



# imec

**Semiconductor technology  
for new architectures of implantable devices**

Geert Langereis, Program Manager Health Research



# Content

## Semiconductor technology for new architectures of implantable devices

- About imec
- From wearable monitoring to implantable treatment
- Semiconductor building blocks for implantable devices



# imec – what we stand for

“when no one can solve your problem, we will”

A photograph of the imec headquarters building in Leuven, Belgium. The building is a modern, multi-story structure with a glass facade and a distinctive stepped design. It is set against a blue sky with white clouds. In the foreground, there are green bushes and trees. The imec logo is visible in the top right corner of the image.

#FACTS

- °1984, non profit
- Core assets
  - +4500 **R&D top talents** attracted from around the globe
  - >€3B **leading-edge semiconductor fab facilities** as a unique toolbox
  - Entry to an **ecosystem** of leading institutions & companies
- 2020 figures
  - €680M revenue
  - 161 patent applications
  - 1866 peer-reviewed publications
  - 5 spin-offs

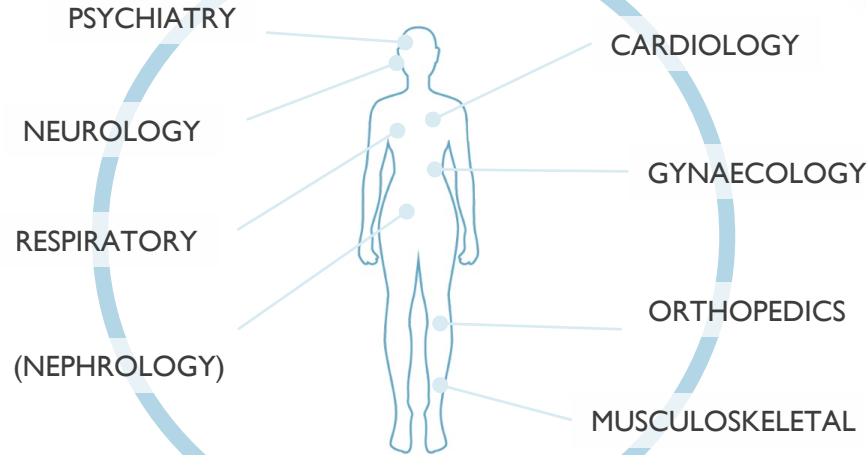
HQ Leuven, Belgium 

From  
wearable monitoring  
to  
implantable treatment



# Wearable experience of imec

Foundation for implant external units

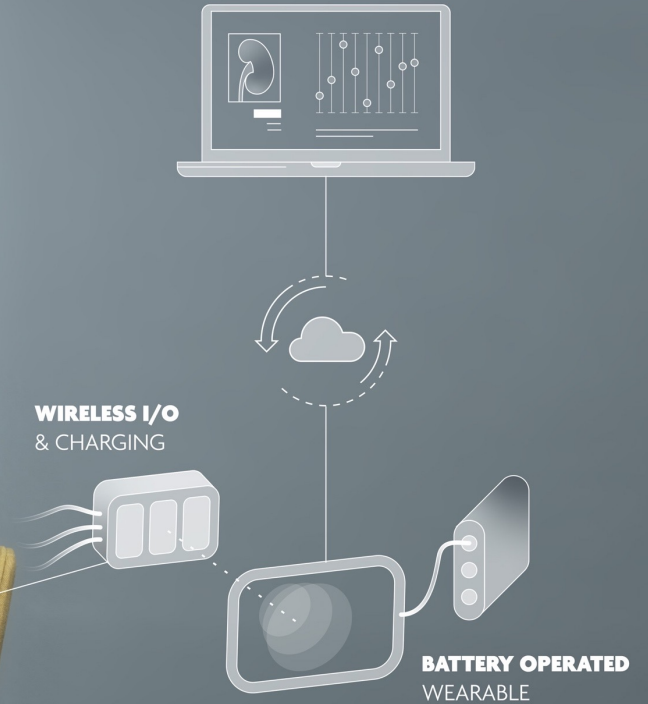


# Introducing closed loop implant program

“Artificial organs”



**ARTIFICIAL  
KIDNEY**



# (Multiple) Chronic Conditions

## The market and societal burden

Six in ten adults in the US have a chronic disease and **four in ten adults** have two or more.



Webpage Center for Disease Control and Prevention CDC (2021)

### A costly burden



Those with MCC have more prescription, out of pocket, and total healthcare costs<sup>9</sup>

WITH EACH ADDITIONAL CHRONIC CONDITION:

— average medical payments **more than double**,<sup>7</sup> suggesting chronic conditions may interact to increase costs exponentially



— annual healthcare costs **increase 80-300%**, depending on age, sex, and chronic condition profile<sup>10</sup>



Amalia Adler-Waxman (2017), This is the biggest challenge to our health, World Economic Forum

## Heart disease and stroke



**1 in 3**  
DEATHS

or more than 859,000 people each year



**\$199**  
BILLION

in health care system costs



**\$131**  
BILLION

in lost productivity from premature death



**78**  
MILLION

people with high blood pressure

## Diabetes



**30.3**  
MILLION

Americans with diabetes



**84.1**  
MILLION

people with prediabetes



**\$237**  
BILLION

a year in medical costs



**\$90**  
BILLION

a year in lost productivity

## Obesity

- Nearly 1 in 5 children are obese
- 1 in 3 adults are obese
- Obesity increases the risk for other chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers

## Arthritis

Arthritis Costs, Per Year

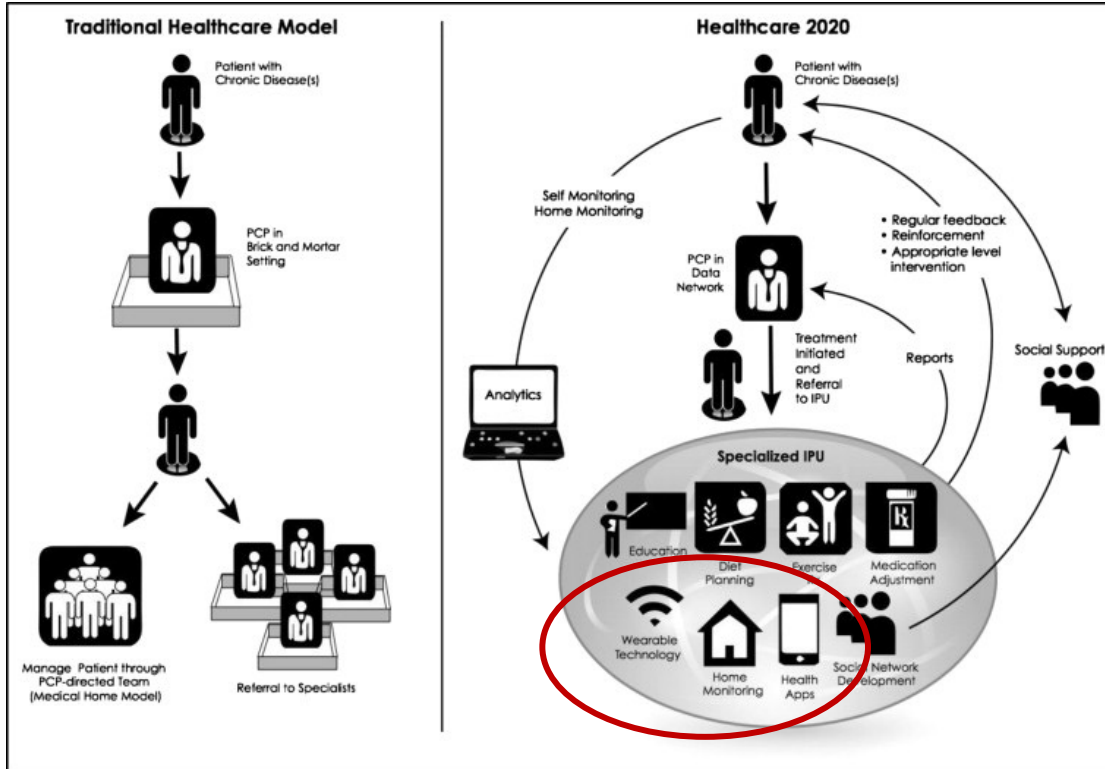


Innovu (2021), Cost of Chronic Disease to Reach \$42 Trillion by 2030

Source: Health and Economic Costs of Chronic Disease, CDC

# (Multiple) Chronic Conditions

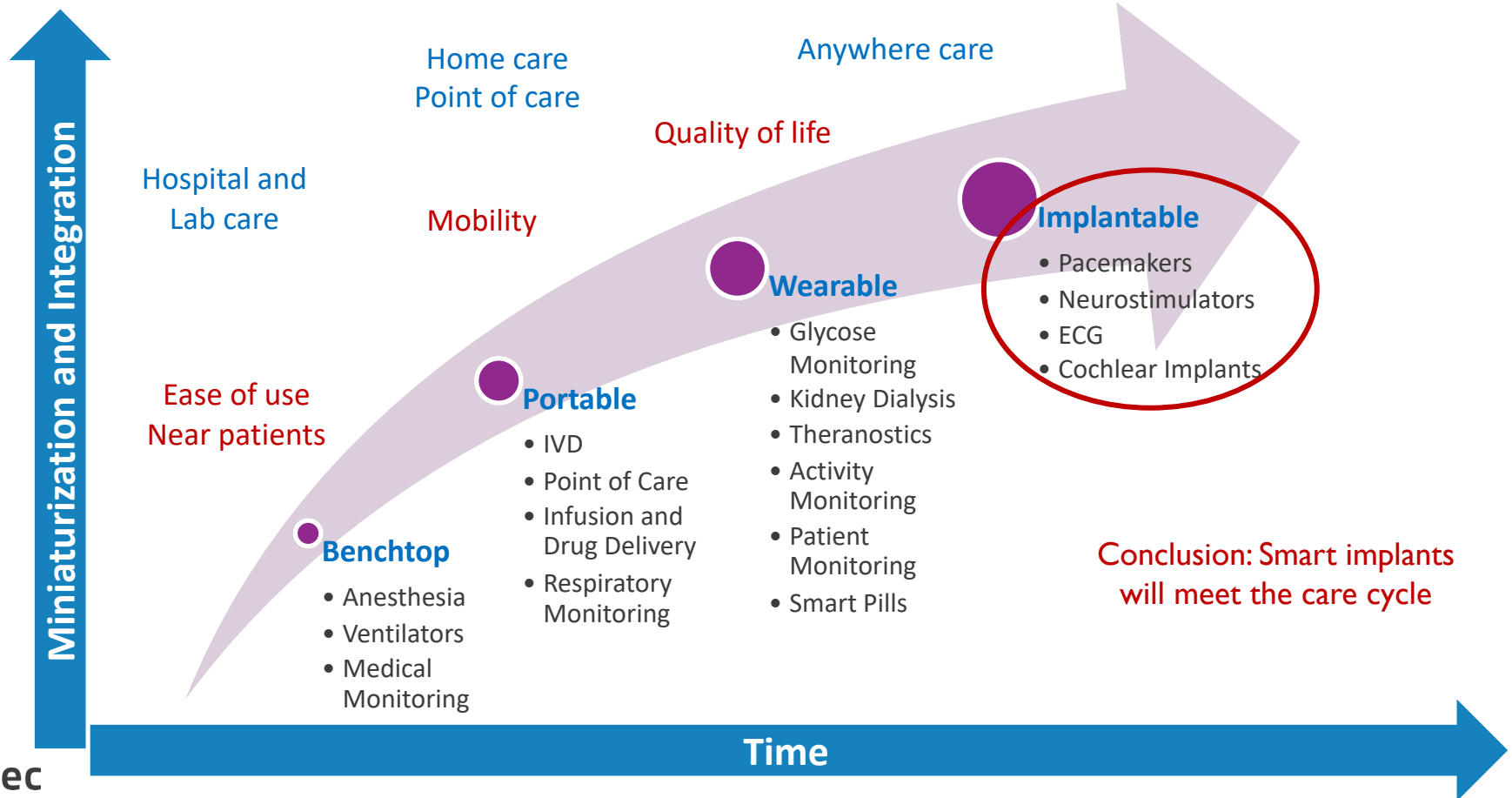
## Current approach



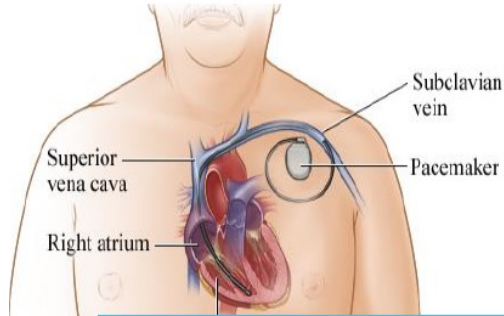
Milani, R. V., & Lavie, C. J. (2015). Health care 2020: reengineering health care delivery to combat chronic disease. *The American journal of medicine*, 128(4), 337-343.



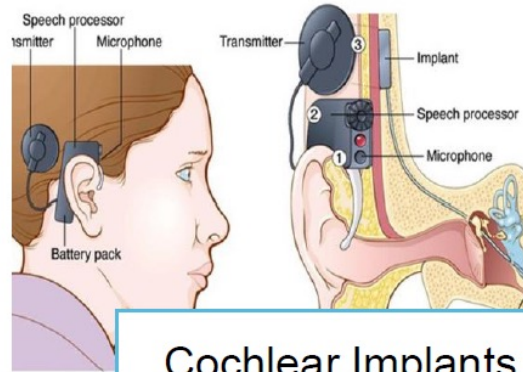
# THE EVOLUTION OF MEDICAL DEVICES TOWARDS IMPLANTATION



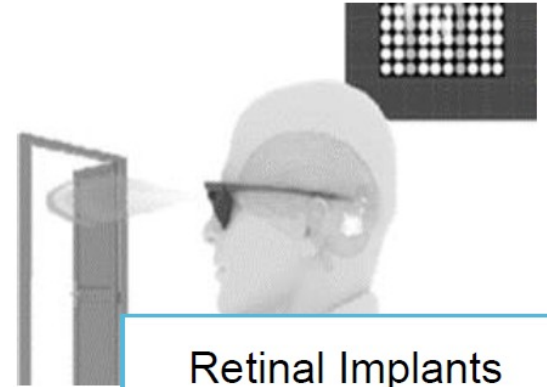
# TODAY THERE ARE 6 KEY TARGETS OF ELECTRICAL STIMULATION



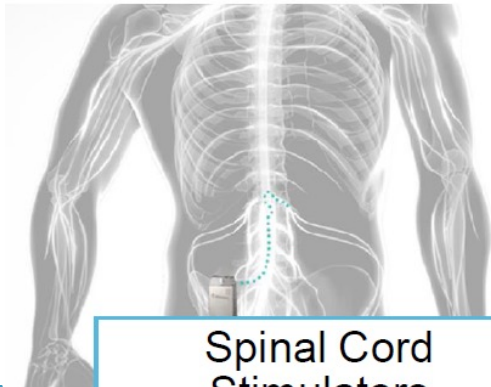
Cardiac Implants



Cochlear Implants



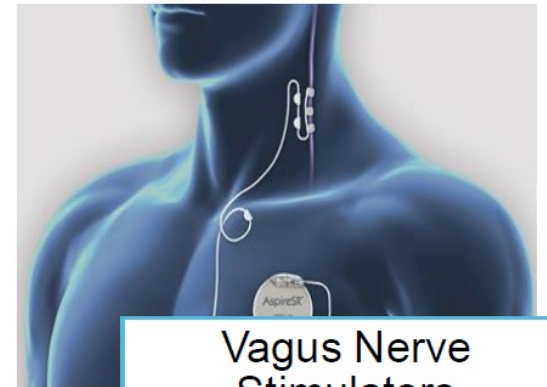
Retinal Implants



Spinal Cord Stimulators




Deep Brain Stimulators



Vagus Nerve Stimulators

# IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATORS REMAIN A MAJOR APPLICATION



**LivaNova**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
SENTIVA®

- for vagus nerve stimulation
- wireless programmable
- non-magnetic

VIDEO



**abiliti.**

LGS 102  
SN:XXXXXXXX

INTRAPACE

**INTRAPACE**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
ABILITI®

- for gastric stimulation



**Cyberonics**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
ASPIRES®

- for vagus nerve stimulation

VIDEO



**nevro**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
SENZA®

- medullary



**EnteroMedics**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
VLOC® MAESTRO®

- for vagus nerve stimulation

VIDEO



**Axonics**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
R-SNM

- sacral nerves stimulation
- wireless programmable



**NUVECTRA**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
ALGOVITA® SCS

- medullary
- wireless programmable

VIDEO




**in'spire**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
INSPIRE®RU2122

- for upper airway stimulation

VIDEO




**NEUROPACE**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
RNS®

- for responsive brain stimulation

VIDEO



**IMTHERA**

IMPLANTABLE NEUROSTIMULATOR  
AURATM 6000

- for upper airway stimulation

**BULKY PALM SIZE STIMULATION IMPLANTS...**

**TO FINGERTIP SIZE LOCALIZED STIMULATION**



**METALLIC** ENCAPSULATION

**LI-ION** BATTERIES

**LOW DATA RATE** COMMUNICATION

**NON-LOCALIZED** STIMULATION



**NON-METALLIC** ENCAPSULATION

IMEC'S **WIRELESS POWERING** AND **CHARGING** FOR **LONGER LIFETIME**

IMEC'S **SIZE OPTIMIZED HIGH DATA RATE** COMMUNICATION

**LOCALIZED STIMULATION** CAPABILITY

[NOTIFICATION CS\_042 RECEIVED]  
**NERVE MODULATION**  
STARTED



[DATA PROCESSING]  
**WEARABLE**

DATA PROCESSING AND STORAGE  
SECURE COMMUNICATION WITH IMPLANT AND CLOUD DEVICE  
WIRELESS CHARGING CAPABILITIES FOR IMPLANTS  
PROGRAMMABLE BY PHYSICIANS



[NERVE STIMULATION]  
**IMPLANTABLE**

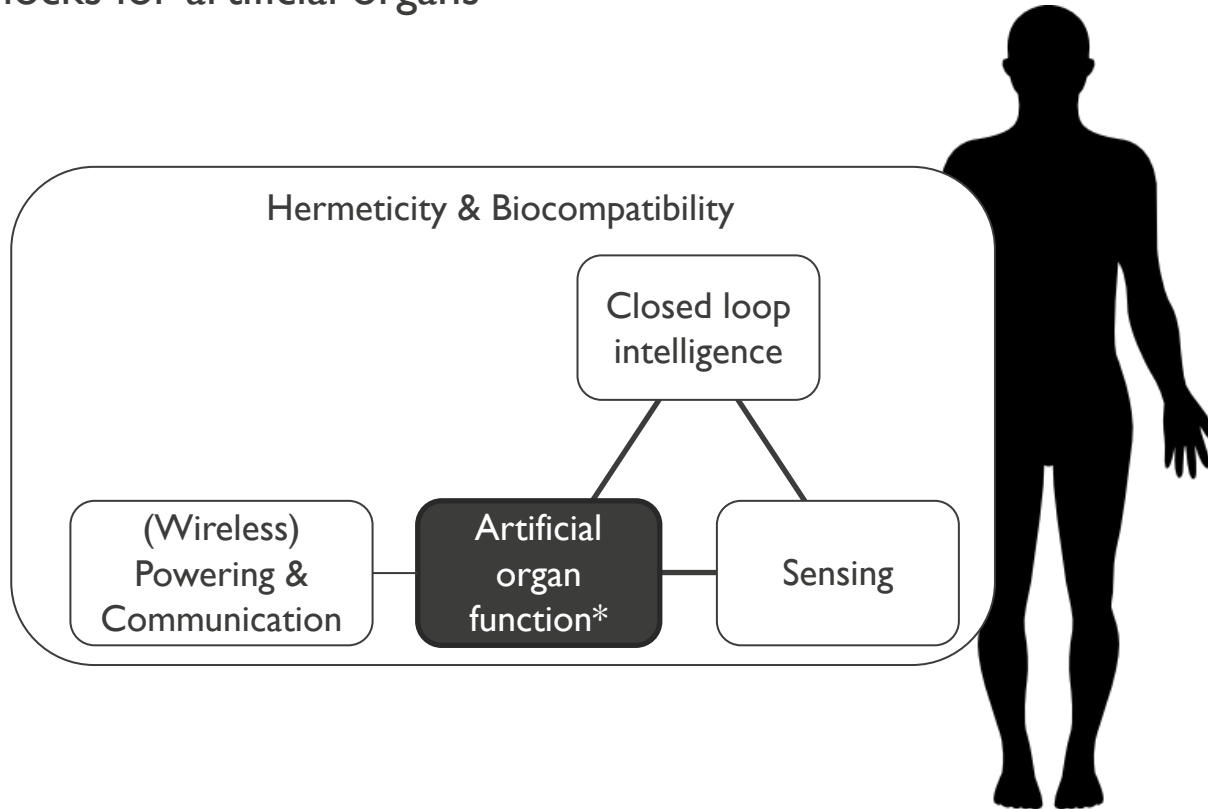
NERVE STIMULATION  
WIRELESS POWERING  
DATA PROCESSING  
WIRELESS COMMUNICATION WITH THE WEARABLE

# Semiconductor building blocks for implantable devices



# Generic artificial implant architecture

## Building blocks for artificial organs

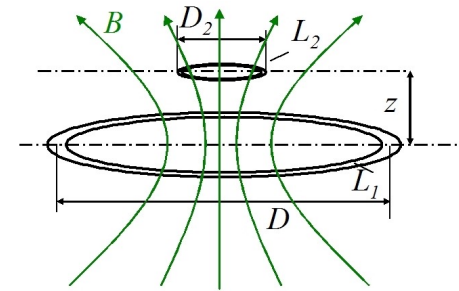
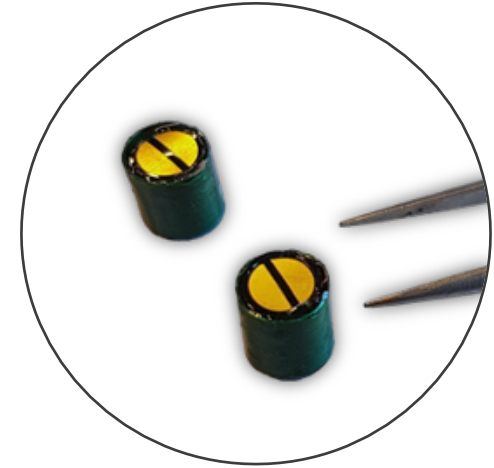


\* E.g.: blood cleansing, fluid removal, mechanical function, endocrine function, nerve stimulatory function

# Wireless powering

For deep implants

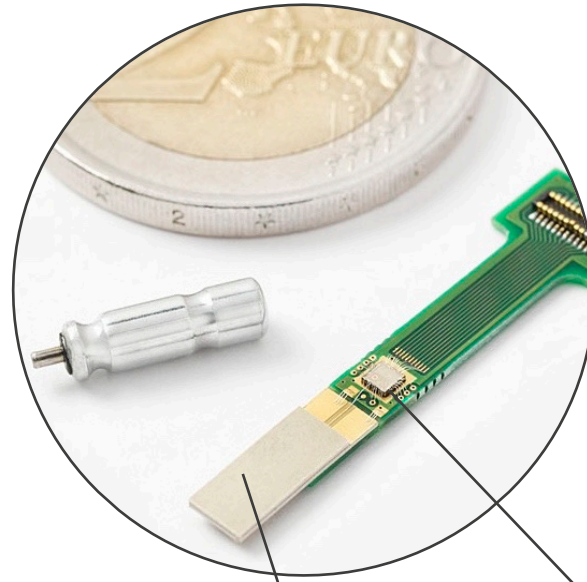
	Inductive	RF	Optical	Ultrasound
Tissue loss	✓	✗	✗	✓
TX power density safety	✓	✗	✓	✓
Reflection	✓	✗	✓	✗ / ✓
Scattering	✓	✗	✗	✗
Sensitivity to misalignment	✗	✓	✓	✓



<https://www.imec-int.com/implantables>



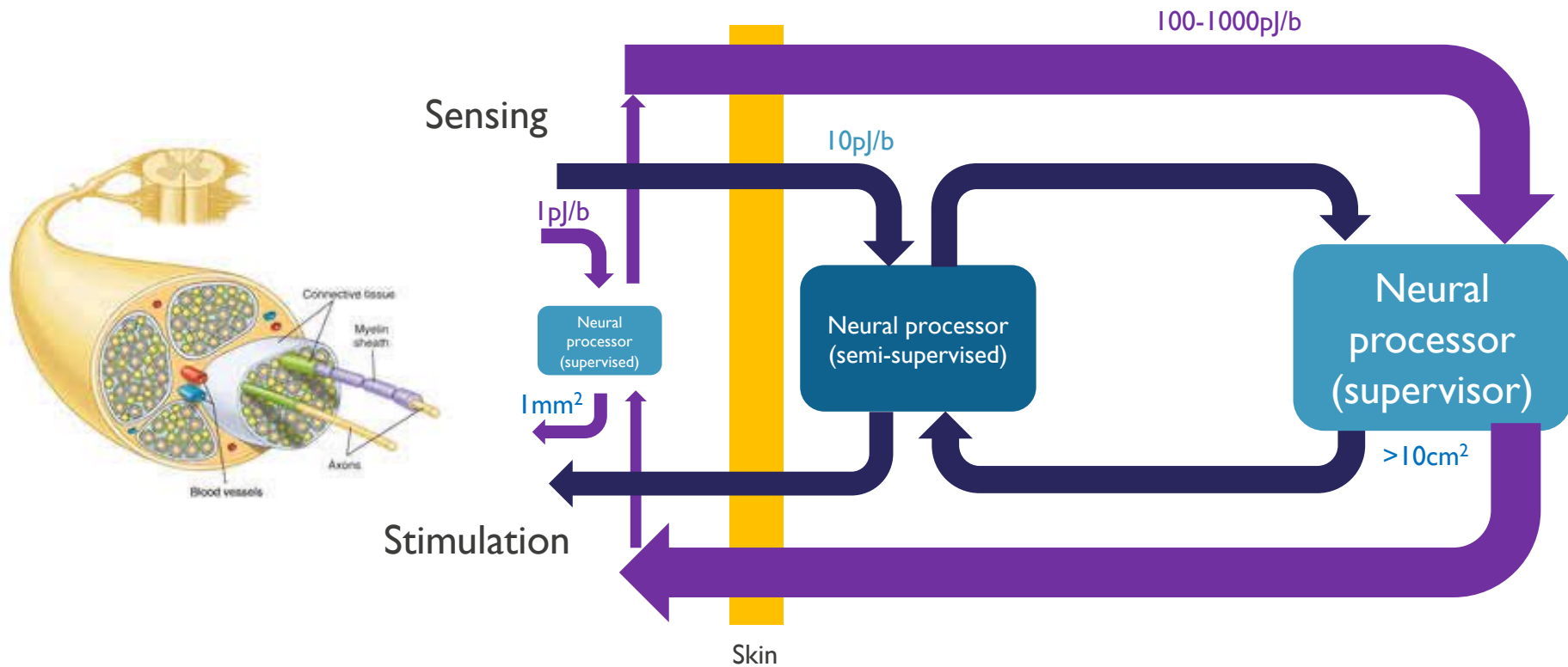
# Implantable wireless communication



Zero-BOM  
Wireless TRx

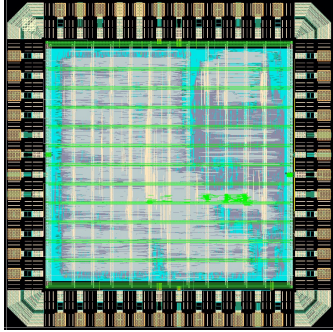
Small size  
400MHz antenna

# Edge computation vs. communication for PNS closing loop

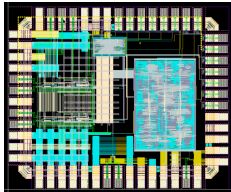


# uBrain (and even smaller cousin)

Extreme edge – on-sensor – match to ULP sensors



- 336 neurons
- Digital
- Event-driven
- Small tasks (ECG, SISO uDoppler)
- 10's uW



- 100 neurons
- Integrated ASC (analog-to-spike-converter)
- For insertables



## $\mu$ Brain: An Event-Driven and Fully Synthesizable Architecture for Spiking Neural Networks

Jan Stuijt\*, Manolis Sifalakis, Amirreza Yousefzadeh and Federico Corradi\*

Ultra-Low-Power Systems for Internet of Things (IoT), Stichting Interuniversitair Micro-Elektronica Centrum (IMEC) Nederland, Eindhoven, Netherlands

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IEEE ASSC 2021/ S

### A 28.2 $\mu$ W Neuromorphic Sensing System Featuring SNN-based Near-sensor Computation and Event-Driven Body-Channel Communication for Insertable Cardiac Monitoring

Yuming He<sup>1</sup>, Federico Corradi<sup>1</sup>, Chengyao Shi<sup>1,2</sup>, Ming Ding<sup>1</sup>, Martijn Timmermans<sup>2</sup>, Jan Stuijt<sup>1</sup>, Pieter Harpe<sup>2</sup>, Ilya Ocket<sup>3</sup>, Yao-Hong Liu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Imec-Netherlands, Eindhoven, Netherlands

<sup>2</sup> Eindhoven University of Technology, Eindhoven, Netherlands

<sup>3</sup> Imec, Leuven, Belgium

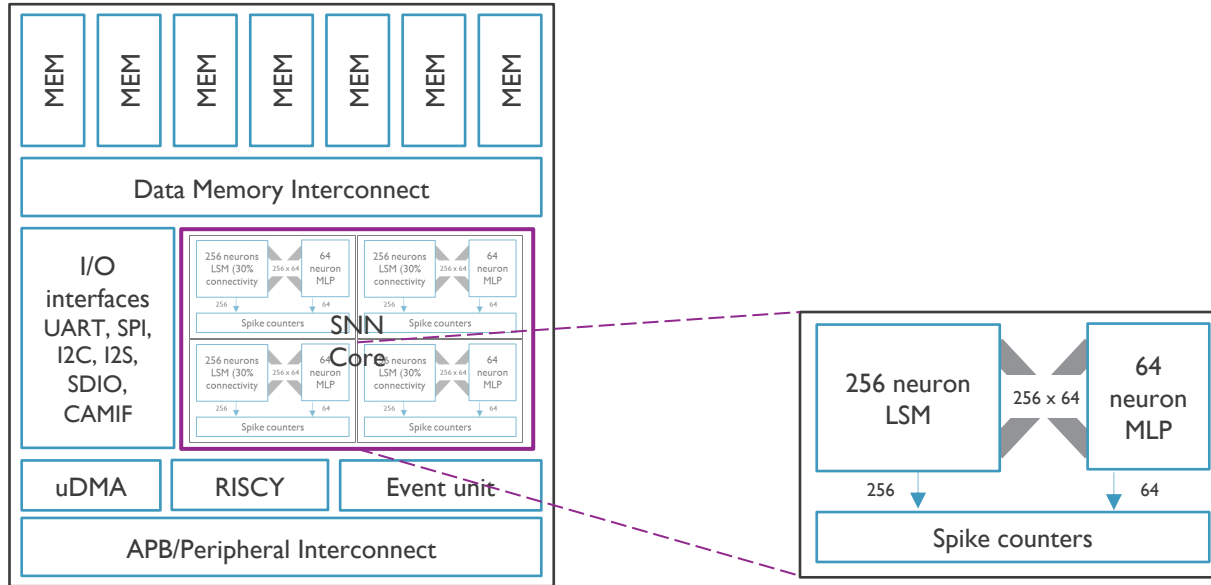
#### Abstract

This paper presents an event-driven neuromorphic sensing system capable of performing on-chip feature extraction and “send-on-delta” transmission for insertable cardiac monitoring. A background offset calibration improves the SNDR of clockless level-crossing ADCs. A fully synthesized spiking neural network extracts full ECG PQRST features with <1ms time precision. An event-driven body channel communication minimizes transmission energy. The prototype is fabricated in 40nm CMOS and consumes 28.2 $\mu$ W system power.

The development of brain-inspired neuromorphic computing architectures as a paradigm for Artificial Intelligence (AI) at the edge is a candidate solution that can meet strict energy and cost reduction constraints in the Internet of Things (IoT) application areas. Toward this goal, we present  $\mu$ Brain: the first digital yet fully event-driven without clock architecture, with co-located memory and processing capability that exploits event-based processing

# Argus

Edge IoT – highly reconfigurable with time-multiplexing – more complex applications

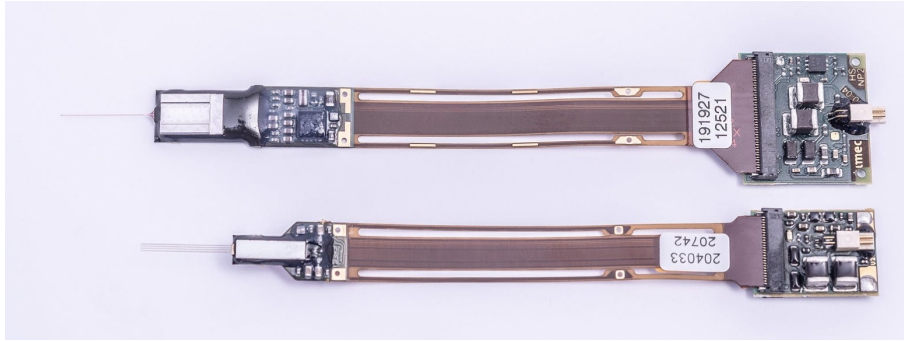


- Event-Driven Digital IP
- Instantiable into different topologies (fully synthesizable)

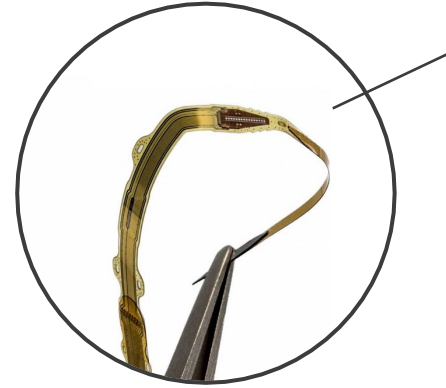
- Scalable multi-level interconnect & memory fabric for large SNN
- Optimized for latency x energy

# Peripheral nerve stimulation

## Selective stimulation



NeuroPixel 2.0 (imec Leuven)



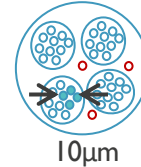
Insertable peripheral nerve stimulator (imec Ghent and Leuven)

Implantable peripheral nerve stimulator (imec Eindhoven)

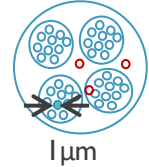
**Phase 1**  
Specific fascicle



**Phase 2**  
Specific fibres in a fascicle



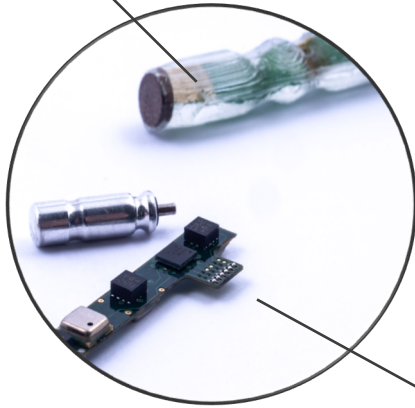
**Phase 3**  
Axon



Optimum technology per phase will change!

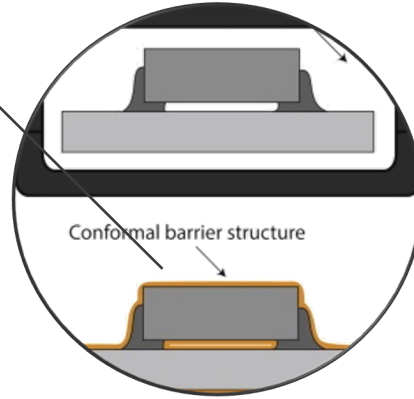
# Microsystem design

System  
minituration

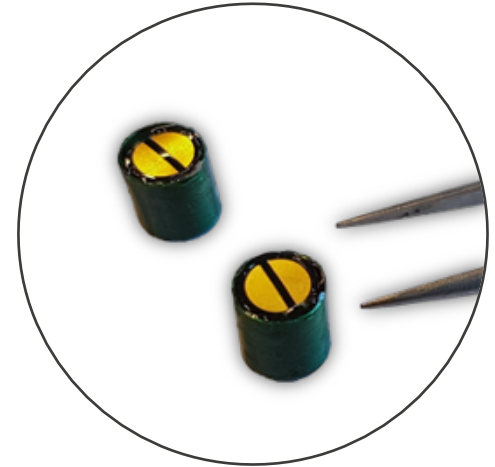


System  
integration

Conformal  
Barriers



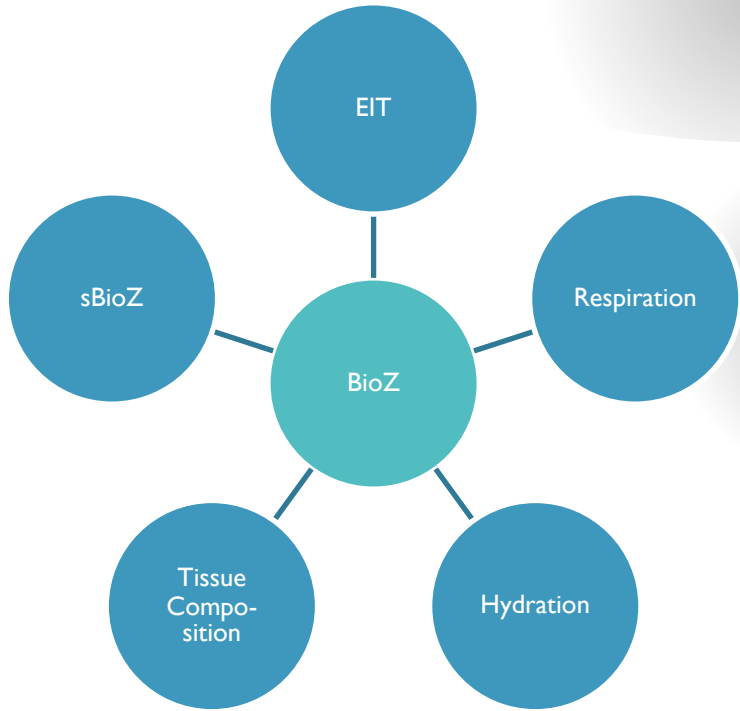
Hermetic sealing  
& bio compatible  
materials



Miniature  
power storage

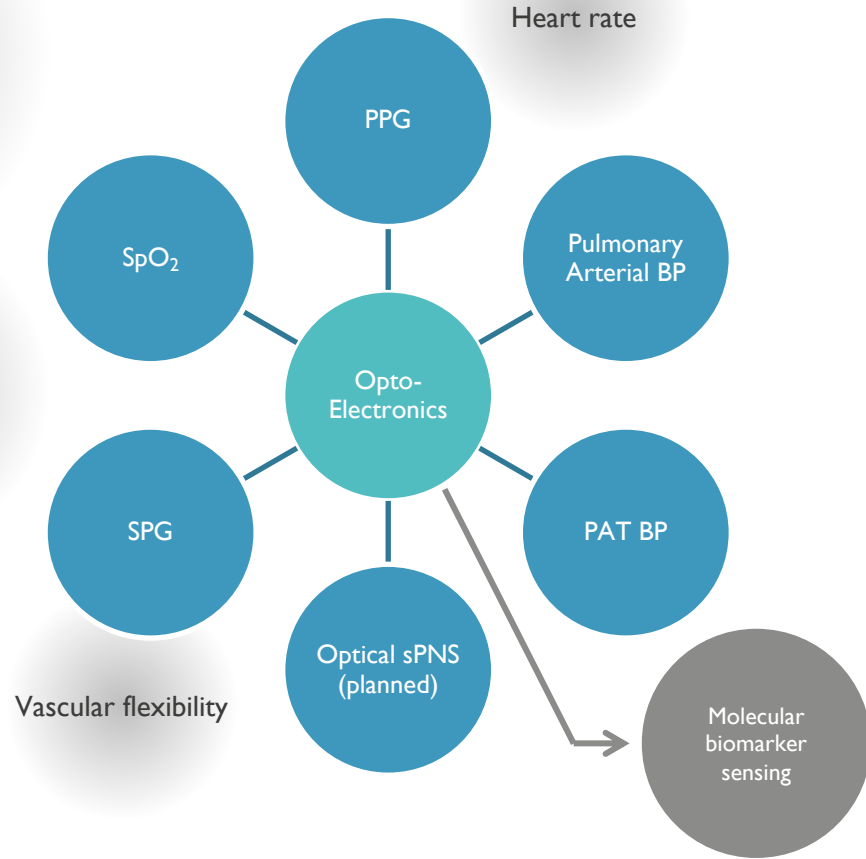
# Additional sensing for companions and implants

## OptoElectronics and BioImpedance



Inflammation

Perfusion



Heart rate

Vascular flexibility

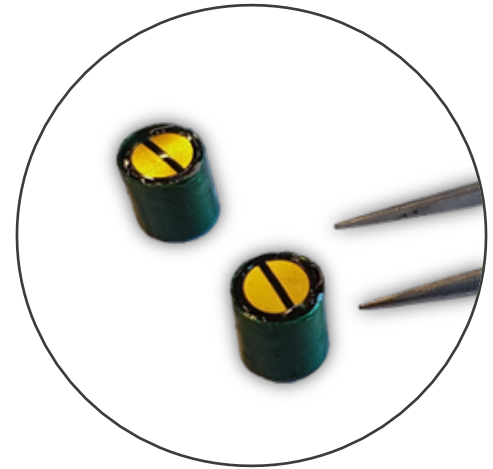
## Conclusion





# Conclusion

- **The societal burden of chronic diseases** requires a new approach of **closed loop implants**
- Modern semiconductor technology enables **radically different architectures of distributed implants**
  1. a lot of the miniaturized implantable solutions do need custom silicon
  2. each of the solutions is different than the neighbor, but it has some commonalities
  3. relationship between global pandemic and more investment in health in the next periods
  4. impact of smart health in semiconductor technology
- A **block-wise open approach** is key to develop such architectures and to **empower start-ups**





mtec

embracing a better life