

Additive manufacturing for metallic materials

Emilien Ancey
Noah Studer
Luka Roche
Adrien Borgeat
Arnaud Sansonnens





Gas turbine (Inconel 718) [8]

Contents

- Direct energy deposition (DED)
- Selective laser melting (SLM)
- Electron beam melting (EBM)
- Extrusion processes
- Micro and nano-scale AM of metals



■ AM for metallic materials

Direct laser deposited
TC11/Ti2AlNb dual alloy blisk for
aero engines

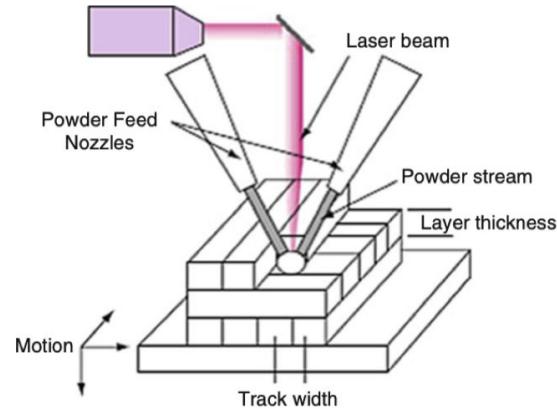
Y.Z. Zhang, Y.T. Liu, X.H. Zhao, Y.J. Tang, The interface microstructure and tensile properties of direct energy deposited TC11/Ti2AlNb dual alloy, *Materials & Design*, Volume 110, 2016, Pages 571-580, ISSN 0264-1275, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.matdes.2016.08.012>.
(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0264127516310747>)

Direct energy deposition

Emilien Ancey

Direct Energy Deposition

- ❑ One general working principle, many trade names
 - ❑ Direct Metal Deposition (DMD)
 - ❑ Laser Based Metal Deposition (LBMD)
 - ❑ Laser Engineered Net Shaping (LENS)
 - ❑ ...
- ❑ Focused on laser as a heat source



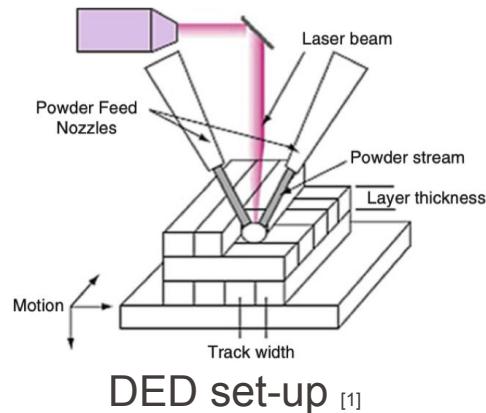
DED set-up [1]

[1] I. Gibson, D. Rosen, and B. Stucker, Additive Manufacturing Technologies: 3D Printing, Rapid Prototyping, and Direct Digital Manufacturing. New York, NY: Springer, 2015. [Online]. Available: <https://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-1-4939-2113-3>

Direct Energy Deposition

□ Working principle

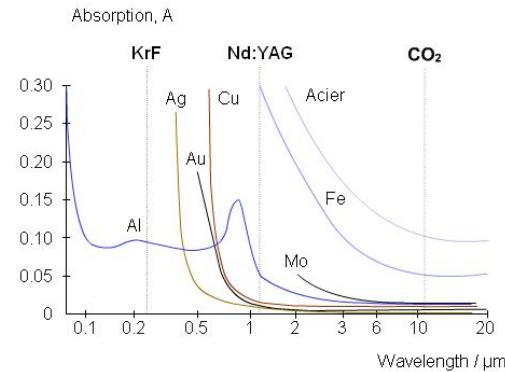
- A metallic powder or wire is feeded in a melting pool created by the focused laser beam
- Many different nozzles: single-jet, co-axial and multi-jet + inert gas
- Precision mainly comes from these systems: 40-1000 μm layer thickness + spot size high of 0.3-3 mm [2]
- Very low losses: the good amount of material is melted everytime



[2] R. M. Mahamood, Laser Metal Deposition Process of Metals, Alloys, and Composite Materials, ser. Engineering Materials and Processes. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018. [Online]. Available: <http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-3-319-64985-6>

Metallic feedstock: laser importance

- **Specific properties of materials required**
 - Decent absorption in wavelength of lasers (e.g. 1.064 μm Nd:YAG)
 - Low thermal conductivity
 - Typically: Ti-alloys, steels, Ni-superalloys are very easily doable
 - A good size distribution of powder is also key for properties
- **Technical parameters also play a role** ^[2]
 - Power of the laser: usually around 100W to a few kW
 - Scan speed: 0.15-1.5m/min
 - Spot size: 0.3-3mm



Absorption VS wavelength

Process parameters: general impact

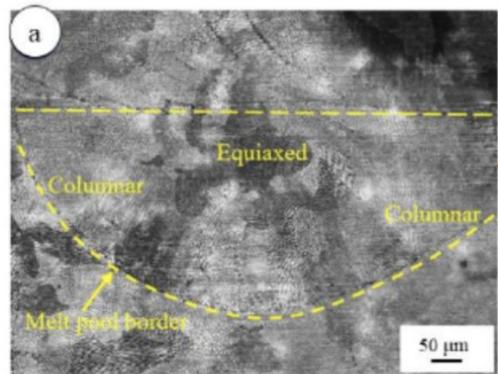
- ❑ **Laser power**
 - ❑ Direct impact on melt pool size → must be high enough to allow melting of powder, but not too large otherwise splattering could occur → chosen wisely
- ❑ **Scan speed**
 - ❑ Speed of displacement of feeding device + laser → inverse effect compared to laser power
- ❑ **Spot size**
 - ❑ Direct impact on track width
 - ❑ Also impact the focus of heat and thus melting
- ❑ **Powder flow rate**
 - ❑ Quantity of powder reaching melting pool every unit of time: 4-30 g/min ^[2]

→ These four parameters work in symbiosis and must be understood as a whole: must be optimized on a case-to-case basis

Resulting microstructures

□ Very complex thermal history

- Direct consequence of laser power and scan speed: high cooling rate
- Up to 10^3 to 10^5 K/s → have a huge impact on microstructure and phase formation [2]
- One layer can be remelted, heat affected many times
- Impact on morphology of grains → also dependant on the layer
- Impact on appearance of out of equilibrium phases



Light optical microscopy of the DED of steel

Typical example of DED

- ❑ **Multi-material part**

- ❑ Very easy and tunable manufacturing of this part
 - ❑ Very high mechanical properties of the as-deposited material

- ❑ **Low precision part**

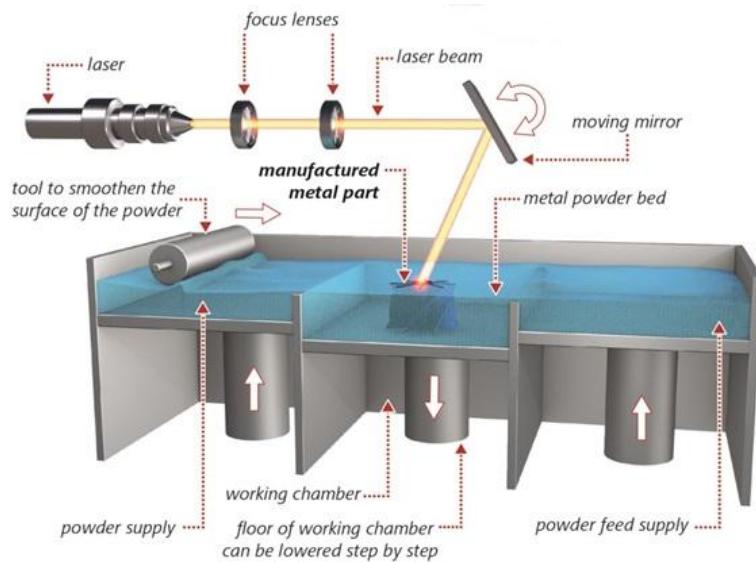
- ❑ Near-net shape blanks: requires further finishing step



Direct laser deposited
TC11/Ti2AlNb dual alloy blisk for
aero engines

Pros and cons of DED

	
Low to zero losses	Very low precision
Manufacturing of multi-materials components	Quasi-always near net shape blanks → finishing step required
Direct printing on substrate: less joining problems like riveting	Large thermal stresses: heat-treatment can be useful
Possibility to repair parts	Very expensive equipment



Selective laser melting (SLM)

Noah Studer

Selective Laser Melting (SLM)

□ What is SLM ?

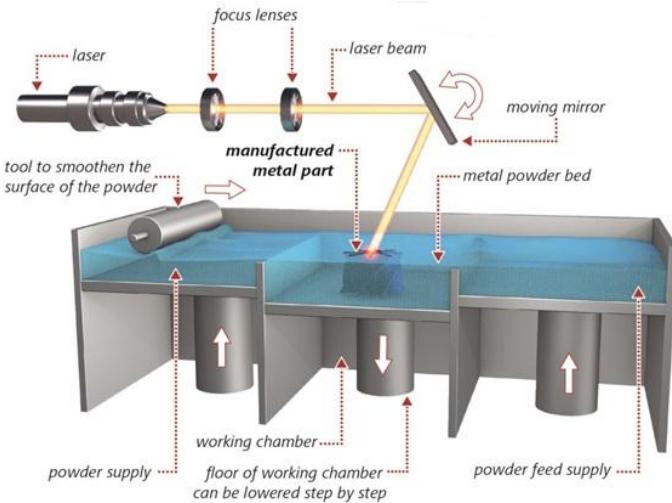
- Powder bed process using lasers to fuse metal layer by layer

□ History

- First commercial machine in 1998 (using a 12W laser)
- Modern machines (2014) now use laser up to 2800W (4x 700W) ->  production time

□ Functioning

- Laser selectively melts powder on a build plate in an inert atmosphere → avoid oxidation + metal vapors
- Precision: Dimensional accuracy ~0.1-0.2% + layer thickness 20-100 μm (dep. on laser beam size)



Selective laser melting mechanism scheme [1]

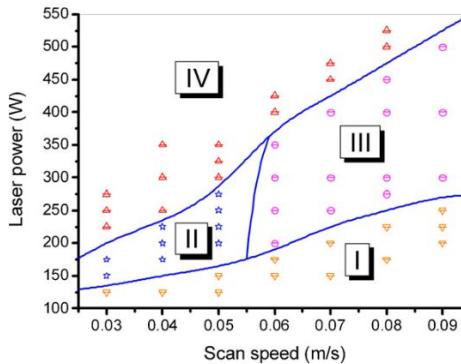
Process parameters and impact on part properties

☐ Laser Power & Scanning Speed

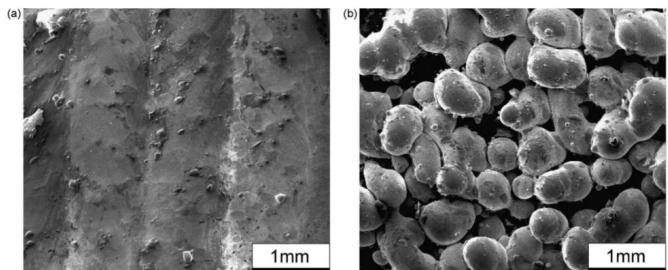
- ☐ Need of an optimal combination avoids defects
 - ☐ Zone I → Insufficient fusion
 - ☐ Zone II and III → Balling (Fig. b) = weak cohesion, need more penetration
 - ☐ Zones IV → Perfect melting (Fig. a)

☐ Hatch angle

- ☐ Is laser scanning direction angle between two layers
- ☐ E.g., 105° angle improves isotropy in 304 stainless steel



Influence of varying the laser power and scanning speed [2]



Microstructure : a) Complete melted surface; b) Surface with balling phenomenon [3]

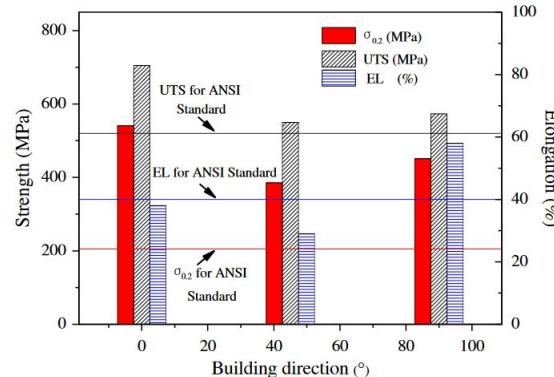
Process parameters and impact on part properties

❑ Build Direction Influence

- ❑ Horizontal (0°) → Best for ductility
- ❑ Vertical (90°) → Good combin. strength + ductility
- ❑ 45° → Least favorable for mechanical properties

❑ Additional Parameters

- ❑ Layer thickness → Affects precision and surface finish
- ❑ Overlap rate → Impacts density and strength



Mechanical properties in function of the build direction [4]

□ Common Materials

- Stainless steels, aluminum (e.g., AlSi10), titanium alloys (e.g., TiAl6V4), nickel alloys (Inconel 718), and Co-Cr alloys

□ Material Requirements

- Powder form with specific grain size
- High laser absorption (e.g., near-infrared lasers = wavelength around 1000nm)
- Limitations for reflective metals like copper → need laser with lower wavelength (around 500 nm) = more expensive

□ Emerging Materials

- Metal-ceramic Matrix Composites (e.g., Titanium and boron carbides in Inconel 718)
 -  Hardness, wear resistance, strength, corrosion high-temperature resistance
- Intermetallics (e.g., Al-La-Mg-Mn alloys)
 -  mechanical properties at high temperatures while avoiding cracking

□ Initial Steps

- Remove excess powder
- Support removal (manual, bandsaw, EDM)

□ Heat Treatments

- To enhance mechanical properties
- Can be : stress relieving, hardening, or annealing
 - Can reduce residual stresses and/or improve ductility and toughness

□ Surface Treatments

- Electropolishing, bead blasting → Improves smoothness
- Spray painting → Corrosion protection
- Anodizing or electroplating → Strength and wear resistance

Pros and Cons of SLM

	
Production of complex parts	Residual stresses in the part (due to high cooling rate)
Reduction of weight (with infill) <-> cost	Post-processing almost mandatory
Recyclability of unmelt powder	Building size limited
Broad choice of materials	High equipment cost (from 50'000\$ to 1'000'000\$)

Industrial applications

□ Medical and dental industry

- Need of biocompatibility, high precision and corrosion resistance
 - Main materials : Titanium alloys, Co-Cr alloys and stainless steels



Hip implant (Ti alloy) [5]

□ Automotive industry

- Light weight parts for high-performance vehicles and corrosion resistant
 - Main materials : Stainless steel and titanium alloys



Exhaust system (stainless steel) [6]

□ Aerospace industry

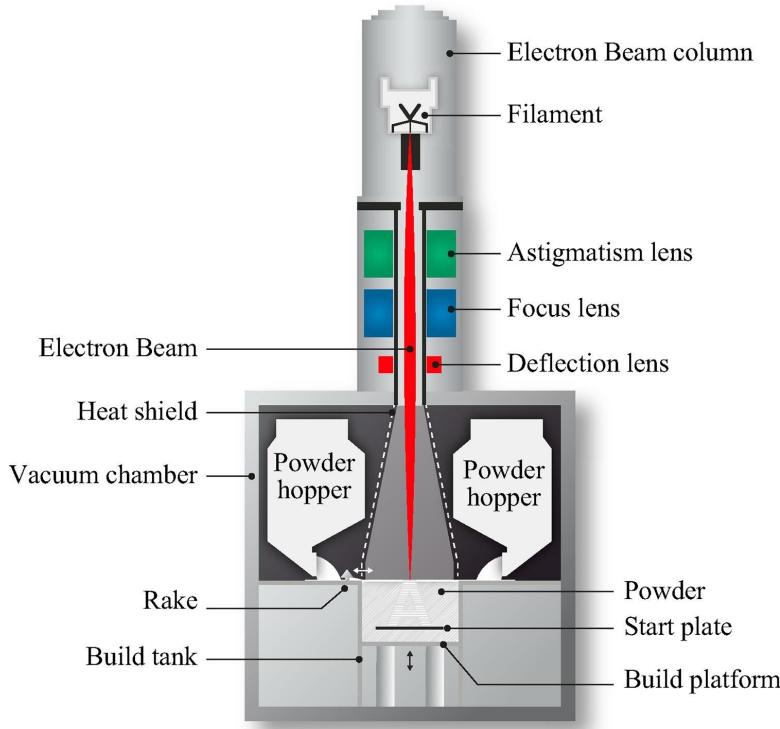
- Need of high temperature and corrosion resistance
 - Main materials : Nickel alloys



Gas turbine (Inconel 718) [8]



Dental implants (Co-Cr alloy) [7]



Electron-Beam Melting (EBM)

Luka Roche

Electron-Beam Melting (EBM)

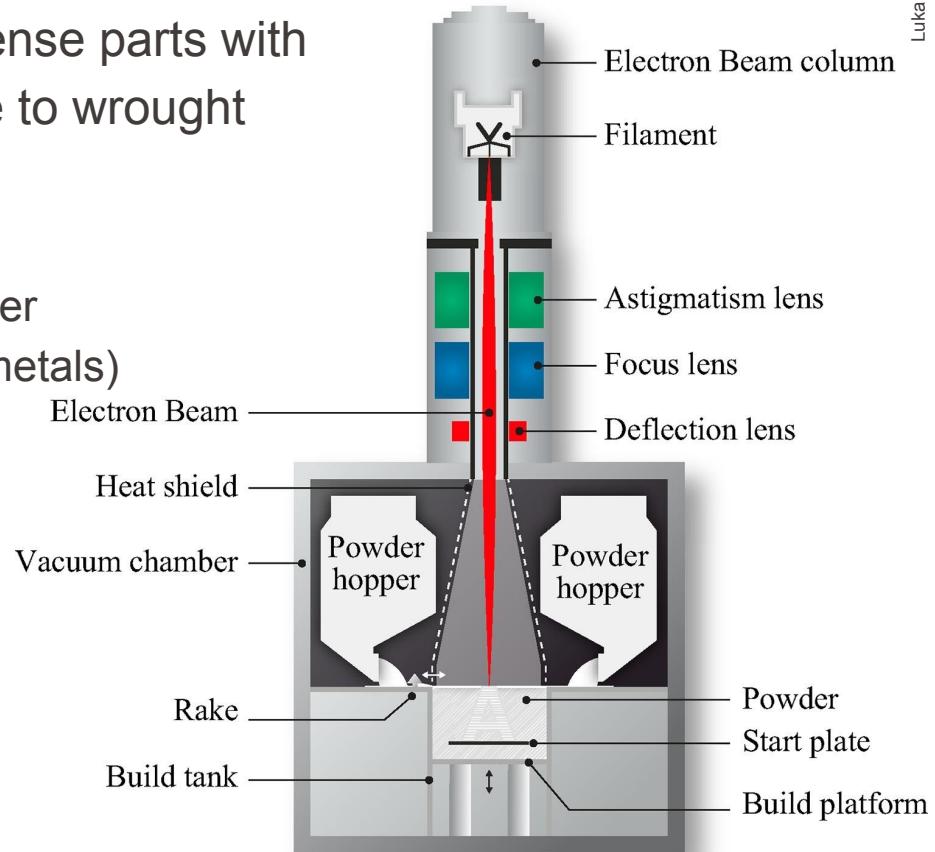
Fast production of complex and dense parts with mechanical properties comparable to wrought metals

❑ Background

- ❑ Electron beam instead of laser
- ❑ Only conducting materials (metals)
- ❑ Local melting of powder bed
- ❑ Layer by layer
- ❑ Vacuum environment

❑ Marketing

- ❑ First and only by Arcam, General Electrics (GE)
- ❑ Sweden, 2001



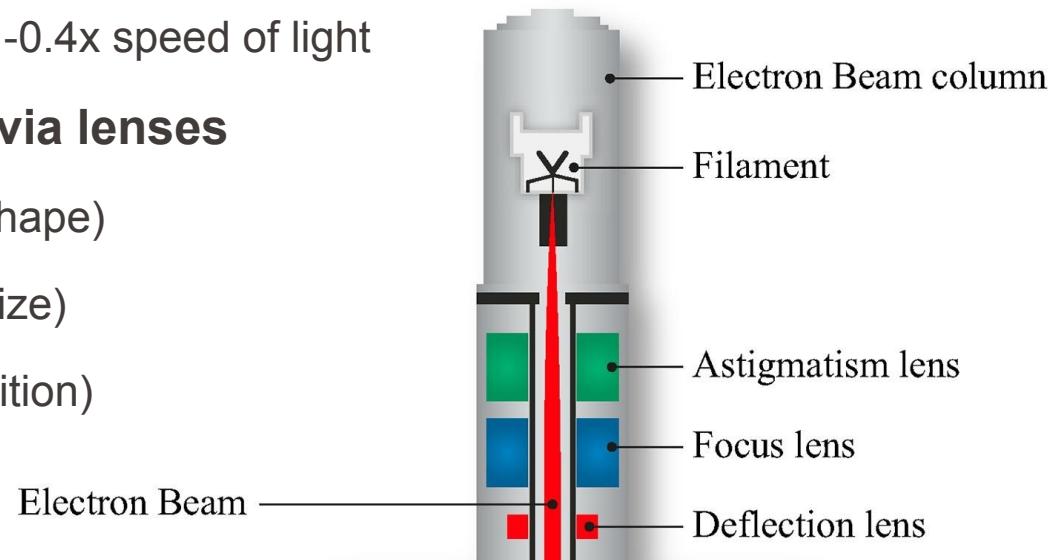
Electron-Beam generation

□ Generation of electron beam

- 60 kV between filament and anode
- Emited electron 0.1-0.4x speed of light

□ Control of the beam via lenses

- Astigmatism lens (shape)
- Focus lens (beam size)
- Deflection lens (position)



Components of an Arcam machine, EB column

❑ Different purposes

- ❑ Necessary to avoid interaction with molecules
- ❑ Minimise gas flow, reduce internal stresses -> avoid thermal cracks

❑ Vacuum achievement

- ❑ Turbomolecular pumps
- ❑ Generally $\sim 10^{-3}$ Pa
- ❑ Some helium added for better heat dissipation
- ❑ In both, chamber and column

❑ Drawback

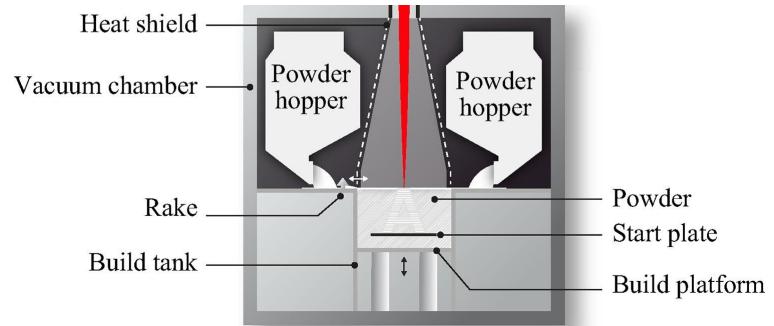
- ❑ Equipment cost, time to reach vacuum

□ Powder particles

- Generally 45-105 μm size
- Stored in powder hopper

□ Materials

- EB can reach higher temperatures (interesting for titanium)
- Independent of the absorptivity
 - Example: Copper has a low absorption efficiency in the infrared domain



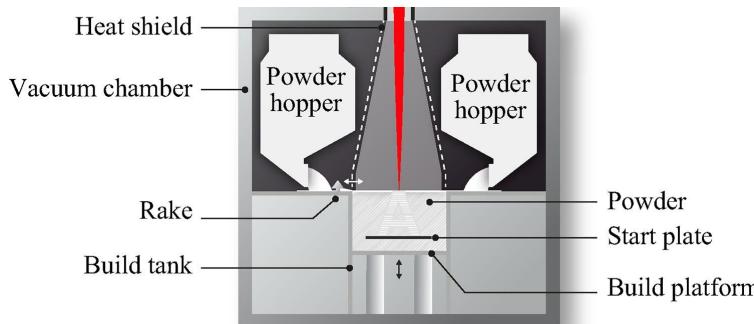
Components of an Arcam machine

- According to GE, EBM works well with:

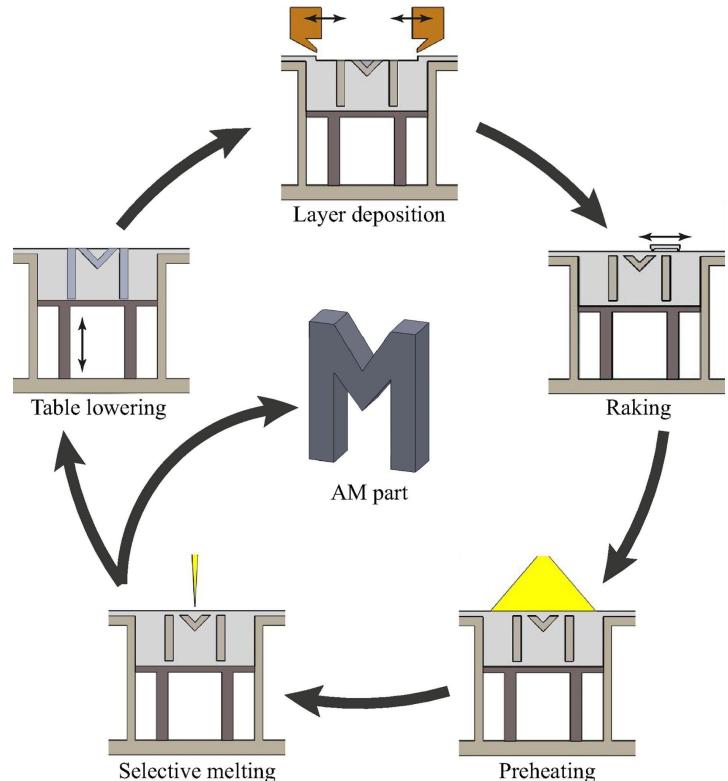
Stainless steel, nickel- and cobalt-based superalloys, Invar, aluminum, copper, titanium alloys...

Layer by layer production

- ❑ Deposition of powder layer
- ❑ Raking (homogeneous spreading)
- ❑ Preheating
- ❑ Selective melting
 - ❑ Form one “2D slice” of the part
 - ❑ Fusion with previous layer
- ❑ Lowering of the build platform
 - ❑ Production of next layer



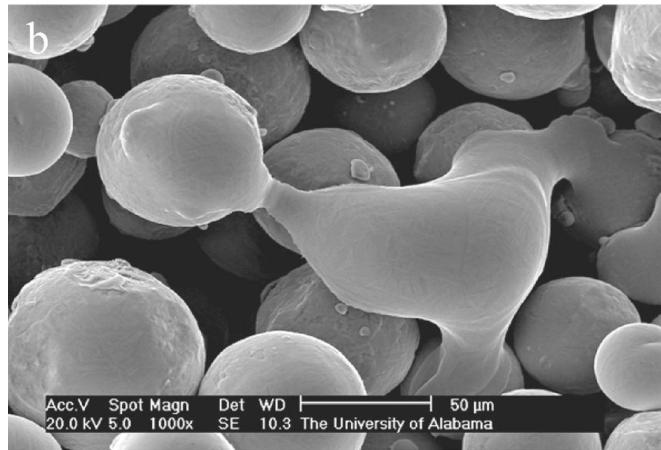
Components of an Arcam machine, vacuum chamber



Steps of the EBM process [8]

Preheating

- ❑ Preheating of the start plate and the powder
 - ❑ Via an unfocused electron-beam
 - ❑ Temperature depends on metal
 - ❑ Sintering of particles (necking)
 - ❑ Increased thermal conductivity between particles
 - ❑ Reduced risk of powder spreading



SEM images of Ti6Al4V preheated particles, circular necks form

End of production

- ❑ Cooling
 - ❑ Increase pressure and helium
 - ❑ Easier heat dissipation
- ❑ Recycling of unused powder
 - ❑ Both volatile and agglomerated
 - ❑ Sand blasting
- ❑ Post-processing
 - ❑ Possible but not mandatory

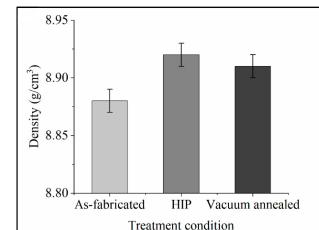
Post-processing

☐ Increase an already high density

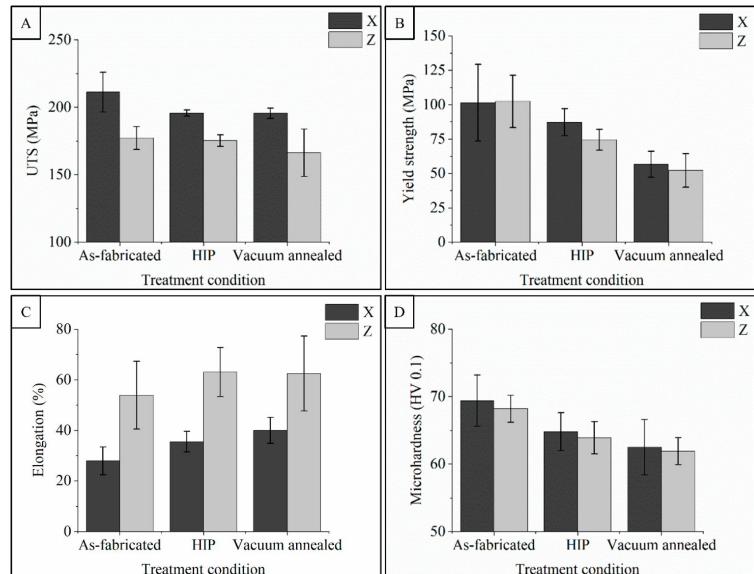
- ☐ Isostatic pressing (HIP)
- ☐ Vacuum annealing (VA)

☐ Mechanical properties

- ☐ Anisotropy (regardless of post processing)
- ☐ Both HIP and VA:
 - ☐ decrease ultimate tensile strength
 - ☐ decrease yield strength
 - ☐ decrease Vickers microhardness
 - ☐ increase elongation to failure



Effect of treatment condition on the density



Mechanical properties summary and selected statistical observations

Comparison with SLM

Differences between EBM and SLM

Characteristics	EBM	SLM
Thermal source	Electron beam	Laser
Production rate	3 kg/h	0.2 kg/h
Atmosphere	Vacuum	Inert gas
Energy absorption	Conductivity-limited	Absorptivity-limited
Energy costs	Moderate	High
Powder particle size	Medium	Fine
Feature resolution	Moderate	Excellent
Surface finish	Moderate to poor	Excellent to moderate

Applications for EBM-parts

□ Biomedical industry

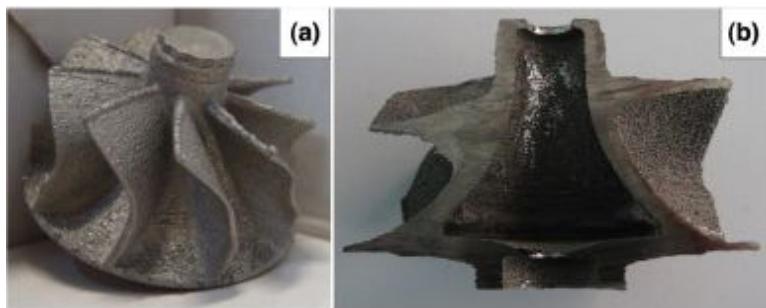
- Complex shapes
- Cellular, meshed, and porous structures
- Orthopedic metal implants



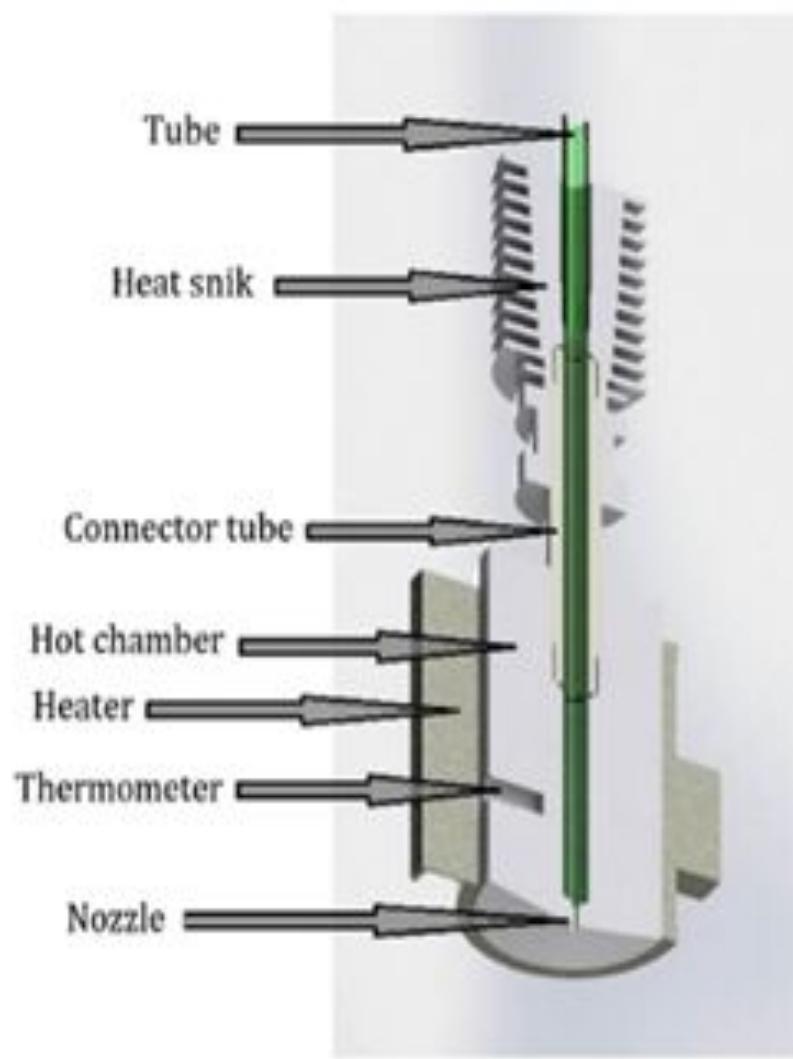
Ti mandibular framework fabricated using EBM technology [1]

□ Aerospace industry

- Complex parts, titanium alloys
- Enhanced mechanical properties
- Reduced risk of heat cracking
- Aircraft engine blades, automotive turbocharger wheels



TiAl turbocharger wheel produced by EBM [2]



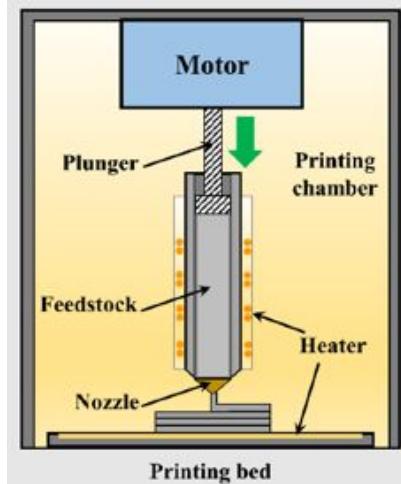
Material extrusion

Adrien Borgeat

A. Jabbari and K. Abrinia, "A metal additive manufacturing method: semi-solid metal extrusion and deposition," *The International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology*, vol. 94, no. 9, pp. 3819–3828, Feb. 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00170-017-1058-7>

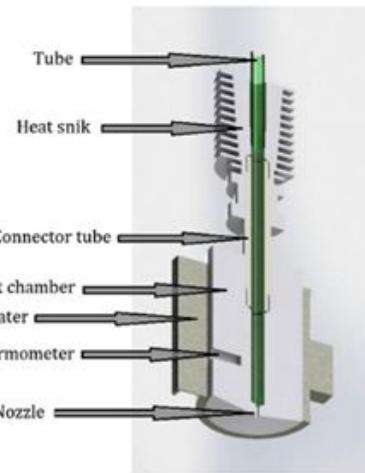
Material Extrusion

- Many possible processes (well-established or in development)
 - Metal extrusion (MEX)
 - Semi-solid material extrusion and deposition (SSMED)



MEX setup [1]

[1] Suwanpreecha, C., and A. Manonukul, Metals 12.3 (2022): 429.

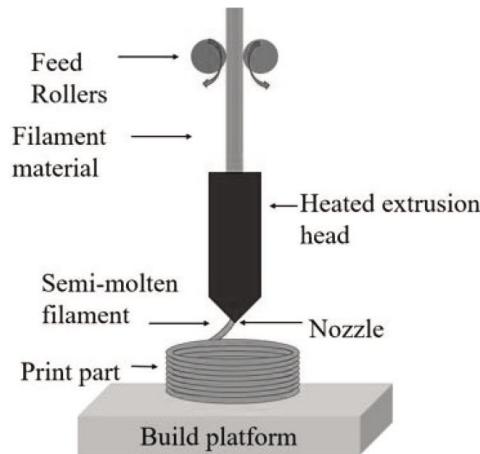


SSMED setup [2]

[2] A. Jabbari and K. Abrinia, "A metal additive manufacturing method: semi-solid metal extrusion and deposition," The International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology, vol. 94, no. 9, pp. 3819–3828, Feb. 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00170-017-1058-7>

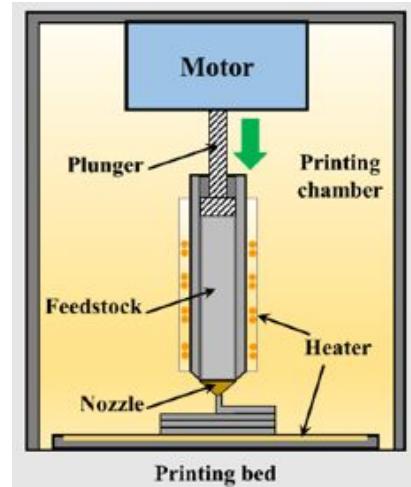
Metal Extrusion

- ❑ Based on a process efficient for polymers
- ❑ Comparison with Metal Injection Molding (MIM) because:
 - ❑ debinding and sintering needed
 - ❑ Same feedstocks can be used



Fused deposition modelling (FDM)
(since 1980s) [1]

[1] Marciak, M., Advances in Military Technology 18.2 (2023): 241–257.

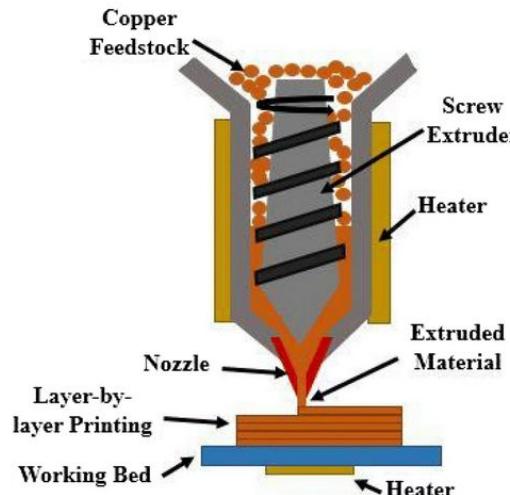


Metal Extrusion
(since 2000s) [2]

[2] Suwanpreecha, C., and A. Manonukul, Metals 12.3 (2022): 429.

3 methods to produce green bodies

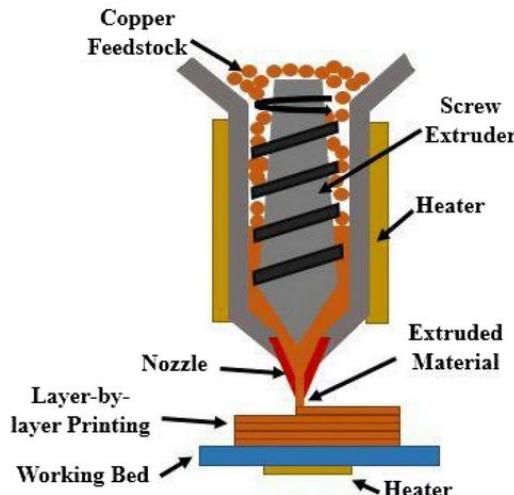
Screw-based



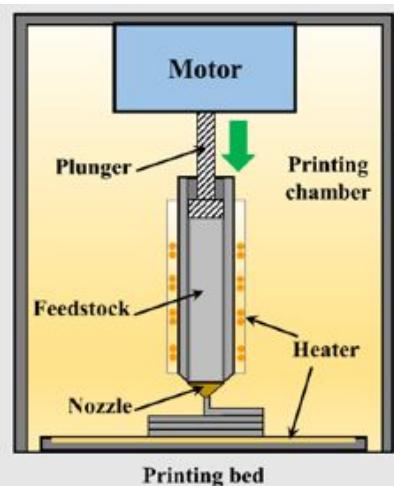
Same granules like MIM
Can be refilled (no stop)
Hard to control flow rate

3 methods to produce green bodies

Screw-based



Plunger-based

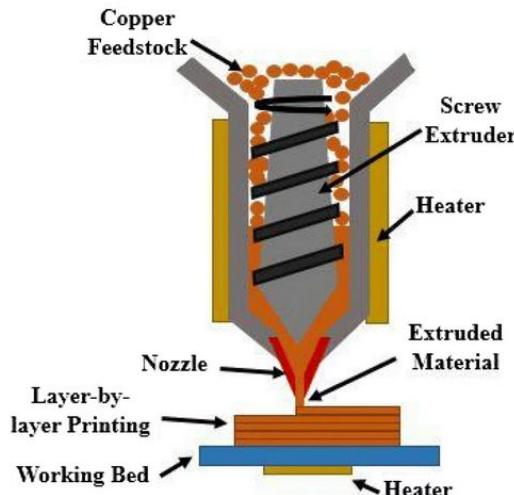


Same granules like MIM
Can be refilled (no stop)
Hard to control flow rate

No screw => simplified head
Keep MIM feedstock
Not continuous

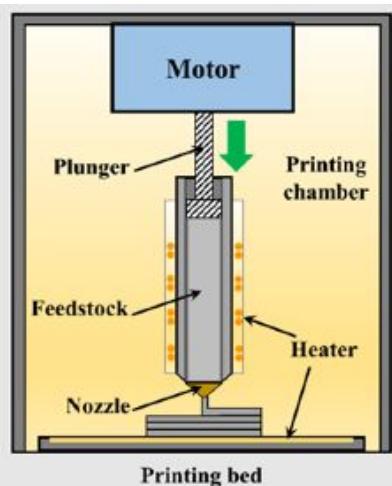
3 methods to produce green bodies

Screw-based



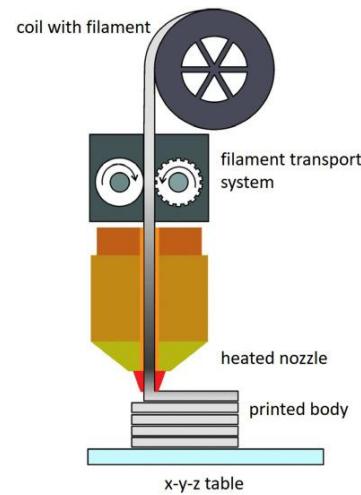
Same granules like MIM
Can be refilled (no stop)
Hard to control flow rate

Plunger-based



No screw => simplified head
Keep MIM feedstock
Not continuous

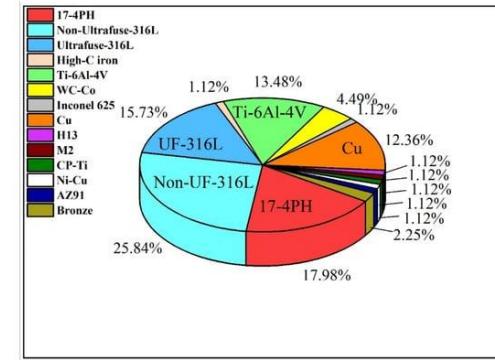
Filament-based



Cheaper (1 vs 5-10 kCHF)
Similar to FDM
Production of wires (one more step)

Feedstock composition

- ❑ Metal alloy: **stainless steel**, Cu, Ti, Ni -> any sinterable alloy
 - ❑ Small and spherical particles (increase green density)
 - ❑ Fraction of feedstock: 60-70 vol.% (50-60 vol.% for filament-based)
- ❑ Plasticiser: wax, paraffin, low molecular weight polymer
 - ❑ Reduces viscosity
 - ❑ 50-90 vol.% of polymers added
- ❑ Backbone: PP, PE, higher molecular weight polymer
 - ❑ Gives strength when plasticiser is removed
 - ❑ 10-40 vol.% of polymers added



Metals used as feedstock for MEX [1]

Debinding & Sintering

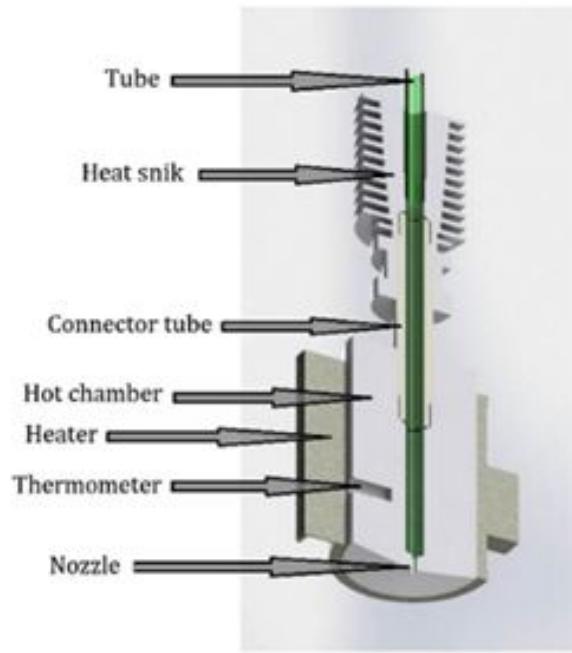
- ❑ Elimination of plasticizer
 - ❑ Most common: through solvent (hexane, acetone)
 - ❑ More rarely: evaporation -> big bubbles damaging the structure
- ❑ Elimination of backbone
 - ❑ Thermally removed
 - ❑ Under protective atmosphere
- ❑ Sintering
 - ❑ Temperature and time depend on metal
 - ❑ 12-20% size reduction



As-printed through MEX and as sintered Ti-6Al-4V piece

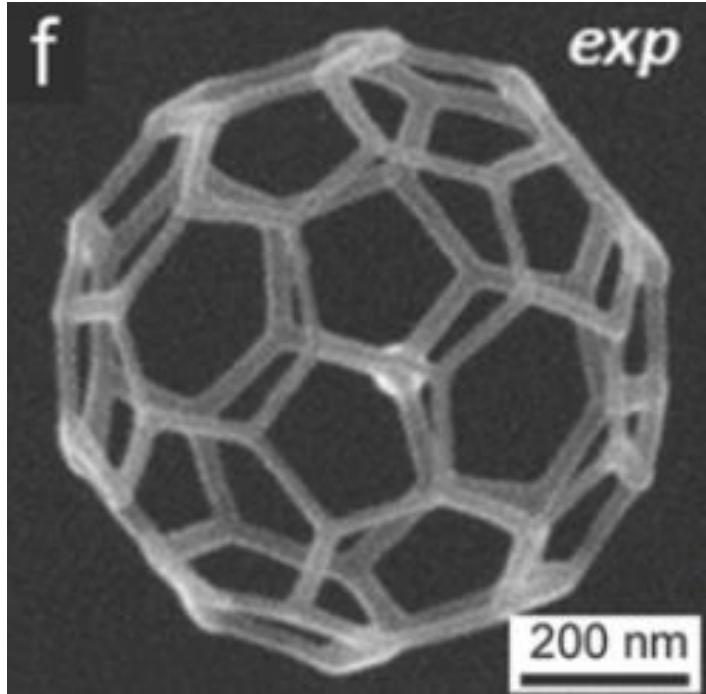
	
Same feedstock like MIM => wide range of possible metals	Nozzles suffer from high wear
No loose powder => better for health	Low mechanical properties
Lower power sources needed as the metal is not completely melted	Many steps (printing, debinding, sintering)
Multiple nozzles => multi-material printing	Lower resolution than SLM (250-400 μm)
Applications for prothesis	

Semi-solid metal extrusion and deposition (SSMED)



- Solid fraction: 30-50%
- More possible materials (lower temperature)
- Feedstock: globular grains to ensure better properties
- Printer similar to Fused Deposition Modeling (polymers)

	
No powder at all	Rheology of semi-solid metal badly understood
Better deposition rate and repeatability than powder based processes	Difficult to ensure globular microstructure of feedstock
Density: 100%	Different printer head for different solid fraction
Lower temperature => less shrinkage, new possible materials	Lower resolution than SLM (250-400 μm)
Only one process (no need of sintering)	

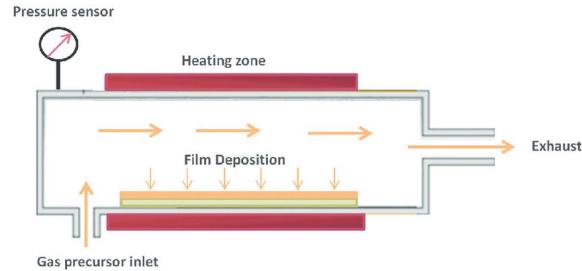


Complex FEBID Structur [1]

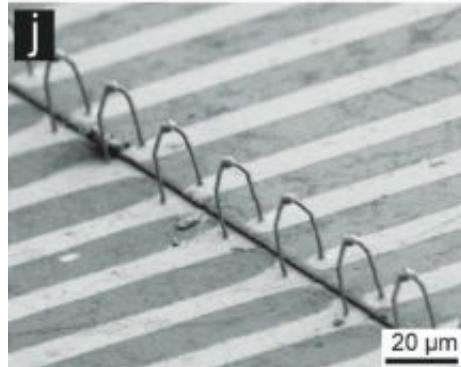
Micro and nano-scale AM of metals

Arnaud Sansonnens

- Metal often use in microstructure
 - Microsystem, Microfluidic, Quantum Application
 - Electrical Conductivity, Thermal Conductivity, Magnetism Properties, Mechanical Durability, Chemical Resistance, Superconductivity
- Industrial 2D application with Electroplating, CVD, PVD
- AM allows 3D structures
 - Complex Shape (freeform, internal channel)
 - Layer by Layer or Out of Plane Geometry



CVD Process [2]

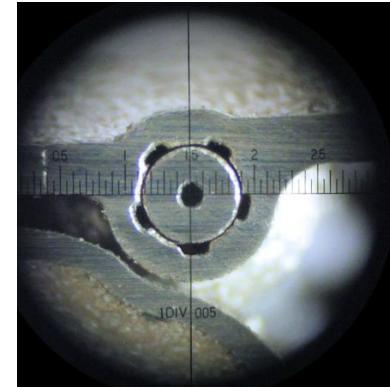


3D silver interconnect [1]

- Improvement from SLM
 - smaller particles size ($< 1\mu\text{m}$)
 - layer thickness (μm range)
 - Laser Spot Diam. ($<$ tens μm)
 - Laser Source (in range of 100W)
- One of the most common and advanced commercialized machines for μ SLM is DMP74 [5]



Stents manufactured with μ SLM[3]



Pivot Join [4]

[3] <https://additive.industrie.de/news/micro-slm-hybrider-3d-druck-pu-schaum-metal-coating-fit-additive-manufacturing/#1>

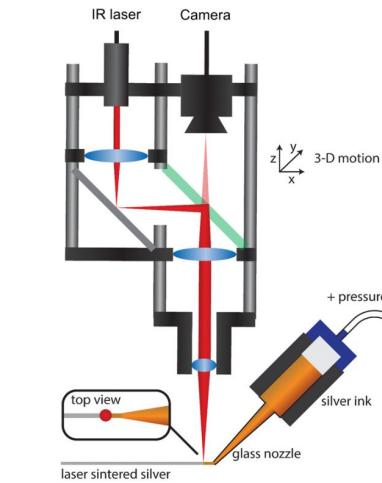
[4] <https://www.3dmicroprint.com/files/2016/12/Case-study-grabber.pdf>

[5] <https://www.3dmicroprint.com/files/2024/03/Maschine DMP.pdf>

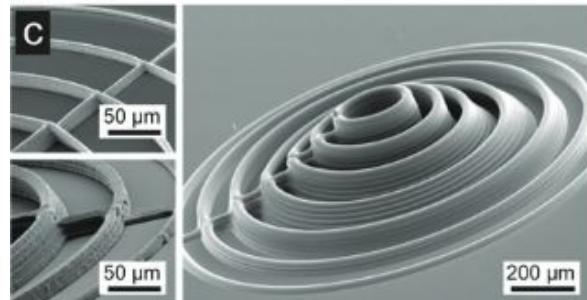
Direct Ink Writing (DIW)

- Depose Ink with metal nanoparticle inside
 - similar to macro. filament extrusion
- Importance of viscosity of it's ink (solid core, fluid shell)
- Laser-DIW enable in situ annealing
- Capabilities [1] :
 - Deposition Size : DIW = $2\mu\text{m}$, Lazer-DIW = 600nm
 - Deposition Rate : DIW = $20\text{-}500\ \mu\text{m/s}$ Lazer DIW = $0.5\text{-}1\ \text{mm/s}$

[6] M. A. Skylar-Scott, S. Gunasekaran, and J. A. Lewis, "Laser-assisted direct ink writing of planar and 3D metal architectures," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 113, no. 22, pp. 6137-6142, May 2016



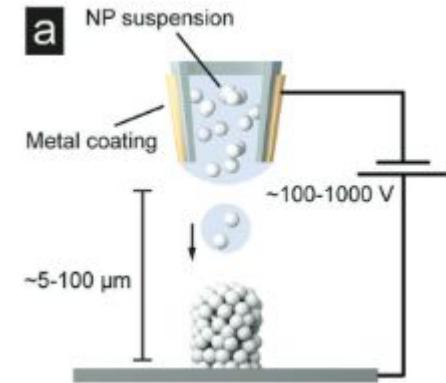
Laser-DIW Process [6]



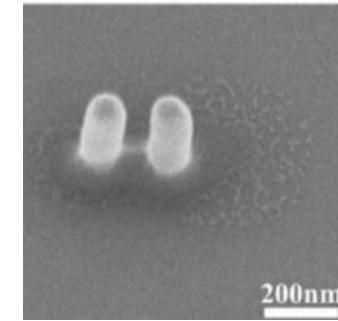
SEM image of 3D Silver-Structure [1]

Electrohydrodynamic (EHD) printing

- Use electrostatic fields to eject tiny droplets
- Ink Deposition Modes
 - Cone Jet : continuous jet of ink from the nozzle, very useful to create continuous track
 - Microdripping : pulsed electric field release periodically tiny droplets
- Feature Sizes
 - Cone Jet : few μm
 - Microdripping : tens of nm



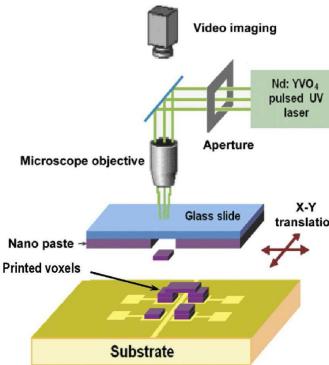
EHD Process [1]



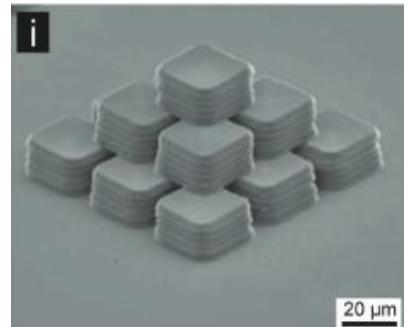
2 pillars manufactured by EHD [1]

Laser-Induced Forward Transfer (LIFT)

- Use laser ablation to transfer material from a donor layer to a substrate
- Often need surface pre-treatment to improve adherence
- Minimal Feature Size = 0.5 μm [7]
- Often use to produce vertical and layered structure



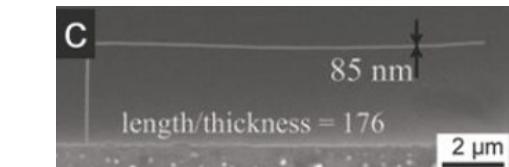
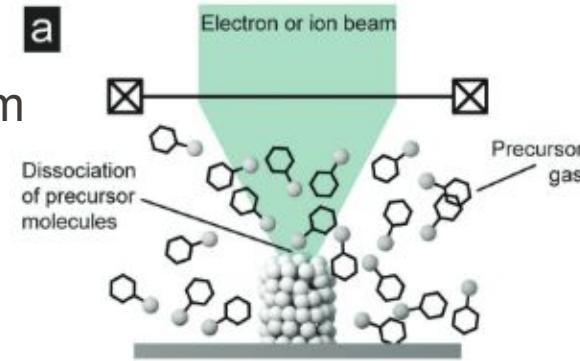
Lift Process [7]



Structure with stacked layer [7]

Focused Electron/Ion Beam Induced Deposition (FEBID/FIBID)

- Most precise AM methods for metal
- Precursor gas dissociates upon electron/ion beam interaction, depositing solid material onto substrate
- FIBID has higher deposition rate but risk of contamination
- Resolution of 0.7–2 nm achievable, it depends on interaction volume [8]
- SEM feedback enables precise 3D structures with control



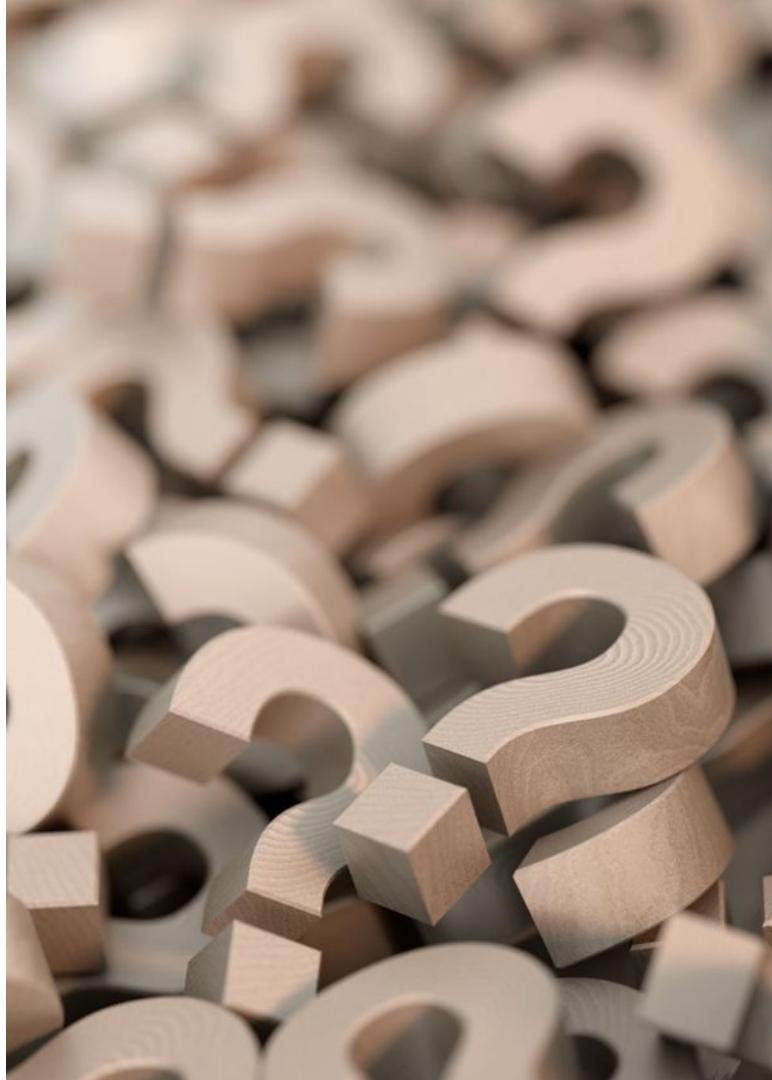
Standing Wire [1]

Comparison between all the techniques at the macro scale (added after the presentation)

Methods	Resolution [μm]	Printing speed [mm/s]	Printer cost [kCHF]	Loose powders ?	More than one material at a time?
DED	300-1000	2.5-25	~500	Yes	Yes
SLM	20-100	10-50	50-1000	Yes	No
EBM	50-200	200-1000*	100-250	Yes	No
MEX	250-400	1-80**	1-10	No	Yes

*without time to achieve vacuum

**Only to print green bodies. Debinding (8 hours for standard pieces) and sintering (2-4 hours) are not considered here



Questions & Answers