The backward hadronic calorimeter (nHCal) of the ePIC experiment at EIC



Subhadip Pal for the ePIC Collaboration Czech Technical University in Prague





## Outline



### □ Introduction

- Electron-Ion Collider (EIC)
- The ePIC (electron-Proton/Ion Collider) detector
- □ Backward Hadronic Calorimeter for ePIC
  - Design
  - Physics Motivation
  - Performance

## □ Summary

## The Electron-Ion Collider (EIC)





- □ Accelerator to be built on the current site of RHIC, BNL to yield e+p/nuclei collision.
- Variable e+p center-of-mass energies from 28–140 GeV.
- Ion beams from deuterons to heavy nuclei such as gold, lead, or uranium.
- High collision electron-nucleon luminosity  $10^{33}-10^{34}$  cm<sup>-2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>.
- The possibility to have more than one interaction region.

## The ePIC detector





## A Quick Look into EIC Physics

- How are the sea quarks and gluons, and their spins, distributed in space and momentum inside the nucleon?
- How do the nucleon properties (mass & spin) emerge from their interactions?
- gluon emission



What happens to the gluon density in nuclei? Does it saturate at high energy (low x), giving rise to a gluonic matter with universal properties in all nuclei (and perhaps even in nucleons)?

Measurements at low-x are essential to the physics objectives of EIC.

 $\eta = 4$  $\theta = 2^{\circ}$ 





 $\eta = 0$  $\theta = 90^{\circ}$ 

Central

Detecto

## The Backward Hadronic Calorimeter for ePIC - nHCal



- Tail catcher sampling calorimeter with alternating Steel/SciTiles layers
- $\Box$  Total of 45 cm ( ~ 2.4  $\lambda_0$ )
- □ Acceptance: -4.14 <  $\eta$  < -1.18
- Participating institutions:
  OSU, CTU in Prague, UIUC,
  UNH, BNL







# Negative Hadronic Calorimeter (nHCal) - Design



- nHCal is surrounded by an outer collar, backed by a flux return plate and has an oculus ring placed in front.
- **Current Design**:
  - 10 layers  $\approx 2.4\lambda^0$
  - 4 cm non-magnetic steel
  - 4 mm plastic scintillator tiles [10 cm. x 10 cm.]
  - SiPM placed on tiles used for light collection
- Tile tests using cosmic ray muons in progress at OSU
  - Light yield, MIP response,
  - efficiency
- Low radiation dose expected as compared to the forward region.



## Lessons from HERA H1 detector



- □ The backward region of the H1 detector had a **SpaCal** calorimeter upgrade.
  - The difference in energy depositions in the "em" and "had" sections leaded to improved electron-pion separation in low-X.
  - At low energies, "fake electron"s were mitigated from photoproduction events where the scattered electron escapes in the beampipe.
  - Improved hermeticity. Effective in reconstructing events where hadronic energy measurement was crucial (e.g, photoproduction, CC interaction).







## **Diffractive Processes**

- Diffractive (DDIS) processes made up a significant fraction of the total e+p crosssection.
- □ Exclusive vector-meson production (e.g.  $J/\psi$ ,  $\phi$ ) in DDIS will be a powerful tool to explore the structure of hadrons.





 $\Box$  nHCal required to access x < 10<sup>-3</sup>

## Neutral Hadrons and Jet Measurement





**Figure 8.57:** Demonstration of the effect of selecting only jets which do not contain a neutral hadron (green circles) on the jet energy scale (left) and resolution (right) as compared to the cases when all subsystems are used in jet finding (red squares) and when HCal information is excluded (blue triangles).

**EIC Yellow Report** 

Vetoing jets with neutral hadrons using the nHCal could substantially improve resolution + scale. Neutral Hadron E vs Eta: 18x275: 0.9 < y < 0.95



- Low-x and high-y events produce activity both in backward and forward direction
- "This neutral hadron veto capability depends critically on the ability to physically isolate individual showers within the calorimeter".

## Neutral energy reconstruction via charged hadron correction



**<u>Objective</u>** : Use two-particle clusters to distinguish between neutron/pion shower reconstruction.



- $\theta_n = 155^{\circ} (\eta = -1.51) ----- fixed$
- $\theta_{\pi} = 155^{\circ} (\eta = -1.51), 158^{\circ} (\eta = -1.64), 161^{\circ} (\eta = -1.79), 164^{\circ} (\eta = -1.96), 167^{\circ} (\eta = -2.17), 170^{\circ} (\eta = -2.44)$



 Cluster (x,y) are shown in the nHCal plane along with simulated angular coordinates

[neutron showers in outer region; pion showers in inner region]

## Charged Hadron Correction





R = Radial Coordinate of the cluster position in the nHCal plane

As the showers start to overlap, clusters start to get merged, neutron hits are "hijacked" into pion clusters.

## Charged Hadron Correction – Preliminary Approach





# $E^{Reco}_{charged}\,$ = Energy of the cluster that is matched to a track

*p* = Momentum obtained from tracking

 $\sigma_E$  = Energy Resolution

## Charged Hadron Correction





When, 
$$|(E_{charged}^{Reco}-p)/\sigma_{E}|>3.0$$
  $E_{neutral}^{Reco}=E_{total}^{Reco}-p$ 

Otherwise, 
$$E_{neutral}^{Reco} = E_{total}^{Reco} - E_{charged}^{Reco}$$

 $E_{neutral}^{MC}\,$  = MC energy deposition by neutron

 Good neutral energy separation should be possible from clusters which are
 ~ 30 cm apart

## Single particle position resolution for neutrons





Performed with singleparticle neutron simulations and reconstructed clusters for geometry optimization

Tile size has negligible impact on the transverse position resolution

 Hadronic showers are much wider than tile size





In HCal will be crucial for low-x measurements, which is the frontier for proton and nuclear structure and one of the key objectives for EIC physics.

□ Studies of diffractive events will be facilitated from nHCal.

□ It will act as a neutral veto to identify charged jets.

Growing collaboration!

Opportunities for people to participate!!

Simulations, testing, hardware work, reconstruction.

# Thank You

Subhadip Pal, EPSHEP-2025/Marseille



## Charged Hadron Correction



Subhadip Pal, EPSHEP-2025/Marseille

Reco



## Energy Sharing



## $\square$ <u>nEMCal + nHCal response to $\pi^{-}$ </u>



□ Acceptance of nHCal:  $-3.5 < \eta < -1.25$ 

Significant overlap in acceptance with the backward (or negative) Endcap EMCal

## Position Resolution Study - Resolution



'Hcal Only' /('Hcal+Ecal both' + 'Ecal only')

~ 68% of neutrons scatter in EEEMCal which might fall out of a jet reconstruction cone. This might be an issue for jet energy reconstruction.

 $\Box$  Scattering in EEMCal affects the  $\Delta R_{XY}$  resolution.

## Hit and Cluster Positions

 $\Box$  1 neutron/event, 100k events and p = 5 GeV

**D**  $\theta$  = 170° and  $\phi$  = 45°





## DD4hep – detector description toolkit

Works with Geant4 for particle transport
 Uses ROOT for visualization

- Separate detector descriptions from their interpretation
  - The compact detector description is contained in a .xml file
  - Interpretation is done by detector Constructors (.cpp file)
    - Can create one detector element with a given shape.
    - Make multiple placements to replicate it.





## Hadronic Showers



A hadronic shower is a cascade of secondary particles initiated by the interaction with matter (i.e, energy loss) of an incoming of hadron.



### **Electromagnetic component:**

- Electrons, photons (from excitation, radiation, decay of hadrons, photo-effect, ...)
- Neutral pions (eg,  $\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ ,  $\eta \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ )

#### Hadronic component:

- Charged hadrons  $\pi^{\pm}$ , K<sup>±</sup>, p, ...
  - ionization, excitation, nuclei interaction (spallation p/n production, evaporation n, spallation products)
- Neutrons,
  - Elastic collisions, thermalization+capture (=>γ's)
- Break-up of nuclei





- Part of the energy is lost in breaking nuclei (nuclear binding energy)
  - Invisible part of the shower! Only part of the shower energy is sampled!