

Beyond Bandwidth

Phase-Coherent Distributed ISAC for 6G
Positioning, Sensing, and Imaging

Henk Wymeersch

Department of Electrical Engineering
Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden
henkw@chalmers.se



CHALMERS

Chalmers and the CROSSNET group

- **Chalmers:** private foundation, established by William Chalmers in 1829, 300 professors, 11000 students



CHALMERS



Erik
Ström



Fredrik
Brännström



Thomas
Eriksson



Tommy
Svensson



Erik
Agrell



Henk
Wymeersch



Giuseppe
Durisi



Christian
Häger



Alexandre
Graell i Amat



M. Furkan
Keskin



Hui Chen

- **CROSSNET group:** focus on radio localization and sensing. ~20 members, 3 permanent staff.
- **Our vision:** Repurpose developments in communication systems for positioning and sensing

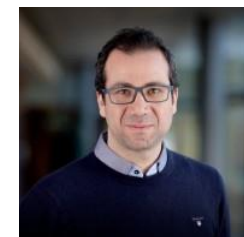


CROSSNET Group Spinoffs

- ISAC: <https://www.radchat.tech>
- Zero-energy devices: <https://emickers.com>
- AI for fault monitoring: <https://aiopt.se/>
- Multi-modal sensing: <https://raitech.se>



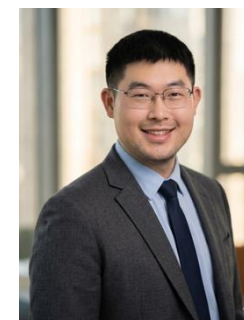
CEO: Prof. Simon HE
IEEE Senior Member
Changjiang Distinguished
Professor, BIT



CEO: Dr. Navid Amani
PhD Chalmers and TU
Eindhoven



CEO: Jafar Banar



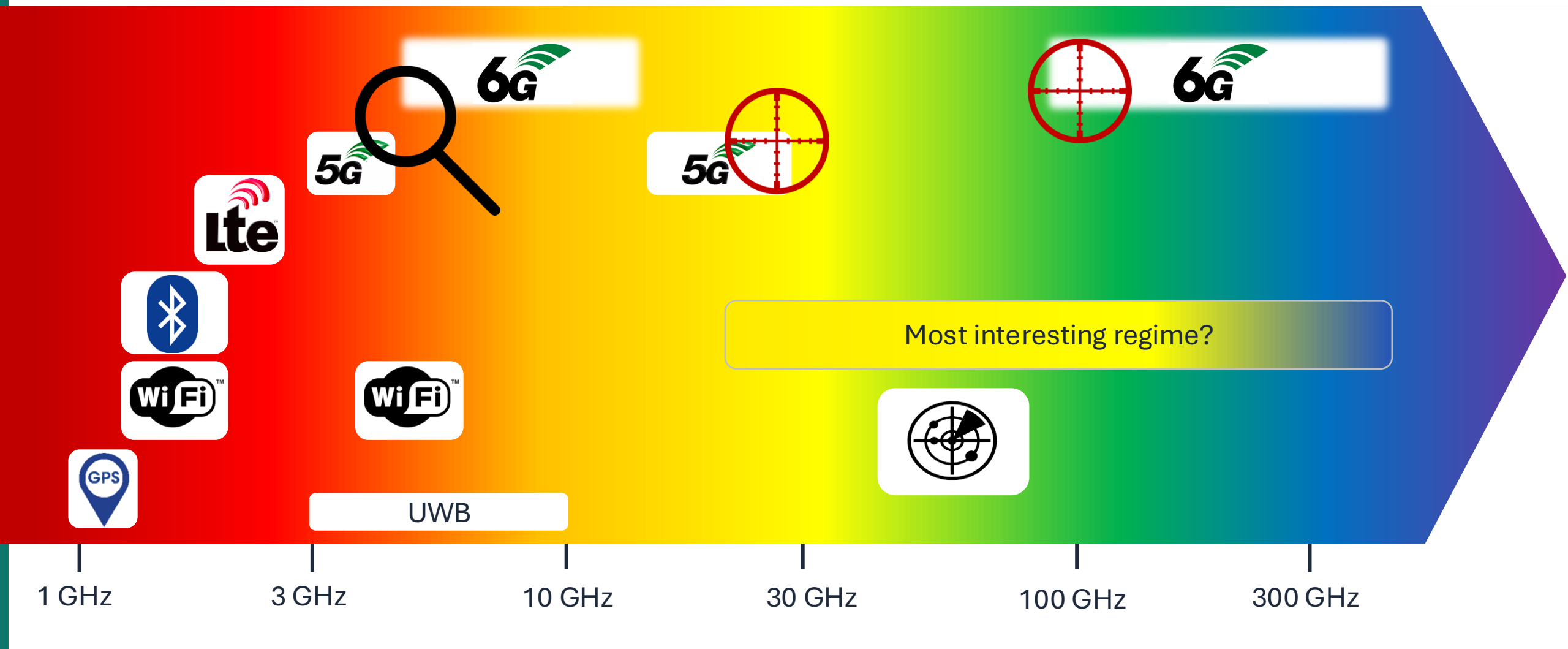
CEO: Dr. Yu Ge
MIT

Our research: two paths



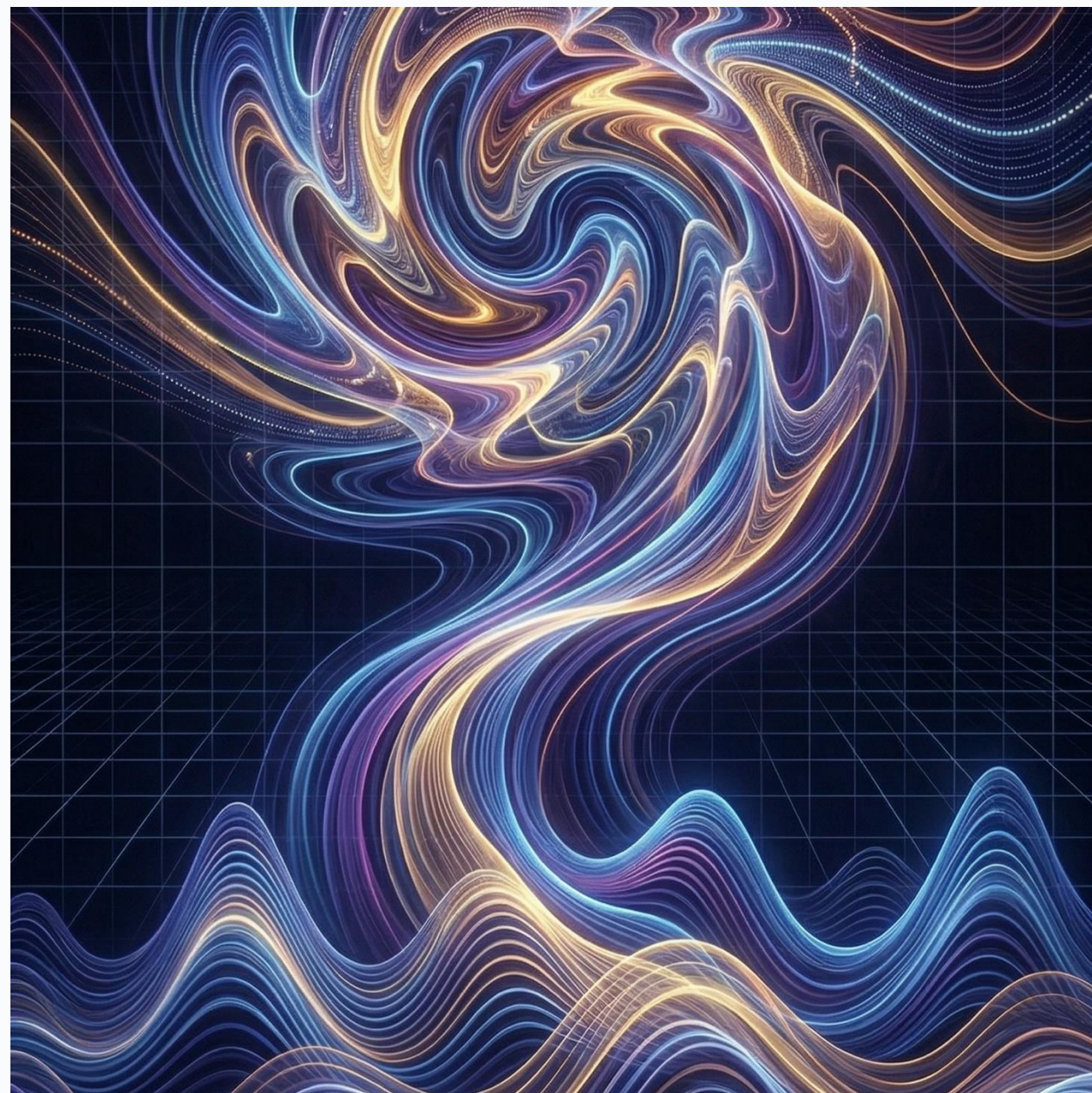
Model-based signal processing

Communication and sensing for 6G: all about bandwidth?



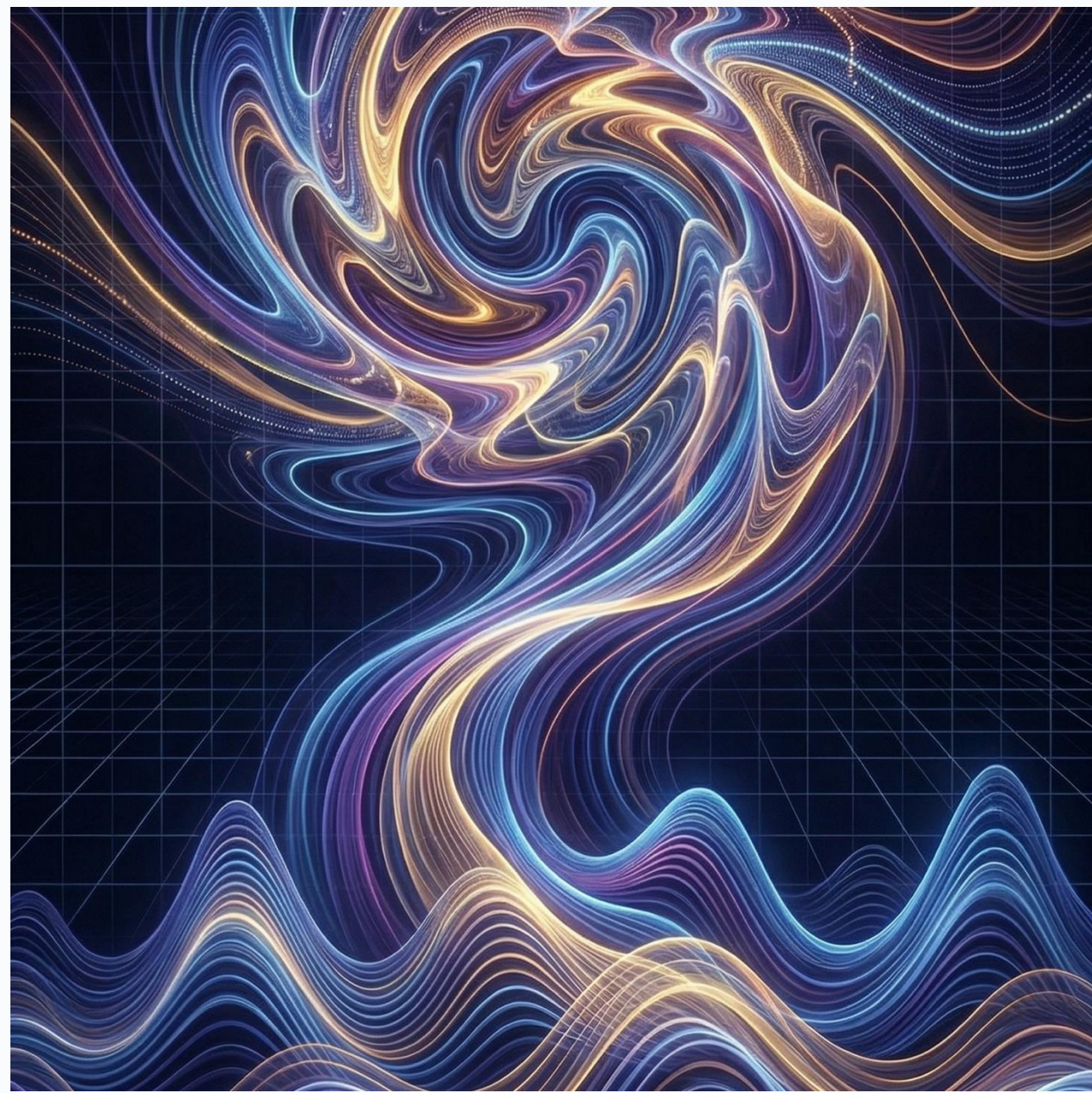
Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- Conclusions
- References



Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- Conclusions
- References



The wireless channel

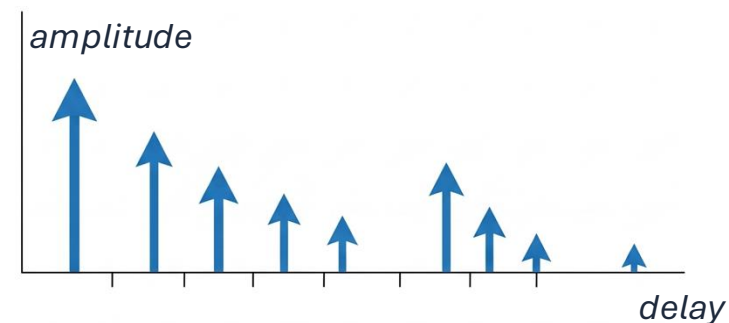
- Communication channel models $\text{vec}(\mathbf{H}) \sim \mathcal{CN}(\mathbf{0}, \sigma^2 \mathbf{I})$
- Rayleigh origin: many paths + central limit theorem
- At higher frequencies:
 - Severe shadowing: paths cannot penetrate objects
 - Objects appear rougher: less reflection
 - Overall fewer propagation paths
- Narrowband model:

$$\mathbf{H} = \sum_{\ell=1}^{N_p} \alpha_{\ell} \mathbf{a}_{\text{R}}(\theta_{\text{R},\ell}) \mathbf{a}_{\text{T}}^{\text{T}}(\theta_{\text{T},\ell})$$

- Wideband model:

$$\mathbf{H}_k = \sum_{\ell=1}^{N_p} \alpha_{\ell} \mathbf{a}_{\text{R}}(\theta_{\text{R},\ell}) \mathbf{a}_{\text{T}}^{\text{T}}(\theta_{\text{T},\ell}) e^{-j2\pi k \Delta_f \tau_{\ell}}$$

- Localization and sensing use the **same channel** as communication, so **same model**

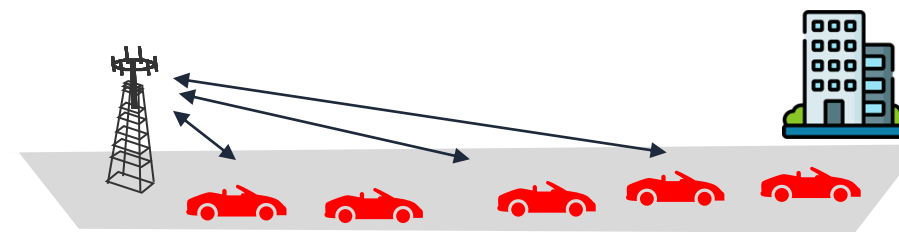


Measurements from the channel

- Several domains available: angle-of-arrival or departure, time-of-arrival, Doppler

- Common model
$$y_n = \sum_{l=0}^L \alpha_l e^{jn\omega_l} + n_n$$

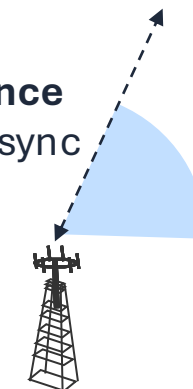
- Interpretation of ω depends on n :
 - Observations over subcarriers $2\pi\tau_l\Delta_f$
 - Observations over antennas $\pi \sin \theta_l$
 - Observations over time $2\pi\nu_l T_s$
- Estimation is classical harmonic retrieval
- Resolution depends on aperture in frequency, space, time



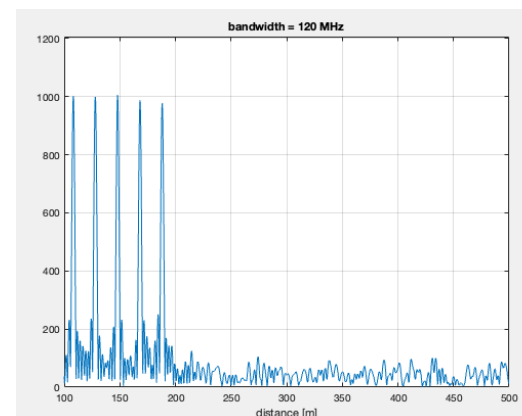
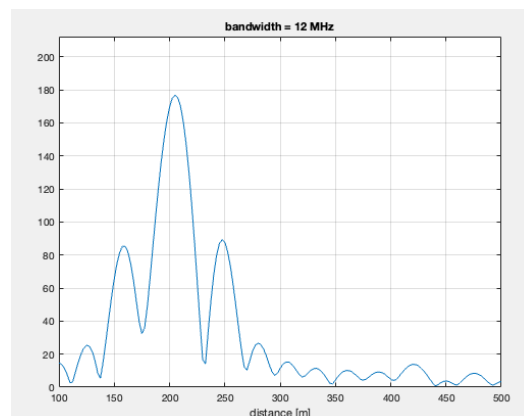
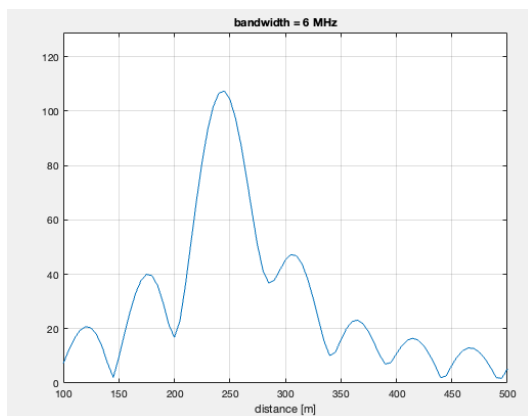
Doppler to (radial) velocity
requires frequency sync



Time to distance
requires time sync

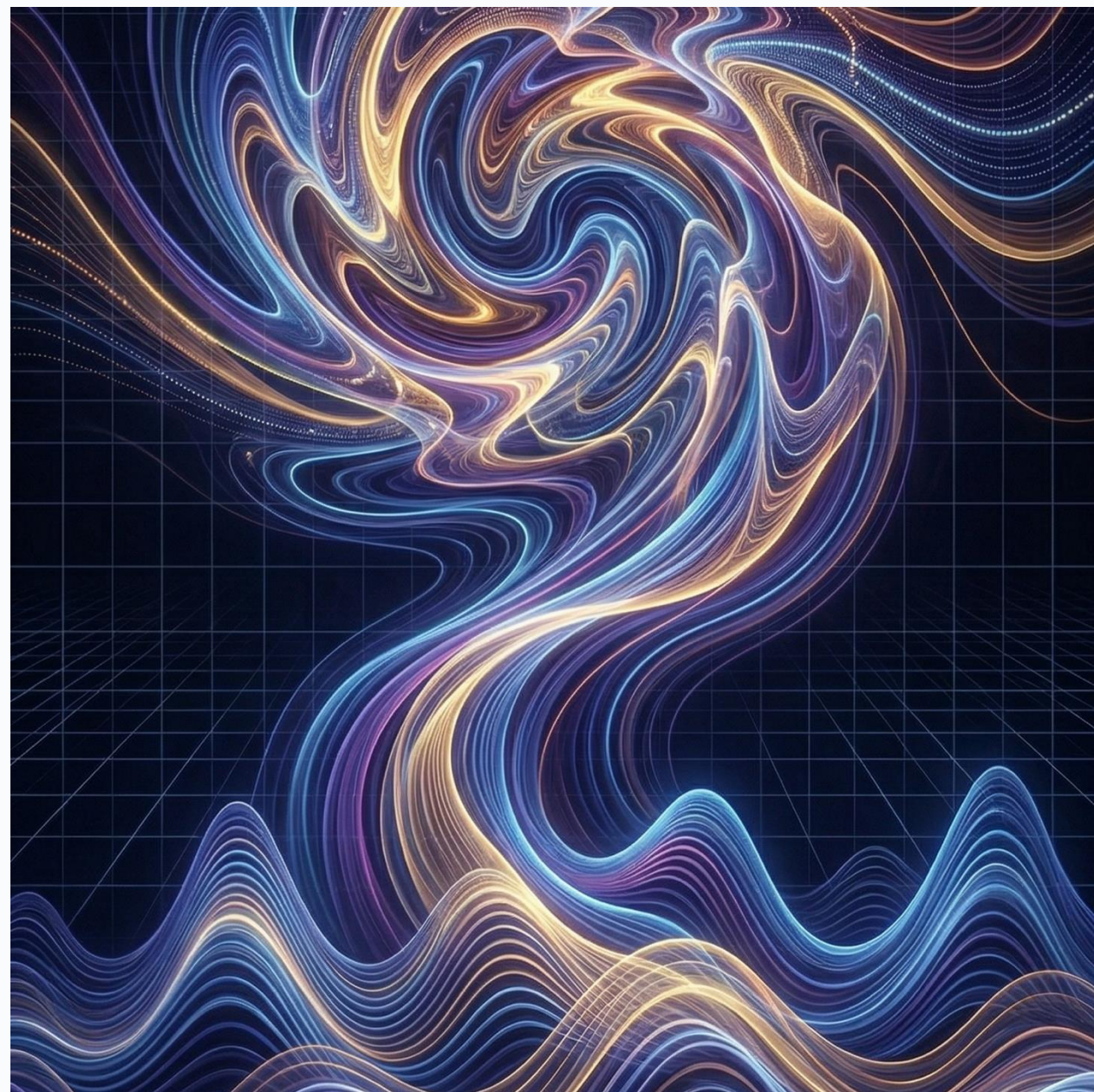


Angle to direction requires
known orientation



Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- Conclusions
- References



Phase-coherent deployments

- **Classical arrays** are phase coherent

$$\mathbf{r} = \alpha \mathbf{a}(\theta) + \mathbf{n}$$

$$\alpha = \rho \exp(j\phi)$$

$$[\mathbf{a}(\theta)]_n = \exp(-j\pi n \sin(\theta))$$

- **Extra-large arrays** are phase coherent

$$\mathbf{r} = \alpha \odot \mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p}) + \mathbf{n}$$

$$[\alpha]_n = \rho_n \exp(j\phi)$$

$$[\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p})]_n = \exp(-j2\pi(d_n - d_0)/\lambda)$$

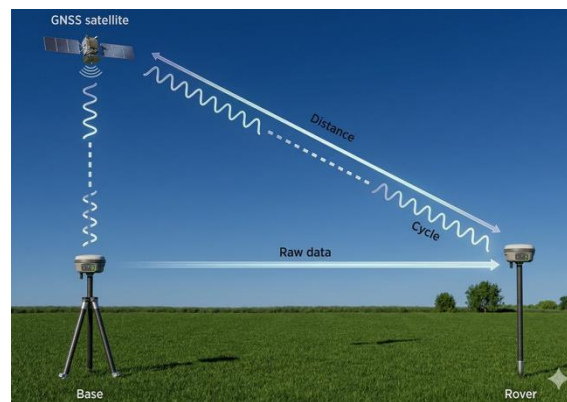
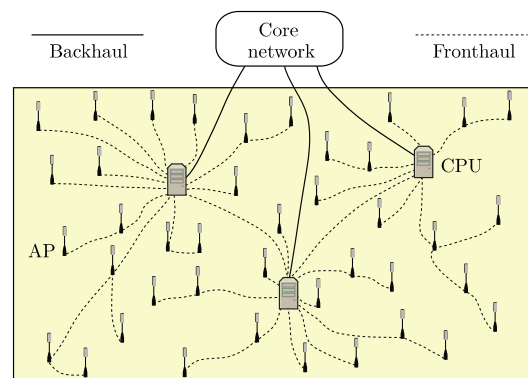
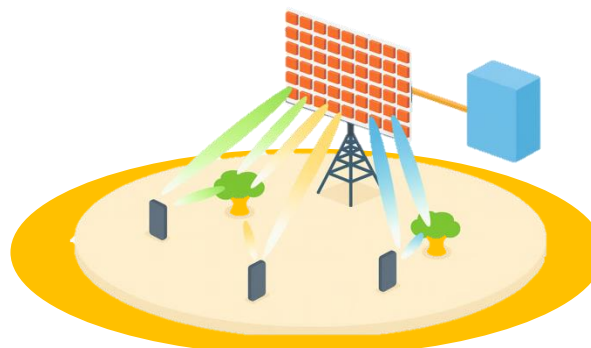
$$d_n = \|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\|$$

- **Cell-free systems** are phase coherent

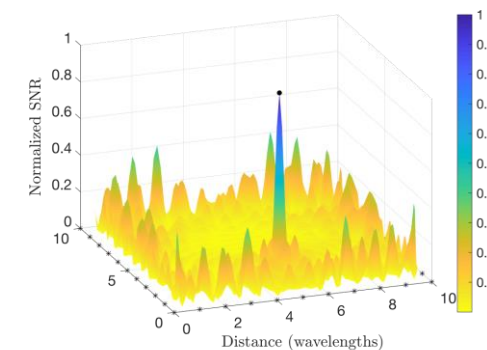
- **RTK-GPS** is also phase coherent

- Main idea:

observed phase relates to distance



Chen, H., Keskin, M.F., Sakhnini, A., Decarli, N., Pollin, S., Dardari, D. and Wymeersch, H., 2024. 6G localization and sensing in the near field: Features, opportunities, and challenges. *IEEE Wireless Communications*, 31(4), pp.260-267.



(a) View with normalized SNR (between 0 and 1) on the vertical axis.

Özlem Tugfe Demir, Emil Björnson and Luca Sanguinetti (2021), "Foundations of User-Centric Cell-Free Massive MIMO", *Foundations and Trends® in Signal Processing: Vol. 14, No. 3-4*, pp 162–472. DOI: 10.1561/2000000109.

Phase coherence: benefits and challenges

Benefits

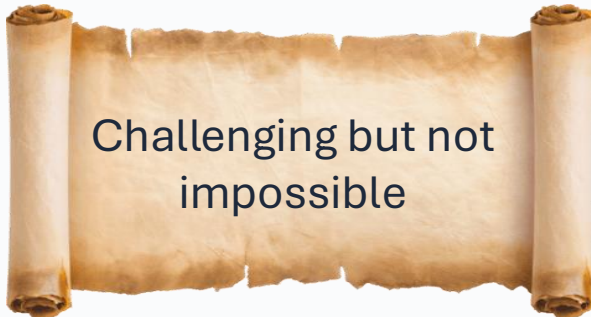
- Phase observation provide distance measurement (up to wavelength)
- Widely distributed aperture in D-MIMO provide diverse geometric information

Challenges

- Requires fine synchronization (time, frequency, and phase)
- Requires fine geometric calibration
- Positioning, sensing computationally challenging

Solutions

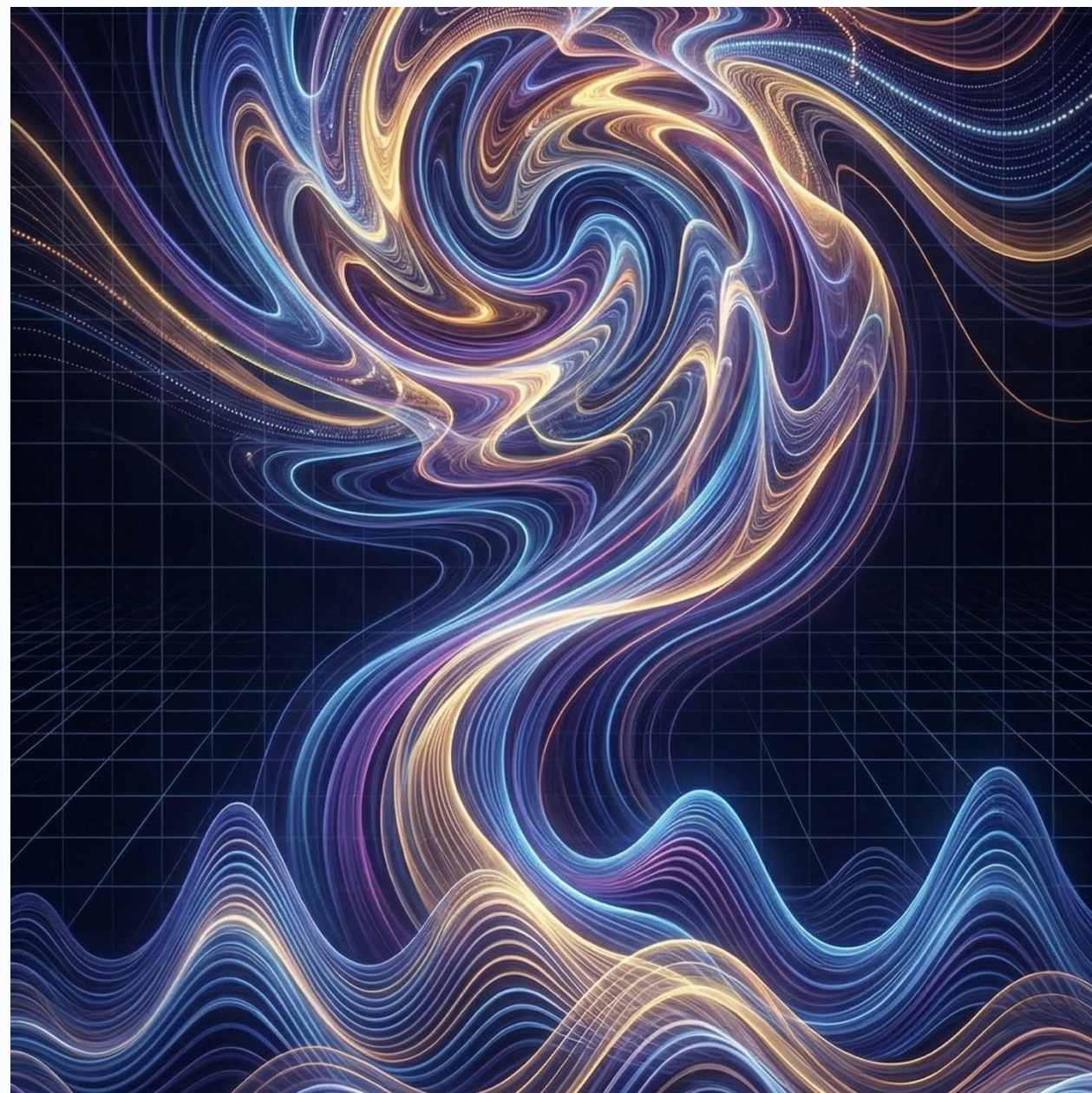
- Reference nodes can relax sync requirements. Promising signal processing methods, including OTA sync
- In-situ calibration is possible at lower frequency bands
- Good problems for signal processing researchers 😊



Challenging but not impossible

Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- Conclusions
- References



Classical array

Single source model:

$$\mathbf{r} = \alpha \mathbf{a}(\theta) + \mathbf{n}$$

$$\alpha = \rho \exp(j\phi)$$

$$[\mathbf{a}(\theta)]_n = \exp(-j\pi n \sin(\theta))$$

ML estimate:

$$\hat{\theta}_{ML} = \arg \max_{\theta} |\mathbf{a}^H(\theta) \mathbf{r}|^2$$

Normalized ambiguity function*:

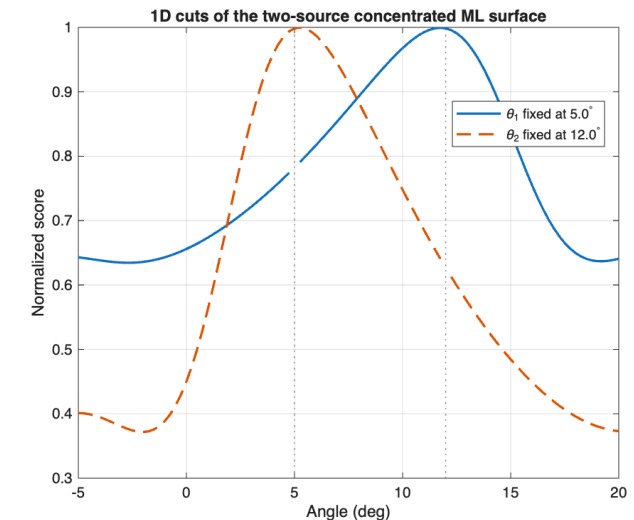
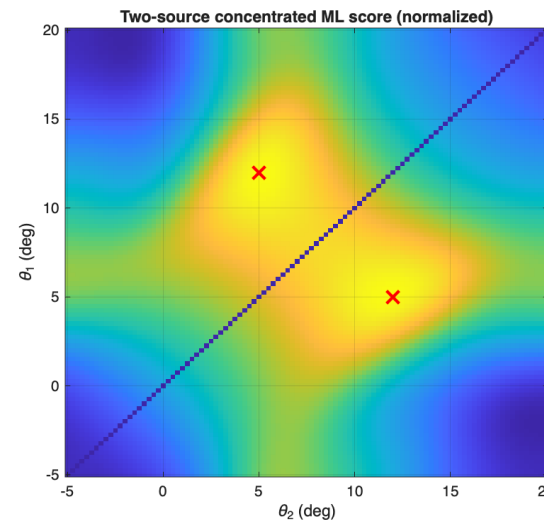
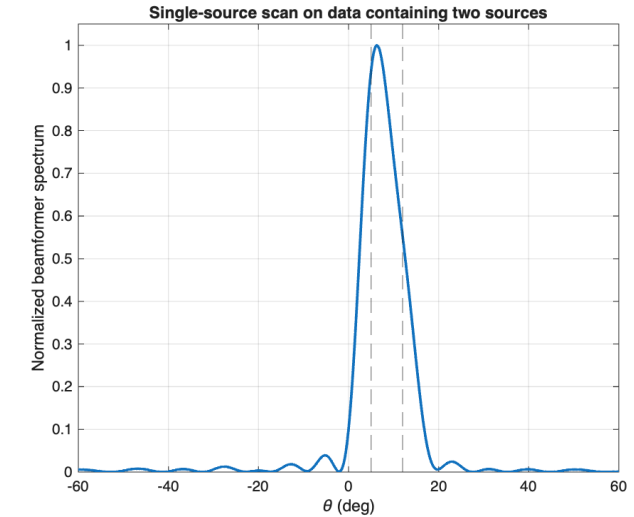
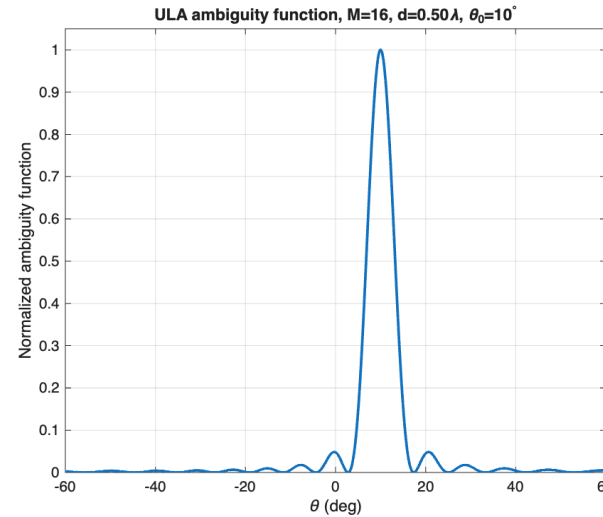
$$\begin{aligned} \chi(\theta, \theta_0) &= \frac{|\mathbf{a}^H(\theta) \mathbf{a}(\theta_0)|^2}{\|\mathbf{a}(\theta)\|^2 \|\mathbf{a}(\theta_0)\|^2} \\ &= \frac{1}{M^2} \left(\frac{\sin(M\psi/2)}{\sin(\psi/2)} \right)^2, \text{ with } \psi = \pi(\sin \theta - \sin \theta_0) \end{aligned}$$

Accuracy from Fisher information (curvature of AF)

$$J_e(\theta) = \frac{\pi^2 \rho^2 M(M^2 - 1) \cos^2 \theta}{6\sigma^2}$$

Properties:

- CRB does not account for entire AF
- AF is specific to the estimator's model



Everything smooth and well-behaved

*M. J. Rendas and J. M. F. Moura, "Ambiguity in radar and sonar," IEEE Trans. Signal Process., vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 294-305, Feb. 1998.

Widely distributed array

Single source model:

$$\mathbf{r} = \boldsymbol{\alpha} \odot \mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p}) + \mathbf{n}$$

$$[\boldsymbol{\alpha}]_n = \rho_n \exp(j\phi)$$

$$[\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p})]_n = \exp(-j2\pi(d_n - d_0)/\lambda)$$

$$d_n = \|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\|$$

ML estimate (with $k = 2\pi/\lambda$)

$$\hat{\mathbf{p}}_{\text{ML}} = \arg \max_{\mathbf{p}} \left| \sum_{n=1}^N r_n^2 e^{j2k\|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\|} \right|$$

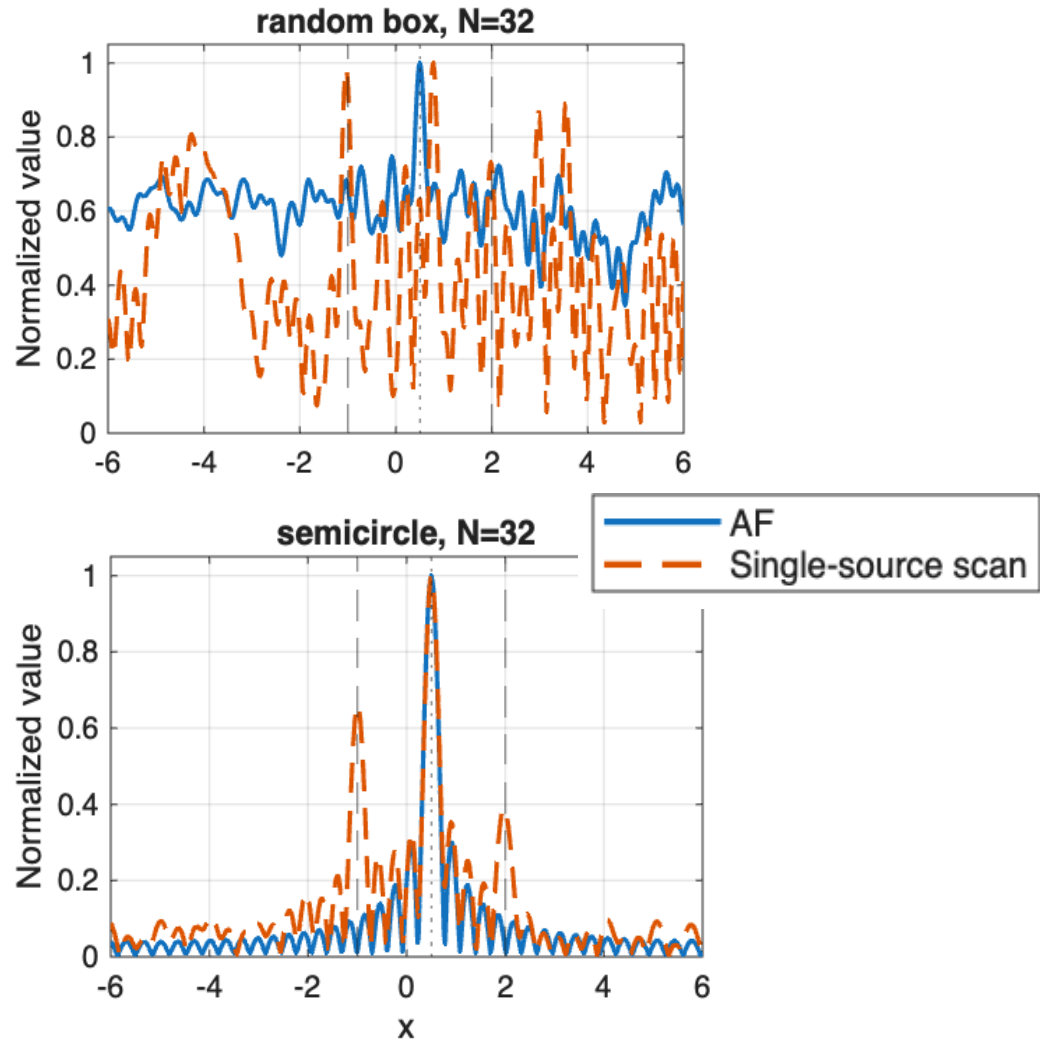
Normalized ambiguity function:

$$\chi(\mathbf{p}; \mathbf{p}_0) = \frac{\left| \sum_{n=1}^N \rho_{0,n}^2 e^{j2k(\|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\| - \|\mathbf{p}_0 - \mathbf{p}_n\|)} \right|}{\|\boldsymbol{\rho}\|^2}$$

Accuracy from Fisher information:

$$\mathbf{J}_e(\mathbf{p}) = \frac{2k^2}{\sigma^2} \sum_{n=1}^N \rho_n^2 (\mathbf{q}_n - \bar{\mathbf{q}})(\mathbf{q}_n - \bar{\mathbf{q}})^T$$

$$\bar{\mathbf{q}} = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^N \rho_n^2 \mathbf{q}_n}{\sum_{n=1}^N \rho_n^2}$$



Performance limited by ambiguities (CRB only at very high SNR)
 Ambiguities limited by the deployment

Understanding the ambiguity function

- Model:**

$$\mathbf{r} = \boldsymbol{\alpha} \odot \mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p}) + \mathbf{n}$$

$$[\boldsymbol{\alpha}]_n = \rho_n \exp(j\phi)$$

$$[\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p})]_n = \exp(-j2\pi(d_n - d_0)/\lambda)$$

$$d_n = \|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\|$$

- Nuisance-amplitude AF:**

$$\chi(\mathbf{p}; \mathbf{p}_0) = \frac{\left| \sum_{n=1}^N \rho_{0,n}^2 e^{j2k(\|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\| - \|\mathbf{p}_0 - \mathbf{p}_n\|)} \right|}{\|\boldsymbol{\rho}\|^2}$$

- Phase-only AF (mismatched):**

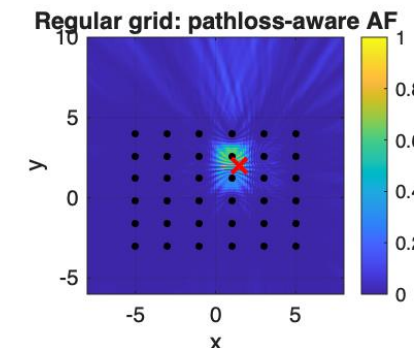
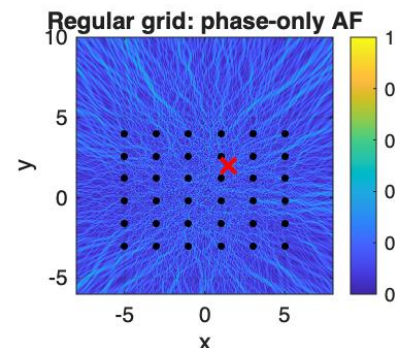
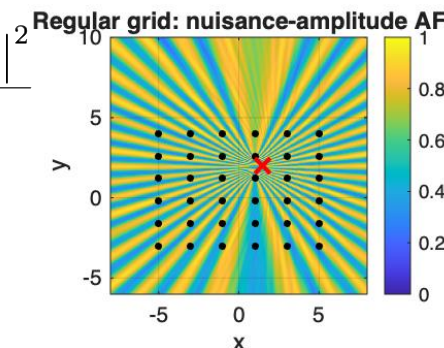
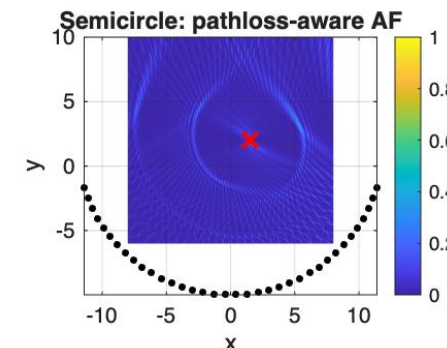
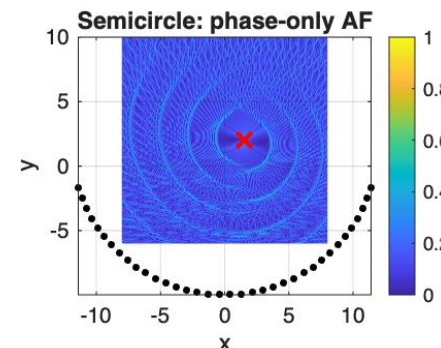
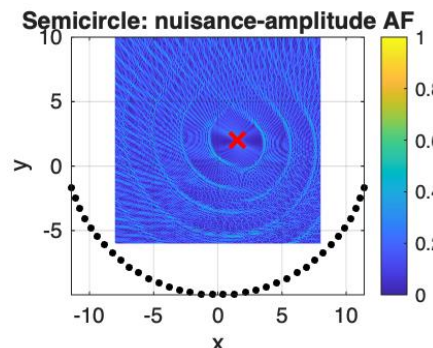
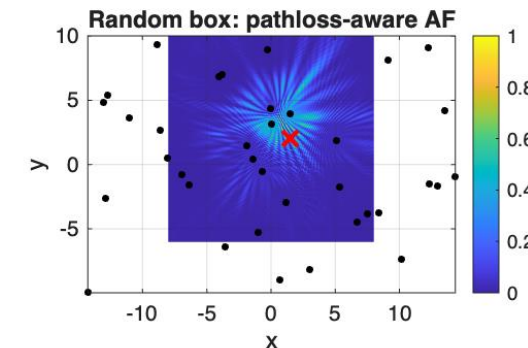
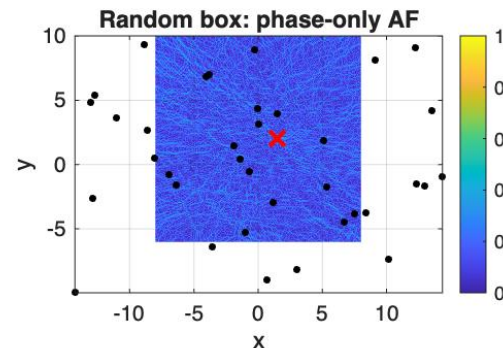
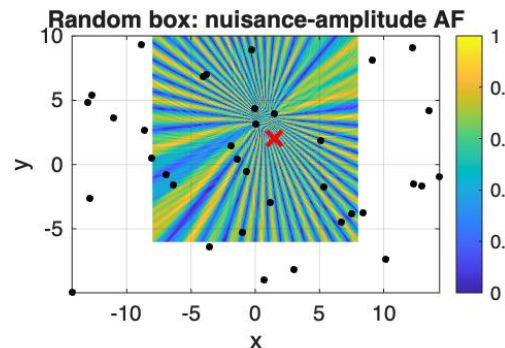
$$\chi(\mathbf{p}; \mathbf{p}_0) = \frac{|\mathbf{a}^H(\mathbf{p})\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p}_0)|^2}{\|\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p})\|^2 \|\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p}_0)\|^2}$$

- Pathloss-aware AF:**

$$\chi(\mathbf{p}; \mathbf{p}_0) = \frac{\left| \sum_n g_n(\mathbf{p})g_n(\mathbf{p}_0)e^{jk(d_n(\mathbf{p}) - d_n(\mathbf{p}_0))} \right|^2}{\left(\sum_n g_n(\mathbf{p})^2 \right) \left(\sum_n g_n(\mathbf{p}_0)^2 \right)}$$

$$g_n(\mathbf{p}) = \frac{\beta}{d_n(\mathbf{p})^\gamma}$$

- Improve AF:** deployment, frequency, antennas, bandwidth



Improving the ambiguity function: metrics

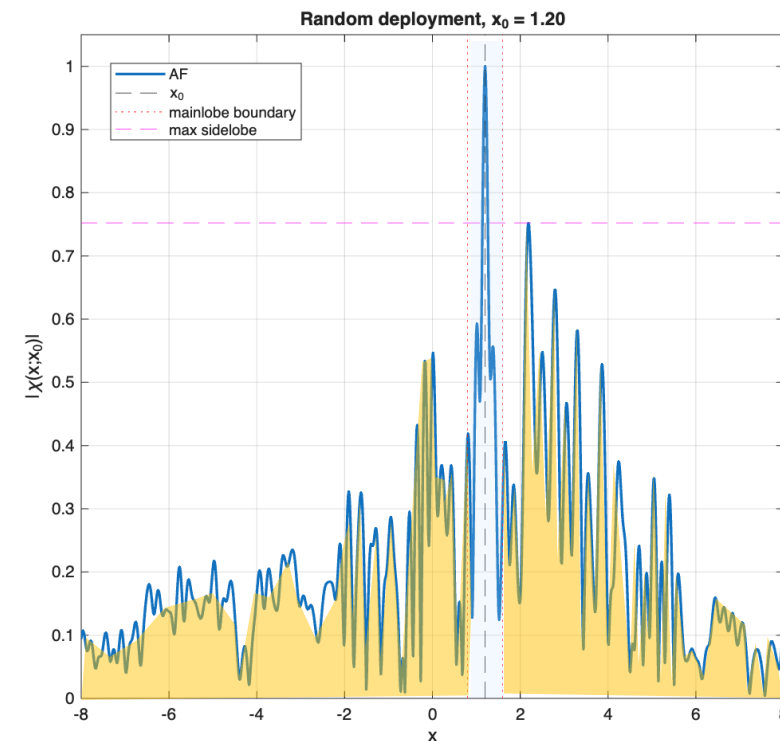
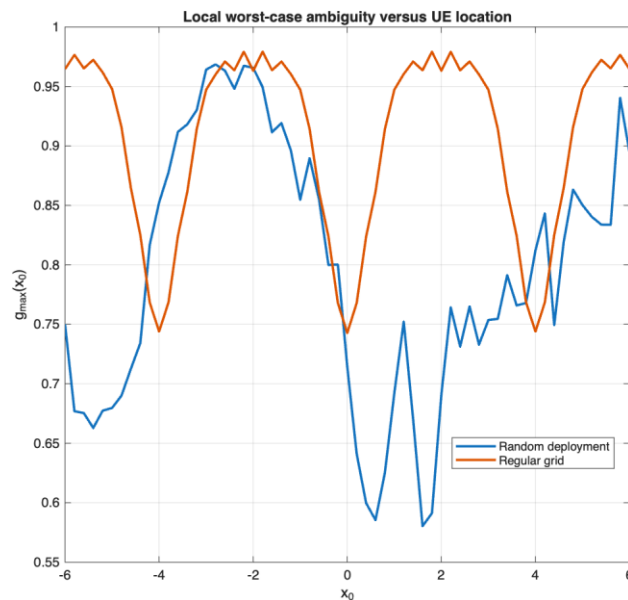
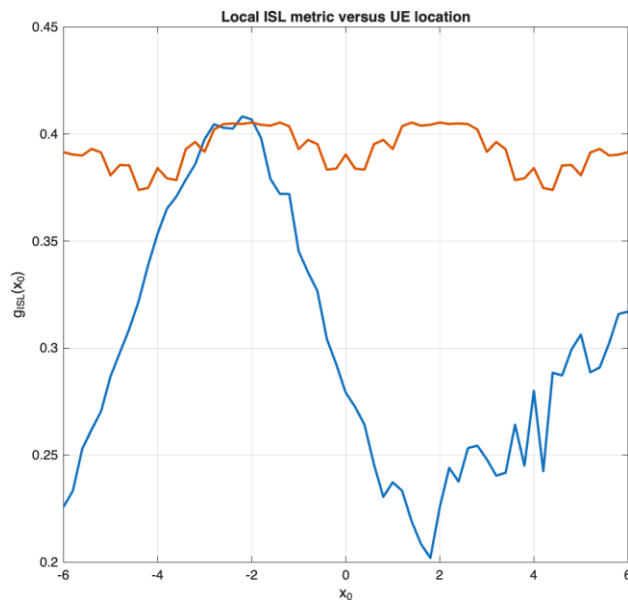
- AF preference: narrow main lobe and limited sidelobes
- Possible metrics

- Integrated sidelobe level:

$$g_{ISL}(\mathcal{R}) = \left(\text{mean}_{\mathbf{p}_0 \in \mathcal{P}} \text{mean}_{\mathbf{p} \in \mathcal{U}(\mathbf{p}_0)} |\chi(\mathbf{p}; \mathbf{p}_0)|^2 \right)^{1/2}$$

- Max. sidelobe level:

$$g_{\max}(\mathcal{R}) = \max_{\mathbf{p}_0 \in \mathcal{P}, \mathbf{p} \in \mathcal{U}(\mathbf{p}_0)} |\chi(\mathbf{p}; \mathbf{p}_0)|$$



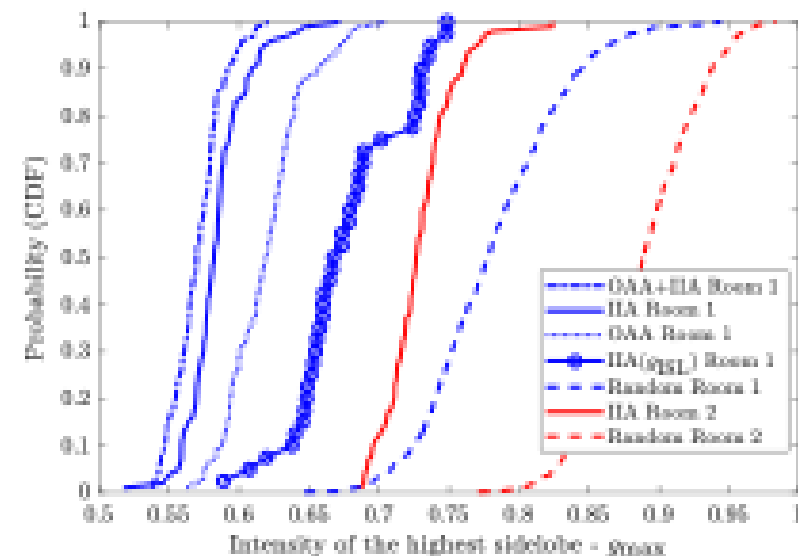
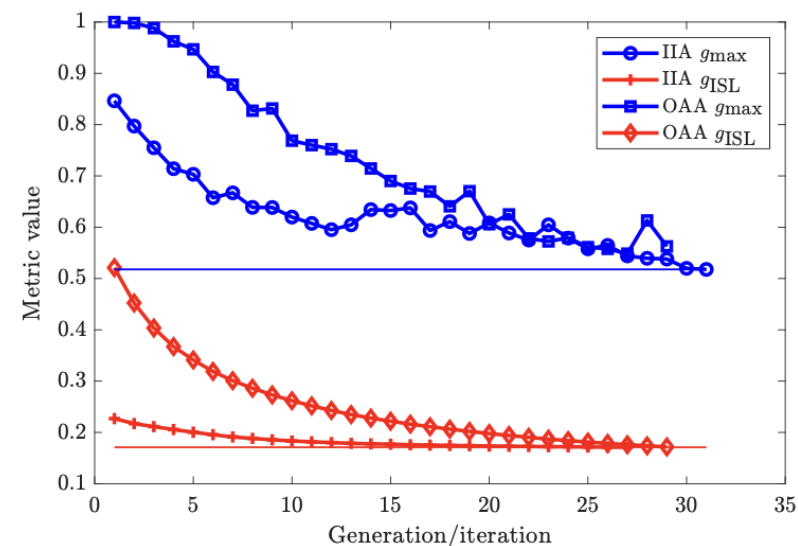
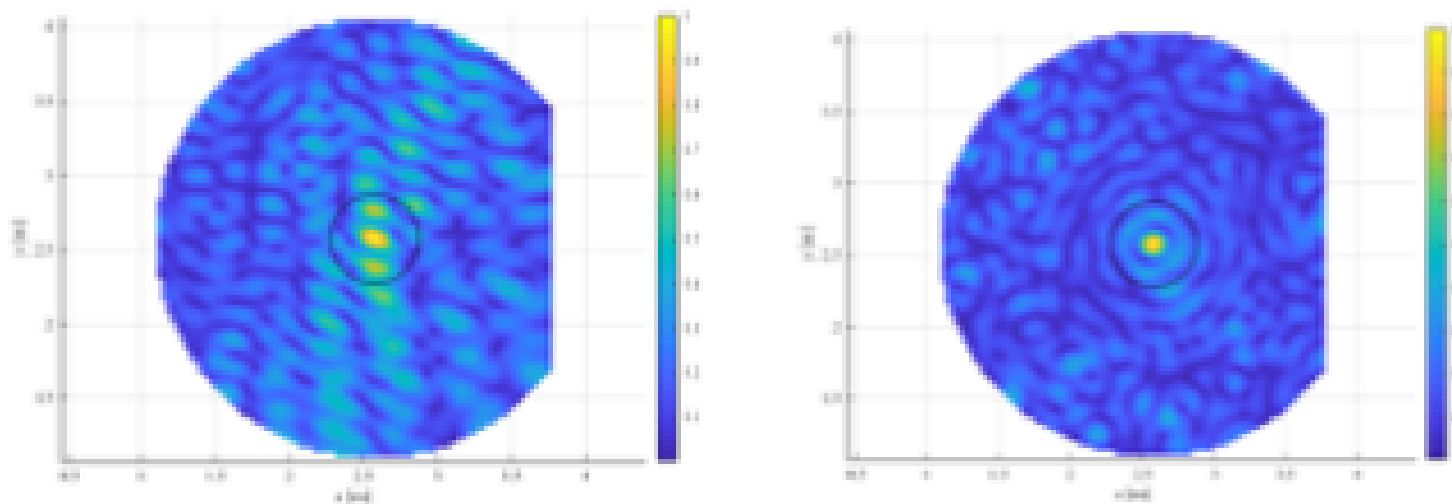
Metrics change slowly over space

Improving the ambiguity function by *deployment optimization*

- Challenging non-convex, combinatorial problems

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\mathcal{R}} g(\mathcal{R}) \quad & \min_{\mathcal{R}} |\mathcal{R}| \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & g(\mathcal{R}) \leq \gamma \end{aligned}$$

- Solved via heuristics (e.g., greedy methods)



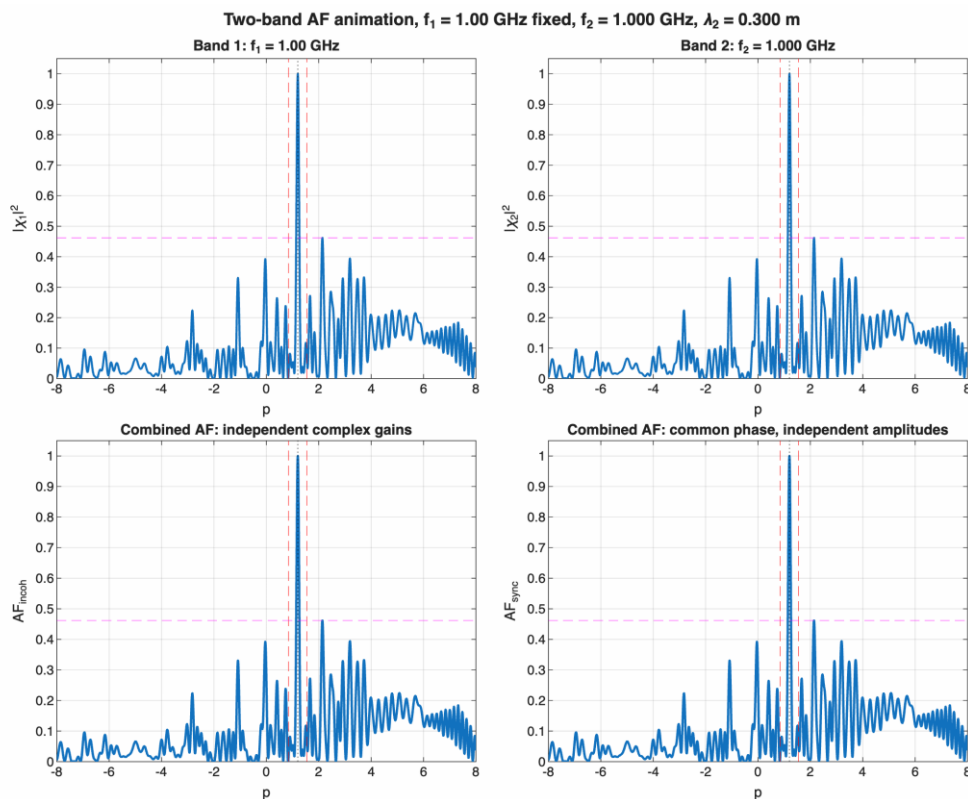
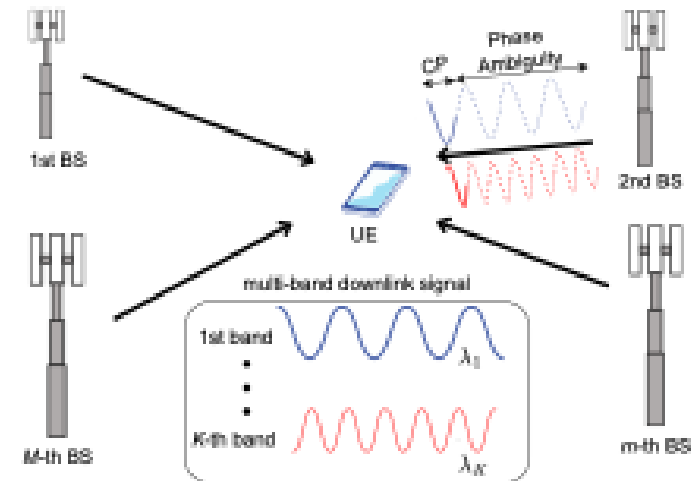
Vukmirović, N., Erić, M., Wymeersch, H., Keskin, M.F., Ge, Y. and Djurić, P., 2026, January. Deployment Optimization for Uplink Phase-Coherent Localization. In 2026 IEEE 6th International Symposium on Joint Communications & Sensing (JC&S) (pp. 1-6). IEEE.

Improving the ambiguity function by *adding frequencies*

- Start with a few subcarriers, node m , band k :

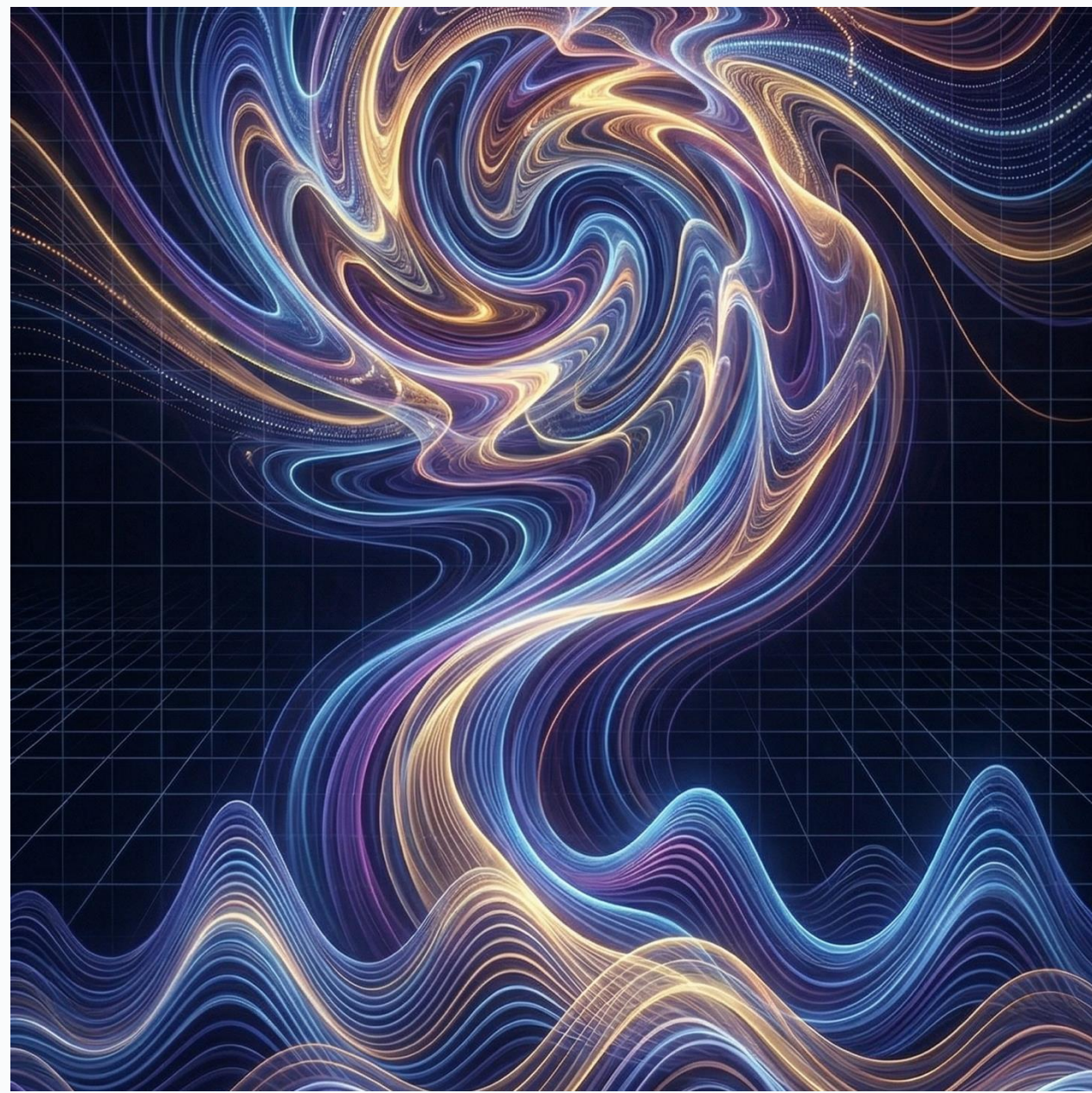
$$\mathbf{y}_{m,k} = \sqrt{E_{s,k}} \alpha_{m,k} \mathbf{d}(\tau_{m,k}) + \boldsymbol{\omega}_{m,k}$$

- Each band has some finite bandwidth, provides initial estimate from time-of-arrival
- Ambiguities for different bands don't overlap



Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- **Beyond bandwidth localization**
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- Conclusions
- References



Localization under *negligible* bandwidth?

- Model under negligible bandwidth

$$\mathbf{r} = \boldsymbol{\alpha} \odot \mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p}) + \mathbf{n}$$

$$[\boldsymbol{\alpha}]_n = \rho_n \exp(j\phi)$$

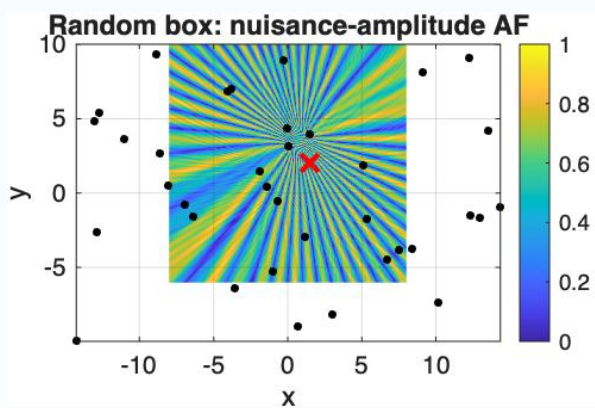
$$[\mathbf{a}(\mathbf{p})]_n = \exp(-j2\pi(d_n - d_0)/\lambda)$$

$$d_n = \|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\|$$

- Just one complex scalar per AP
- Transmit signal does not need to be known
- Estimator

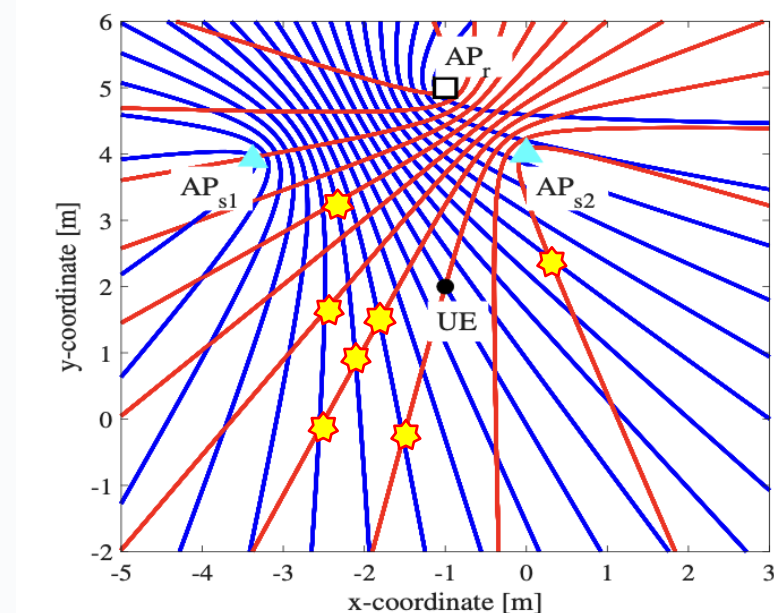
$$\hat{\mathbf{p}}_{\text{ML}} = \arg \max_{\mathbf{p}} \left| \sum_{n=1}^N r_n^2 e^{j2k\|\mathbf{p} - \mathbf{p}_n\|} \right|$$

- AF may look random but has structure!



- For any pair of APs: differential phase measurement determines a family of hyperbola

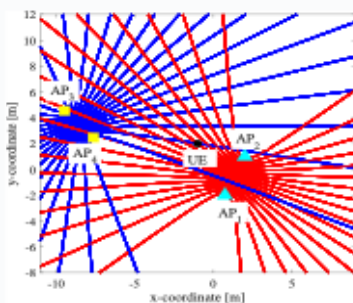
$$\|\mathbf{p}_{s_1} - \mathbf{p}\| - \|\mathbf{p}_r - \mathbf{p}\| = \Delta r_{s_1} - z_{s_1} \lambda, z_{s_1} \in \mathbb{Z}$$
- A triplet of APs (common reference) determines a discrete set of points
- These points can be determined in closed form!



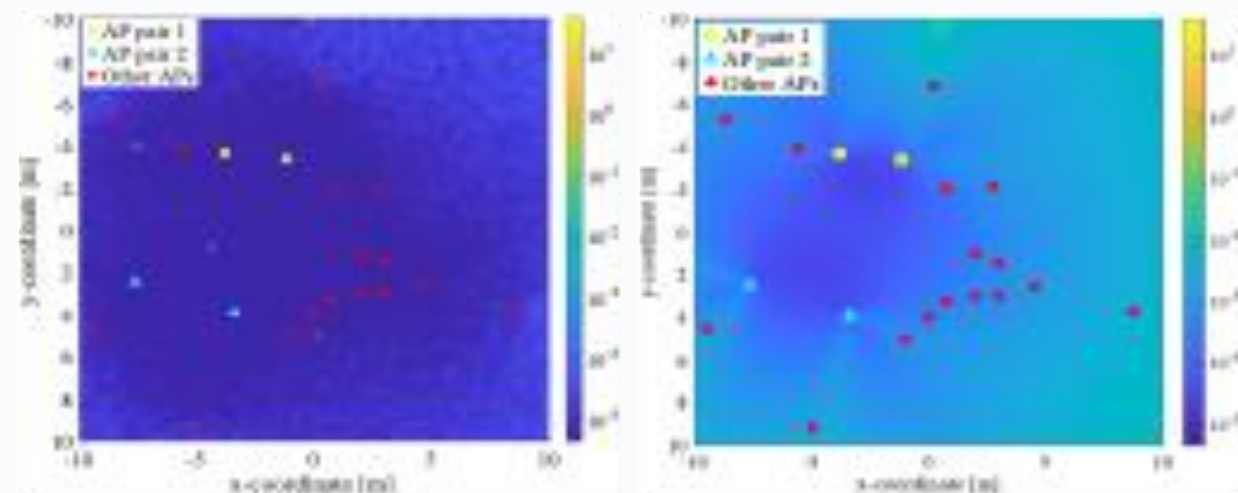
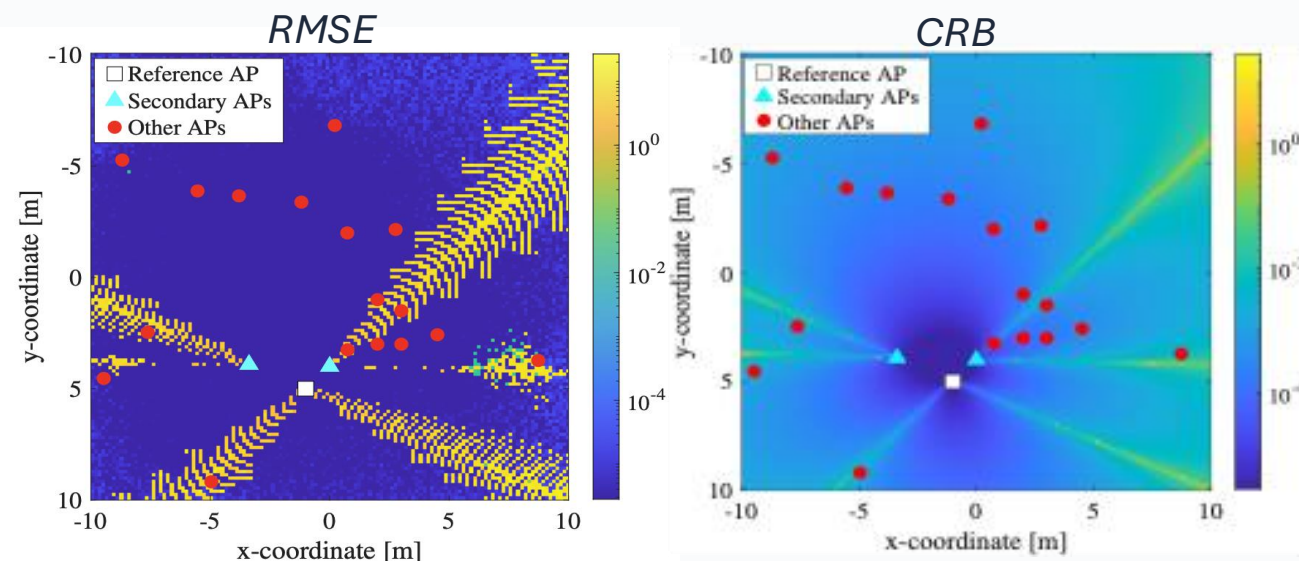
Insight: Number of candidate points scales with distance between APs.

Phase-only localization (POLO)

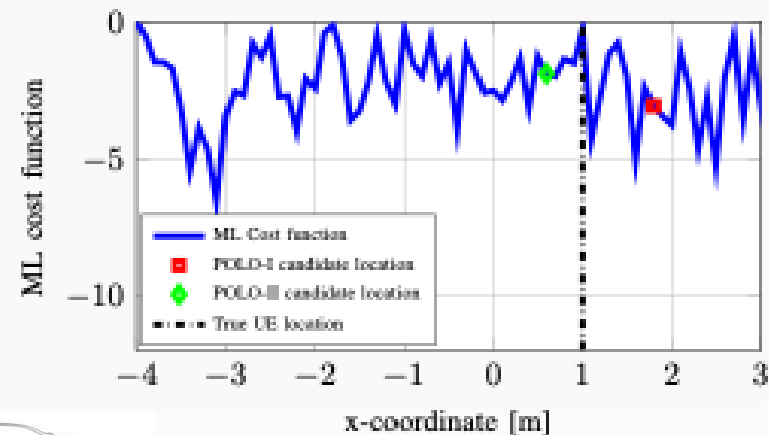
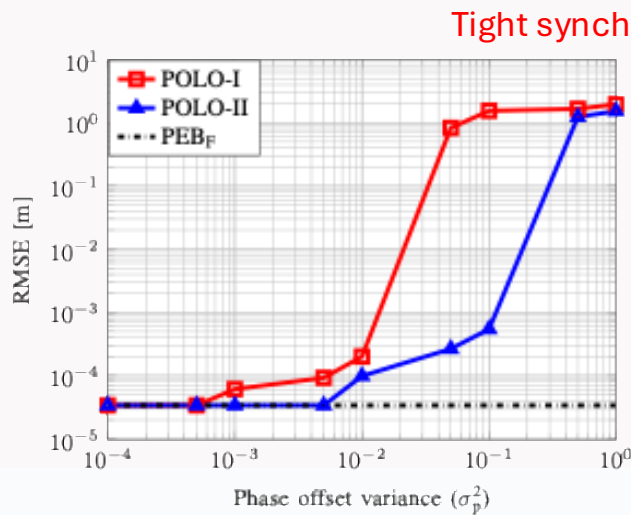
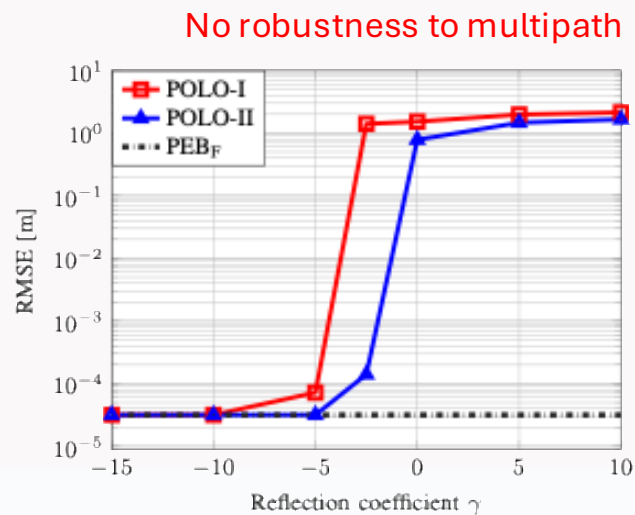
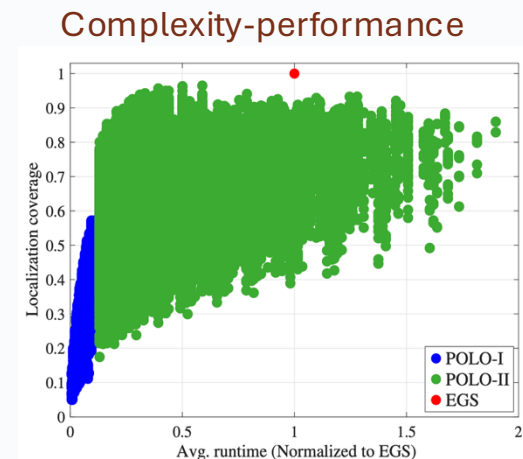
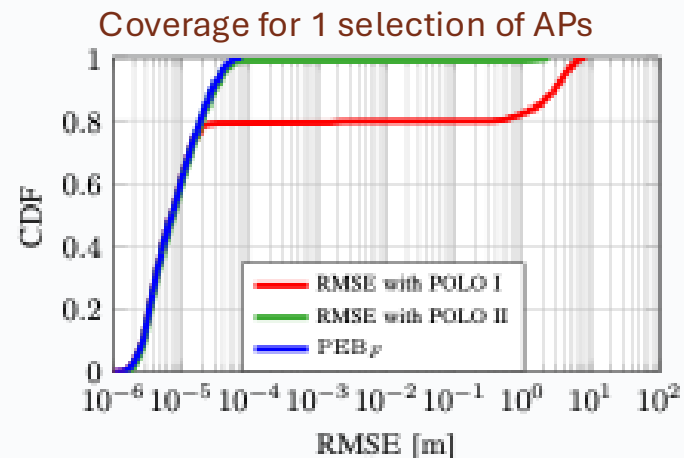
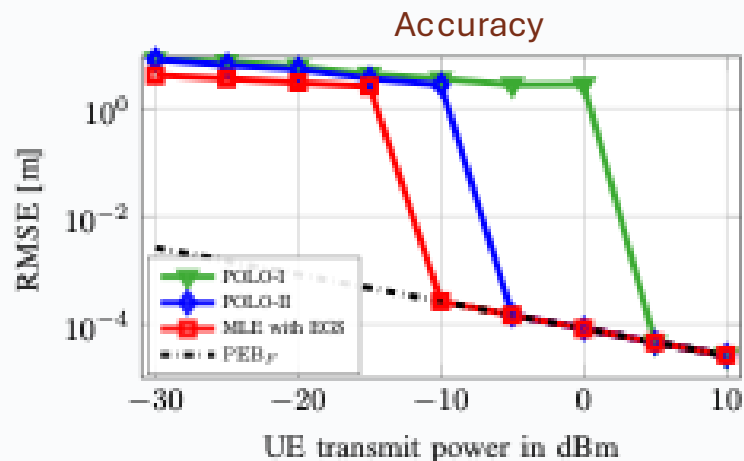
- Which APs to select?
- **POLO-I: at least 3 APs needed**
 - **Insight 1:** Number of candidate point scales with distance between APs. Use as an initial filter.
 - **Insight 2:** CRB considering 3 APs is correlated with RMSE from all APs (considering discrete locations from candidate APs). Use to select best APs
 - Regions with infinite CRB (coverage issue)
- **POLO-II: what about 4 APs?**
 - Select 4 APs to overcome coverage issue



- But no longer closed-form intersections

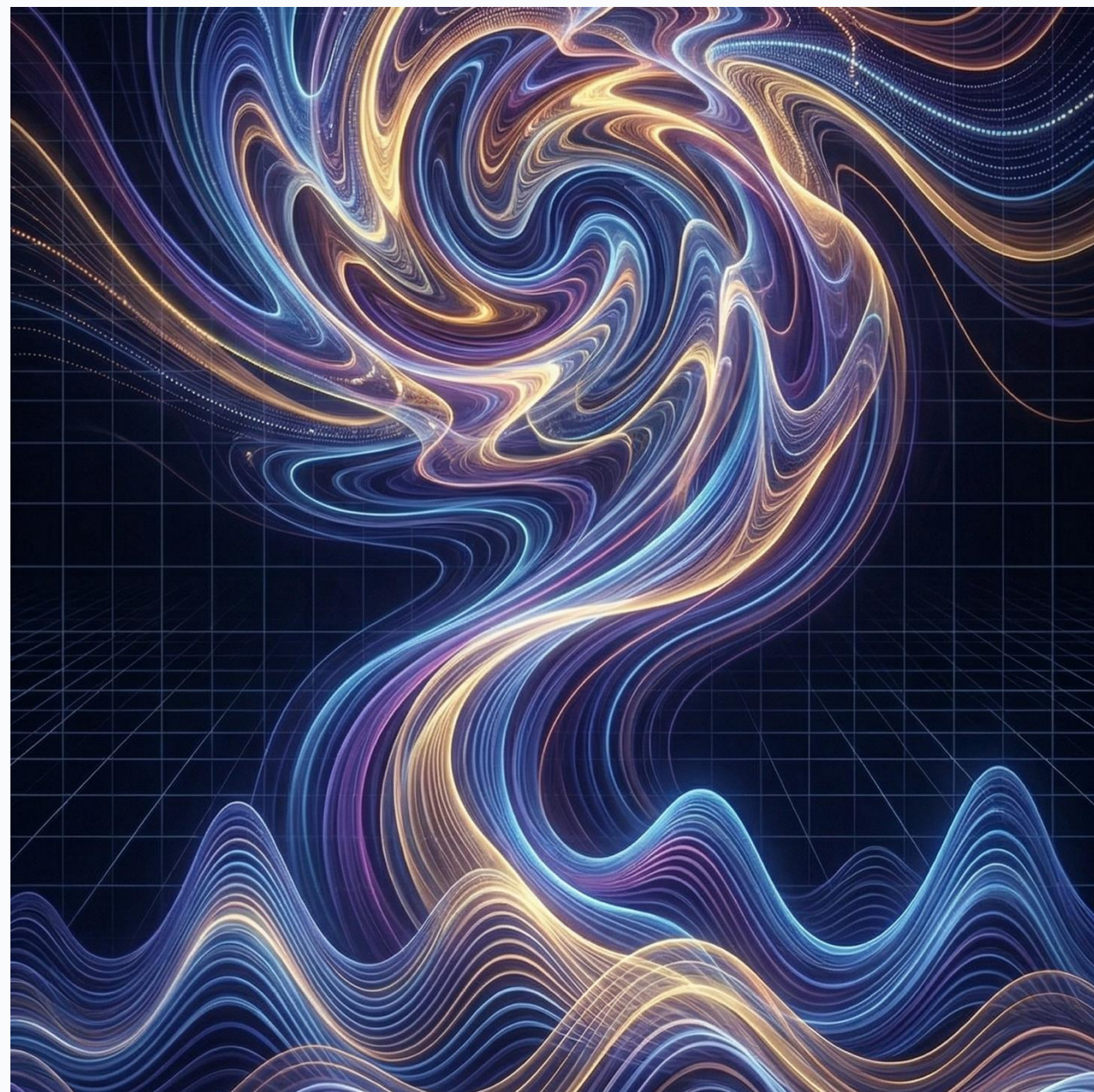


Beyond bandwidth localization: Performance



Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- **Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging**
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- Conclusions
- References



Localization Sensing under negligible bandwidth?

- In sensing, the multipath is of interest
- Requires a generative geometric model

$$y^n = \sqrt{E} \sum_{m=0}^M \rho^{m,n} e^{j\theta^m} e^{-j2\pi f_c \tau^{m,n}} \zeta + w^n$$

- Several types of paths, e.g.:

– LOS (calibrated UE):

$$\rho^{0,n} = \frac{\lambda}{4\pi \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_{AP}^n\|} \quad \tau^{0,n} = \frac{\|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_{AP}^n\|}{c}$$

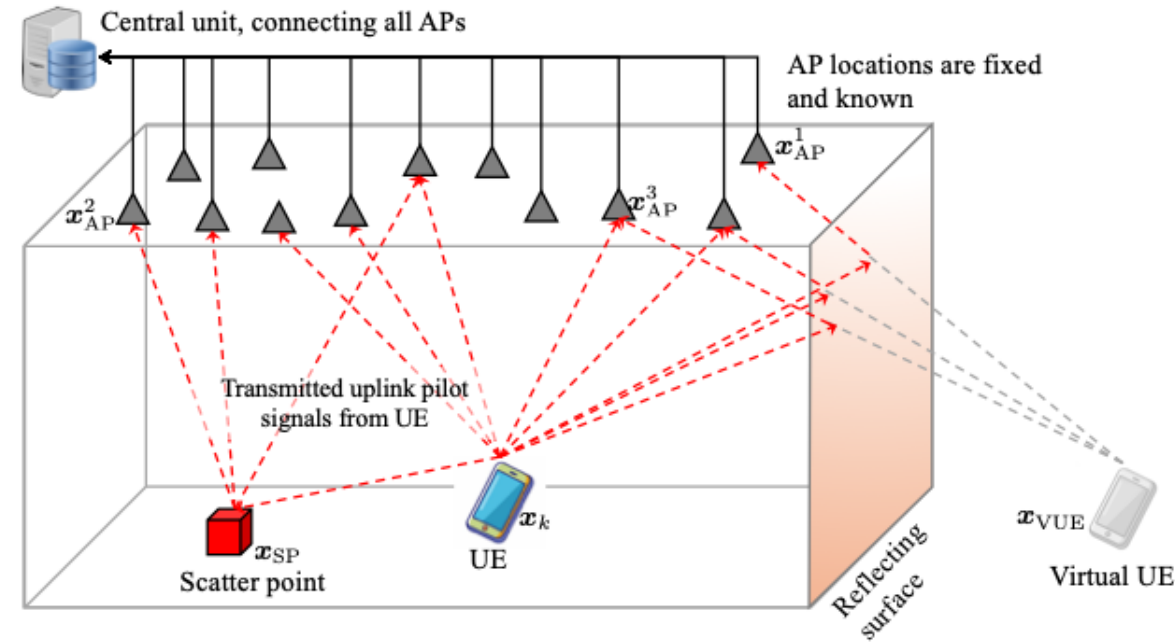
– Scattering (isotropic!):

$$\rho^{m,n} = \frac{\lambda\beta}{(4\pi)^{3/2} \|\mathbf{x}_{AP}^n - \mathbf{x}_{SP}\| \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_{SP}\|}$$

$$\tau^{m,n} = \frac{\|\mathbf{x}_{AP}^n - \mathbf{x}_{SP}\| + \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_{SP}\|}{c}$$

– Reflection:

$$\tau^{m,n} = \frac{\|\mathbf{x}_{AP}^n - \mathbf{x}_{VUE}\|}{c} \quad \rho^{m,n} = \frac{\lambda\Gamma}{4\pi \|\mathbf{x}_{AP}^n - \mathbf{x}_{VUE}\|}$$



Insight: Unified geometric model under isotropic conditions

Sensing processing

- Aggregate observation:

$$\mathbf{y} = \zeta \sum_{m=0}^M \boldsymbol{\rho}^m \odot \mathbf{a}^m(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{x}_{LM}^m) + \mathbf{w}$$

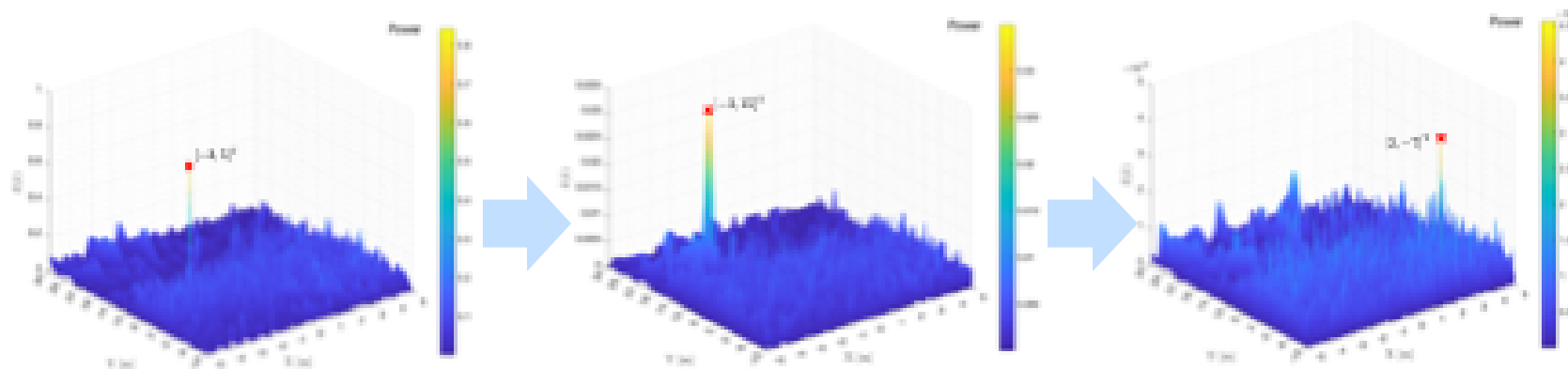
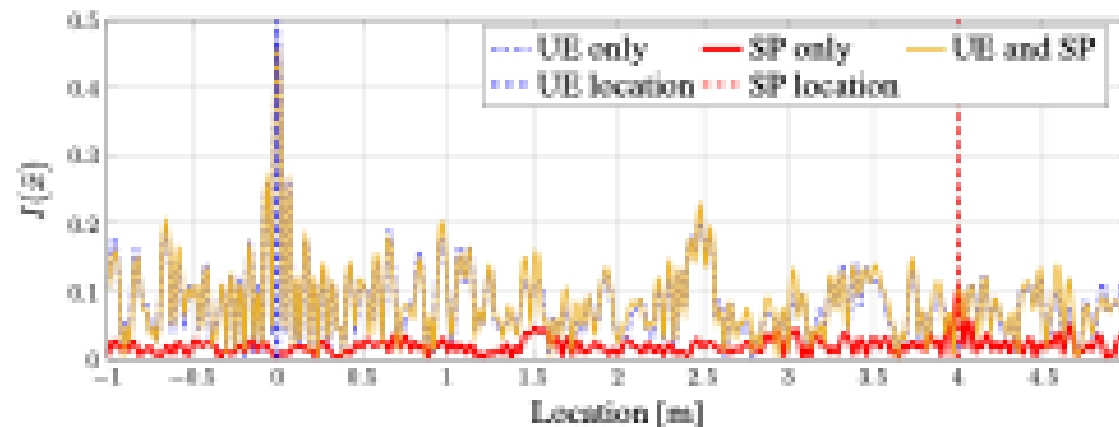
- Define steering vector:

$$[\mathbf{a}(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})]_n = e^{-j2\pi f_c \tau^n(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})}$$

- Then an image can be formed as:

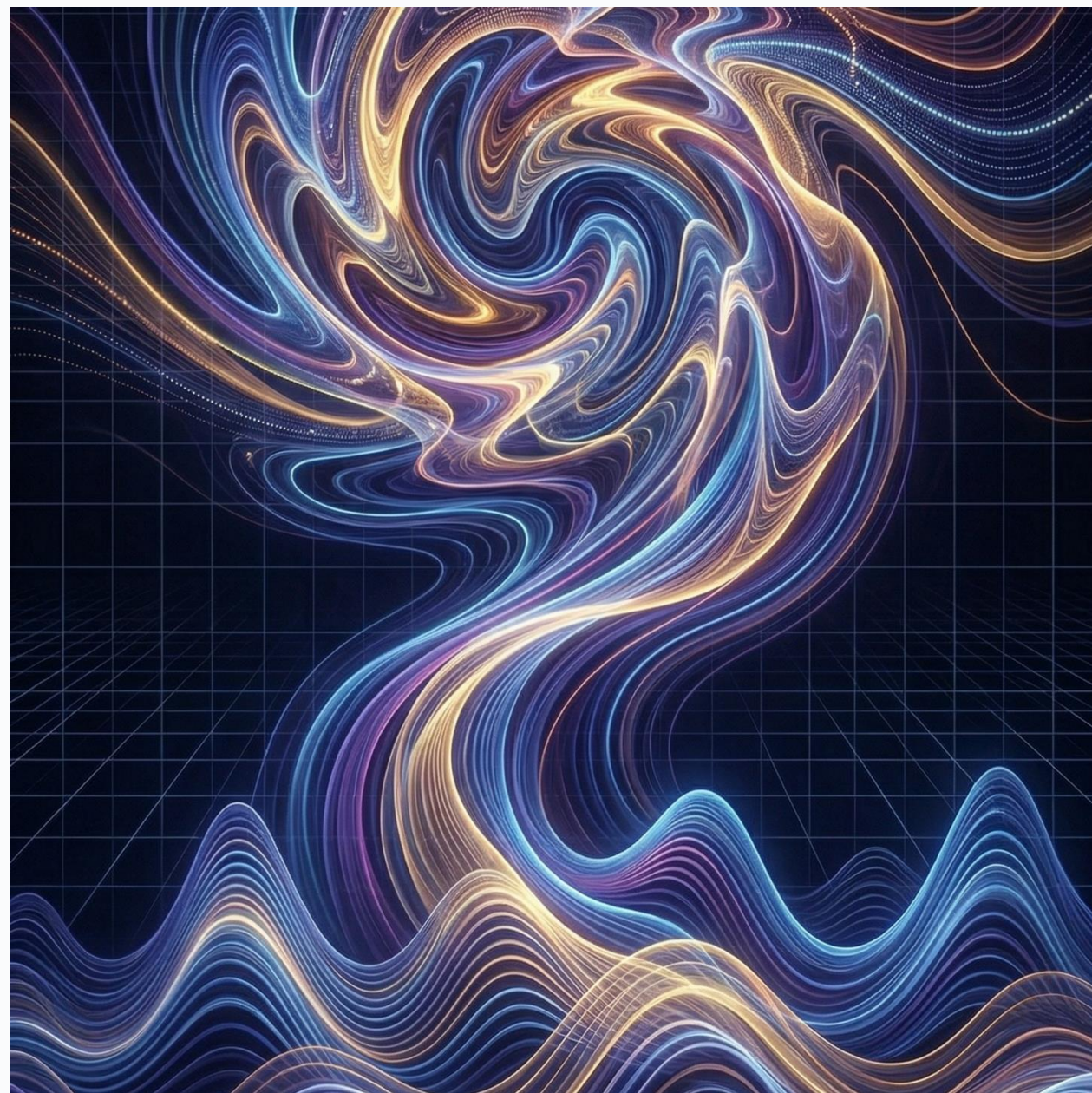
$$I(\tilde{\mathbf{x}}) = |H(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})|^2 = |\mathbf{a}^H(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})\mathbf{y}|^2$$

- Weak paths drown in sidelobes of strong paths
- Successive interference cancellation can be applied
- Considering path loss improves performance



Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- **Beyond bandwidth ISAC**
- Conclusions
- References



Beyond bandwidth ISAC: How to co-exist with communication?

- Scenario:
 - Cell-free system, 1 antenna per AP, OFDM, downlink
- Communication-centric operation:
 - UL CSI acquired. DL precoders designed to maximize comm. Objective (e.g., sum-rate). Transmission by all APs on subcarrier s :

$$\mathbf{x}_{\text{com}}[s] = \sum_{k=1}^K \mathbf{f}_k[s] a_{k,\text{com}}[s] = \mathbf{F}_{\text{com}}[s] \mathbf{a}_{\text{com}}[s]$$

- Reception across all UEs:

$$\mathbf{y}[s] = \mathbf{G}[s] \mathbf{F}_{\text{com}}[s] \mathbf{a}_{\text{com}}[s] + \mathbf{n}[s]$$

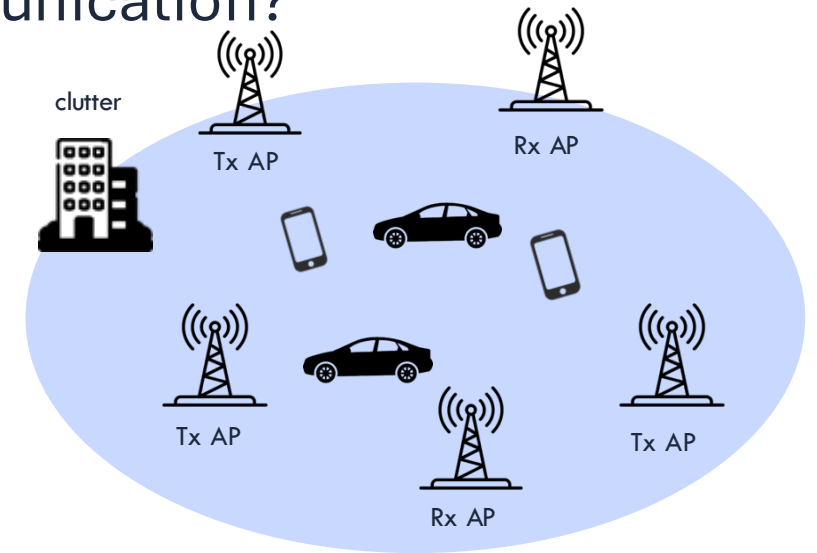
- Sensing-centric operation:
 - No CSI available. Assign some APs at TX, others RX. Each TX-AP uses orthogonal set of subcarriers

$$\mathbf{x}_{\text{sen}}[s] = \mathbf{a}_{\text{sen}}[s] \quad \|\mathbf{a}_{\text{sen}}[s]\|_0 \leq 1$$

- Receiver APs:

$$\mathbf{z}[s] = \mathbf{H}[s] \mathbf{a}_{\text{sen}}[s] + \mathbf{w}[s]$$

$$[\mathbf{H}[s]]_{mn} = \int \frac{\gamma[\mathbf{r}] \lambda_0 e^{-j \frac{2\pi}{c} (f_0 + s \Delta_f) (d(\mathbf{p}_n, \mathbf{r}) + d(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{p}_m))}}{(4\pi)^{\frac{3}{2}} d(\mathbf{p}_n, \mathbf{r}) d(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{p}_m)} d\mathbf{r}$$



Combining communication and sensing

- Common approach
 - Component 1: superposition
 $w\mathbf{x}_{\text{com}}[s] + (1 - w)\mathbf{x}_{\text{sen}}[s], w \in [0, 1]$
 - Component 2:



Benefits

- Pure communication is a special case
- Pure sensing is a special case
- Flexible trade-off

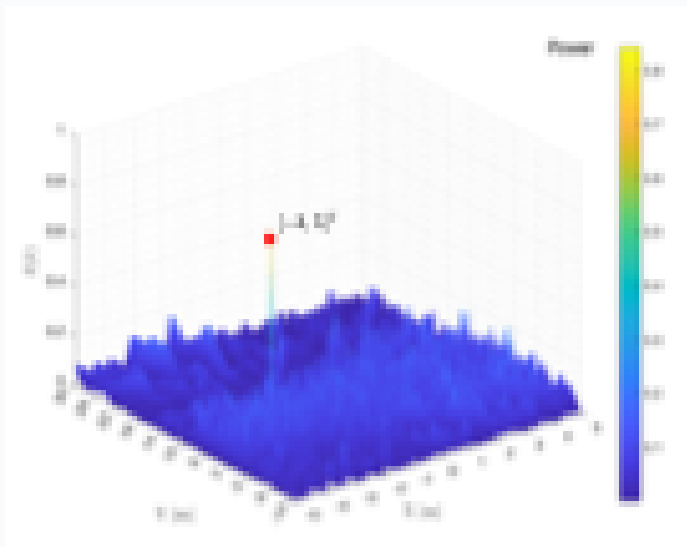
Challenges

- “Fingers crossed” may not be optimal
- Limited by cross-functional interference

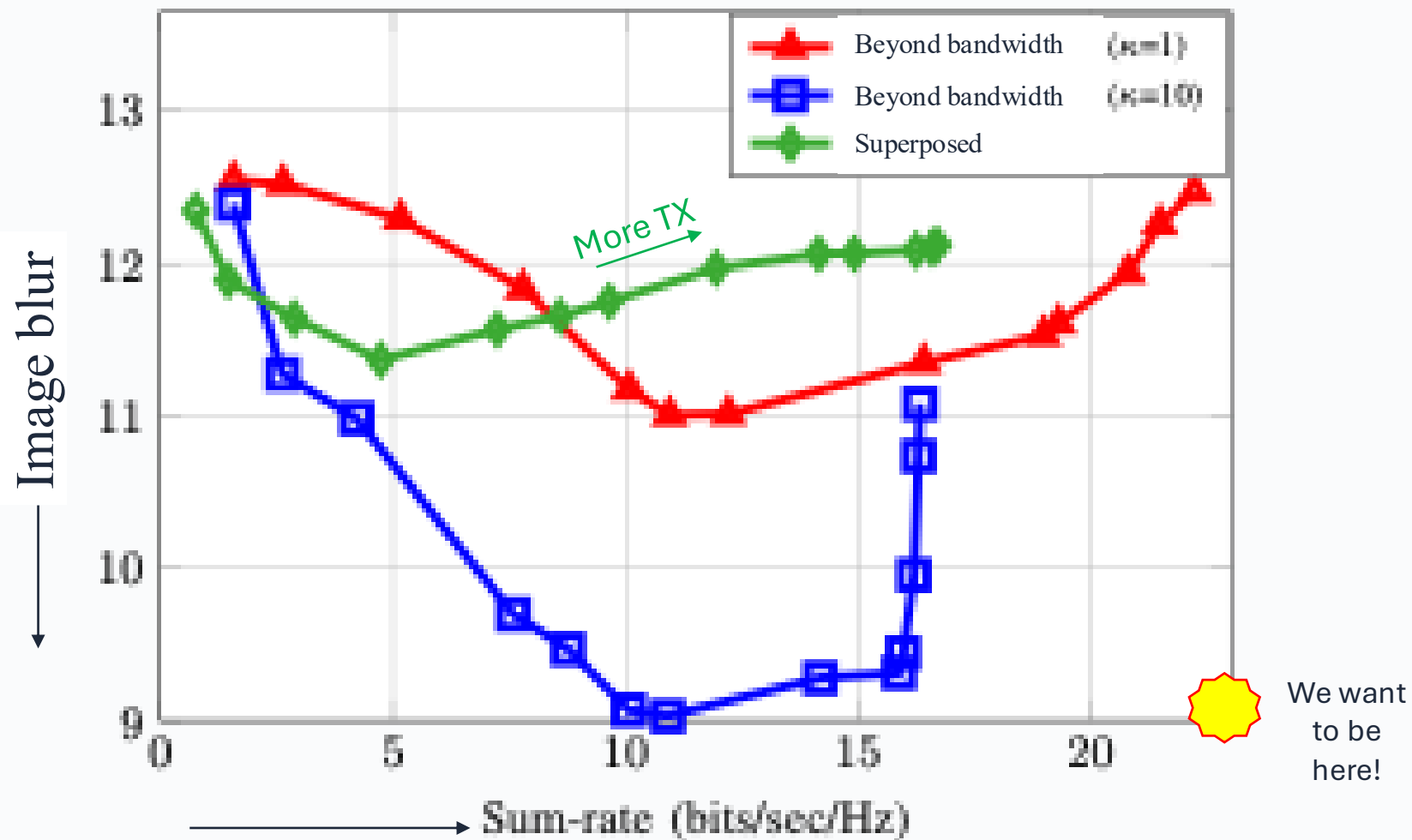
Beyond bandwidth ISAC: insights

- Positioning and sensing don't need much bandwidth
- We can reserve a small set of subcarriers for sensing (e.g., one subcarrier per TX AP) and a small subset of APs as sensing receivers
- Selection of APs, subcarriers subject to optimization
- Needs a sensing metric without a prior knowledge of target locations: **image or AF quality**

We want images/AFs with few narrow peaks

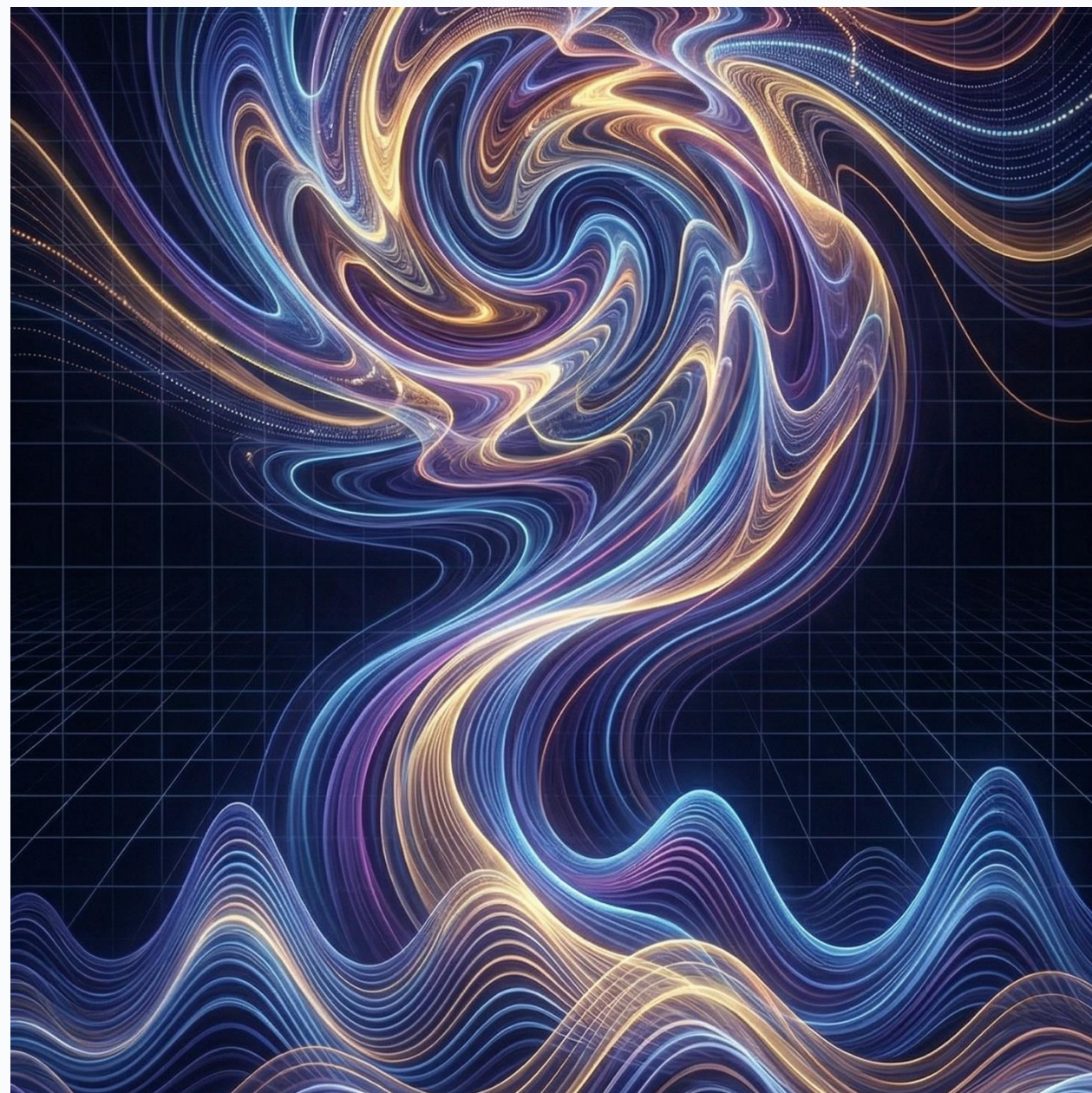


Beyond bandwidth ISAC: preliminary result



Outline

- Foundations of localization and sensing
- Phase-coherent deployments
- Accuracy, resolution, and ambiguity
- Beyond bandwidth localization
- Beyond bandwidth sensing and imaging
- Beyond bandwidth ISAC
- **Conclusions**
- References



Conclusions and the road ahead

- Limited bandwidth is not a killer for high-accuracy sensing, localization, imaging
- Widely distributed arrays provide new resolution dimensions with extreme accuracy potential. Inspire new paradigms for ISAC
- Many challenges remain
 - Synchronization and calibration, wired or wireless
 - Coherence of nodes and targets across space and frequency
 - Cost of many APs: sweet spot of how many antennas per AP and how much bandwidth to be explored
 - (Distributed) super-resolution methods
 - AF shaping
 - Use of prior knowledge and data-driven methods
 - Combine with FR2 and sub-THz



5G FR2 will
return



References

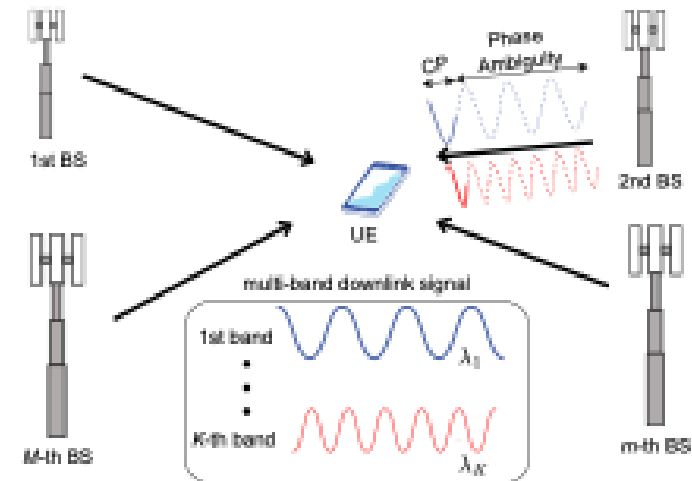
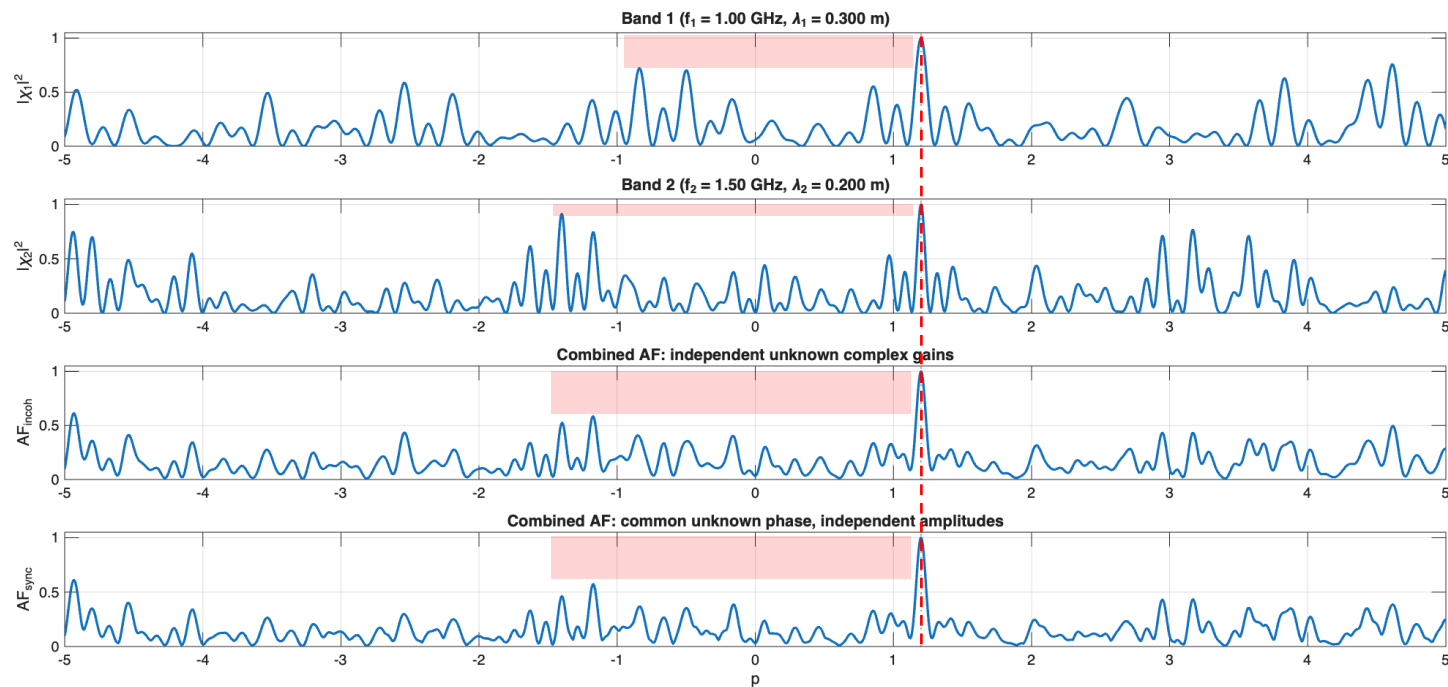
- Chen, H., Keskin, M.F., Sakhnini, A., Decarli, N., Pollin, S., Dardari, D. and Wymeersch, H., 2024. 6G localization and sensing in the near field: Features, opportunities, and challenges. *IEEE Wireless Communications*, 31(4), pp.260-267.
- Wymeersch, H., Amiri, R. and Seco-Granados, G., 2023, December. Fundamental performance bounds for carrier phase positioning in cellular networks. In *IEEE GLOBECOM*.
- Vukmirović, N., Erić, M., Wymeersch, H., Keskin, M.F., Ge, Y. and Djurić, P., 2026, January. Deployment Optimization for Uplink Phase-Coherent Localization. In *2026 IEEE 6th International Symposium on Joint Communications & Sensing (JC&S)* (pp. 1-6). IEEE.
- Shourezari, E., Kaltiokallio, O., Ilter, M.C., Talvitie, J., Seco-Granados, G., Wymeersch, H. and Valkama, M., 2026. Multi-band Carrier Phase Positioning toward 6G: Performance Bounds and Efficient Estimators. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2601.05178*.
- Dey, S., Keskin, M.F., Tagliaferri, D., Seco-Granados, G., Valkama, M. and Wymeersch, H., 2025. POLO: Phase-Only Localization in Uplink Distributed MIMO Systems. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2512.10879*.
- Yu Ge, Xin Tong, Nenad Vukmirovic, Musa Furkan Keskin, Miljko Eric, Petar Djuric, Henk Wymeersch, “Uplink Single-Snapshot Frugal SLAM in Phase-Coherent Distributed MIMO Systems”, submitted to *IEEE Globecom 2026*.

Localization under *limited* bandwidth

- Start with a few subcarriers, node m , band k :

$$\mathbf{y}_{m,k} = \sqrt{E_{s,k}} \alpha_{m,k} \mathbf{d}(\tau_{m,k}) + \boldsymbol{\omega}_{m,k}$$

- Each band has some finite bandwidth, provides initial estimate from time-of-arrival
- Ambiguities for different bands don't overlap



CRB and ambiguity function interplay

- Carrier phase positioning example**

$$\mathbf{y}_{iq,m} = \sqrt{E_s} \alpha_m \mathbf{d}(\tau_m) + \mathbf{w}_m,$$

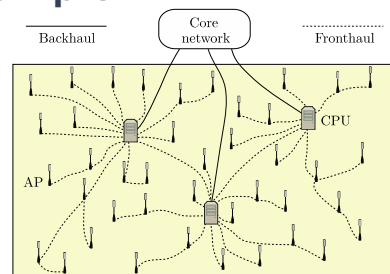
$$[\mathbf{d}(\tau)]_n = e^{-j2\pi n \Delta_f \tau}$$

$$\alpha_m = \rho_m e^{j\vartheta_m}$$

- Geometric information**

$$\tau_m = \frac{1}{c} \|\mathbf{x}_{bs,m} - \mathbf{x}_{ue}\| + B_{ue}$$

$$\vartheta_m = \frac{2\pi}{\lambda} \|\mathbf{x}_{bs,m} - \mathbf{x}_{ue}\| + \phi_{ue},$$



- Convert to distances**

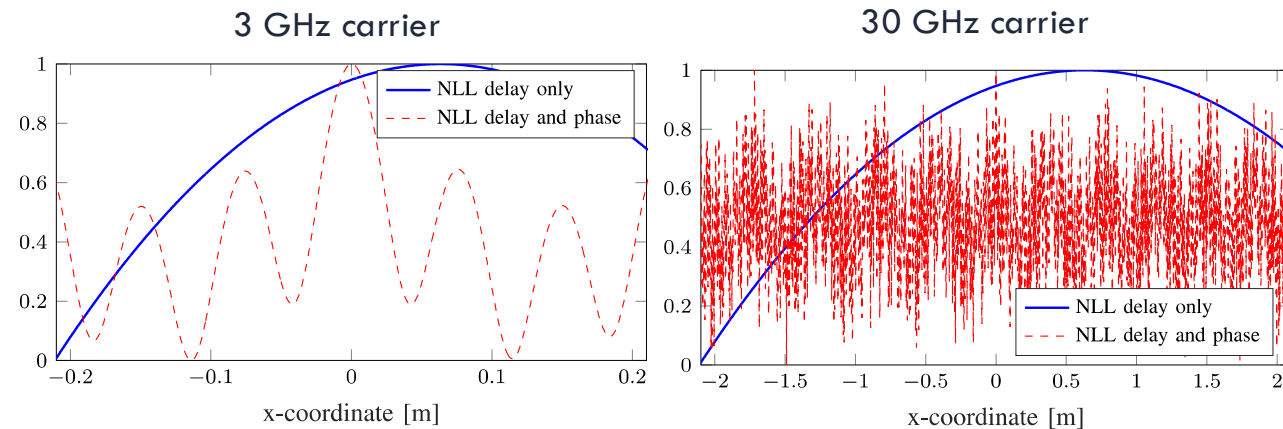
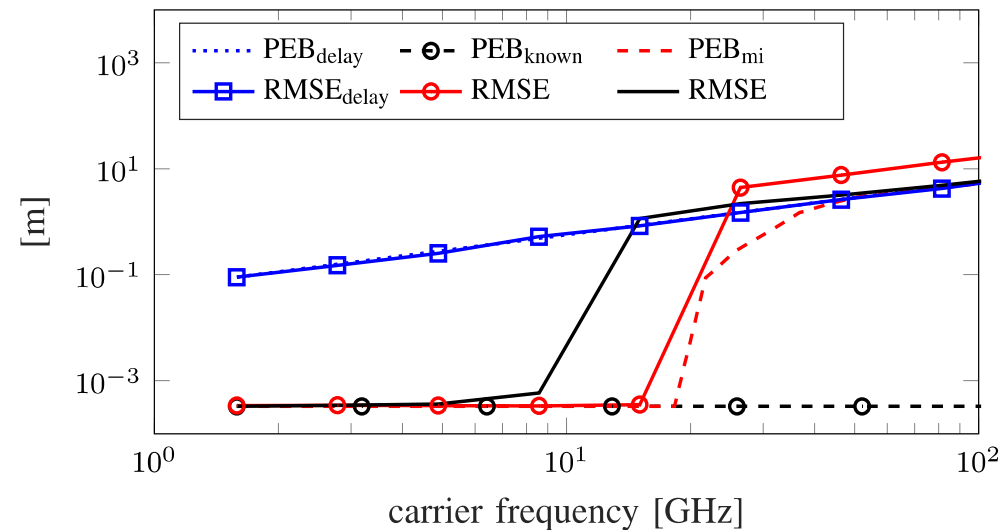
$$y_{\tau,m} = \|\mathbf{x}_{bs,m} - \mathbf{x}_{ue}\| + B_{ue}c + w_{\tau,m}$$

$$y_{\vartheta,m} = \|\mathbf{x}_{bs,m} - \mathbf{x}_{ue}\| + z_m \lambda + \phi_{ue} \frac{\lambda}{2\pi} + w_{\vartheta,m},$$

- CRBs**

$$\mathbb{E}\{w_{\tau,m}^2\} \approx \left(\frac{2 \text{SNR}_m \pi^2 W^2}{3c^2}\right)^{-1} \sim \frac{c^2}{W^2}$$

$$\mathbb{E}\{w_{\vartheta,m}^2\} = \left(\frac{8 \text{SNR}_m \pi^2}{\lambda^2}\right)^{-1} = \left(\frac{8 \text{SNR}_m \pi^2 f_c^2}{c^2}\right)^{-1} \sim \frac{c^2}{f_c^2}$$



Wymeersch, H., Amiri, R. and Seco-Granados, G., 2023, December. Fundamental performance bounds for carrier phase positioning in cellular networks. In IEEE GLOBECOM.