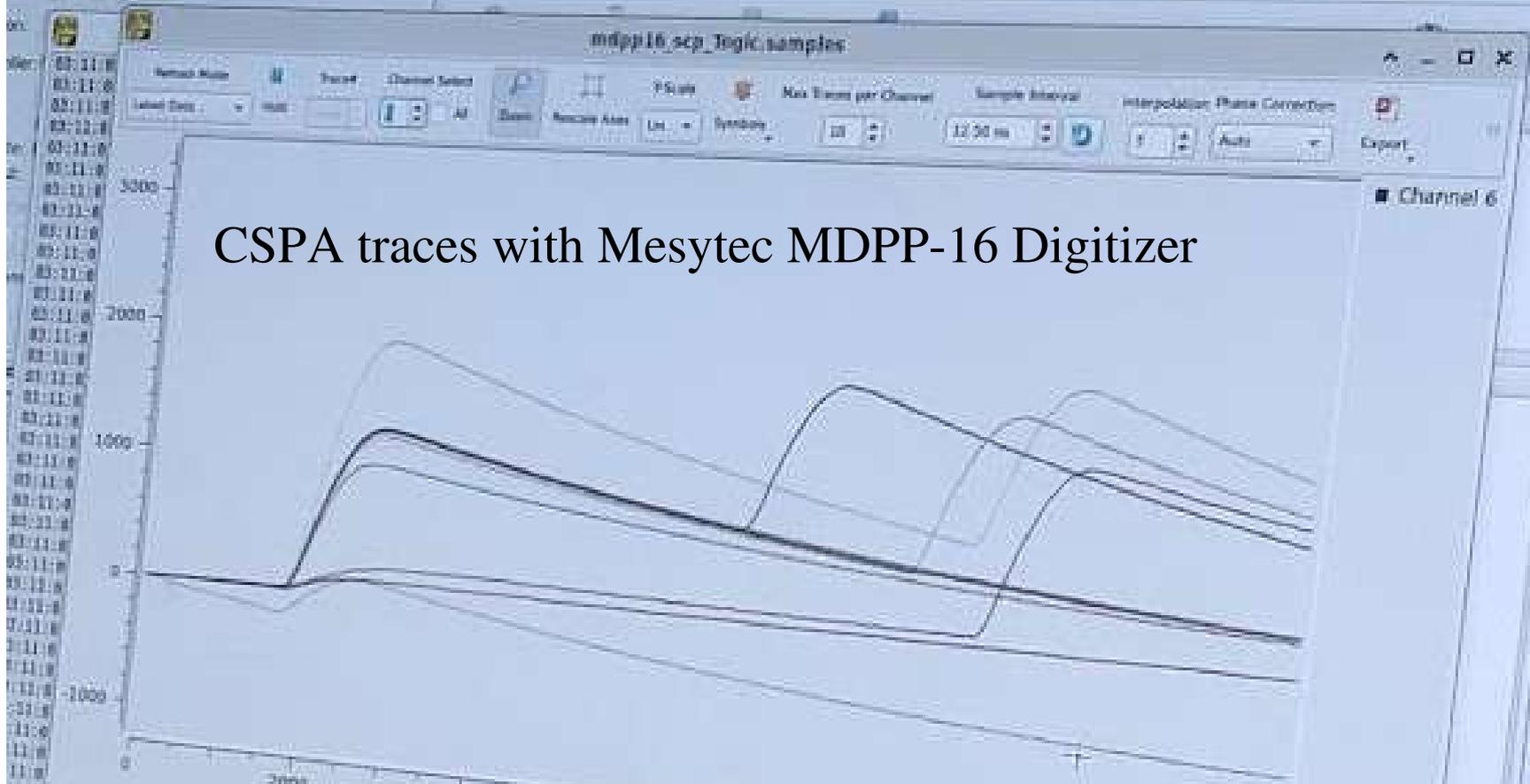
SA: 0.25 μ s

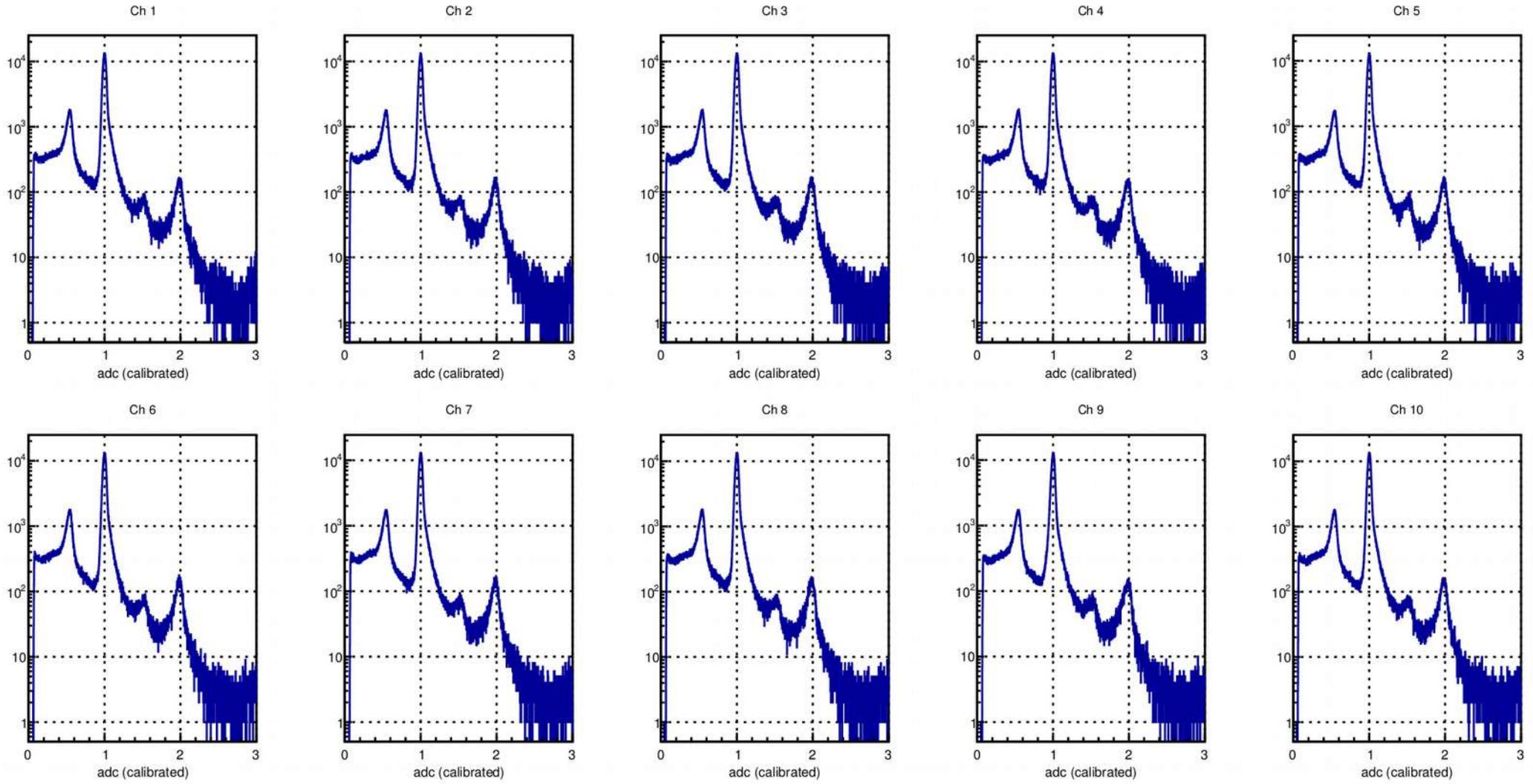
TEGIC Mounted in CAVE 'C' at GSI with UNILAC-SIS18 Accelerator Facility



Measurements performed with ^{238}U beam @ 300 MeV/A – 1 GeV/A

CSPA traces with Mesytec MDPP-16 Digitizer





Calibrated differential energy loss spectra from 10 segments of TEGIC

Development of 16 channel fast timing amplifier (FTA) for SSD

FTA realized as a hybrid fabricated using SMD components.

0402 package R and C used.

Inverting three stage CE amplification

16 channels assembled on 4 layer PCB (8 x 5 cm²)

8 channels each on top and bottom layer (3 cm x 1 cm for each channel)

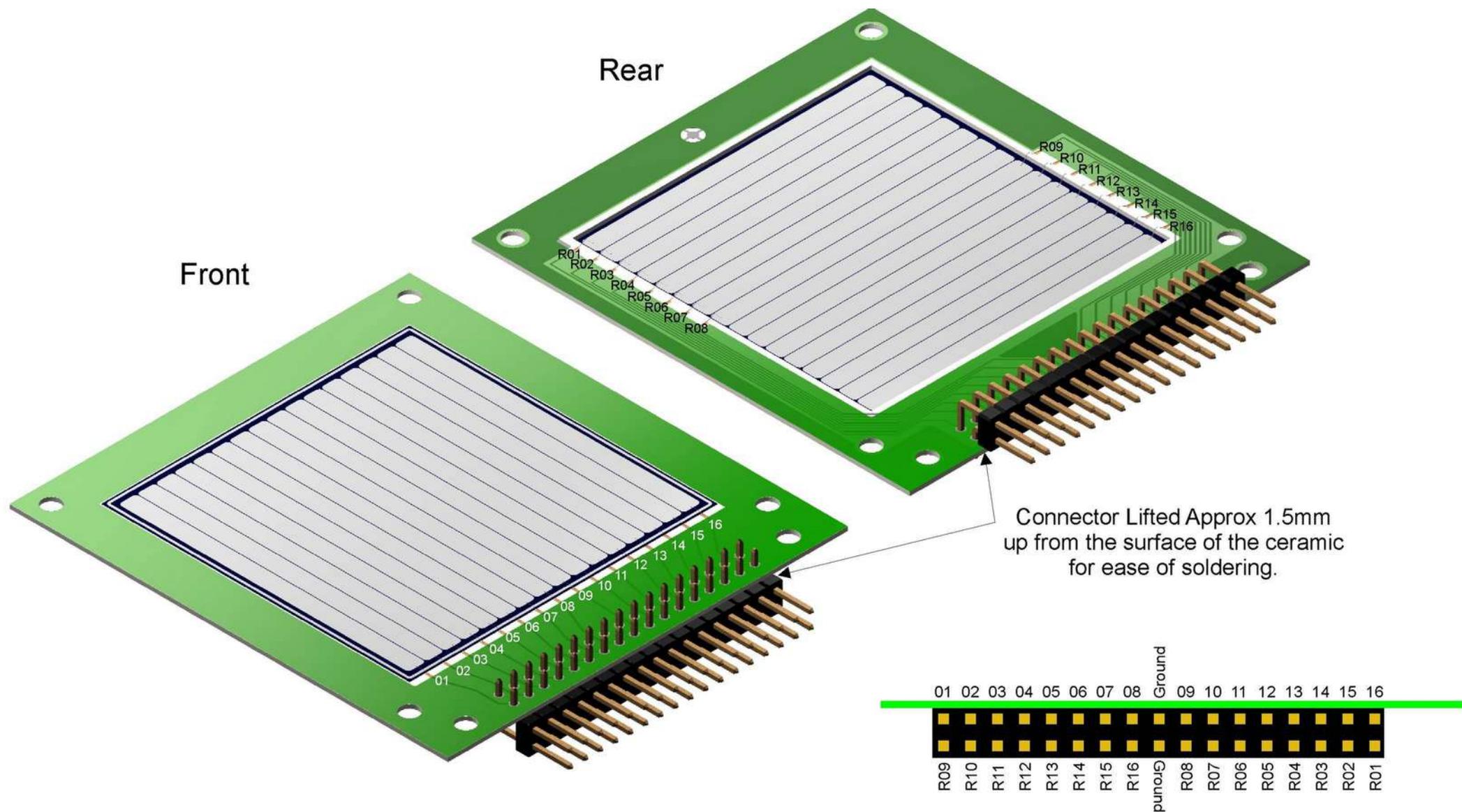
Gain ~ 50, Input impedance 50 Ω

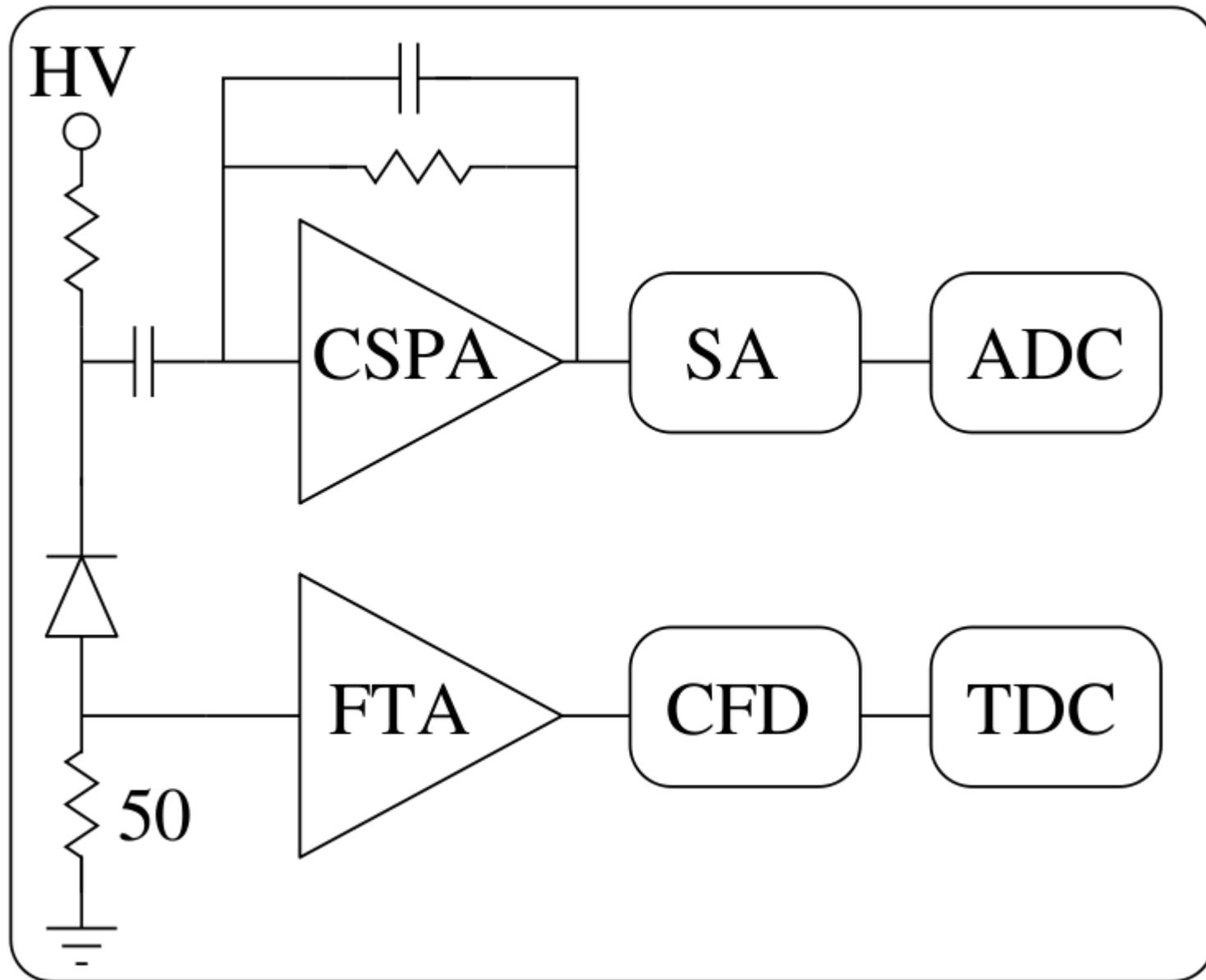
Sensitivity : ~ 3 - 5 mV/MeV (Detector capacitance dependent)

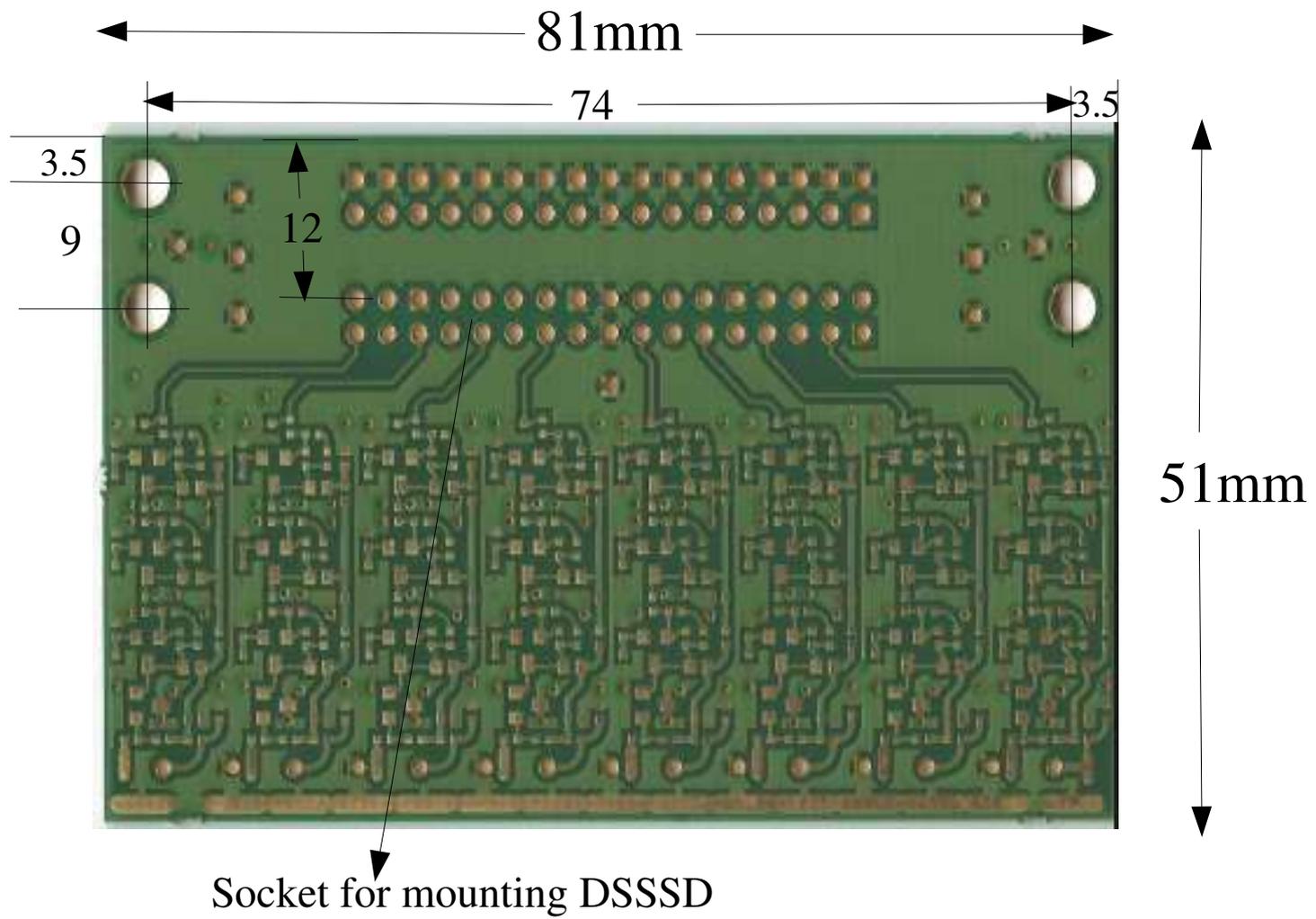
Power consumption : 1.6 W (100 mW/channel) @ + 6V supply.

Designed for SSD design W from Micron Semiconductors, UK

FRC 34 pin socket as input connector



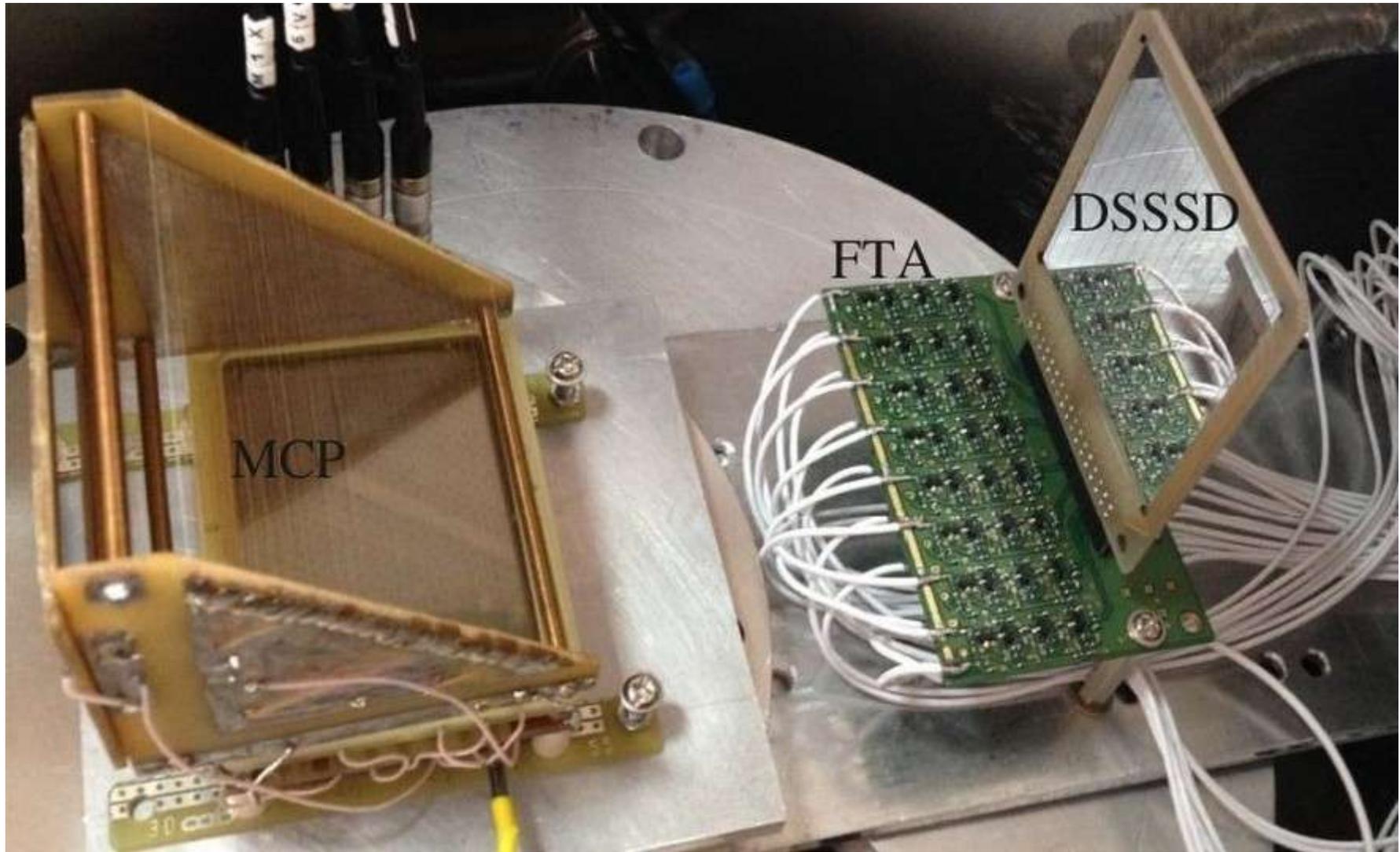




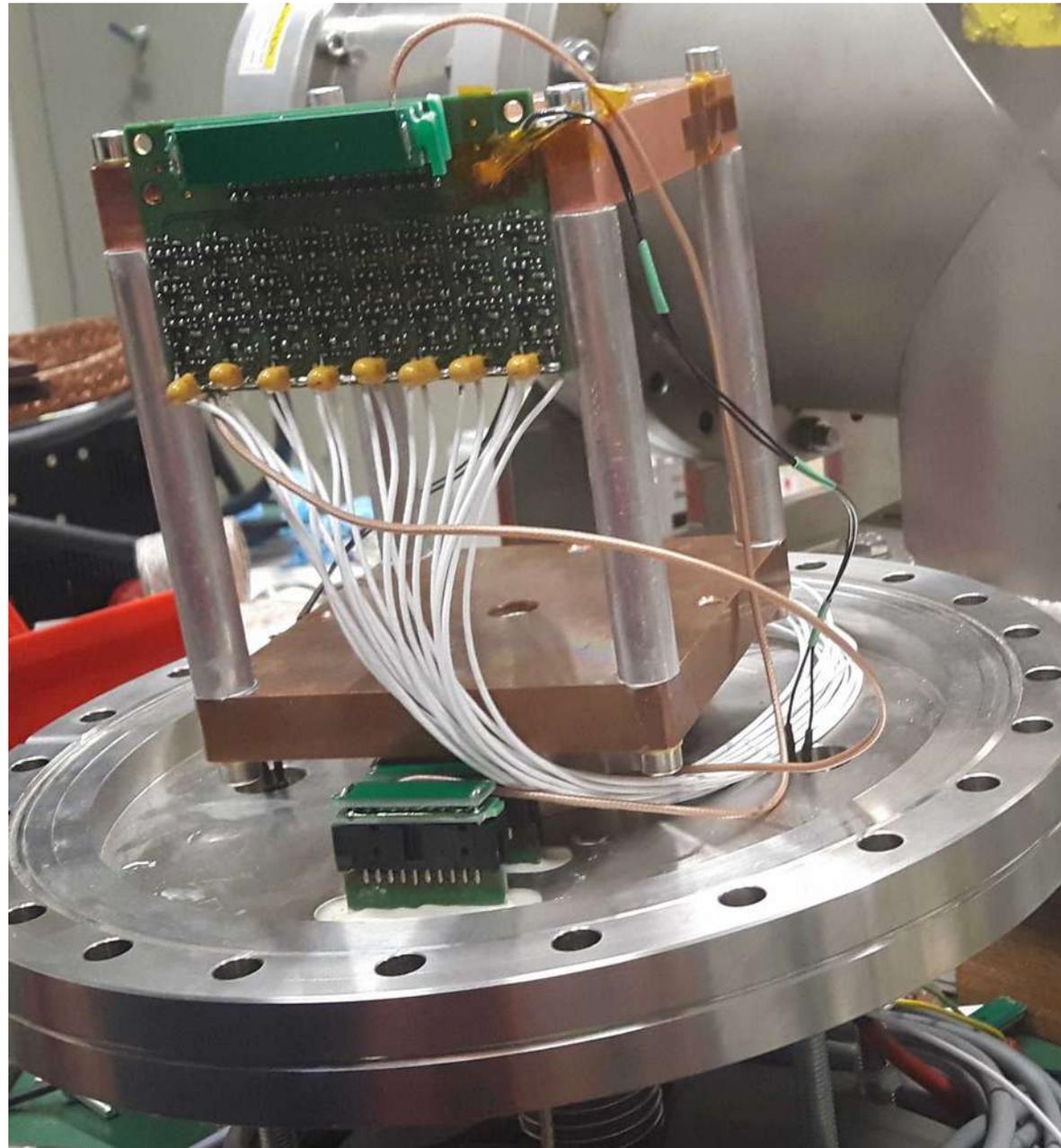
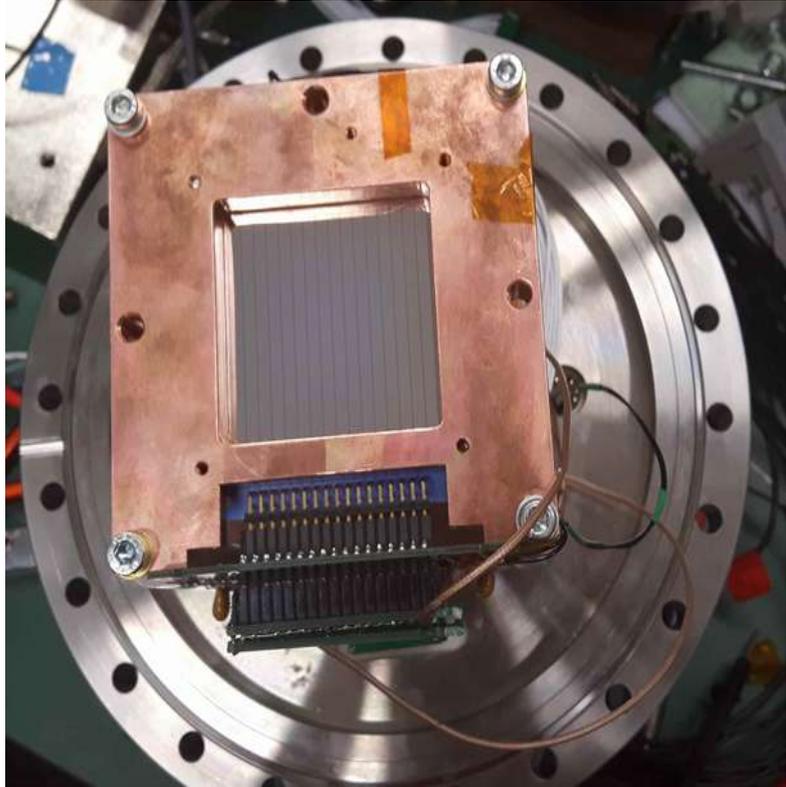
PCB layout of the 16 channel FTA

Table 1 : FTA specifications

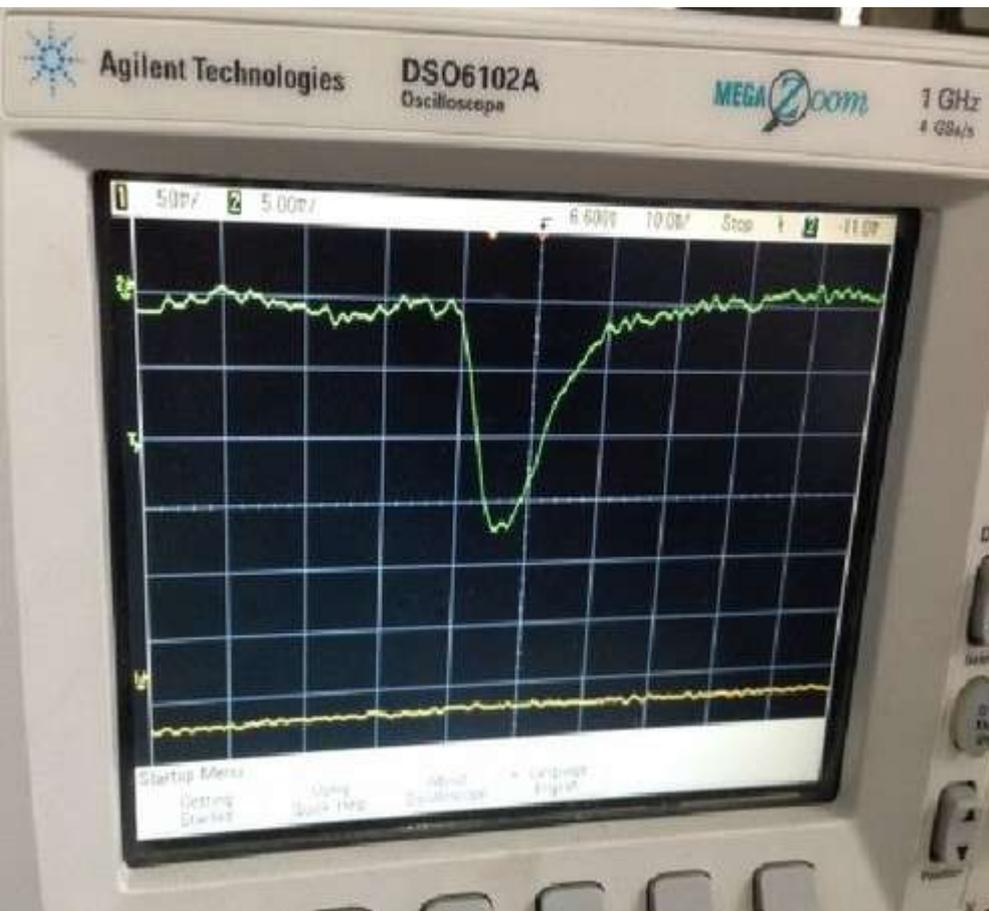
No. of channels	16
Input signal polarity	Positive
Input impedance	50 Ω
Gain	50
Max. output voltage	- 1 V (50 Ω load)
Rise times	\sim 2 ns (without detector)
Power requirement	1.6 W (100 mW/ch.)



TOF set up with alpha source



20 um SSSD with cooling arrangement

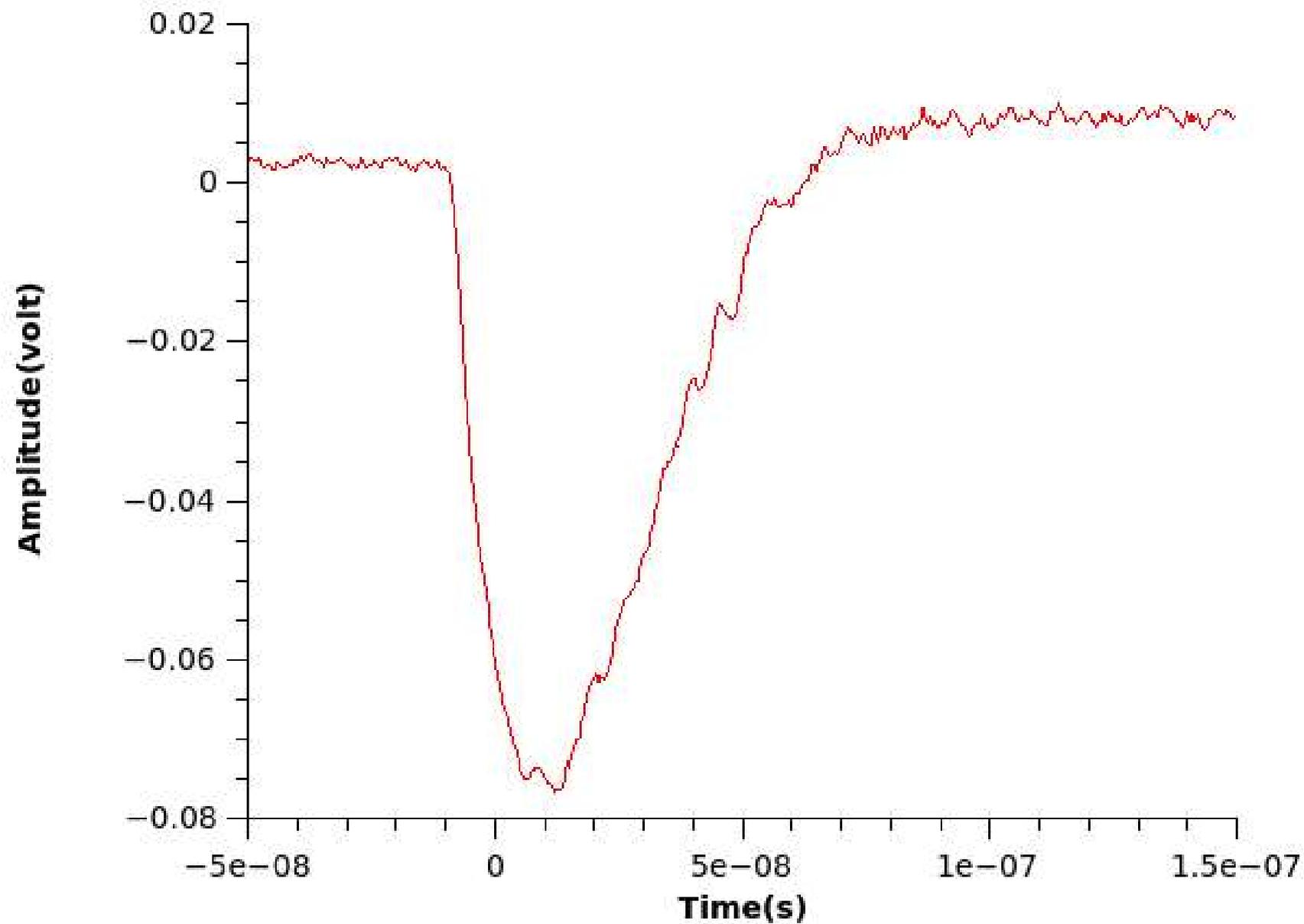


Alpha particles



Silicon Beam

Timing Signal



Timing signal from ^{124}Xe beam with 20 μm SSSD

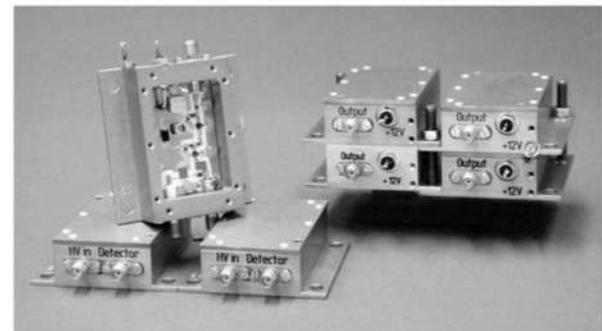
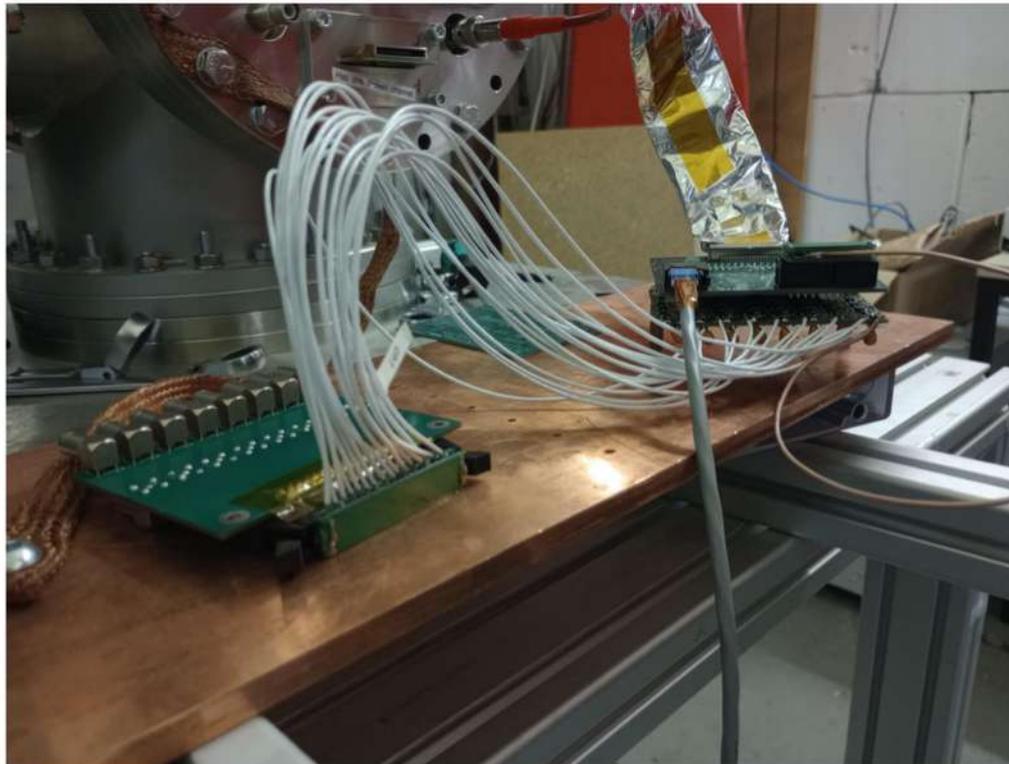
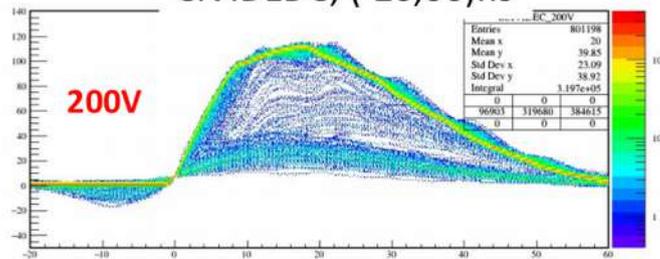


Fig. 1. Photograph of GSI DBA-II amplifiers.

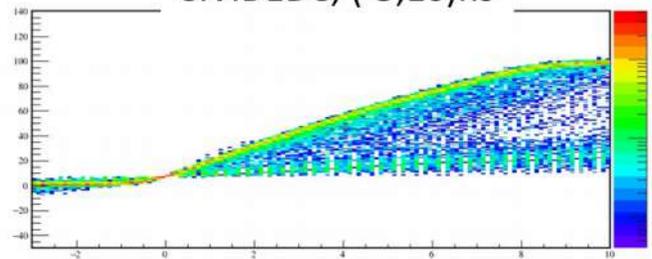
Results



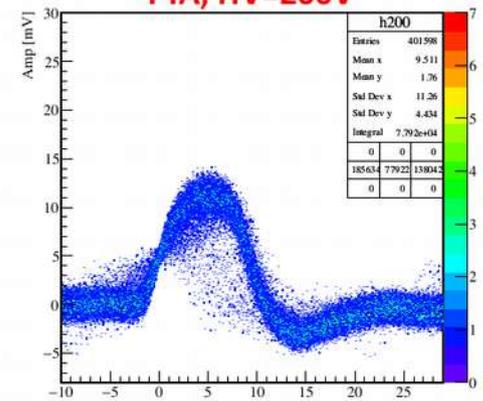
CIVIDEDC; (-20,60)ns



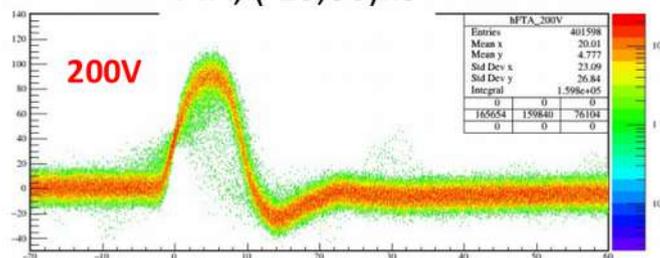
CIVIDEDC; (-3,10)ns



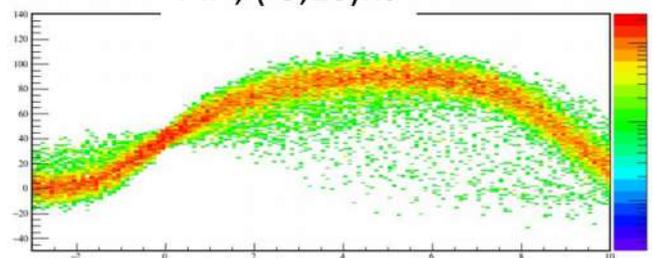
FTA; HV=200V



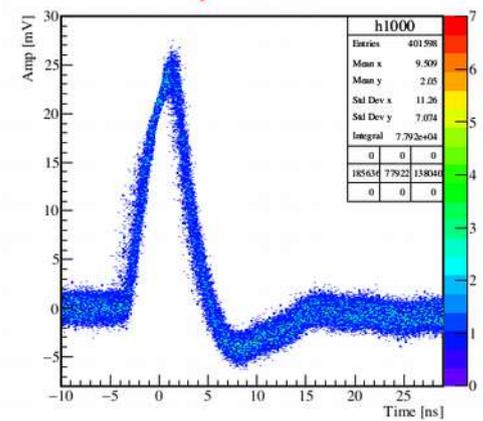
FTA; (-20,60)ns



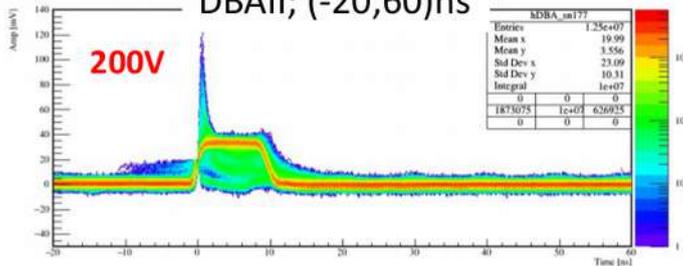
FTA; (-3,10)ns



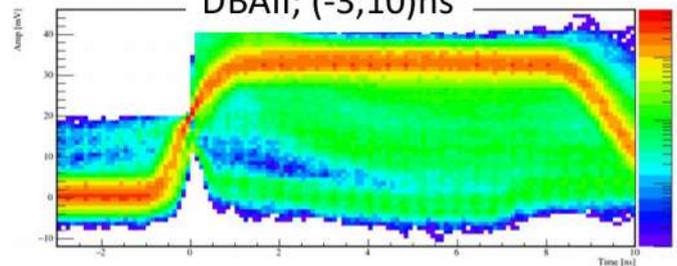
FTA; HV=1kV

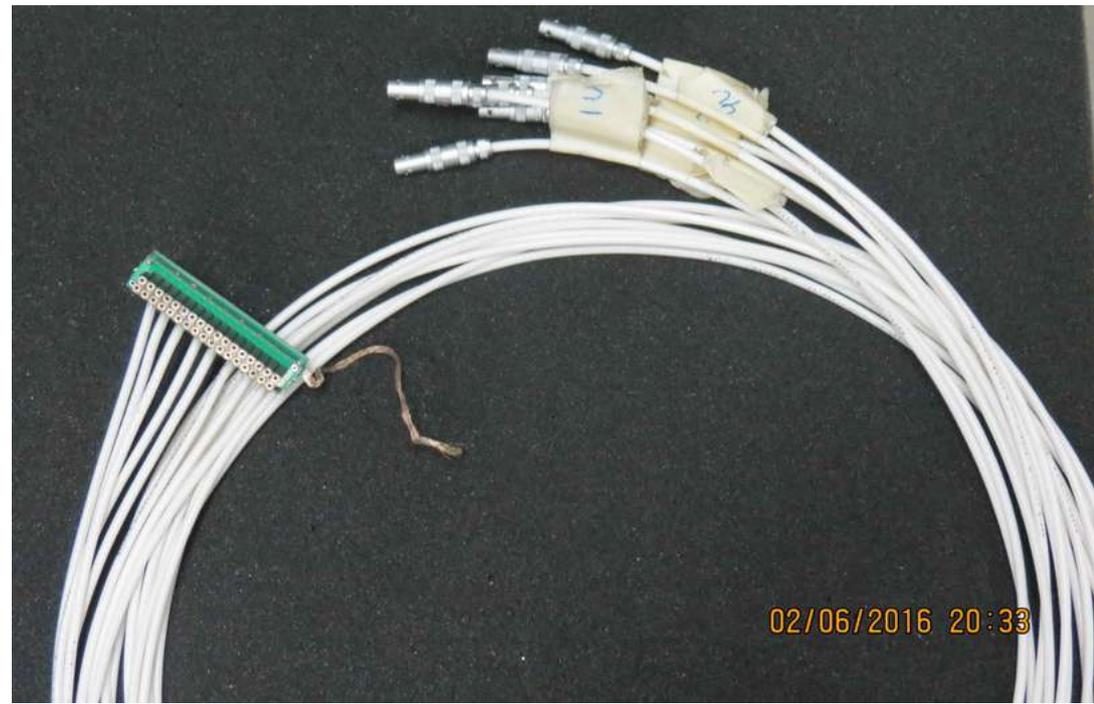


DBAll; (-20,60)ns



DBAll; (-3,10)ns



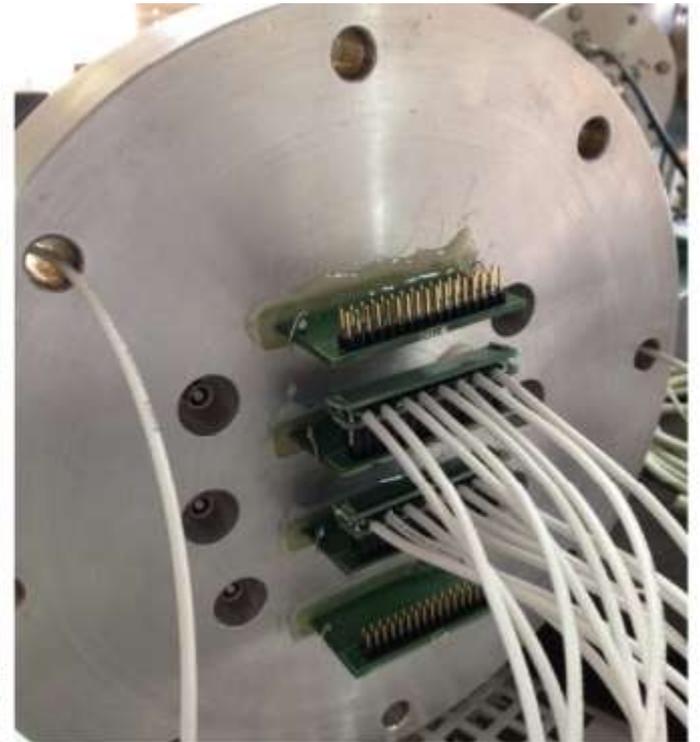
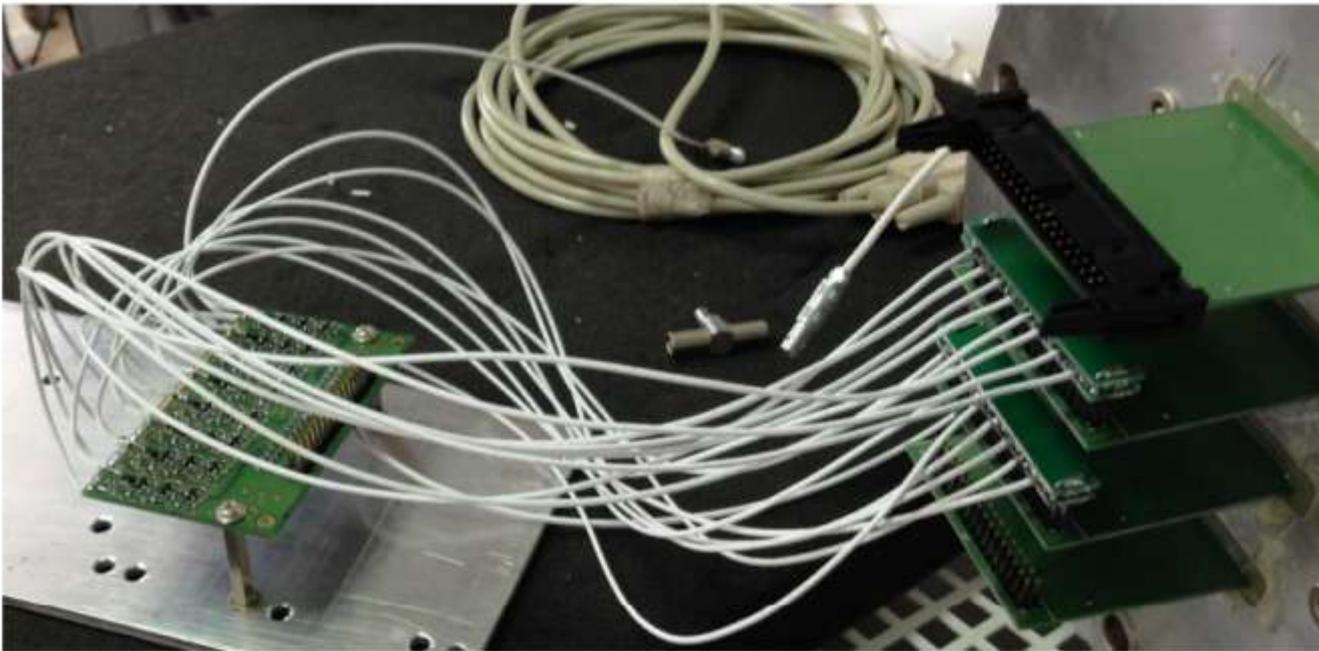


Cable set for signal transmission

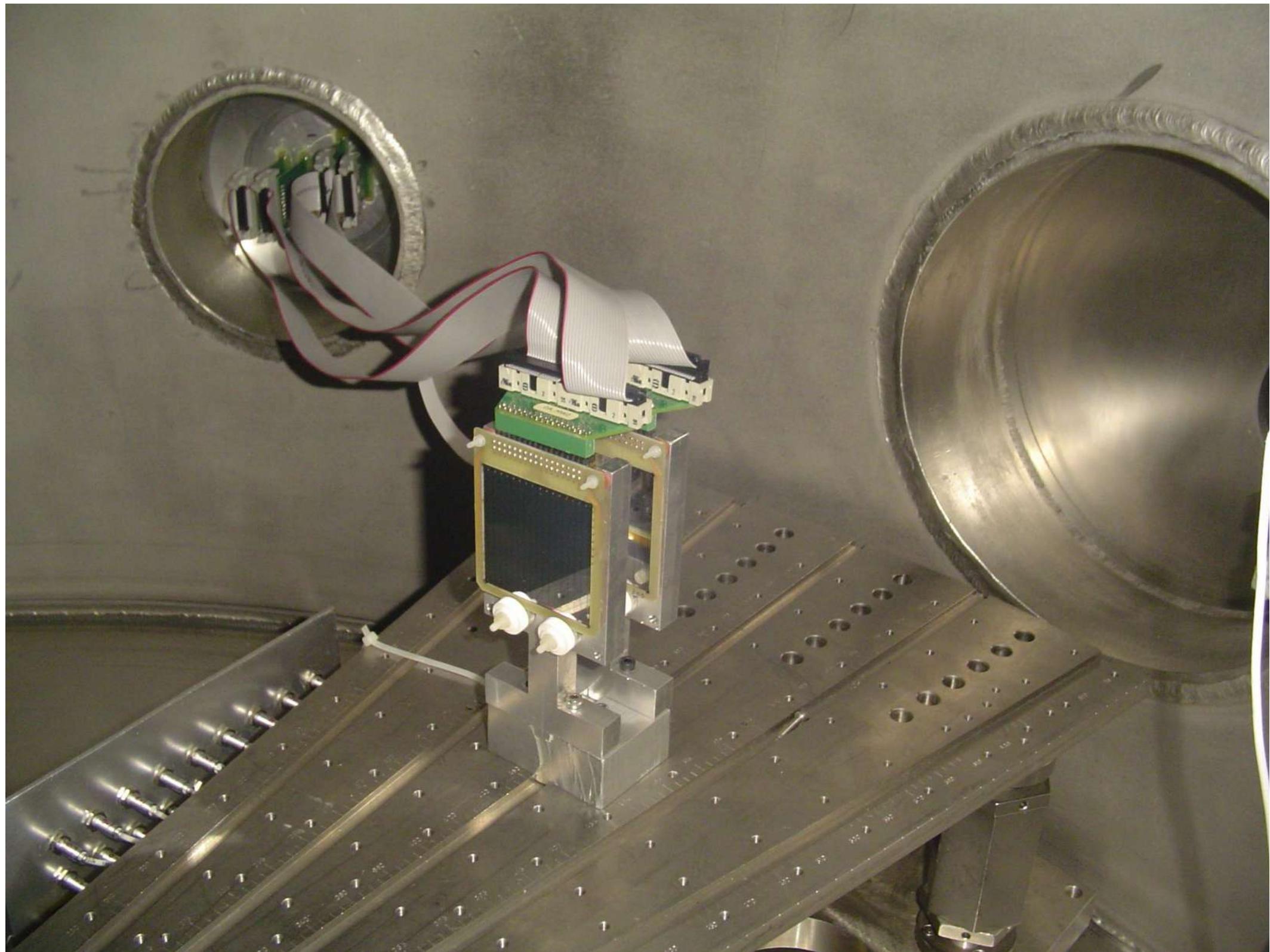
25 pin D-con to 34 pin FRC (16 channel)

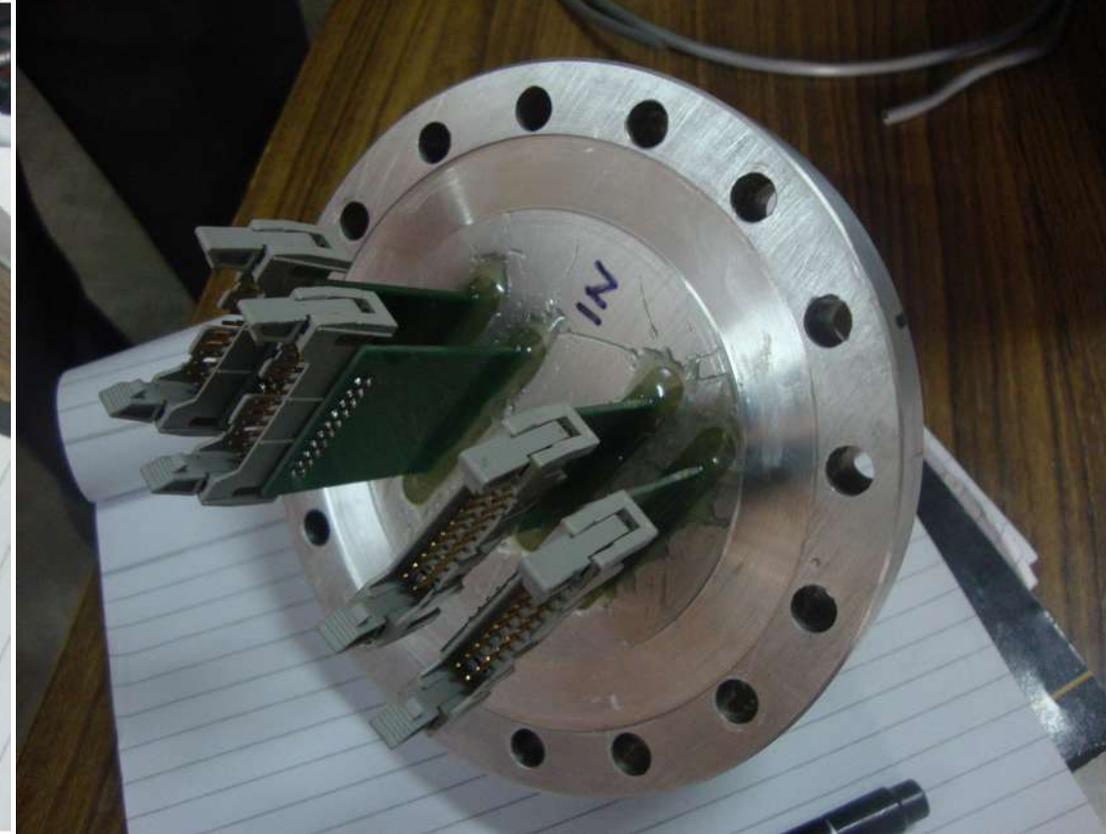
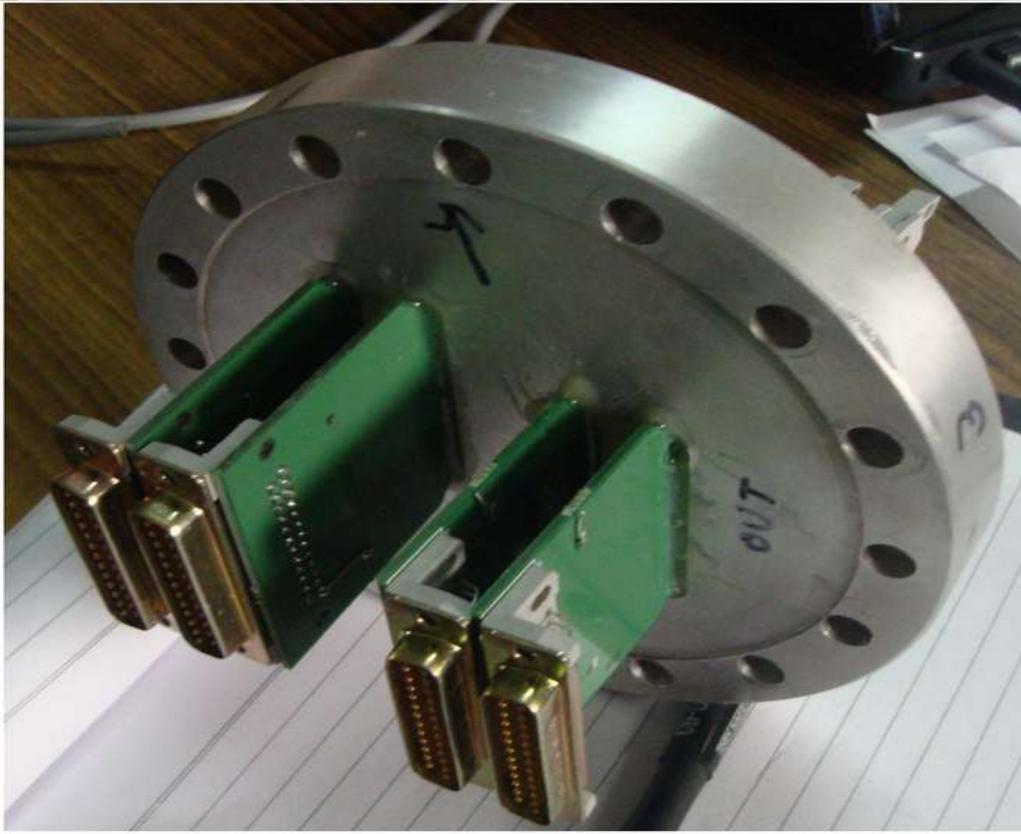
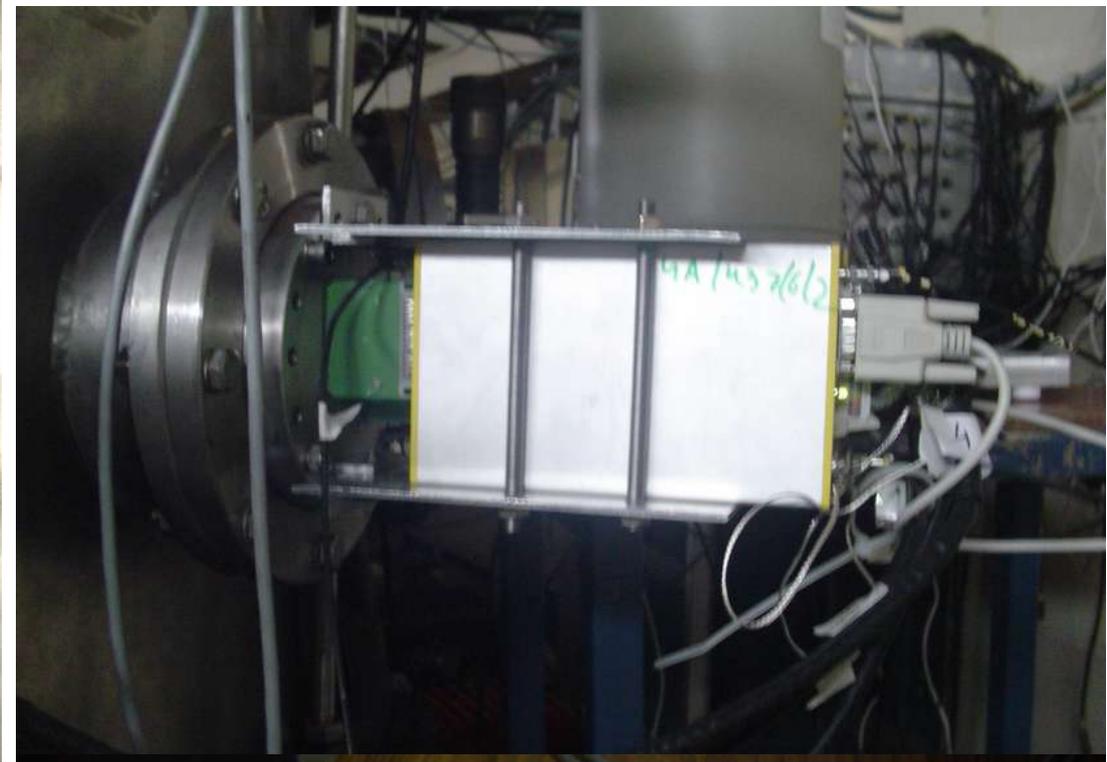
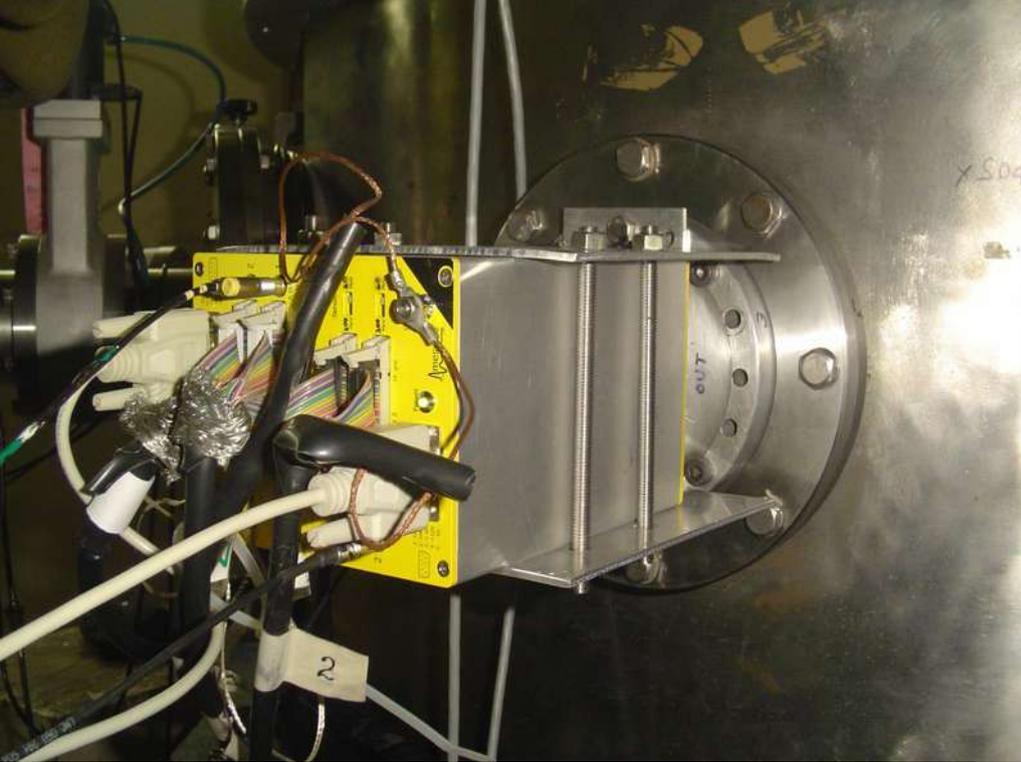
34 pin FRC to 34 pin FRC (16-channel)

FRC to LEMO (8 channel)

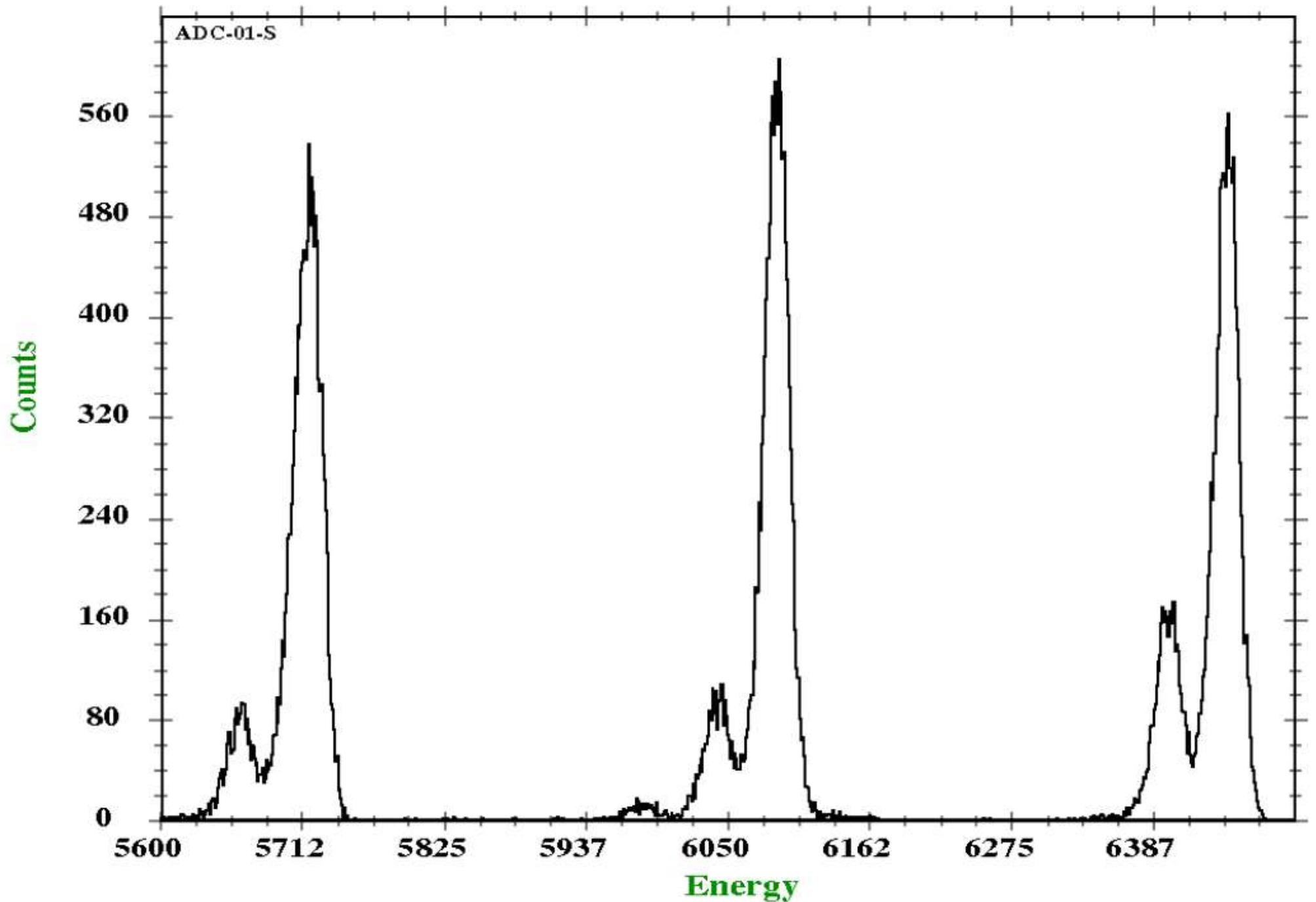


Feedthrough Flange

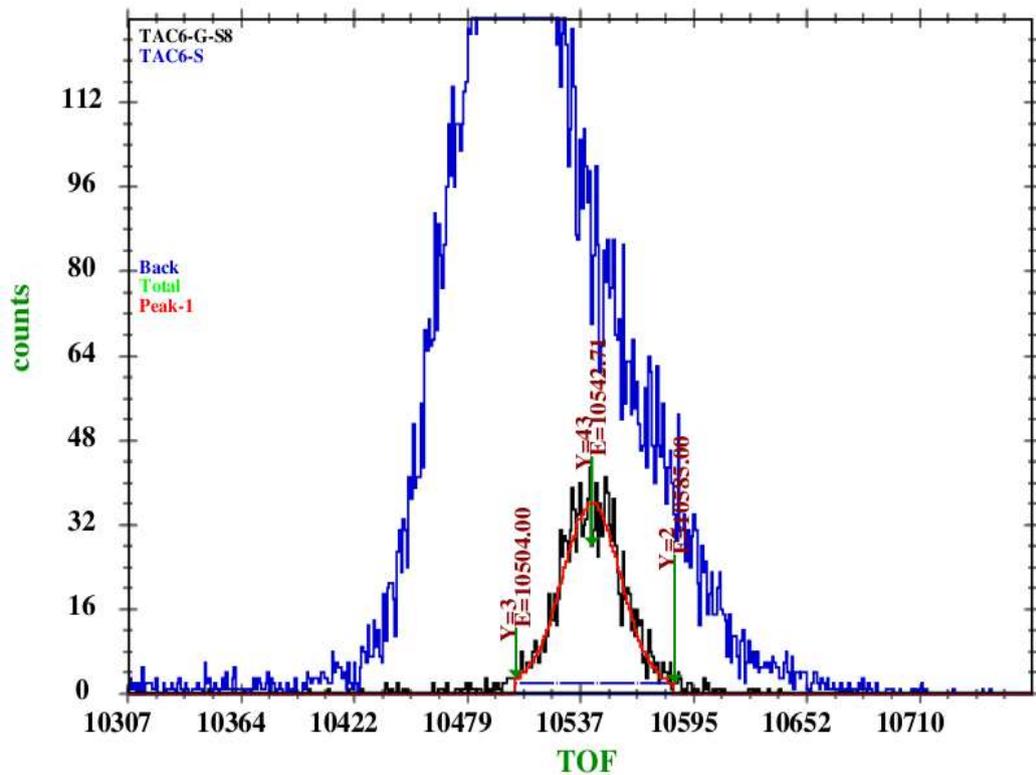




Pu-Am-Cm mixed alpha source



mcp-strip-tof_Si on Gold

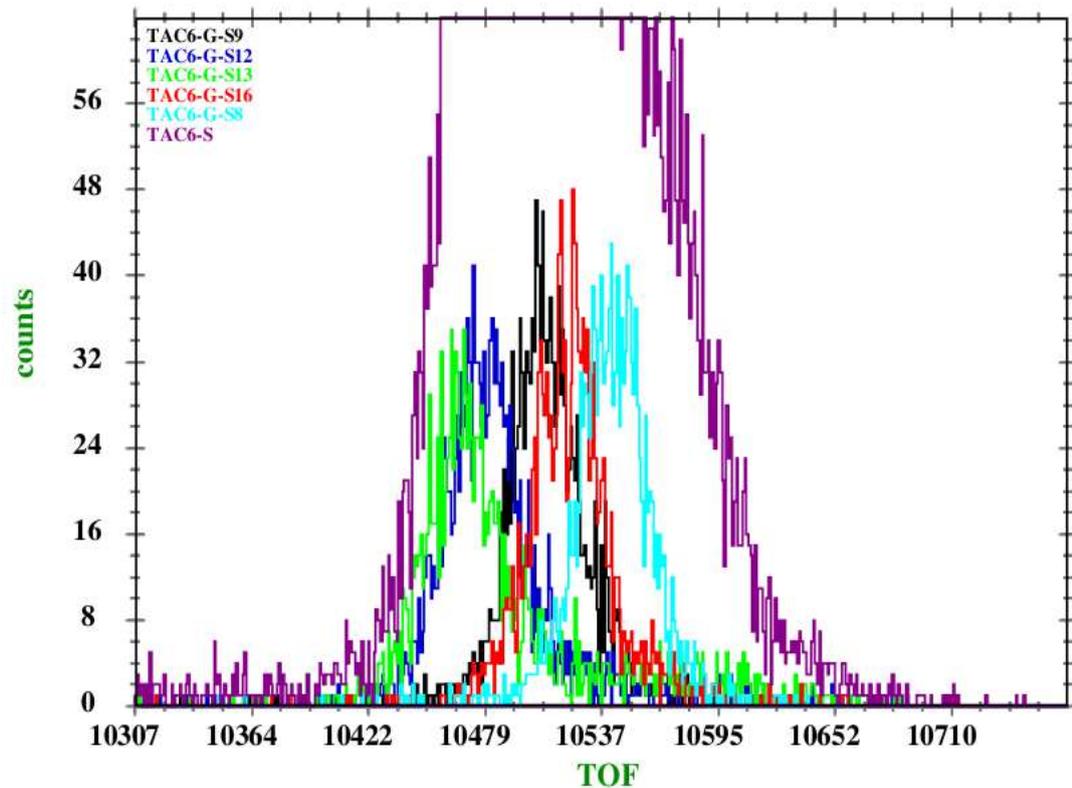


122 MeV ^{28}Si on ^{197}Au
Flight path 15 cm

Propagation delay from
Pixel to pixel observed

TOF res. for 1 pixel ~ 210 ps (fwhm)
MCP res. : 140 ps (fwhm)
Pixel res. : ~ 170 ps (fwhm)

mcp-strip-tof_Si on Gold



Electronics for LaBr_3 detectors

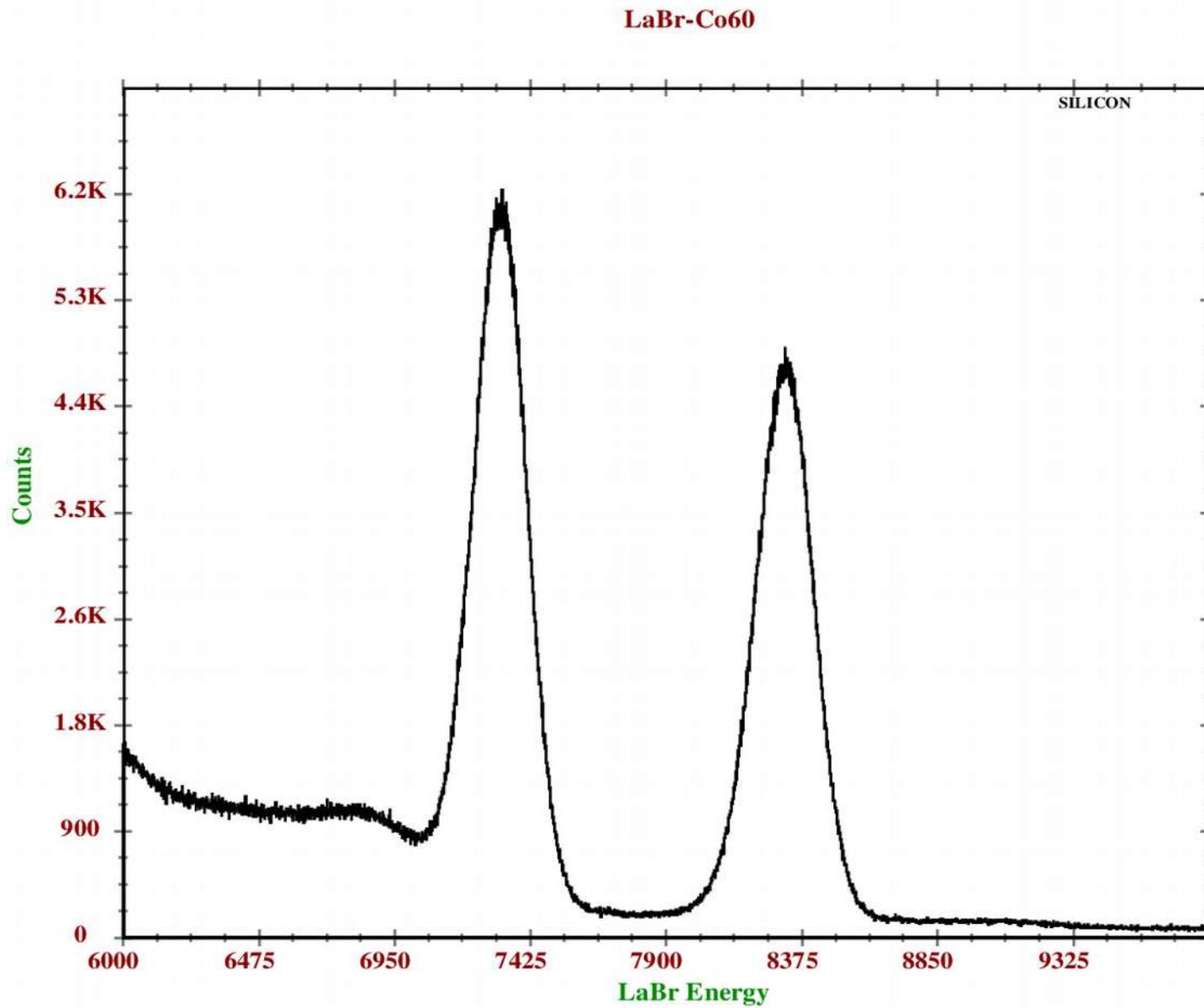
Low gain CSPA developed for extracting Energy information : PMT Dynode

Sensitivity 4.5 mV/pC (Si equi.), Dynamic range $20 \text{ MeV @ } 1 \text{ kV}$ bias
CSPA output fed to Spectroscopy amplifier-ADC or Digitizers

Low gain FTA for extracting timing information : PMT Anode
Gain ~ 5 , Dynamic range $10 \text{ MeV @ } 1 \text{ kV}$ bias.
Output fed to CFD

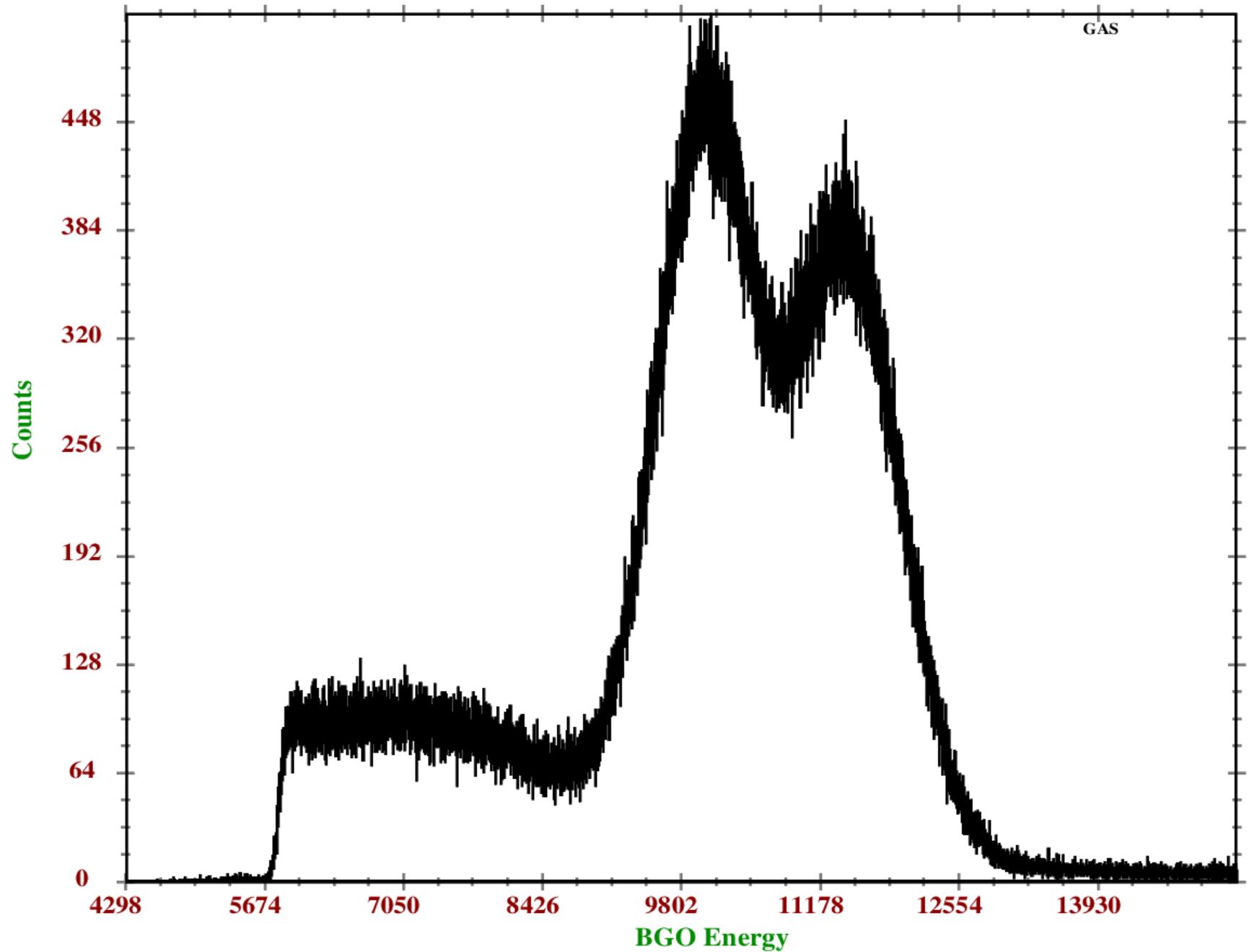
Performance : Energy Resolution $2.5 \% @ 1.33 \text{ MeV } \gamma\text{-ray}$
Timing Resolution $300 \text{ ps @ } 1.33 \text{ MeV } \gamma\text{-ray}$

CSPA and FTA improves the dynamic range and linearity, low PMT voltage operation, drives the signal through long cables (15 – 20 m) improving signal to noise ratio.

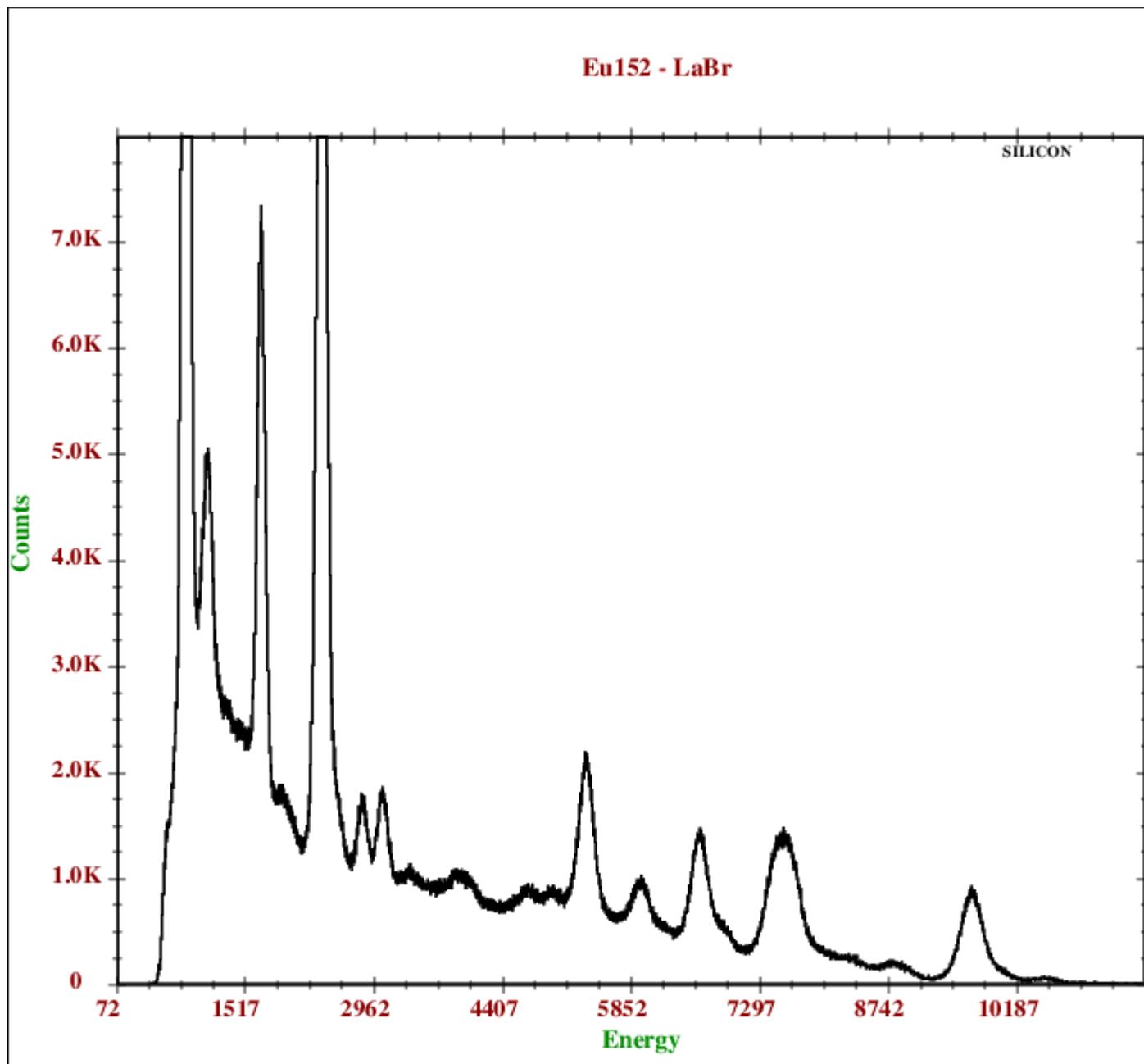


LaBr Energy spectrum with Co60 source

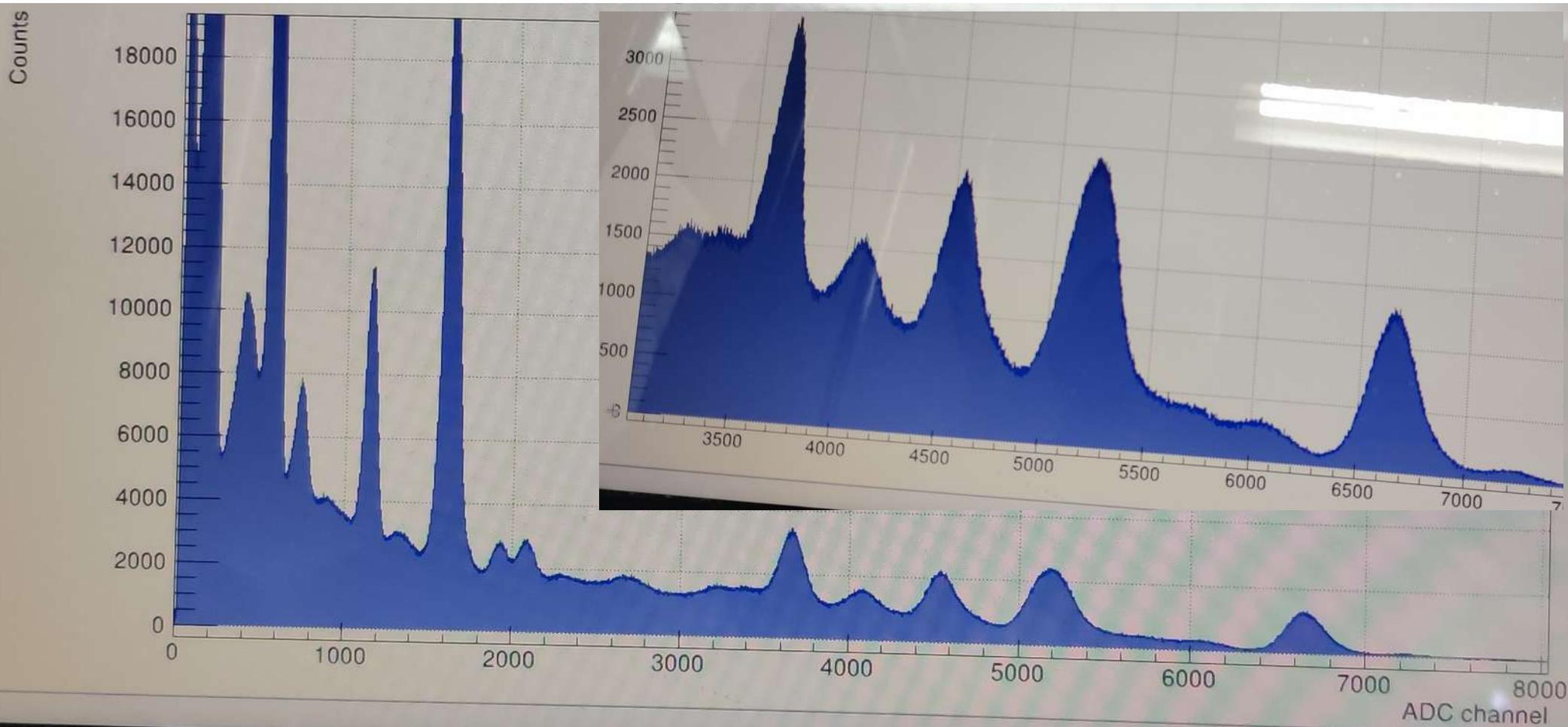
BGO-Co60



BGO Energy plot with Co60



LaBr_3 - Eu^{152} Energy Plot with conventional Analog Signal Processing Electronics



LaBr₃-Eu¹⁵² Energy Plot with CAEN Digitizer PHA



CSPA

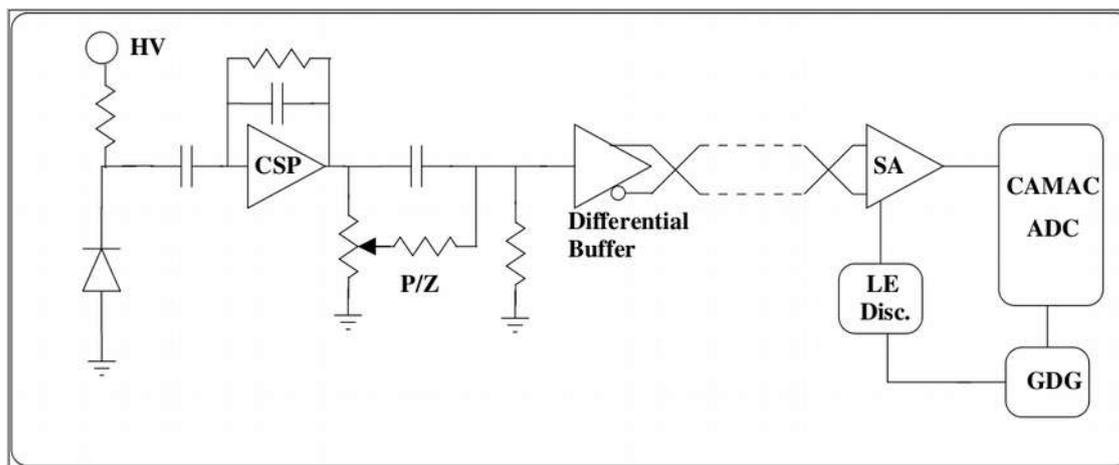


FTA



5 ch. FTA

Preamplifier units prepared for processing LaBr signals



Signal Processing Block diagram

Development of RESET CSPA

Strong flashes of γ -rays, X-rays or even energetic heavy ions etc. can often lead to saturation of pulses in g-ray detectors such as germanium, LaBr₃ etc.

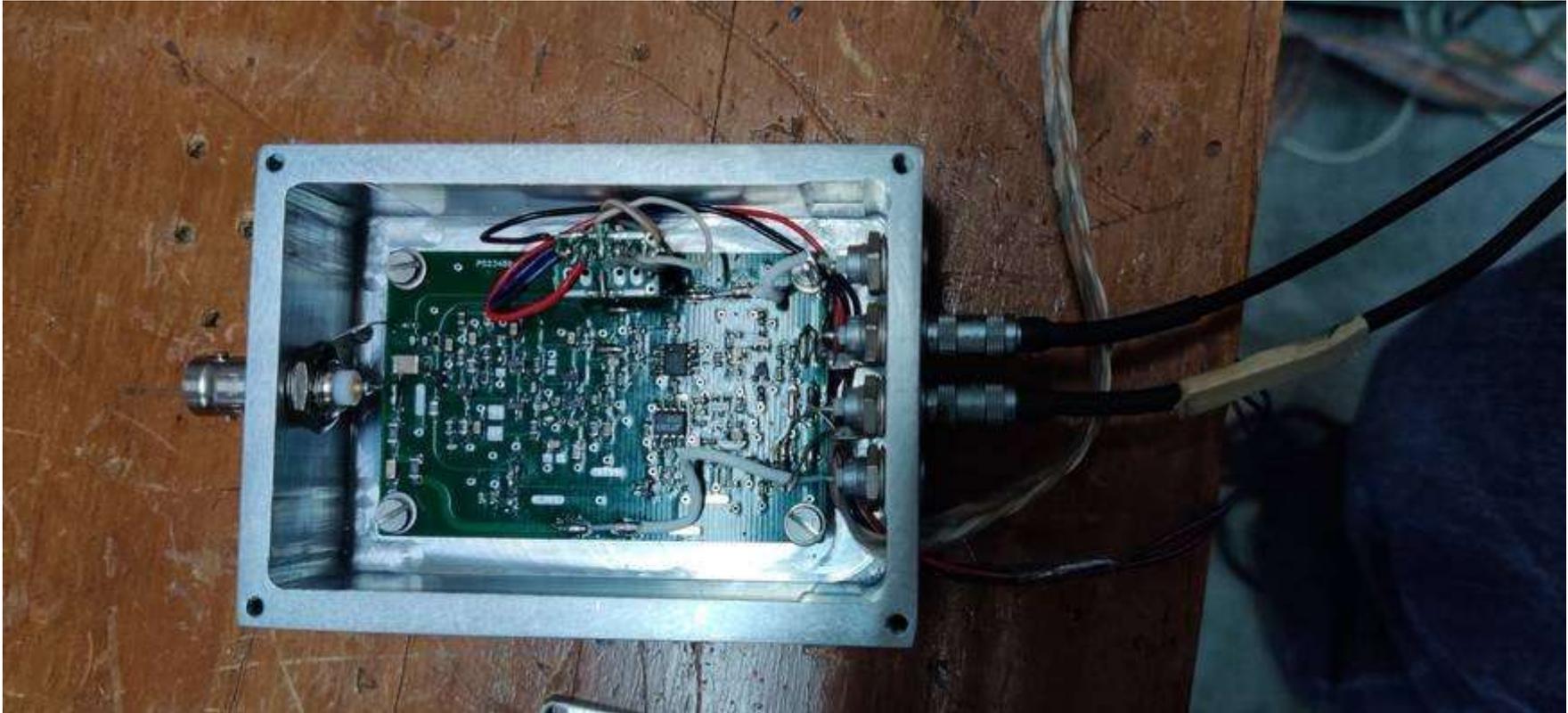
Saturation inhibits CSPA counting for several milliseconds sometimes

Digitizers have limited dynamic range +/- 1 V

Result: Reduced efficiency of the system

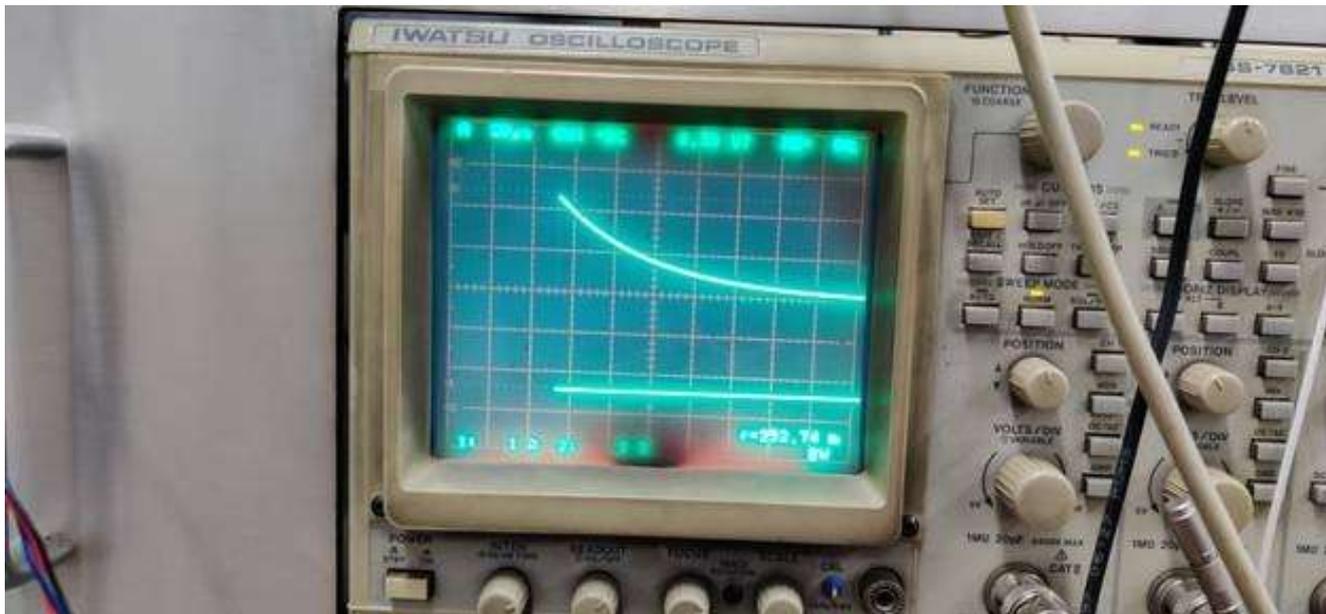
Remedy: Use of RESET charge sensitive pre-amplifiers or CSPA

Assembled charge sensitive preamplifier with reset

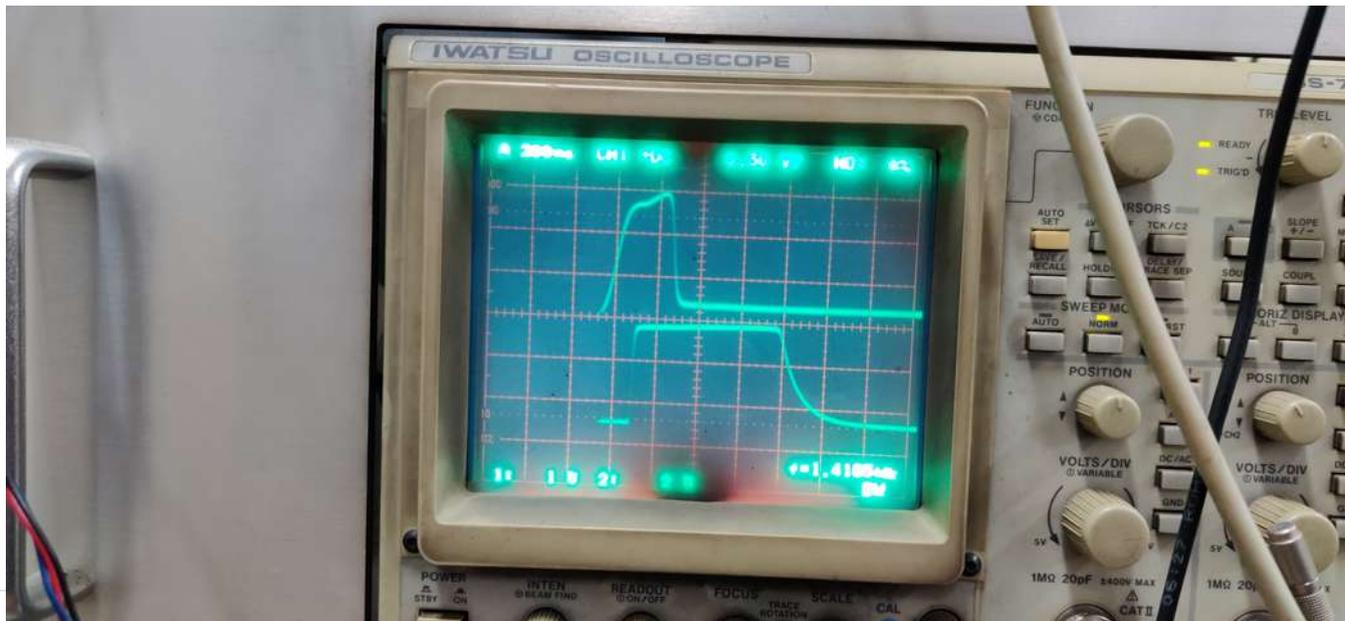


Assembled CSPA designed for *n*-side readout and reset at input stage. Gain 44 mV/MeV (Si equiv.). Decay time 500 μ s for CSPA stage, differentiated to 50 μ s followed by a buffer amplifier feeding voltage comparator and output driver (for 50 ohm loads).

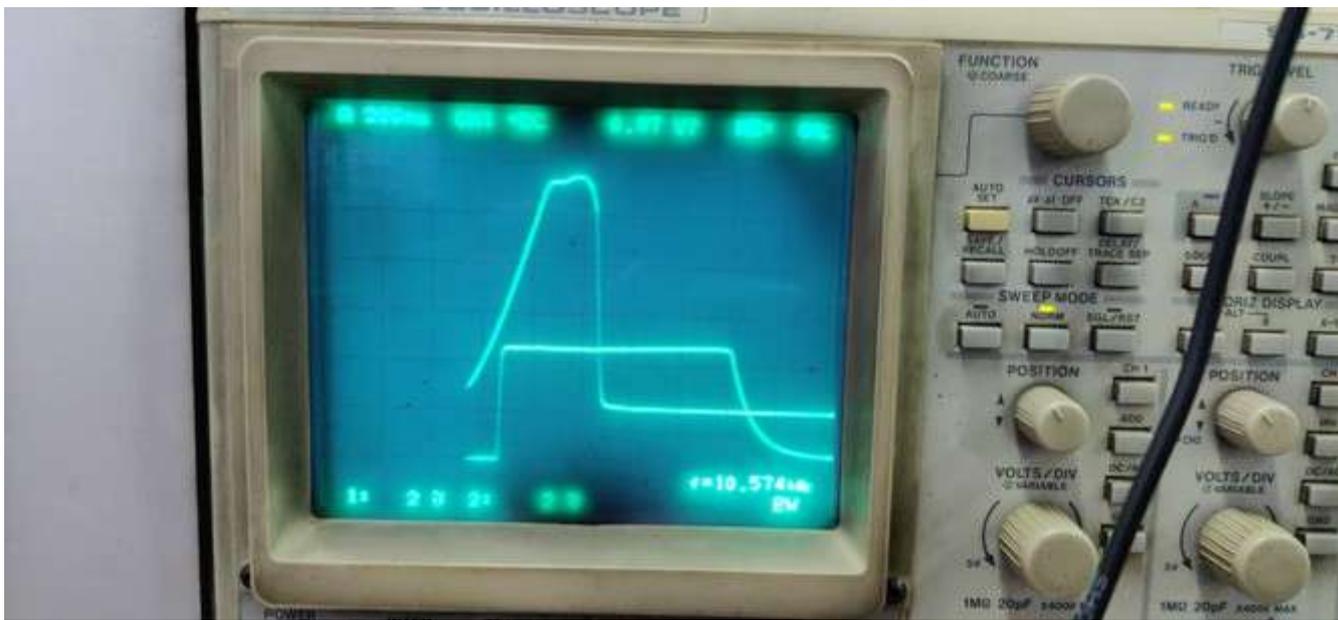
Note: This will work only for *n*-side readout.



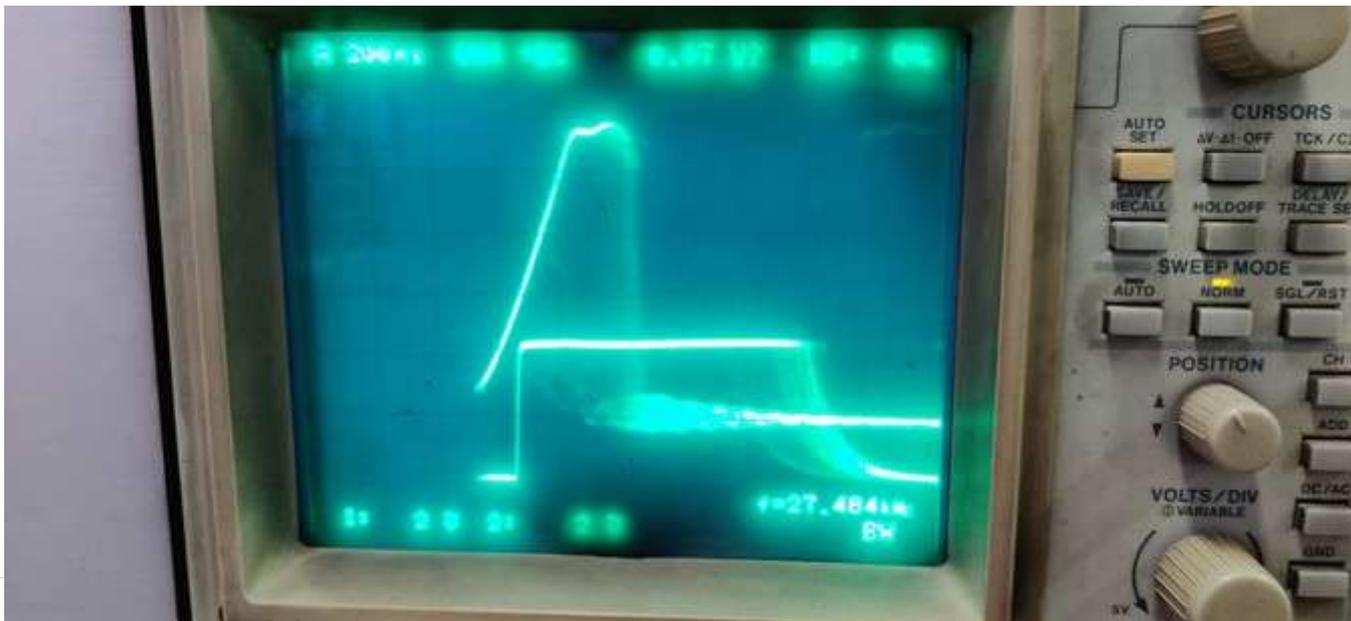
CSPA normal output with pulser without reset (below threshold)



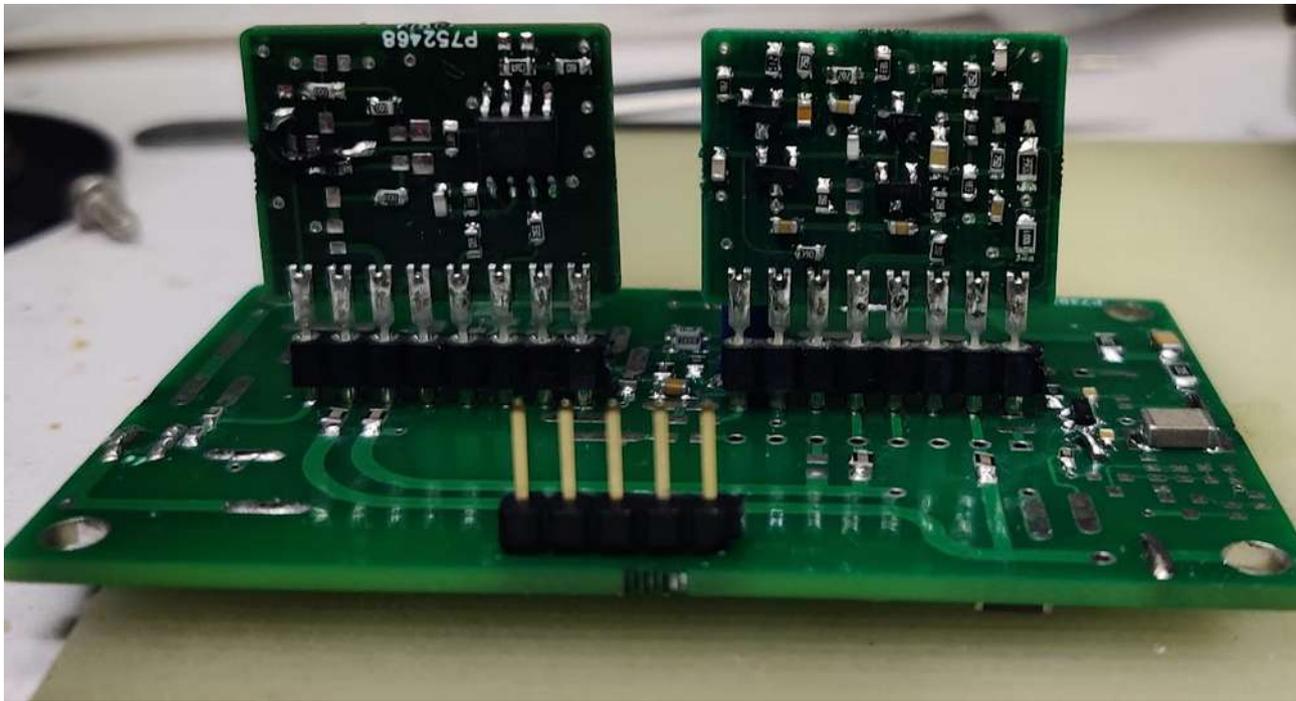
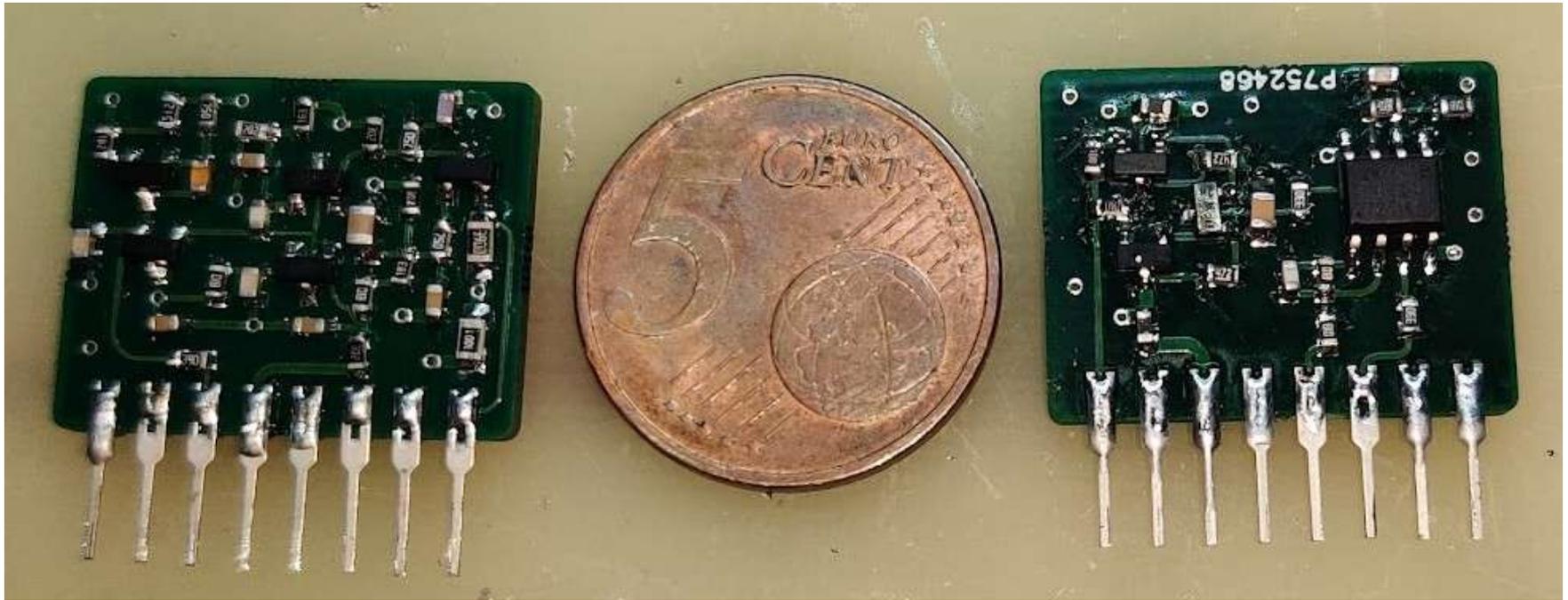
CSPA reset output with pulser (top pulse) with TTL output (bottom)

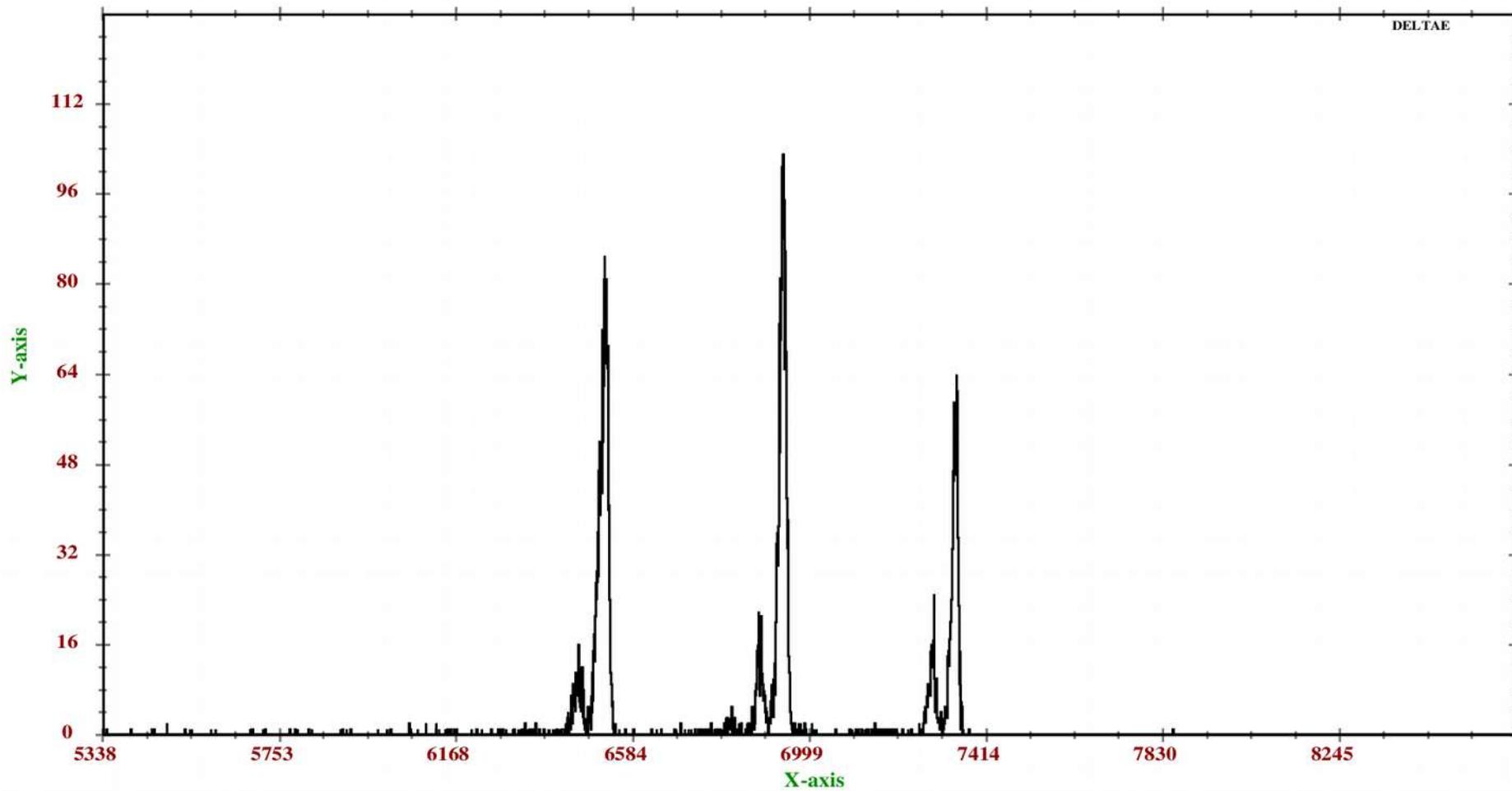


CSPA output using Phillips 7120 charge-time calibrator with 600 pC charge input. No undershoot.

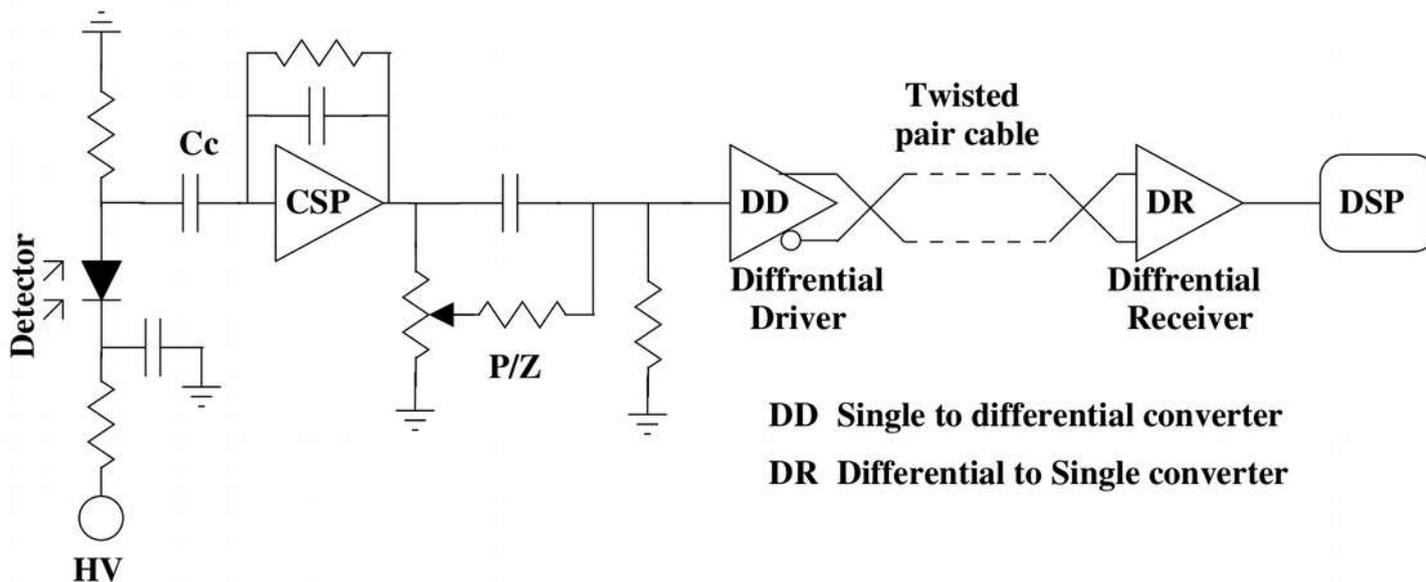
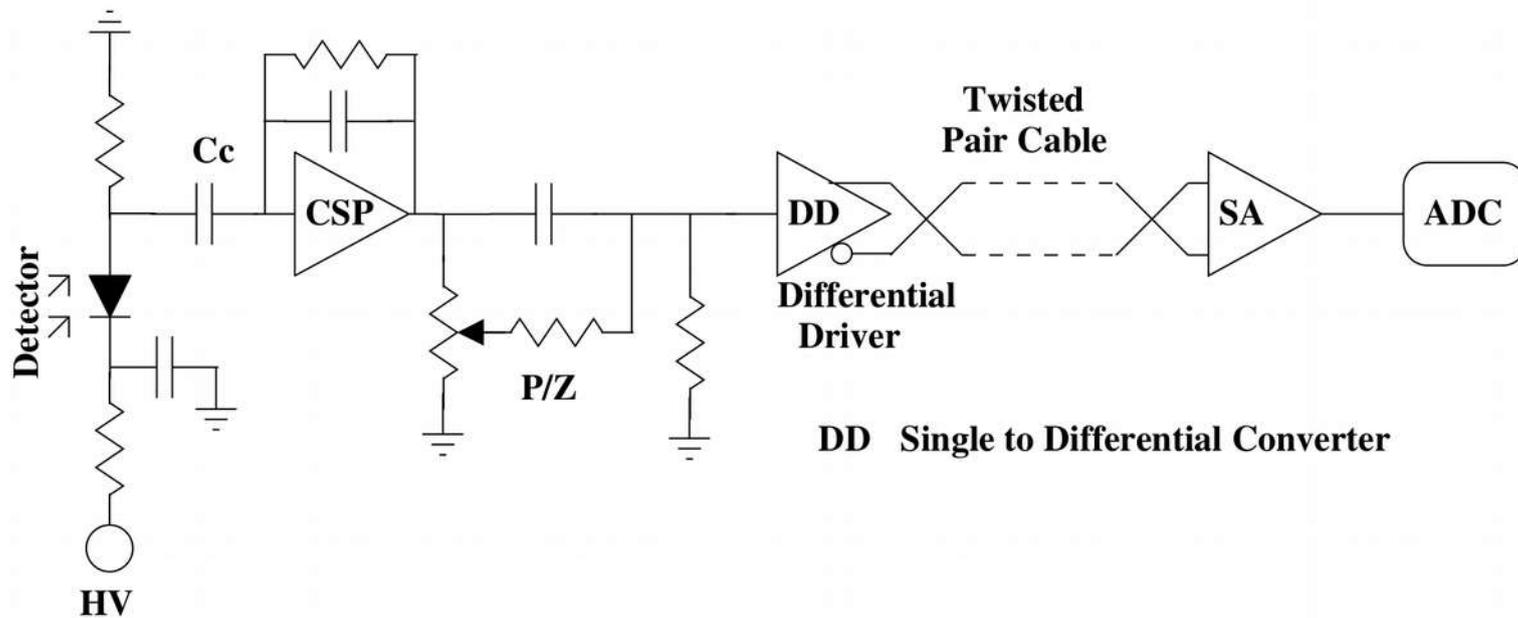


CSPA reset output with BC501 liquid scintillator & ^{60}Co source. Charge input $\sim 2 - 3$ nC. Reset time ~ 300 ns with no undershoot.

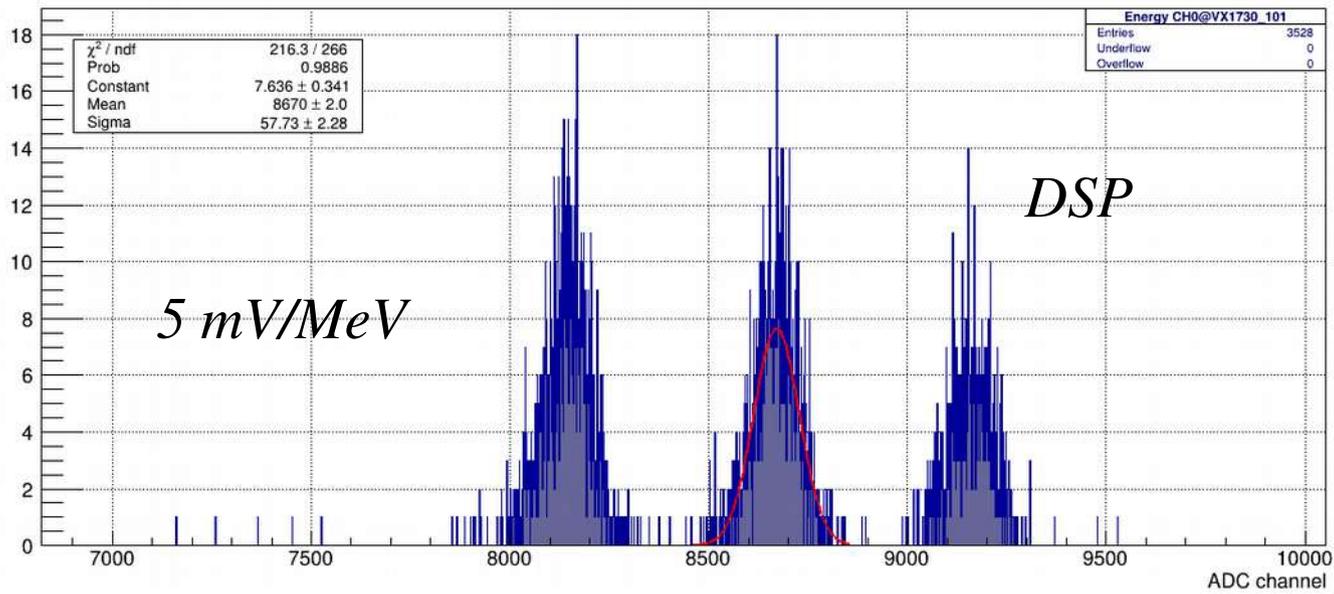




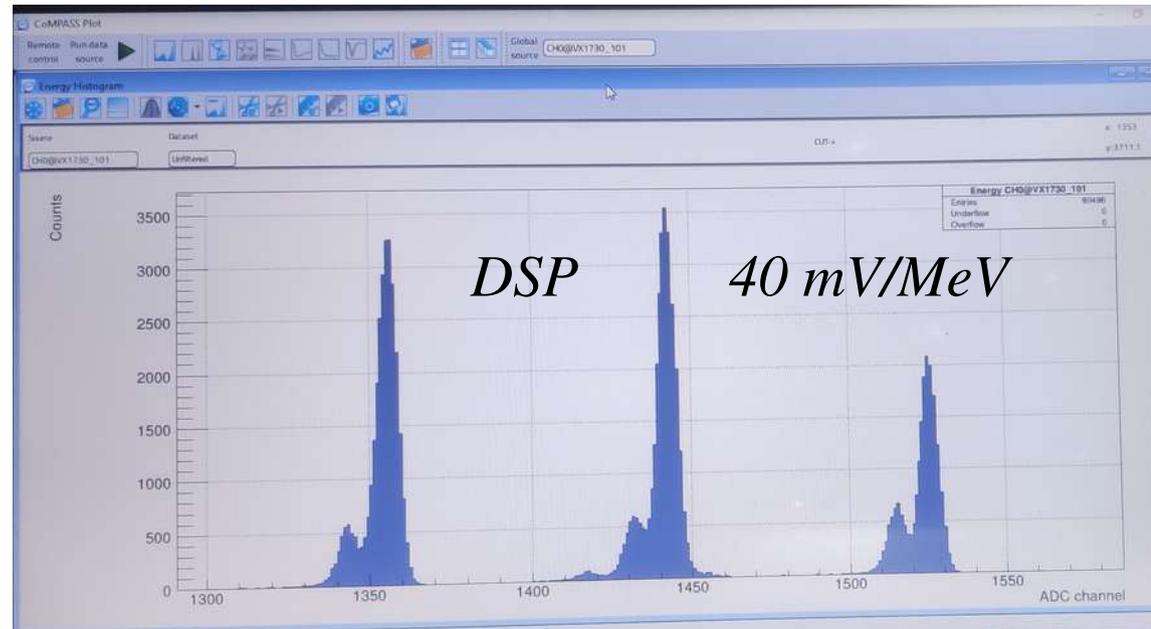
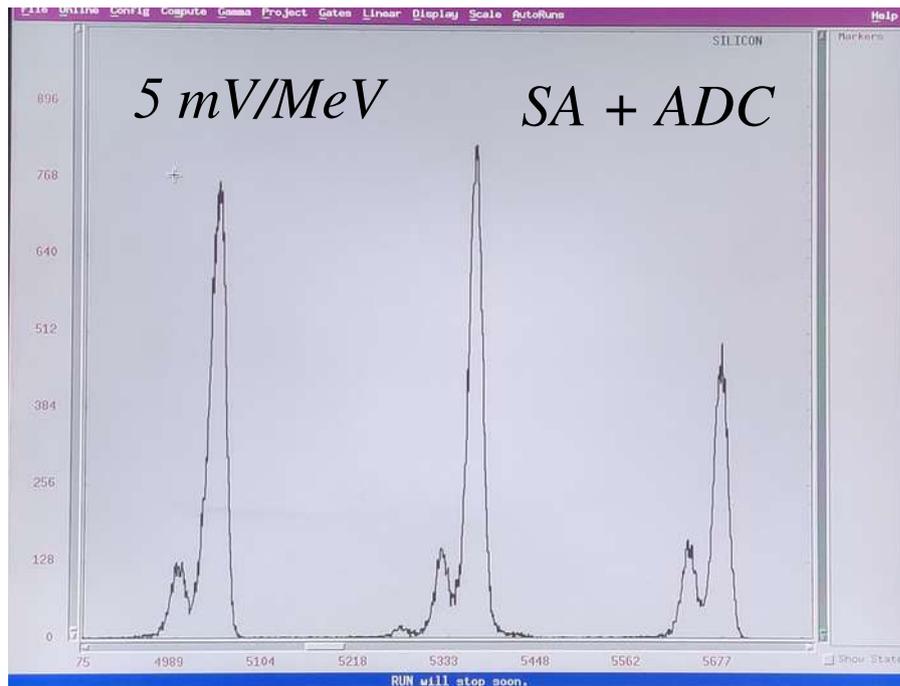
Silicon detector +Pu-Am-Cu



Digital Readout Schematic for multi-channel CSPA with Differential output



Mesytec + DR + DSP
Silicon detector + Pu-Am-Cu



Acknowledgements

All Colleagues and Collaborators

Mechanical, Electronics, Vacuum, Accelerator Group

For their continuous support

Thank You