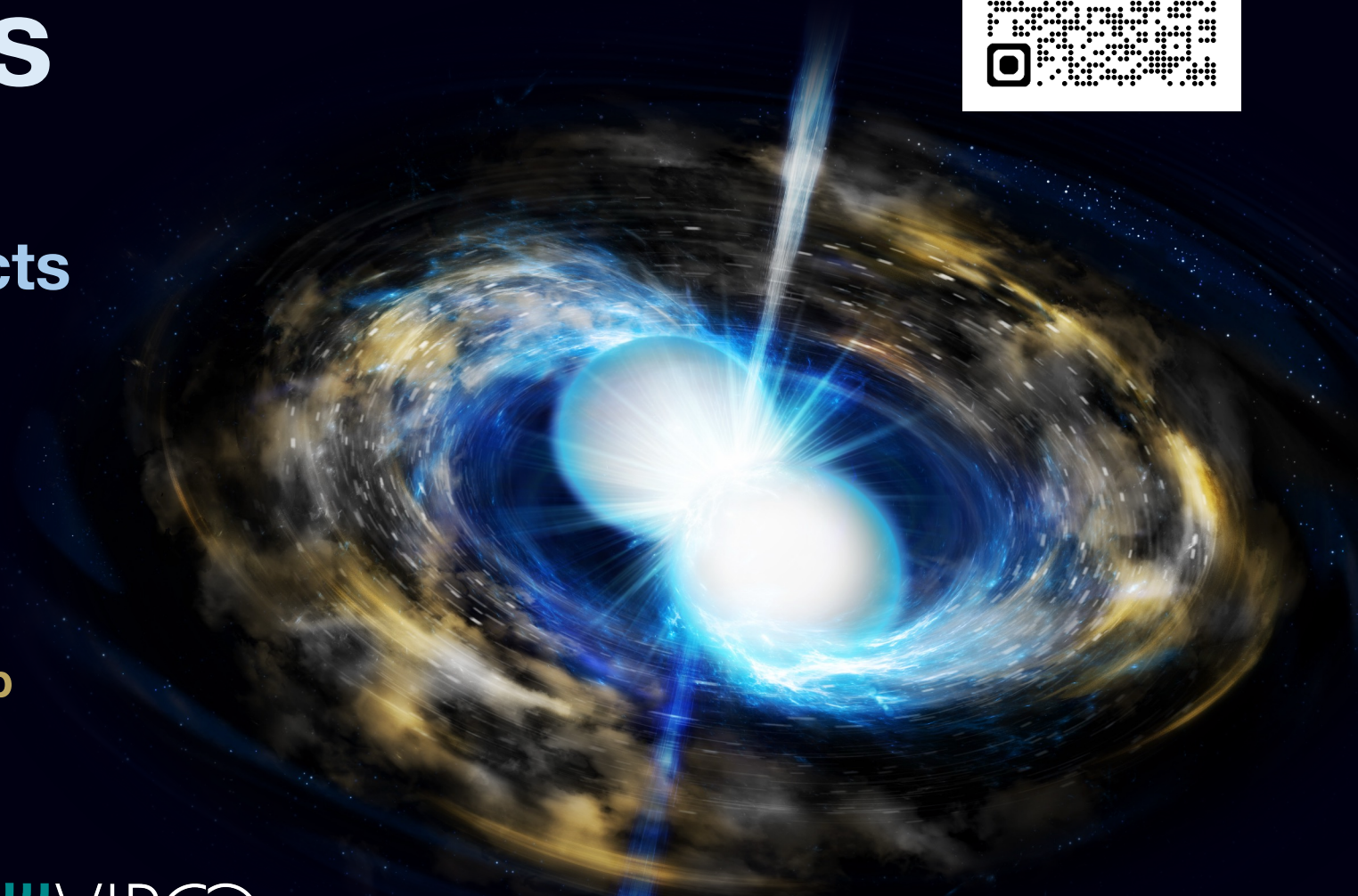
Early X-ray emission of short GRBs

Insights into physics and multi-messenger prospects

Annarita Ierardi, Gor Oganesyan,
Stefano Ascenzi, Marica Branchesi,
Biswajit Banerjee, Samuele Ronchini



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GRAN SASSO SCIENCE INSTITUTE
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES
Scuola Universitaria Superiore

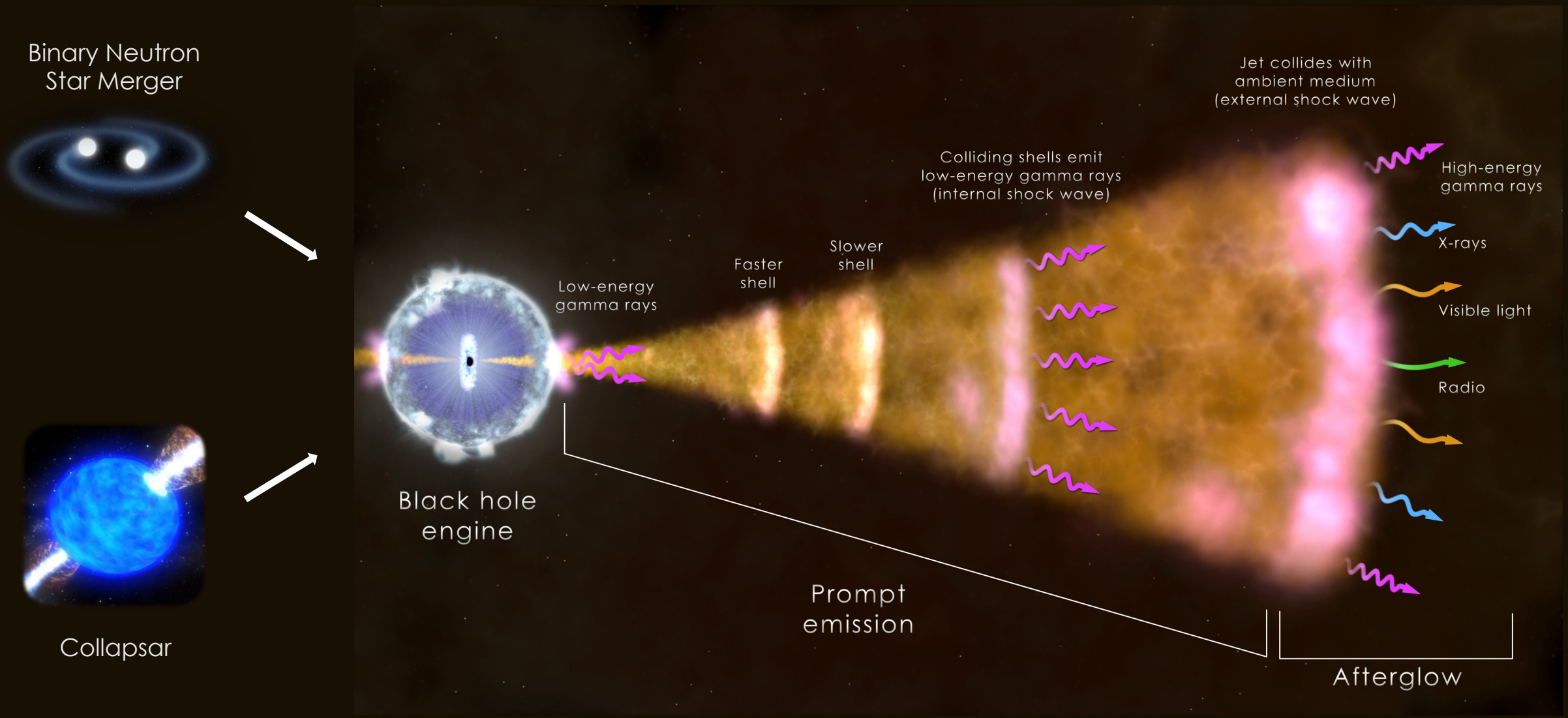
INFN
Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare

VIRGO

annarita.ierardi@gssi.it

Gamma-Ray Bursts

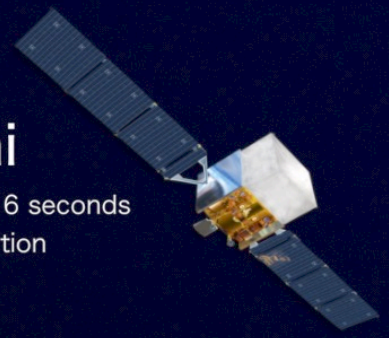
Credit: NASA



Multimessenger astronomy with GWs

Fermi

Reported 16 seconds after detection

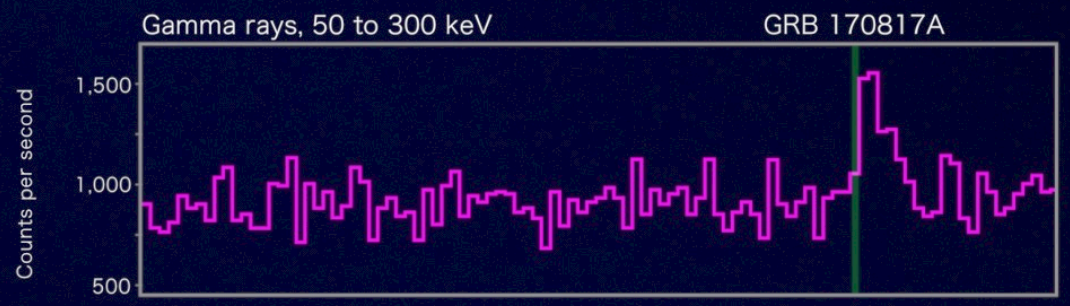


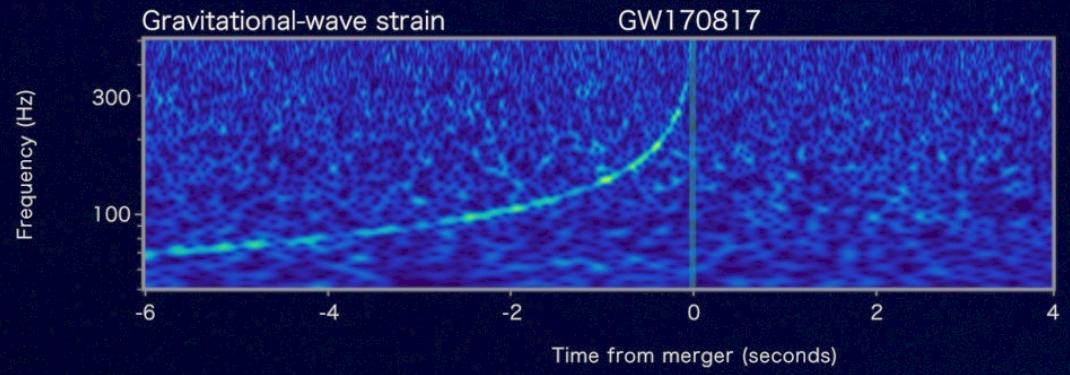
LIGO-Virgo

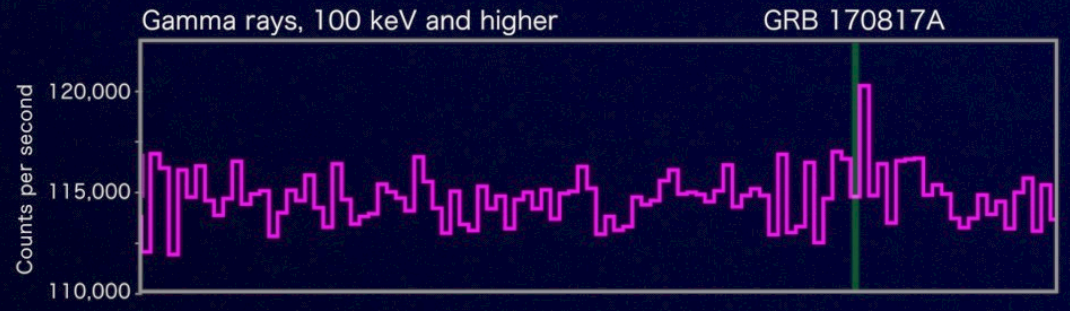
Reported 27 minutes after detection

INTEGRAL

Reported 66 minutes after detection



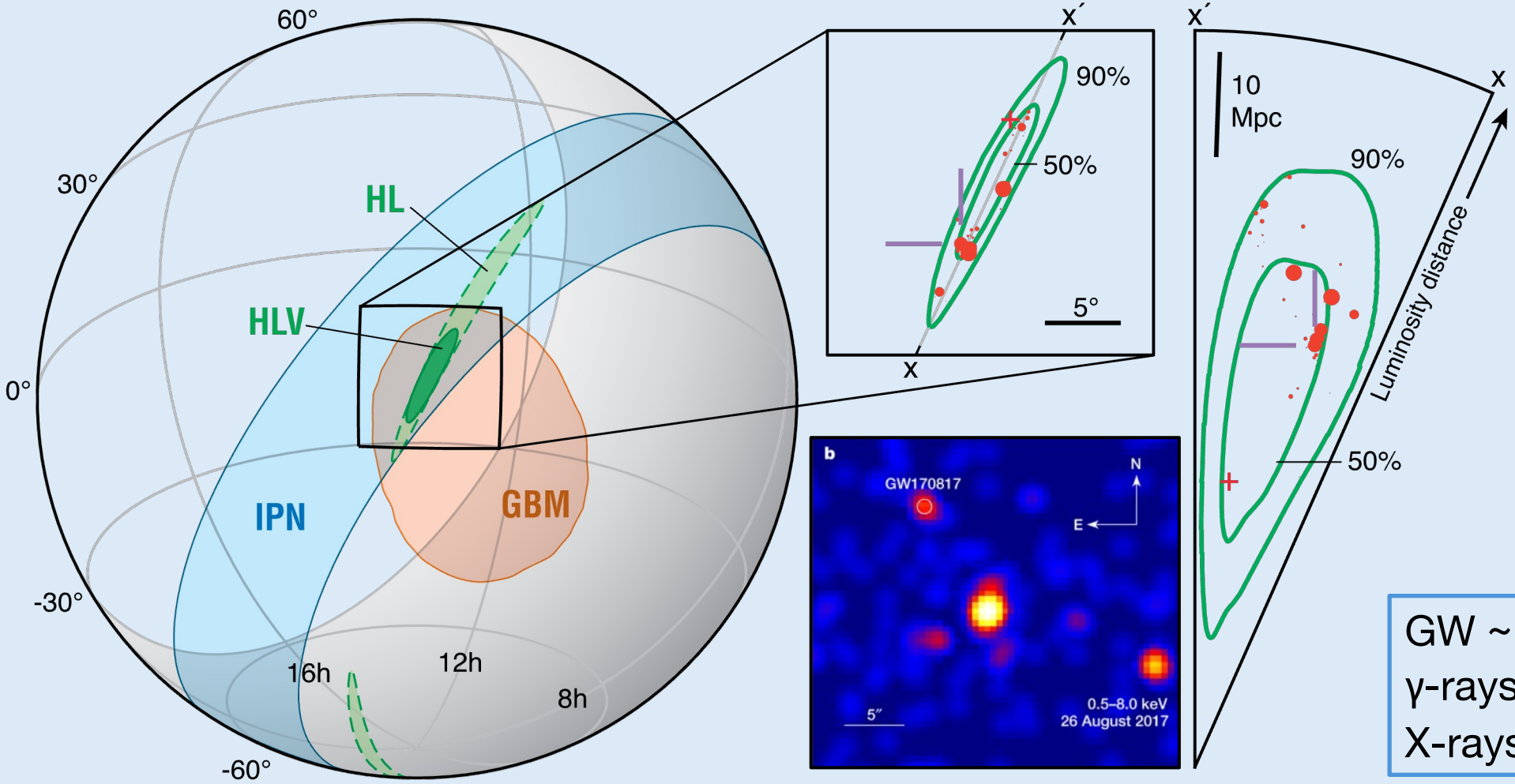




Credit:
Fermi collaboration

Sky localization

Adapted from: M. M. Kasliwal et al. 2017



E. Troja et al. 2017

GW ~ 100 deg²
γ-rays ~ 10 - 100 deg²
X-rays ~ arcmin

Swift

BAT [15-150 keV]

wide-field (1.4 sr) and sensitive coded-mask instrument with a ~4 arcmin localisation

XRT [0.3-10 keV]

Wolter-I telescope with higher angular resolution (~5 arcsec) and higher sensitivity for follow-up

Einstein Probe

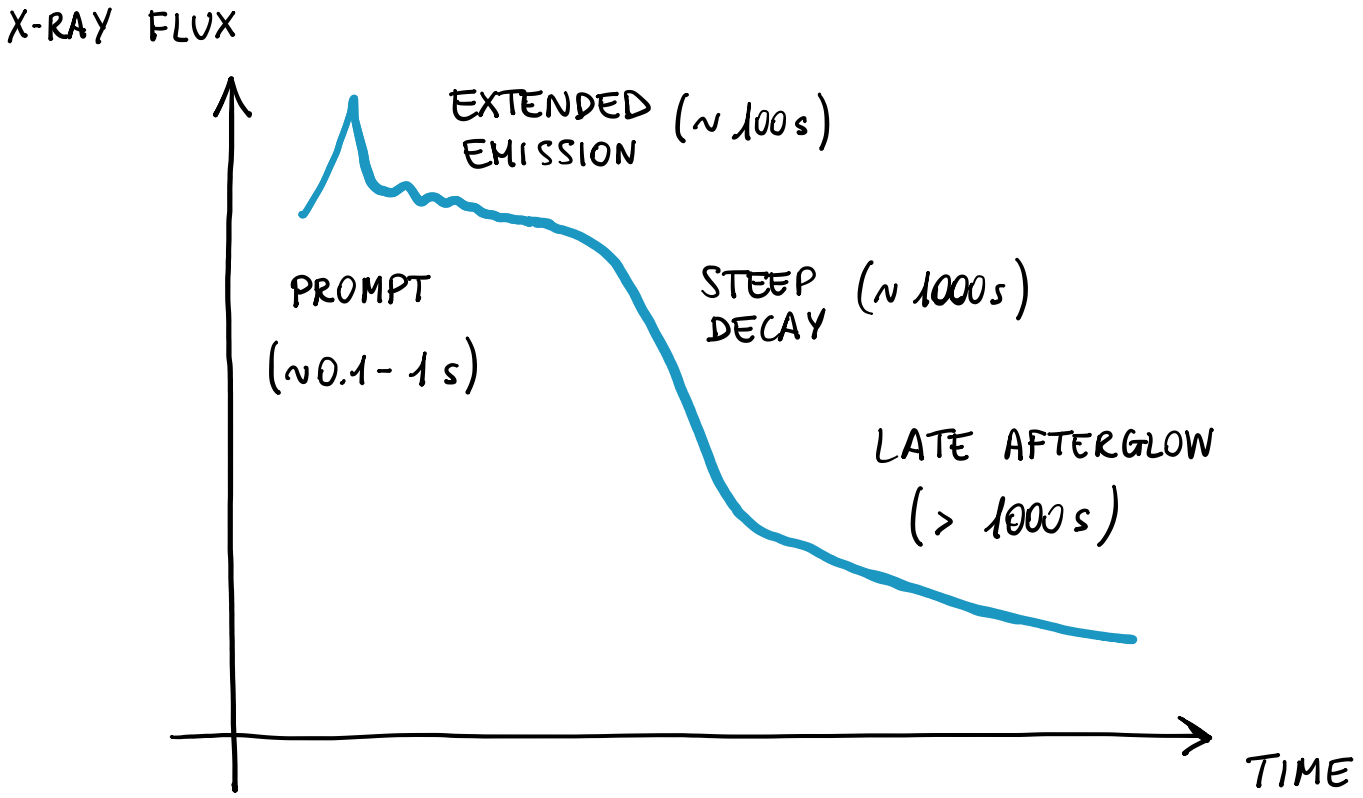
WXT [0.5-4 keV]

lobster-eye optics to combine a large FoV (3600 sq. deg.) with a ~5 arcmin localisation

FXT [0.3-10 keV]

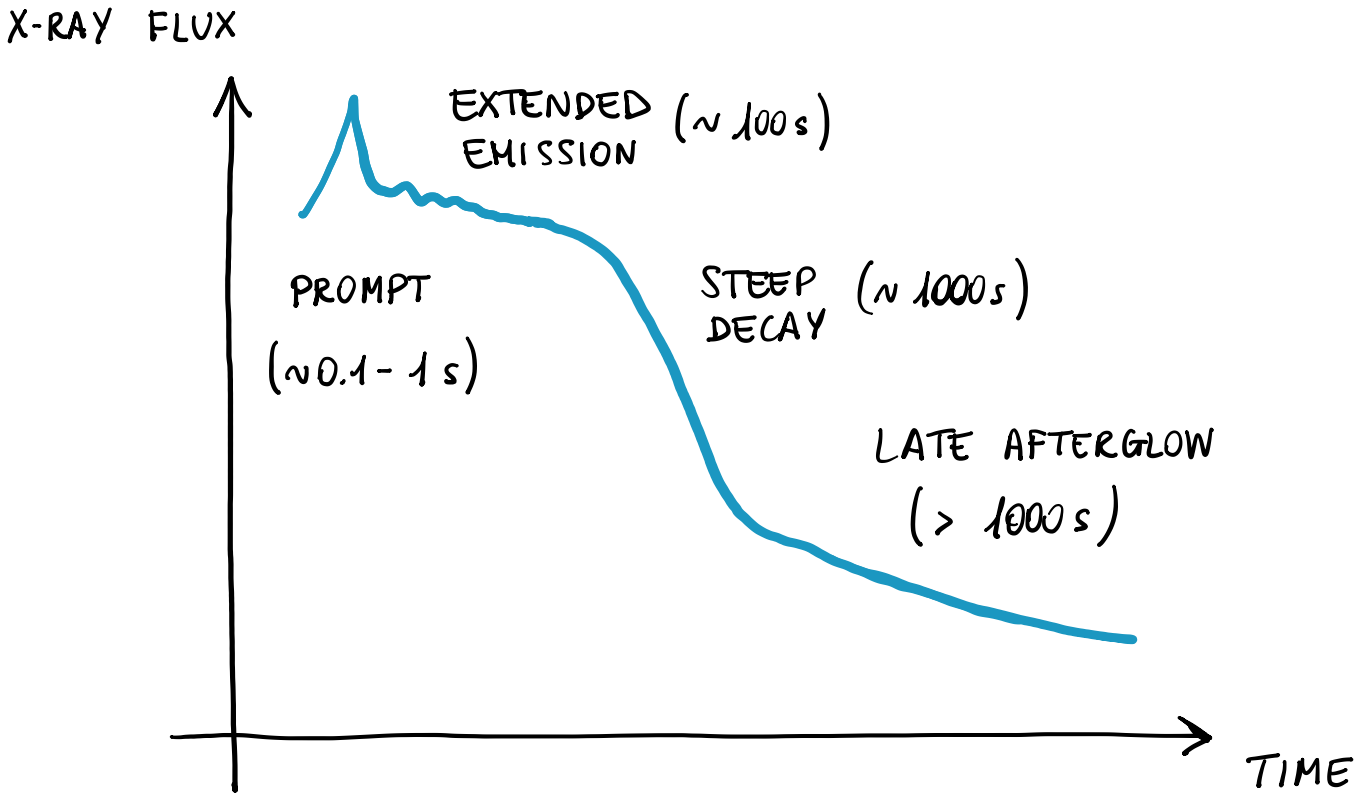
Wolter-I telescope with higher angular resolution (~5 arcsec) and higher sensitivity for follow-up

Short GRBs in soft X-rays



- Late-time afterglow of short GRBs has been well characterized
  (W. Fong et al. 2015, 2022)
- Early X-ray radiation is a probe of GRB jet physics and emission mechanisms
- It can be detected and localized by wide-field X-ray monitors

Short GRBs in soft X-rays



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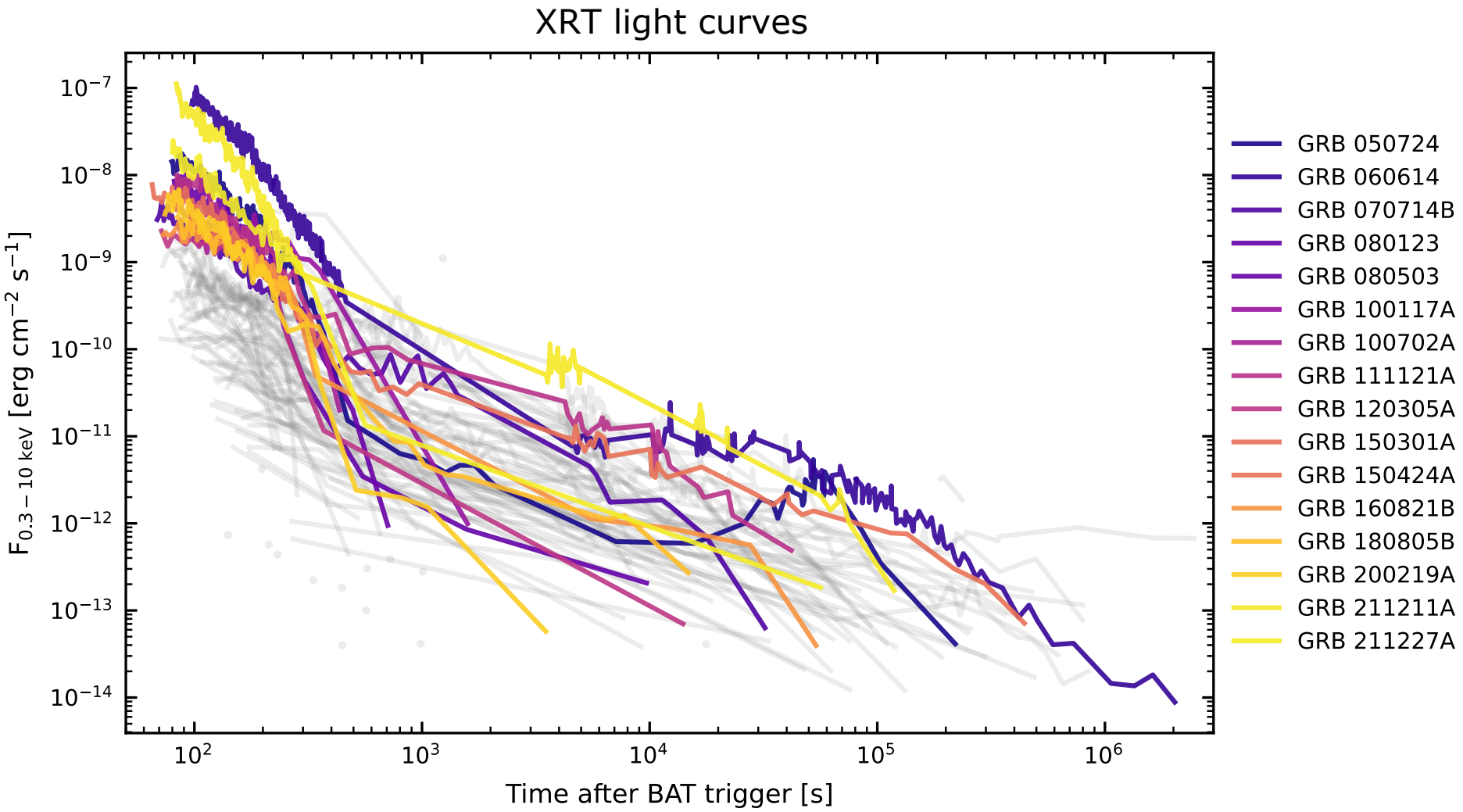
We systematically analyzed temporal and spectral evolution of early X-ray emission in short GRBs

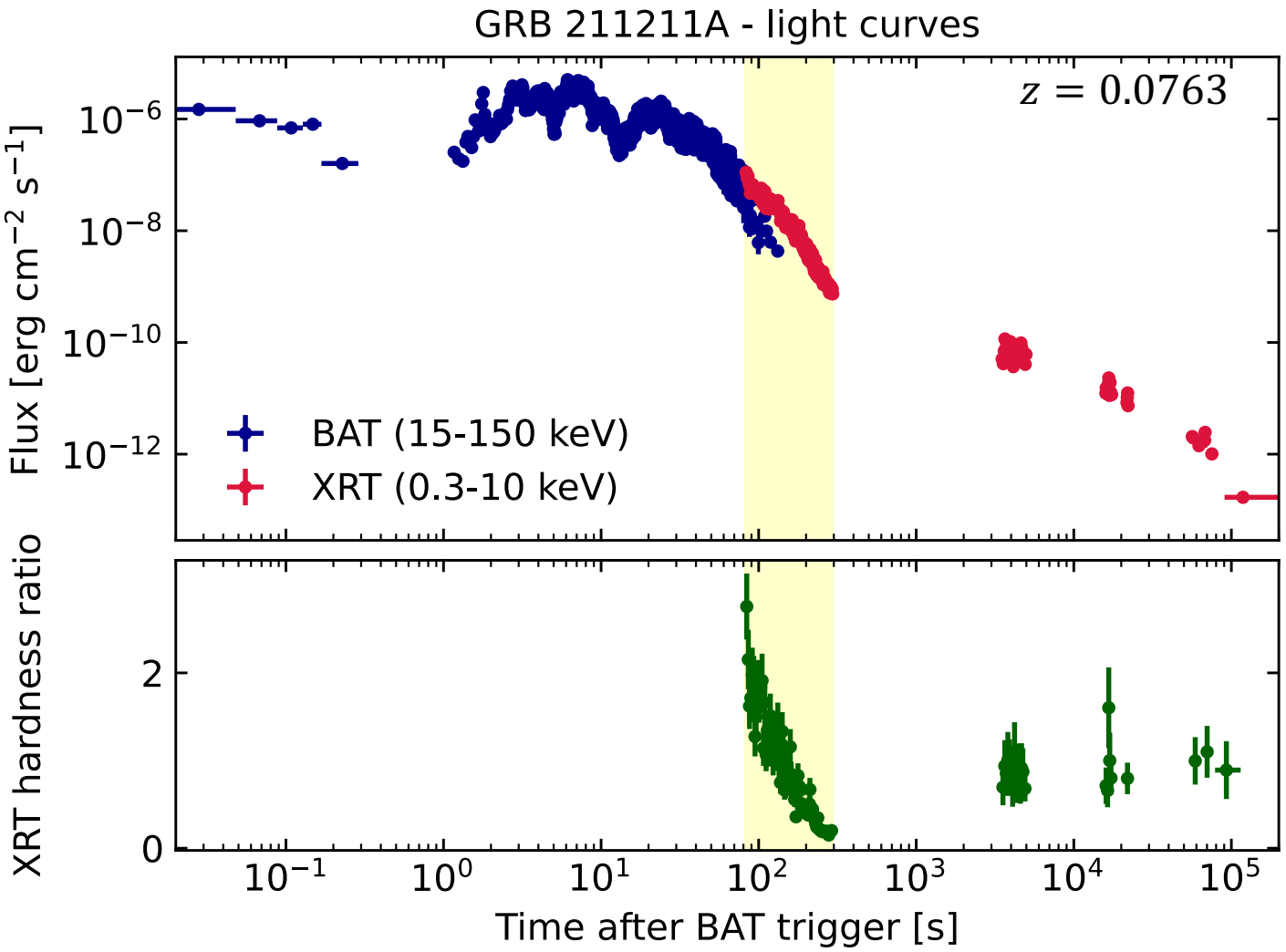
Ierardi+, arXiv:2510.16108

Sample selection



Ierardi+, arXiv:2510.16108

Spectral analysis

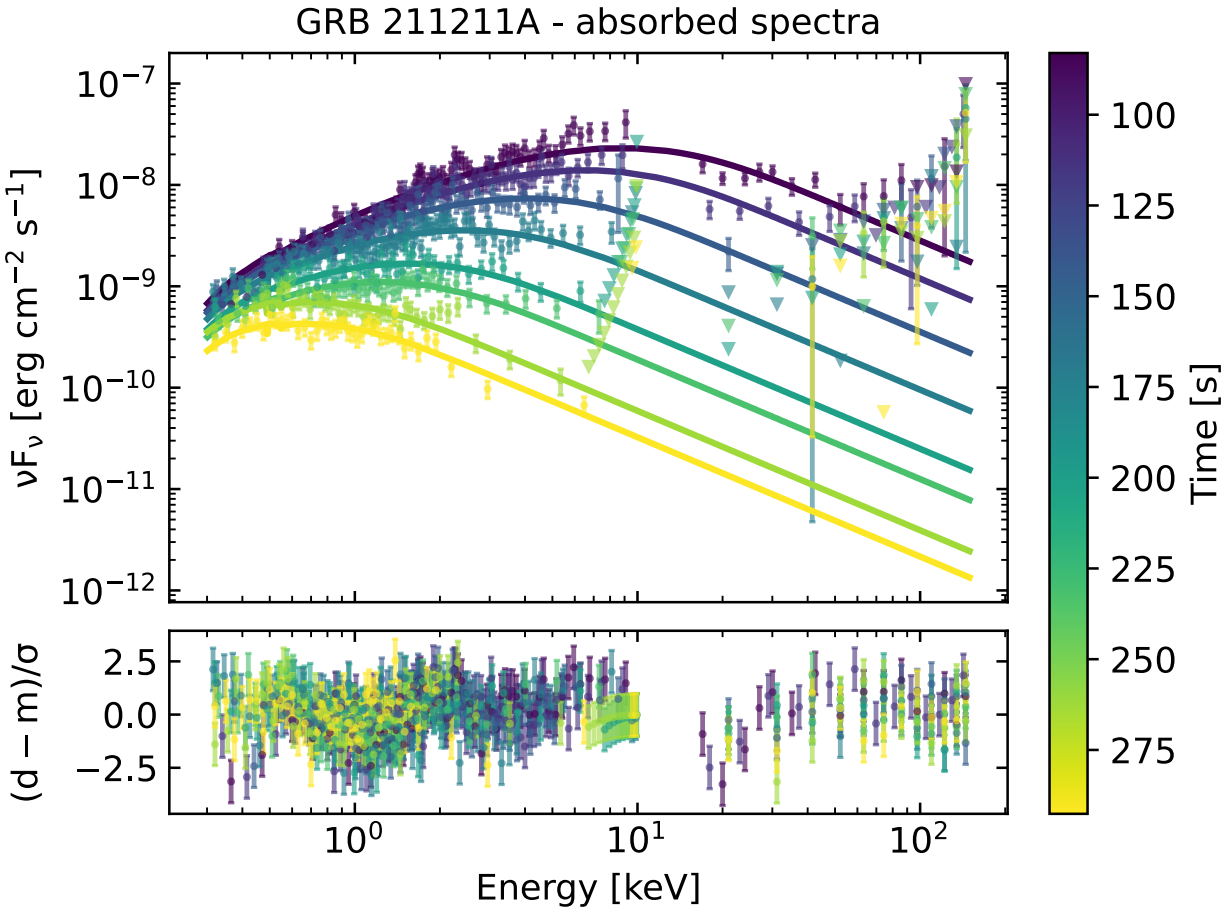


- Spectral evolution of the X-ray emission identified from the XRT hardness ratio
- Time-resolved spectral analysis of XRT and BAT data in the [0.3-150] keV energy range

Ierardi+, arXiv:2510.16108

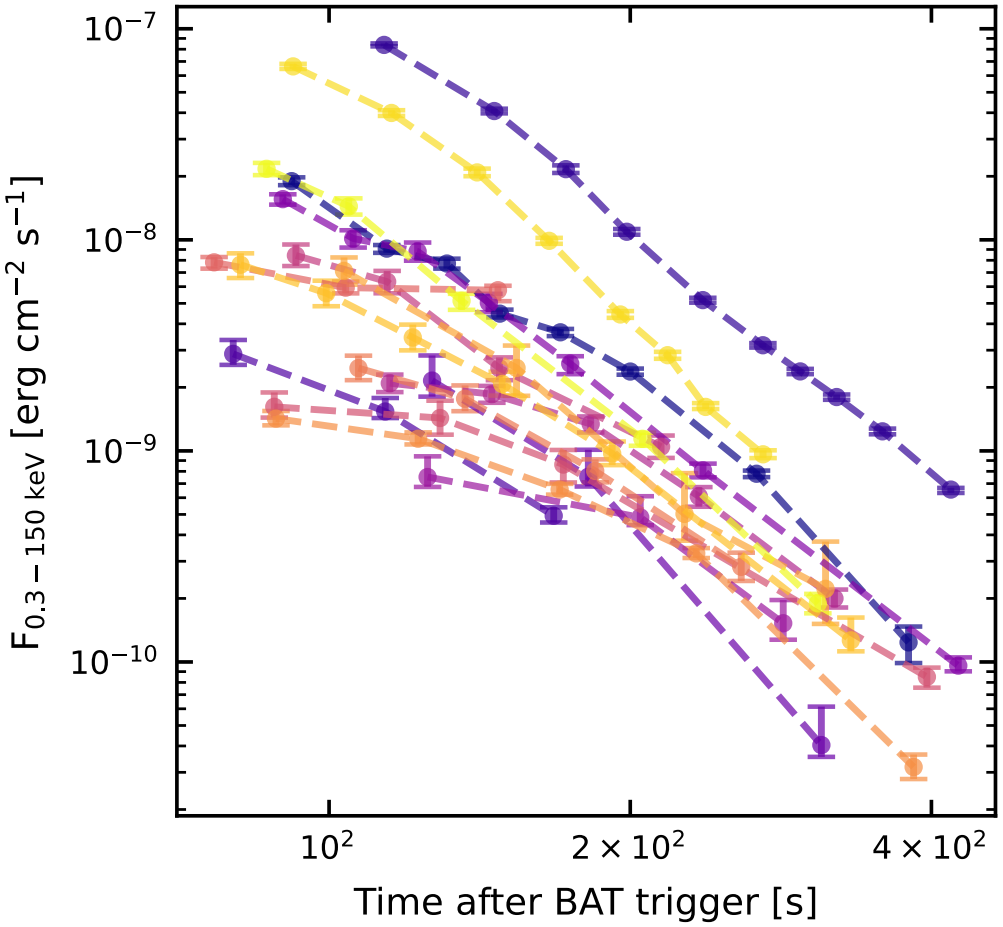
Model

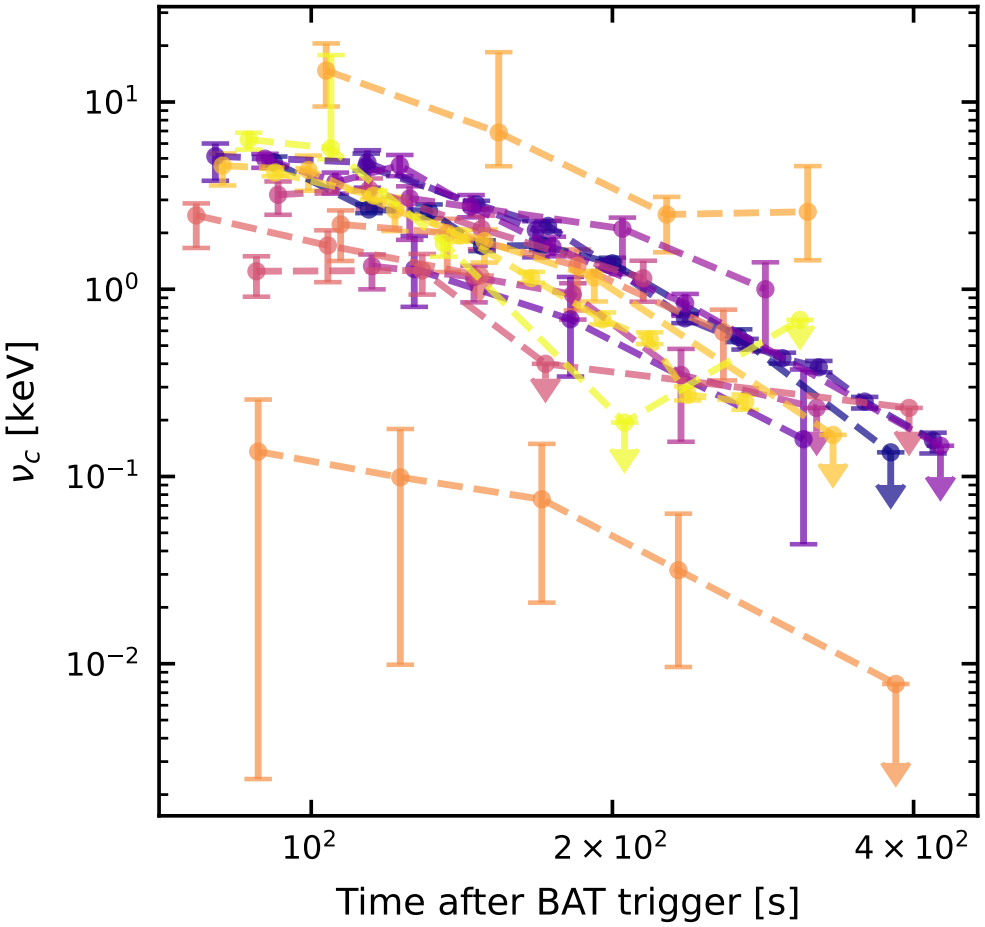
- Empirical modelling of early X-ray flux and spectral evolution
- Cooling of a non-thermal spectrum, whose peak is transiting across the instruments band
- Tested spectral models: synchrotron and sBPL
- We accounted for neutral Hydrogen absorption in the Milky-Way and in the host galaxy



Ierardi+, arXiv:2510.16108

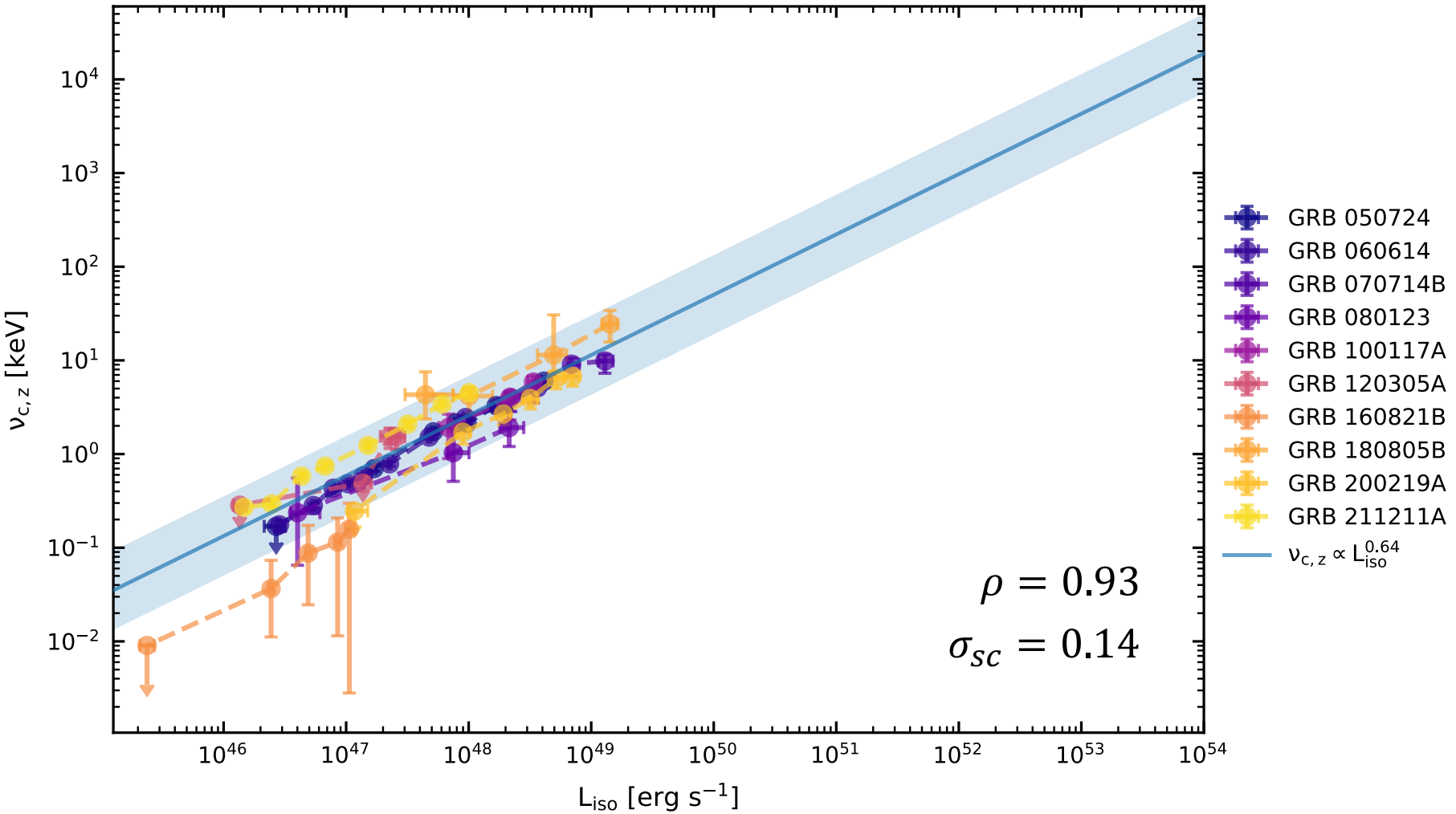
Results





Ierardi+, arXiv:2510.16108

$\nu_{c,z} - L_{iso}$ relation (synchrotron model)



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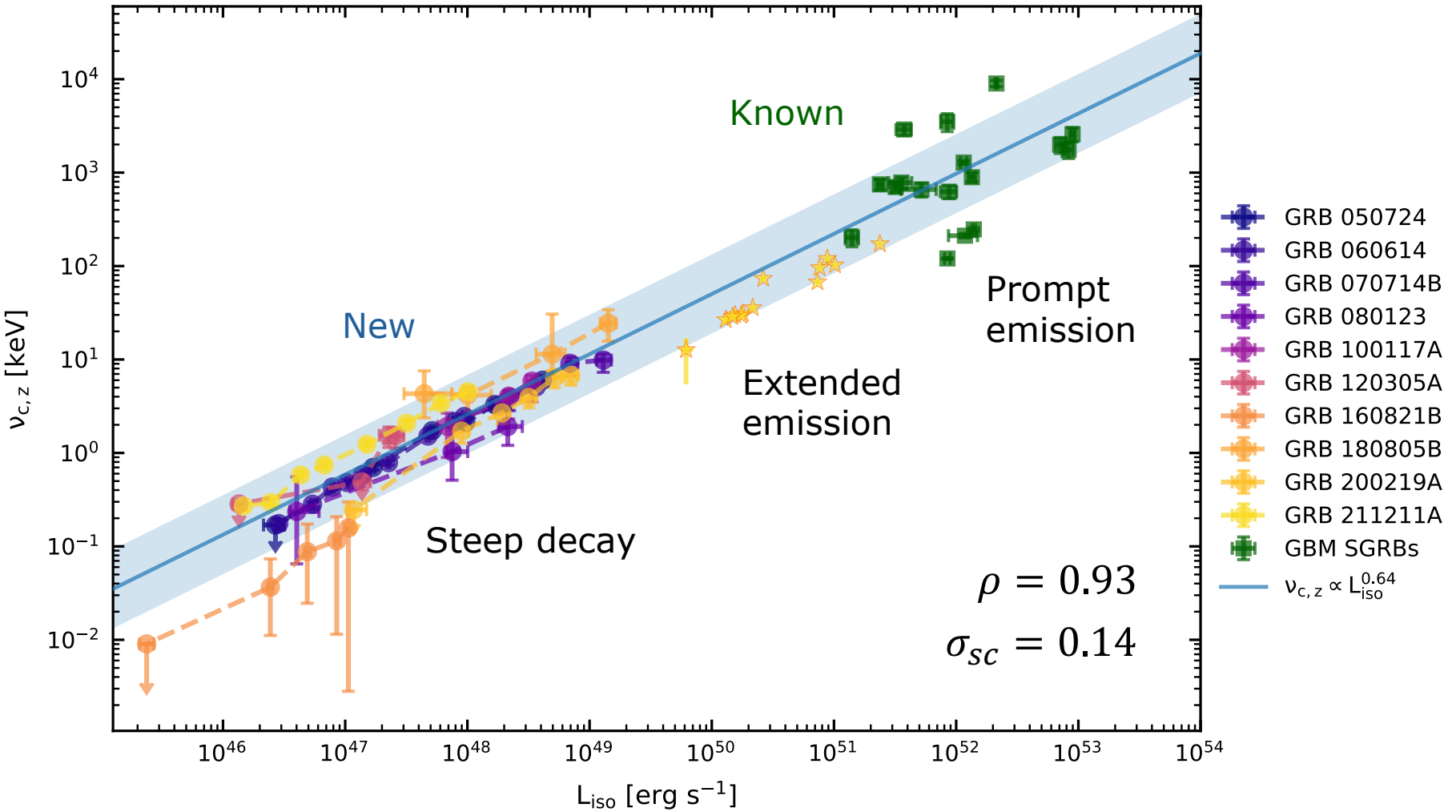

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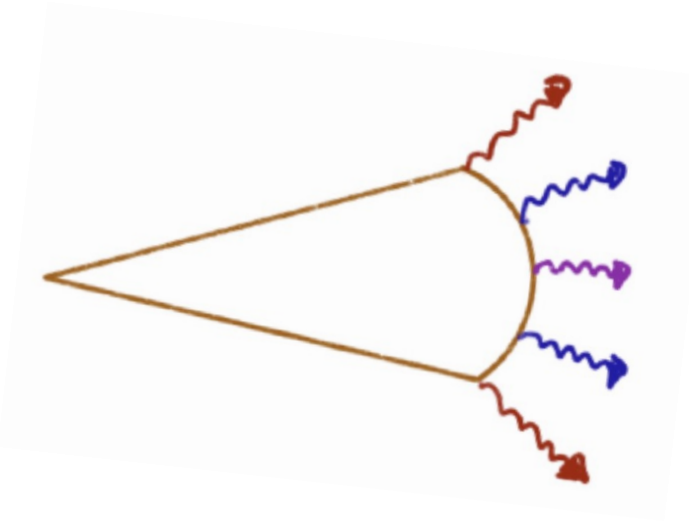
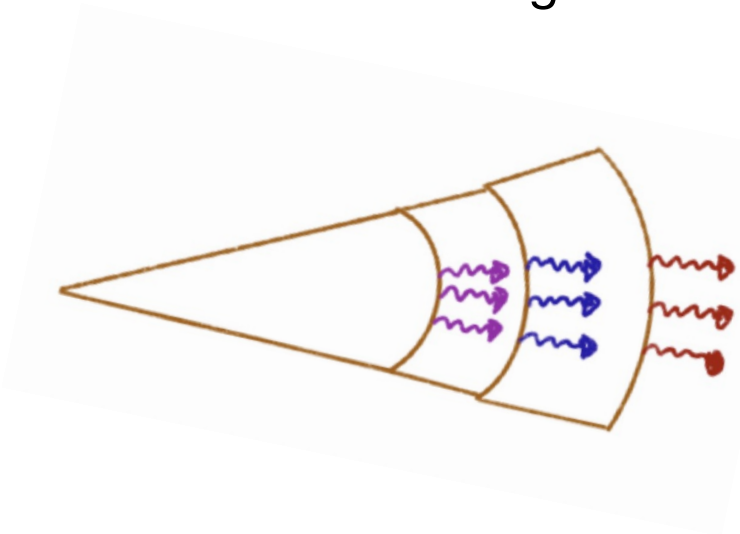
Physical interpretation

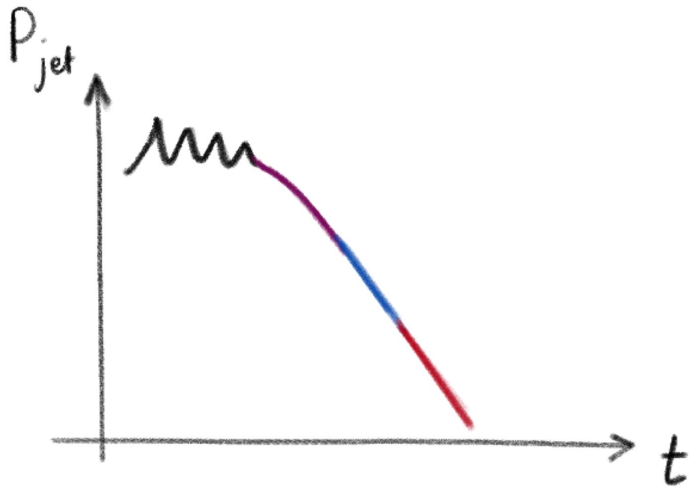
High latitude emission ✗

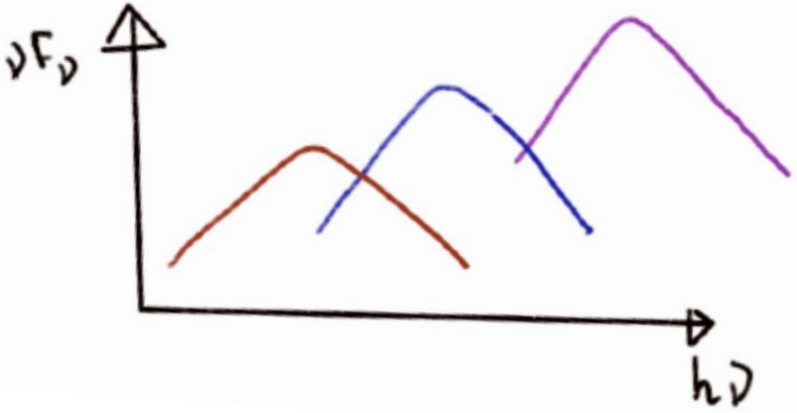


Adiabatic cooling ✓



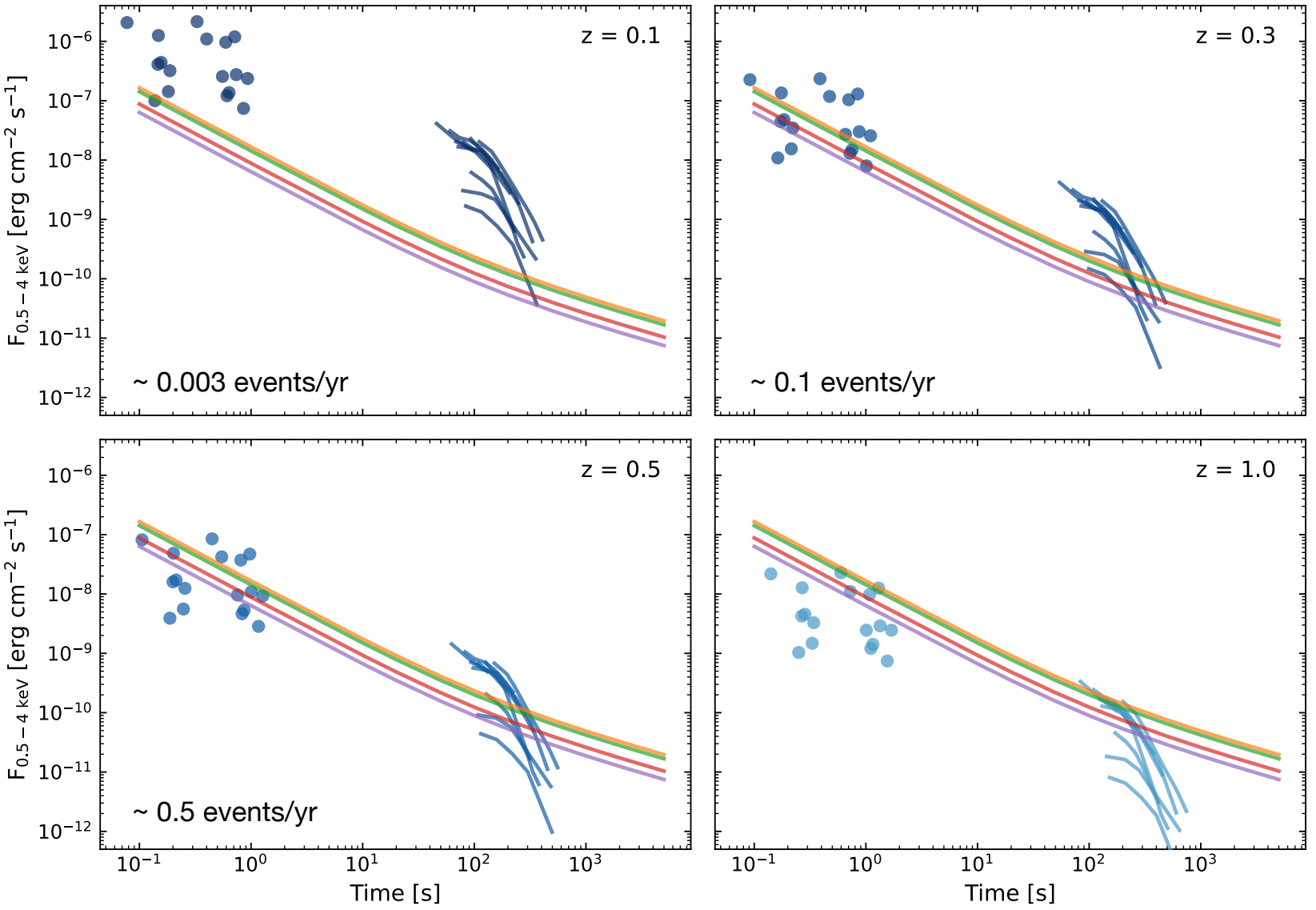
Jet power decline ✓





Credit: G. Oganesyan

Detectability with EP-WXT



EP-WXT 5σ sensitivity curves

PI = 0.7 PI = 1.0

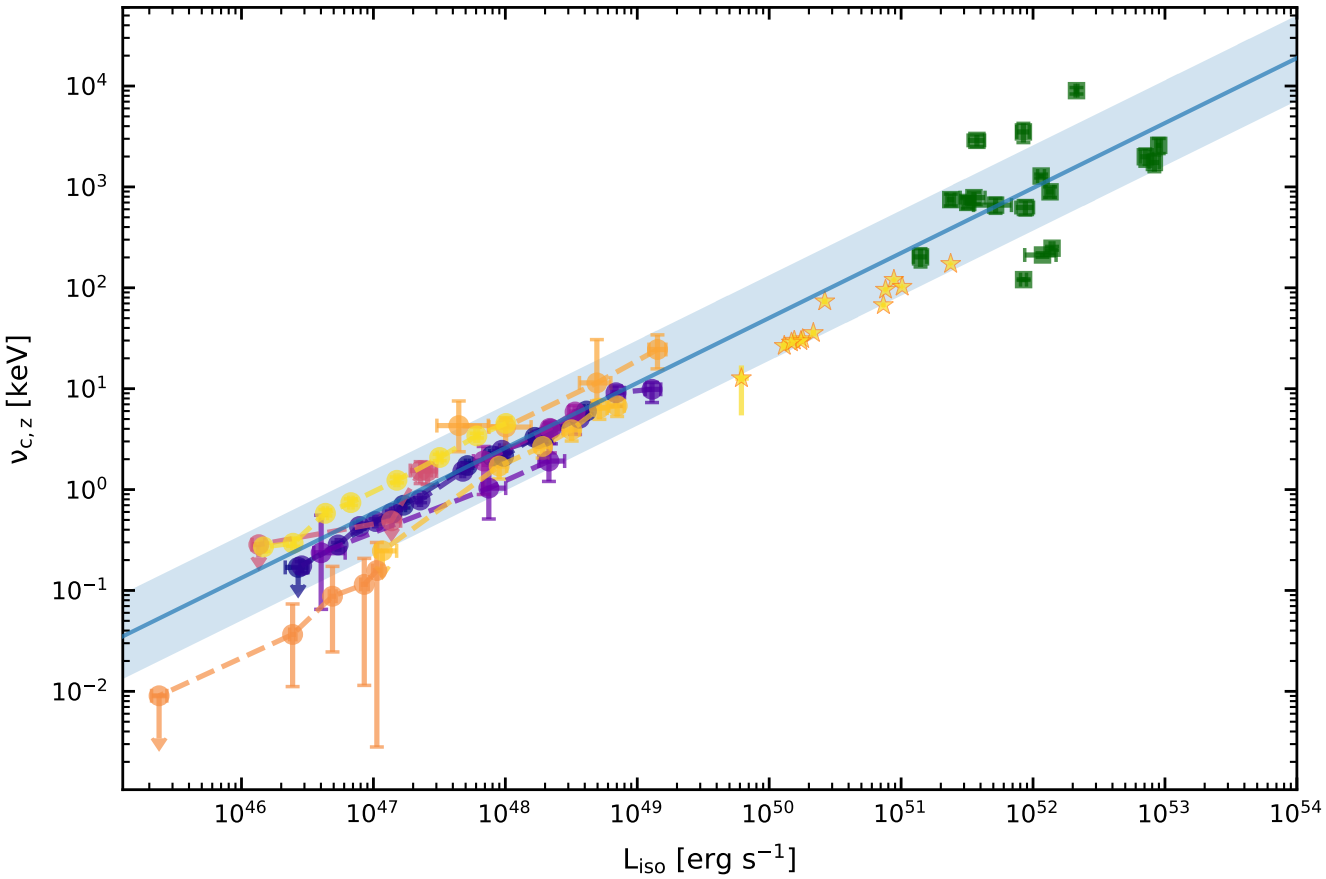
PI = 2.0 PI = 3.0

- Most of the steep decay events are detectable up to $z = 0.5$
- Estimated detection rate: ~ 0.5 events/yr
- Short GRBs will look like X-ray transients lasting few hundred seconds in EP-WXT

Ierardi+, arXiv:2510.16108

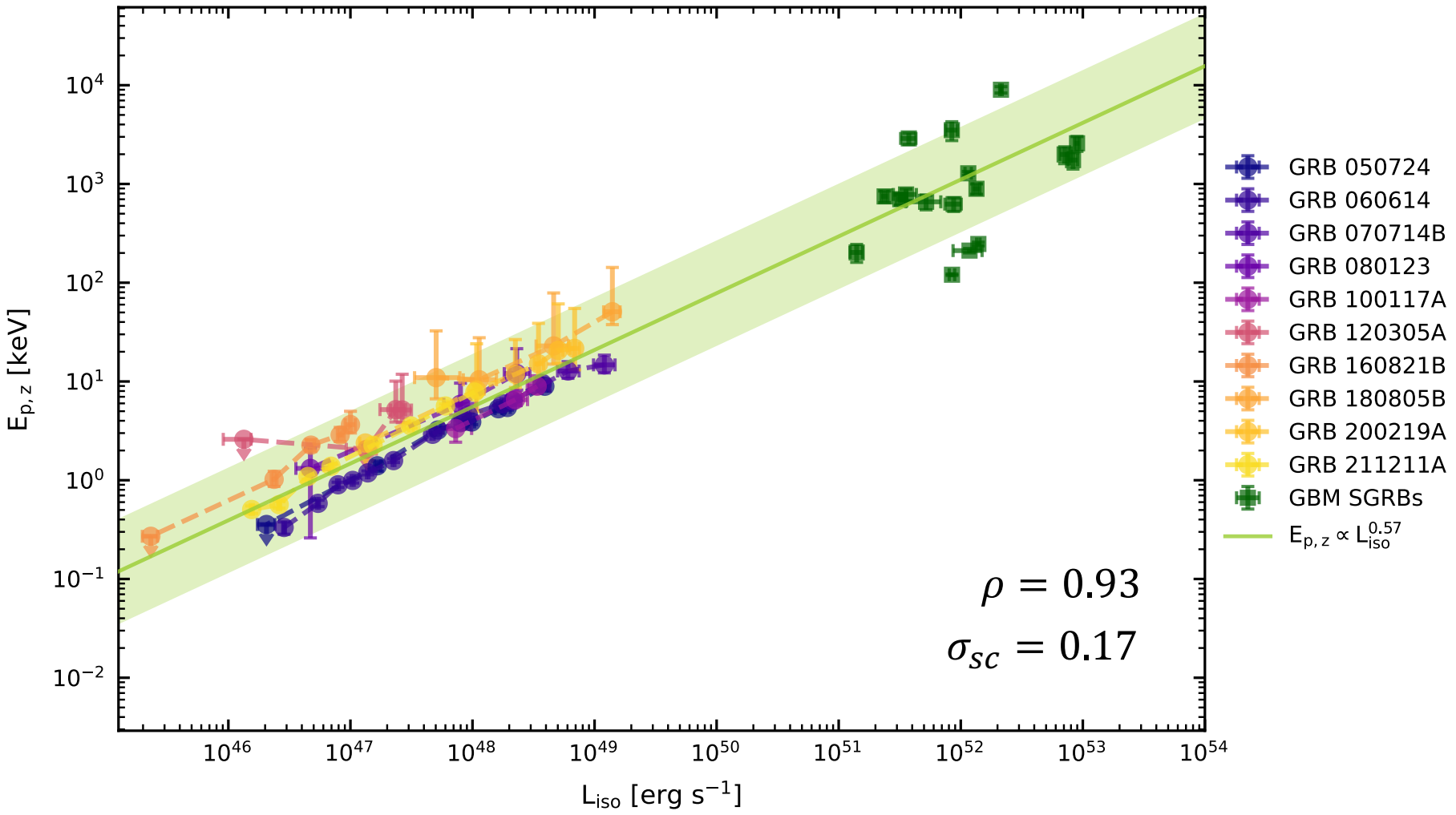
Summary

- We characterized the temporal and spectral evolution of the early X-ray emission of merger-driven GRB candidates
- We discovered a new peak energy-luminosity relation at low energies
- Short GRBs will look like X-ray transients lasting few hundred seconds in EP-WXT



Backup

$E_{p,z} - L_{iso}$ relation (sBPL model)



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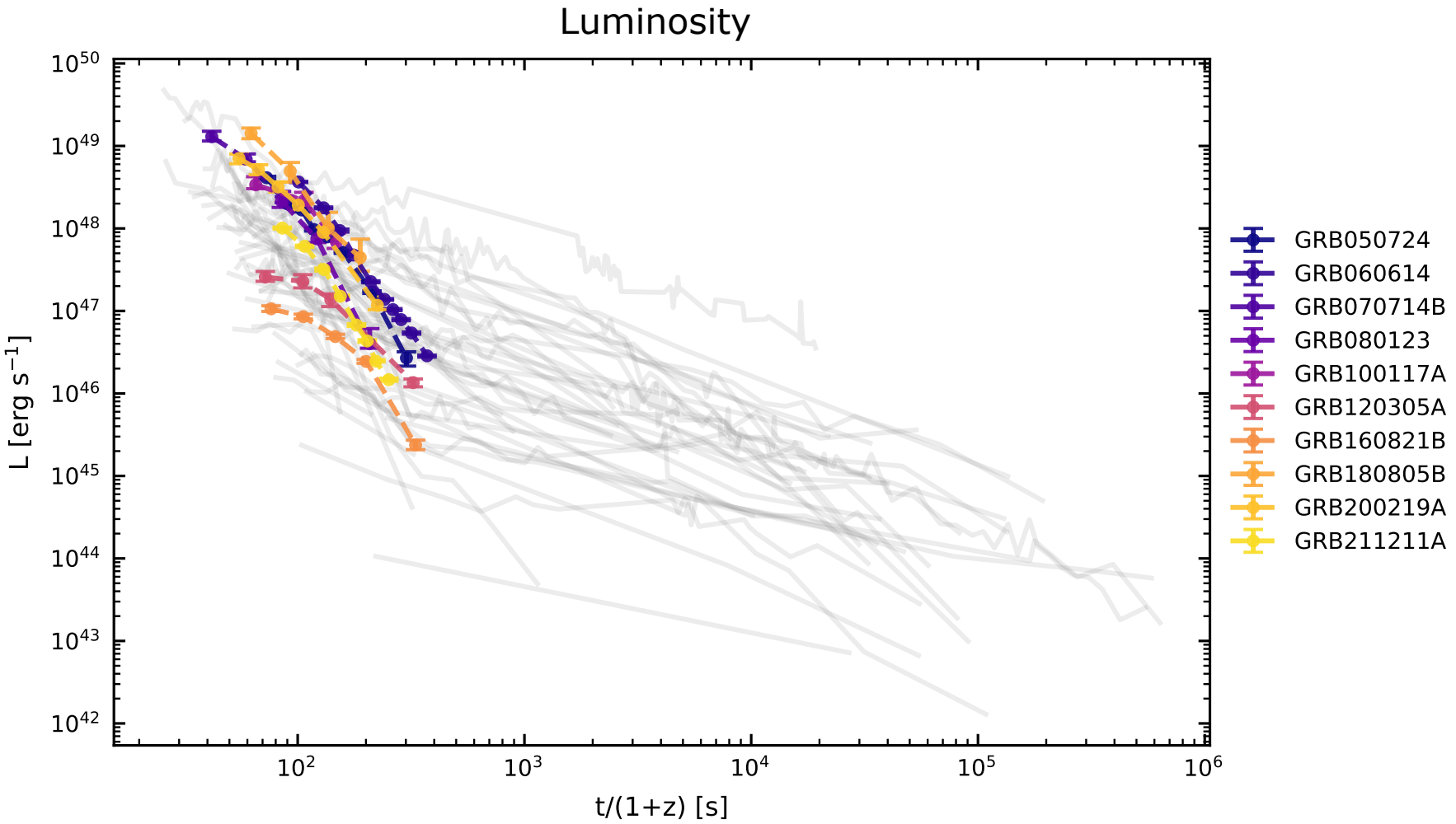
Detectability with EP-WXT

- Our sample is representative of all the XRT-detected short GRB population
- We can assess the detectability of short GRBs with EP-WXT



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Detectability with EP-WXT

Assuming that all short GRBs originate from BNS

Detection rate

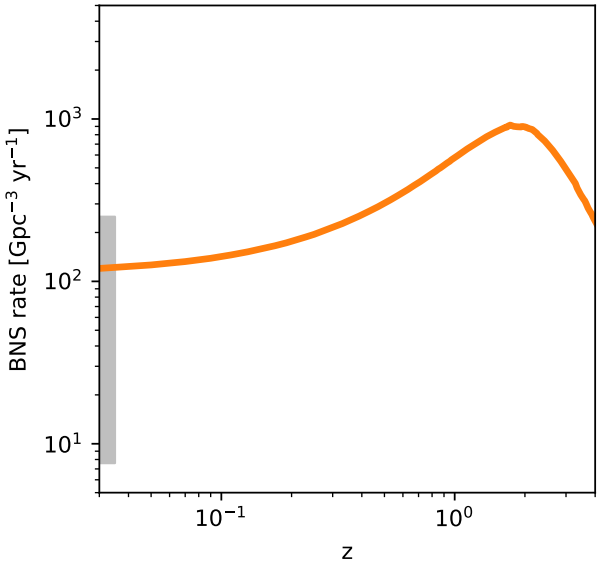
$$\frac{dN}{dt} = \int_0^{z_{max}} dz\, R_{BNS}(z)\, \frac{dV}{dz}\, f_\theta\, f_j\, f_\Omega$$

fraction of successful jets

sky coverage

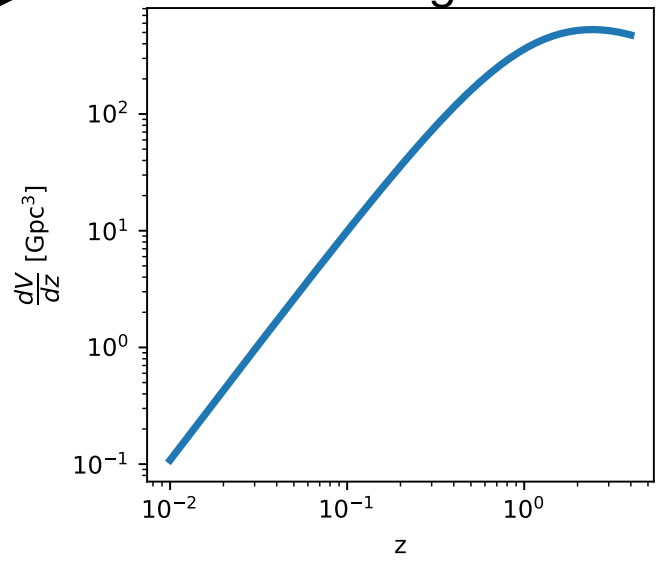
fraction of on-axis jets

BNS rate



Iorio et al. 2023

diff comoving volume



- Detection rate independent of the value chosen for the local BNS rate
- f_j optimized to reproduce the detection rate of short GRBs by Fermi-GBM

(De Santis et al. 2025, in preparation)