

Student's point of view

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My footsteps to PhD:

- Physics - my favorite subject since the primary school
- After high school I did apply for the study of physics and electronic engineering.
- I decided to stay with physics (I do like challenge).
- After three years of bachelor study I have to choose the specialization.
- I did choose experimental particle physics.
(The “smell” of experiment was too strong :)
- I finished my master degree participating in GEM experiment at Juelich, Germany. (good start with the small experiment).
- After that I decided to continue with PhD study and I did accept new challenge – the ALICE experiment

Funding:

- PhD students are funded with scholarship coming from the Ministry of Education, Science,, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (the monthly base salary).
- The monthly salary is approximately 13% less then the average salary in Slovakia.
- There are also possibilities for the other grants (projects) which are provided by the Ministry of Education (supporting project for sub-nuclear physicists participating at CERN) or by other organizations (committee for the cooperation with CERN).
- Those supports are very welcome and I believe also effectively used.
- I have enough money to travel few times per year to CERN or to several conferences or PhD schools.
- My financial situation is acceptable.



The Big collaboration:

- The collaboration is really Big (over 1100 participants)
- The communication skills are really needed.
- Rising responsibility – other people depend on my results.
- Opportunity to meet many interesting people from all over the world and discuss with them.
- Opportunity to travel and present own work at many places and in front of many people.
(much more skilled in communication and presentation than my colleagues from other fields and smaller projects).
- The work is pretty time consuming. (never-ending fight between the work time and the private time).

Research work:

- The timing was just great for my PhD at ALICE
- First data starts to flow after more than 15 years of preparation for the first collisions.
- Lot of experienced people who was just waiting with tuned, well prepared analysis macros for the first data sets.
- Not easy to keep up with them for the newcomers.

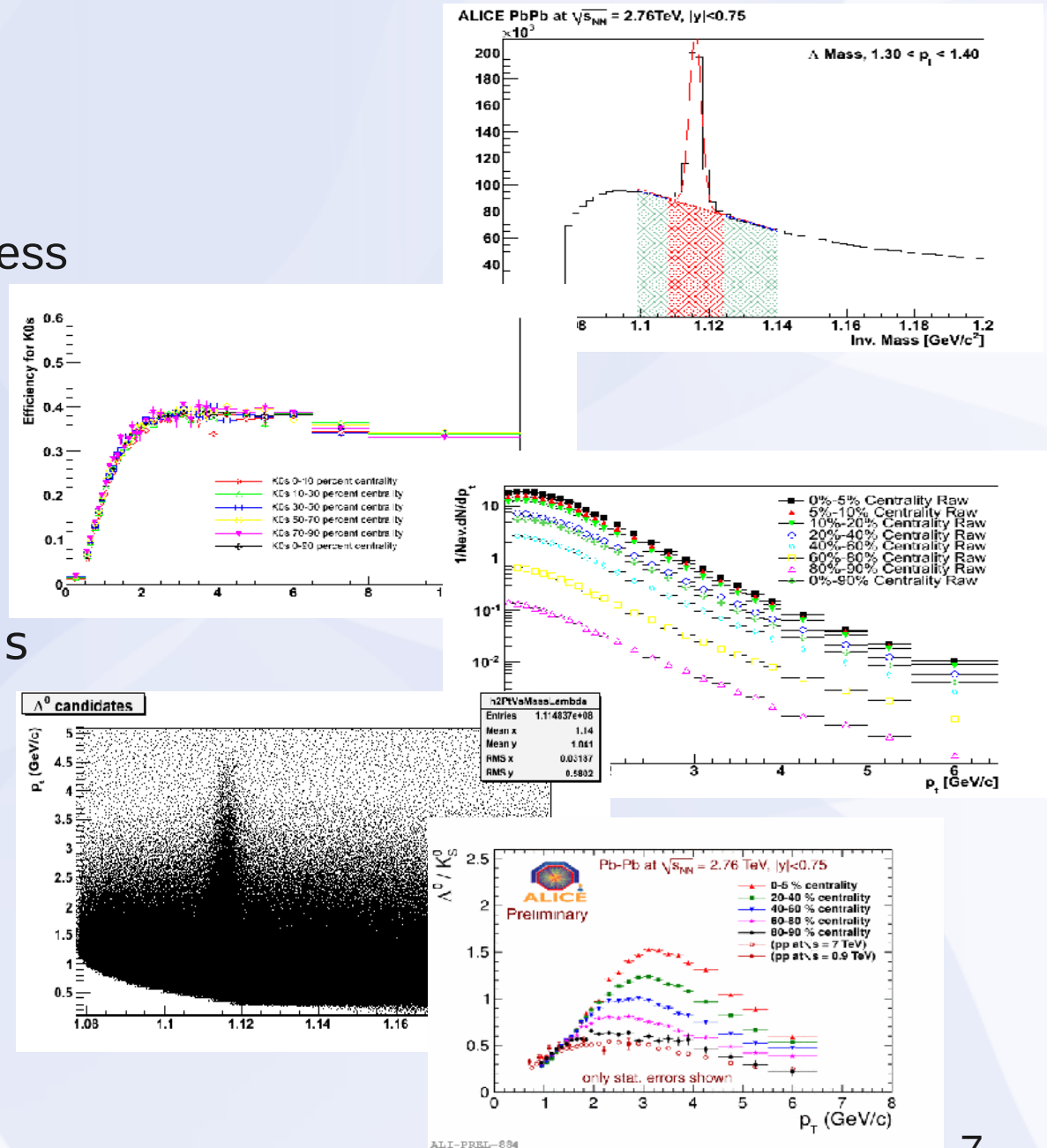
“ It is not easy to jump into the accelerating train.”

Dr. Ladislav Šándor

- Thanks to the experiences and good connections of my supervisor a have met right people at right time and could start working hard.
- Nowadays I'm participating in the main stream analysis and everyday discussions with the professionals.

My PhD work:

- Hunting for the strangeness (V0)
- Using ITS and TPC detectors mostly
- Lookin for K^0_s and Λ
- Extracting signal
- Efficiency corrections
- Feed-down corrections
- Centrality dependent studies.
- Comparison to the models.
- Quality checks for raw data and for Monte-Carlo data.



Talking about the future:

- The future is uncertain
(too many initial conditions and free parameters to solve this differential equation now :).
- Not many open working positions in the research area for graduates here in Slovakia and similar situation also in other European countries.
- Thinking about the other options like post-Doc position
(very low possibility to get the post-Doc position in Slovakia)
- The “nesting” factor getting stronger with years.
- I would like to do the physics but if I will not what else can I do? IT?

Conclusions:

- To be a PhD student in Slovakia is nice
- The work is interesting and to be a part of the international collaboration is a very good experience.
- The future is uncertain but ...
- This work is great :)

Thank you for attention!