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Novel Low Workfunction Semiconductors for Dark Matter, Neutrino Phenomena and x-ray Astronomy

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In frontier physics, precision calorimetry from photons and charged and neutral massive particles have been crucial to major discoveries. Better resolution and low detection thresholds are of great interest for dark matter searches, solar and reactor neutrino detection and oscillations, neutrino mass measurements, x-ray astronomy, and double-beta decay. A Challenge for semiconductor detectors: $\sim 10-100$ eV. We discuss semiconductor photocathode materials Cs₃Sb(S-11) and Ag-O-Cs(S-1) fabricated as possible bulk detectors both by thermal melts and ALD. The pair energy is as low as 0.7 eV for S-1, and the thermal noise for the S-11 is lower than Si despite a lower pair 2 eV compared to 3.6 eV because the bandgap is 1.6 eV, compared with 1.1 eV for Si. Mobilities for both are an order of magnitude larger than Si. ALD has the ability to make perfect crystals of these weakly bound semiconductors.

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