



Contribution ID: 2

Type: **not specified**

New directional signatures from the non-relativistic effective field theory of dark matter

Monday 21 September 2015 12:15 (25 minutes)

The framework of non-relativistic effective field theory (NREFT) aims to generalise the standard analysis of direct detection experiments in terms of spin-dependent (SD) and spin-independent (SI) interactions. I will show that a number of NREFT operators lead to distinctive new directional signatures, such as prominent ring-like features in the directional recoil rate, even for relatively low mass WIMPs. I will discuss these signatures and how they could affect the interpretation of future results from directional detectors. In particular, I will show that for certain NREFT operators, directional sensitivity provides the only method of distinguishing them from the standard SI/SD operators, highlighting the importance of directional detectors in probing the particle physics of dark matter.

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Session Classification: Direct Detection