

# e-Seminar #23

## Supercomputer-based in-silico clinical trials in cardiac therapies towards exascale computing



Presenter:  
**Mariano Vázquez**  
(Barcelona Supercomputing Center, ELEM Biotech)

**27 May 2022**

**The e-Seminar will start  
at 2pm CEST / 1pm BST**



Moderator:  
**Tim Weaving**  
(University College London)



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**Welcome!**



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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 823712



<https://insilicoworld.slack.com/archives/C0151M02TA4>

The e-Seminar series is run in collaboration with:





# SUPERCOMPUTER-BASED IN-SILICO CLINICAL TRIALS

## THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE

MARIANO VÁZQUEZ

CSO/CTO - ELEM BIOTECH

TEAM LEADER - BARCELONA SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER

ELEM

THE VIRTUAL HUMANS  
FACTORY

POWERED BY  **Barcelona  
Supercomputing  
Center**  
Centro Nacional de Supercomputación



# SUPERCOMPUTER-BASED IN-SILICO CLINICAL TRIALS

## THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE NOW

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TEAM LEADER - BARCELONA SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER

### ELEM

THE VIRTUAL HUMANS  
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# MARENOSTRUM IV

166.000 CORES

11.5 PFLOPS

1.3 MW / YEAR

HOSTED BY THE  
BARCELONA  
SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER

HARDWARE SETUP AND  
MAINTENANCE  
SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT  
AND EFFICIENCY  
DATA MANAGEMENT



MARENOSTRUM IV SUPERCOMPUTER



# BARCELONA SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER

600+ RESEARCHERS  
SPANISH PUBLIC CENTER

TIER-0 EUROPEAN  
SUPERCOMPUTING  
NETWORK (PRACE)

APPLIED COMPUTATIONAL  
SCIENCE SINCE 2005



*BSC CORPORATE BUILDING*



# ALYA DEV TEAM

50 RESEARCHERS  
MATHEMATICIANS,  
PHYSICISTS, ENGINEERS,  
PROGRAMMERS...

SENIOR AND PHD  
STUDENTS

BORN WITH BSC IN 2005



FLAMANG, B., MARRAS, S., ET AL. 2020. REMORAS PICK WHERE THEY STICK ON BLUE WHALES. JOURNAL OF EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY, 223, JEB226654. DOI:10.1242/JEB.226654



# ELEM BIOTECH

BSC'S SPINOFF COMPANY

BIOMEDICAL SOFTWARE  
TECHNOLOGY

INSILICO CLINICAL TRIALS

HPC-CLOUD BASED  
SIMULATIONS

CELL, TISSUE AND ORGAN  
LEVEL



*ELEM'S VIRTUAL HUMANS*



# THE TECHNICAL CHALLENGE

RE-CREATE **BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS** IN A COMPUTER

THE MORE **COMPLEX** THE SYSTEM, THE **LARGER** THE  
COMPUTER

THE **LARGER** THE COMPUTER, THE MORE **EFFICIENT**  
THE CODE



# A VIRTUAL HUMANS PLATFORM

SUPERCOMPUTING EFFICIENCY

+

ACCURATE MULTISCALE / MULTIPHYSICS MODELLING

+

VIRTUAL POPULATION GENERATION

---

SUPERCOMPUTER BASED **IN-SILICO CLINICAL TRIALS**  
TO OPTIMIZE AND PERSONALIZE MEDICAL THERAPIES



# A VIRTUAL HUMANS PLATFORM

## THE USER FOLLOWS THESE STEPS

SELECT THE POPULATION  
SELECT THE PRIMARY DISEASE  
SELECT THE COMMORBIDITIES

LAUNCH THE SUPERCOMPUTER-BASED IN-SILICO CLINICAL  
TRIAL ON THE SELECTED VIRTUAL COHORT

WAIT FROM DAYS TO WEEKS (DEPENDING ON THE TESTS)

ANALYSE THE RESULTS AS THEY COME  
REPEAT



# BACKGROUND





# ALYA

## PARALLEL MULTISCALE SIMULATION CODE



USED IN INDUSTRY RELATED PROJECTS: AEROSPACE, ENERGY,  
ENVIRONMENT AND... **BIOMEDICAL**

THE ONLY MULTIPHYSICS MULTISCALE CODE FOR BIOMEDICAL USE AT  
ORGAN LEVEL BORN AND DEVELOPED IN A SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER

VÁZQUEZ, M., HOUZEAUX, G., KORIC, S., ARTIGUES, A., AGUADO-SIERRA, J., ARÍS, R., MIRA, D., CALMET, H., CUCCHIETTI, F., OWEN, H. AND TAHA, A., 2016. ALYA: MULTIPHYSICS ENGINEERING SIMULATION TOWARD EXASCALE. JOURNAL OF COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE, 14, PP.15-27.



# ALYA RED

SIMULATION TOOLS FOR  
BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

INSILICO CLINICAL TRIALS  
AND DIAGNOSE



ORGAN / TISSUE LEVEL

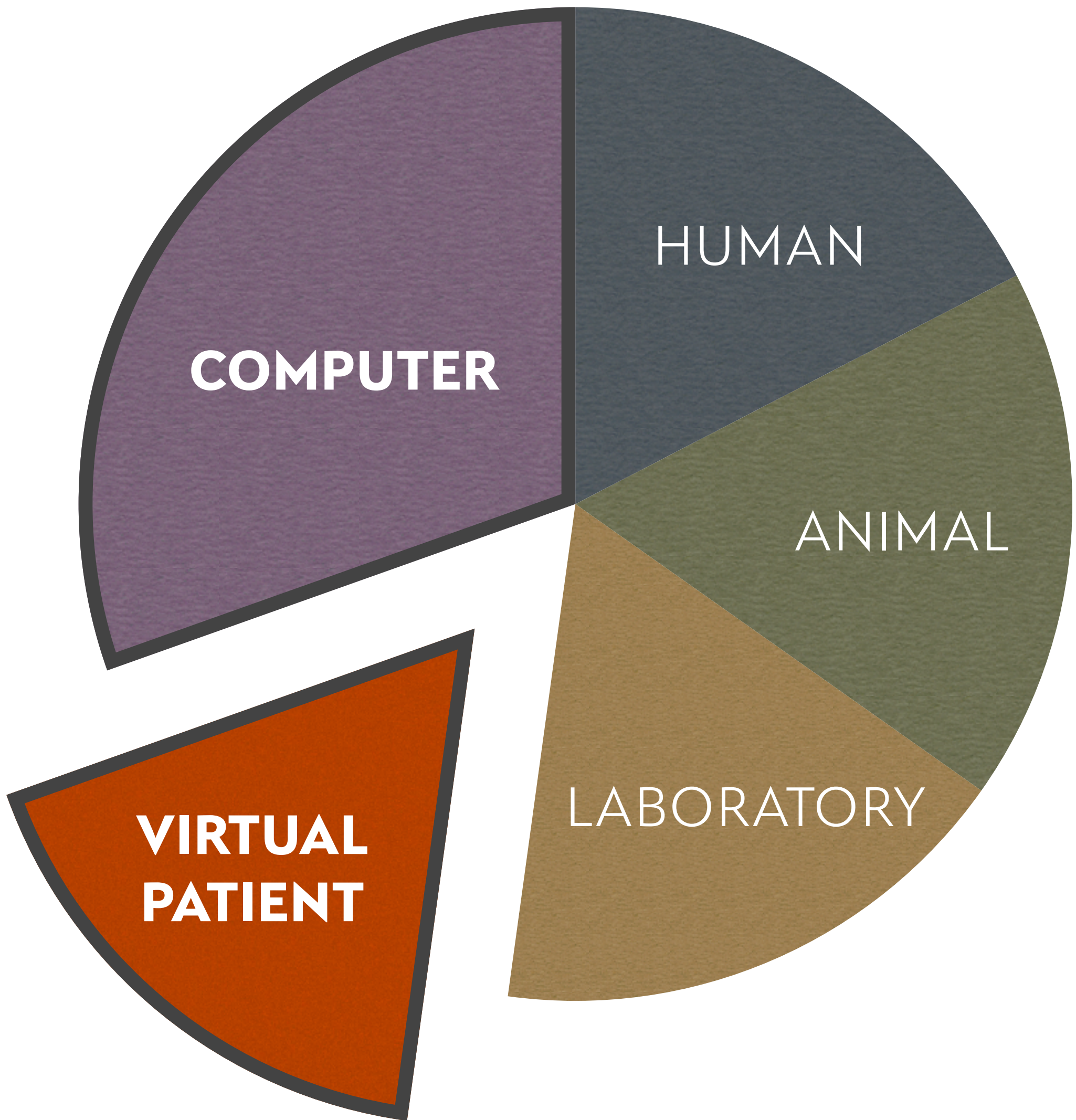
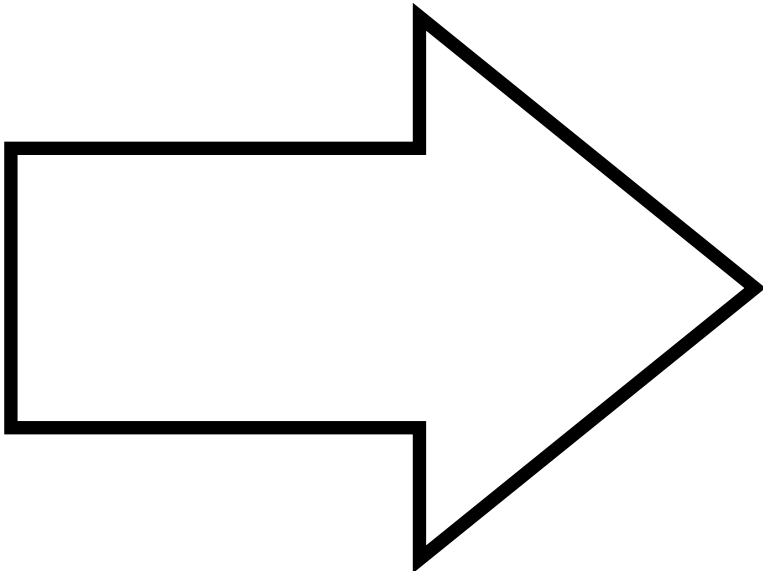
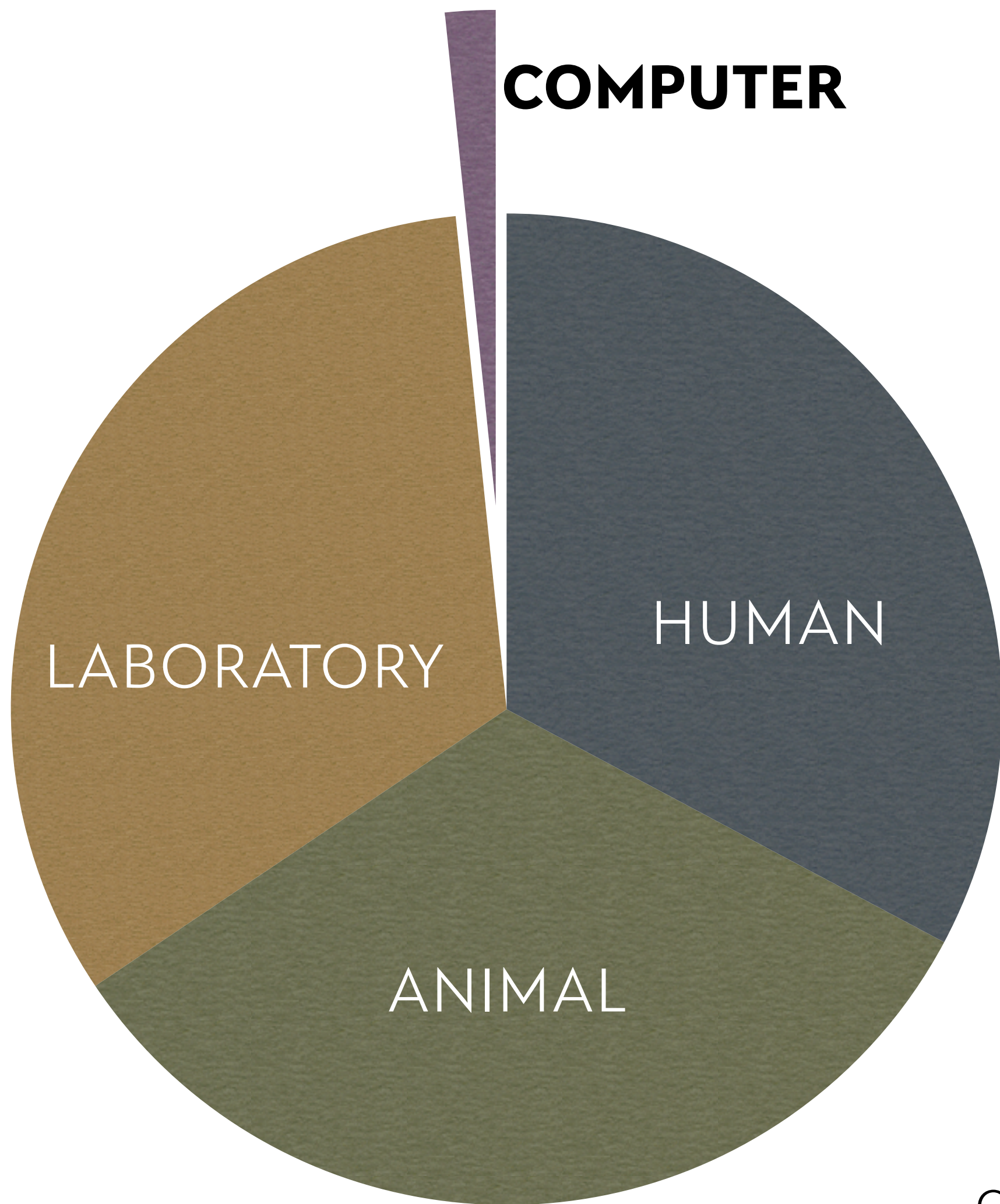
COMPLEX PROBLEMS WHICH REQUIRE SUPERCOMPUTERS

CARDIOVASCULAR, RESPIRATORY, ...  
FOR PHARMA, MEDTECH, ...



# THE VIRTUAL HUMAN

## FDA VISION



CREDIT: MDIC MODELING AND  
SIMULATION PROJECT



# THE VIRTUAL HUMAN

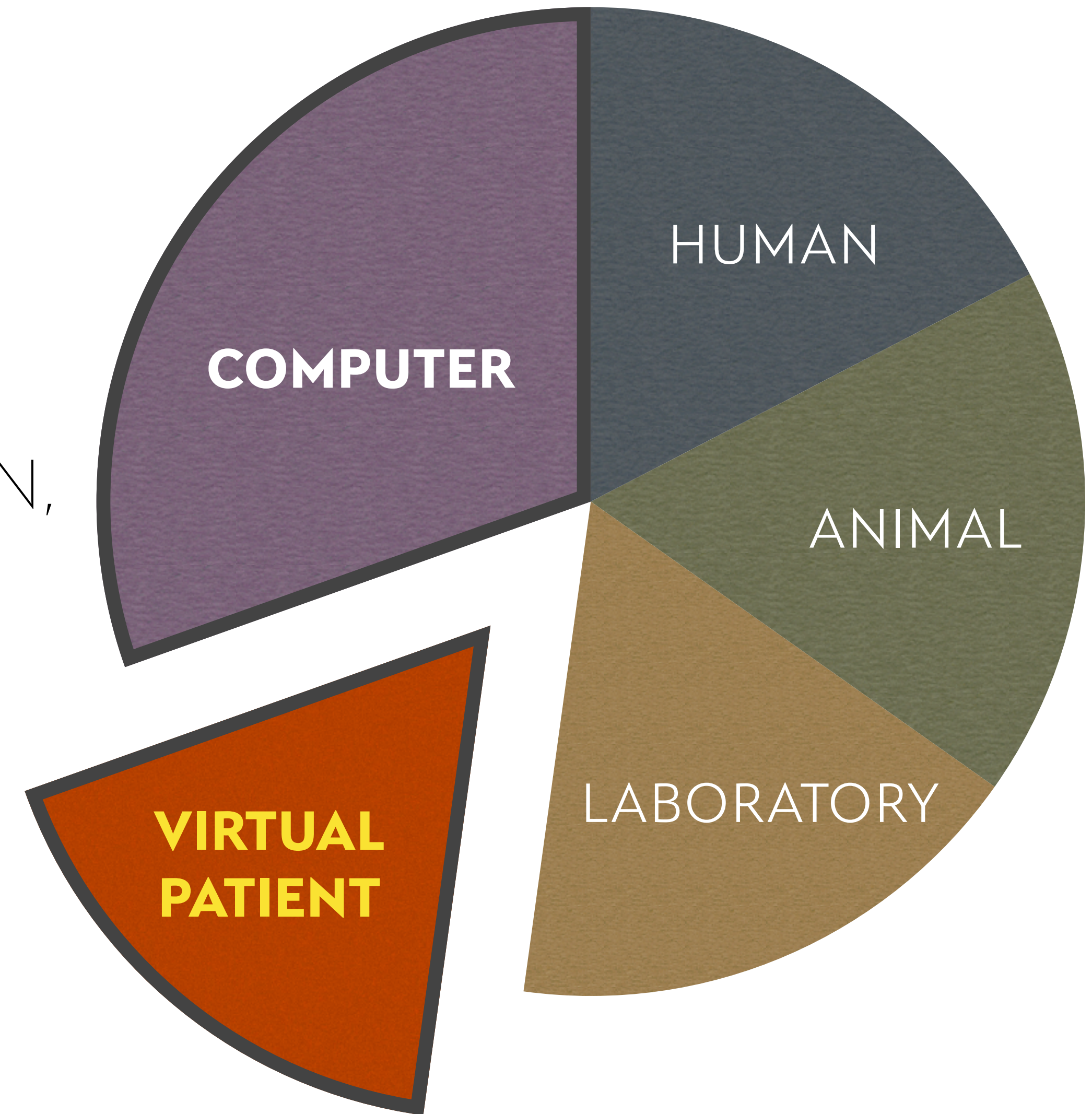
## FDA VISION

### COMPLEXITY BOOST:

MODEL NOT JUST THE ISOLATED THERAPY  
BUT DO IT **ON THE PATIENT**: SYSTEM, ORGAN,  
TISSUE, CELL

IMPLIES **COMPREHENSIVE** MODELLING:  
COMORBIDITIES, PATIENT VARIABILITY, ETC.

REQUIRES SPECIFIC **IN-VIVO AND  
EXPERIMENTAL** VALIDATION ON CONTEXTS  
OF USE



# EXAMPLES

WATCH OUR VIDEO CLIP ABOUT “THE VIRTUAL HUMAN”: [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/GS9PLDZ8OKW](https://youtu.be/GS9PLDZ8OKW)



# THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

COLLABORATORS:

THE VISIBLE HEART LAB - UNIV. OF MINNESOTA(US)  
CENTRO NACIONAL DE INVESTIGACION CARDIOVASCULAR (SPAIN)  
HOSPITAL DE SANT PAU (SPAIN)  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD (UK)  
UNIVERSITAT POMPEU FABRA (SPAIN)  
UNIVERSITAT POLITECNICA DE VALENCIA (SPAIN)  
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY (US)  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (UK)  
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY (US)  
FDA (US)



# THE VIRTUAL HEART ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

## ELECTRO PHYSIOLOGY

model is solved implicitly with either a Backward Euler or a Crank-Nicolson scheme. From numerical experiments we observed that the main limitation solving the electrophysiological model was the time limitation of the tissue model. The proposed combined scheme permits to simulate cardiac electrical propagation both efficient and accurate enough.

### Computational implementation of electrophysiology model

---

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Cell model}(\Delta\phi^*) : \quad & \frac{\Delta\phi^*}{\Delta t} + I_{\text{ion}}(\phi) = 0 \\ \text{Tissue model}(\Delta\tilde{\phi}) : \quad & \left( \frac{M}{\Delta t} + K \right) \Delta\tilde{\phi} = -K\phi^*, \text{ where } \Delta\phi^* = \phi^* - \phi^n \\ \text{Update}(\phi^{n+1}) : \quad & \phi^{n+1} = \phi^n + \Delta\phi^* + \Delta\tilde{\phi}.\end{aligned}$$

---

## 5.3 Alya

The simulations on this Thesis were run in Alya, a code developed at Barcelona Supercomputing Center. It is designed and optimized of large-scale computers. The monodomain model for electrophysiology problem is implemented on Alya as described in Section 5.2.

This software is written in Fortran 90/95 and designed to run efficiently



# THE VIRTUAL HEART ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

## ELECTRO PHYSIOLOGY

model is solved implicitly with either a Backward Euler or scheme. From numerical experiments we observed that the solving the electrophysiological model was the time limiting model. The proposed combined scheme permits to simulate propagation both efficient and accurate enough.

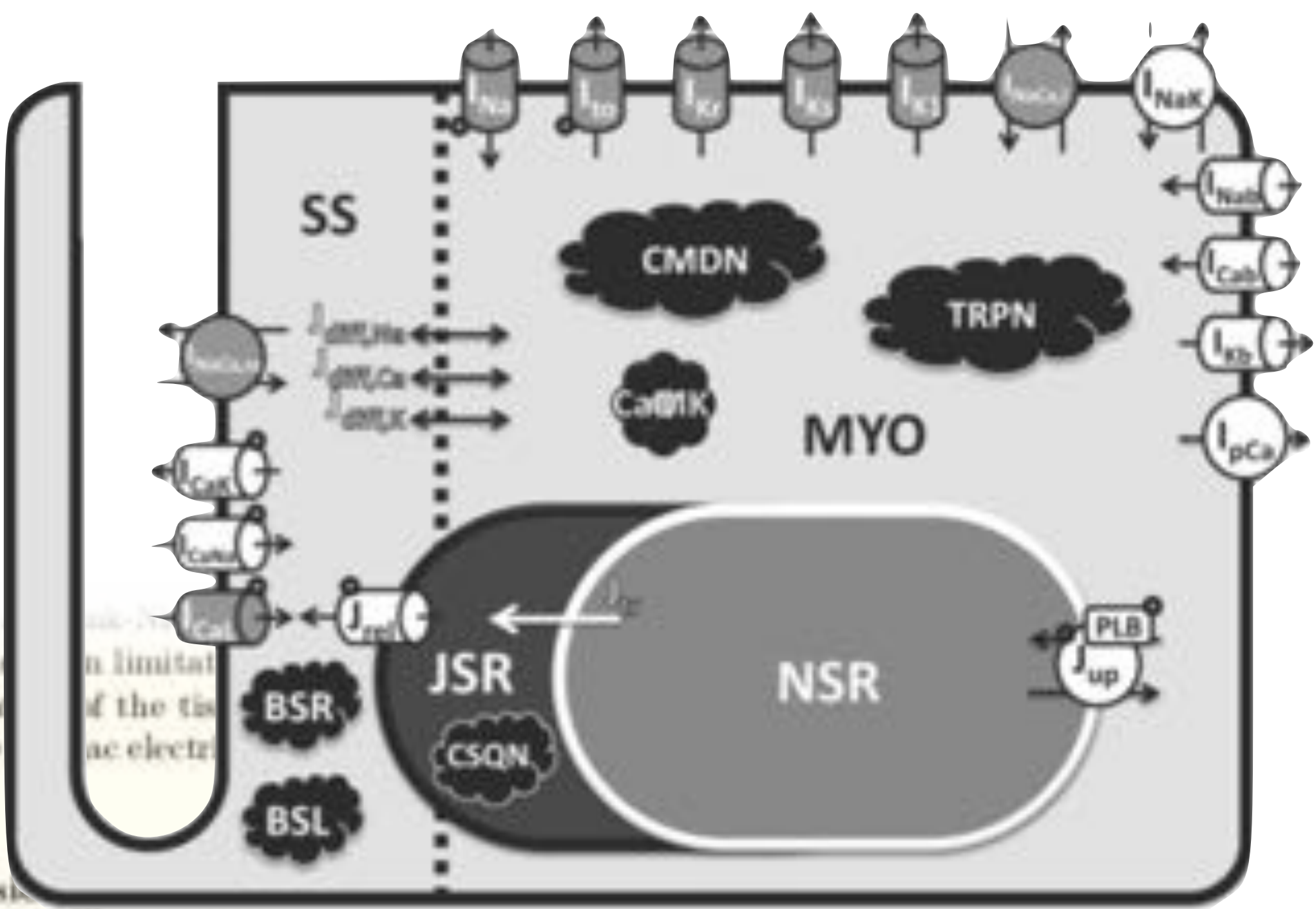
Computational implementation of electrophysiology

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### 5.3 Alya

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O'HARA-RUDY  
CELLULAR  
DYNAMICS  
MODEL

50 ODES SOLVED  
AT EACH GAUSS  
POINT



# THE VIRTUAL HEART ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

ELECTRO  
PHYSIOLOGY

MECHANICS

ELECTRO-MECHANICAL  
COUPLING

balance:

$$\rho^s \frac{\partial^2 u_i}{\partial t^2} = \frac{\partial P_{iJ}}{\partial X_J} + \rho^s B_i,$$

density of the material. The Cauchy stress is derived from the nominal stress  $P_{iJ}$  through the deformation gradient  $\mathbf{F}$  and  $J = \det(\mathbf{F})$  is the Jacobian determinant. The constitutive law is assumed to be a combination of passive and active stresses:

$$\boldsymbol{\sigma} = \boldsymbol{\sigma}_{pas} + \boldsymbol{\sigma}_{act}(\lambda, [Ca^{2+}]) \mathbf{f} \otimes \mathbf{f},$$

where  $\boldsymbol{\sigma}_{pas}$  is the passive (isotropic) part and  $\boldsymbol{\sigma}_{act}$  is the active (anisotropic) part. The active part will be defined in Section 4.2.

**Passive stresses** The passive part is modeled as an isotropic, incompressible, and hyperelastic material [39] and through a strain energy function  $W(\mathbf{b})$ . This constitutive law is defined as:



# THE VIRTUAL HEART ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

ELECTRO  
PHYSIOLOGY

MECHANICS

BLOOD

FLUID-SOLID  
INTERACTION

ELECTRO-MECHANICAL  
COUPLING



# THE VIRTUAL HEART

## ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

ELECTRO  
PHYSIOLOGY

MECHANICS

BLOOD

FLUID-SOLID  
INTERACTION

ELECTRO-MECHANICAL  
COUPLING



# THE VIRTUAL HEART

## ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

ELECTRO  
PHYSIOLOGY

MECHANICS

BLOOD

RESULTS ANALYSIS

VALIDATION & VERIFICATION



# THE VIRTUAL HEART

## ENGINEERING VIEWPOINT

CONTEXT  
OF USE

OR

WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING?

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

MULTI-PHYSICS MODELLING

RESULTS ANALYSIS

VALIDATION & VERIFICATION

QUANTITY  
OF INTEREST  
I.E.  
BIOMARKER

OR

WHAT DO  
YOU WANT?



# THE VIRTUAL HEART

## VALIDATION & VERIFICATION

SCIENTIFIC VERIFICATION	ACADEMIC CODE SELF VERIFICATION ANALYTIC OR MANUFACTURED SOLUTIONS CONVERGENCE ANALYSIS	CONTINUUM	GENERAL
SCIENTIFIC VALIDATION	FROM LITERATURE FREQUENTLY SIMPLE CASES MOSTLY SINGLE PHYSICS	CONTINUUM	GENERAL
EXPERIMENTAL VALIDATION	AD HOC BENCHTOP (IN VITRO / EX VIVO) EXPERIMENTS ASME VV40 VALIDATION PROTOCOL HIGH CONTROL AND MAYBE MULTI PHYSICS BEST OUTCOME: MDDT FDA CERTIFICATION	CAMPAIGN	CONTEXT OF USE
CLINICAL VALIDATION	AD HOC CLINICAL (IN VIVO) MEASUREMENTS CLINICAL VALIDATION PROTOCOL LOW CONTROL AND MAYBE MULTI PHYSICS BEST OUTCOME: CLINICAL VALIDATION PAPER	CAMPAIGN	CONTEXT OF USE



# THE VIRTUAL HEART ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

HH097

HH125

HH165

HH168

HH197

HH229

HH248

## PATIENTS DATABASE

HH140

HH157

HH212

HH311

HH317

HH075

## FEMALE, MALE, CHILDREN

## WITH THE VHL, UNIV. OF MINNESOTA

HH076

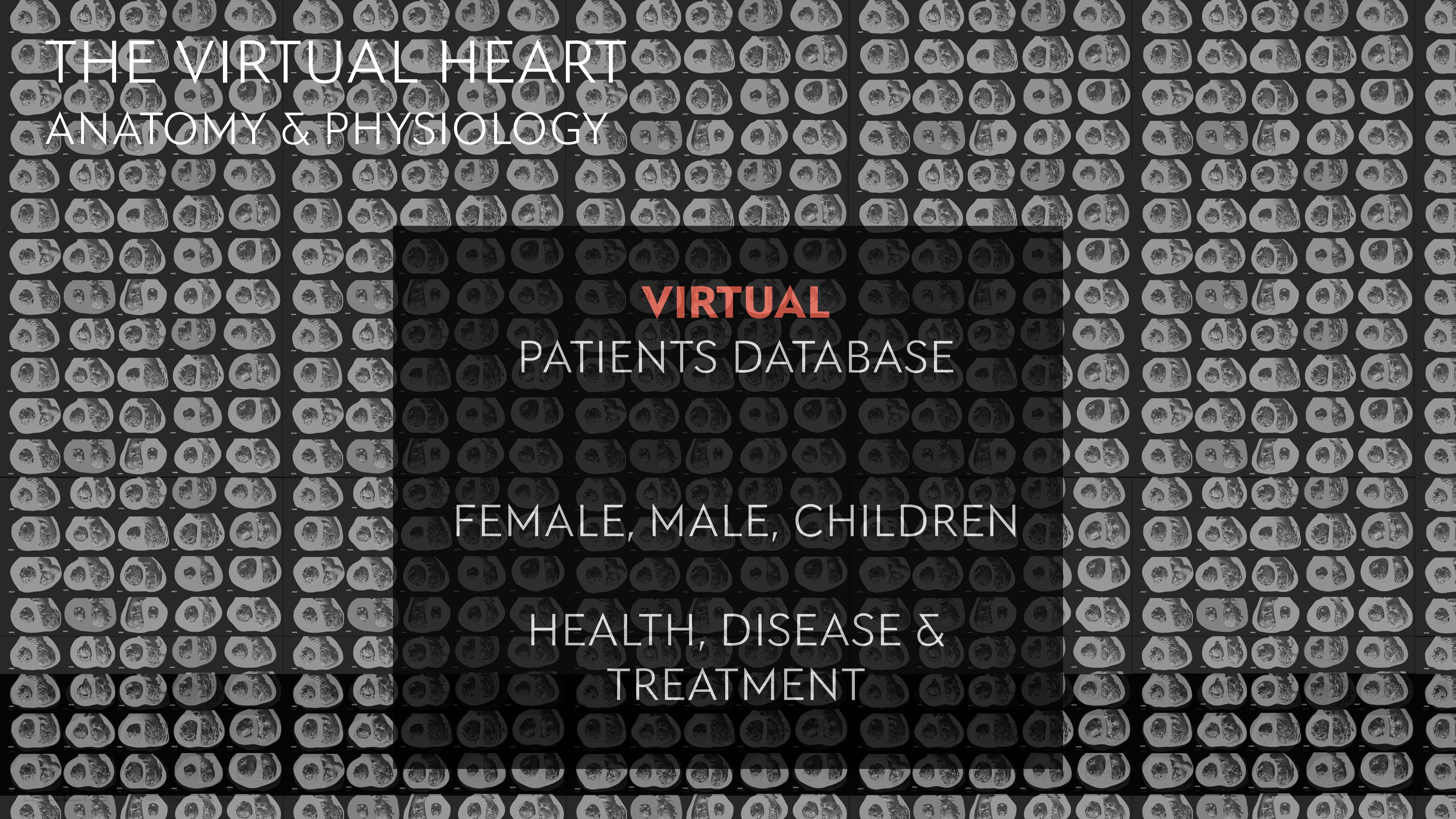
HH077

HH085

HH089

HH092





# THE VIRTUAL HEART ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

**VIRTUAL**  
PATIENTS DATABASE

FEMALE, MALE, CHILDREN

HEALTH, DISEASE &  
TREATMENT



# ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

## SETTING UP THE SCENARIO

SEMI-EMPIRICAL RULE BASED MODEL

FIBRES ARE ORIENTED ALONG HELICES OF OPPOSITE SENSE IN EPICARDIUM AND ENDOCARDIUM

