

# EPOWERS Research Group: Efficient POWER Electronics, POWERtrain and Energy Solutions

EPOWERS Research Group: Research Portfolio  
MOBI Research Centre & ETEC Department  
Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)



# EPOWERS Research Portfolio



## Power Electronics

Charging Systems  
Inverters & multi-level converters  
DC/DC converters & Active Front-End (AFE)  
Battery Management Systems (BMS)

## Electrical Machines

Design and Optimization  
System Control  
Performance Assessment

## Vehicle Powertrains

Digital Twin Powertrain  
Codesign Optimization Framework  
ECO-energy management strategies  
Fleet Electrification

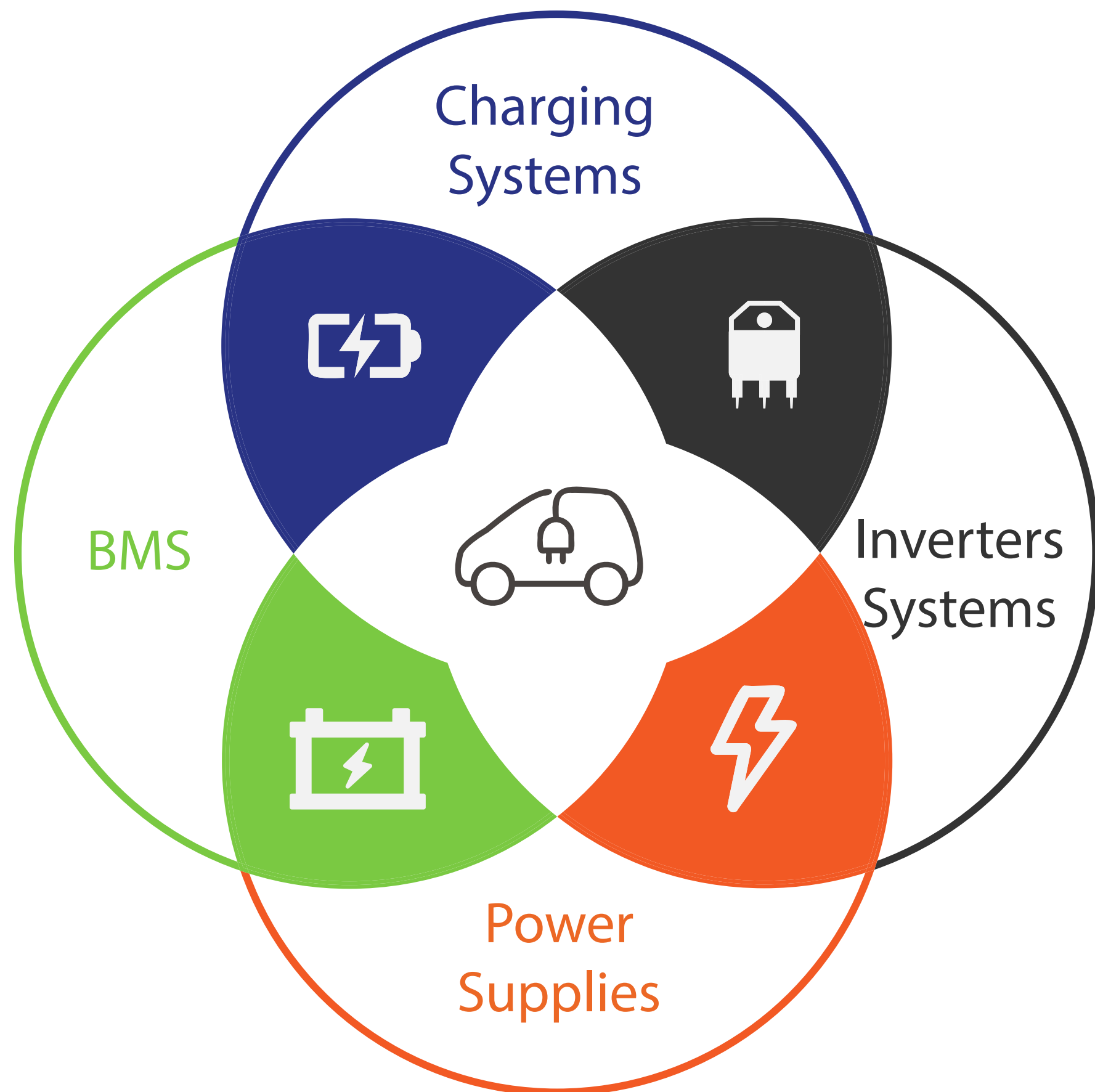
## Smart Green Grid Solutions

Design, Optimization and Sizing of Green assets  
Energy-Thermal Management and Control system  
Optimal Charging & V2X (V2G, V2B, V2H, V2D) Strategies

## Digital Twin and Reliability

Virtual prototyping and validation of PE converters  
Virtual vehicles simulation and Fleets management  
Lifetime testing/ALT testing and RUL estimation

# Power Electronics Research Track



## Charging Systems

- On-board chargers & V2X
- Off-board chargers & V2X
- Wireless charging systems & V2G
- Integrated Chargers
- Thermal design and optimization
- Advanced control: MPC, ANN

## DC/DC and AFE converters

- Modular multiport DC/DC
- HV-LV DC/DC
- Active Front-End (AFE)
- Thermal design and optimization
- Advanced control: MPC, Sliding mode control, ANN-control

## Inverter systems

- Modular Multi-level Inverters
- Traction inverters (VSI & ZSI)
- Grid-connected inverters (VSI & ZSI)
- Thermal design and losses optimization
- Advanced control: MPC, PSO based IFOC, DTC, ANN-control

## Battery Management Systems (BMS)

- Passive balancing systems
- Active balancing systems
- MLC for module balancing-BMS
- Predictive control-based balancing

# Power Electronics

**i** Charging Systems: Modular On-Board Charging systems

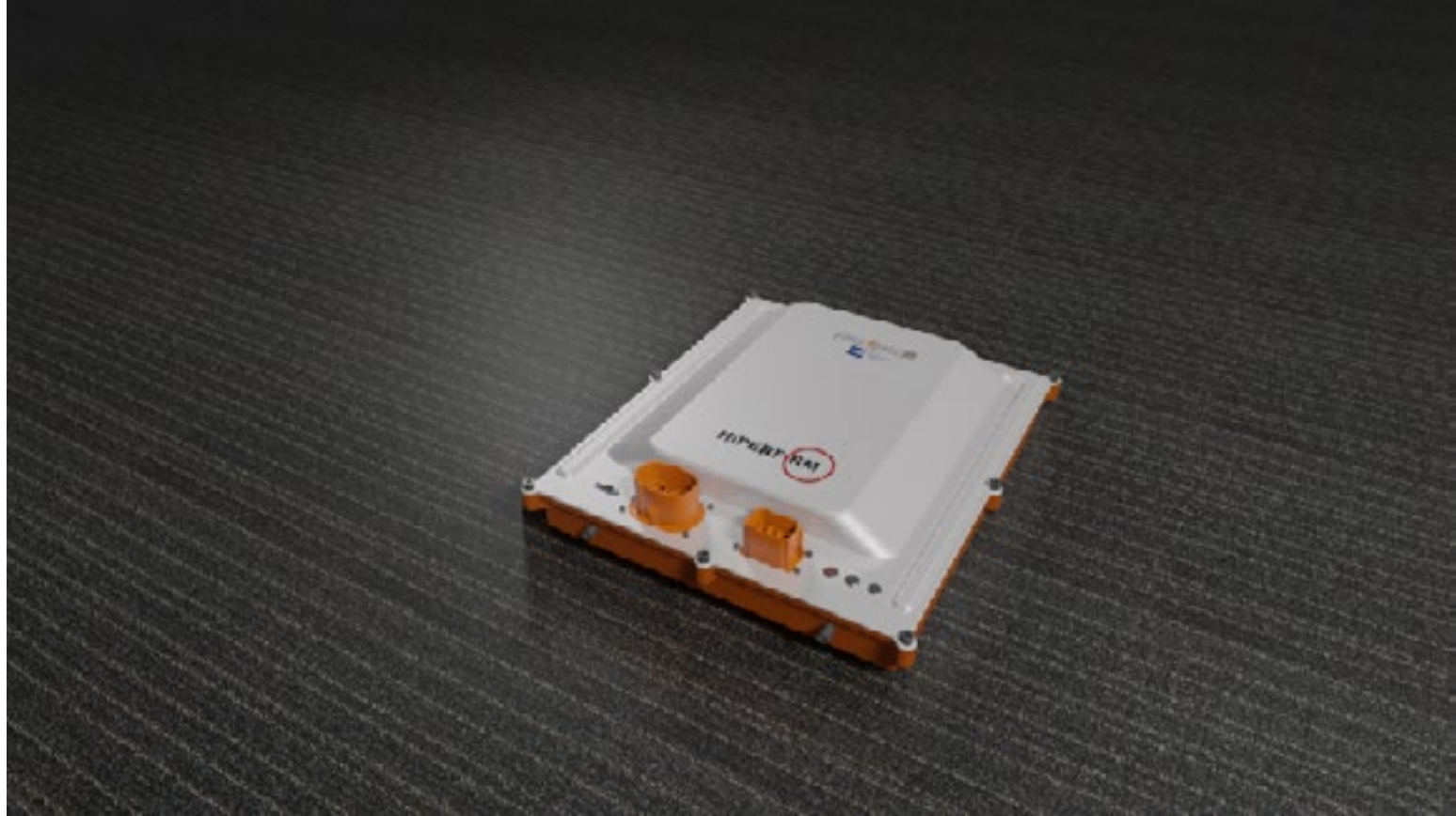
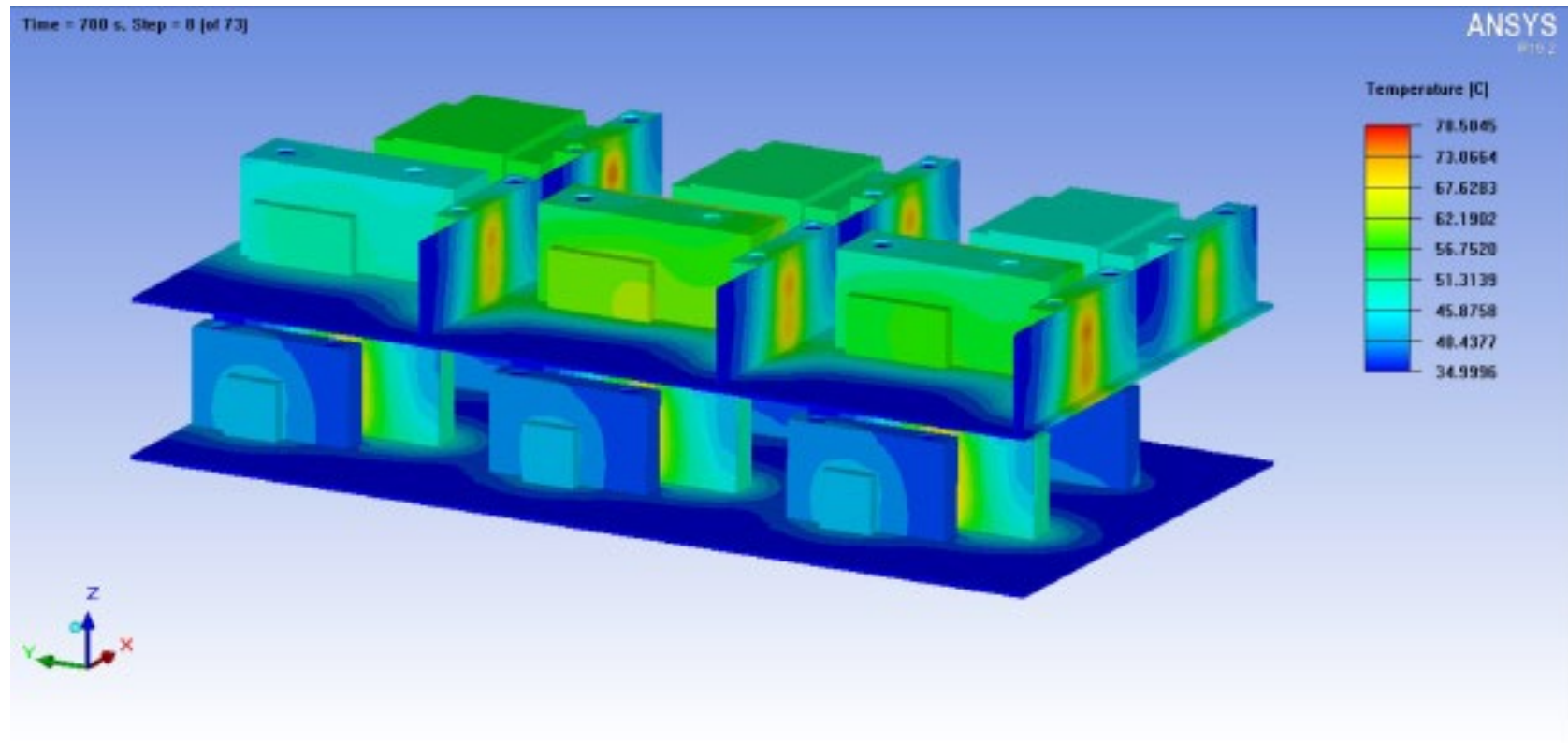


- Power Density
- Efficiency
- Reliability
- Cooling selection
- Advanced Topology
- WBG Devices (i.e., SiC and GaN)

- Electrical model
- Magnetic model
- Optimal control: Iterative adaptive frequency control with minimum THDi
- V2X (V2G, V2B, V2H, V2D)

- Physics based (3D)
- Universal loss model
- Electrical transient model
- Average loss model
- Map-based model
- Equivalent thermal models
- Multi core HiL model

- WBG technology
- Compact busbar & cooling
- Modular designs
- Local measurements
- Full load testing
- Testing at different ambient conditions



# Power Electronics

## i Charging Systems: Modular Off-Board Charging systems

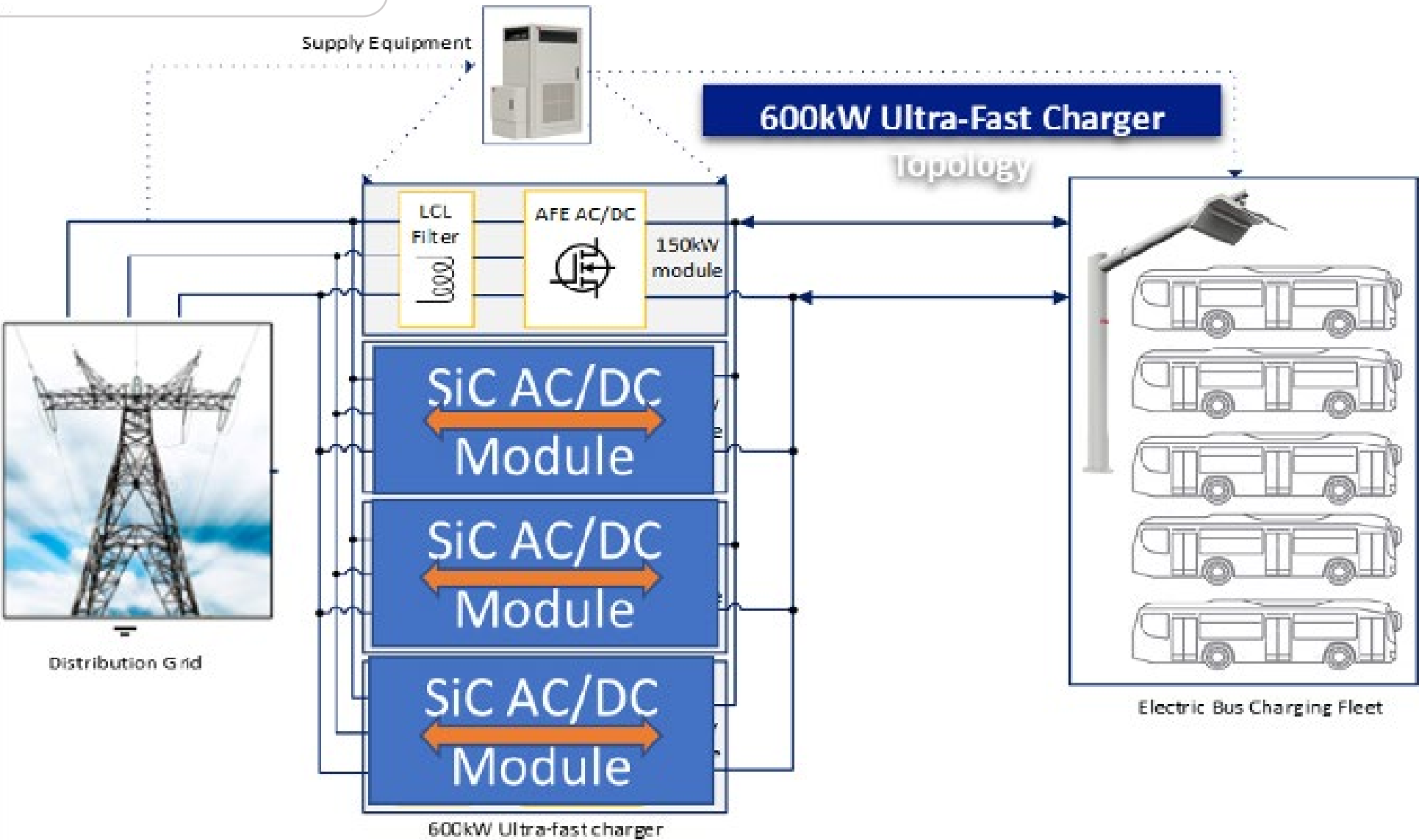
1. Design Specification and Optimization
2. Converter Analysis and Control
3. Thermal Modeling and Cooling
4. Hardware Prototype and HiL Testing

- Topology
- Power devices
- Passive filter design
- Power density
- Efficiency
- Reliability
- V2X (V2G, V2B, V2H, V2D)

- Modular converter design
- Dynamic & linear modeling
- Static Stability analysis
- Dynamic analysis
- Advanced control: H-infinity control based on GA, adaptive PI control based on PSO

- Dynamic loss modeling
- Filter loss modeling
- Thermal modeling
- Cooling system modeling
- Simulation testing
- Virtual prototyping

- Real-time HiL testing
- Modular designs
- Inductor design
- Integrated gate driver
- Modular cooling system development



Substation: Power Converter

# Power Electronics

## **i** Charging Systems: Wireless Power Charging Systems

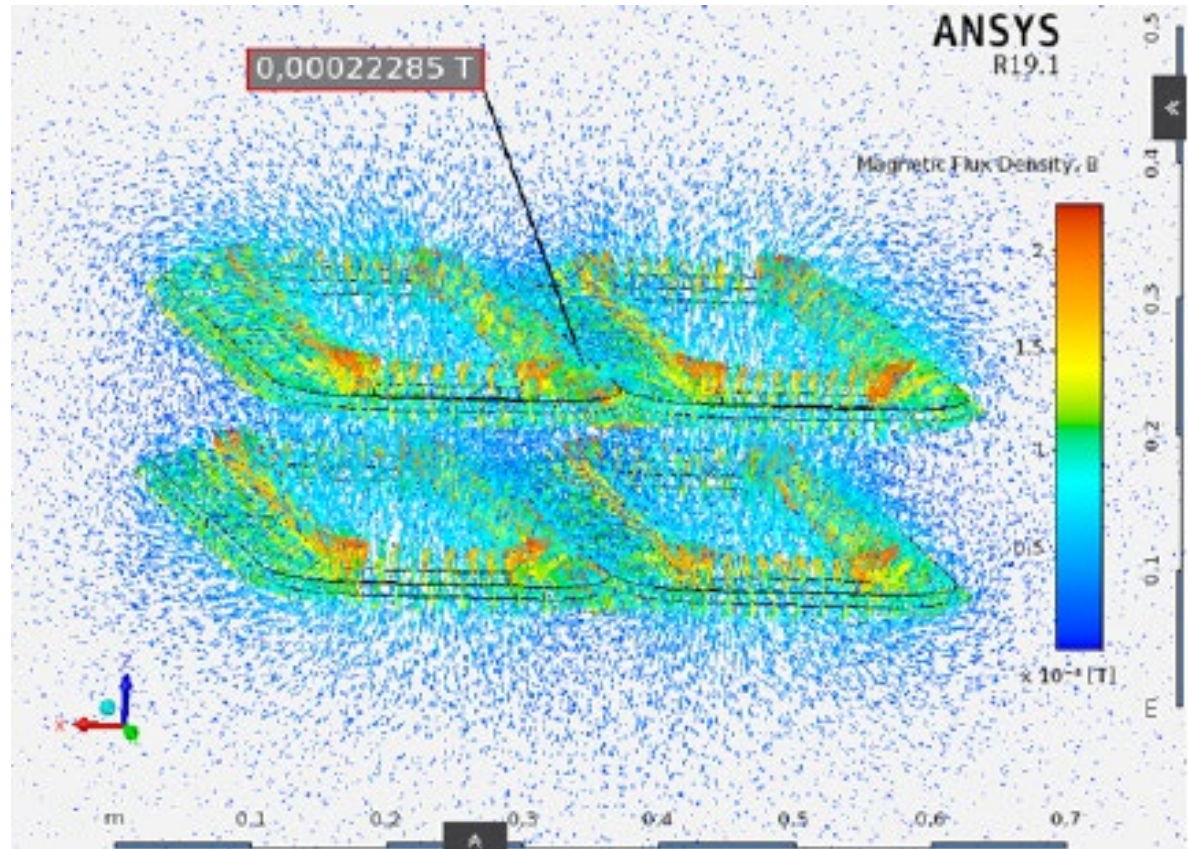
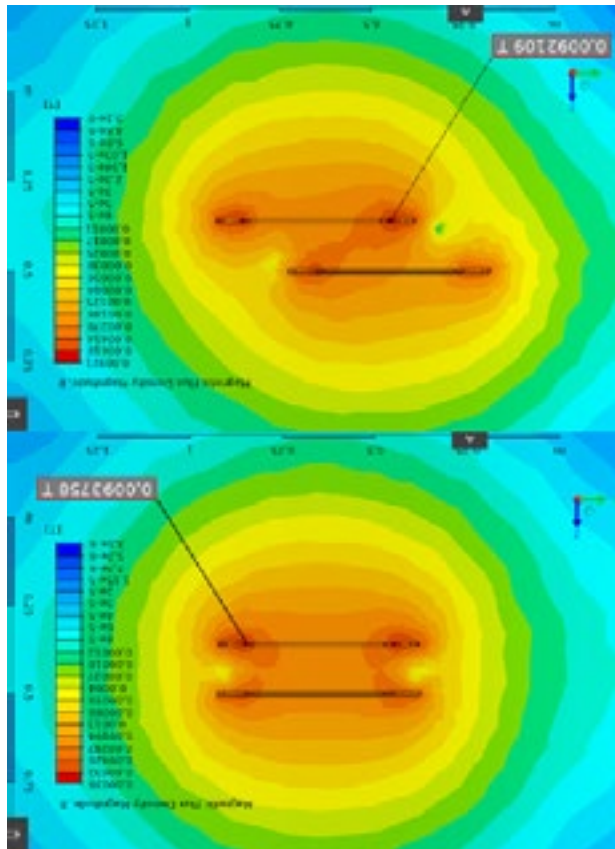


- Topology
- Devices ( SiC, GaN)
- Resonant components
- Power rating
- Switching frequency

- Phase Shift Control, PWM Modulation, PID controller
- Steady-state analysis
- V2G, G2V
- Transient analysis

- Physics based 3D Flux distribution modelling
- System loss model

- GaNs, SiC devices
- Integrated gate-drives
- Coil design optimization 3.7 kW -7.7 kW-22 kW
- Modular design
- High frequency inverter PCB (kHz)



# Power Electronics

## **i** Charging systems: Multifunctional Integrated Charger systems

### 1. Design Specification and Optimization

- Multifunctional and Flexible Design
- Efficient Power Converters
- Compatible Motor Configuration
- Voltage and Power Level selection

### 2. Converter Analysis and Control

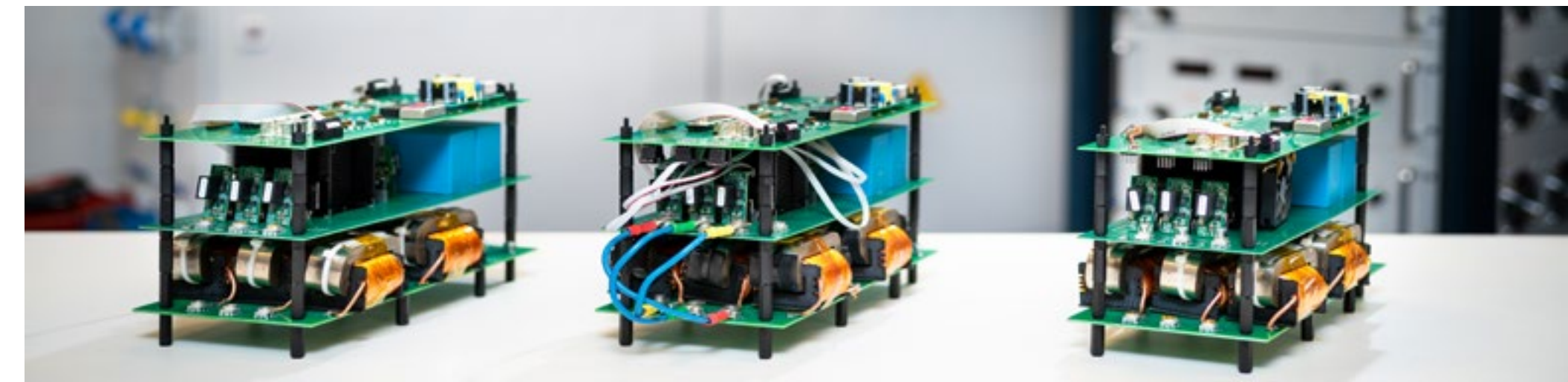
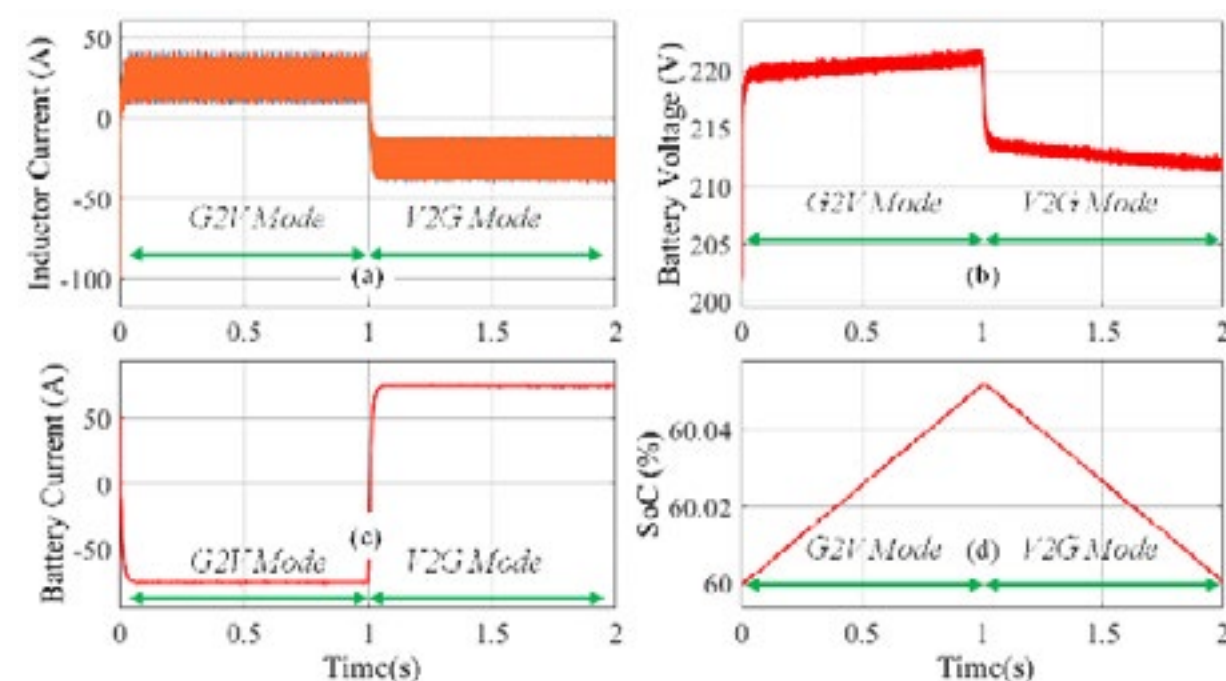
- Steady-state analysis
- Transient analysis
- Optimized and Intelligent Control
- Adaptive Data Capturing
- RT-Control Design (DSP, FPGA)
- Reactive Power Compensation
- Voltage Regulation and Harmonic Reduction

### 3. Thermal Modelling and Cooling

- Dynamic loss modeling
- Detailed Thermal modeling
- Efficient cooling modelling in FEM
- Battery thermal modeling in FEM

### 4. Hardware Prototype and HiL Testing

- Optimal passive component design
- Multi-layer PCB design
- Integrated gate-drivers
- Distributed Cooling System
- Real-time HiL Testing



# Power Electronics

**i** Inverter Systems: Modular Inverter systems

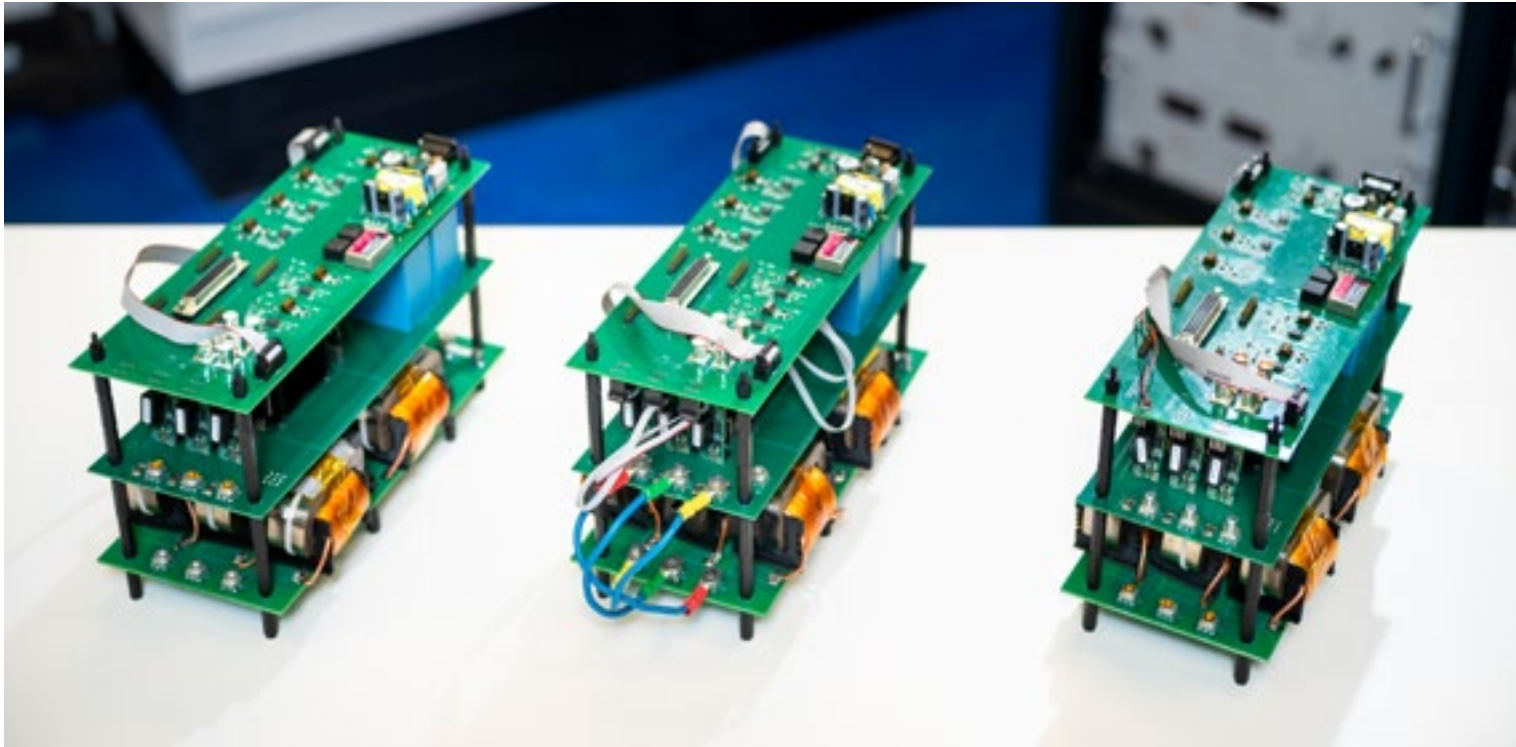
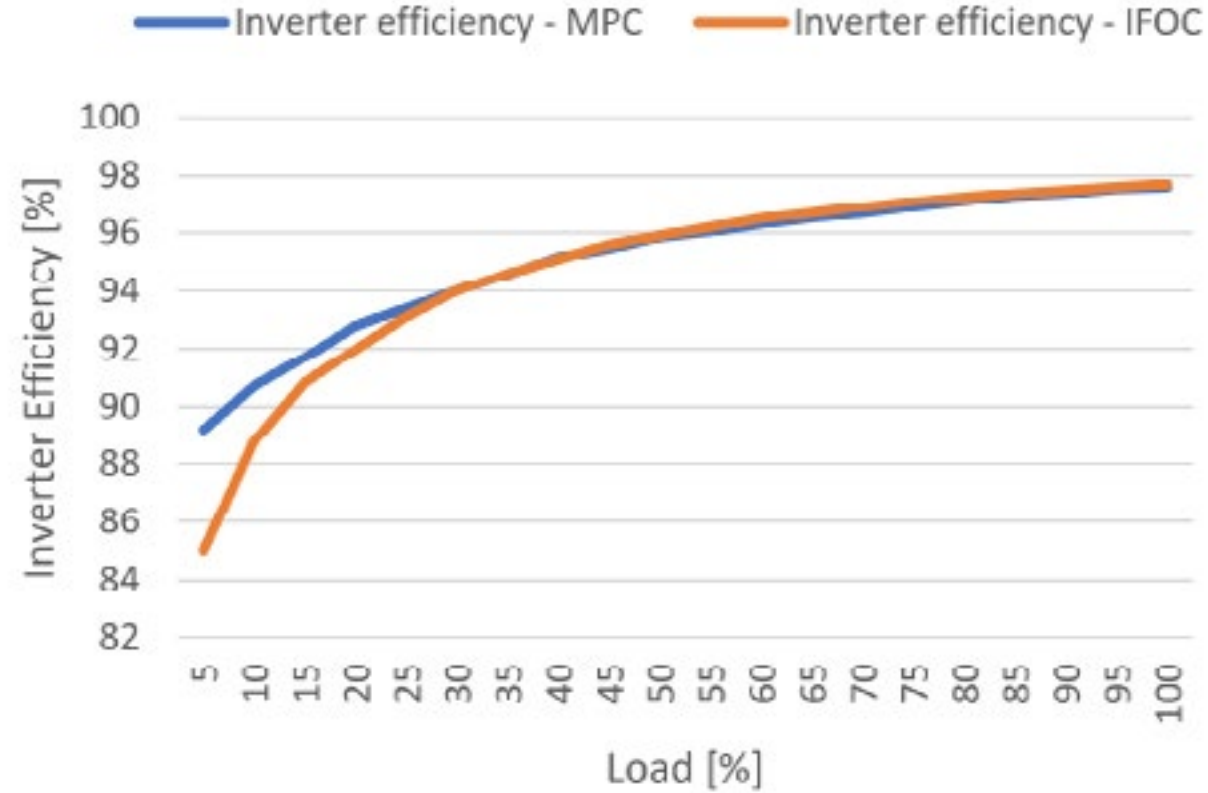


- Topology selection
- Technology (Si, SiC, GaN)
- DC-link capacitor
- Efficient cooling system
- Switching frequency
- Power density
- Reliability

- Steady-state analysis
- Transient analysis
- Load response analysis
- Advanced control: optimal switching vector MPC for VSI, PSO-based IFOC & DTC
- RT-controller design (DSP, rapid prototyping, FPGA)

- Line voltage harmonic
- Phase current harmonic
- DC-link voltage ripples
- Switch voltage stress
- Inductor current ripples
- Efficiency
- Obtainable AC voltage
- Thermal design validation

- Modular designs
- Integrated gate-drives
- Passive component size
- Load testing (No-Load to 100%)





# Power Electronics

## **i** Inverter systems: Modular Multilevel Inverter systems

### 1. Design Specification and Optimization

- Multilevel voltages
- Modular topology selection
- Submodule devices
- Passive components
- WBG semiconductors
- Cooling Optimization

### 2. Converter Analysis and Control

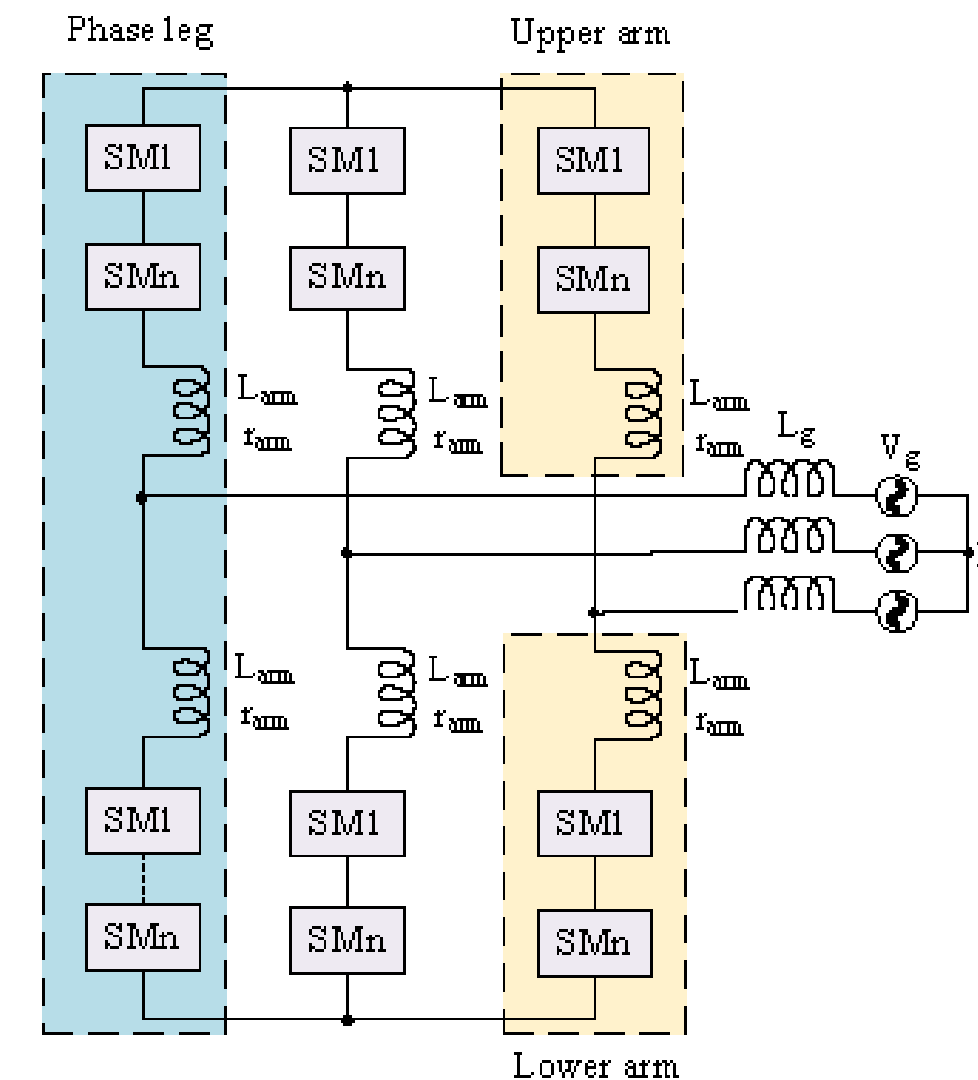
- Mathematical modelling
- Steady-state analysis
- Transient analysis
- Output current control
- Submodule balancing
- Circulating current elimination
- Model predictive control

### 3. Electro-Thermal Modeling and Cooling

- Electro-thermal modeling
- Mechanical modeling
- Detailed thermal analysis in FEM
- HiL modeling for control validation

### 4. Prototype Design and Hardware Testing

- SiC & GaN power devices
- Modular designs
- Scalable designs
- Modular cooling
- Integrated gate driver
- Full-load testing via scaled lab DC microgrid



# Power Electronics

## **i** Inverter systems: Scalable Multi-Inverter systems

### 1. Design Specification and Optimization

- Multi-Inverters/Multiport
- Fault-Tolerance Strategies
- Technology selection (Si, SiC, GaN)
- Switching frequency
- Passive components sizing

### 2. Converter Analysis and Control

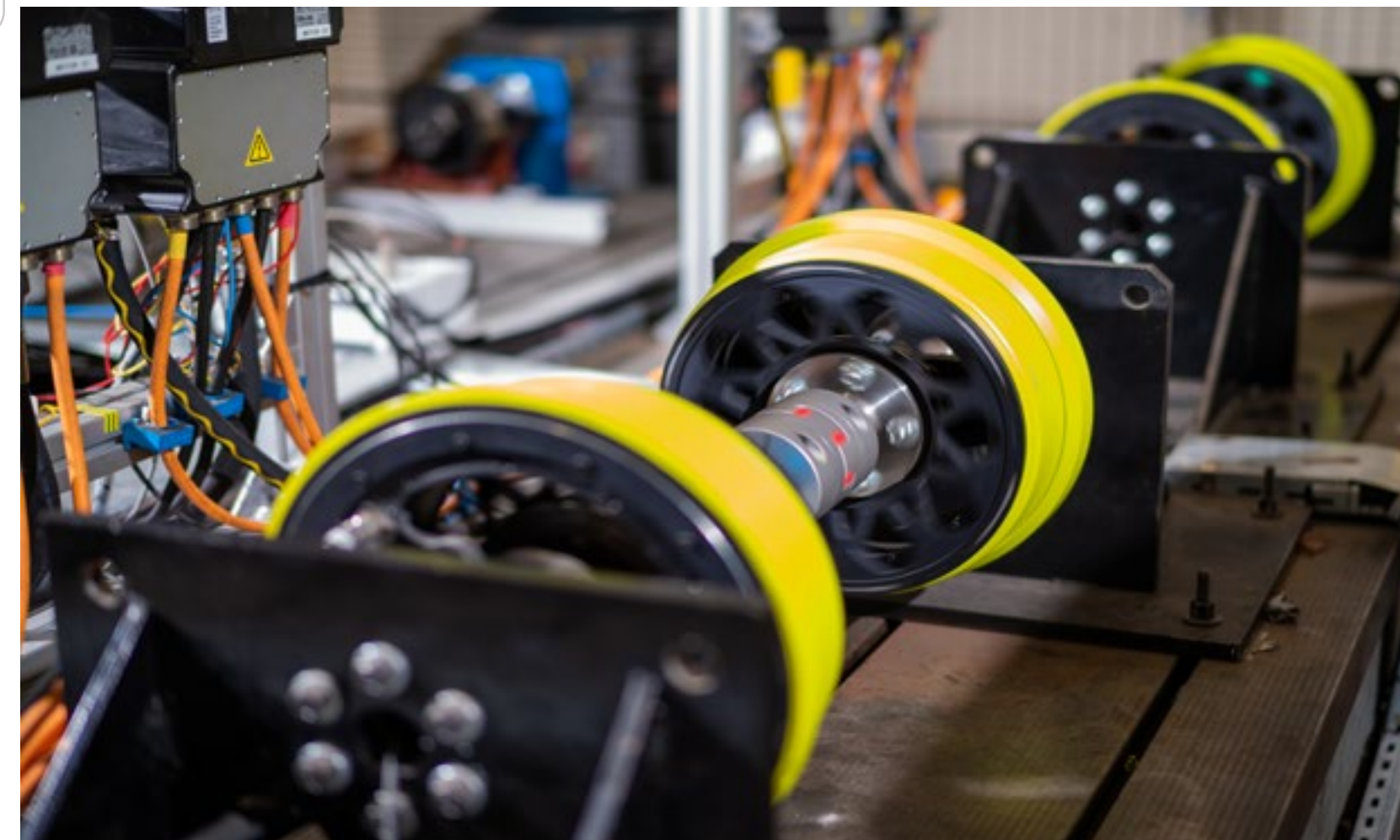
- Integrated Motor Control
- Torque Vectoring
- Torque ripple reduction
- Steady-state analysis
- Transient analysis
- Load response analysis
- RT-controller design (DSP, rapid prototyping, FPGA)

### 3. Performance Evaluation

- Efficiency assessment
- Reliability assessment
- Thermal design validation

### 4. Prototype Design and Testing

- Scalable prototype
- Cooling system design
- Full load testing
- Torque Vectoring validation
- Torque ripple validation
- Fault scenarios testing



# Power Electronics

## **i** Multiport and Modular HV DC/DC Converter systems

### 1. Design Specification and Optimization

- Topology selection
- Devices (Si, SiC, GaN)
- Passive components
- Switching frequency selection
- Heatsink (Air/ Liquid)

### 2. Converter Analysis and Control

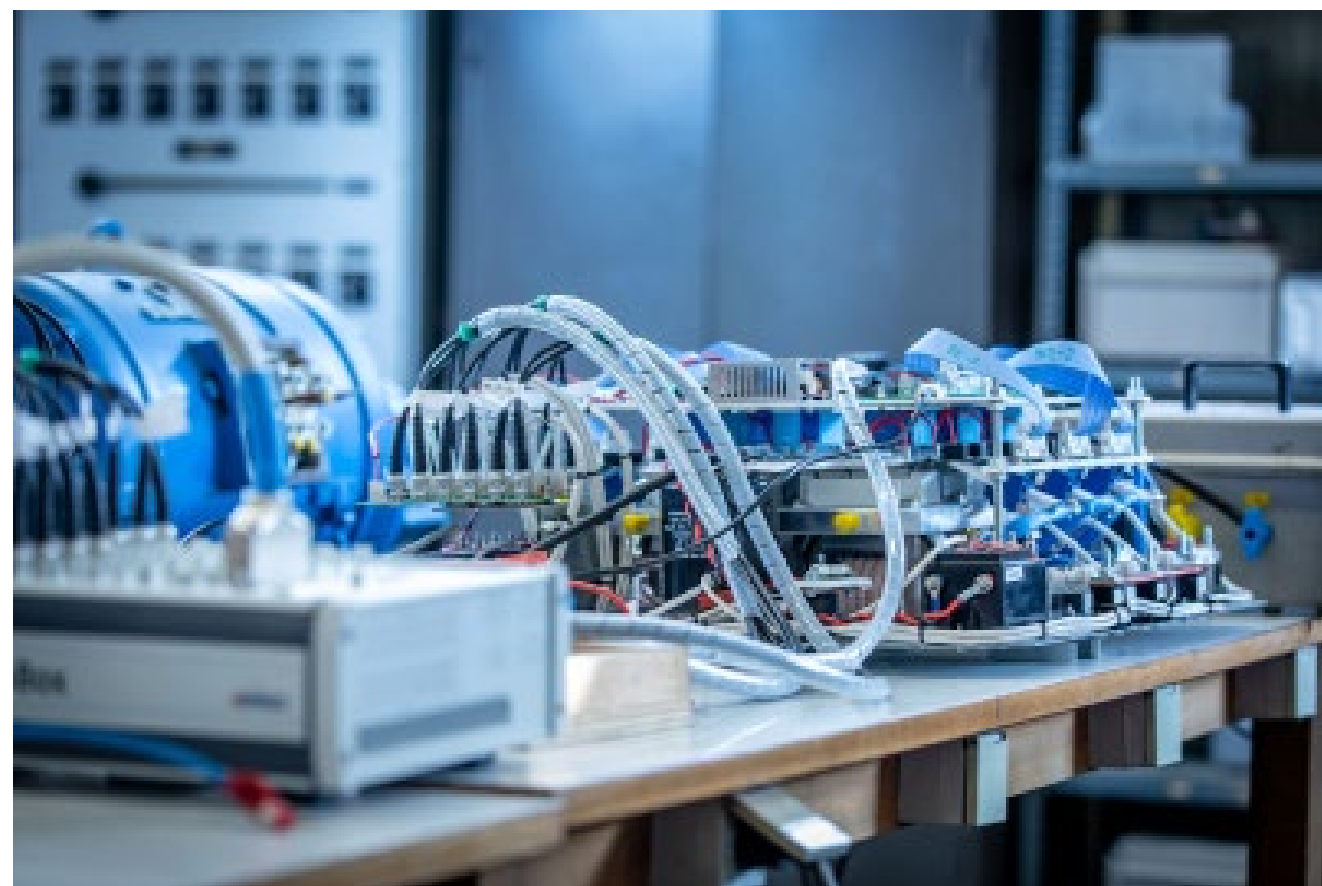
- Steady-state analysis
- Transient analysis
- Load response analysis
- Optimal control: MPC, sliding mode control, ANN-based
- RT-controller design (DSP, rapid prototyping, FPGA/dSPACE)

### 3. Electro-Thermal Modelling

- Scalable modeling
- Physics based (3D) modeling
- Universal loss modeling
- Electrical transient modeling
- Average loss modeling
- Map-based modeling
- Equivalent thermal modeling
- Multi core HiL modeling

### 4. Converter Prototype Design & Testing

- WBG technology
- Compact busbar and cooling design
- Modular designs
- Multifunctionalities testing
- Full load testing ~250kW



# Power Electronics

**i** Battery management systems (BMS): Active Battery Management Systems (ABMS) and Balancing Circuits

**1.** Design Specification and Optimization

- Passive and Active BMS Topologies
- Multilevel balancing concept (MBC)
- Modular BMS
- Active Fast BMS
- Performance Evaluation:
  - Vehicle applications
  - Stationary applications

**2.** BMS balancing techniques

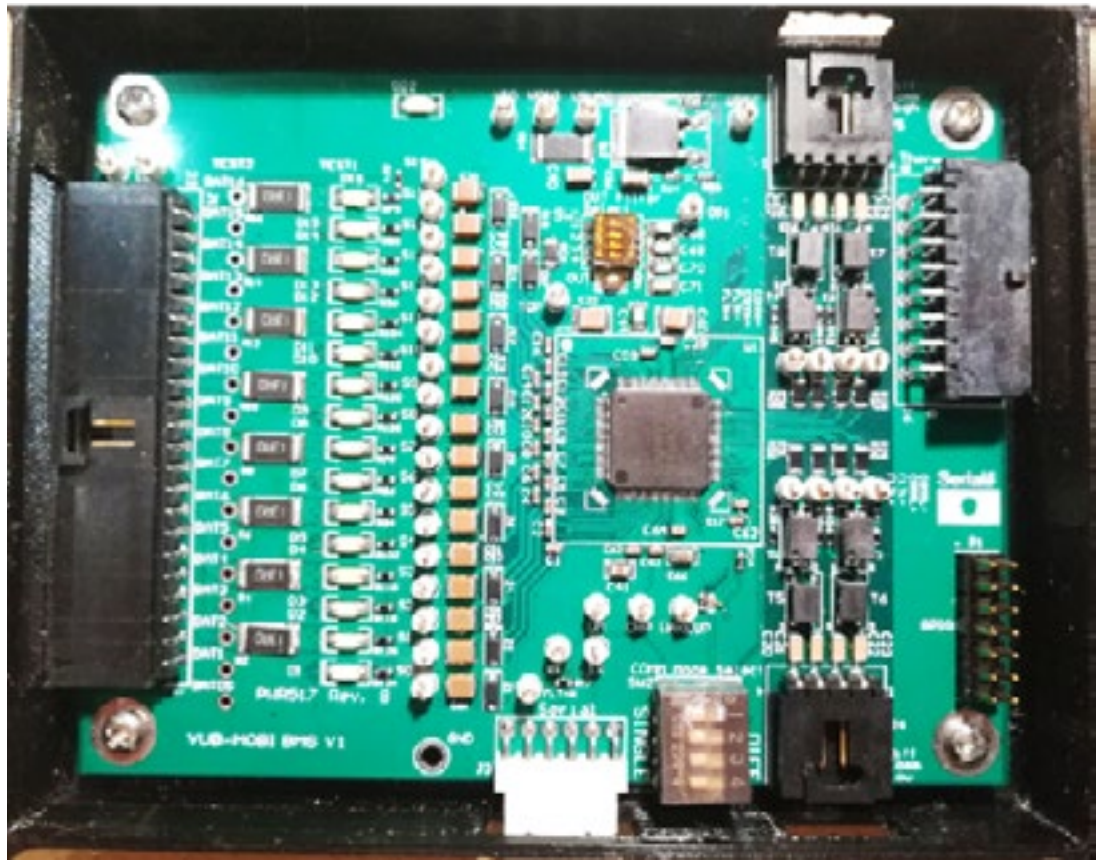
- Circuit topology optimization
- Predictive control-based balancing (i.e., Model Predictive control (MPC))
- Energy Balancing Enhancement

**3.** Electro-Thermal Modelling and Cooling

- Digital twin of the BMS of balancing circuits
- Component sizing and selection of the BMS
- Integrated and modular cooling of the balancing circuit

**4.** Prototype Design and Hardware Testing

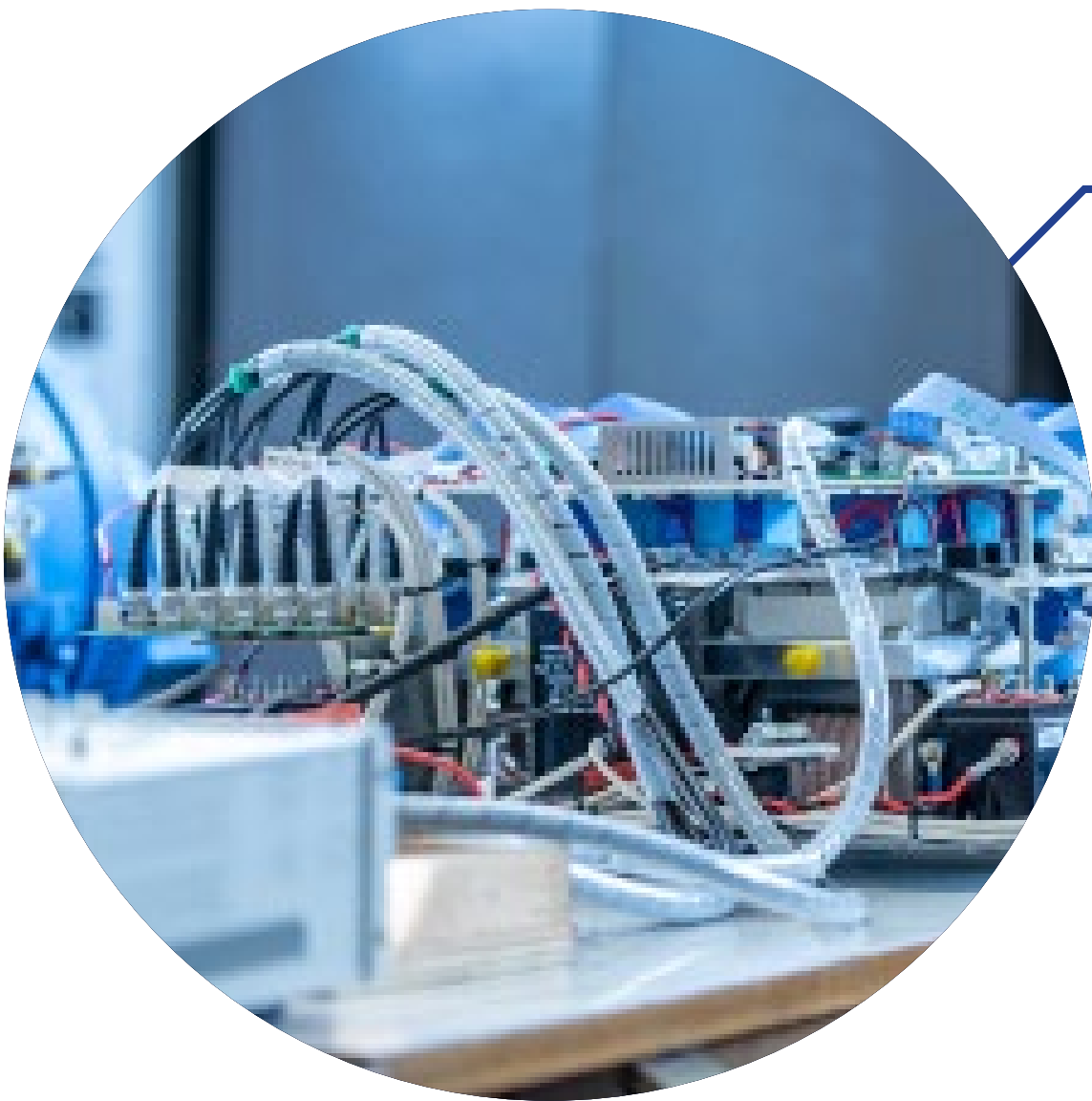
- SiL development
- P-HiL development
- Modular BMS prototype (i.e., manufactured Flex BMS v1)
- Full Scale testing



Flex BMS v1

# PE Research Infrastructure: Power Electronics Innovation Lab (PEIL)

Smart Modular power systems up to 800kVA

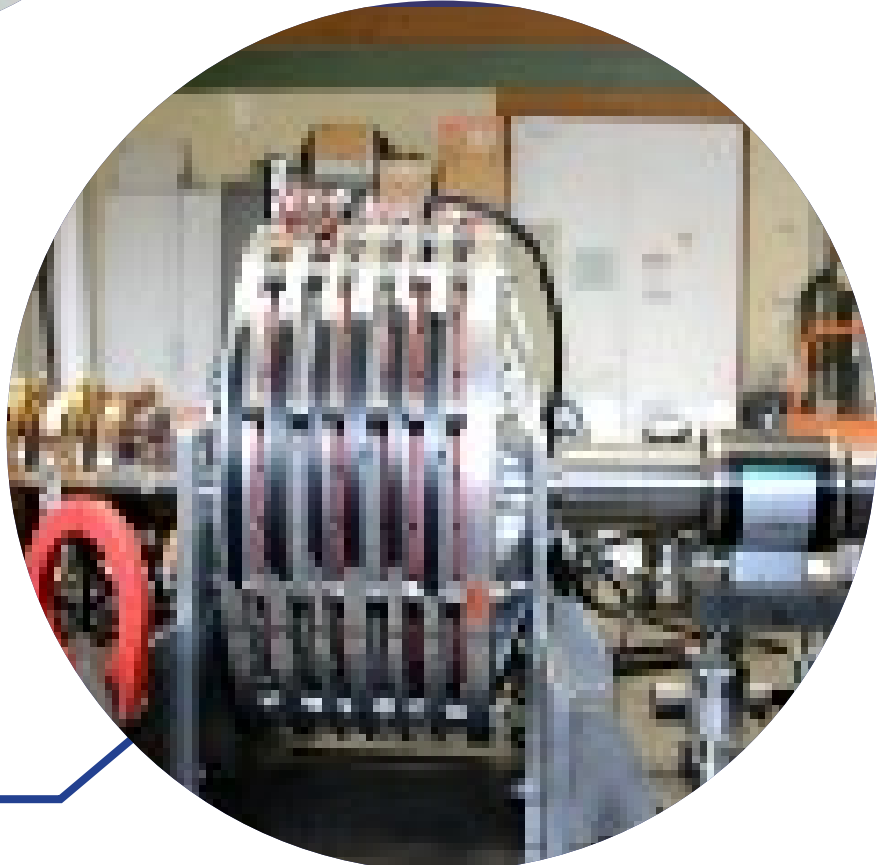


Advanced PE Converter Testbench & Performance Testing Up to 250kW

Grid and dynamic load setup for the DUTs

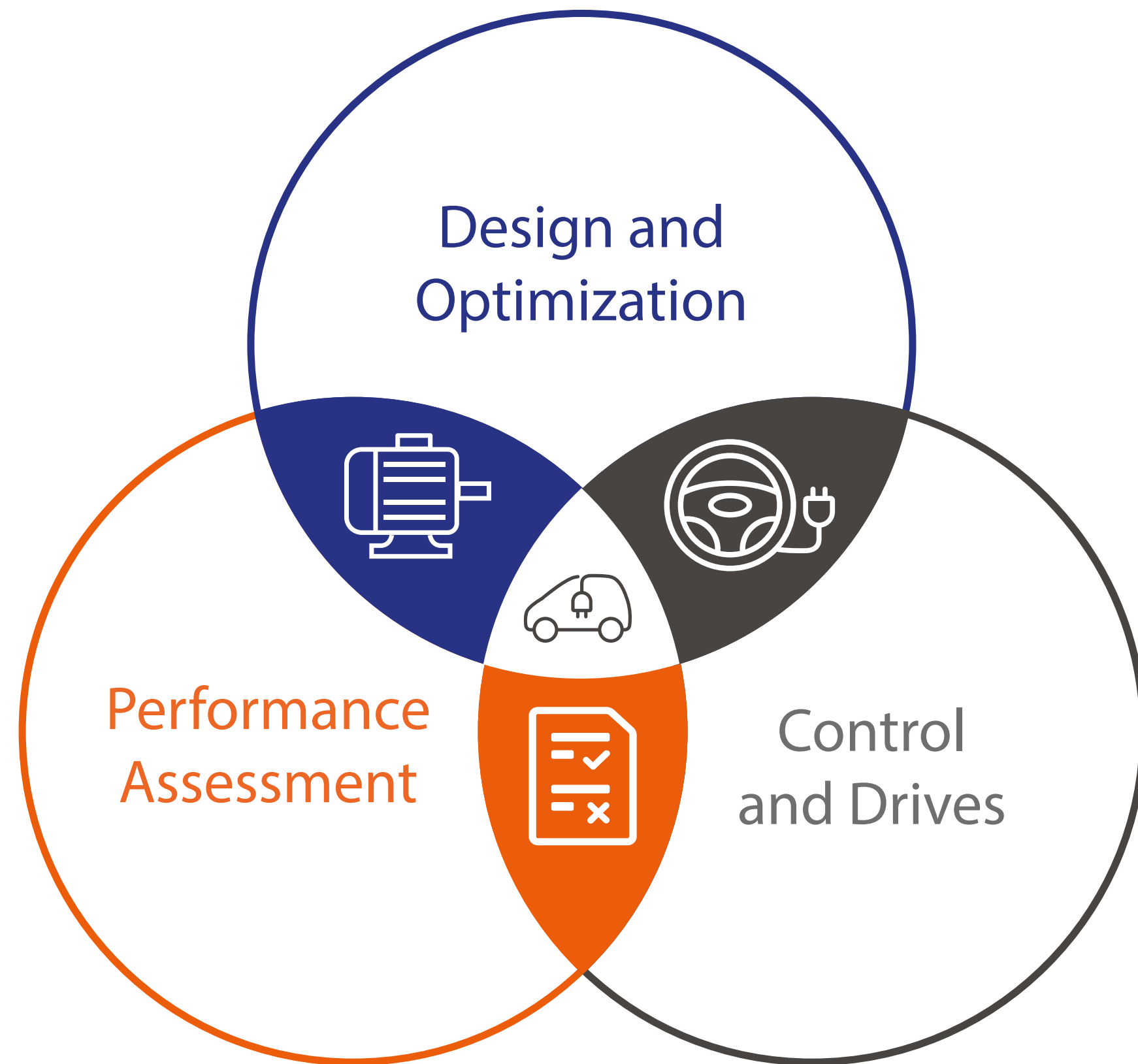


Multiple Electrical Machines Group up to 250kW



Programmable Source / Load 1000V (160kW)

# Electric Machines (EM)



## Design and Optimization

- Electromagnetic 2D and 3D FEA Design
- Magnetic Circuit and Winding Design of EM using Analytical Methods
- Thermal Analysis of EM
- Multidisciplinary optimization

## Control and Drives

- System Analysis of converter fed Machines
- WBG-based Modular Multi-level Inverters
- WBG-based Z-Source Inverters (ZSI)
- Advanced control: MPC, PSO based IFOC, DTC, ANN-control

## Performance Assessment

- Digital Twin validation
- Measurements on Motors and Converters
- Test Setup for In-Wheel Motors

# Electric Machines (EM)

## **i** Brushless Doubly Fed Reluctance Motor/Generator (BDFRM/BDFRG)

### 1. Design Specification and Optimization

- Drive system design
- Variable speed
- Cost minimization
- Rotor structure design

### 2. Modeling and Control Approach

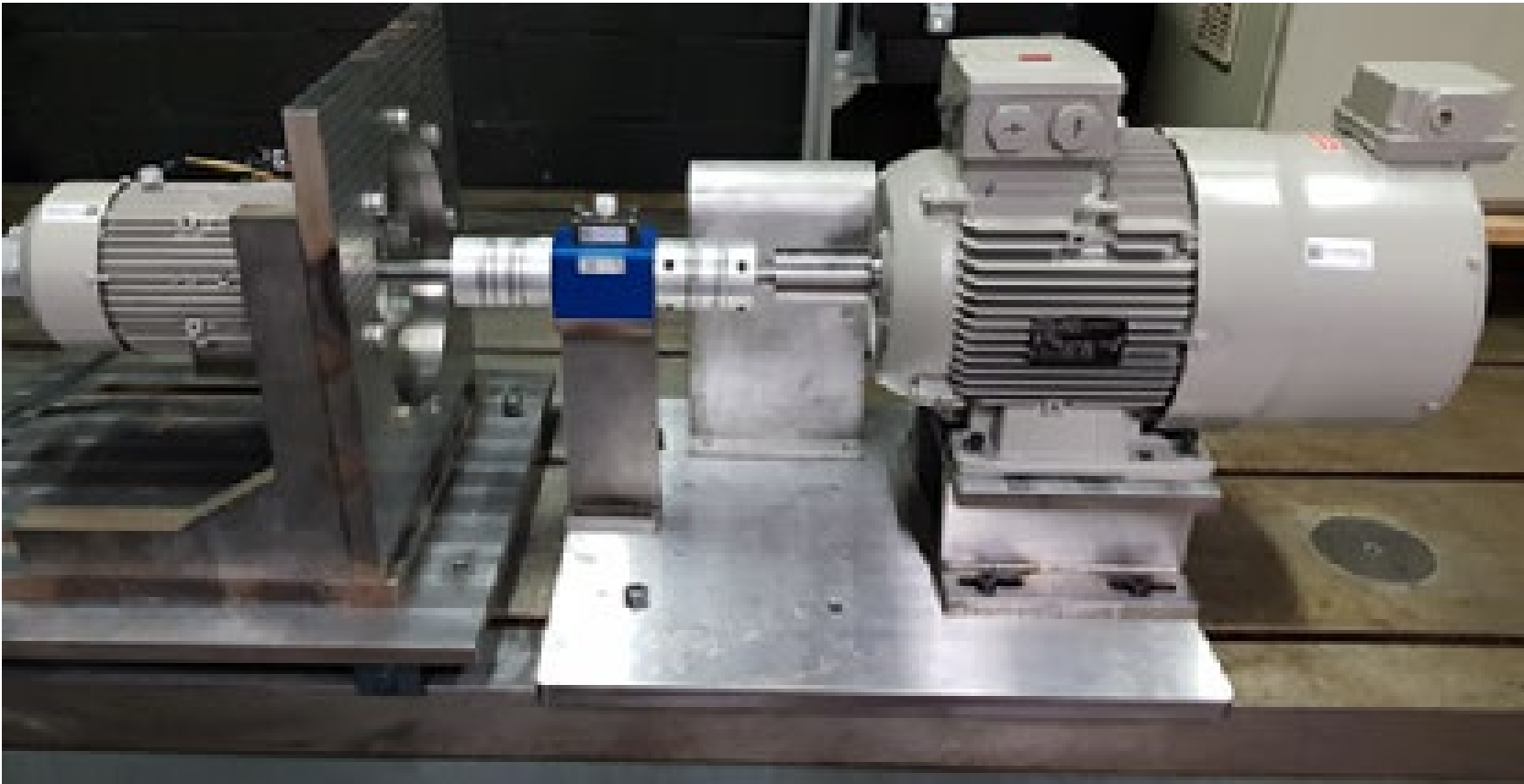
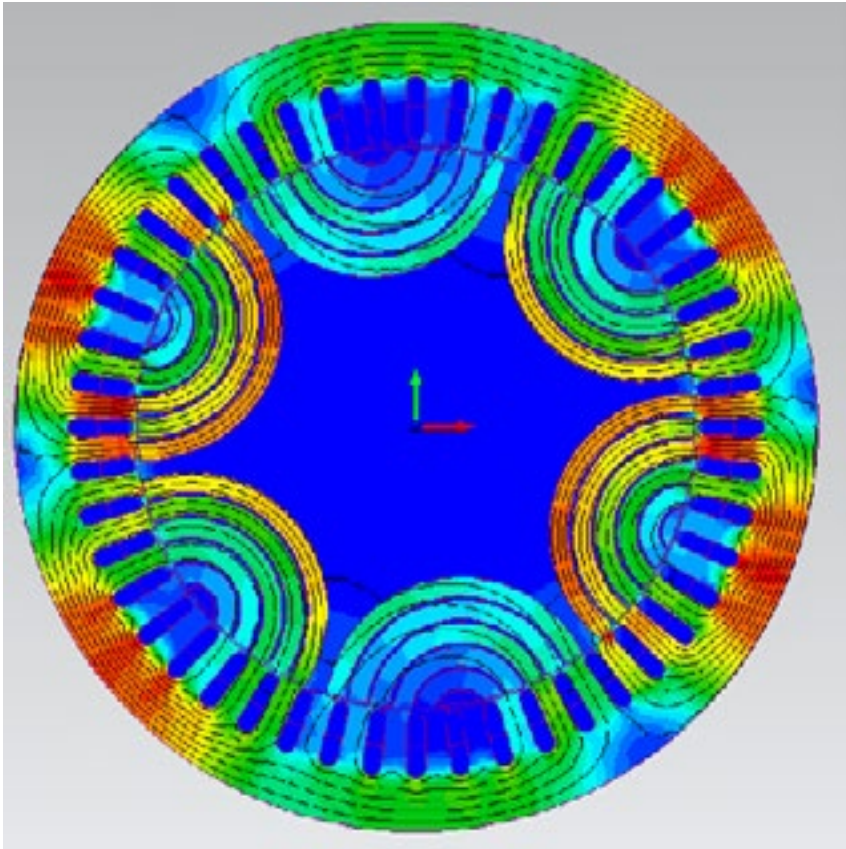
- Analytical modeling
- Finite Element Analysis (FEA)
- Reluctance Network modeling
- Active/Reactive Power Control

### 3. Performance Evaluation

- Efficiency assessment
- Power Factor
- Cost Analysis

### 4. Prototype Design and Hardware Testing

- DT validation
- FEA Validation
- Rapid Control Prototyping
- 7.5 kW flexible testbench



# Electric Machines (EM)

## **i** Switched Reluctance Machines (SRM)

### 1. Design Specification and Optimization

- Segmental configuration
- Multi-stack configuration
- Stator structure
- Rotor structure
- Integrated drive systems

### 2. Modeling and Control Approach

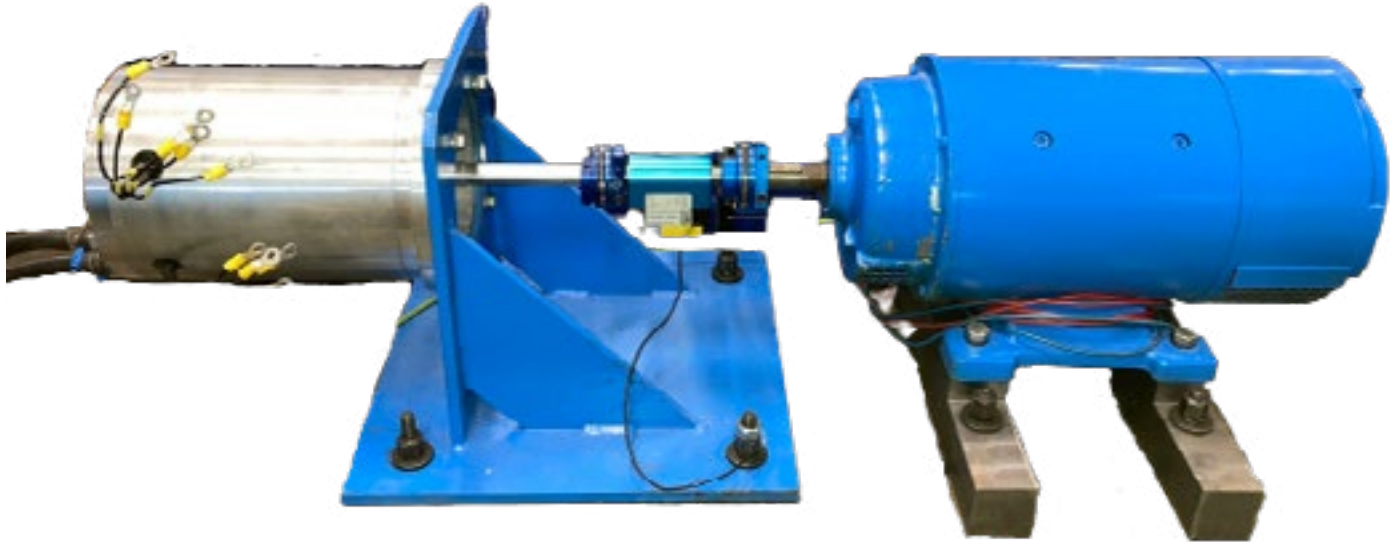
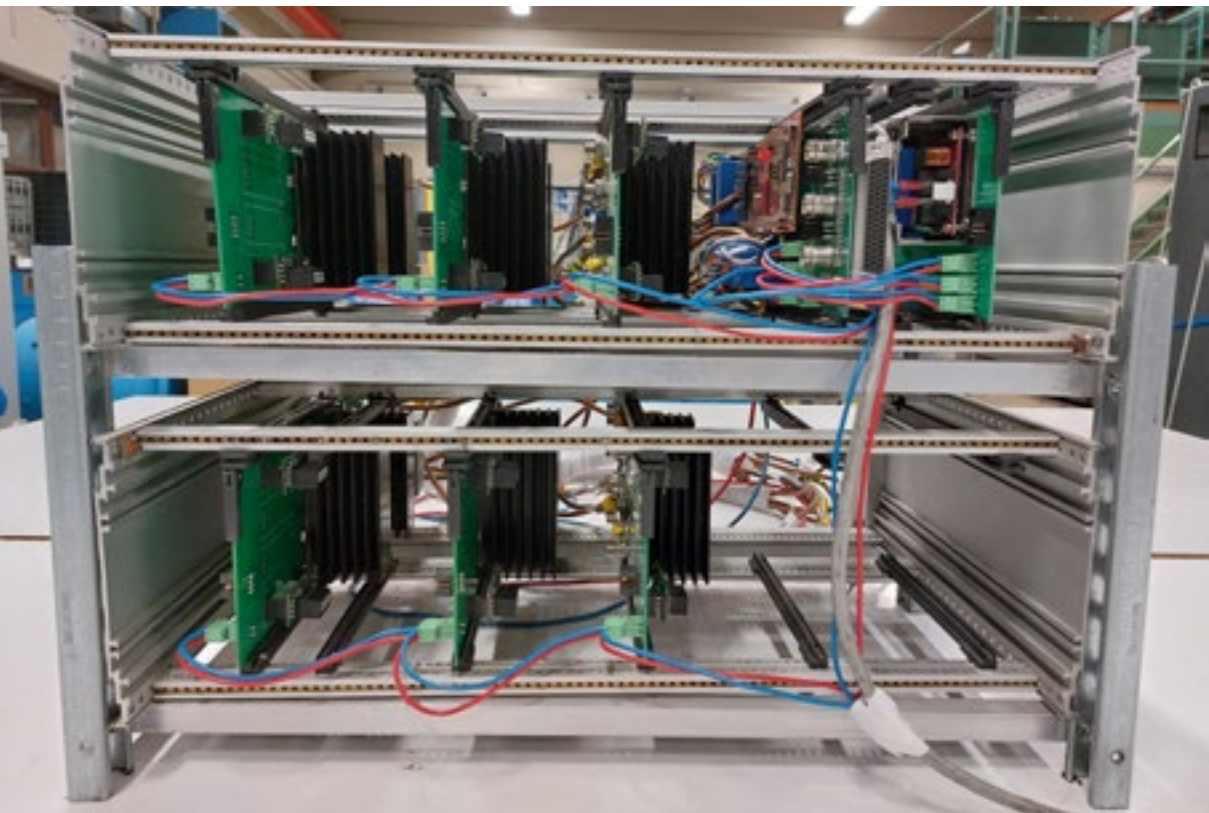
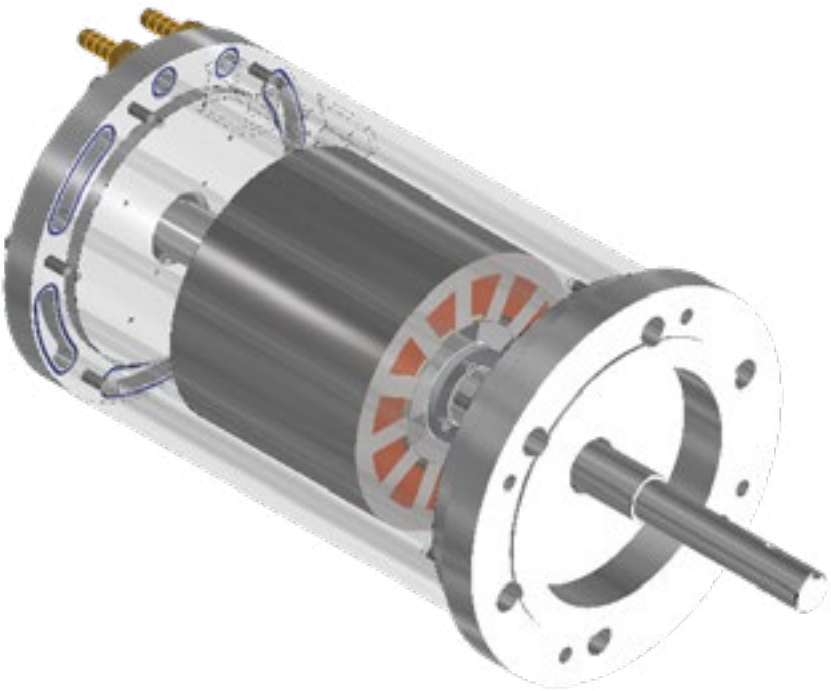
- Finite Element Analysis
- Physical modeling
- Controller design

### 3. Performance Evaluation

- Flux feedback control
- Current control
- Speed control
- Torque feedback control
- Average torque
- Torque ripple

### 4. Prototype Design and Hardware Testing

- Scaled design
- Multifunctional drives
- Rapid prototyping and DSP, FPGA/dSPACE control
- Efficient cooling system





# Electric Machines (EM)

## **i** PMSM- Inwheel Machines

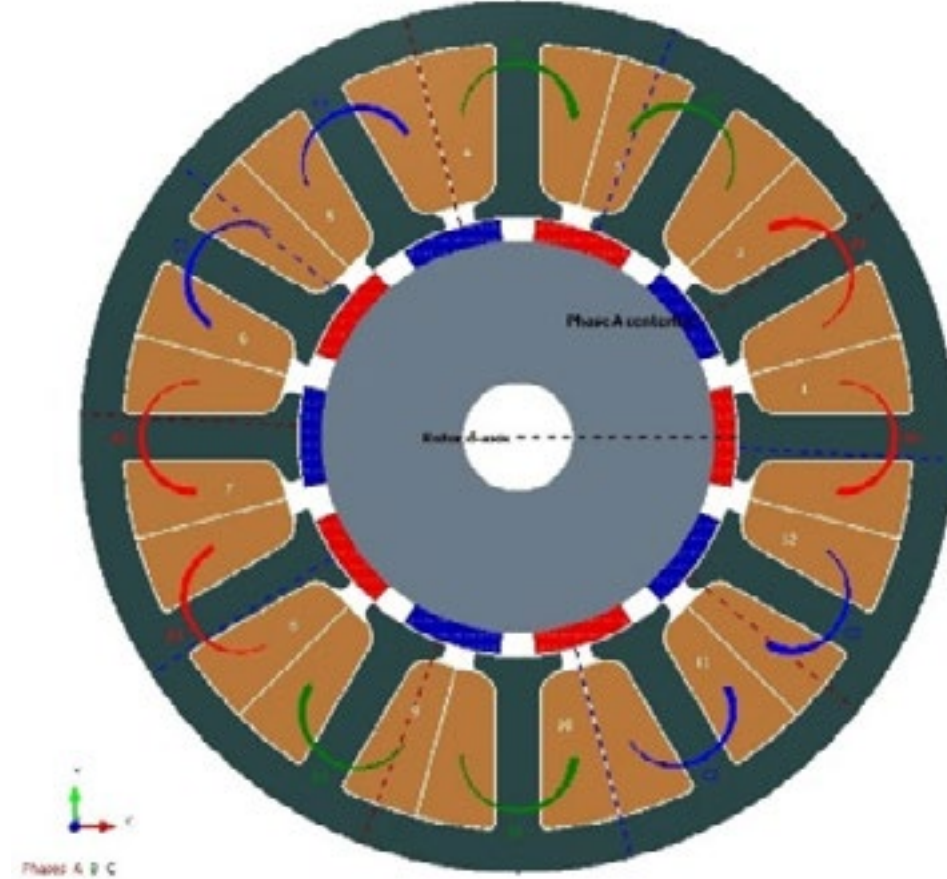
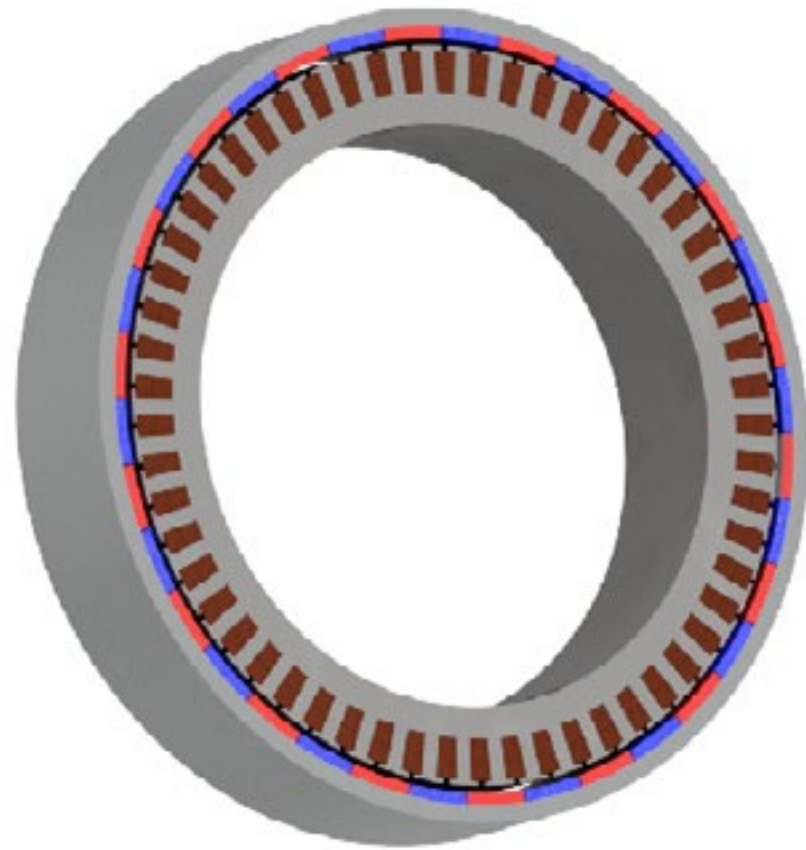


- Machine design optimization
- Internal or external rotor
- Magnetic geometry optimization
- Integrated drive systems
- Integrated and non integrated cooling concepts

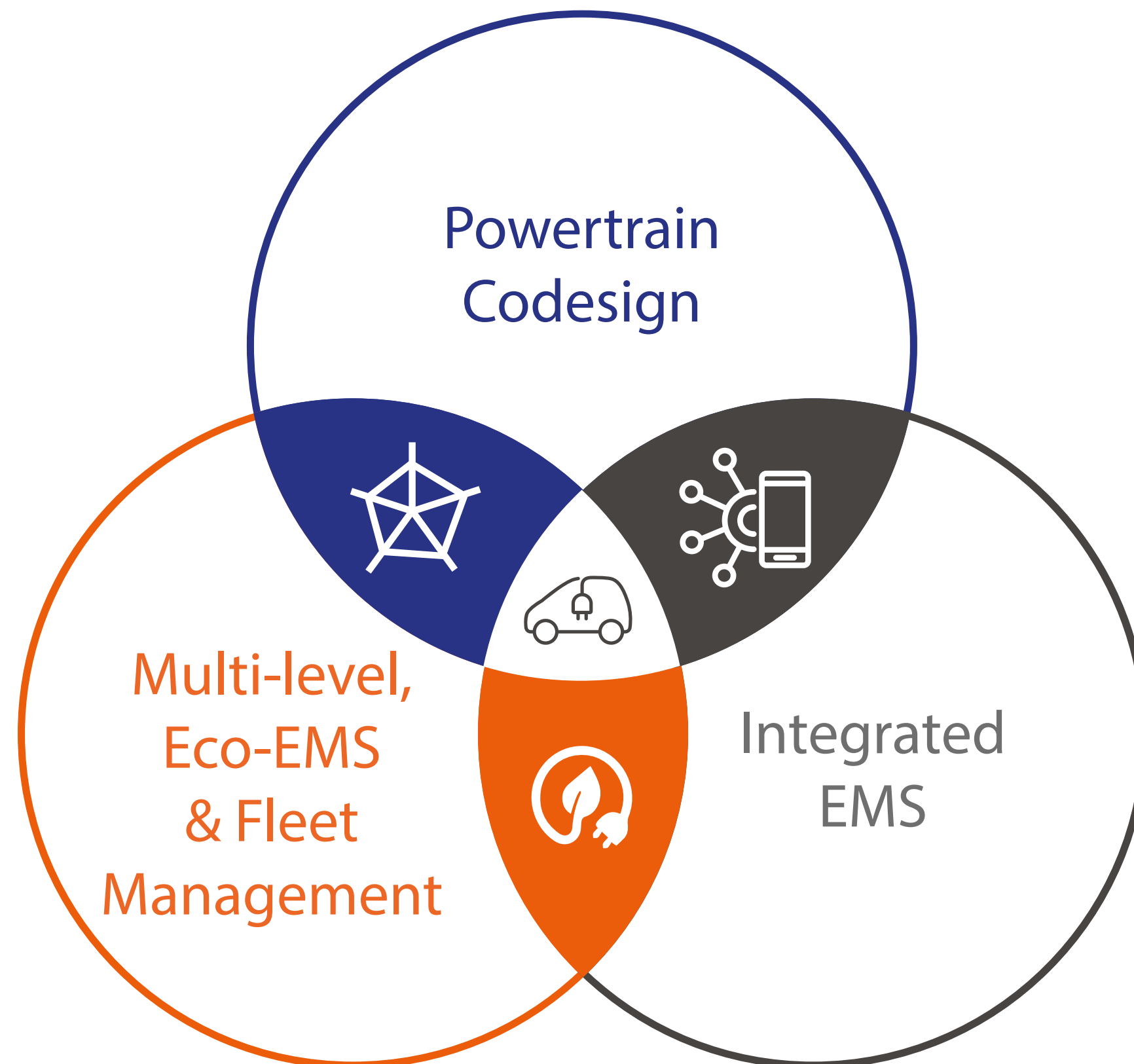
- Finite Element Analysis
- Multi-Physics Modeling (Coupled Electromagnetic and Thermal Model)
- Digital-Twin (synchronizing of the physical & digital models)
- Advanced controller design

- Efficiency mapping
- Torque and speed control
- Machine and inverter temperature
- Parameter sensitivity analysis

- Scaled design
- Torque ripple measurement
- Multifunctional drives
- Rapid prototyping and DSP, FPGA/dSPACE control
- Efficient cooling system



# Vehicle Powertrain Codesign Optimization, Multi-level Integrated EMS & Electrification



## Powertrain Co-Design Optimization

- Virtual Simulation Platform based on forward/backward facing models
- Modular Scalable Models (ICE, EM, Battery, gearbox)
- Hardware-controller coordination = codesign
- SiL/MiL optimization

## Integrated EMS for Plug-in/Hybrid/Electric/Connected Vehicles

- Rule-based EMS
- Optimization-based EMS
- Learning-based EMS

## Multi-level and Eco-EMS Strategies for Plug-in/Hybrid/Electric/Connected Vehicles and Fleets

- Full Electrification of bus-lines in cities
- Eco-driving
- Eco-charging
- Eco-comfort

# Vehicle Modelling and Optimal Co-design framework for EVs/HEVs

## i Powertrain Co-design Optimization

### 1. Vehicle modelling

- Powertrain modeling (backward, forward facing) in 1D simulation tool
- Powertrain thermal, electro-mechanical and mechanical modeling

### 2. Design specification & optimization

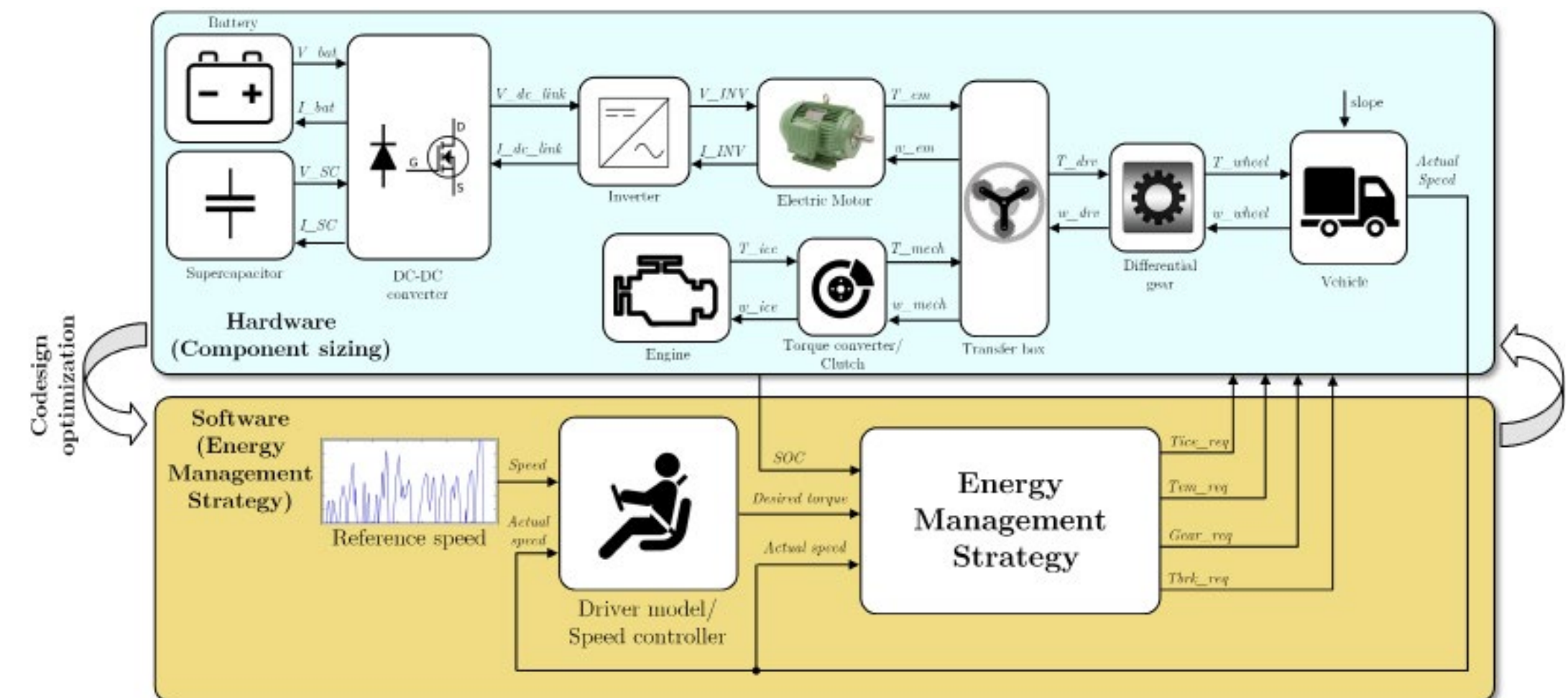
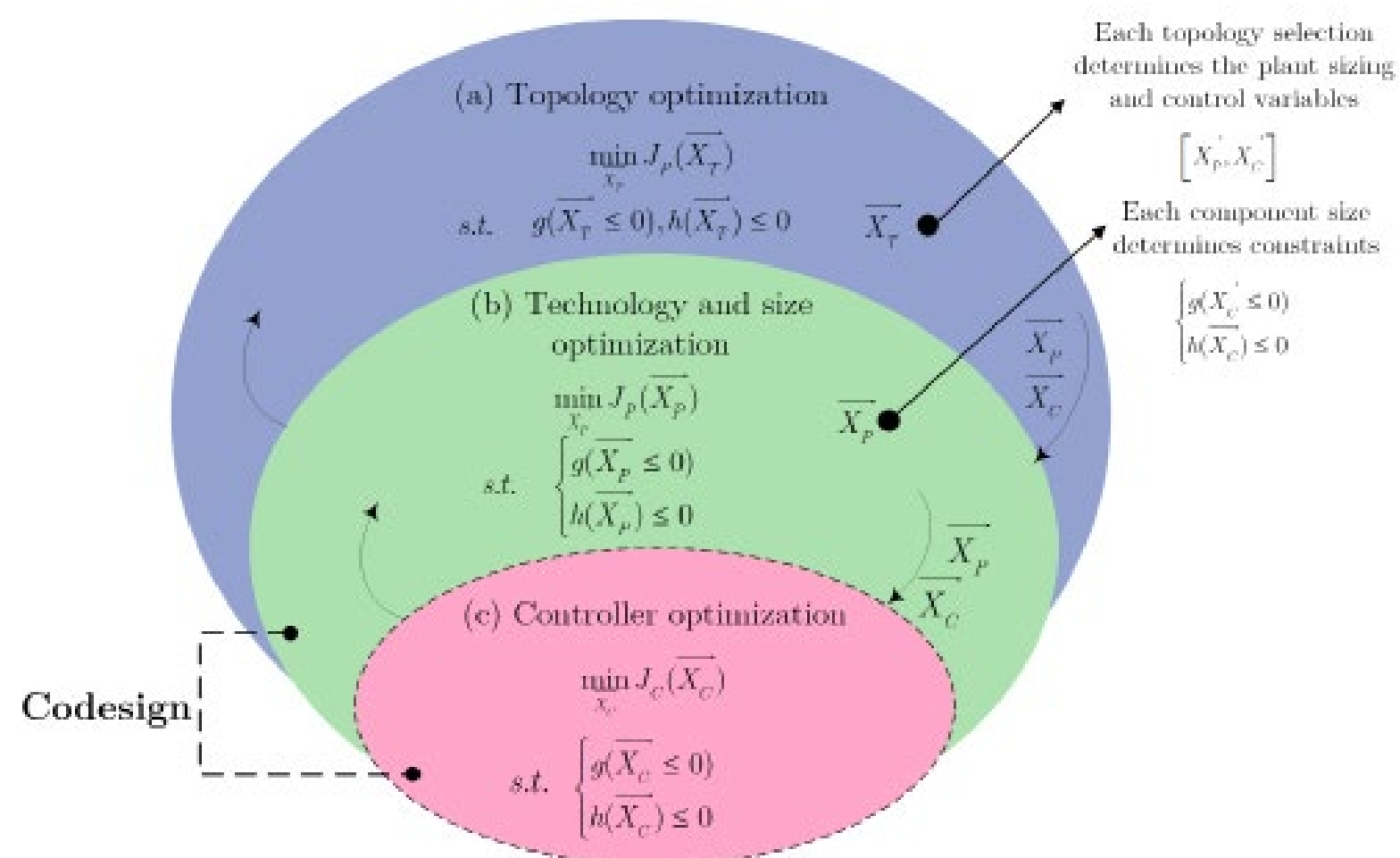
- Technologies and sizing
- Integrated thermal management strategies
- Integrated energy management strategies

### 3. Codesign Methodology

- Coordination method (alternating, nested, simultaneous)
- Codesign = 'sizing' + 'control' optimization
- Evolutionary-based optimization algorithms

### 4. Virtual Testing and HiL Testing

- Battery SoC regulation
- Battery chemistry limitations
- Experimental limitations
- Minimization of the fuel consumption
- HiL tests: real-time implementation



# Vehicle Modelling and Optimal Co-design framework for EVs/HEVs

**i** Integrated EMS for Plug-in/Hybrid/Electric/Connected Vehicles

## 1. Standard EMS

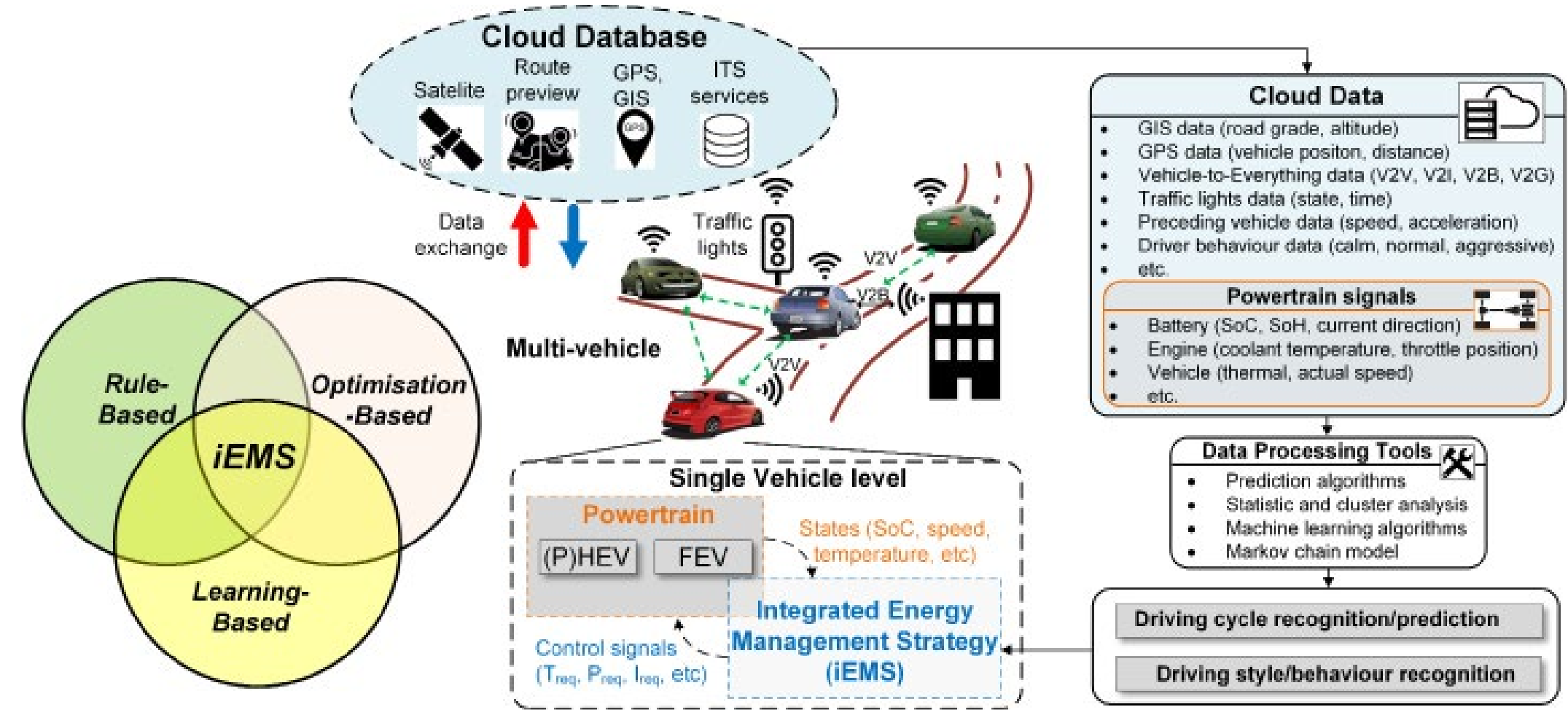
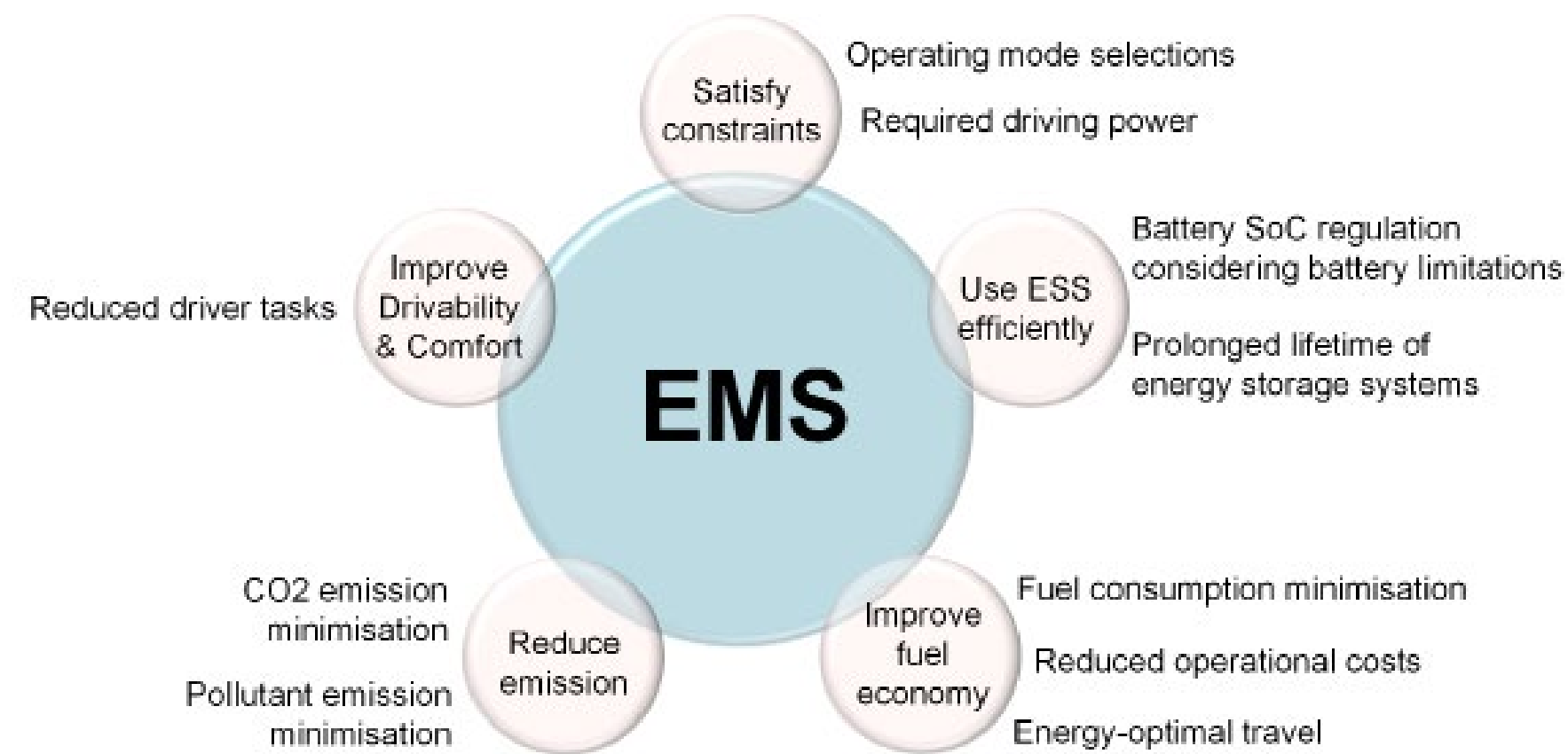
- Rule-based (RB)
- Adaptive Low Pass Filter (LPF) control
- Kinetic Strategy (SoC= f(v)), Average Power Strategy (APS)

## 2. Optimization-based and prediction-based EMS

- Equivalent Consumption Minimization Strategy (ECMS) based on DP/GA/PSO
- Predictive EMS based on ANN
- EMSopti based on GA, PSO, Krill Herd (KH), Ant Lion Optimization (ALO)

## 3. Next generation of controllers

- Developing and testing new agent-based algorithms for online training and optimization, i.e., Deep Reinforcement Learning (DRL)



# Vehicle Fleet Electrification & Energy Management– ECO Strategies

**i** Multi-level and Eco-EMS Strategies for Plug-in/Hybrid/ Electric/Connected Vehicles and Fleets

## 1. Full Electrification of Bus-lines in Cities

- Bus lines specifications
- Optimal location of the charging systems for the bus-lines
- Depot optimization
- Codesign optimization for the fleets
- TCO assessment

## 2. Eco-Driving

- Extended driving range of vehicles
- Eco driving algorithms including boosting operational limits techniques
- Energy consumption minimization with integrated Eco driving

## 3. Eco-Charging

- Smart Charging strategies including optimized charging/DC charging power, charging time, number of super-fast and depot chargers
- Smart rescheduling of fleets
- Minimization of grid impact during charging/discharging processes
- TCO optimization at fleet level
- Respect pre-conditioning required by thermal management system (TMS)

## 4. Eco-Comfort

- Optimized on-board thermal management algorithms
- Delivering the maximum level of comfort to passengers
- Smart pre-conditioning strategies for the cabin and the powertrain systems



# Powertrain Research Infrastructure: Powertrain Innovation Lab (PIL)

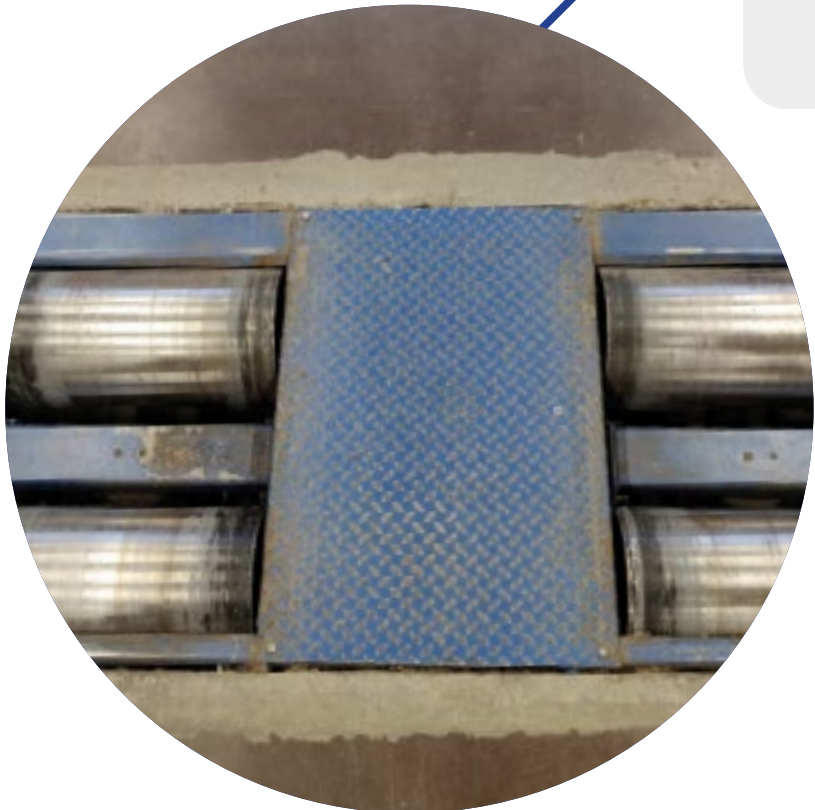
Open Vehicle Powertrain Platform - OVPP



Driver-in-the-loop Simulator (DiL)



Vehicle Dyno-roll Bench (200km/h)



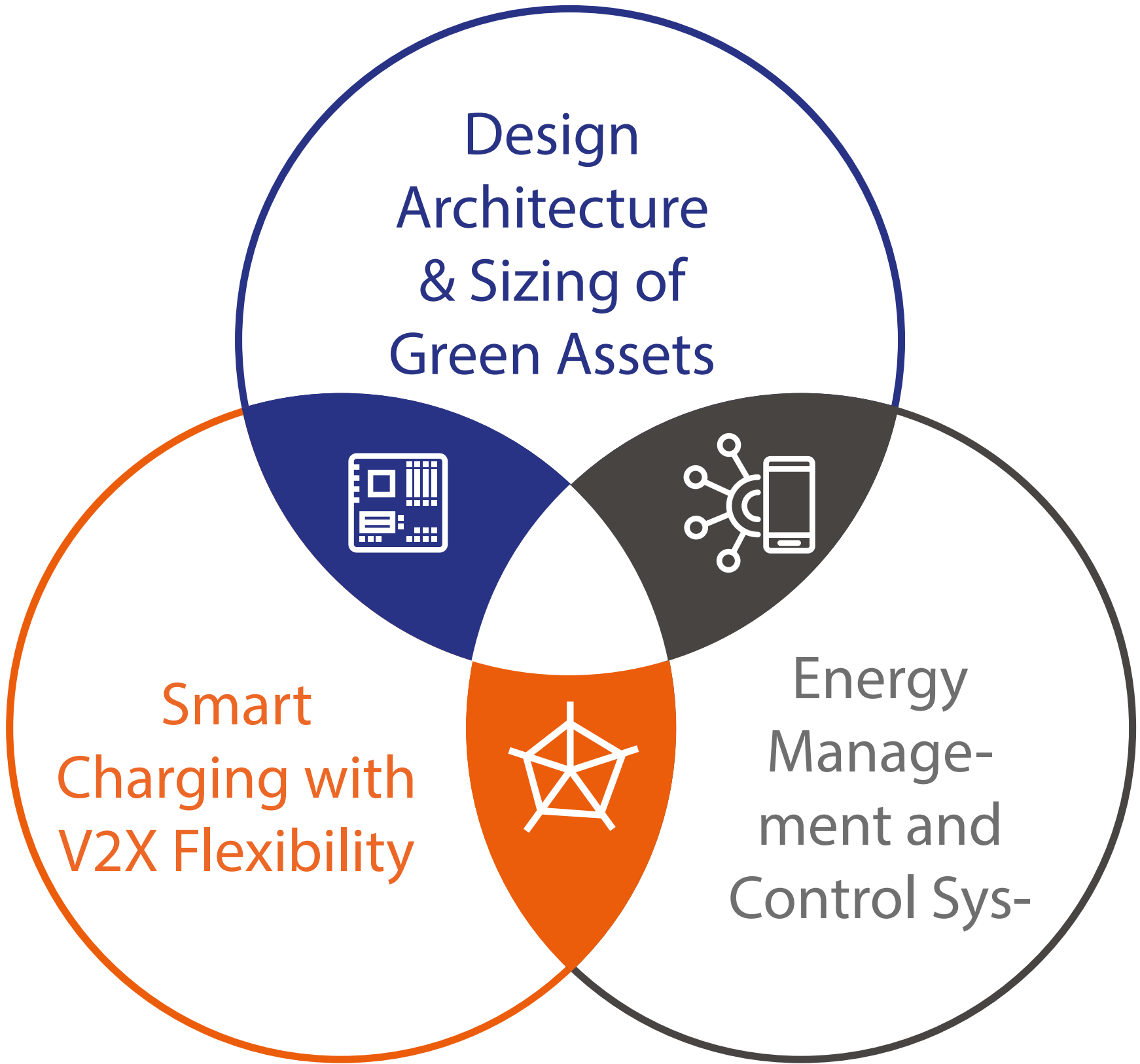
Automated Test Bench for EV



Mobile Battery Pack System



# Smart Green Grid Solutions – Architecture & EMS



### Design architecture & sizing of Green assets

- PV-EV charging systems
- ESS-EV charging systems
- PV-ESS system
- Smart buildings
- Small-Scale DC Microgrids
- Parking lots and Depots with V2X

### Energy management and control systems

- Rule-based EMS
- Optimization-based EMS
- Learning-based EMS
- Self-Healing (SH) EMS
- IoT-based control of assets

### Smart Charging with V2X flexibility

- Cost optimization
- Power quality and Power flow
- Grid impact
- Self-consumption
- V2X (V2G, V2B, V2H) management

# Smart Green Grid Solutions – Architecture & EMS

**i** Design architecture & sizing of Green assets

## 1. Assets Design Optimization

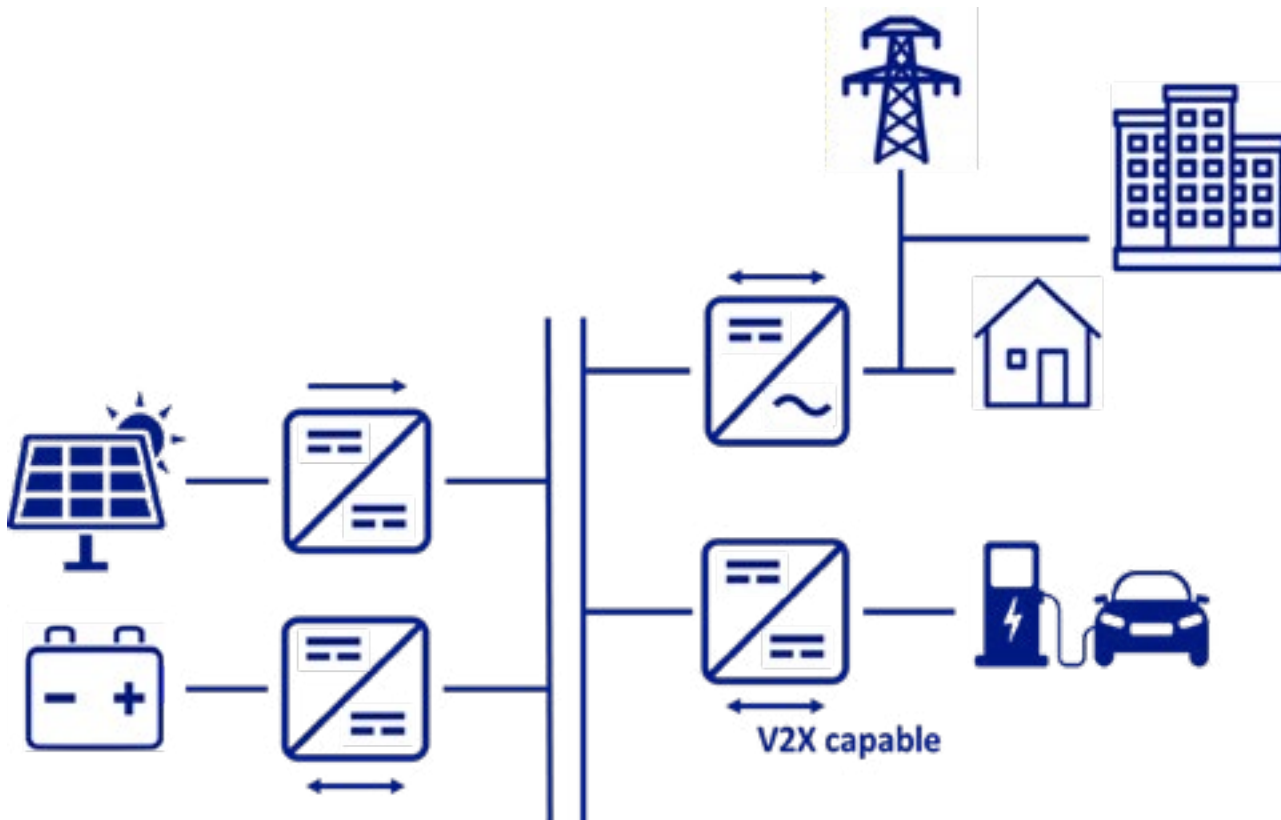
- Integration of EV charging stations incl. V2X, PV units, ESS and household consumption
- Sizing to minimize the price of OPEX and APEX for all assets
- Guaranteeing electricity can be used locally with sufficient generation/storage capacity

## 2. Optimal Operation of Green Assets

- Energy management to optimize the power flow between the assets
- Constitution of small-scale DC Microgrids
- Joint optimal operation of Green Energy Assets

## 3. Smart Neighbourhood Integration

- Analysis of integration into higher-level neighbourhoods
- Impact on the LV and MV grids
- Optimization of large EV fleets and electric buses charging stations incl. V2G
- Involvement of the grid operator in the optimization loop
- Centralized and distributed controls





# Smart Green Grid Solutions – Architecture, Grid Monitoring & EMS

**i** Energy management and control systems & Smart Charging with V2X flexibility

## 1. EV Charging Optimization including V2X

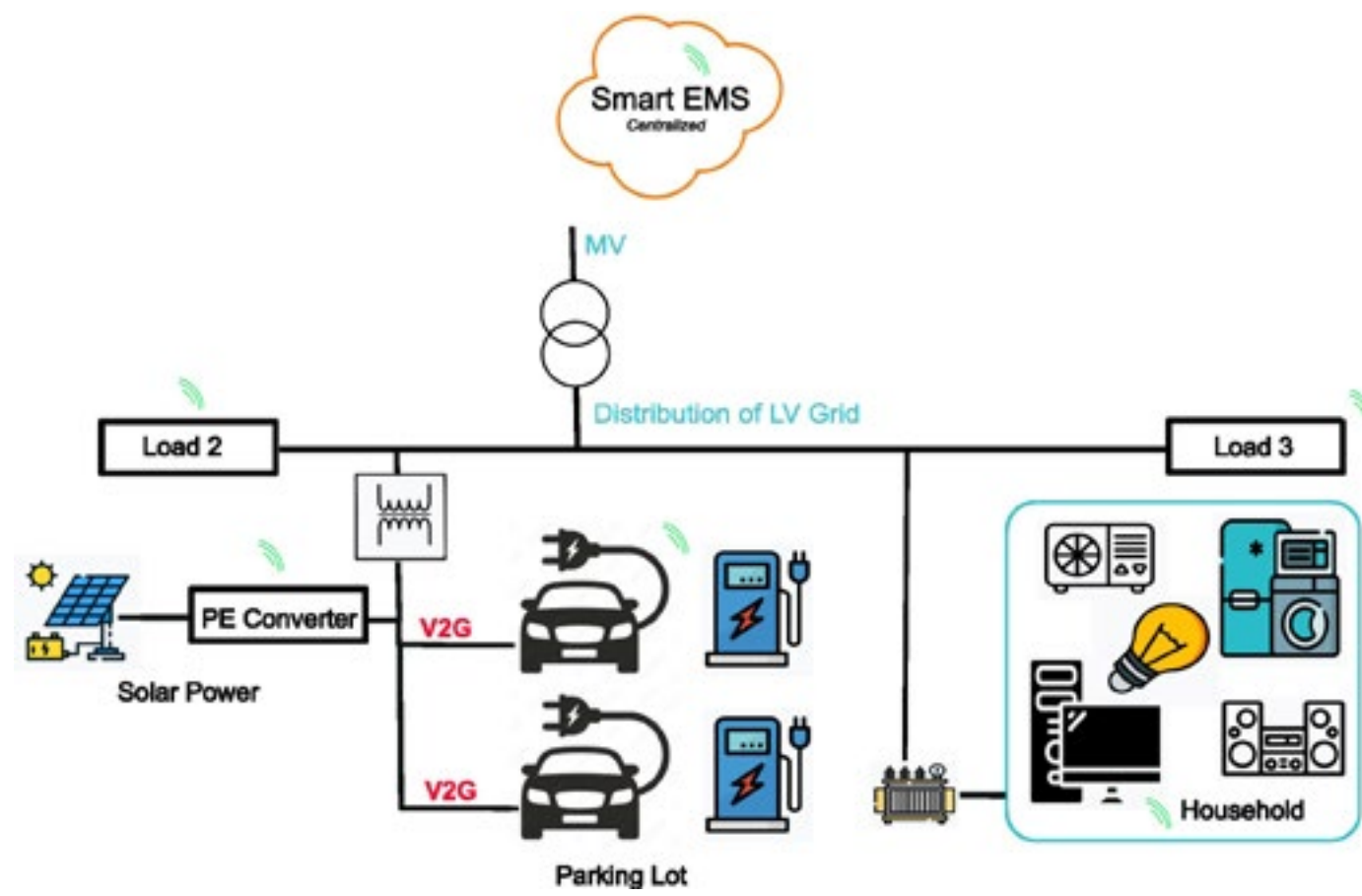
- Real-time scheduling of EVs
- Cost reduction for EV fleets
- Satisfying grid constraints
- Optimized operation of EV charging equipment
- Smart V2X (V2G, V2B, V2H, V2D) integration
- Smart power quality monitoring of grid voltages

## 2. Optimal Energy Management in the microgrid

- Advanced EMS for optimized power flow in DC-microgrid
- Maximization of self-consumption within the DC-microgrid
- Provision of extra services to DC-microgrid (predictive load, peak shaving, load shifting, Power quality)
- Self-Healing (SH) algorithm to increase system availability and lifetime
- Fleet management with real-time monitoring and centralized data analysis
- Condition monitoring for improved and reliable grid operation

## 3. Future Trends

- SiL & HiL testing
- Machine learning based algorithms
- Fleet maintenance scheduling and on-air software updates



# Charging and V2X Research Infrastructure: Smart Charging Lab (SCL)

Charger Testing and Certification



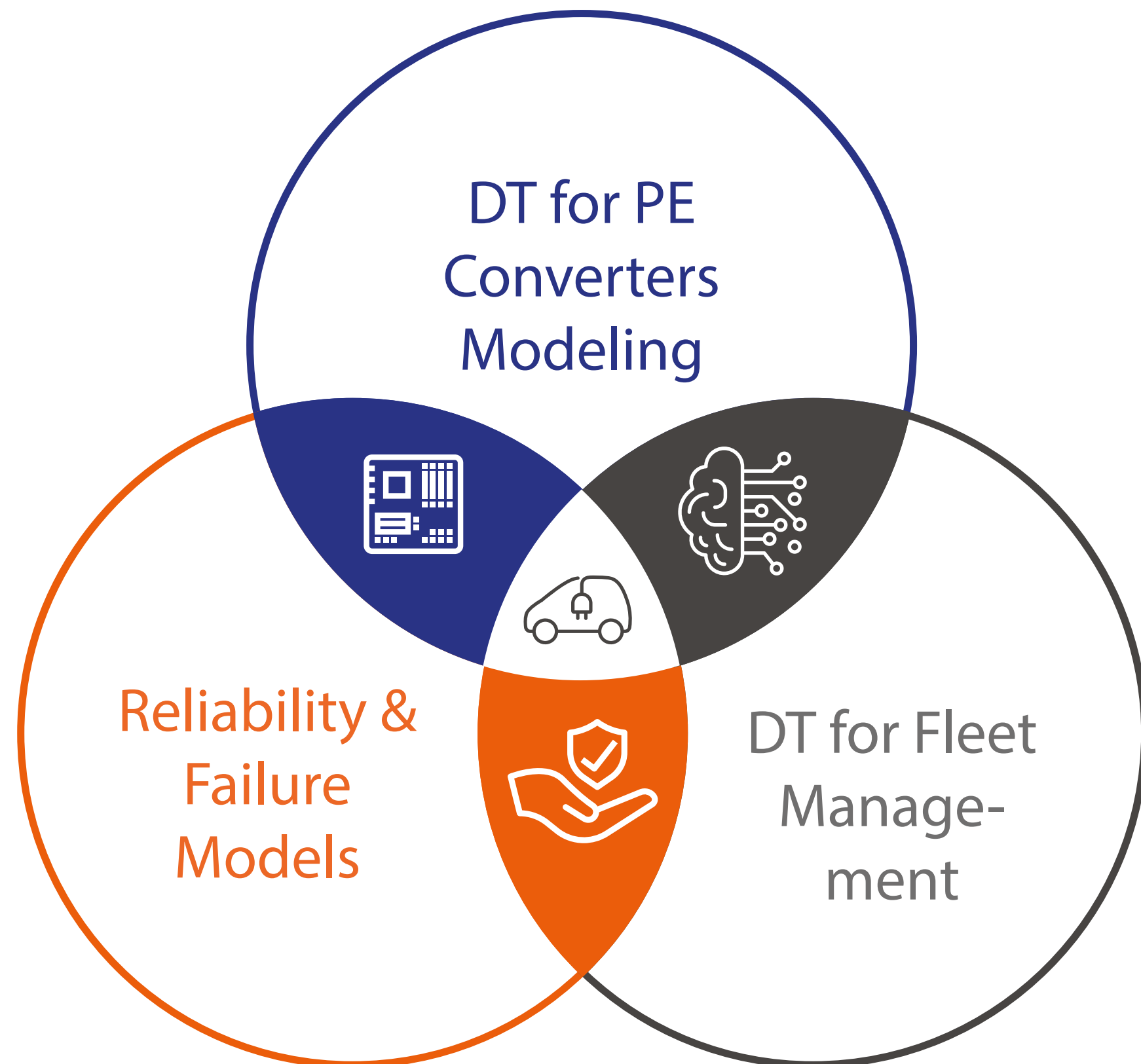
Charging Systems Lab: Grid Emulator



Charging Systems Lab:  
EV charging Analyzer/simulator



# Digital Twin (DT) and Reliability Assessment



## DT for PE converters modeling

- Digital Twin for Design (DT4D)
- Digital Twin for Reliability (DT4R)
- Cloud connectivity
- Digital Twin for validation (DT4V)

- Digital Twin for control (DT4C)
- Virtual prototype

## DT for EVs and Fleet management

- Virtual fleet simulation
- Cost Optimization
- Improve Reliability

- Predictive maintenance
- Fleet Resilience
- Improve safety

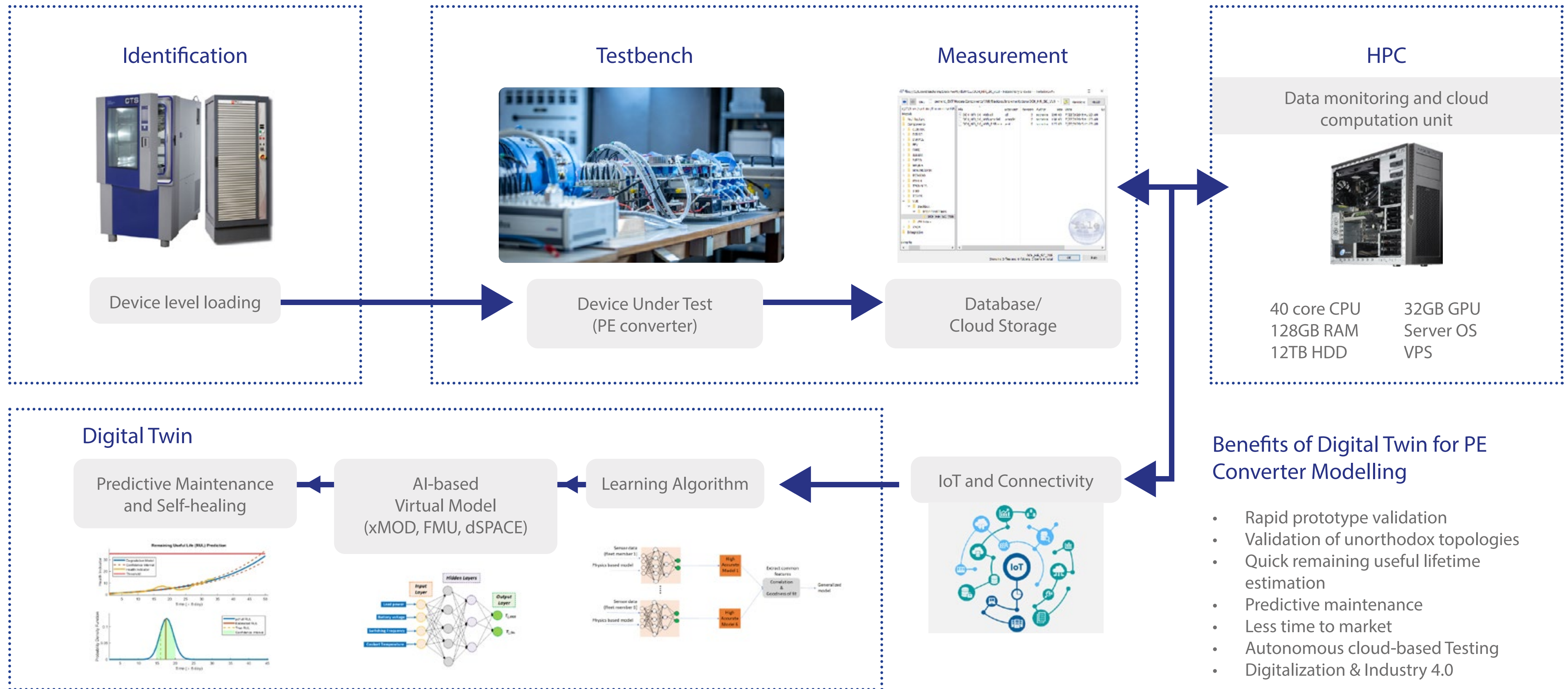
## Reliability & Fault tolerant PE models

- Physics of failure-based analysis
- ALT of converters/components
- Converter level reliability assessment

- Online condition monitoring
- Fault localization
- Fault tolerance

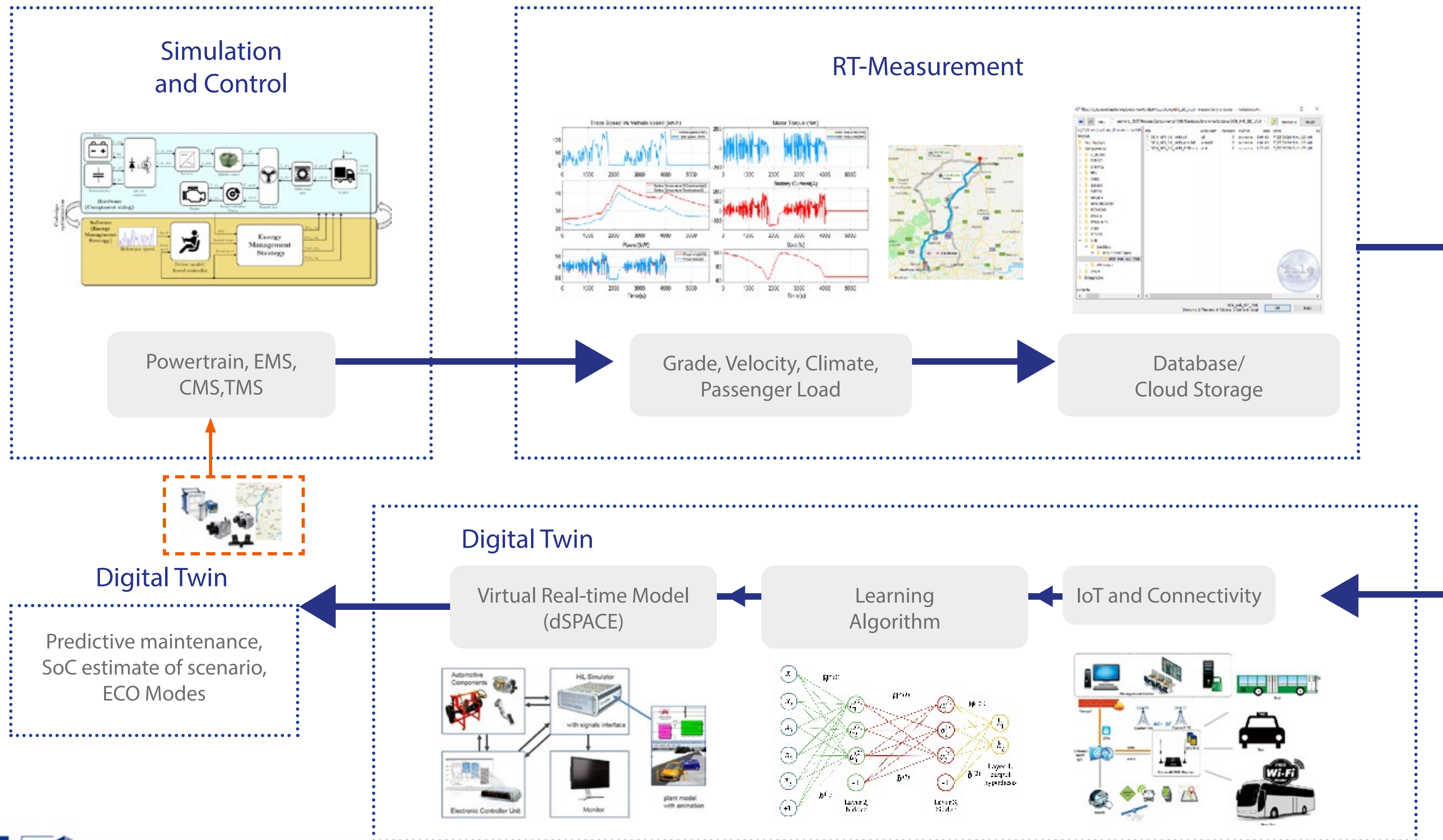
# Digital Twin (DT) and Reliability Assessment

## DT for PE converters modeling



# Digital Twin (DT) and Reliability Assessment

## DT for Electric Vehicles (EVs)

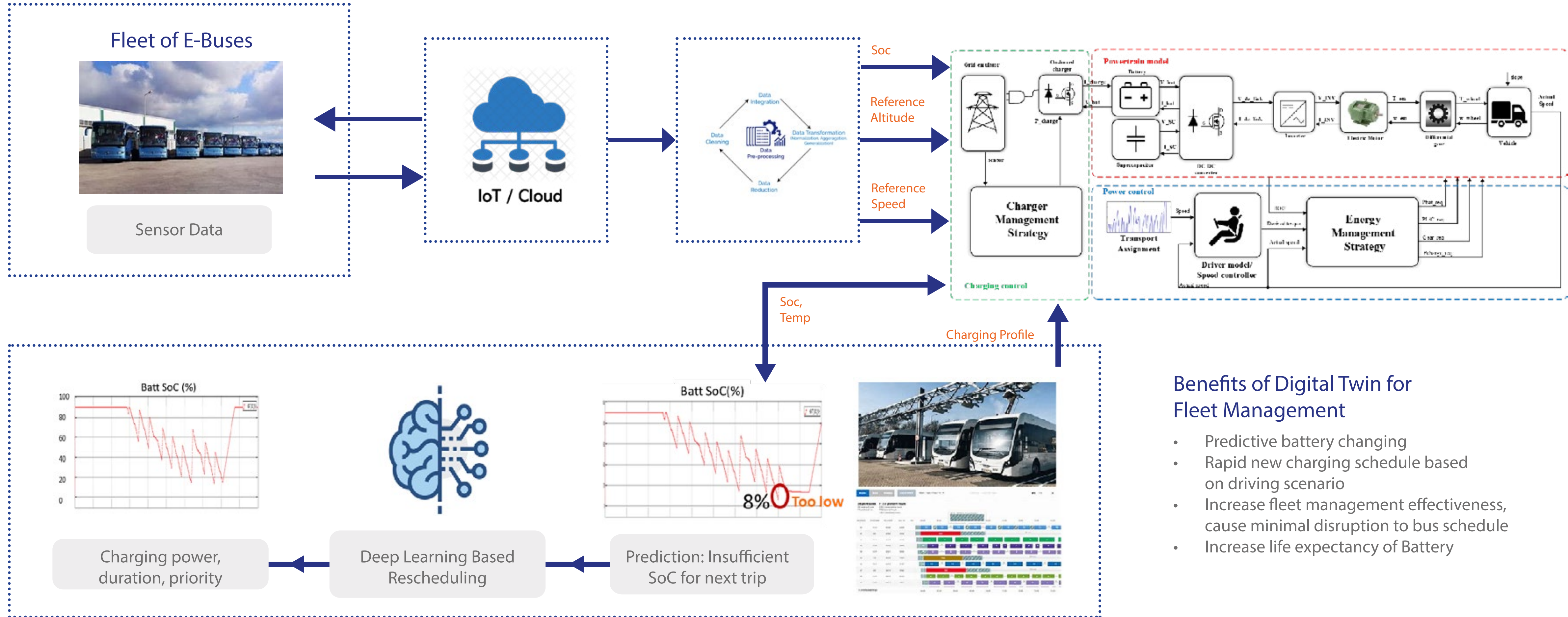


## Benefits of Digital Twin for EVs

- Quick Model Validation
- Optimization strategies
- Extreme scalability of the EVs
- Improve EVs safety and comfort
- Improve vehicle consumption

# Digital Twin (DT) and Reliability Assessment

## i DT for Fleet management

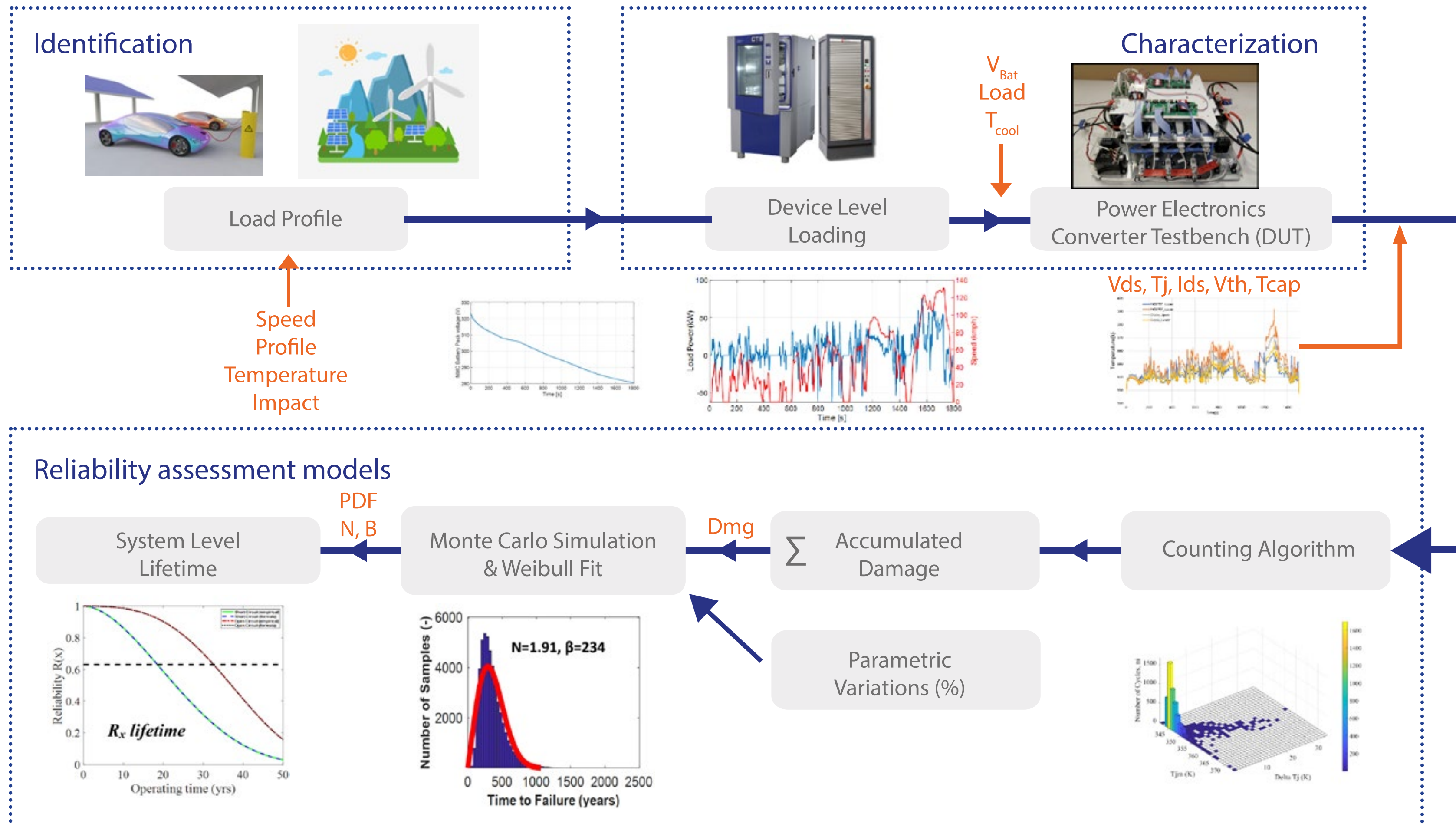


### Benefits of Digital Twin for Fleet Management

- Predictive battery changing
- Rapid new charging schedule based on driving scenario
- Increase fleet management effectiveness, cause minimal disruption to bus schedule
- Increase life expectancy of Battery

# Digital Twin (DT) and Reliability Assessment

**i** Reliability Assessment: Accelerated lifetime testing/Lifetime testing procedure



## Activities and Services

- DUT conformance testing up to 250 kW
- Device characterization
- HALT and failure diagnosis
- Wear out testing
- Mission-profile oriented Test
- Reliability-Oriented Design
- Fault progression
- Estimating Remaining Useful Lifetime

## Targeted Testing

- Mission-profile based Test
- Power Cycling Test [IEC 60749-34:2011]
- Temperature Cycling Test [IEC 60749-34:2012]
- HALT Test [IEC 68-2-38]

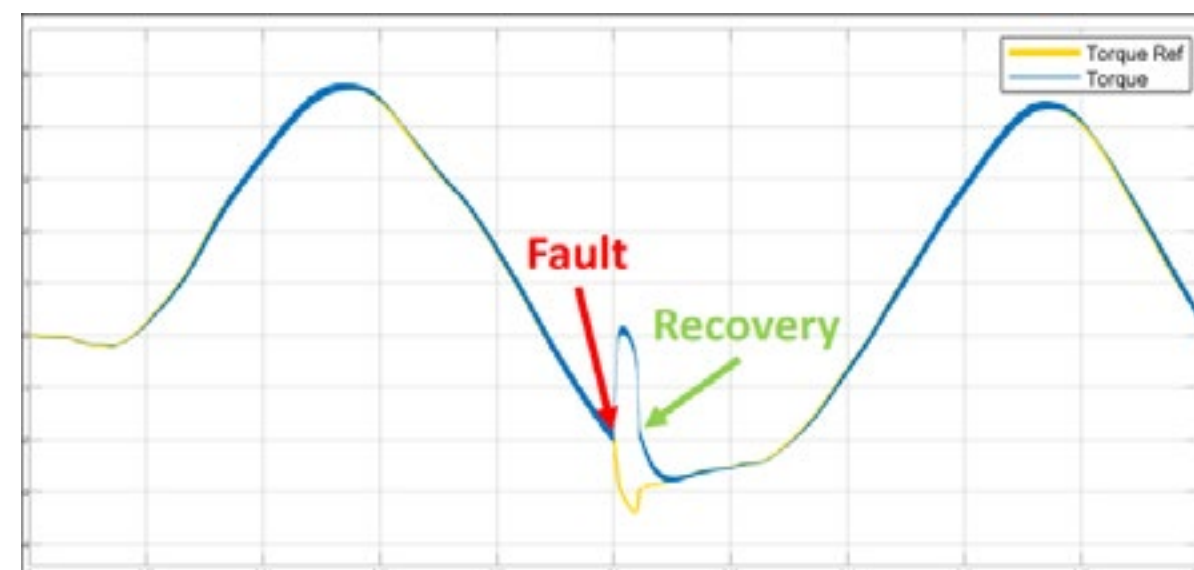
# Digital Twin (DT) and Reliability Assessment

## i Fault Tolerance PE models

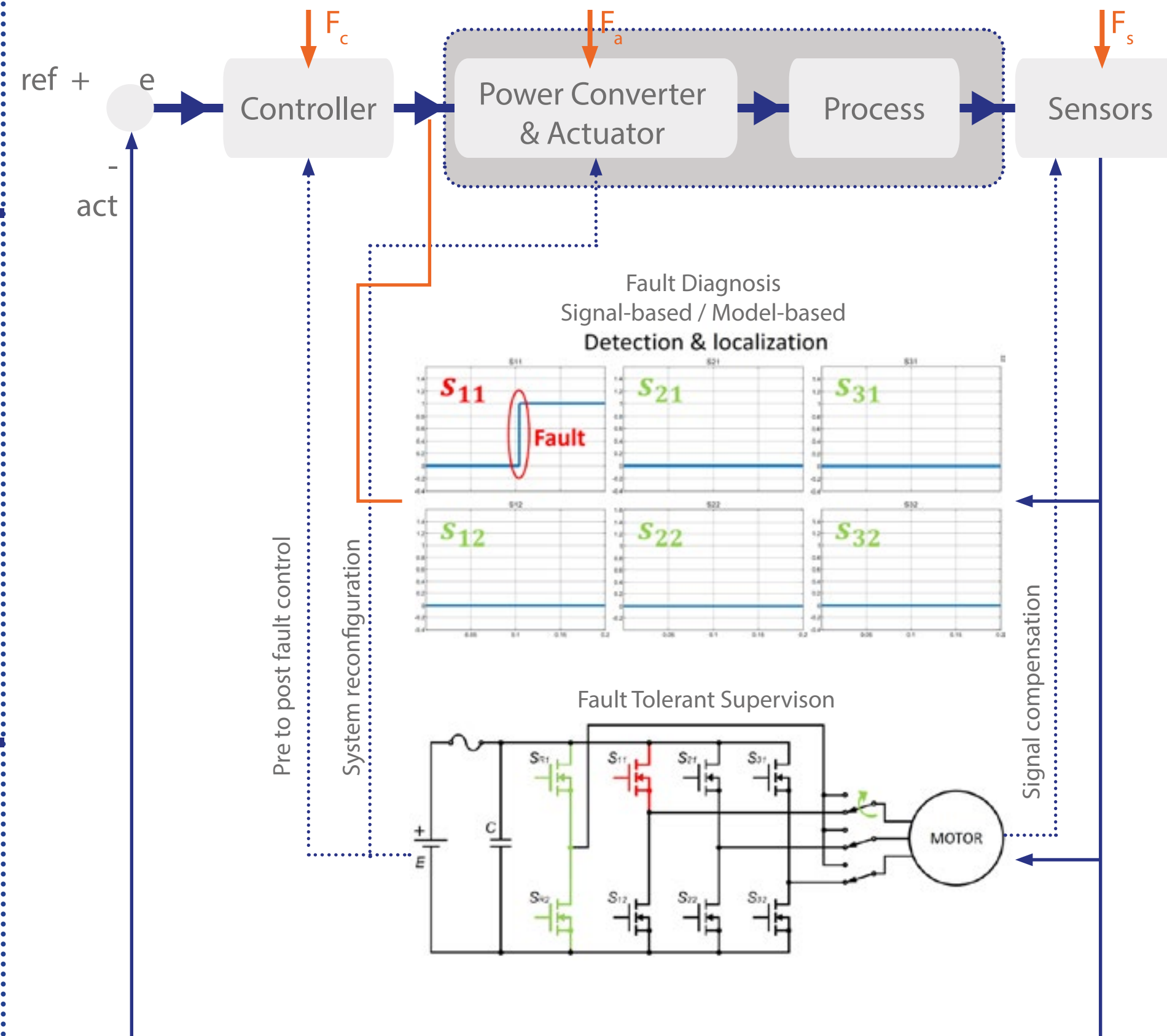
### Design for Fault-Tolerance



### Testing and Verification



### Fault-Tolerant control



### Methodology

- Identification of:
  - System Requirements & specifications
  - Fault modes & behaviors
- System optimization and selection of suitable fault tolerance strategy
- System modeling
- Implementation of fault detection and localization methods
- Fault isolation
- System Reconfiguration mechanisms
- Pre- and post-fault control
- Prototyping, testing and validation

### Key Activities and Features

- Fault tolerant converter modeling
- Converter faults characterization
- Fast fault detection, isolation and system reconfiguration
- Advanced control
- Cost reduction
- Improved reliability



# Power Electronics Reliability Lab (PERL)

Dynamic Double Pulse Tester (DPT)



Accelerated Lifetime Tests (ALT) for Si, SiC, GaN and beyond



EMC Test Cabinet with Thermal Cycling



Advanced Cloud Computing Hydra PC



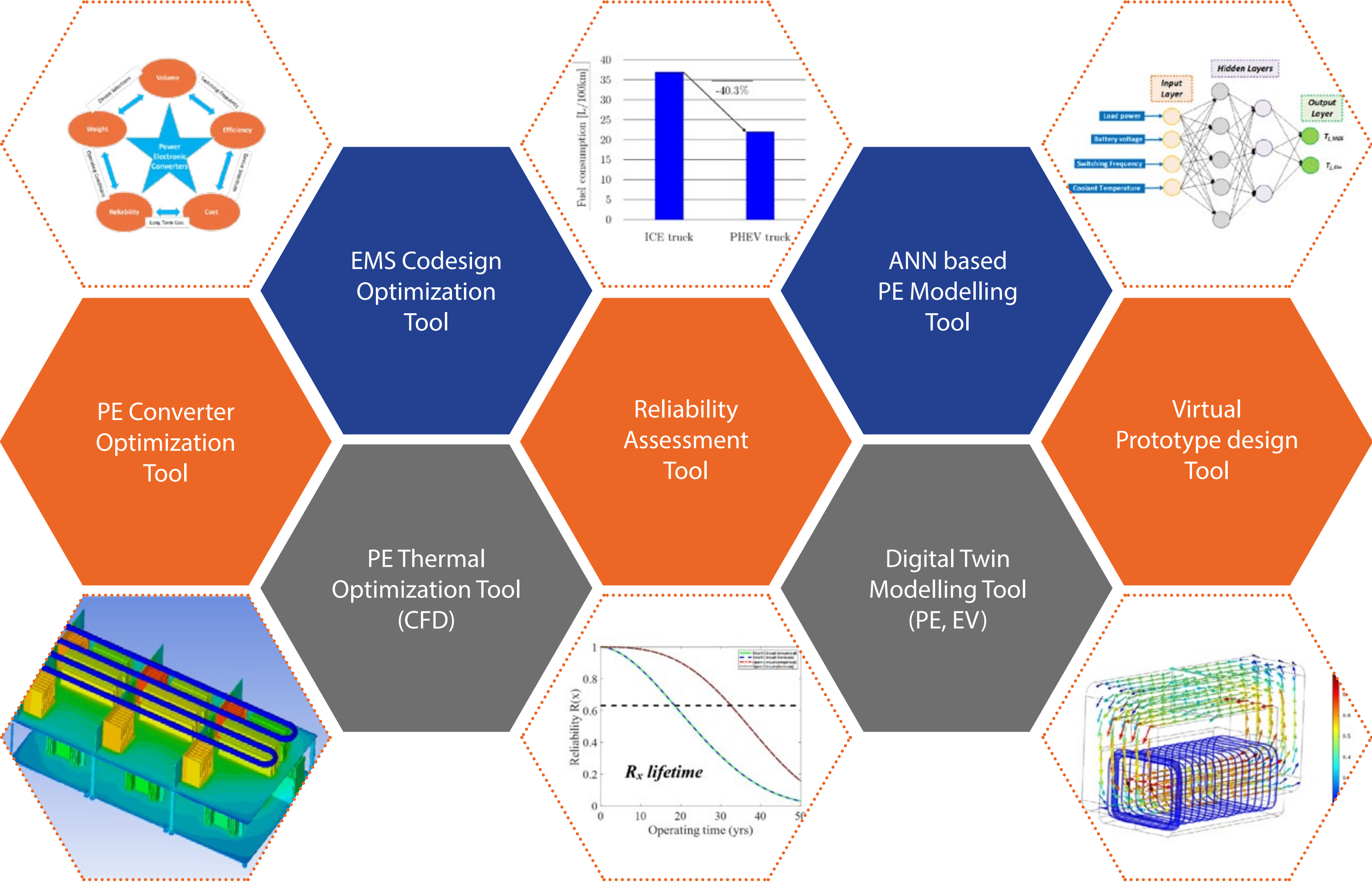
High Precision Data Capturing Equipment



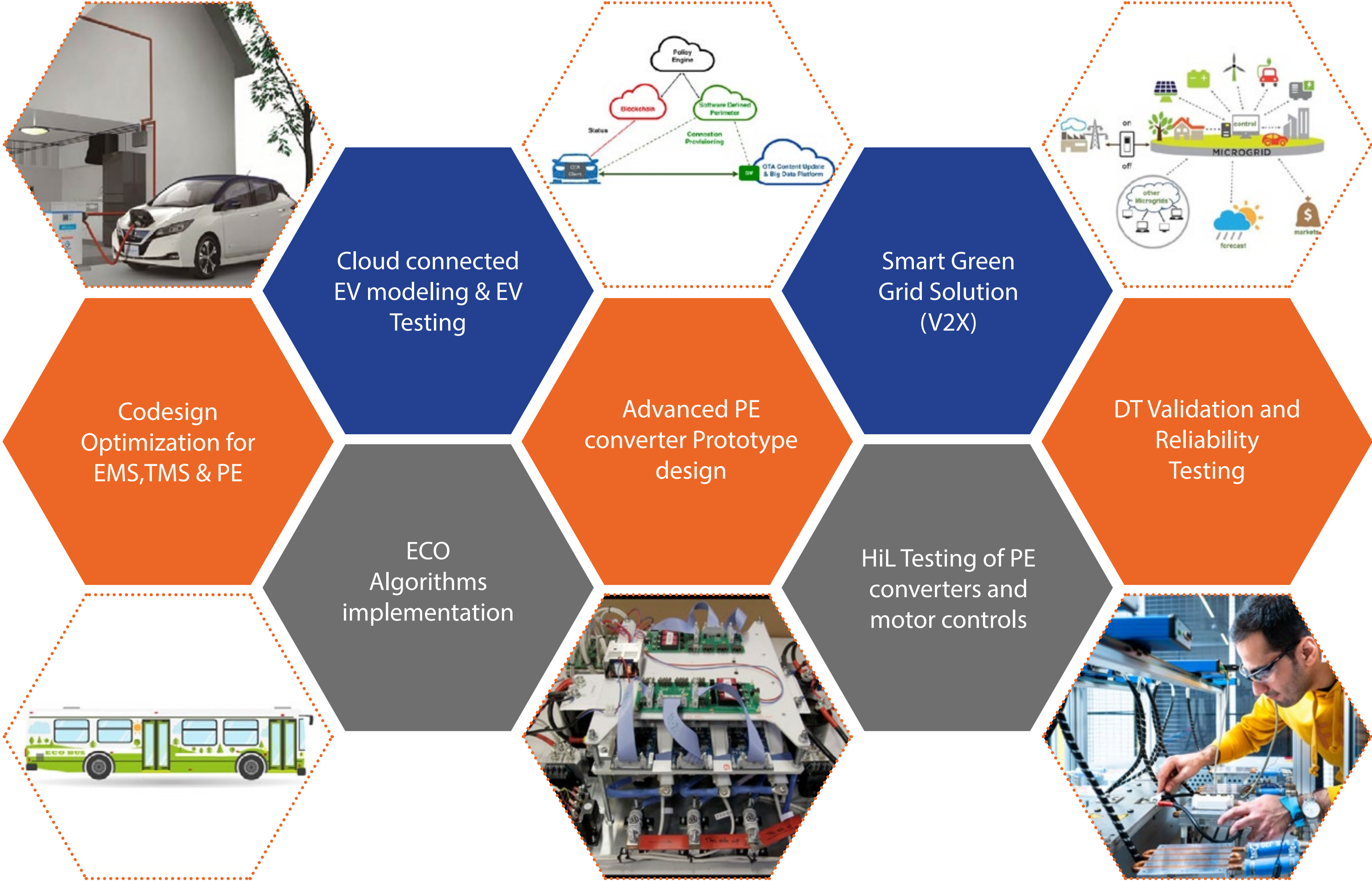
Mission Profile Testing Device (MPT)



# Our Tools



# Service Offer



# Interesting Projects



EBRT2030

NEXTBMS

ECO-MOBILITY

OPEVA

NEMOSHIP

INCADD

MODULAR

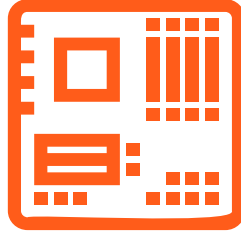
DT4V

INfraREL-PE

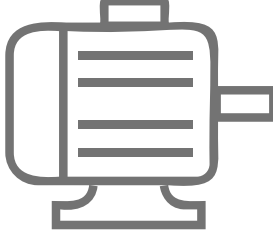
# EPOWERS Research Tracks




4. Smart Green Grid Solution




1. Power Electronics



2. Electrical Machines



3. Vehicle Powertrain



5. Digital Twin and Reliability

## Director and Leadership

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## Senior Researchers

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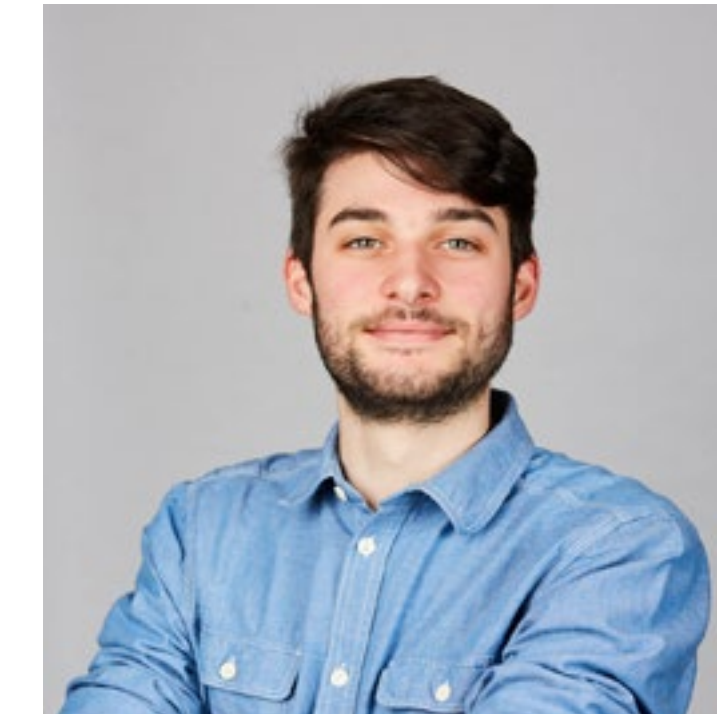
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