Großes Physikalisches Kolloquium an der Universität zu Köln

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Unconventional magnetism in spintronics: the emergence of altermagnetism and beyond

9.07.2024
16^{30} Uhr
HS III

Antiferromagnetic spintronics has been a very active research area of condensed matter in recent years. As we have learned how to manipulate collinear antiferromagnets actively and their emergent topology by means of new types of spin-orbit torques, a key problem remained: the inefficiency of relativistic mechanism. The necessity of relativistic effects to manipulate and detect Néel order arises from the spin degeneracy of collinear antiferromagnets in the non-relativistic limit – or at least it was thought. The discovery of d-wave magnetic order in momentum space motivated a closer look at the symmetry classification of collinear magnetic systems. This has emerged as the third basic collinear magnetic ordered phase of altermagnetism, which goes beyond ferromagnets and antiferromagnets.
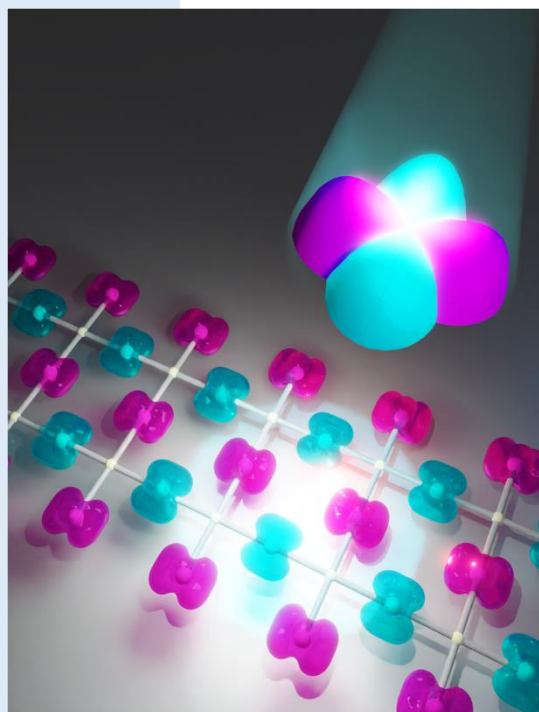
Altermagnets exhibit an unconventional spin-polarized *d/g/i*-wave band structure in reciprocal space, originating from the local sublattice anisotropies in direct space. This gives properties unique to altermagnets (e.g., the spin-splitter effect), while also having ferromagnetic (e.g., polarized currents) and antiferromagnetic (e.g., THz spin dynamics and zero net magnetization) characteristics useful for spintronics device functionalities. I will cover the basic introductory view to altermagnetism and its consequences to spintronics as well as new emerging exchange driven phenomena akin to spin-orbit coupling effects, such as p-wave magnetism, emerging from the basic concepts that gave rise to the discovery of altermagnetism.