

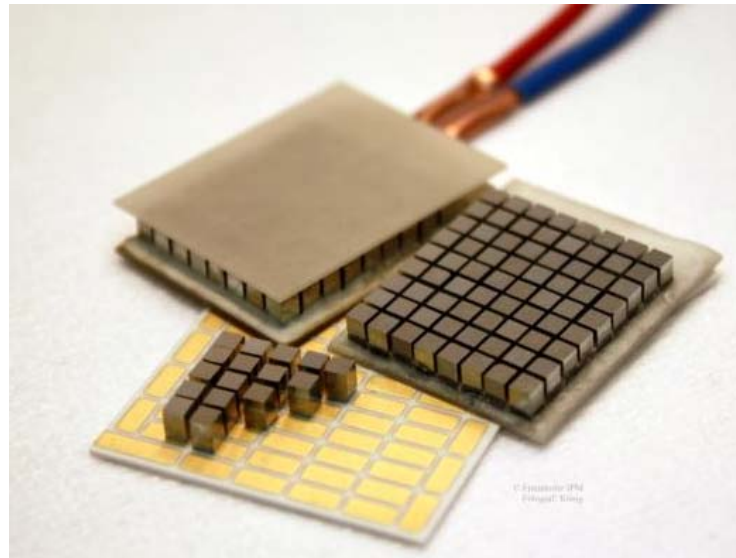
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# Thermoelectric waste heat recovery on the way to mass production and into applications

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**J. König,**

M. Kluge, K. Tarantik, K. Bartholomé, J. Heuer, J. Horzella, M. Vergez, U. Vetter  
Fraunhofer IPM, Freiburg, Germany



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# Thermoelectric waste heat recovery on the way to mass production and into applications

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## Content

- On the way to applications
- Module Fabrication
- New Half-Heusler Modules and Arrays
- Cost Considerations
- Summary

# Application



Bundesministerium  
für Wirtschaft  
und Energie

TÜVRheinland®  
Genau. Richtig.

## Project: ThermoHeusler 2



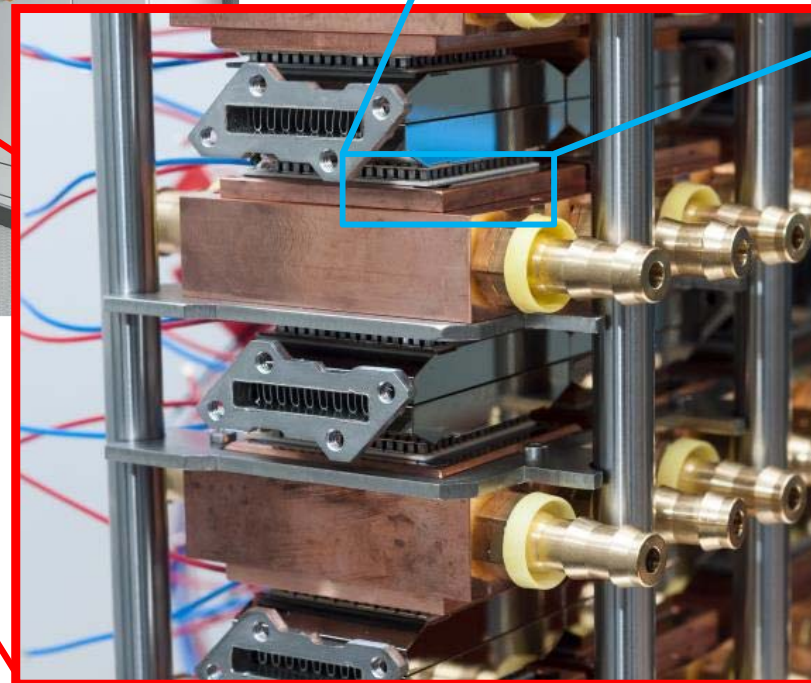
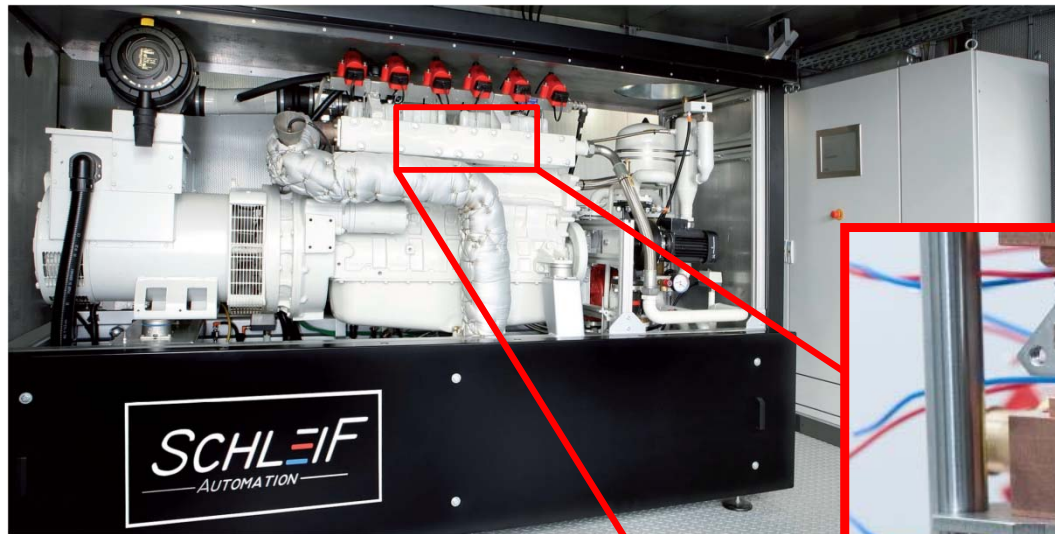
Automobile with  
Thermoelectric Generator

=> ~5 % *fuel saving*



# Application

## Project: Thermoelectric CHPs



CHP with  
Thermoelectric Generator

=> *~3 % improvement in  
electrical efficiency*

# System Design Aspects

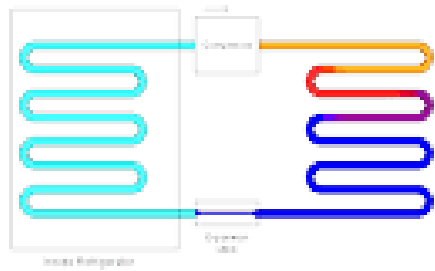
## TE-Module Design and Integration



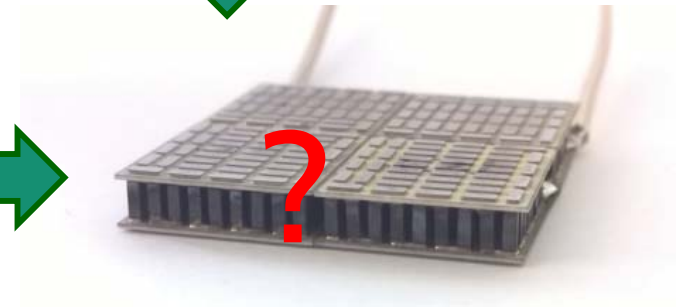
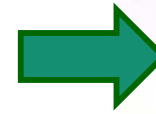
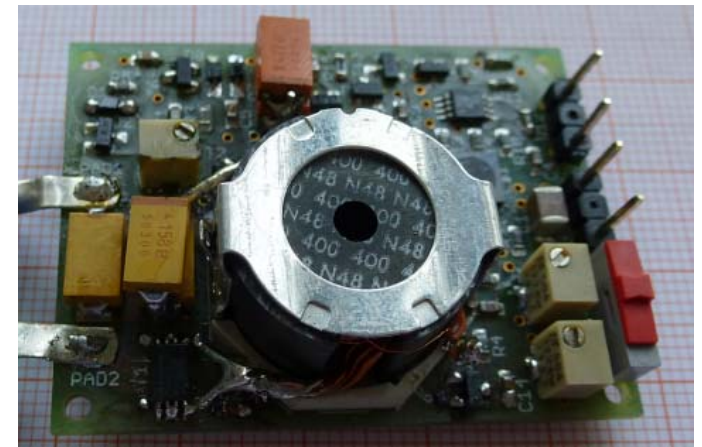
mass-flow,  
temperature,  
back-pressure



### Application

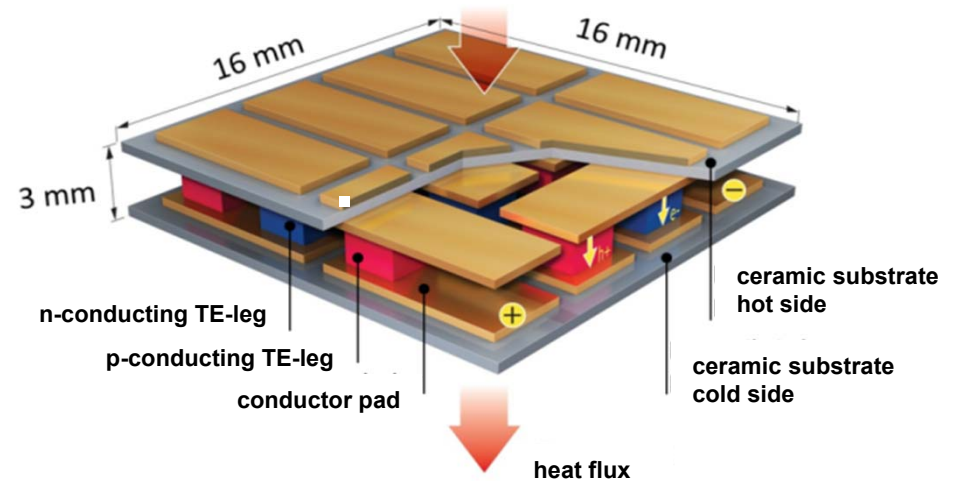


Coolant flow,  
temperature,  
(back-pressure)



# System Design Aspects

## TE-Module Design and Integration



## System design essentials

- Thermal matching with heat exchangers
- Electrical matching with load circuit
- Power management, Voltage conversion

$$R_{th,TE} = (R_{th,H} + R_{th,C}) \cdot \sqrt{ZT + 1}$$

$$R_{el,TE} = R_{el,L}$$

$$U_0 = f(T_H, T_C)$$

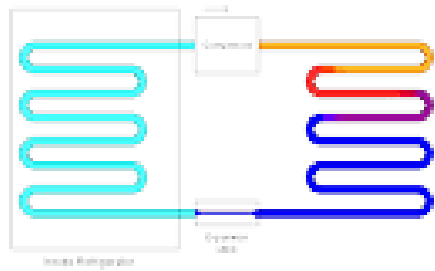


# System Design Aspects

## TE-Module Design and Integration



mass-flow,  
temperature,  
back-pressure



Coolant flow,  
temperature,  
(back-pressure)



Heat flux,  
thermal resistance



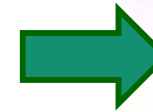
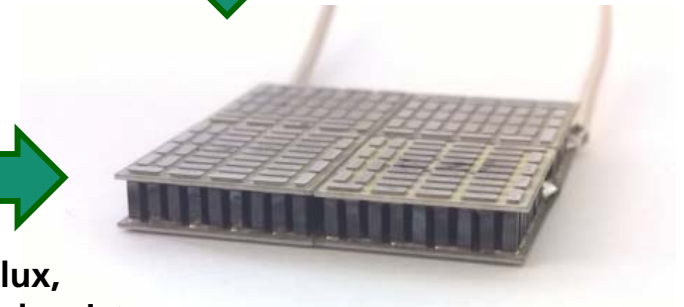
Height of legs;  
legs diameter;  
filling factor



Voltage / current (@  $\Delta T$ , T)



Number of legs



# High Temperature Module Manufacturing

## Customized Half-Heusler Module designs

**Module efficiency ~5,4 %**

( $dT \sim 530 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ )

### Tunable Module design parameter:

Module geometry: **16 x 16 mm<sup>2</sup>** or **20 x 20 mm<sup>2</sup>**

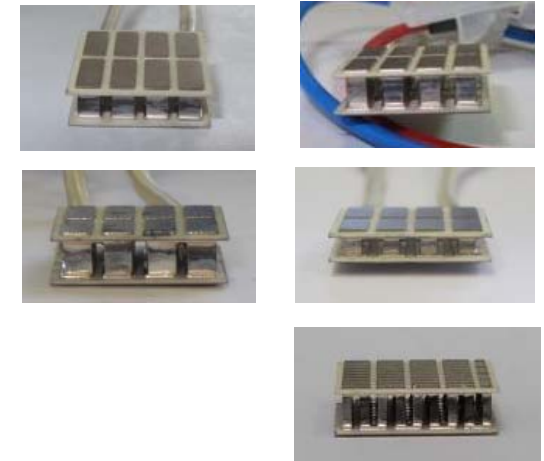
variable height: 3 ... 5 mm

Thermal resistance: **4 .... 40 K/W** ; ( $dT \sim 490 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ )

Open circuit voltage: **245  $\mu\text{V/K}$  per uncouple** ( $dT \sim 490 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ )



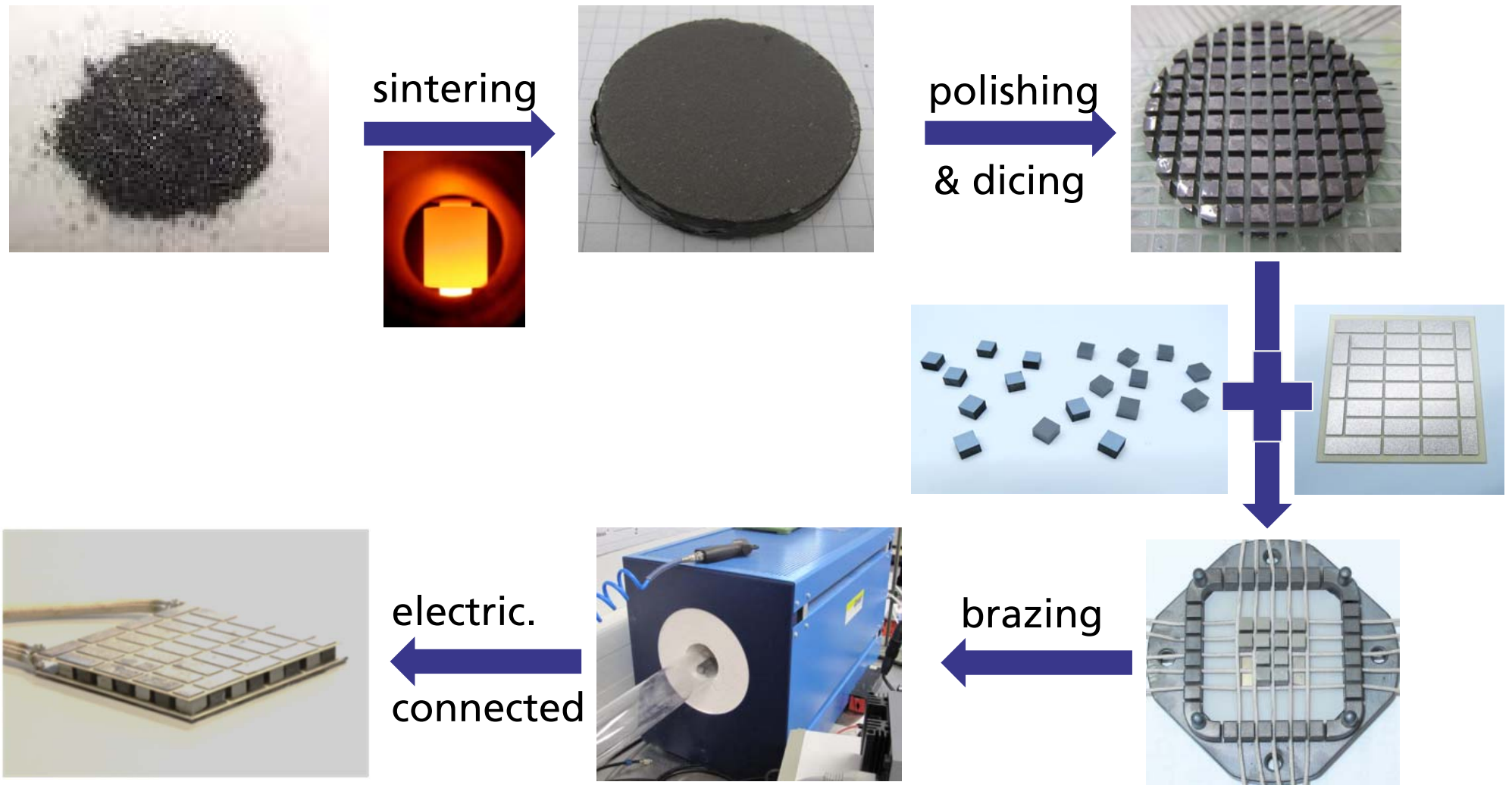
=>  $U_0 = \sim 0,9 \text{ V}$  for module with 7 uncouples  
and  $dT \sim 490 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$





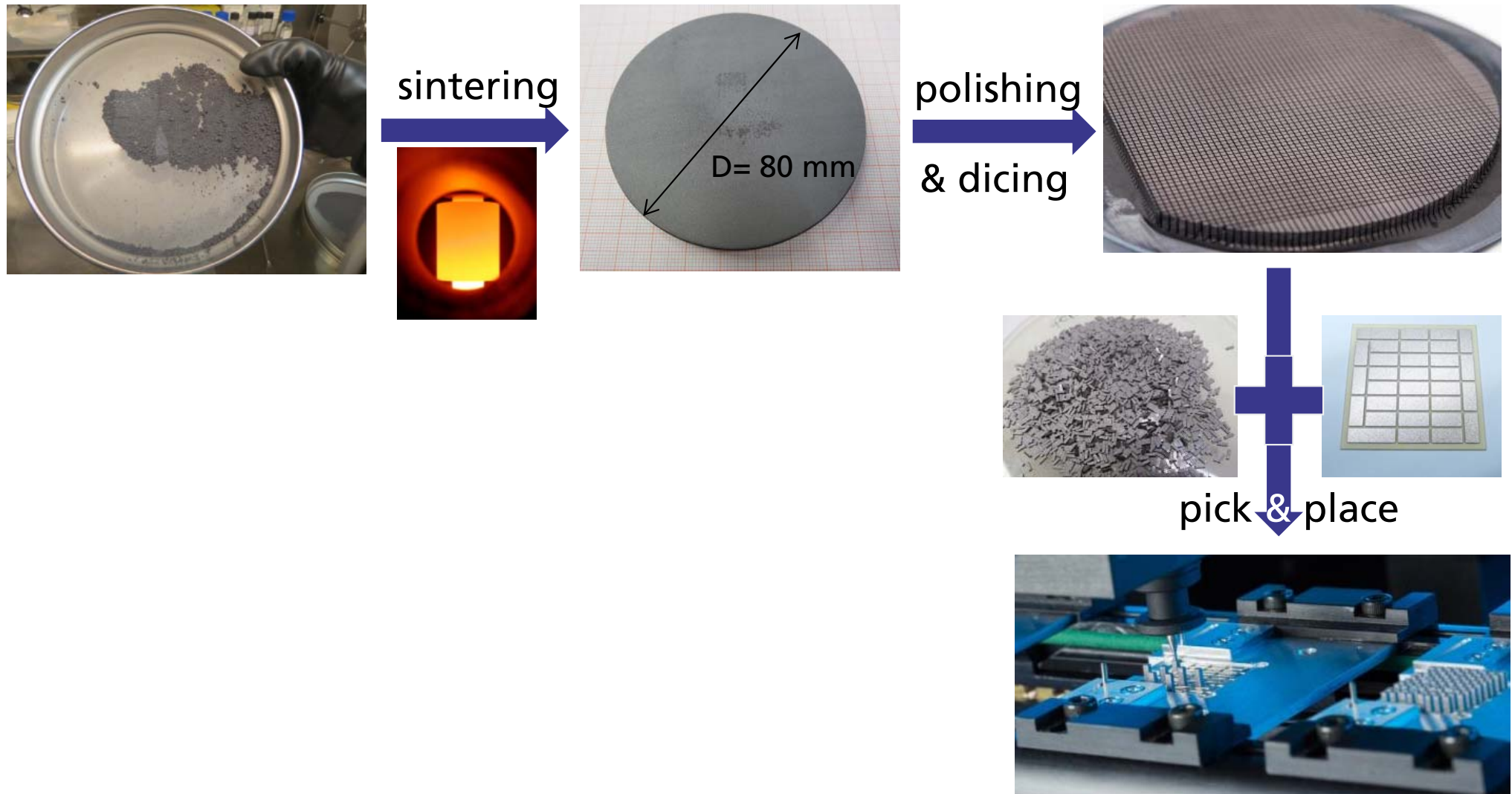
# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Manual Module Production Process



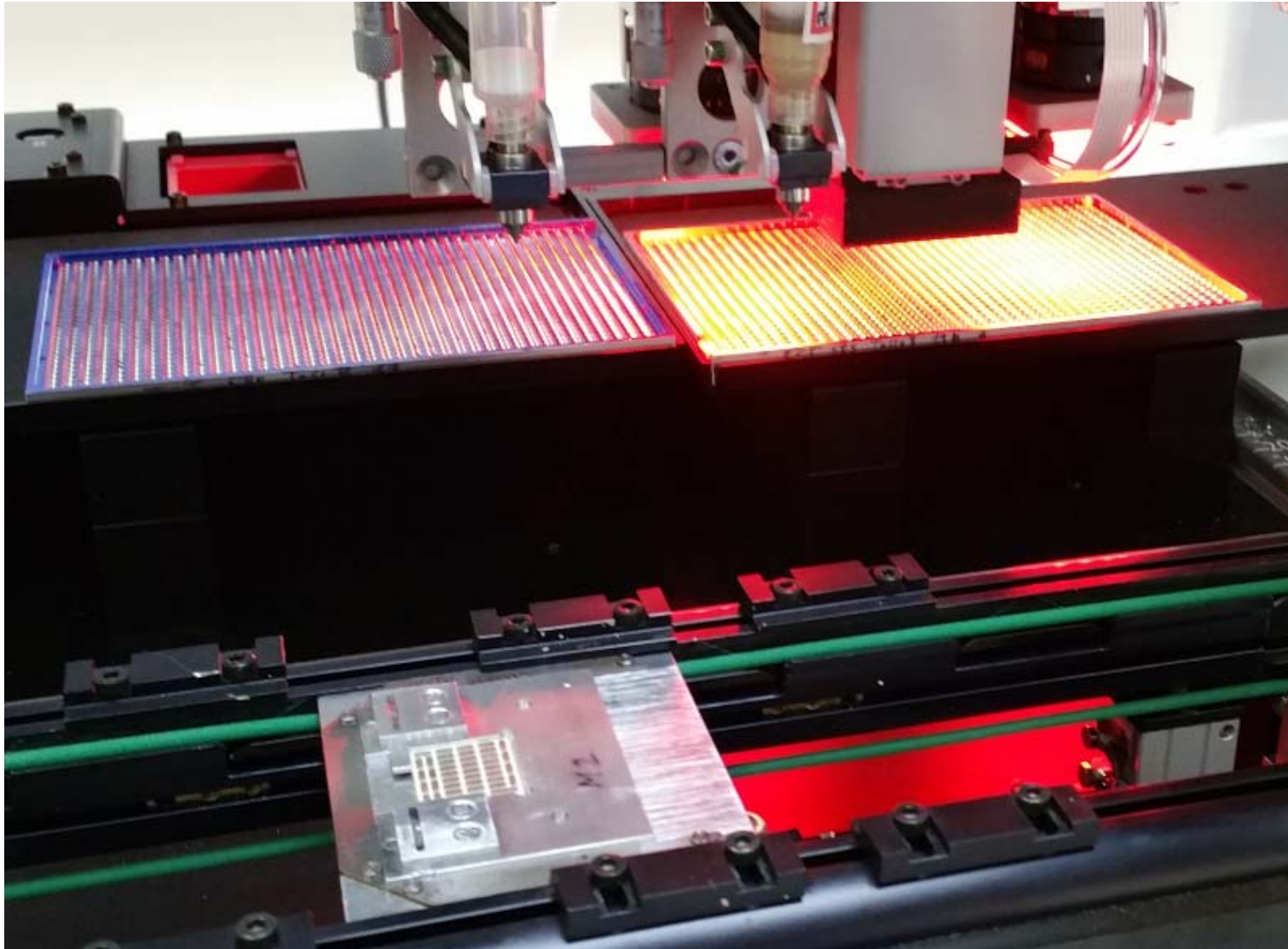
# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Semi-automated Module Process



# High Temperature Module Fabrication

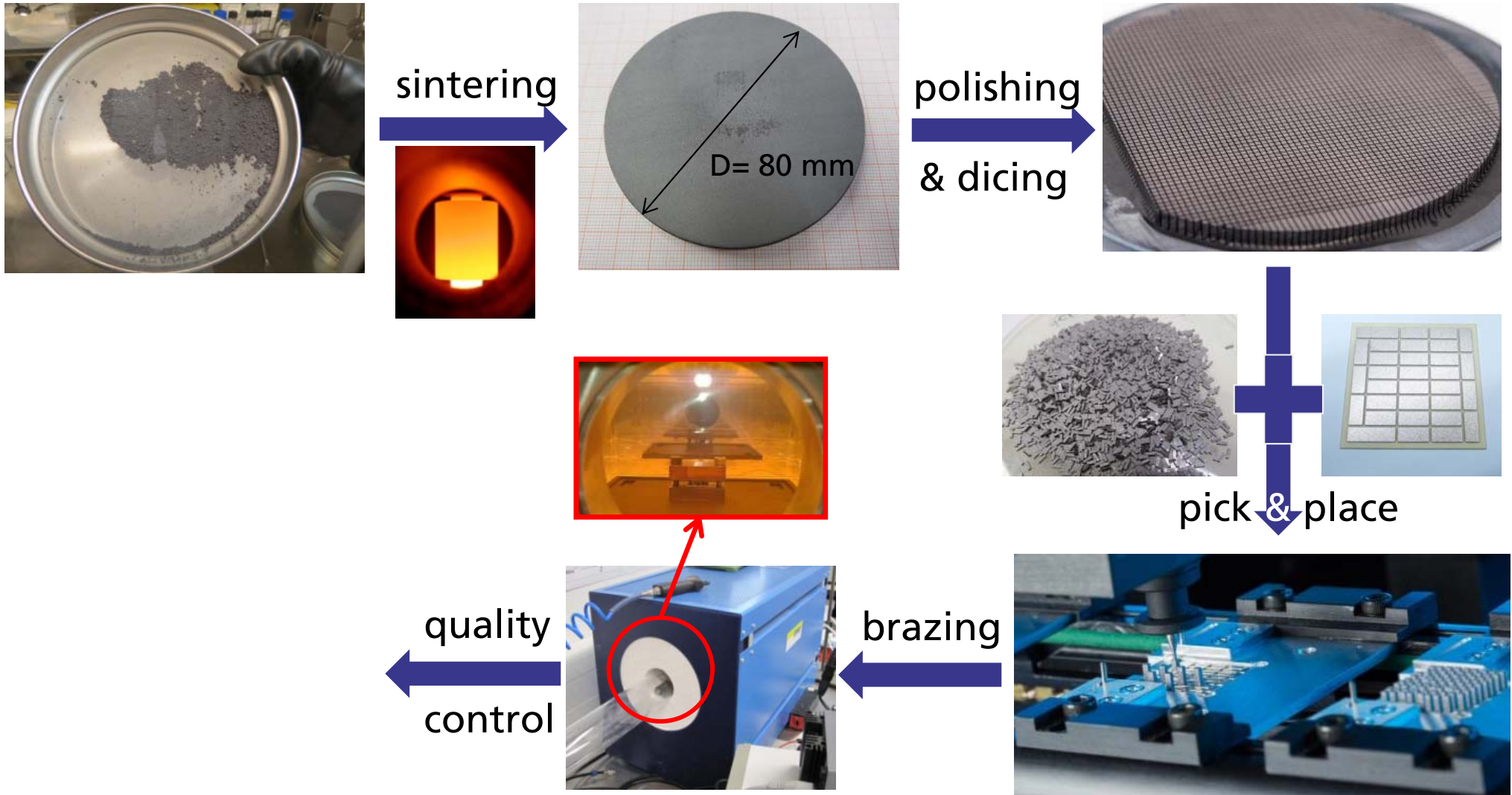
## Semi-automated Module Process





# High Temperature Module Fabrication

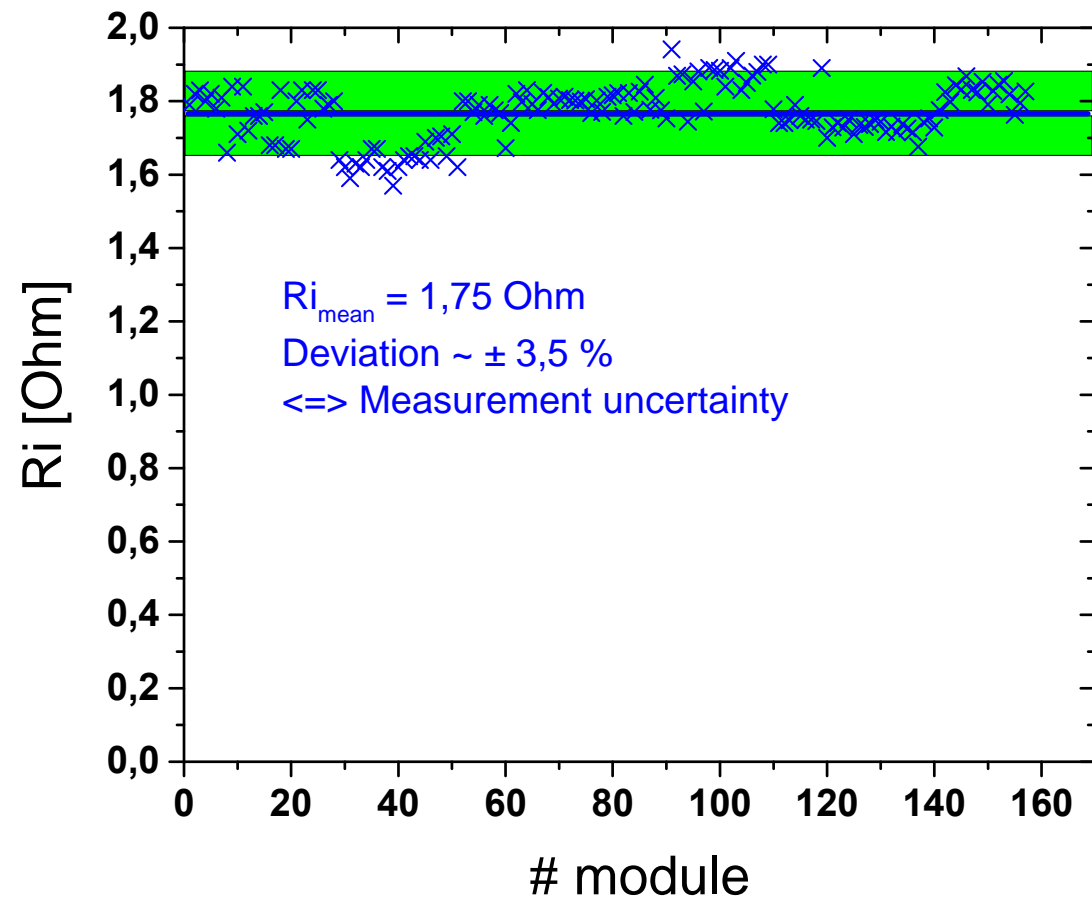
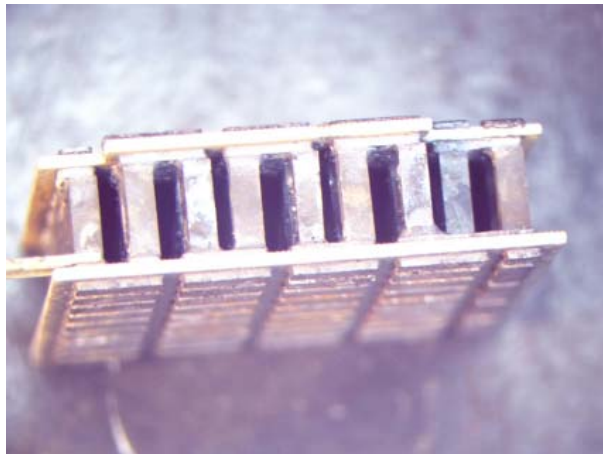
## Semi-automated Module Process





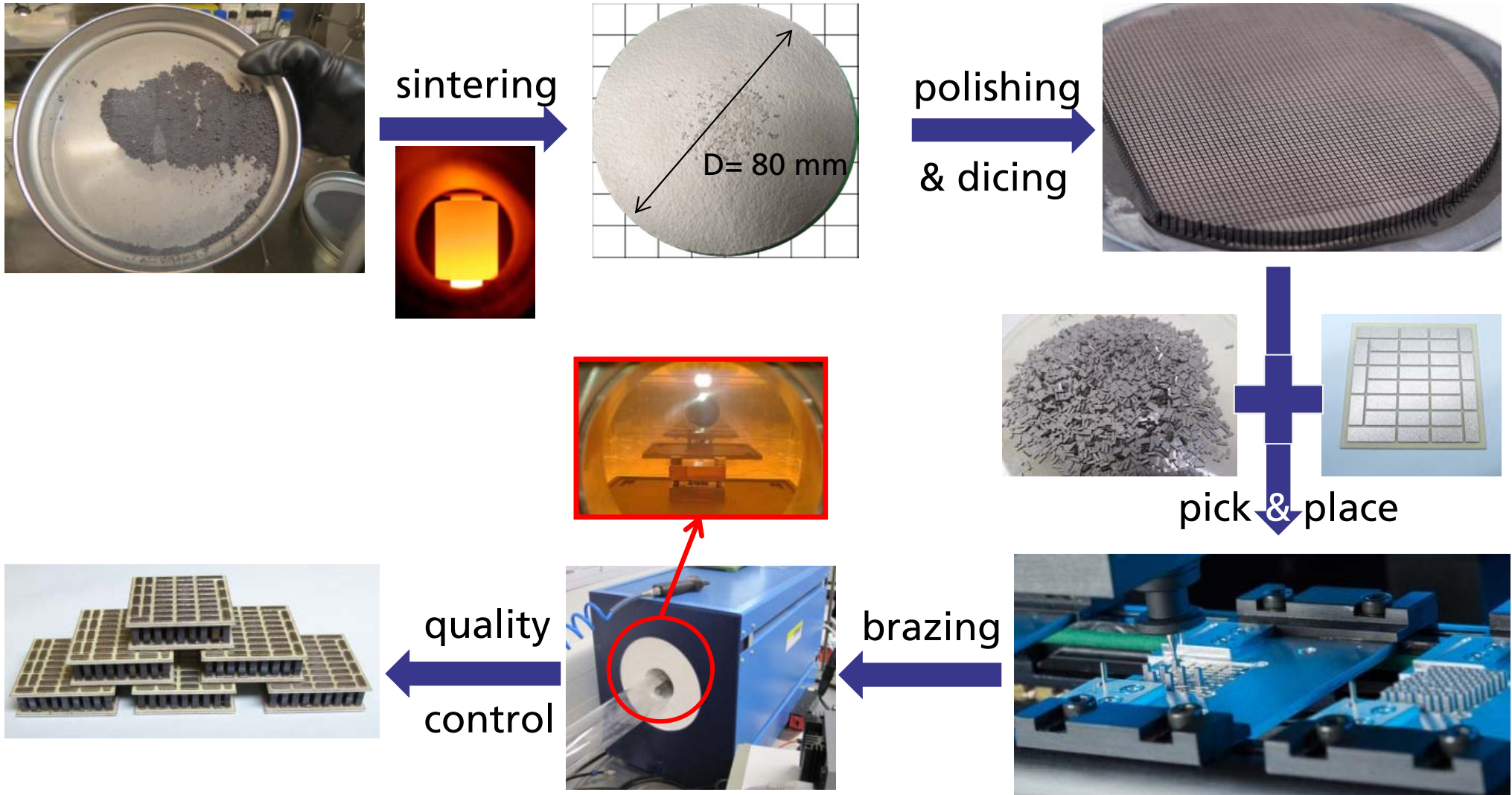
# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Semi-automated Module Process



# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Semi-automated Module Process

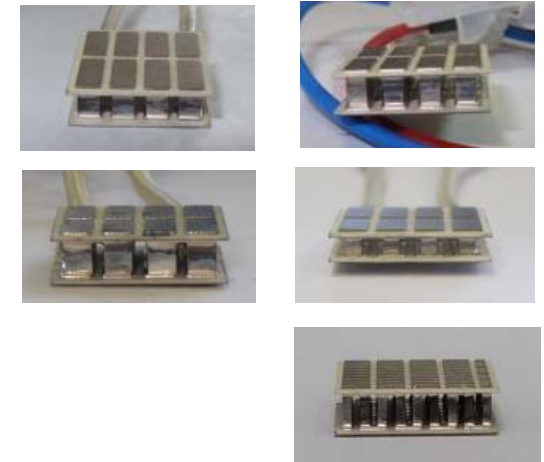


# High Temperature Module Fabrication

Customized Half-Heusler Module designs

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( $dT \sim 530 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ )



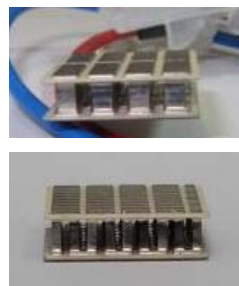
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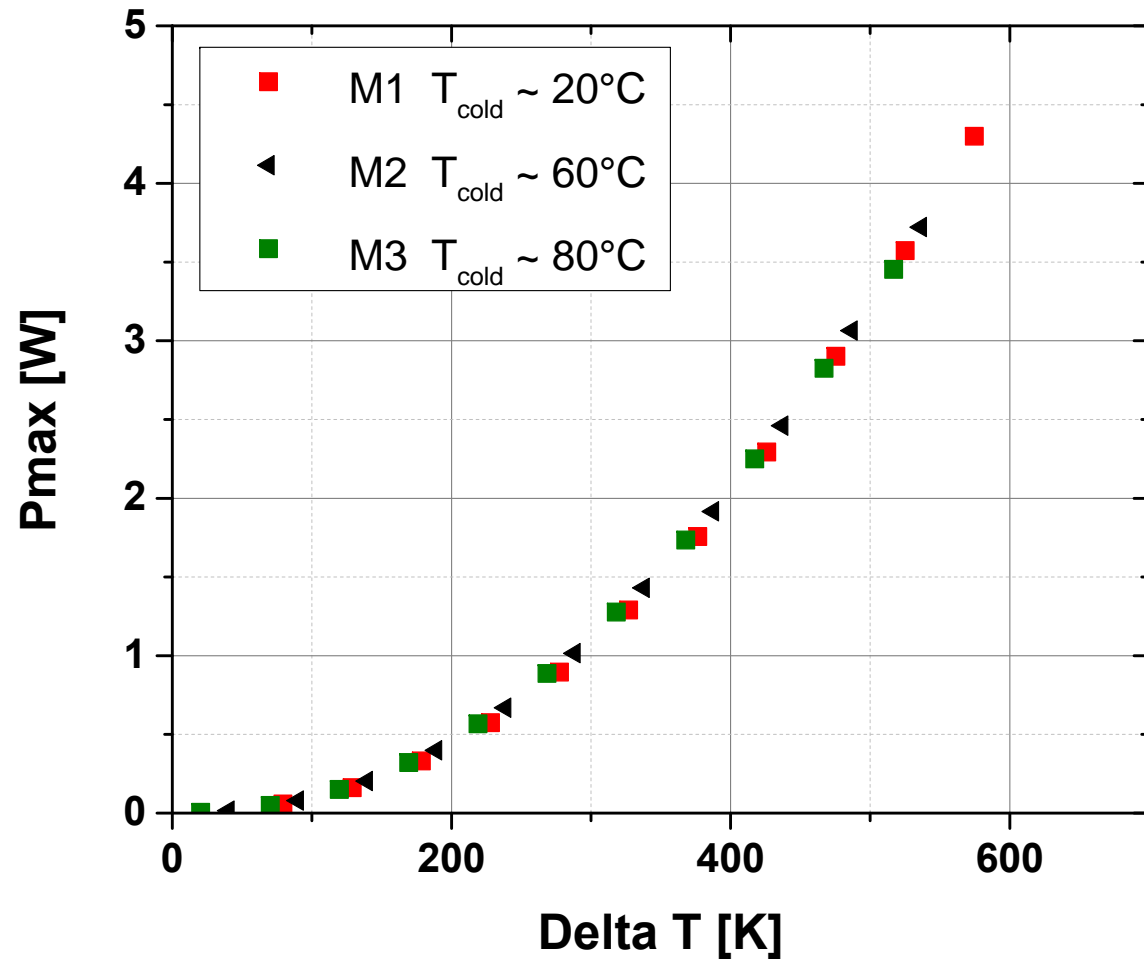
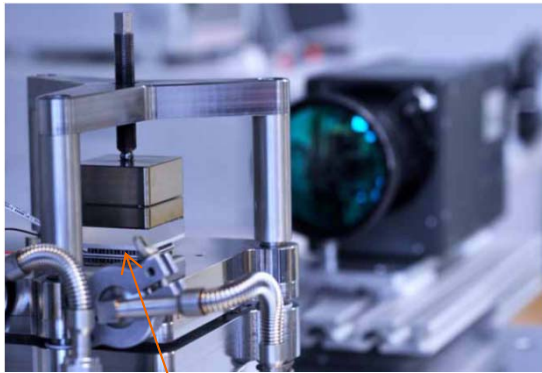
=>  $U_0 = \sim 0,9 \text{ V}$  for module with 7 uncouples  
and  $dT \sim 490 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$

=>  $U_0 = \sim 5 \text{ V}$  for module with 39 uncouples  
and  $dT \sim 490 \text{ K}$ ;  $T_{\text{hot}} \sim 550 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$

# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Performance of Half-Heusler Modules

Electrical Power output of a new high temperature Half-Heusler Module (1.6 x 1.6 cm<sup>2</sup>)





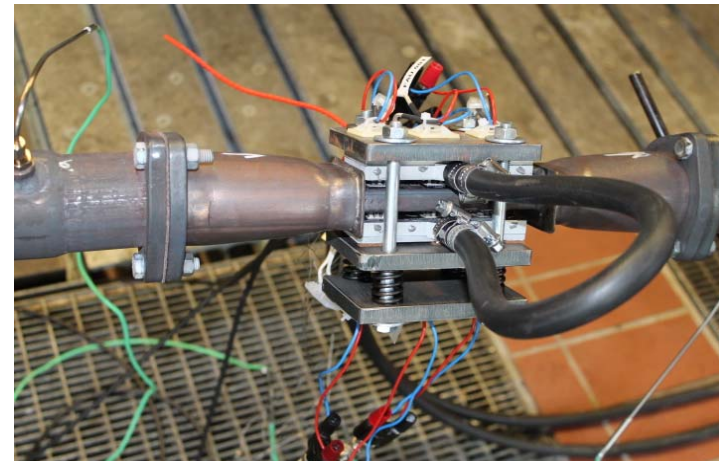
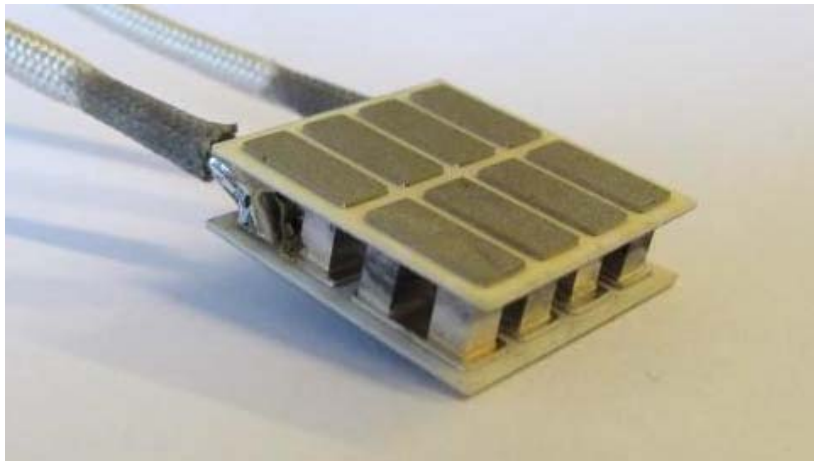
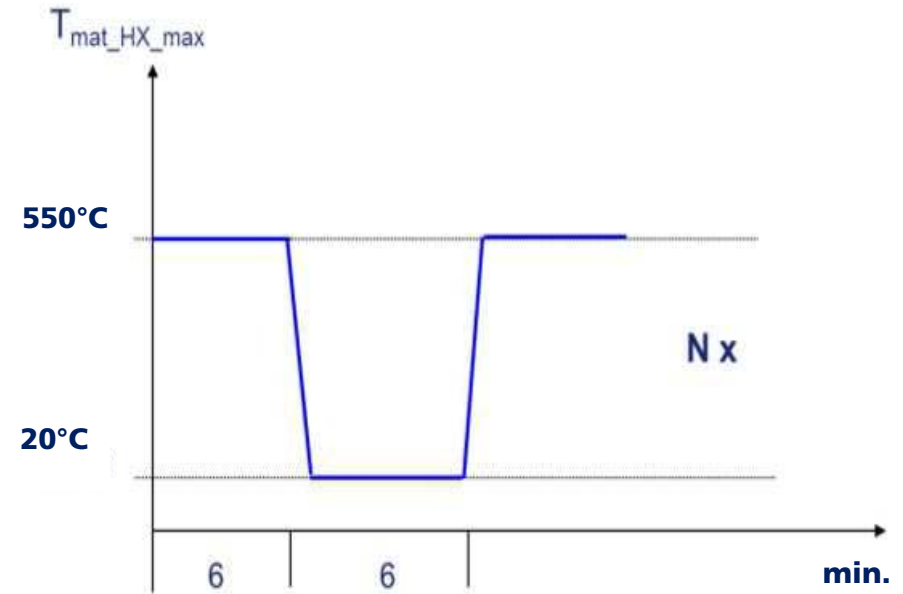
# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Reliability of Half-Heusler Modules

Thermal shock testing at Faurecia ECT

- $T_H = 550\text{ °C} \leftrightarrow 20\text{ °C}$
- $T_C = 20\text{ °C}$
- >1,000 Cycles in Air

→ No significant degradation!

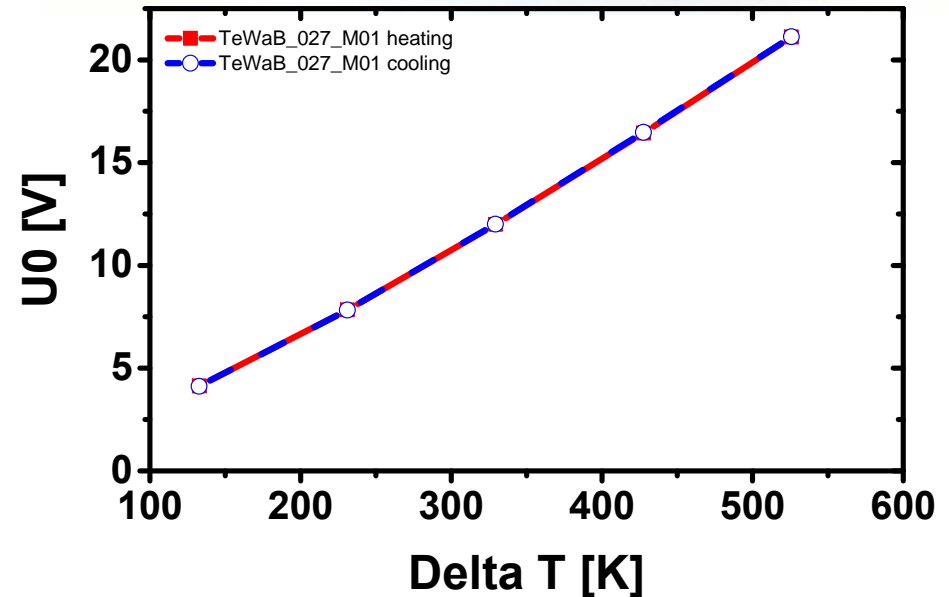
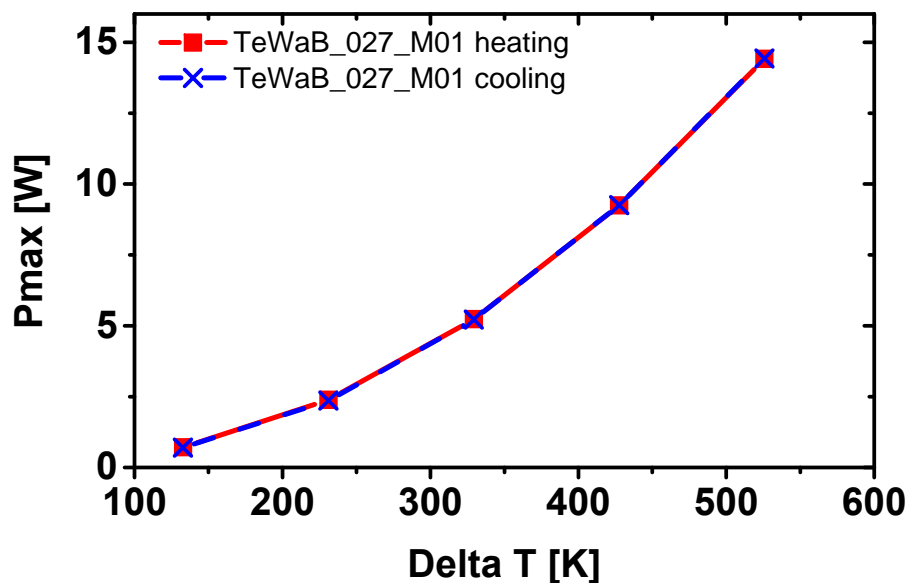
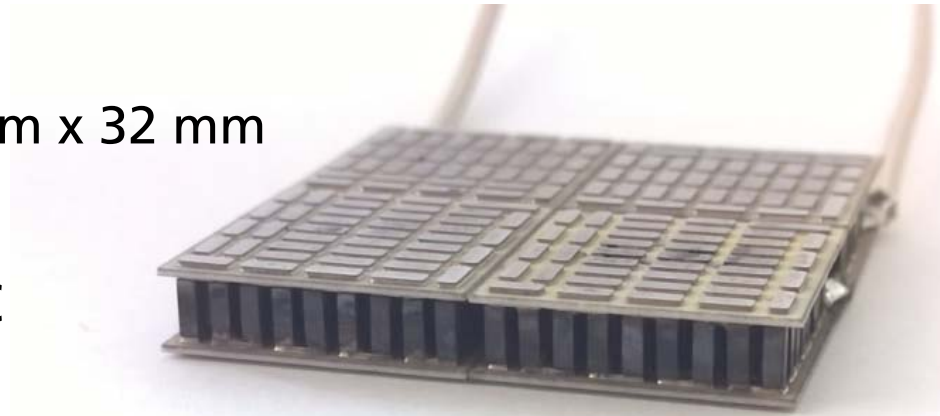


# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Half-Heusler Module Arrays

### 2 x 2 Module Array

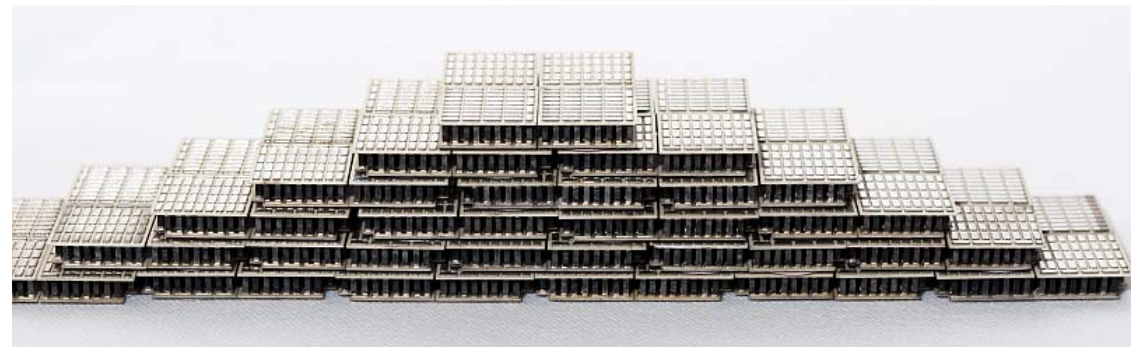
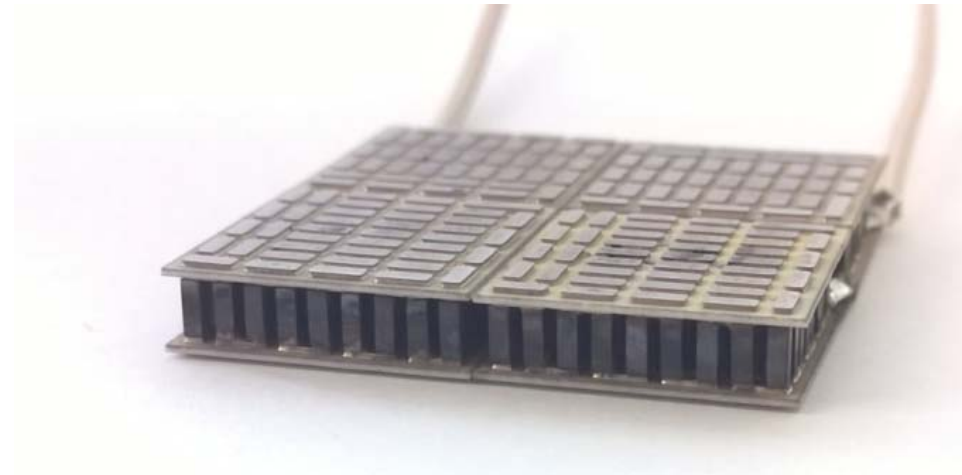
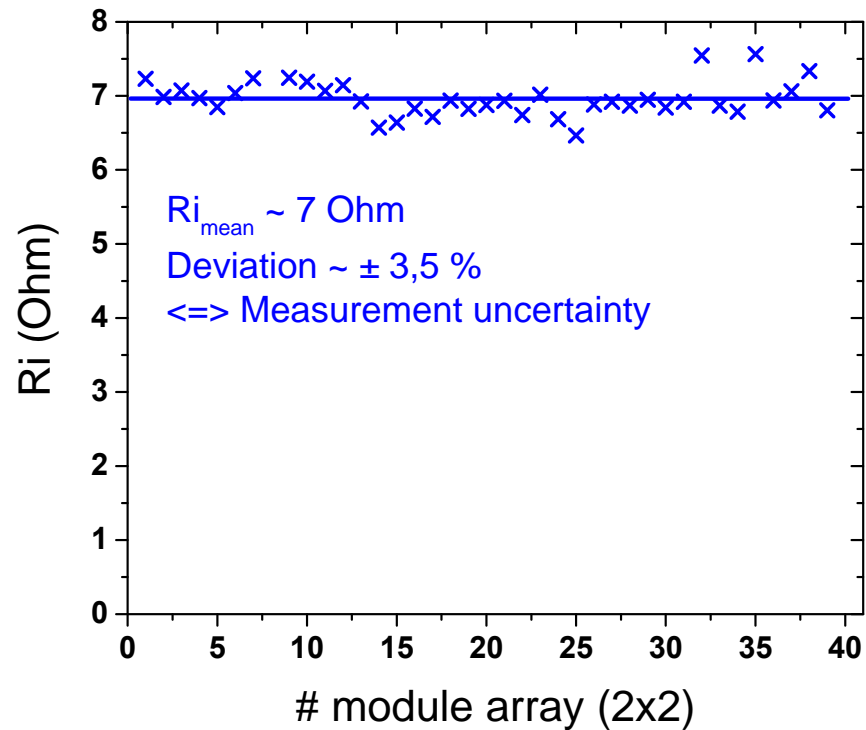
- Interconnection of 4 modules = 32 mm x 32 mm
- 156 unicouples => High voltage
- 1.46 W/cm<sup>2</sup> @  $\Delta T = 530$  K,  $T_{\text{hot}} = 550^\circ\text{C}$
- 5.4% @  $\Delta T = 530$  K,  $T_{\text{hot}} = 550^\circ\text{C}$



# High Temperature Module Fabrication

## Half-Heusler Module Arrays

2 x 2 Module Array

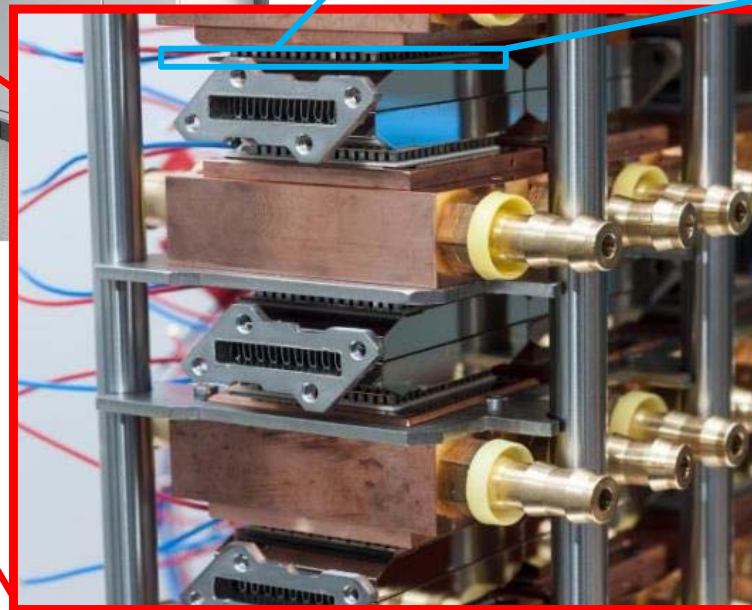
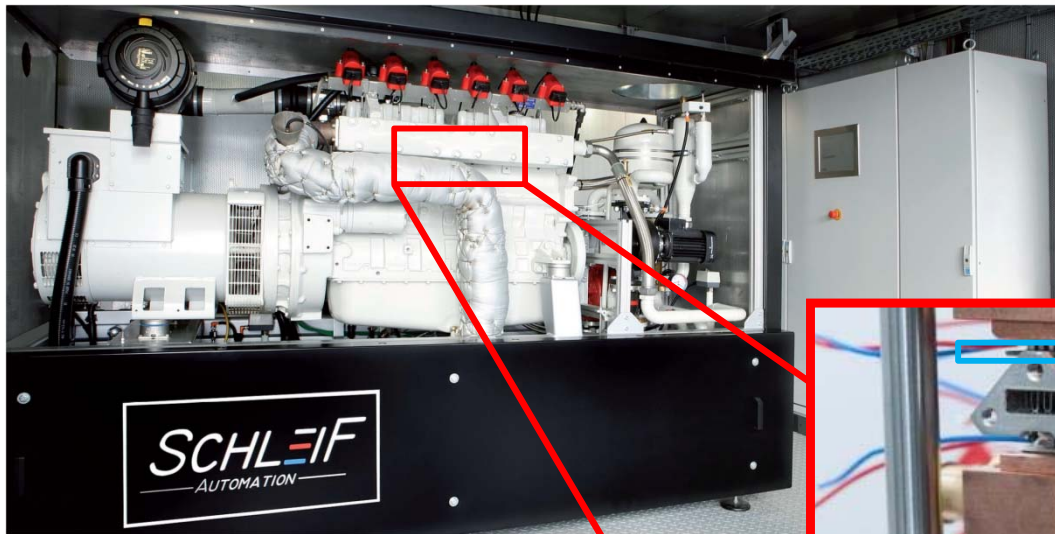


# High Temperature Module Manufacturing

## Half-Heusler Module Arrays



### Project: Thermoelectric CHPs

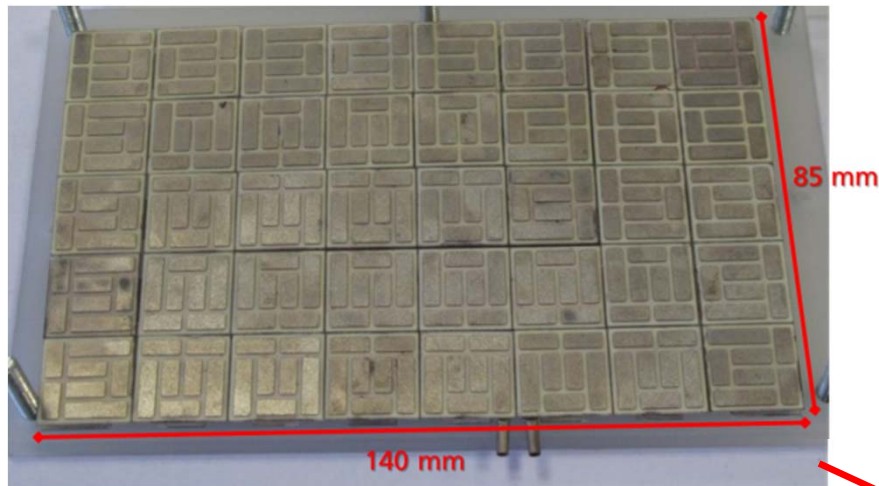




# High Temperature Module Manufacturing

## Half-Heusler Module Arrays

Interconnection of 40 single modules



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# Thermoelectric waste heat recovery on the way to mass production and into applications

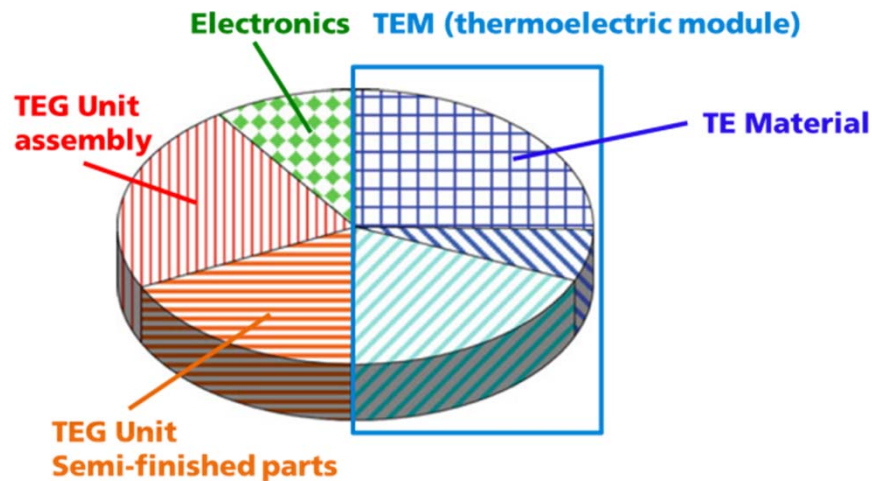
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## Content

- On the way to applications
- Module Fabrication
- New Half-Heusler Modules and Arrays
- **Cost Considerations**
- Summary

# Cost Considerations

## Thermoelectric system (TEG) cost allocation



ment. Nevertheless it is assumed that currently pending issues can be solved, thus most effective production steps for the shaping of the legs, making the electrical contacts, as well as the assembly and testing of the modules and safe thermal contacting at low compression levels can be realized. The result of the cost assessment for these assumptions indicates that **system target costs for mass production of 1 €/W to 2 €/W** are still realistic. The related cost

K. Salzgeber (AVL), et al., JEMS, Vol. 39, No. 9, 2010 DOI: 10.1007/s11664-009-1005-y

### Cost breakdown:

- In car price: 110 € (CM to End user)
- TEG cost: 80€ (Valeo to CM)
- Mean output P(W): 80 W (NEDC)

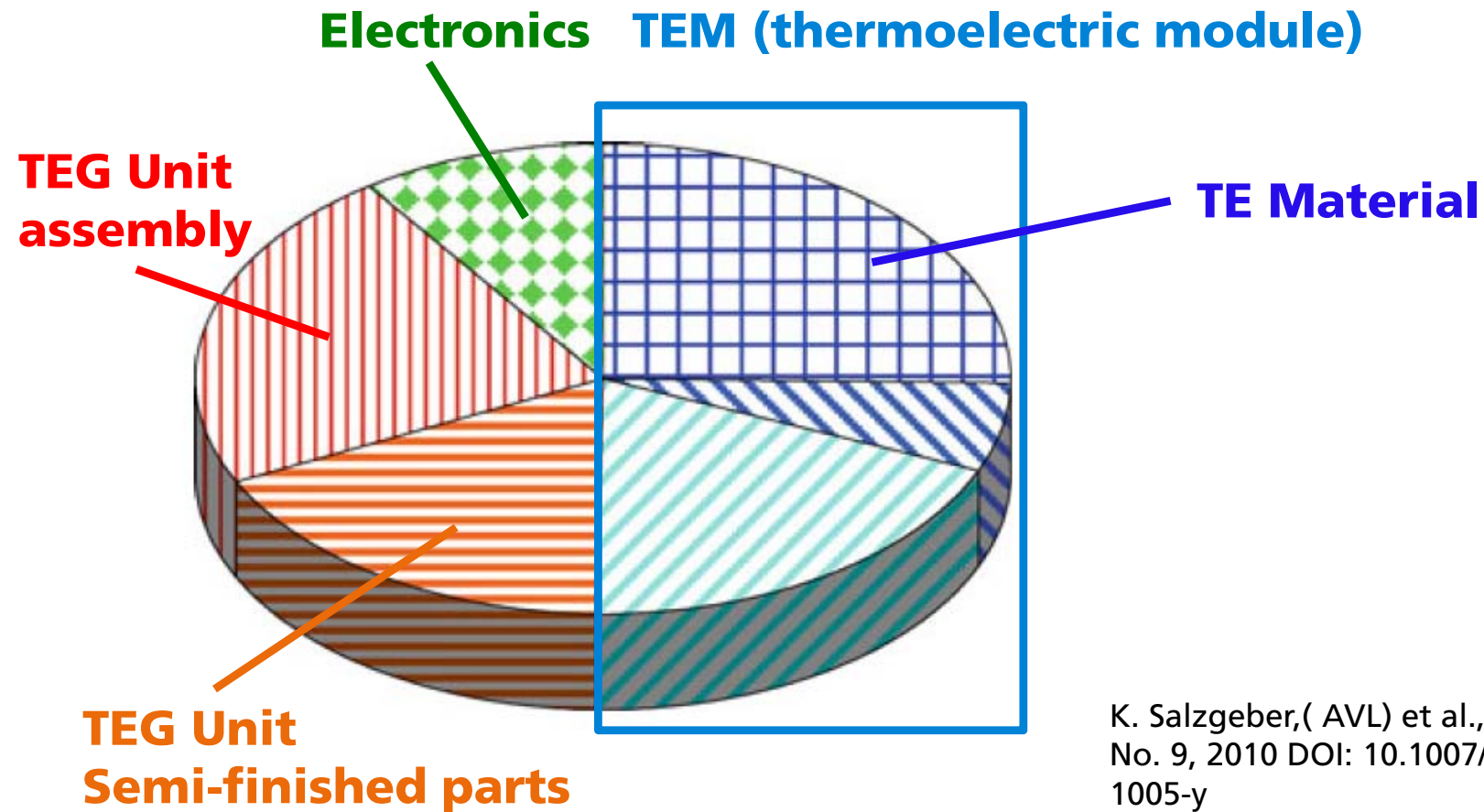


Cost target  
**1€ / W**

Dr. Cédric de Vault et al. TRA2014, Paris 14-17 April 2014

# Cost Considerations

Thermoelectric system (TEG) cost allocation



Cost split for a TEG Unit designed for gasoline engines for Hybrid electrical vehicles (Cost assessment for mass production)



# High temperature modules

made by Fraunhofer IPM

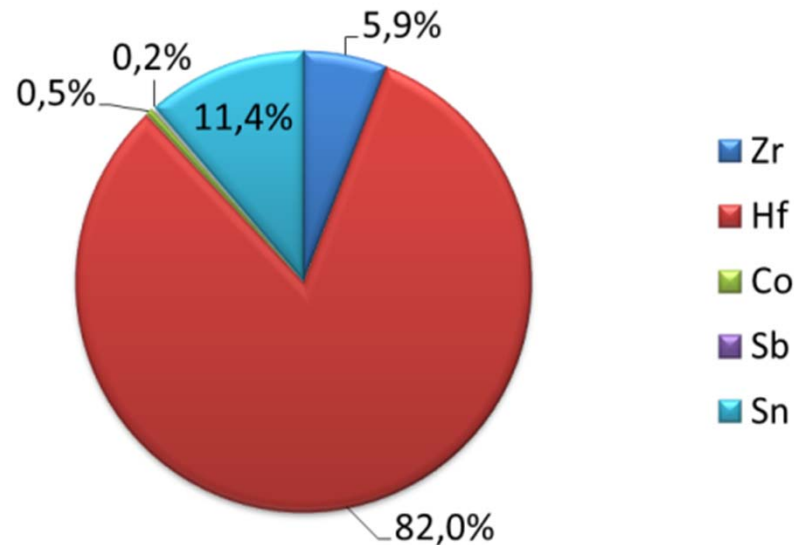
Material class	Material availability	Power density (module)		Module efficiency	Pros / Cons
		[W/cm <sup>2</sup> ]	[W/g]		
Lead telluride	>kg	0.5	?	?	+ high ZT - contains Pb + Te
Silicides	kg	0.6	0.6	5.0 %	+ low density + good n-type - <b>capsulation needed</b> - <b>poor p-type</b>
Skutterudites	>kg	0.74	0.5	<b>8 %</b>	+ high ZT + high reproducibility - <b>capsulation needed</b> - <b>mechanical stability</b>
Half-Heuslers	>kg	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	5.4 %	+ stable + high reproducibility - <b>Contain Hf</b>

# Cost Considerations

## Hf-based Half-Heusler Modules

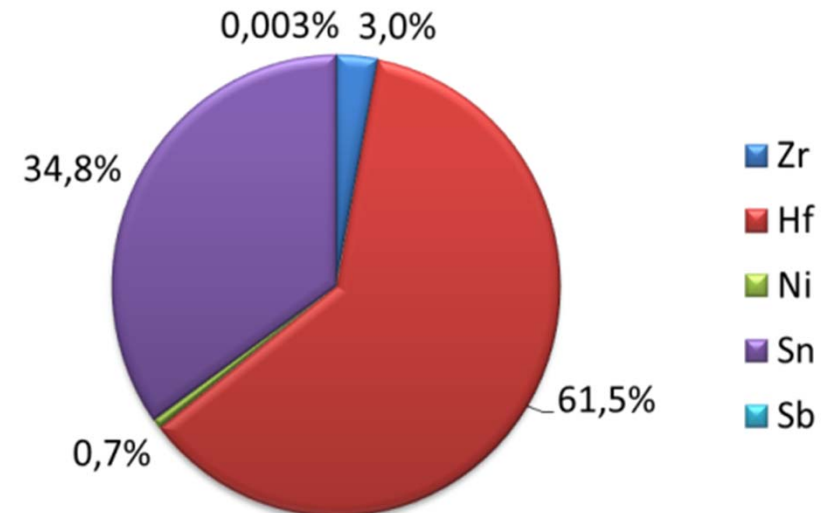
### Raw material costs (2016)

p-type  $Zr_{0,5}Hf_{0,5}CoSb_{0,8}Sn_{0,2}$



226 € /kg

n-type  $Zr_{0,4}Hf_{0,6}NiSn_{0,98}Sb_{0,02}$




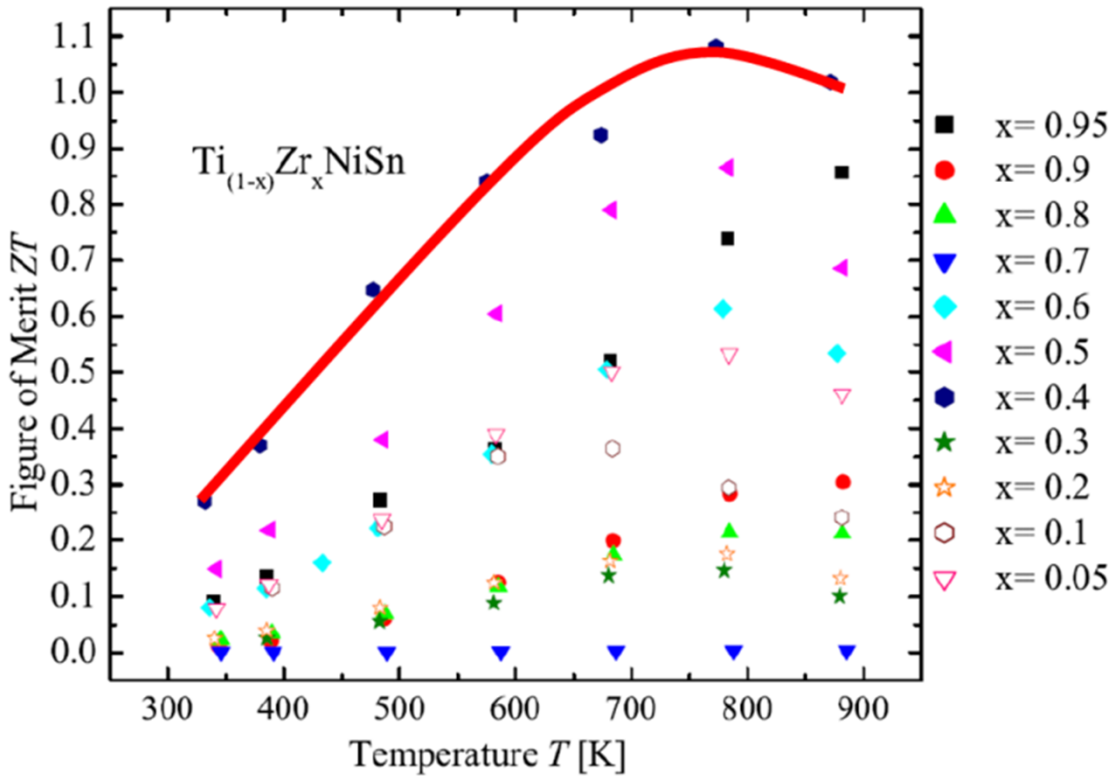
262 € /kg

**=> Hf- free Half-Heuslers**

# Cost Considerations

## Hf-free Half-Heusler Modules


**Hf-free or Hf-low alternatives – n-types**



Schwall 2012 (PhD thesis)

© MOMENT Group 14<sup>th</sup> ECT 2016, Lisboa, Portugal September 21<sup>st</sup> 2016

Benjamin Balke, ECT 2016, 21.09.2016

# Cost Considerations

## Hf-free Half-Heusler Modules

Material	cost [€] / kg material	Hf-% on material price	ZT @ 600°C 700°C
$\text{Ti}_{0.6}\text{Zr}_{0.4}\text{NiSn}$ (p)	13.7	0	1.02
$\text{Ti}_{0.5}\text{Zr}_{0.5}\text{NiSn}_{0.98}\text{Sb}_{0.2}$ (p)	14.0	0	1.19
$\text{Ti}_{0.2}\text{Nb}_{0.8}\text{FeSb}$ (n)	30	0	0.95
$\text{Zr}_{0.14}\text{Nb}_{0.86}\text{FeSb}$ (n)	31.5	0	0.85

Cost reduction of  
Half-Heusler raw  
materials by  
**>90% !!!**

Benjamin Balke, ECT 2016, 21.09.2016



# High temperature modules

made by Fraunhofer IPM

Material class	Material availability	Power density (module)		Module efficiency	Pros / Cons
		[W/cm <sup>2</sup> ]	[W/g]		
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Half-Heuslers	>kg	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	5.4 %	+ stable + high reproducibility

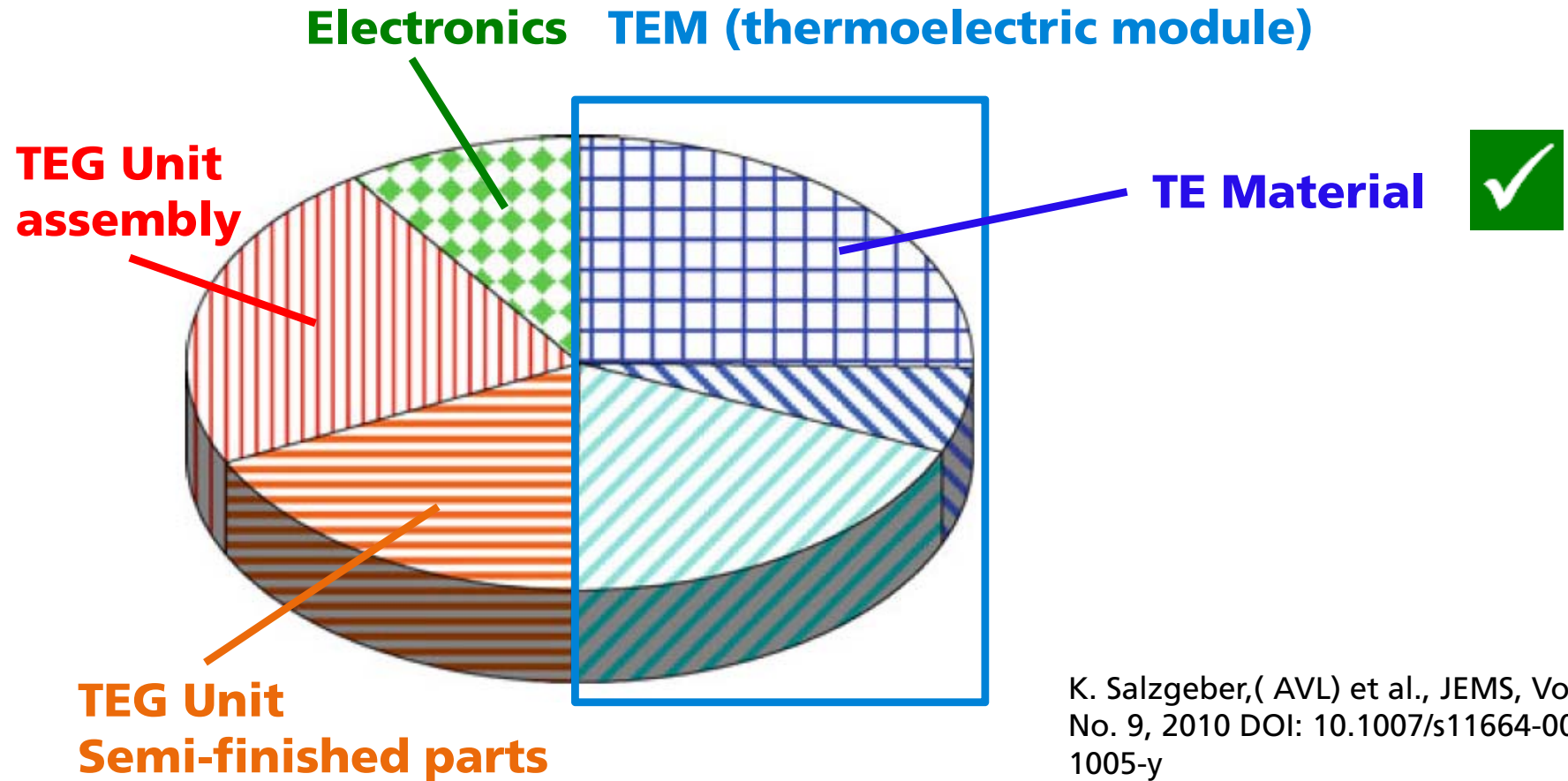
# Cost Consideration

Based on commercially available  $\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3$  modules

Module	<u>commercial <math>\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3</math></u>	<u>Half-Heusler</u>
Raw material costs (2016):	~ 44 \$/kg	22 - 50 \$/kg (Hf-free)
Synthesized material costs	~ 300 \$/kg	<=> 300 \$/kg possible !?
	<b><i>3-5 kg batch synthesis by THM in mass production</i></b>	<b><i>&gt; 8 kg batch synthesis realized &gt;&gt; 8 kg possible</i></b>

# Cost Considerations

Thermoelectric system (TEG) cost allocation



K. Salzgeber, ( AVL) et al., JEMS, Vol. 39, No. 9, 2010 DOI: 10.1007/s11664-009-1005-y

Cost split for a TEG Unit designed for gasoline engines for Hybrid electrical vehicles (Cost assessment for mass production)

# Cost reduction

## Thermoelectric Downsizing

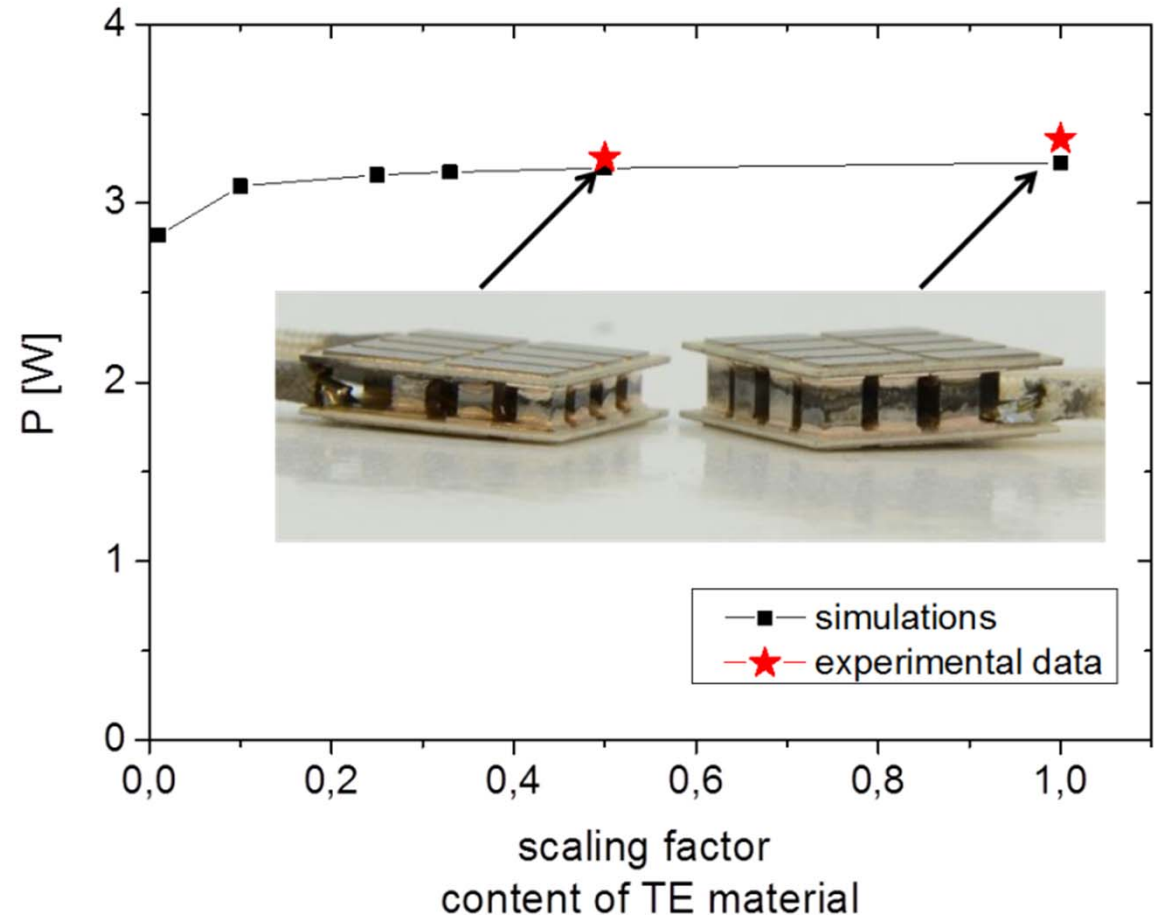
### 50 % material reduction

without changing the module properties like

- thermal resistance
- electrical resistance

Possible due to the very good mechanical properties of Half-Heusler materials

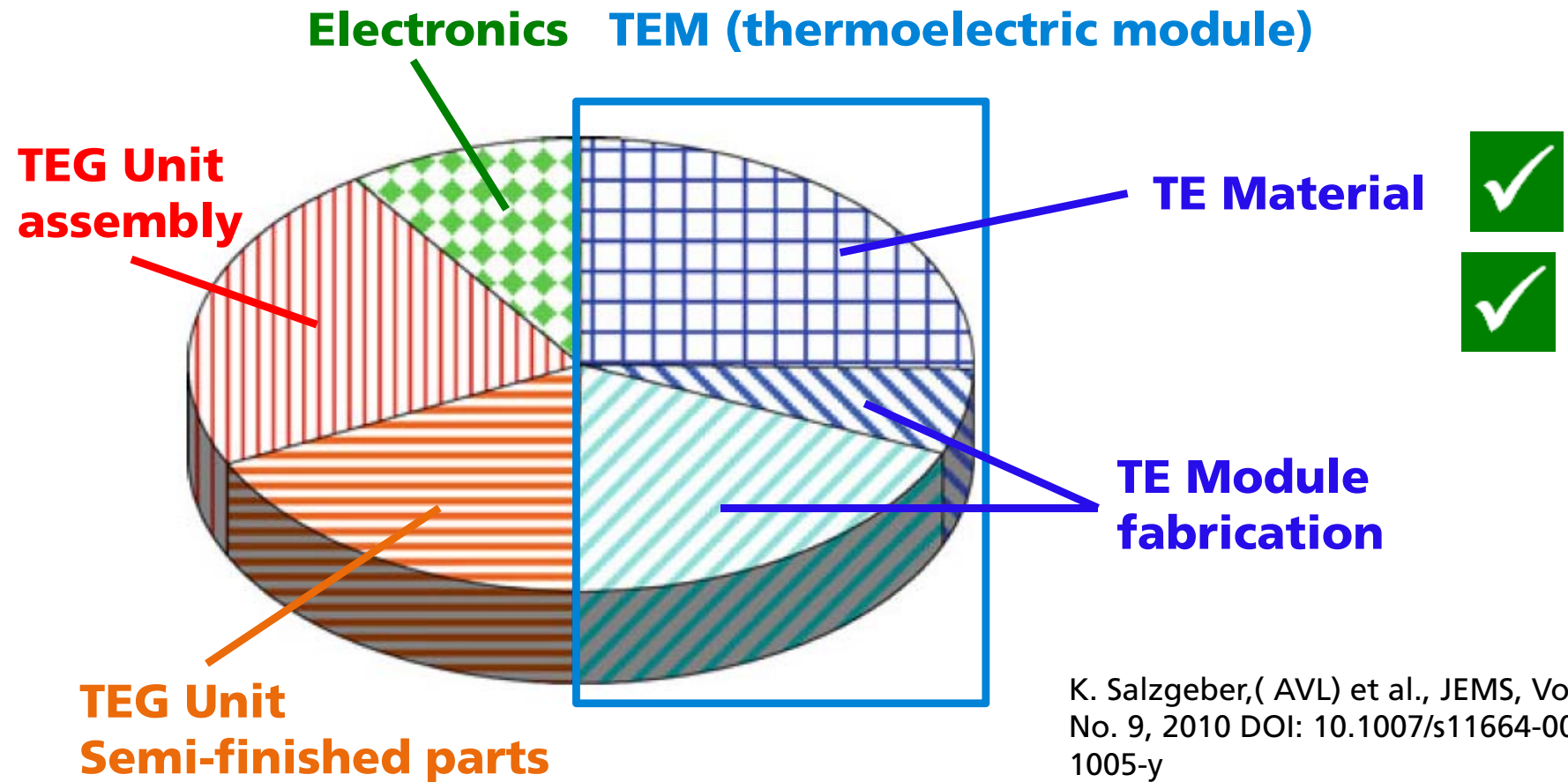
( $\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3$  is very brittle -> not possible)





# Cost Considerations

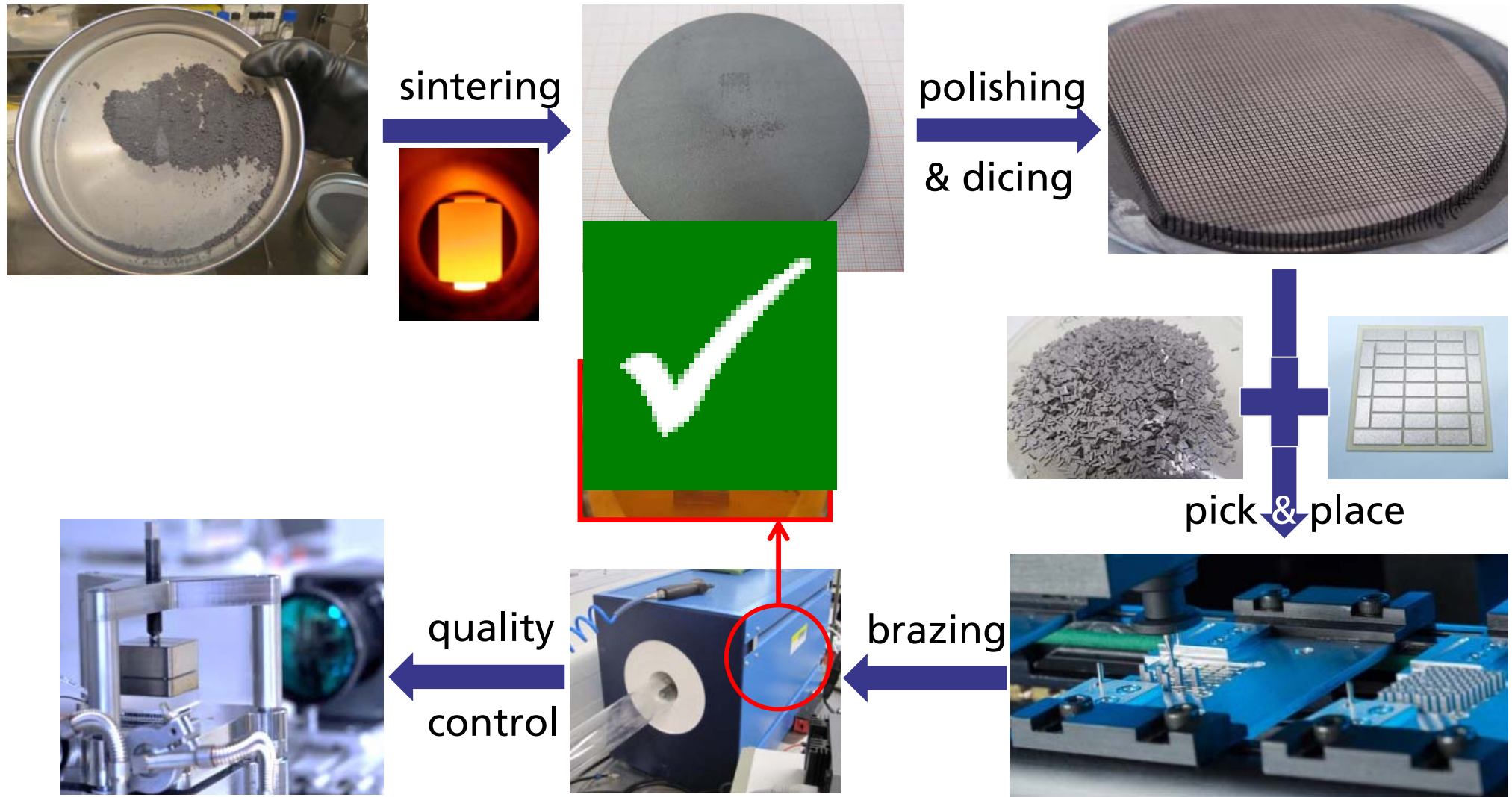
Thermoelectric system (TEG) cost allocation



Cost split for a TEG Unit designed for gasoline engines for Hybrid electrical vehicles (Cost assessment for mass production)

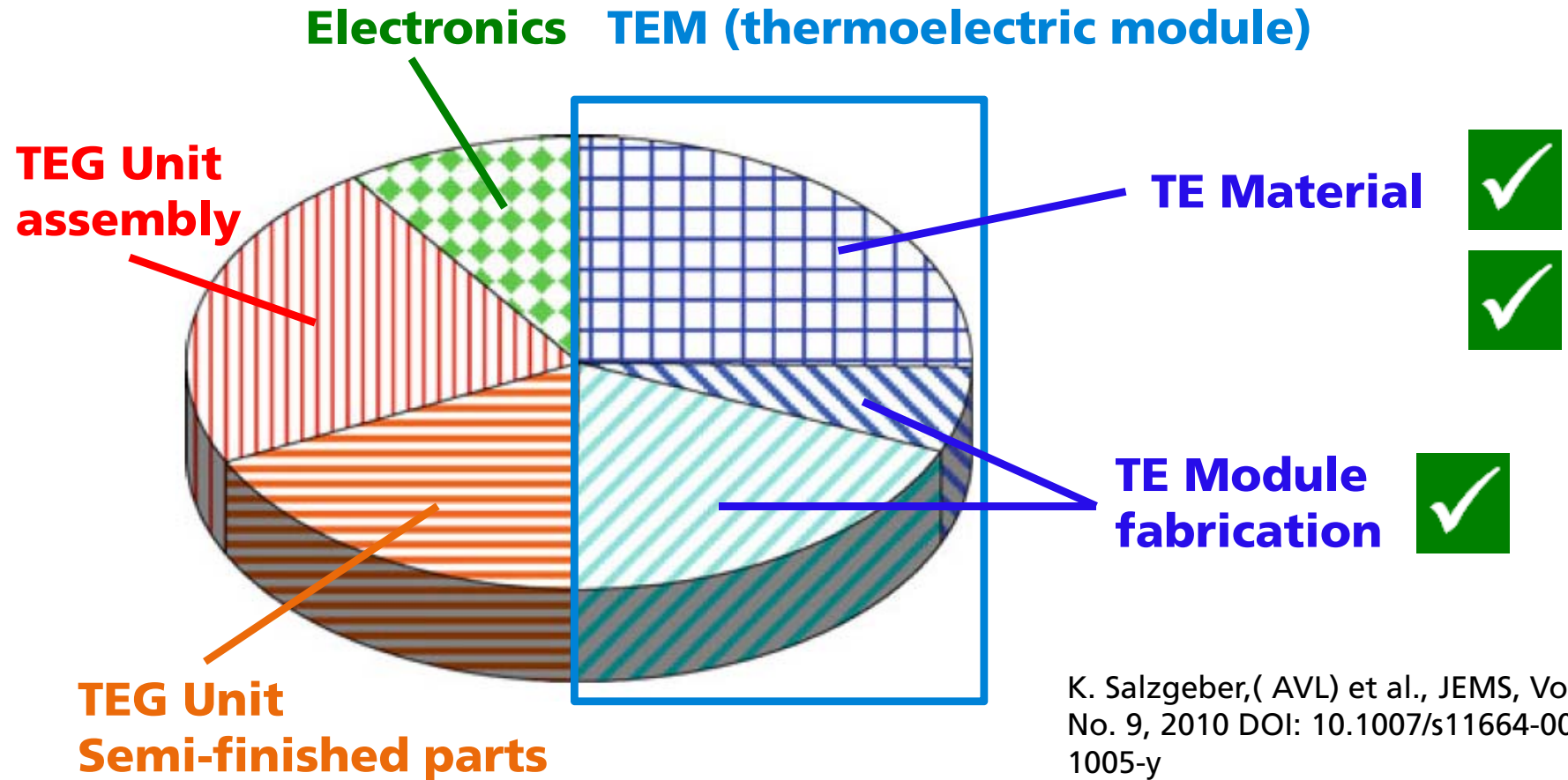
# Cost reduction due to mass production

## fully automated production process is possible



# Cost Considerations

Thermoelectric system (TEG) cost allocation



Cost split for a TEG Unit designed for gasoline engines for Hybrid electrical vehicles (Cost assessment for mass production)

# Cost Consideration

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mass production of thermoelectric modules (TEM) possible:

> 100.000 TEM (40x40 mm<sup>2</sup>)      1 - 4 \$/TEM



# Cost Consideration

Based on commercially available  $\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3$  modules

Module	<u>commercial <math>\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3</math></u>	<u>Half-Heusler</u>
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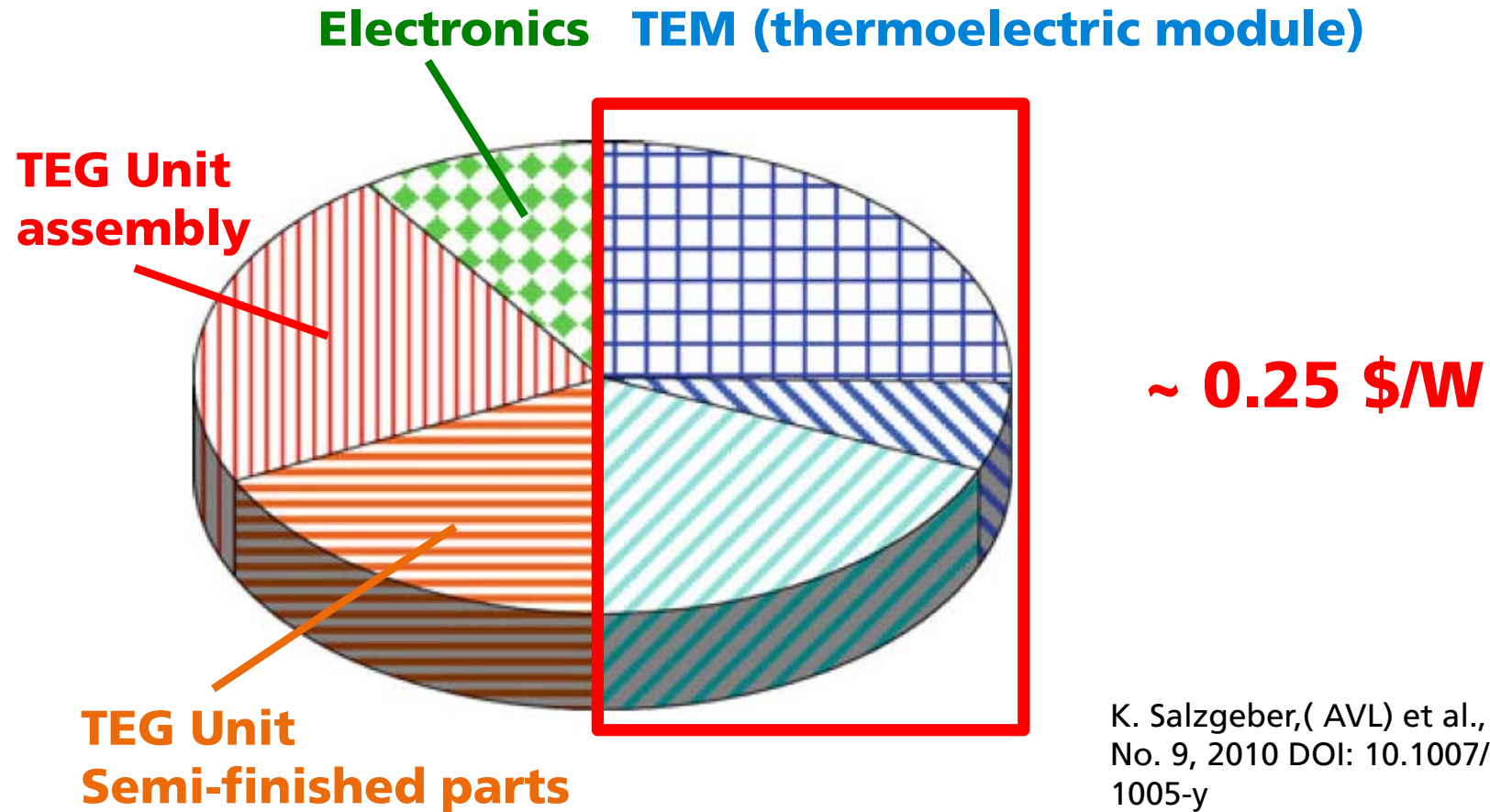
mass production of thermoelectric modules (TEM) possible:

> 100.000 TEM (40x40 mm <sup>2</sup> )	1 - 4 \$/TEM $\Leftrightarrow$	<b>5 \$/TEM</b> realistic*
$P_{\text{out, peak}}$ / TEM (40x40mm <sup>2</sup> )	4 - 9 W	<b>18 - 22 W shown</b>
$\Rightarrow$	<b>~1 - 0.5 \$/W</b>	<b>~0.25 \$/W *</b>

\*assumption: TEM fabrication process for Half Heusler similar to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3$  TEM fabrication

# Cost Considerations

Thermoelectric system (TEG) cost allocation



Cost split for a TEG Unit designed for gasoline engines for Hybrid electrical vehicles (Cost assessment for mass production)

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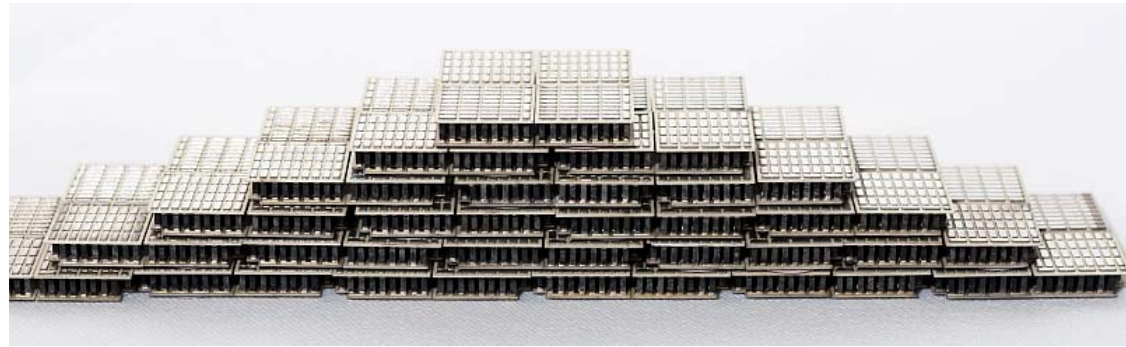
# Thermoelectric waste heat recovery on the way to mass production and into applications

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## Content

- On the way to applications
- Module Fabrication
- New Half-Heusler Modules and Arrays
- Cost Considerations
- **Summary**

# Summary



## Achievements:

- **Custom designed Half-Heusler modules** with high power densities made of kg-batch material
- **Fabrication of Half-Heusler modules with high reproducibility** and reliability is possible
- **Semi-automated fabrication** of Half-Heusler modules **demonstrated**
- **Mass production** of Half-Heusler modules is **possible**
- Cheap Half-Heusler modules possible in mass production !!!
- Fraunhofer IPM provide **Half-Heusler-modules for prototype systems**



# High Temperature Module Manufacturing

## Customized TE-Module designs



TEM Properties		Unit	IPM-Type 1	IPM-Type 2	IPM-Type 3	IPM-Type 4	IPM-Type 5
TE module dimensions	base area	[mm <sup>2</sup> ]	16±0.5 × 16±0.5	16±0.5 × 16±0.5	16±0.5 × 16±0.5	16±0.5 × 16±0.5	16±0.5 × 16±0.5
	height	[mm]	5.0±0.15	5.0±0.15	4.0±0.15	3.5±0.15	5.0±0.15
weight (without wires)		[g]	~4	~3	~3	~2	~4
number of thermo-couples		[#]	7	7	7	7	39
wire with thermal isolation ~80 mm long			500 mm long; blue: minus, red: plus				
Internal resistance at room temperature (without wires)		[Ohm]	0.04±0.01	0.06±0.01	0.03±0.01	0.05±0.01	1.4±0.1
Following module properties were achieved under the conditions $\Delta T \sim 530$ K; $T_{hot} \sim 550$ °C; $T_{cold} \sim 20$ °C; $p_{con} = 2$ MPa, atmosphere: nitrogen							
thermal resistance ( $K_{th}$ )*		[K/W]	~9	~7	~7	~9	~8
open circuit voltage ( $U_0$ )		[V]	1.0±0.1	1.0±0.1	0.9±0.1	1.0±0.1	5.3±0.5
internal resistance ( $R_i$ )		[Ohm]	0.07±0.01	0.10±0.01	0.05±0.01	0.08±0.01	2.0±0.1
power ( $P_{max}$ )		[W]	3.1±0.3	2.4±0.2	3.5±0.3	3.0±0.3	3.5±0.3
efficiency ( $\eta$ )*		[%]	~5.3	~3.2	~4.6	~5.1	~5.3
* calculated data							

# Acknowledgment



RexTEG

thermoHEUSLER  
thermoHEUSLER<sup>2</sup>



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# Thanks!

Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium  
für Wirtschaft  
und Energie



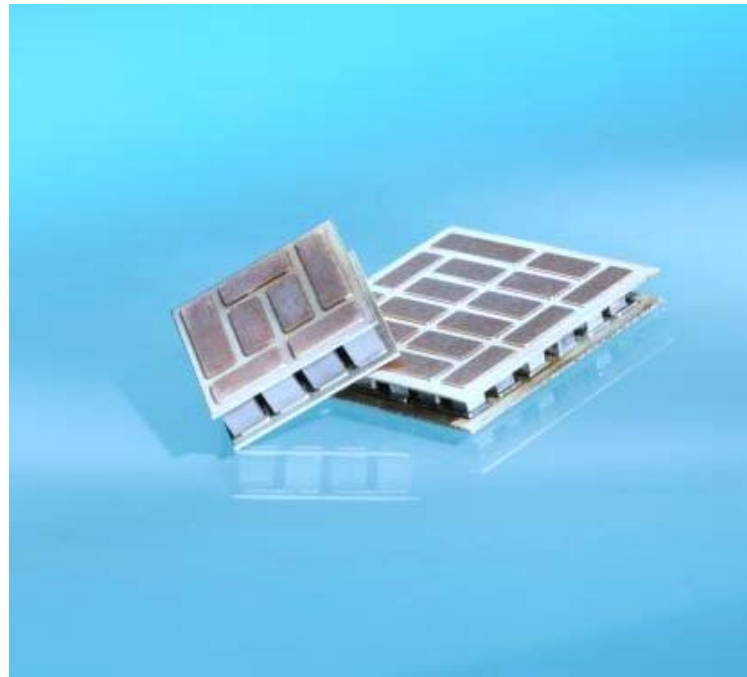
Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research



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# Good ideas for better solutions

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Thank you for your  
attention!



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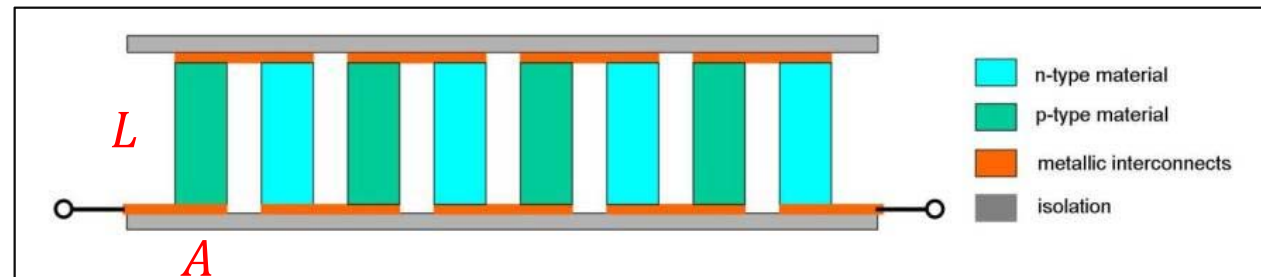


# Cost reduction

## Optimization of module geometry

Idea: "**thermoelectric downsizing**"

Reduce amount of TE material while keeping thermal and electrical properties of TE module



- electrical resistance of TE module:

$$R^{el} = nR_{TE}^{el} + \mathcal{O}(R^{contact}) \approx n\rho \frac{kL}{kA}$$

- thermal resistance of TE module:

$$R^{th} = \frac{1}{n}R_{TE}^{th} + \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{R_{TE}^{th}}{R^{bp}}\right) \approx \frac{1}{n\lambda} \frac{kL}{kA}$$

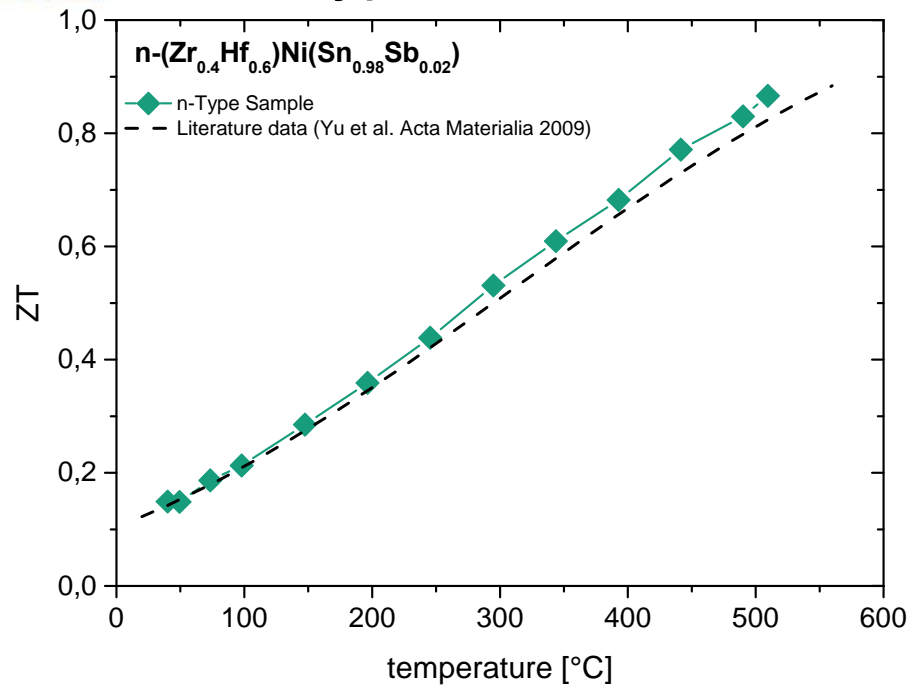
Identical scaling  $k$  of  $L$  and  $A$  leaves thermal and electrical properties of module unaltered!

# High Temperature Module Manufacturing

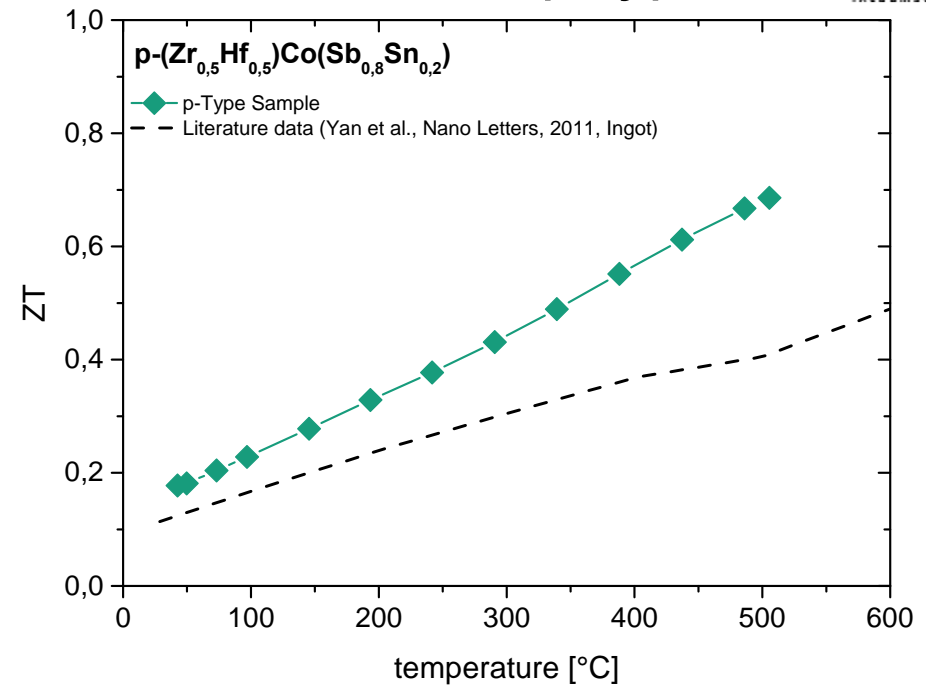
## The Half-Heusler Alloys (>kg production)



n-type



p-type



- Data in very good agreement with literature<sup>\*,\*\*</sup>
- Good reproducibility of material properties in >kg production (typically ~10% deviation from batch to batch)

\*C. Yu, T.-J. Zhu, R.-Z. Shi, Y. Zhang, X.-B. Zhao and J. He, Acta Materialia **57** (9), 2757-2764 (2009).

\*\*X. Yan, G. Joshi, W. Liu, Y. Lan, H. Wang, S. Lee, J.W. Simonson, S.J. Poon, T.M. Tritt, G. Chen, Z.F. Ren, Nano Letters, 11 (2011) 556.

# Thermoelectricity

## Performance of commercial $\text{Bi}_2\text{Te}_3$ module

Performance data of a commercial TEG (4x4 cm<sup>2</sup>) up to hot side temperatures of 250°C

