

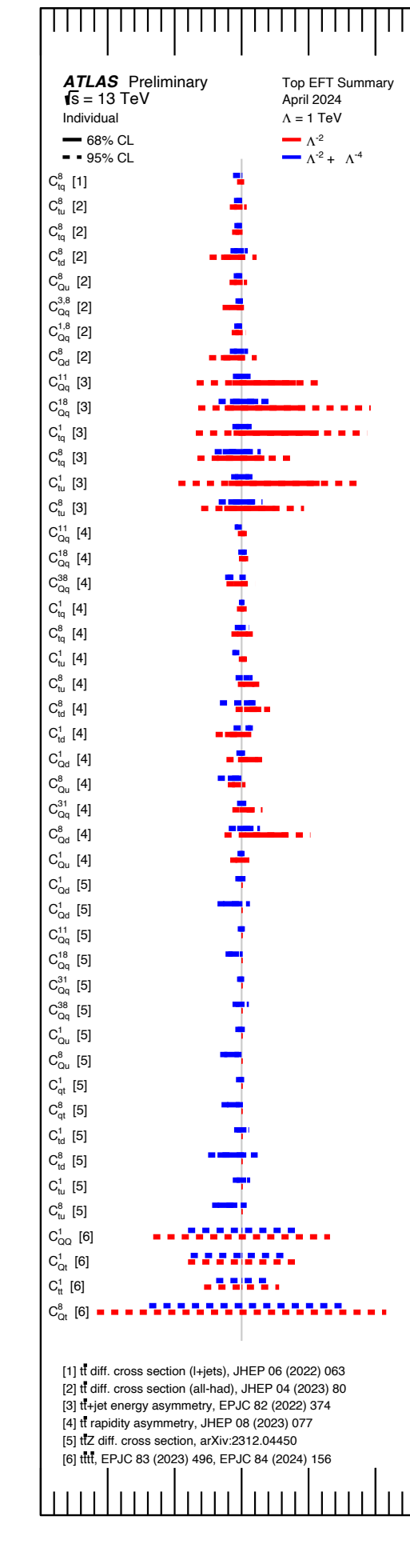
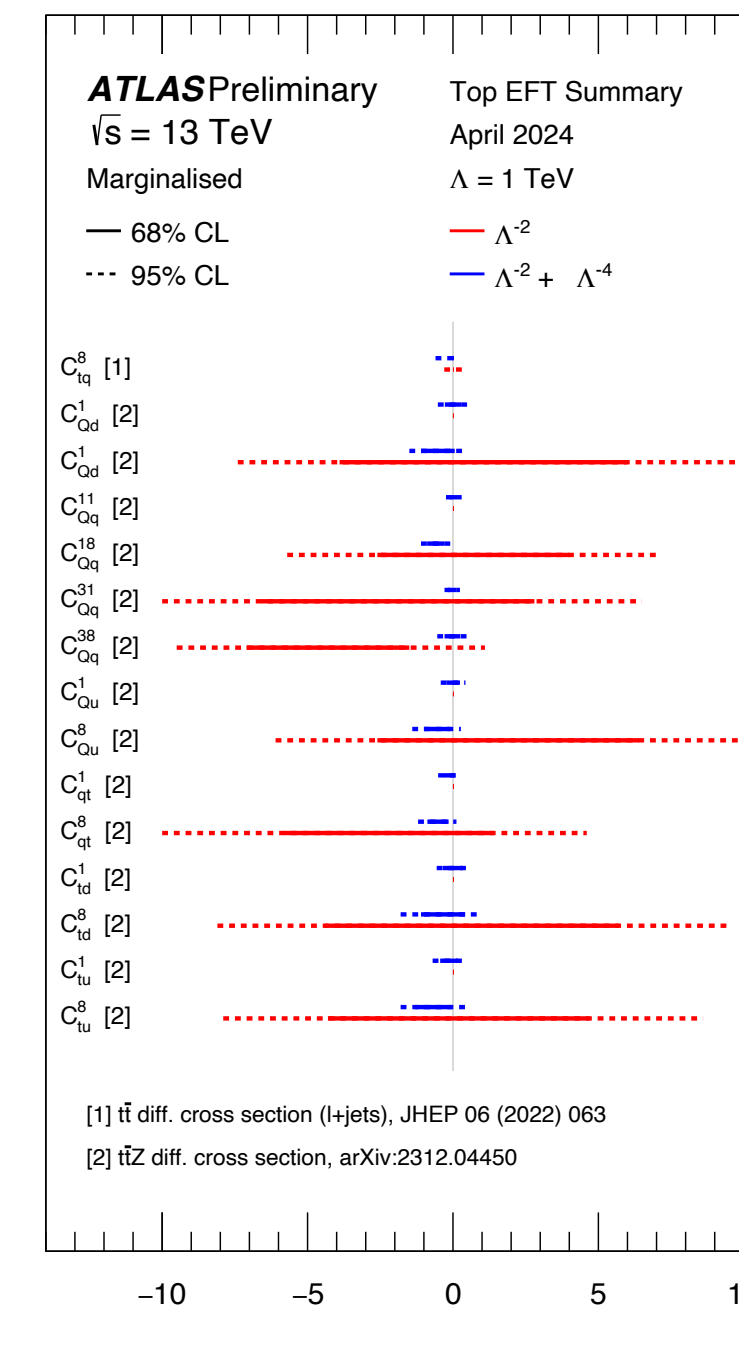


Associated production of tX and $t\bar{t} + X$, including their EFT interpretation

Caley Yardley
On behalf of the ATLAS Collaboration

SM@LHC2025, Durham
9th April 2025

- ATLAS explores a rich programme of top-phillic measurements and searches.
- Provides complementary sensitivity to physics within the SM and beyond.
- This talk shall highlight work on the following associated productions of top quarks using Run 2 measurements:
 - $t\bar{t}W$ production cross-sections
 - $t\bar{t}Z$ production cross-sections
 - $t\bar{t}\gamma$ production cross-sections
 - *Search for same-sign top pair production
 - * $t\bar{t}l^+l^-$ production measurement
 - *Also discussed in [Maryam's talk](#) yesterday

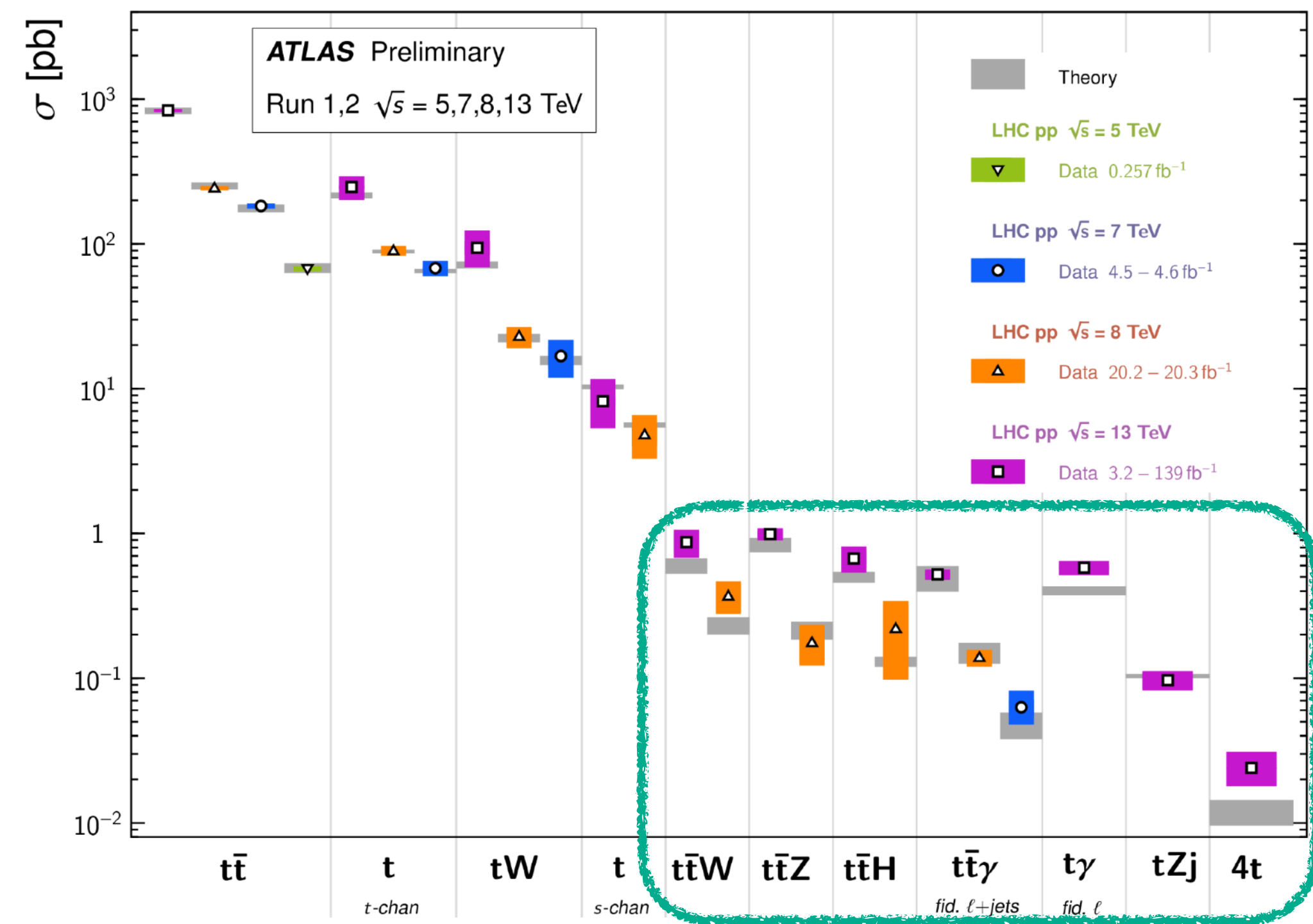


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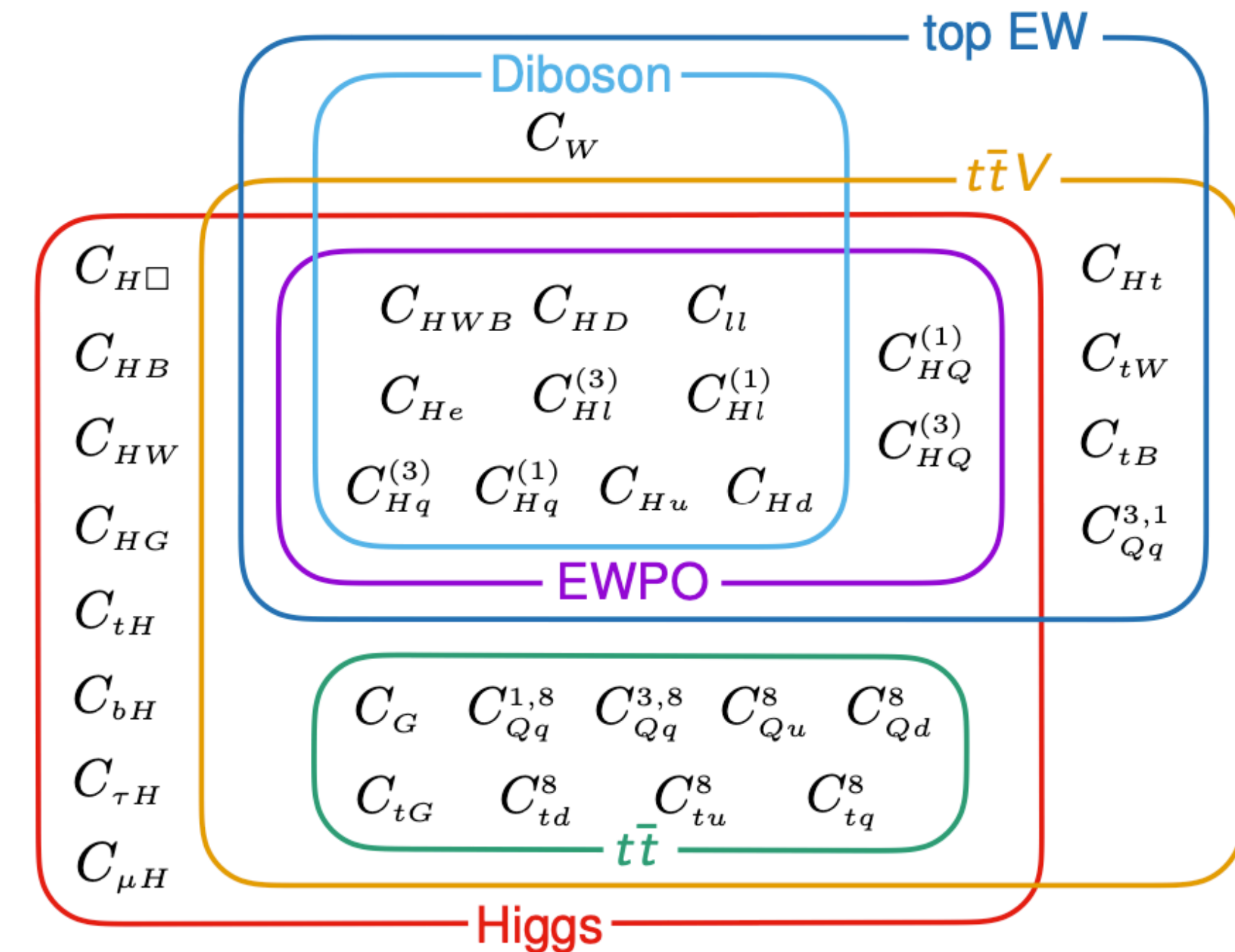
- Rare associated production of top quarks are sensitive to various physics insertions:

Top Quark Production Cross Section Measurements

Status: November 2022



- Probe of EW physics
- Higgs portal
- High-energies for observing massive BSM contributions
- Top EW sector is a strong probe of complementary EFT operators to other programmes at the LHC.

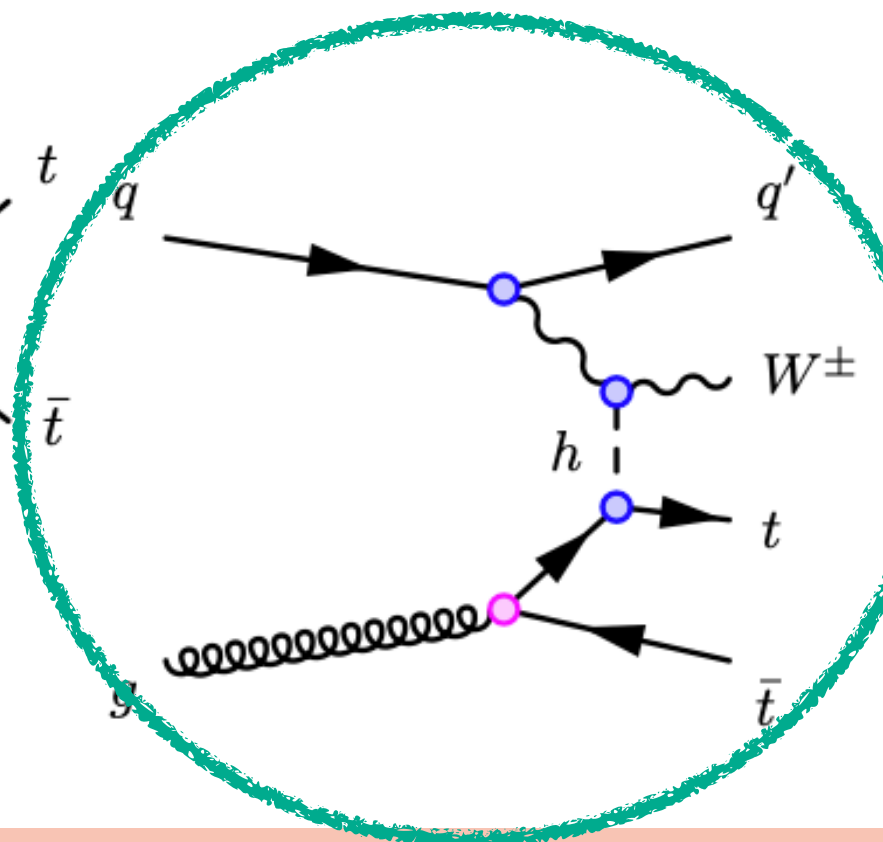
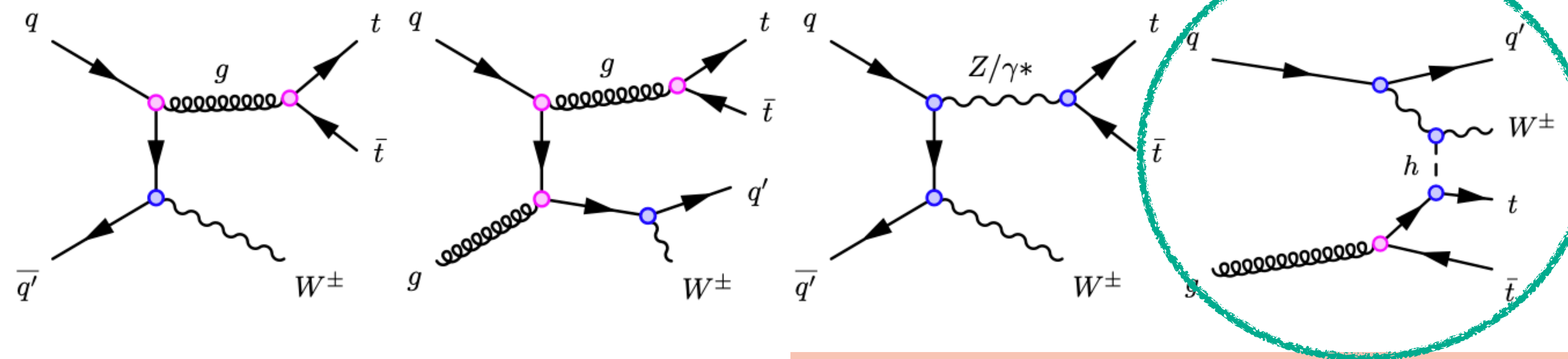


ATL-PHYS-PUB-2022-051

JHEP 04 (2021) 279.

- A rare associated top process which is a dominant background in SS dilepton searches.
- Understanding of $t\bar{t}W$ modelling is one of the key limitations on measurement.
- LO initial state sensitive to PDFs and complex QCD & EWK corrections.
 - Consequences: charge-asymmetric production & tW -scattering (could probe EFT)
- Measures inclusive cross-section and asymmetry in a maximum-likelihood fit.
- First measurement of particle-level differential cross-sections at the LHC using profile likelihood unfolding:

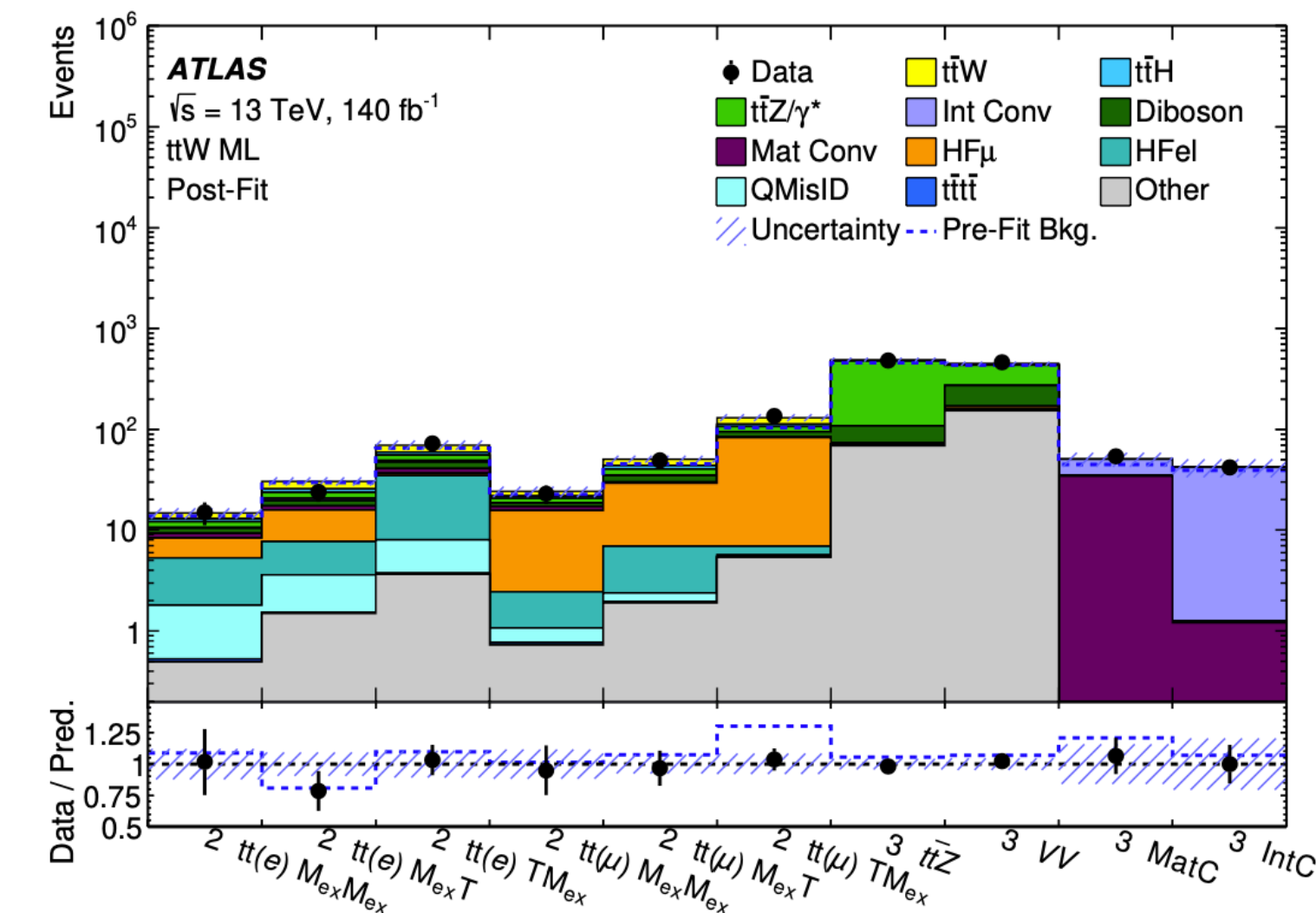
Choice of six variables motivated by theory or previously observed discrepancies.



- Events used in this analysis are selected using high-efficiency dilepton triggers & must be trigger matched (~82% for signal events satisfying preselection):
 - They must have at least one primary vertex candidate & two leptons passing a tight isolation requirement.
- Categorisation into $2lSS$ and $3l$ SRs reduces migration of $3l$ $t\bar{t}W$ events into $2l$ (reconstruction inefficiencies).

Good closure shown for fit-derived background norm factors:

- **Dominated by $t\bar{t}Z$ & diboson** - CRs use on-shell-Z OSSF pair.
- Inversion of selection on $3l$ invariant mass used in CRs for electron conversions.
- CRs for HF non-prompt leptons must have two leptons passing looser isolation requirement.

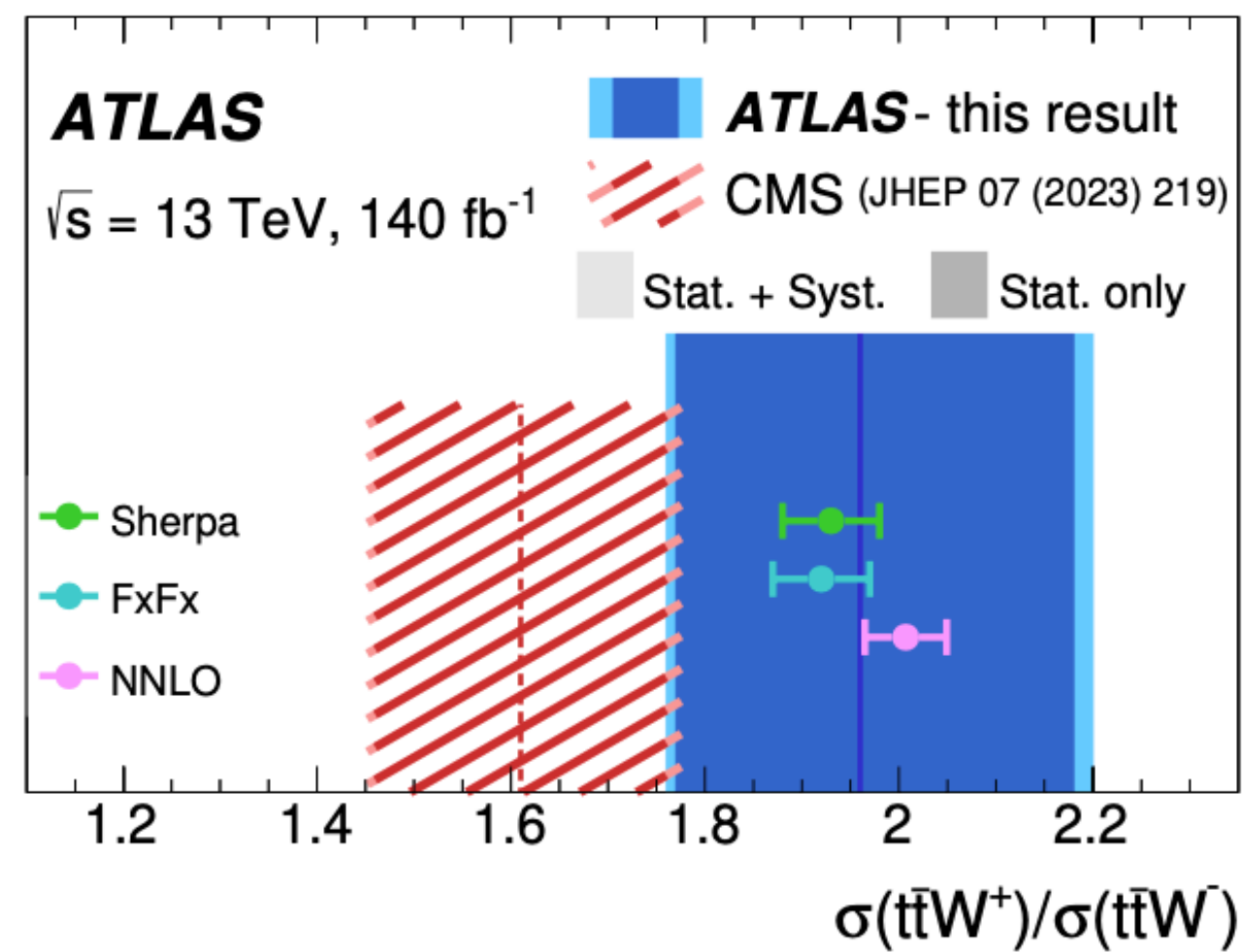
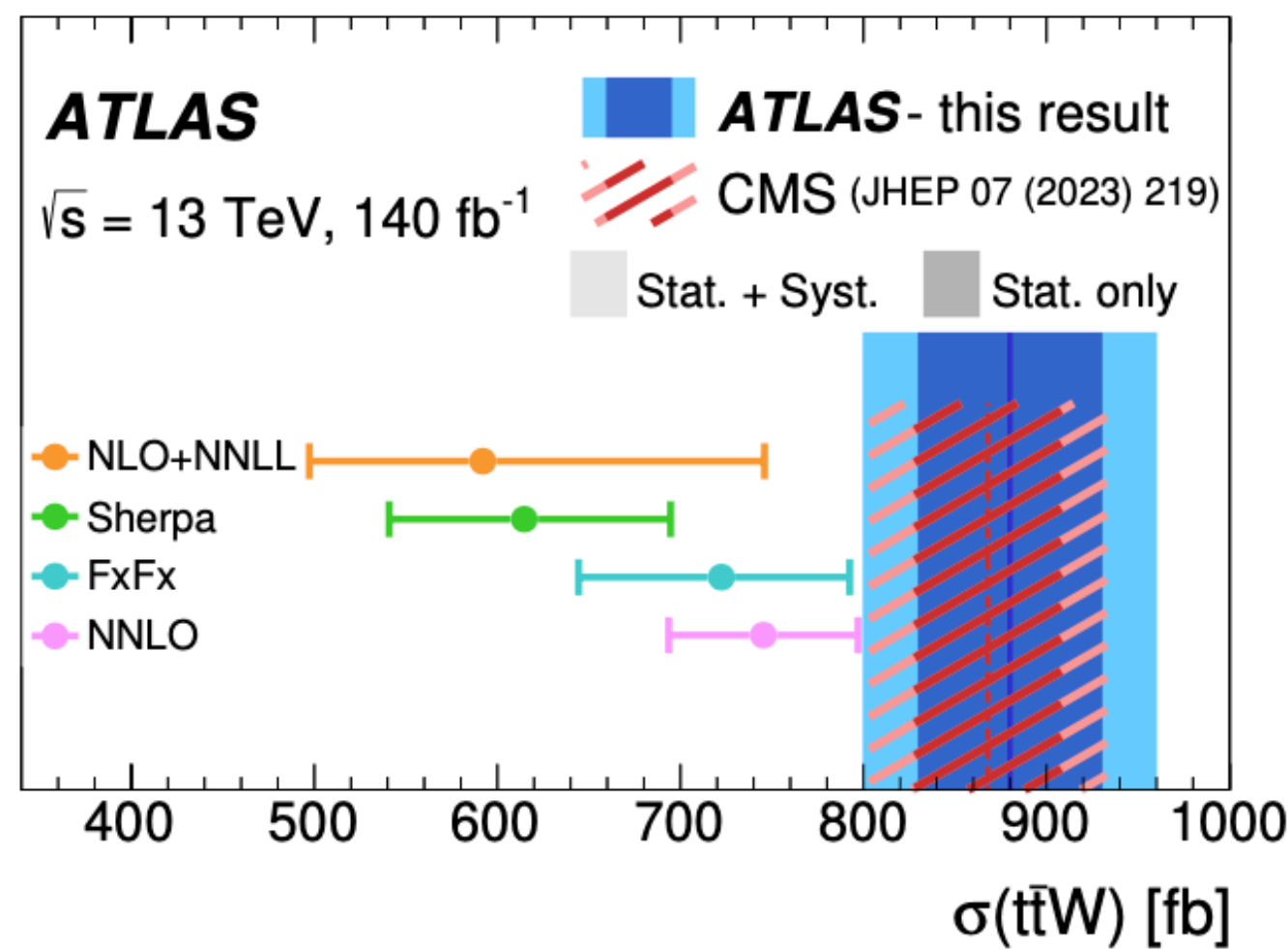
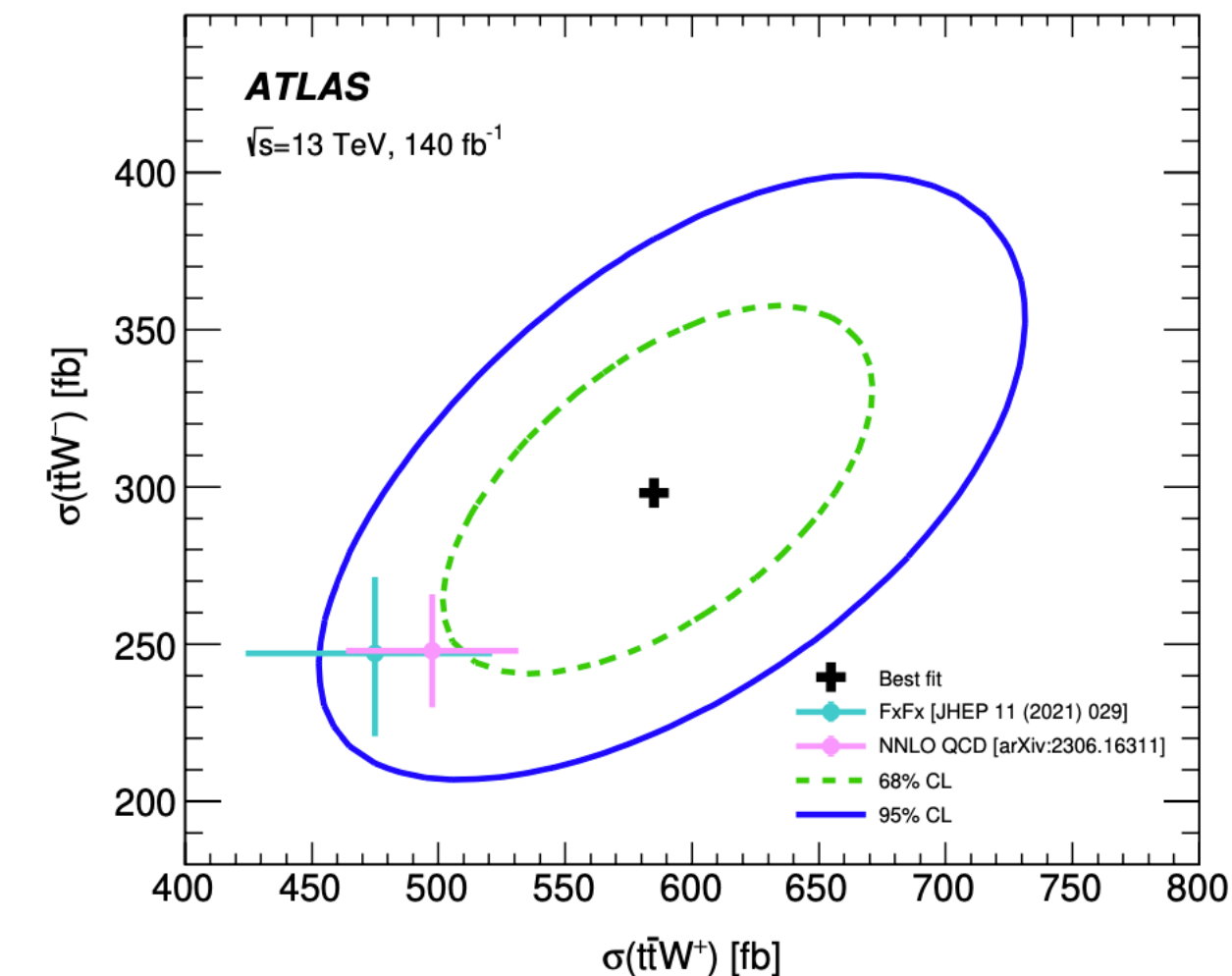


Additional data-driven corrections applied to $t\bar{t}$ and VV kinematics to better model the data.

[JHEP 05 \(2024\) 131.](#)

- Uncertainty on results of maximum likelihood fit dominated by $t\bar{t}W$ signal modelling and prompt-lepton background normalisation.
- Inclusive cross-section measurement compatible with SM NNLO at a level of 1.4σ .

$$\sigma(t\bar{t}W) = 880 \pm 50 \text{ (stat.)} \pm 70 \text{ (syst.)} = 880 \pm 80 \text{ fb}$$

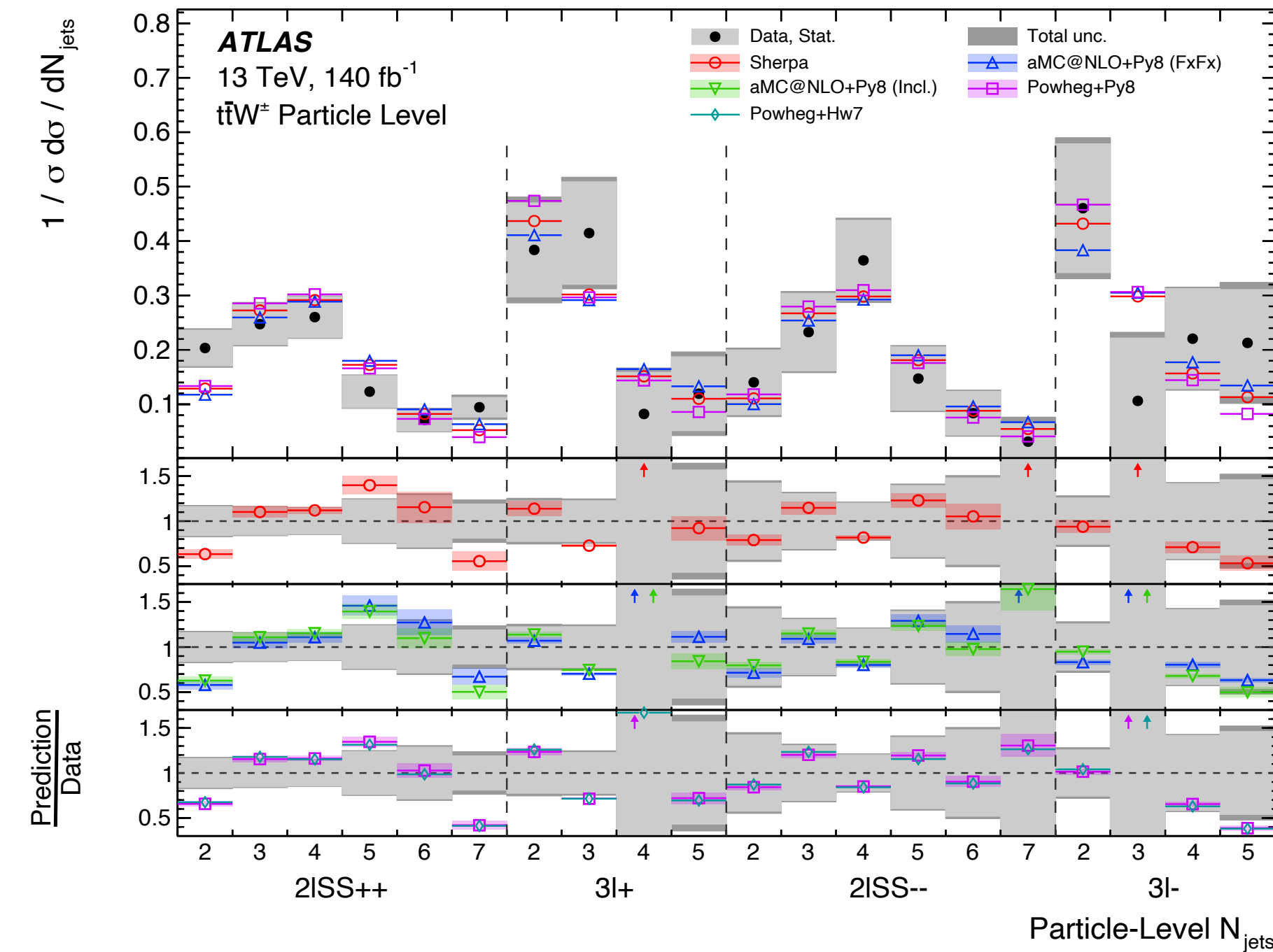
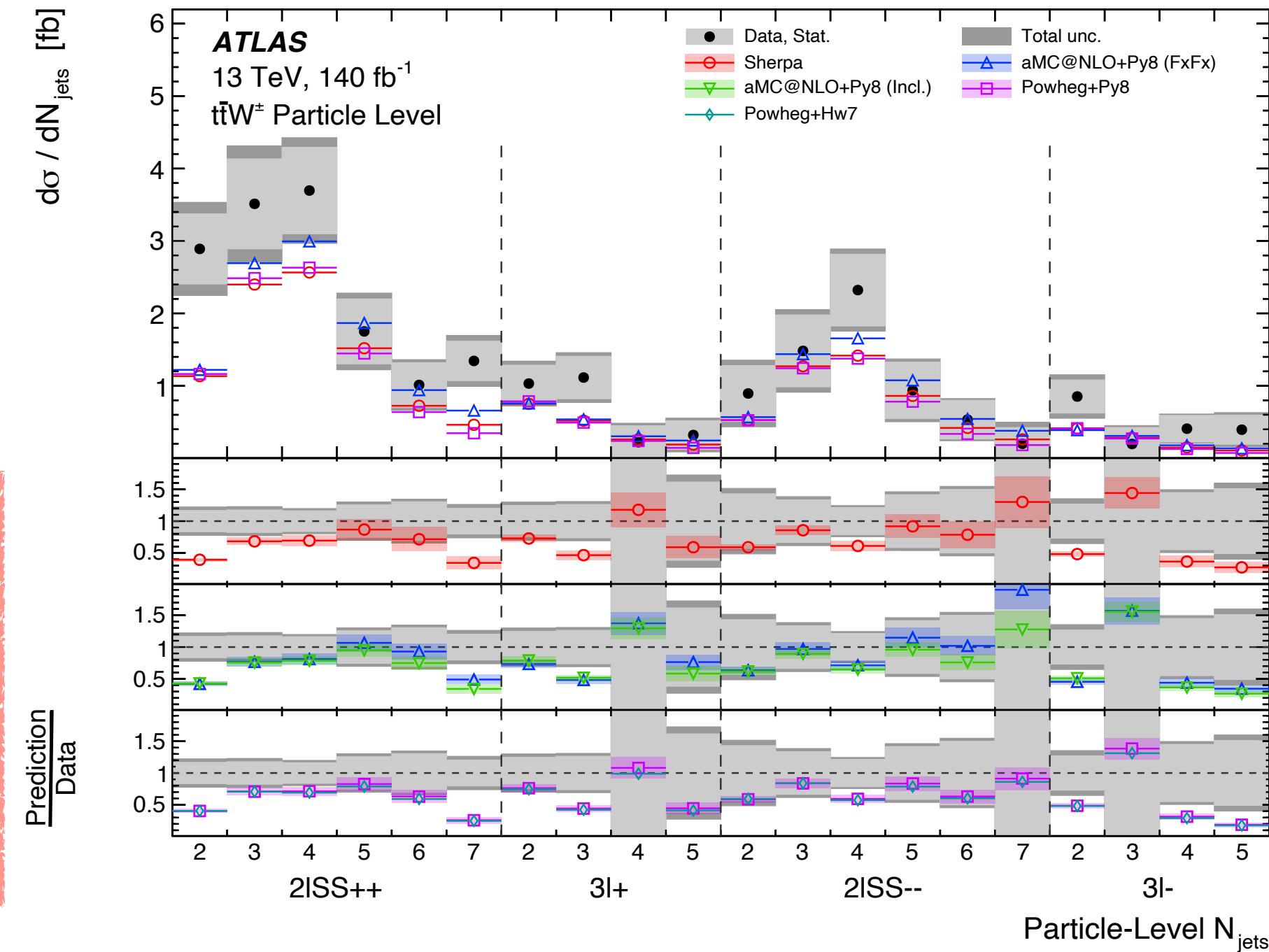


- 58% correlation between $t\bar{t}W^{+/-}$

$$\sigma(t\bar{t}W^+) = 583 \pm 58 \text{ fb}$$

$$\sigma(t\bar{t}W^-) = 296 \pm 40 \text{ fb}$$
- Asymmetry measurement: 0.33 ± 0.05
- SHERPA 2.2.10 MEPS@NLO: $0.322 \pm 0.003 \pm 0.007(\text{scale}) \pm 0.003(\text{PDF})$

Theory predictions generally agree well with normalised differential cross-section results



- At high jet multiplicities, predictions using NLO (FxFx) merging are in better agreement than NLO+PS from Powheg.
- Disagreement in cross-sections at lower jet multiplicities is independent of NLO merging vs NLO+PS modelling.

- The coupling of the Z -boson to the top quark is still not well-constrained by the available data but is significantly modified by BSM physics.
- $t\bar{t}Z$ is a irreducible background in other rare-top analyses such as $t\bar{t}t\bar{t}$ production and in BSM searches.
- The first differential measurements made by CMS and ATLAS also extract inclusive cross-section measurements compatible with each other and the SM.
- This analysis refines the previous ATLAS measurement [EPJC 81 \(2021\) 737](#):
 - Additional final state considered targeting all-hadronic decay of the $t\bar{t}$ system.
 - Improved calibrations, reduced experimental uncertainties, and updates to theoretical & modelling uncertainties.
 - Additional EFT and spin-correlation interpretations.

A data-driven $t\bar{t}$ estimation is also used.

- An MVA approach is used in each channel to maximise signal discrimination

Variable	Preselection		
$N_\ell (\ell = e, \mu)$	= 2		
	= 1 OSSF lepton pair with $ m_{\ell\ell} - m_Z < 10$ GeV		
$p_T(\ell_1, \ell_2)$	> 30, 15 GeV		
	SR-2ℓ-5j2b	SR-2ℓ-6j1b	SR-2ℓ-6j2b
$N_{\text{jets}} (p_T > 25$ GeV)	= 5	≥ 6	≥ 6
$N_{b\text{-tagged jets}@77\%}$	≥ 2	= 1	≥ 2

← 2 ℓ

3 ℓ

4 ℓ →

Variable	Preselection		
$N_\ell (\ell = e, \mu)$	= 3		
	≥ 1 OSSF lepton pair with $ m_{\ell\ell} - m_Z < 10$ GeV for all OSSF combinations: $m_{\text{OSSF}} > 10$ GeV		
$p_T(\ell_1, \ell_2, \ell_3)$	> 27, 20, 15 GeV		
$N_{\text{jets}} (p_T > 25$ GeV)	≥ 3		
$N_{b\text{-tagged jets}}$	$\geq 1@85\%$		
	SR-3ℓ-ttZ	SR-3ℓ-tZq	SR-3ℓ-WZ
DNN-tZq output	< 0.43	≥ 0.43	—
DNN-WZ output	< 0.27	< 0.27	≥ 0.27
$N_{b\text{-tagged jets}}$	—	—	$\geq 1@60\%$

Variable	Preselection	
$N_\ell (\ell = e, \mu)$	= 4	
	≥ 1 OSSF lepton pair with $ m_{\ell\ell} - m_Z < 20$ GeV for all OSSF combinations: $m_{\text{OSSF}} > 10$ GeV	
$p_T(\ell_1, \ell_2, \ell_3, \ell_4)$	> 27, 7, 7, 7 GeV	
The sum of lepton charges	= 0	
$N_{\text{jets}} (p_T > 25$ GeV)	≥ 2	
$N_{b\text{-tagged jets}}$	$\geq 1@85\%$	
	SR-4ℓ-SF	SR-4ℓ-DF
$\ell\ell^{\text{non-Z}}$	e^+e^- or $\mu^+\mu^-$	$e^\pm\mu^\mp$
DNN output	≥ 0.4	—

DNN for each multiplicity of (b -)jets discriminates signal from $t\bar{t}$ and Z +jets & its distribution is used directly in the inclusive measurement.

$Z + b/c$ normalisations extracted from inclusive fit.

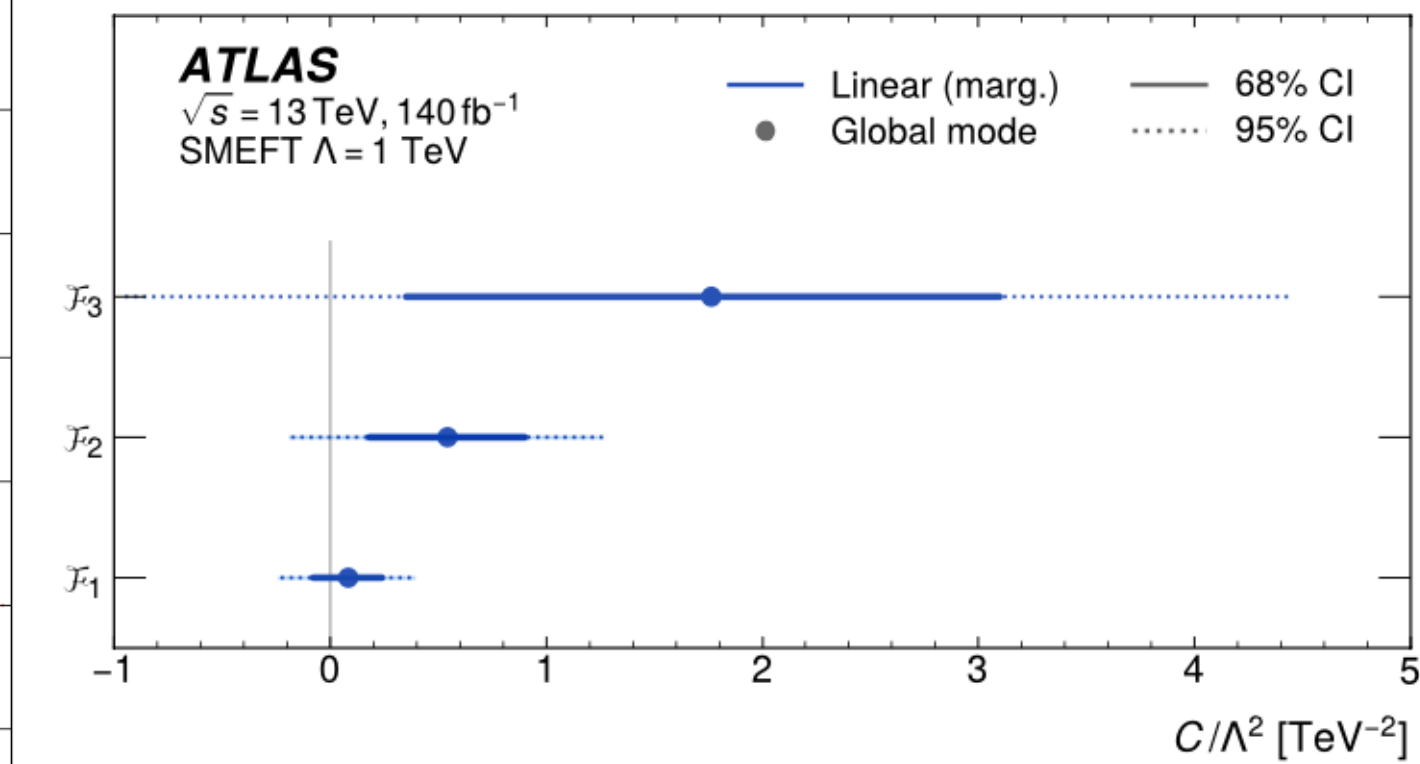
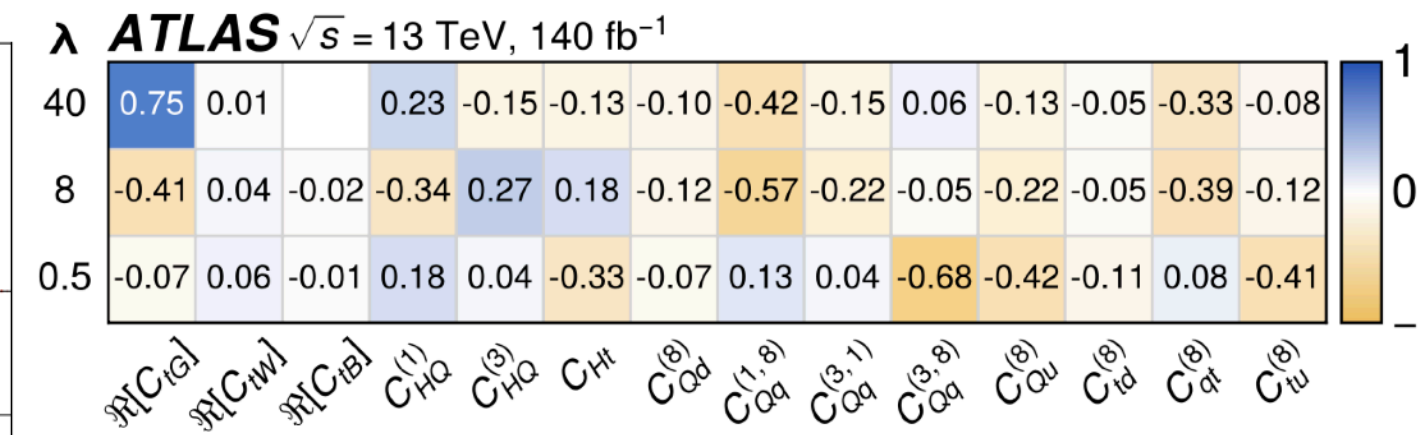
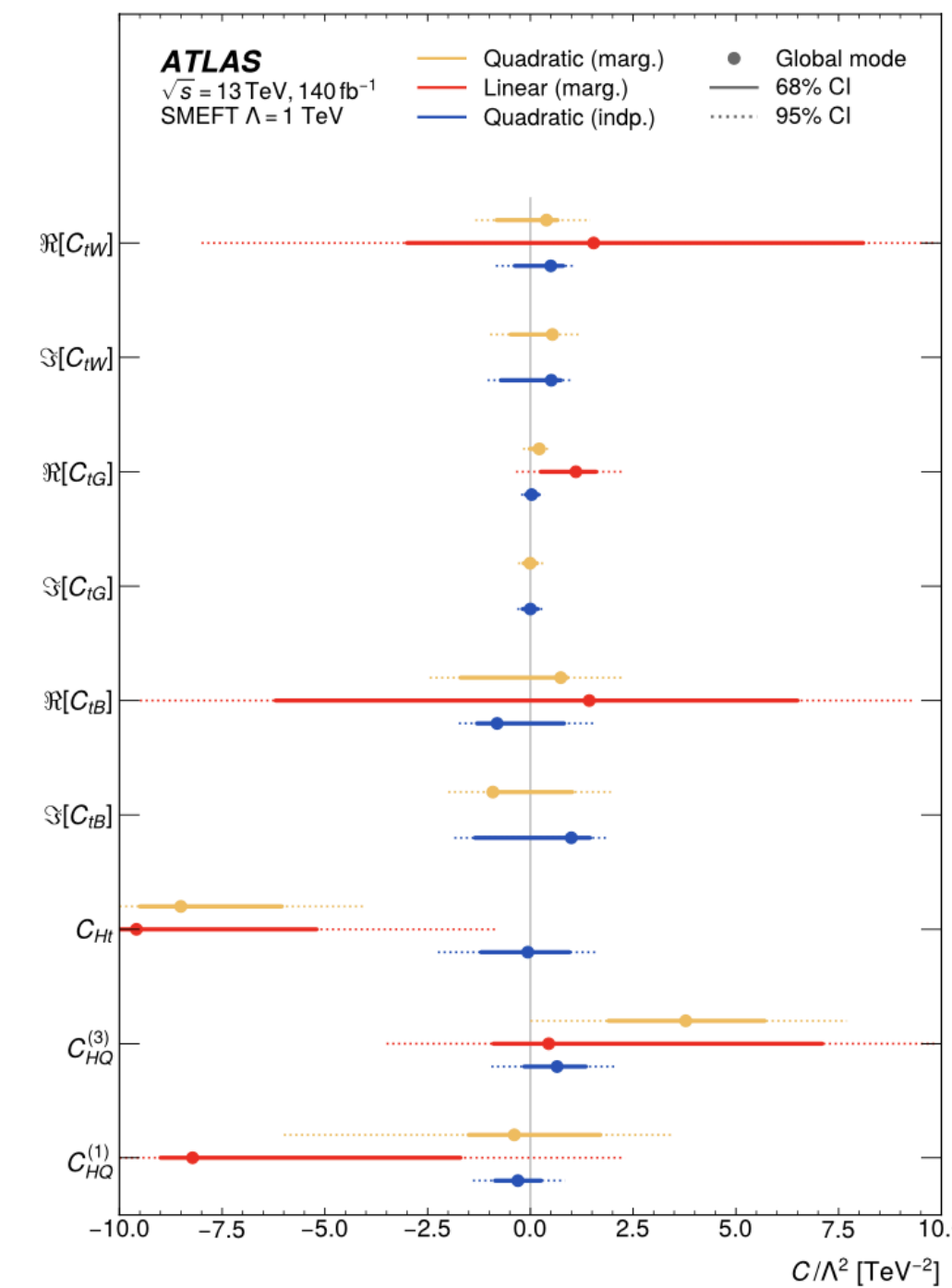
3-class DNN to separate from tZq and WZ & cut on b -tag in SR-3 ℓ -WZ reduces $WZ + l/c$.

Cut on DNN output in SR-4 ℓ -SF suppresses ZZ +jets.

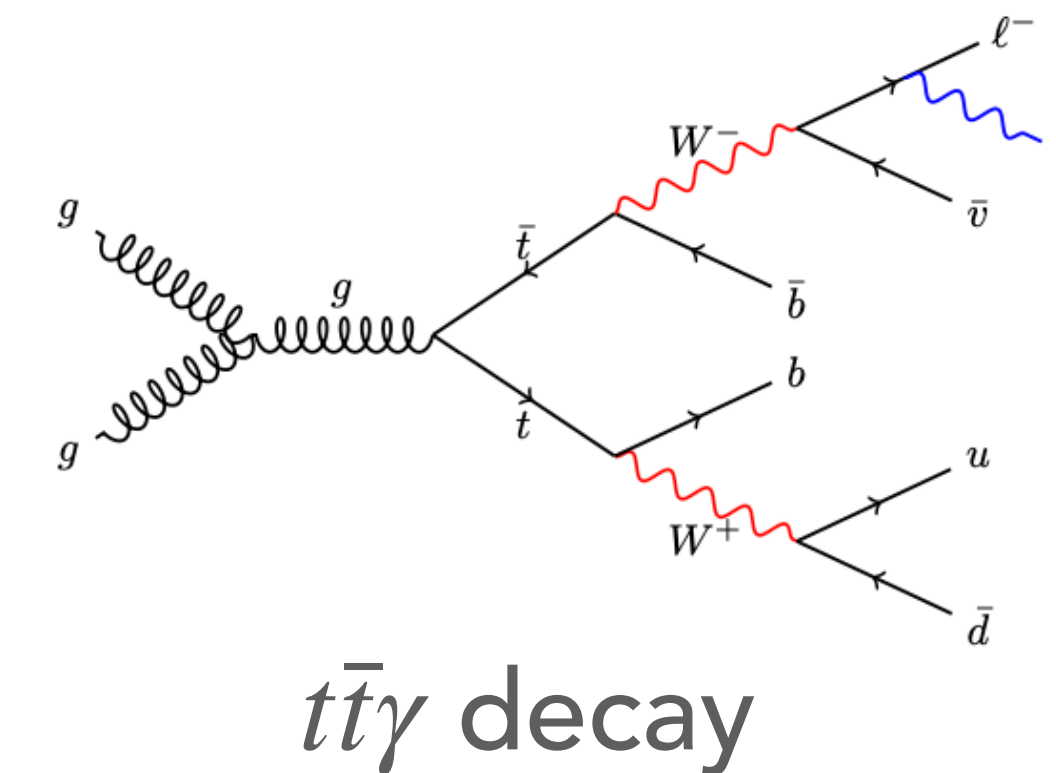
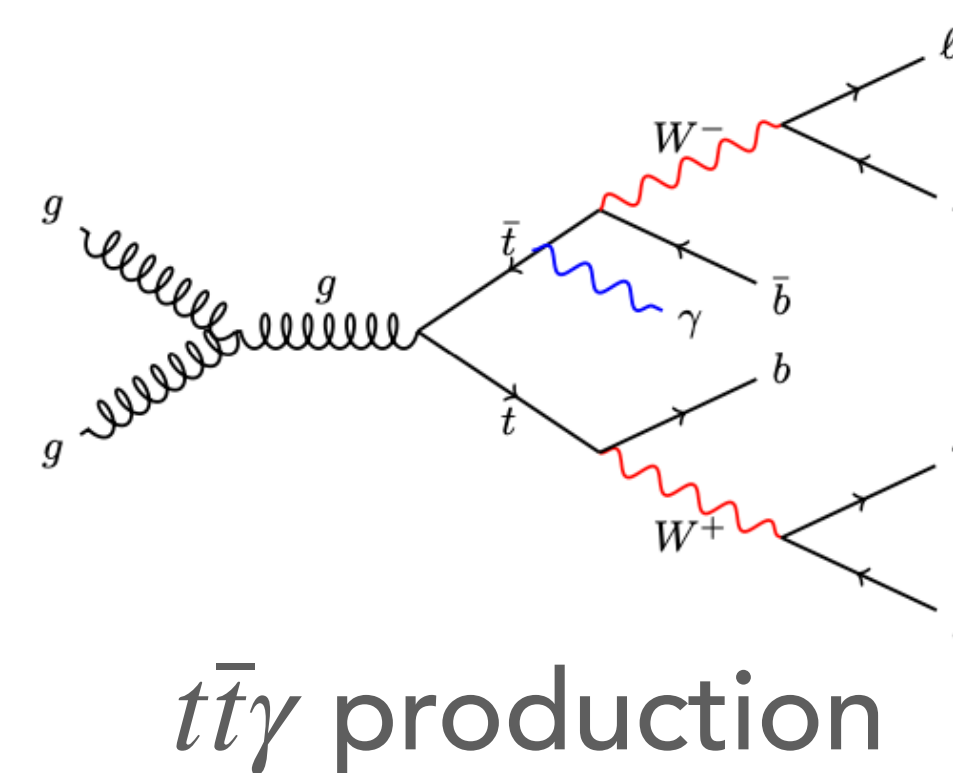
Dominant $ZZ + b$ component normalised using CRs with inverted DNN cut

- Combined inclusive fit result has a precision of 6% vs 10% previously.
- Unfolded differential cross-sections show good agreement with data for most variables:
 - Z & top p_T are typically most sensitive to top- Z & four-quark operators.
- Slightly asymmetric limits on some operators are due to the interplay different operators.
- Also do a fit on the rotated EFT directions
 - Highlights sensitivity to modifications to quark-initiated $t\bar{t}Z$ channel & of the top-gluon vertex.

Channel	$\sigma_{t\bar{t}Z}$
Dilepton	0.84 ± 0.11 pb = 0.84 ± 0.06 (stat.) ± 0.09 (syst.) pb
Trilepton	0.84 ± 0.07 pb = 0.84 ± 0.05 (stat.) ± 0.05 (syst.) pb
Tetralepton	$0.97^{+0.13}_{-0.12}$ pb = 0.97 ± 0.11 (stat.) ± 0.05 (syst.) pb
Combination (2 l , 3 l & 4 l)	0.86 ± 0.05 pb = 0.86 ± 0.04 (stat.) ± 0.04 (syst.) pb



- Focus on this analysis is measurement of $t\bar{t}\gamma$ with improved separation of production-mode events from the decay mode.
- Interference between the two is negligible both in the SM and in EFT.
- Production mode is most sensitive to measurements of the top- γ coupling.
- Measurements exploit channels at stable particle level in a fiducial phase space using events with exactly one photon, at least one b -tagged jet, and considering light-leptons only
- **Single-lepton** - 3-class NN with 40 input variables ($t\bar{t}\gamma$ prod. vs dec. vs bkg)
- **Dilepton** - Binary classify ($t\bar{t}\gamma$ prod. vs bkg)
- Non-prompt/fake backgrounds estimated using data-driven techniques.

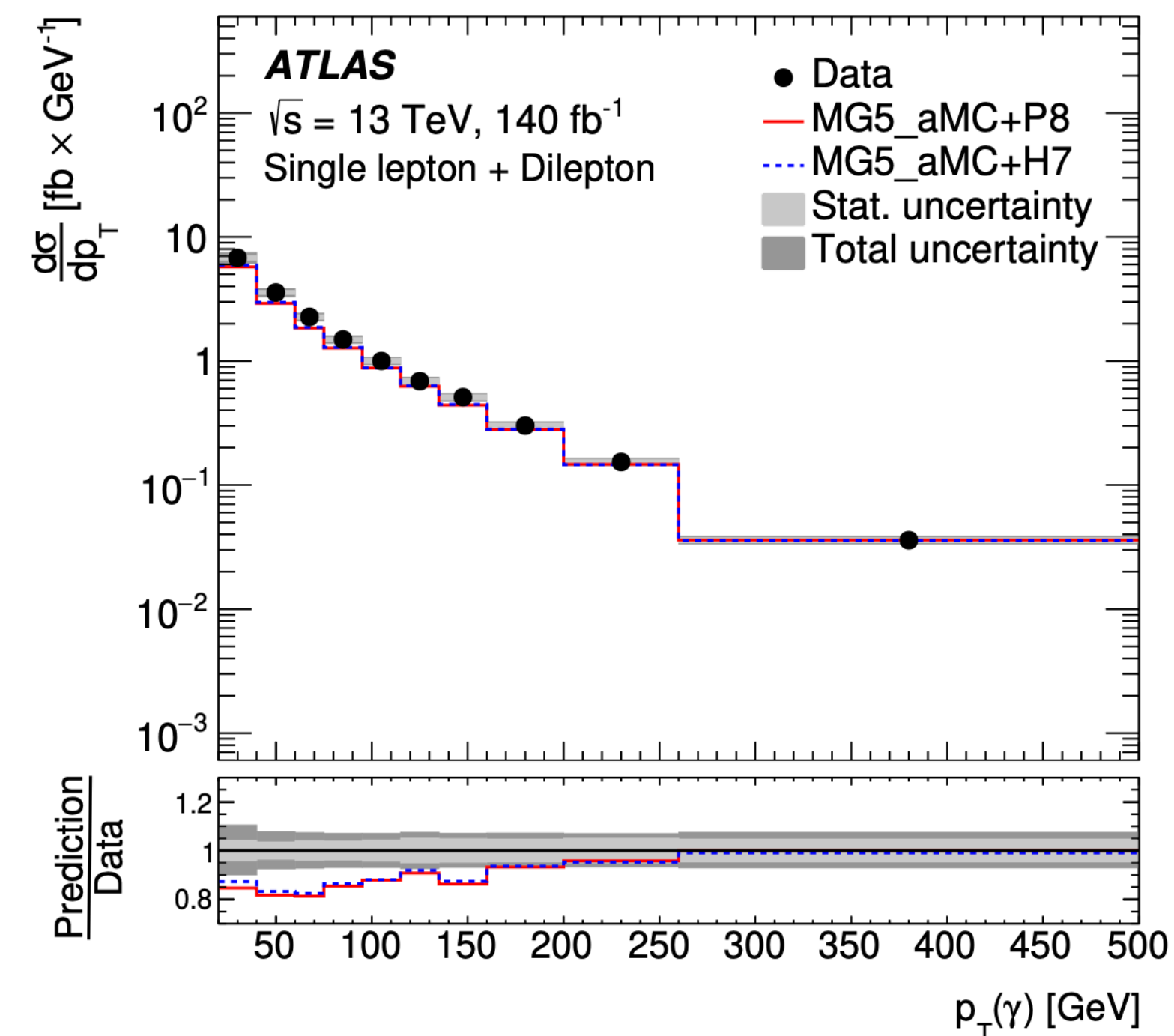
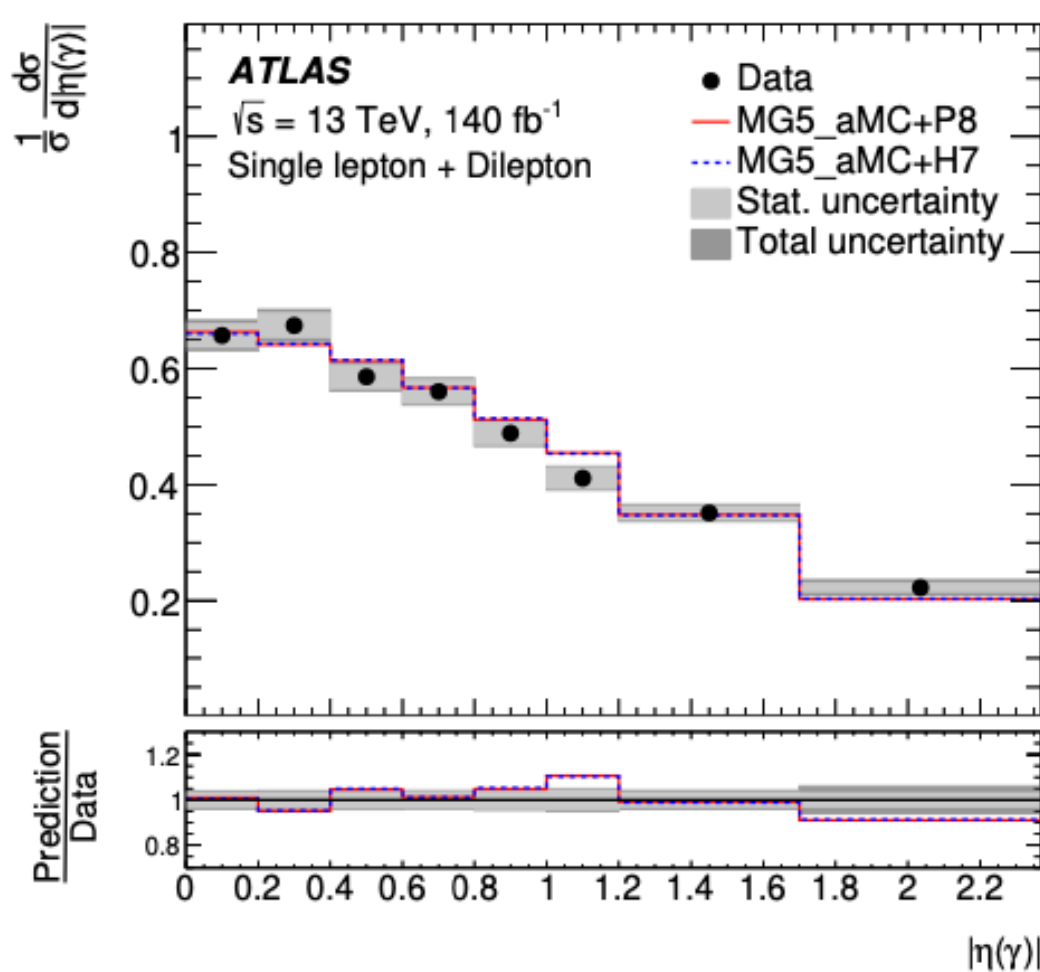
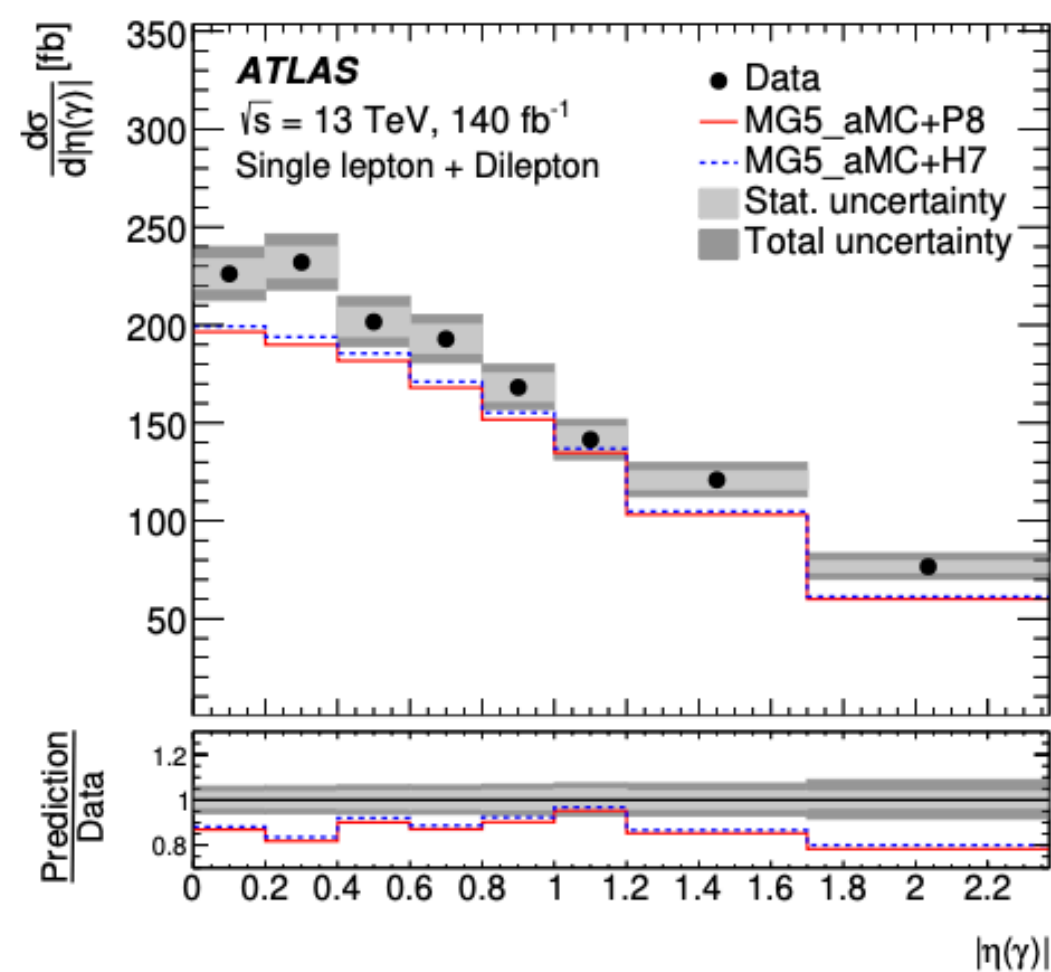


- Measured production cross-section across both channels reduces parton-shower, JES, & flavour-tagging uncertainties:

$$\sigma_{t\bar{t}\gamma \text{ production}} = 319 \pm 15 \text{ fb} = 319 \pm 4 \text{ (stat)} \pm_{-14}^{+15} \text{ (syst) fb}$$

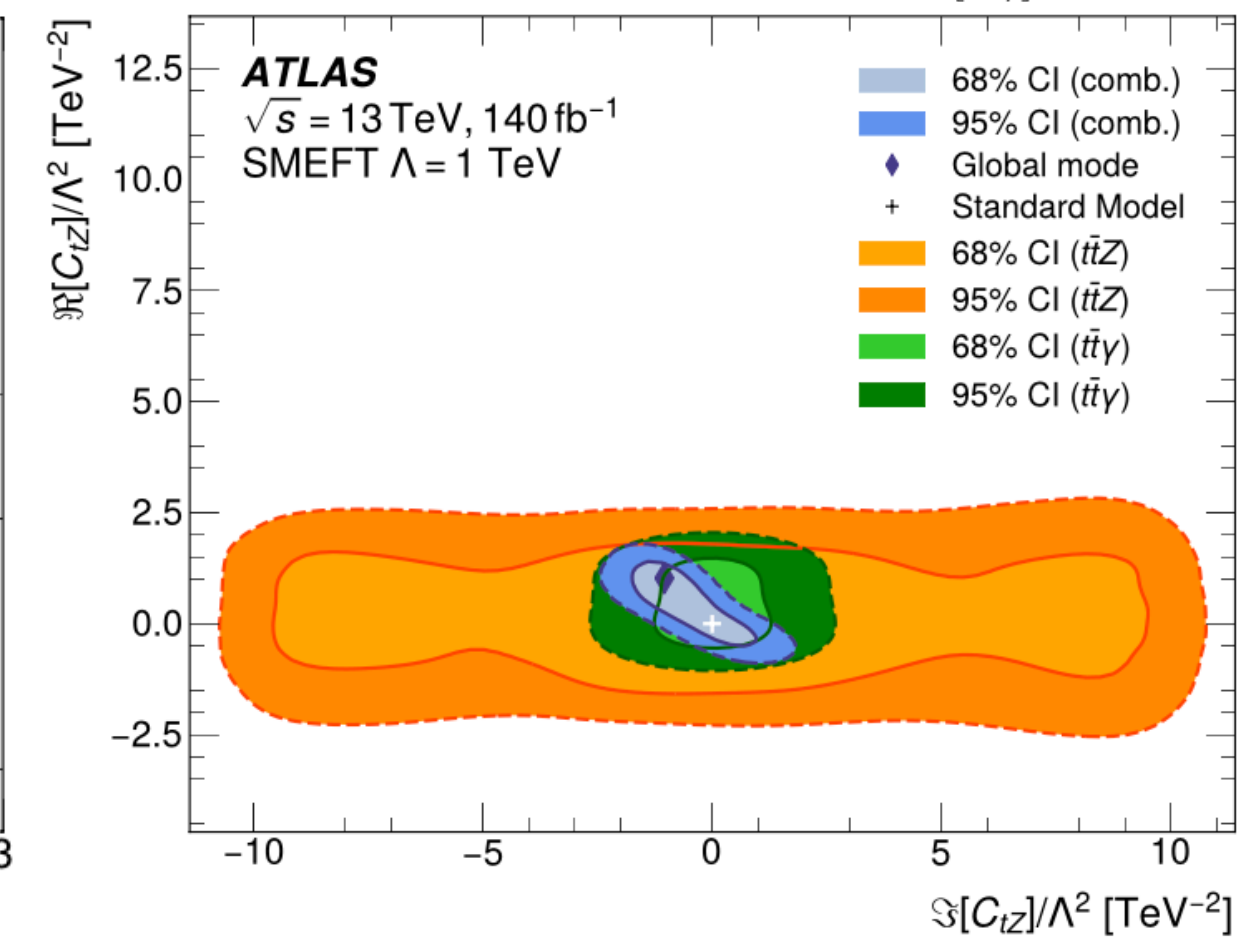
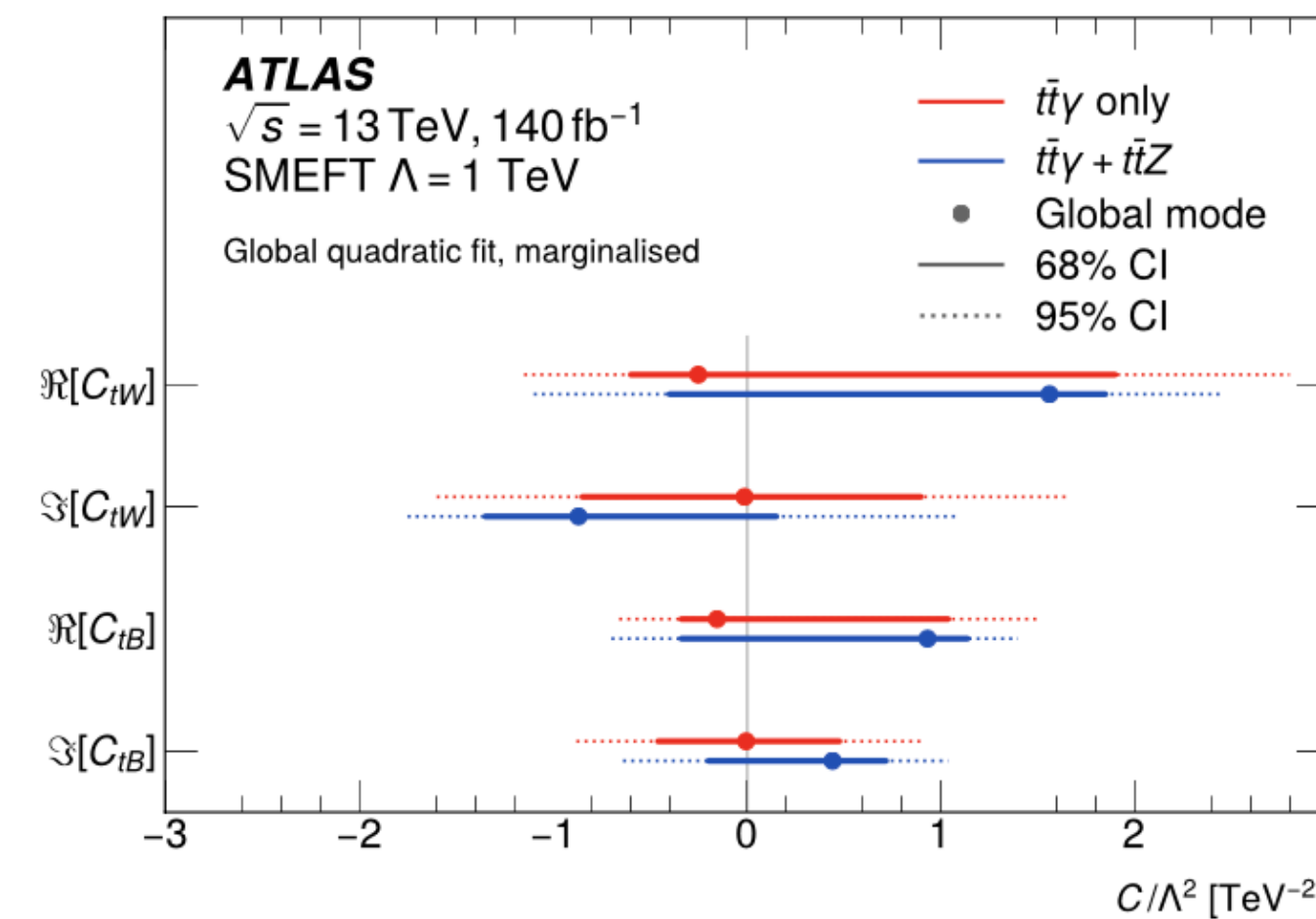
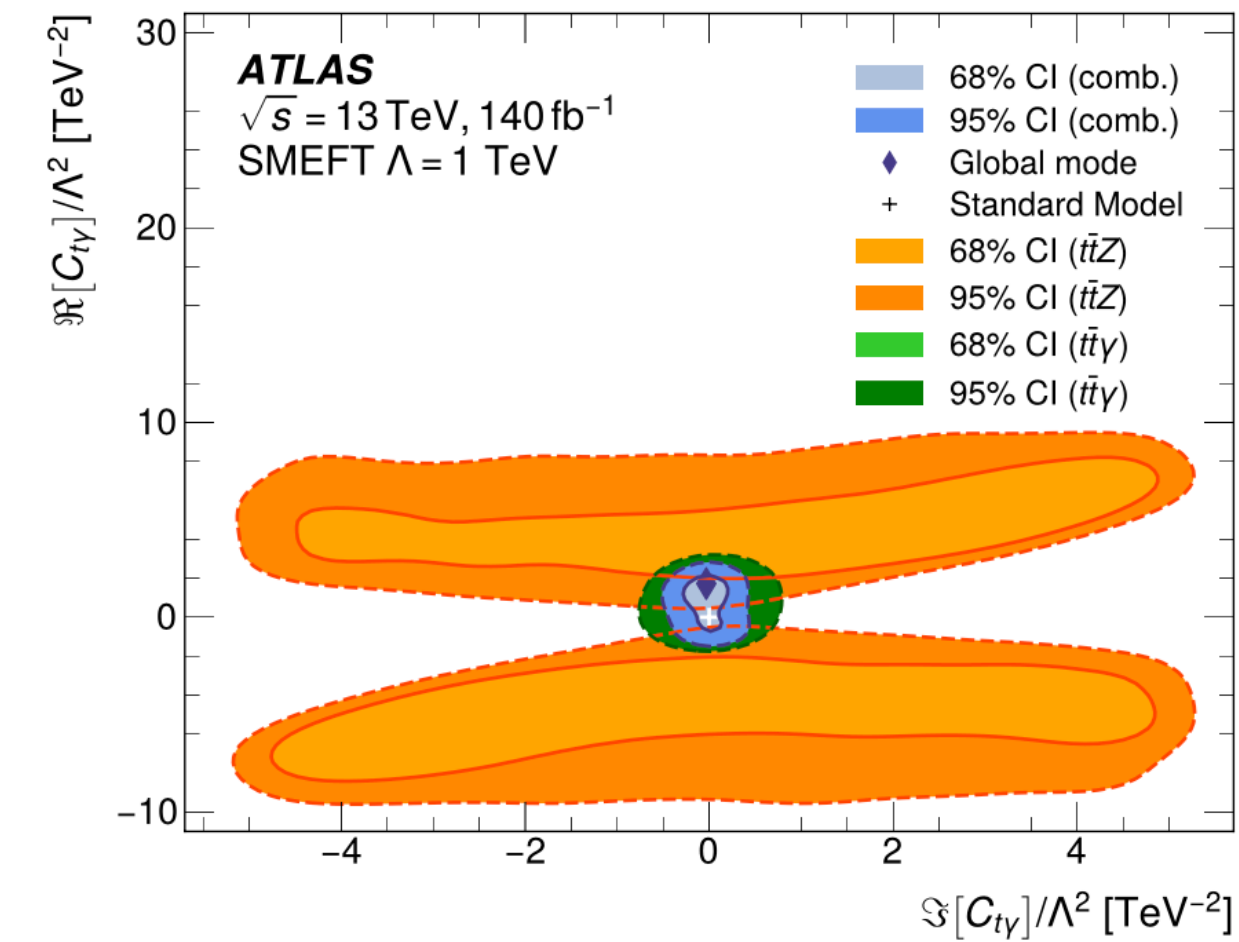
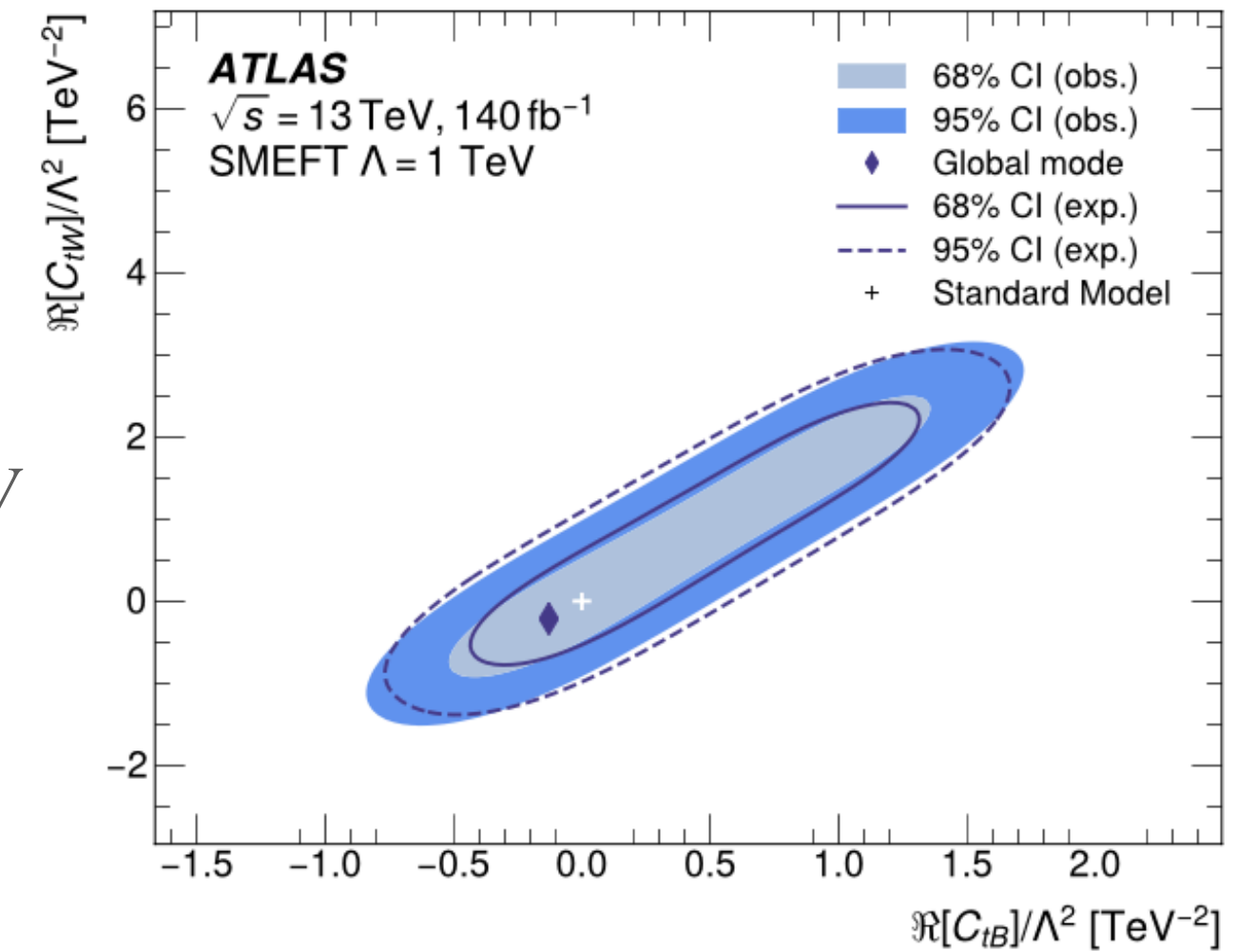
- $p_T(\gamma)$ is slightly softer in MC prediction of production mode than in data but angular shapes are well-modelled.

MADGRAPH predictions underestimate $t\bar{t}\gamma$ production.



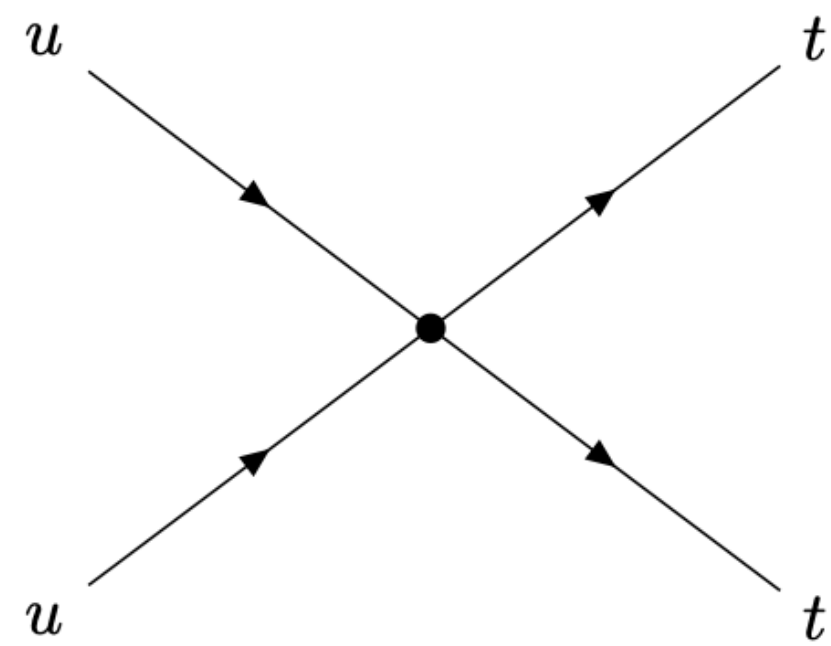
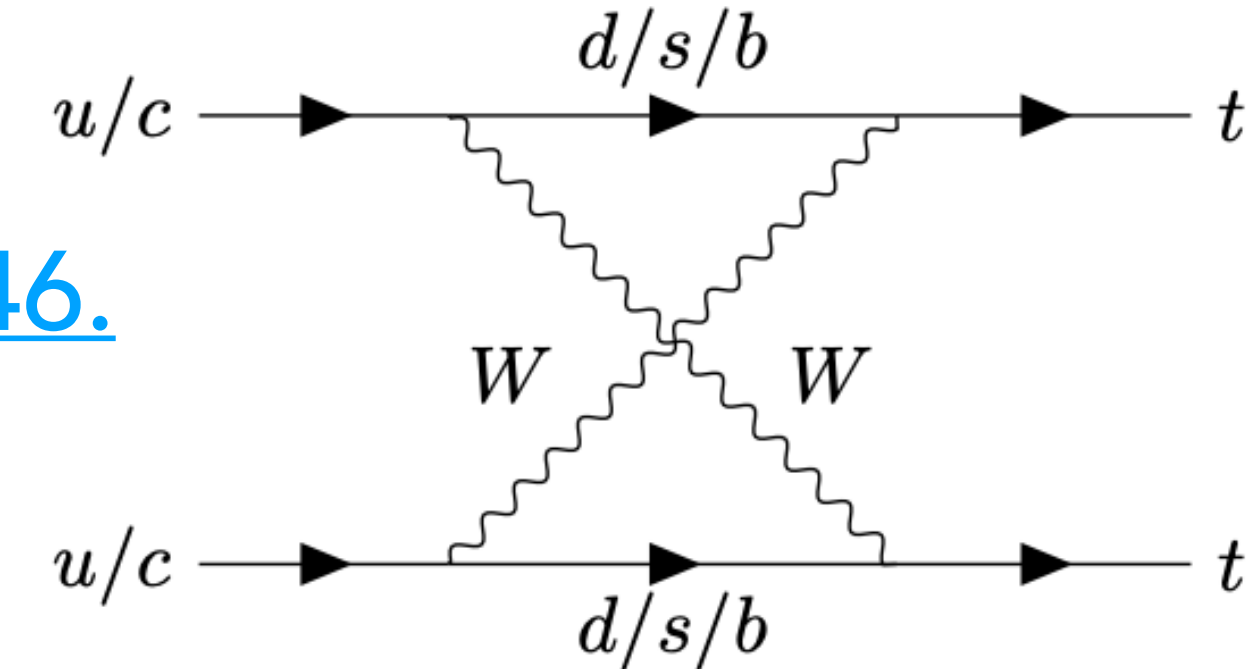
Photon p_T used to obtain limits on EFT parameters in $t\bar{t}\gamma$ production and $t\bar{t}Z$.

- Fit performed only on $t\bar{t}\gamma$ production dominated by quadratic EFT terms.
- Linear relationship observed between C_{tW} and C_{tB} .
- Best-fit values in agreement with SM despite slightly larger measured production cross-section.
- A combined measurement with $t\bar{t}Z$ reduces limits from independent fits by up to 20%.
- $t\bar{t}Z$ alone is unable to resolve some degeneracies;
 - Resolved in combination with $t\bar{t}\gamma$.



[JHEP 02 \(2025\) 084.](#)

- The SM production of same-sign top quarks is not detectable at the LHC, predicted $\sigma(pp \rightarrow tt)_{\text{SM}} \simeq 4 \cdot 10^{-15}$ pb | [JHEP 10 \(2015\) 146.](#)
- Observation would immediately imply some BSM process.



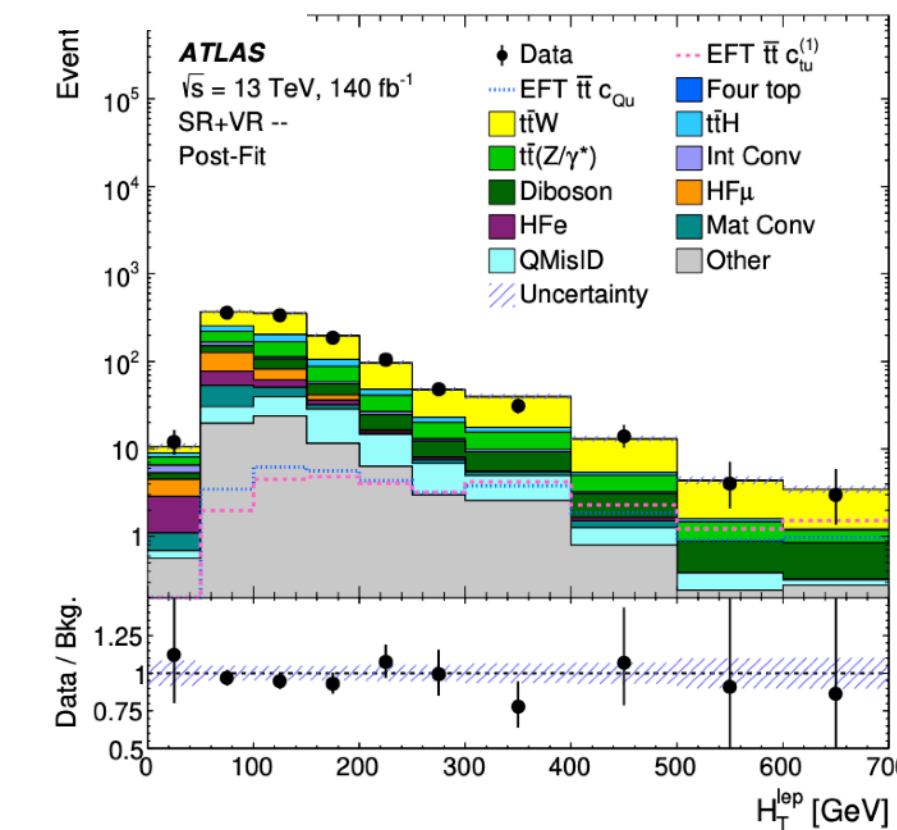
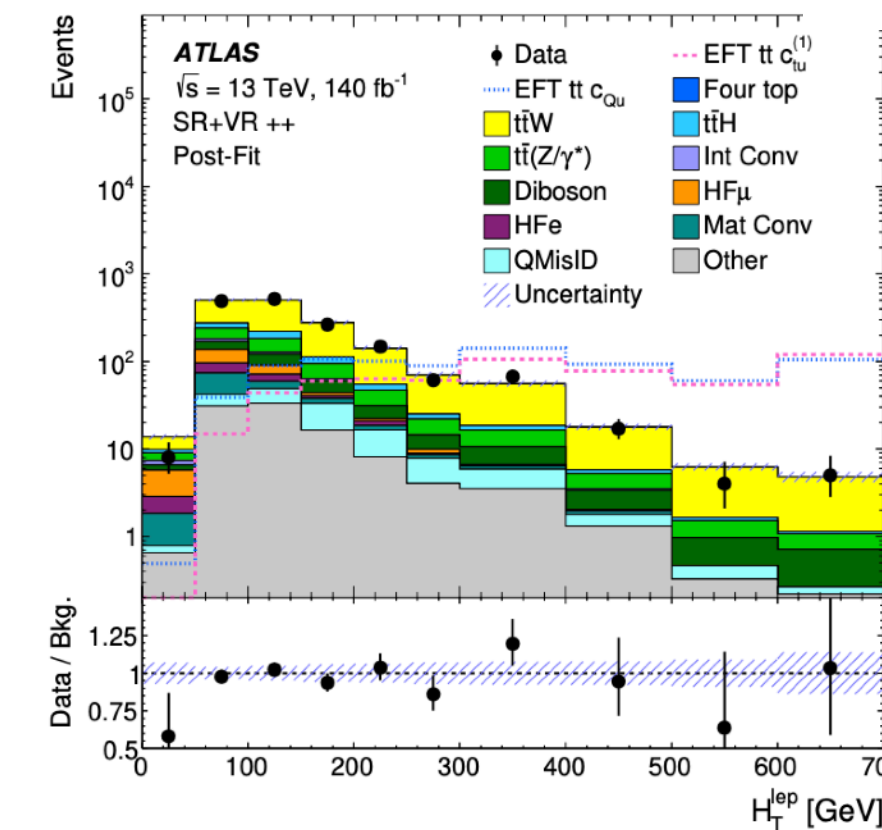
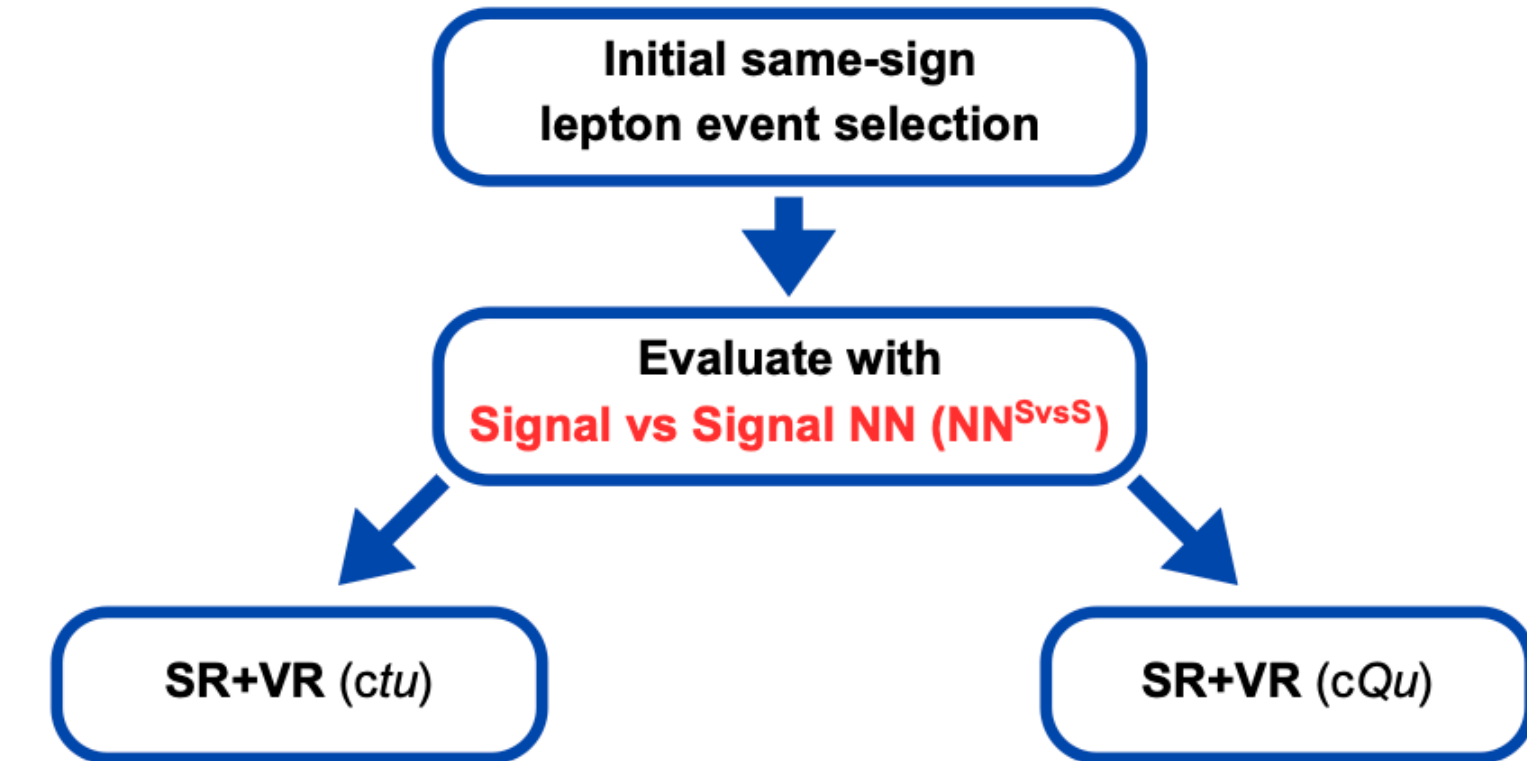
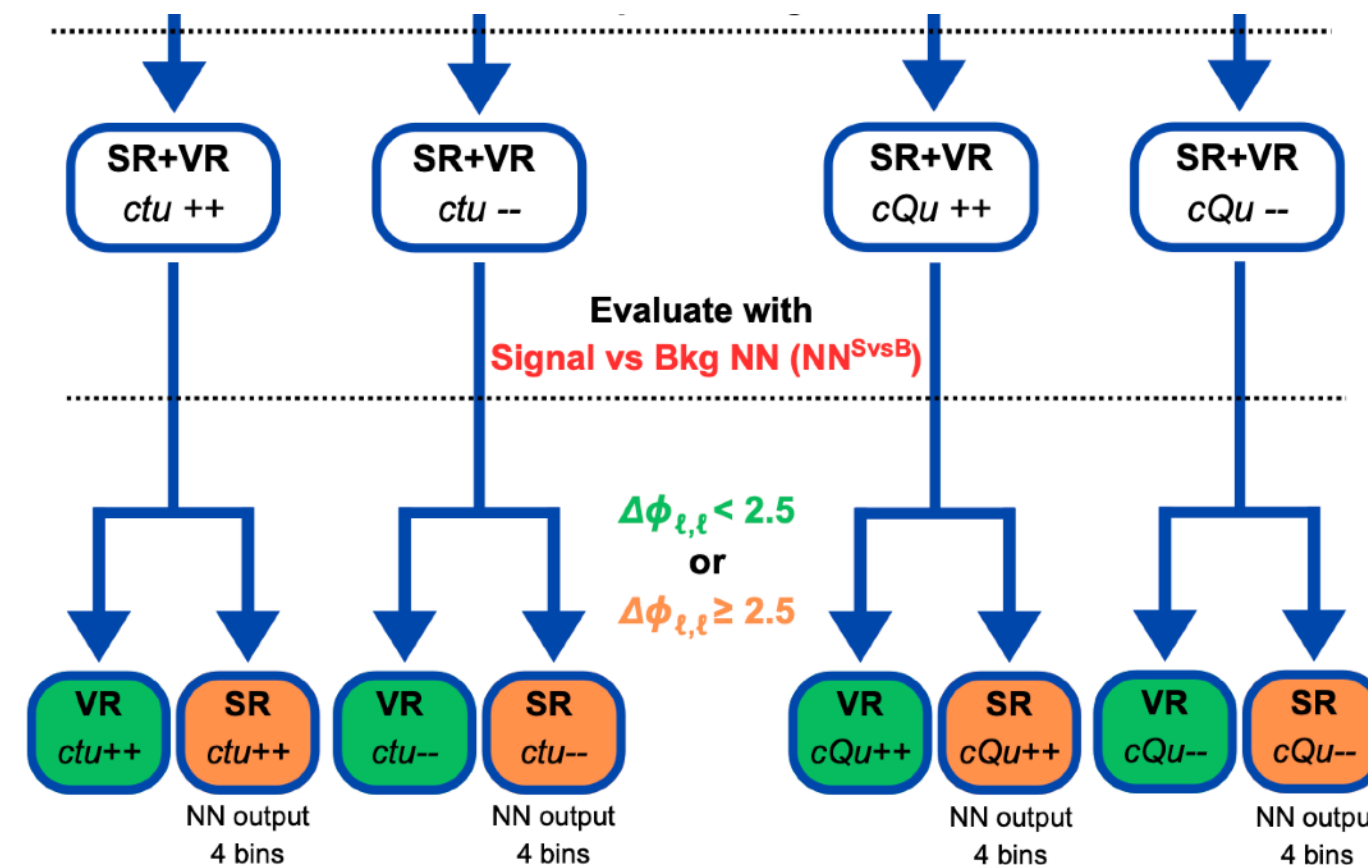
$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathcal{O}_{tu}^{(1)} &= [\bar{t}_R \gamma^\mu u_R][\bar{t}_R \gamma_\mu u_R], \\
 \mathcal{O}_{Qq}^{(1)} &= [\bar{Q}_L \gamma^\mu q_L][\bar{Q}_L \gamma_\mu q_L], \\
 \mathcal{O}_{Qq}^{(3)} &= [\bar{Q}_L \gamma^\mu \sigma^a q_L][\bar{Q}_L \gamma_\mu \sigma^a q_L], \\
 \mathcal{O}_{Qu}^{(1)} &= [\bar{Q}_L \gamma^\mu q_L][\bar{t}_R \gamma_\mu u_R], \\
 \mathcal{O}_{Qu}^{(8)} &= [\bar{Q}_L \gamma^\mu T^A q_L][\bar{t}_R \gamma_\mu T^A u_R].
 \end{aligned}$$

Already constrained by measurements of B_d mixing and dijet production [JHEP 03 \(2008\) 049.](#)

- A previous ATLAS analysis at 8 TeV set 95% CL limits assuming chiral contact interactions [JHEP 10 \(2015\) 150.](#)
- Previous ATLAS upper limit on SS top production cross-section at 13 TeV of 89 fb assumes a BSM FCNC mediator with a mass of 1 TeV [JHEP 12 \(2018\) 039.](#)

Chirality	left-left	left-right	right-right
$\sigma(pp \rightarrow tt)$	62 fb	51 fb	38 fb
$ c /\Lambda^2$ (TeV ⁻²)	0.053	0.137	0.042

- Dilepton final state is characterised by two SS leptons (e, μ), two b -jets (tagged at the 70% WP), and E_T^{miss} .
- **Signal vs Signal NN:** Trained on two SS -top benchmarks Selection on NN has 65% classification efficiency.
- **Signal vs Bkg NN:** Trained separately for each of the SRs.
- **Dedicated CRs for $t\bar{t}Z$, VV & non-prompt leptons.**
- Production of $t\bar{t}W$ is the dominant background and is constrained by the data using NN distribution in the SRs.



$$c_{tu}^{(1)} = 0.04, c_{Qu}^{(1)} = 0, c_{Qu}^{(8)} = 0$$

$$c_{tu}^{(1)} = 0, c_{Qu}^{(1)} = 0.1, c_{Qu}^{(8)} = 0.2$$

- Post-fit yields are consistent with observed data & pre-fit yields (<0.001 signal events).

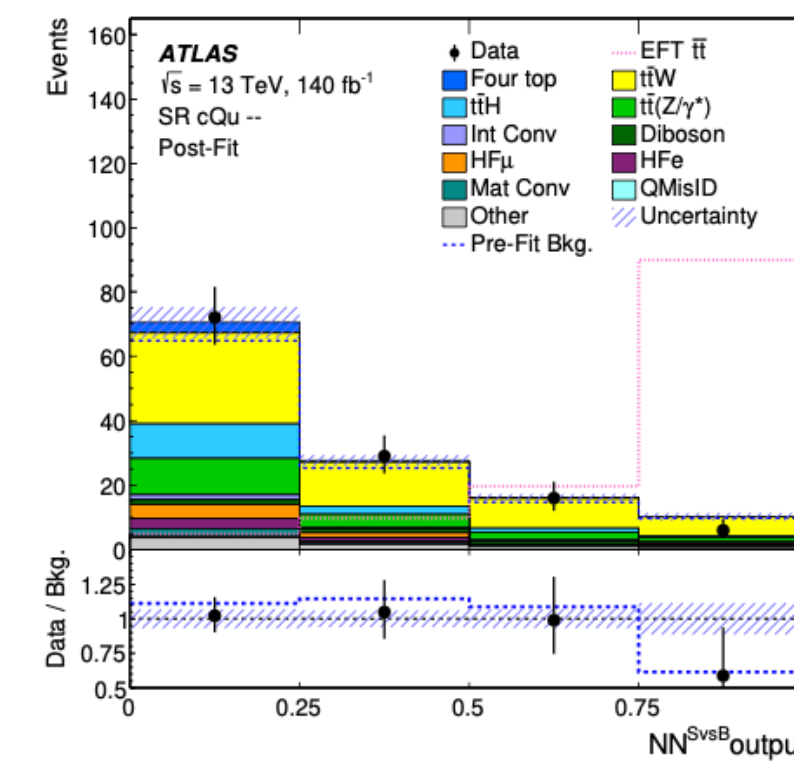
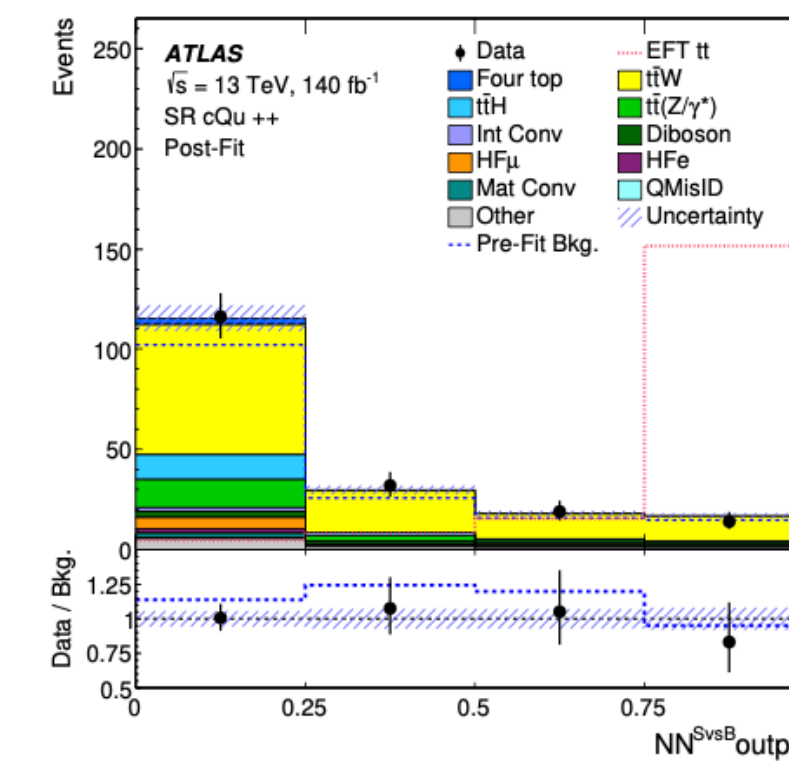
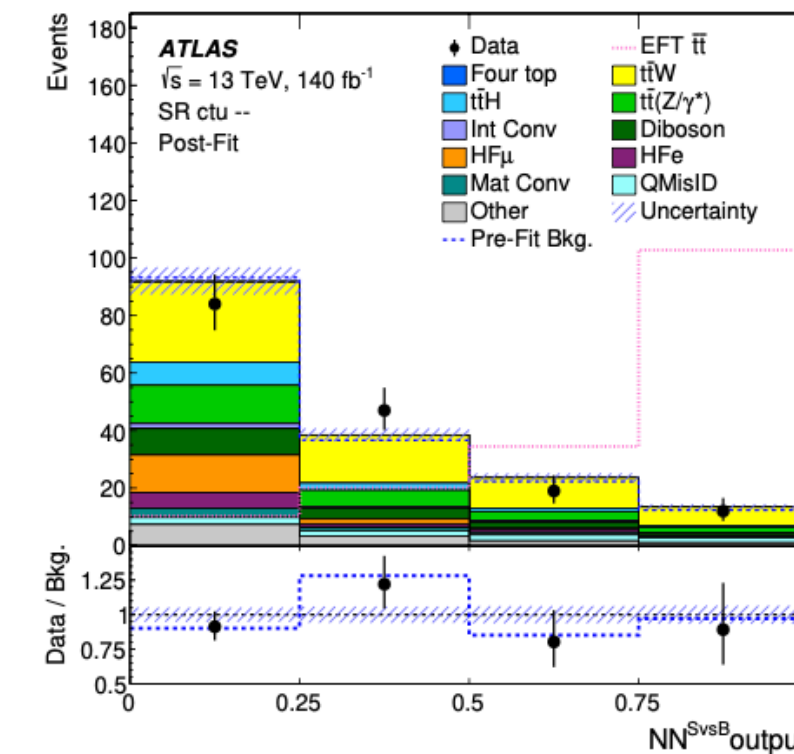
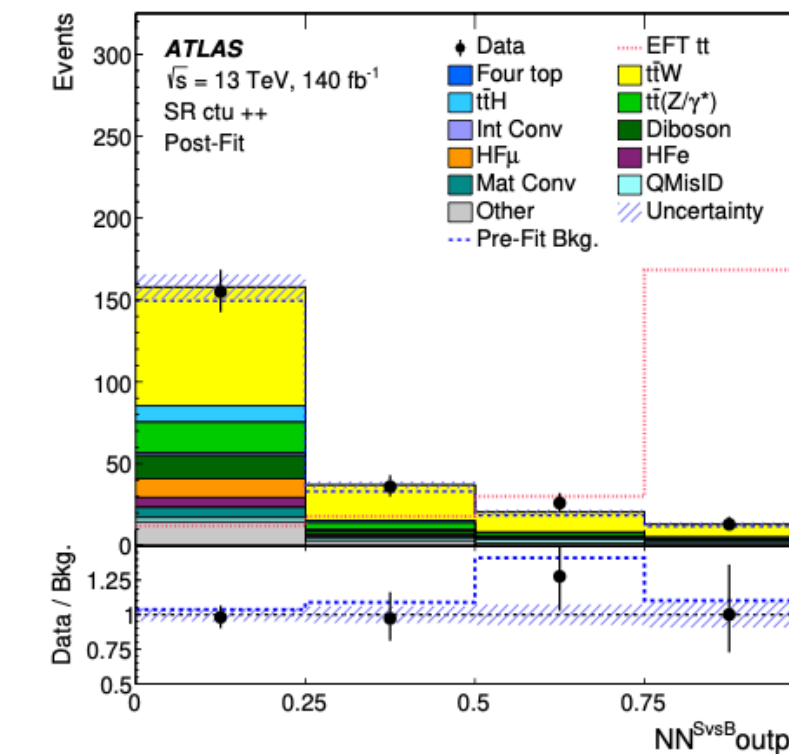
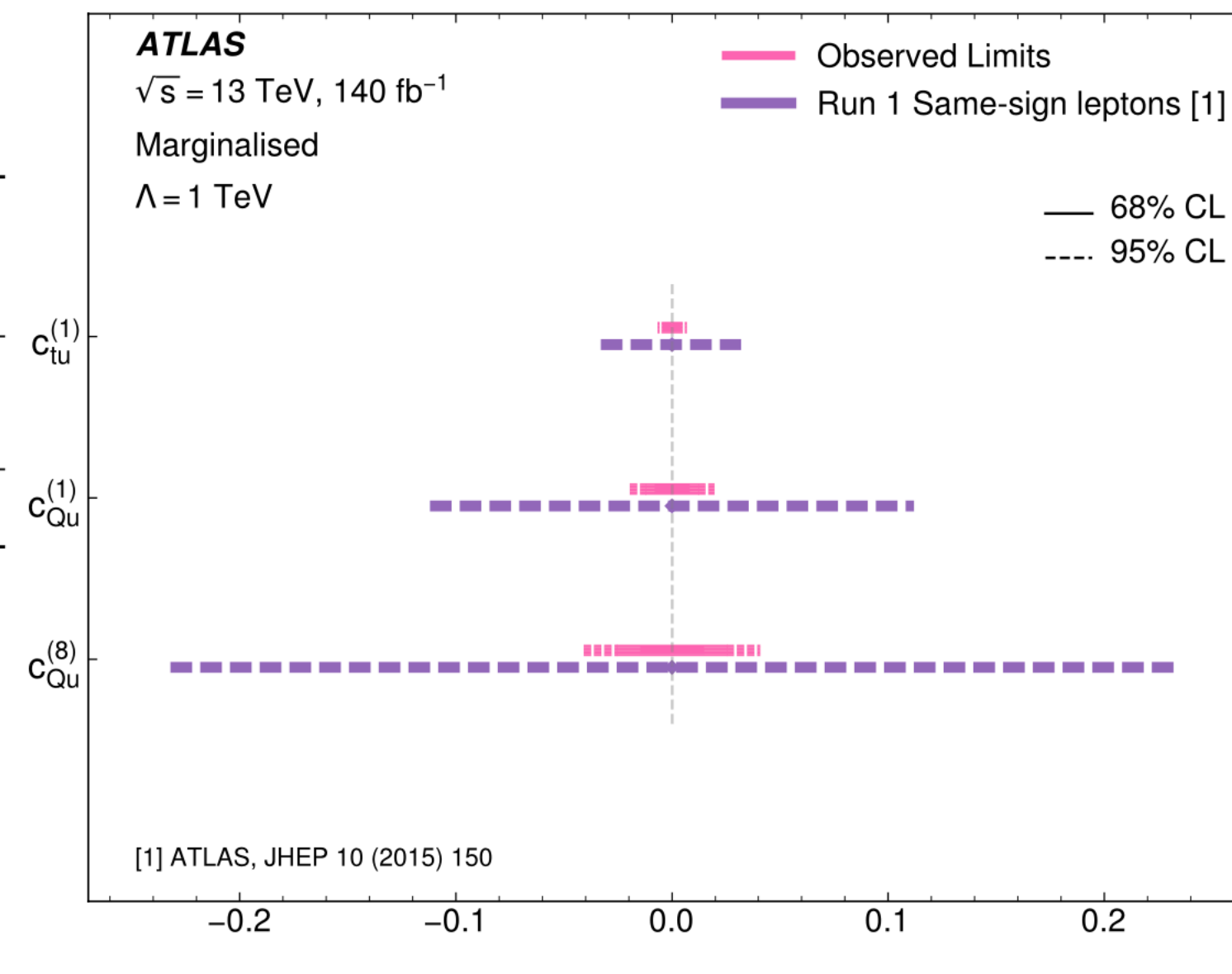
Wilks' theorem: [SciPost Phys. Core 6 \(2023\) 013.](#)

Some over-coverage is observed for WC close to 0 leading to at most 9% looser observed limits.

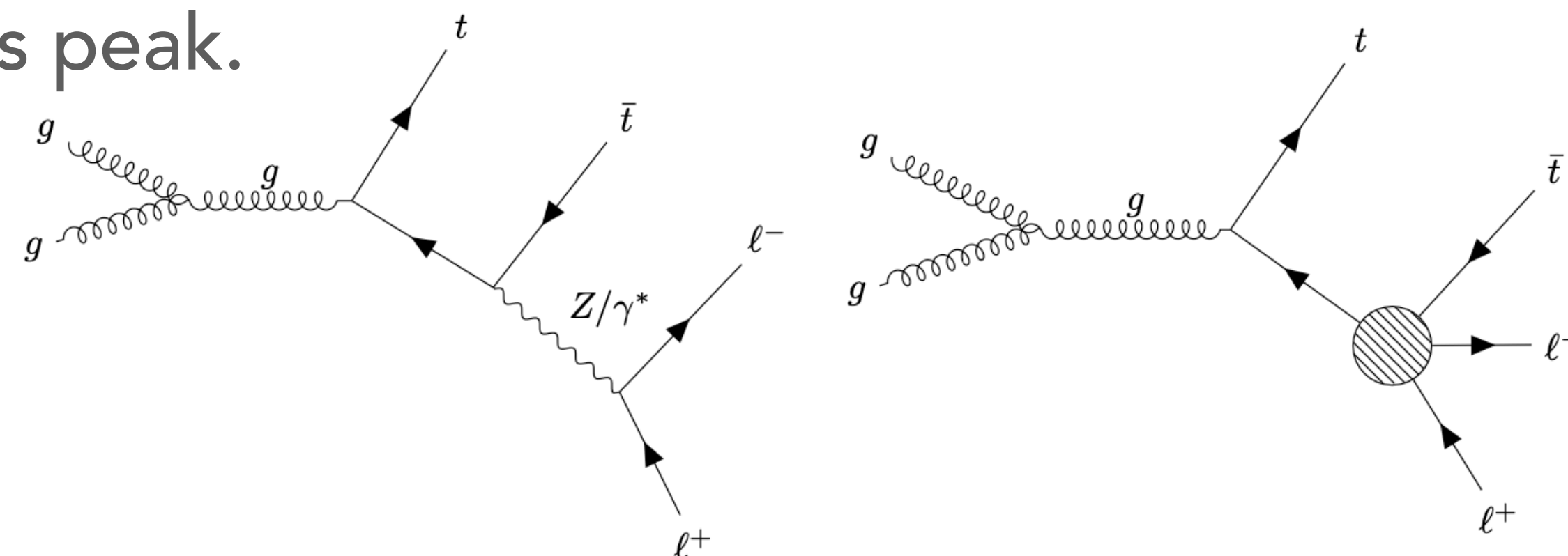
(Statistically dominated)

Uncertainties	Wilson Coefficient CIs at 95% CL ($\times 10^{-2}$)		
	$c_{tu}^{(1)}$	$c_{Qu}^{(1)}$	$c_{Qu}^{(8)}$
Statistical uncertainty only	[-0.65, 0.65]	[-1.9, 1.9]	[-3.9, 3.9]
Statistical + modeling uncertainties	[-0.67, 0.67]	[-1.9, 1.9]	[-4.0, 4.0]
Total uncertainty	[-0.68, 0.68]	[-2.0, 2.0]	[-4.1, 4.1]

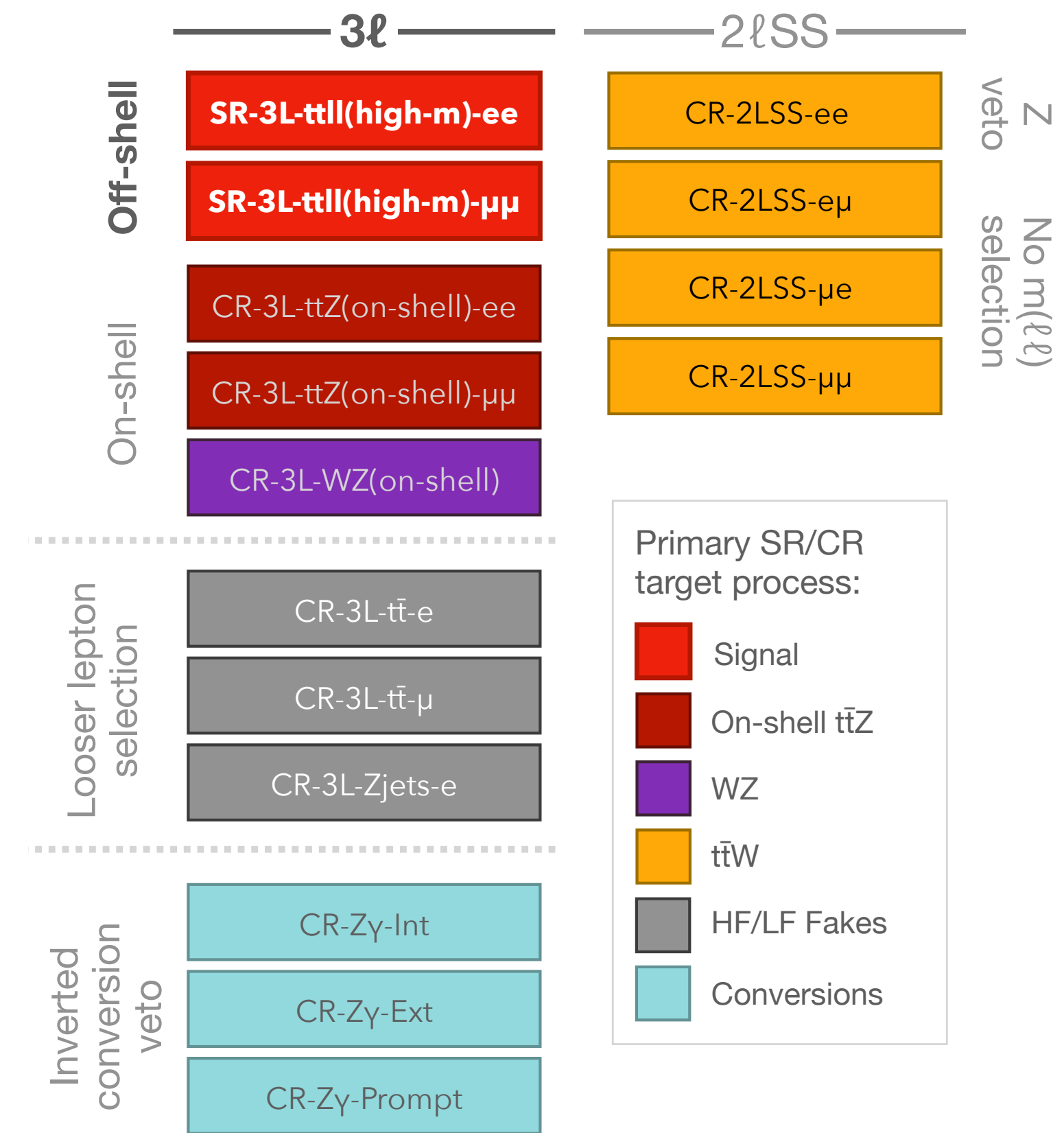
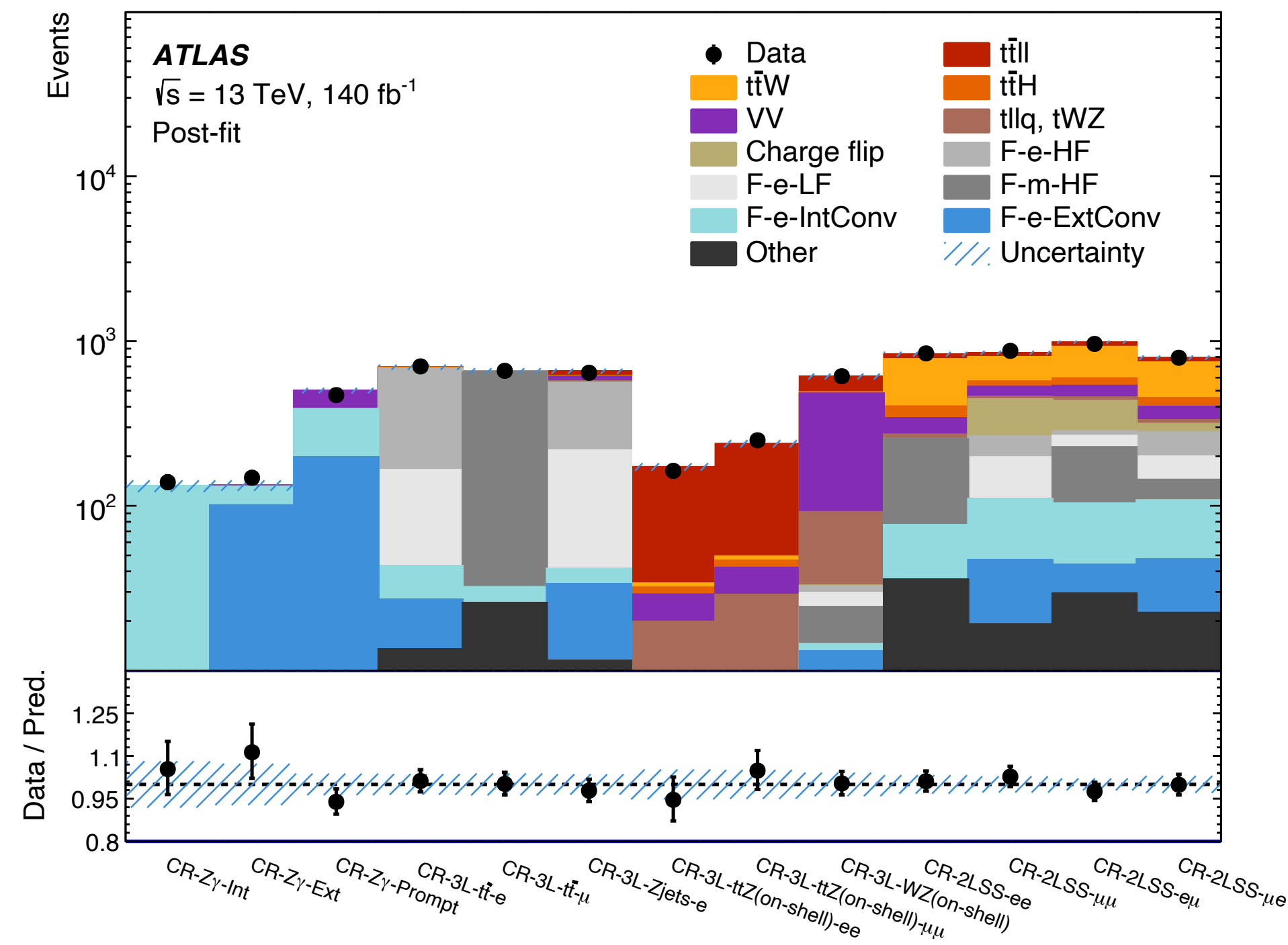
Large charge asymmetry in SS top production means (+ +) dominates sensitivity.



- While detailed measurements of on-shell $t\bar{t}Z$ gives direct sensitivity to t - Z coupling, off-shell $t\bar{t}l^+l^-$ production has not yet been measured by ATLAS.
 - Sensitive to the effective $t\bar{t}l^+l^-$ coupling & thus the top-lepton EFT operators which contribute.
- Analysis focuses on high dilepton invariant mass region by selecting three isolated leptons (e, μ) with extensions of $t\bar{t}Z$ production measurement to deal with larger background contributions away from the mass peak.
 - Flavour-inclusive measurements and those split by e/μ probe SM, possible LFU violation, and possible new physics via EFT.

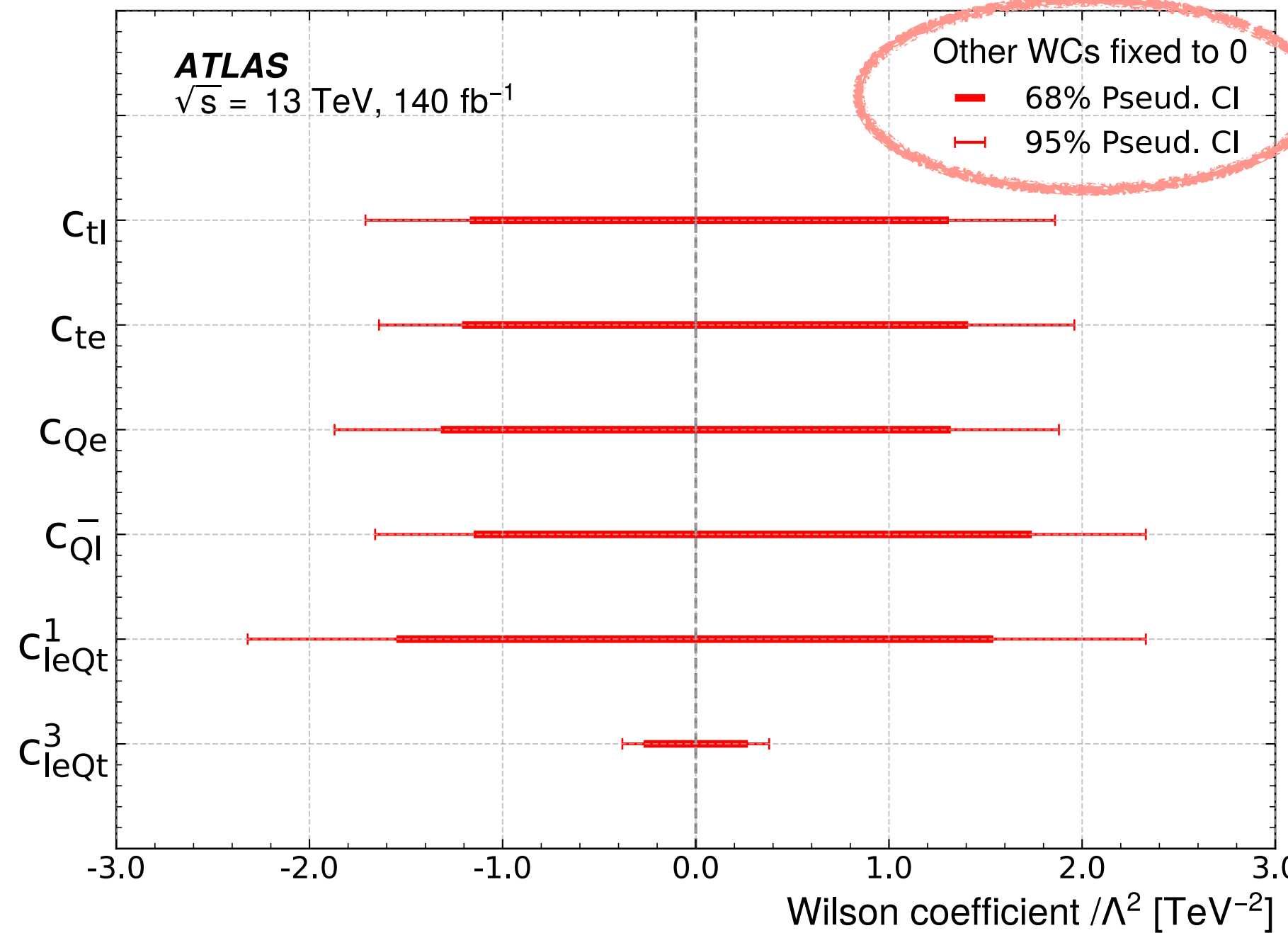
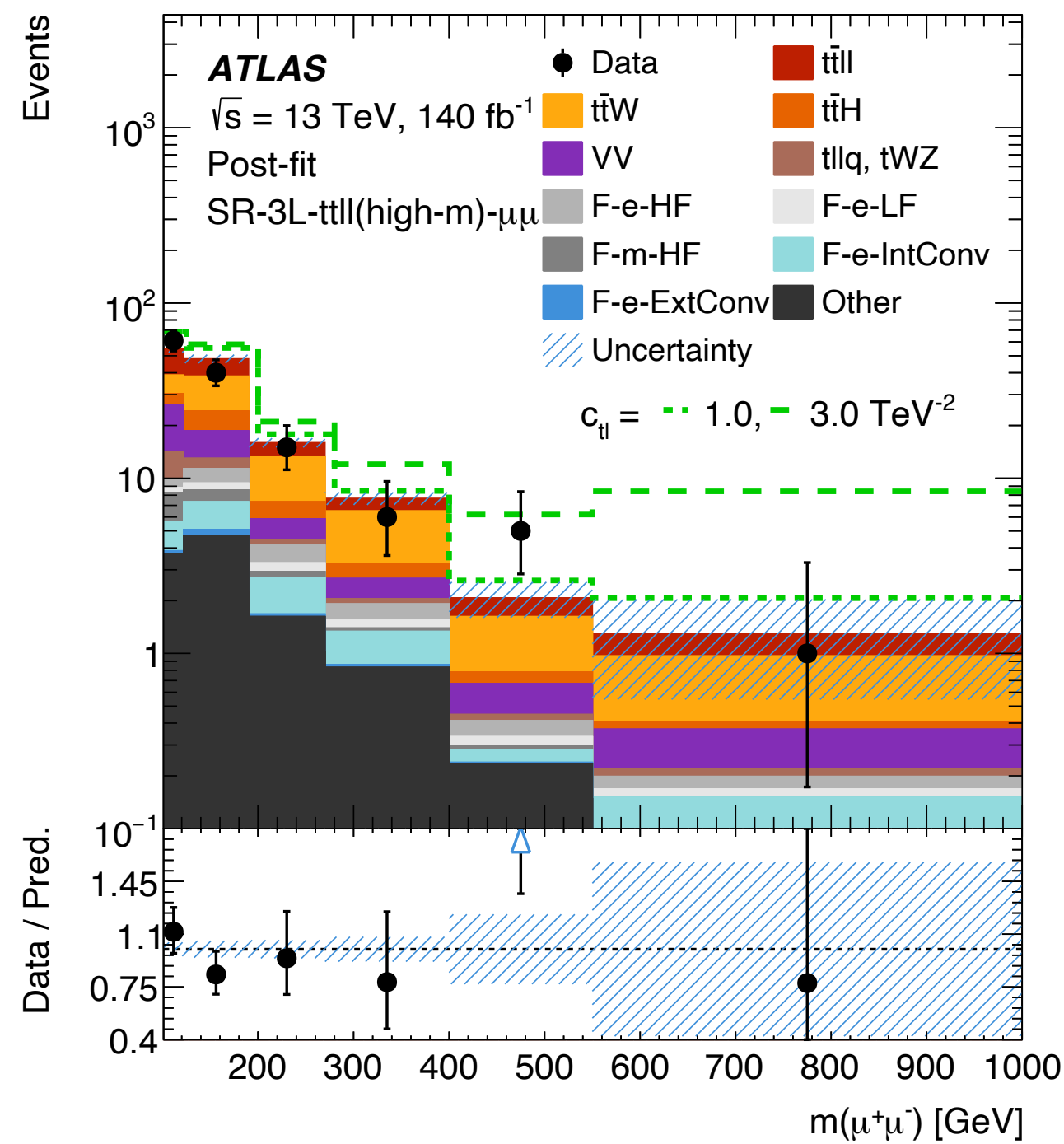


- SRs are split by lepton flavour and binned in the dilepton invariant mass to increase sensitivity to four-fermion EFT operators.
- Dominated by $t\bar{t}W$ background
- CRs defined to reduce uncertainty on low MC-stats fake leptons.
- Estimation of $t\bar{t}Z$ & WZ +jets uses same 3-class DNN from on-shell analysis.



- No significant deviations from the SM: $\mu_{t\bar{t}W} = 1.18 \pm 0.11$
- Compatible with previous ATLAS measurements in similar phase-space.
- In individual-operator fits, constraints are dominated by quadratic EFT terms.

Justified by Wilks' theorem



	$O(\Lambda^{-4})[\text{TeV}^{-2}]$		
	Best fit	68% Asymp. CI	95% Asymp. CI
$c_{tl(22)} - c_{tl(11)}$	0.79	[-2.28, 2.32]	[-3.44, 3.45]
$c_{te(22)} - c_{te(11)}$	-0.43	[-2.10, 2.36]	[-3.34, 3.51]
$c_{Qe(22)} - c_{Qe(11)}$	-0.66	[-2.39, 2.43]	[-3.62, 3.71]
$c_{Ql(22)}^- - c_{Ql(11)}^-$	-1.14	[-2.38, 2.37]	[-3.72, 3.54]
$c_{leQt(22)}^1 - c_{leQt(11)}^1$	-1.32	[-3.03, 3.03]	[-4.58, 4.58]
$c_{leQt(22)}^3 - c_{leQt(11)}^3$	-0.20	[-0.50, 0.50]	[-0.75, 0.75]

Cancellation of systematics limited by Run 2 data statistics but may be useful in a future analysis.

- Measurements of rare tX and $t\bar{t} + X$ production processes provide a rich environment with which to test the SM and beyond.
- Recent analyses by the ATLAS collaboration provide competitive results:
 - Improvements over some previous measurements by utilising MVA signal discrimination and robust background estimations.
- Detailed insights into SM processes are observed as well as probes into new physics through constraints on EFT operators.
 - Work demonstrates some of the interplay between various associated top production processes and new physics contributions described in the SMEFT.
- Exciting results which contribute to a rich and growing field continue to show what the LHC can do.



BACKUP

Associated production of tX and $t\bar{t} + X$,
including their EFT interpretation

Caley Yardley

On behalf of the ATLAS Collaboration

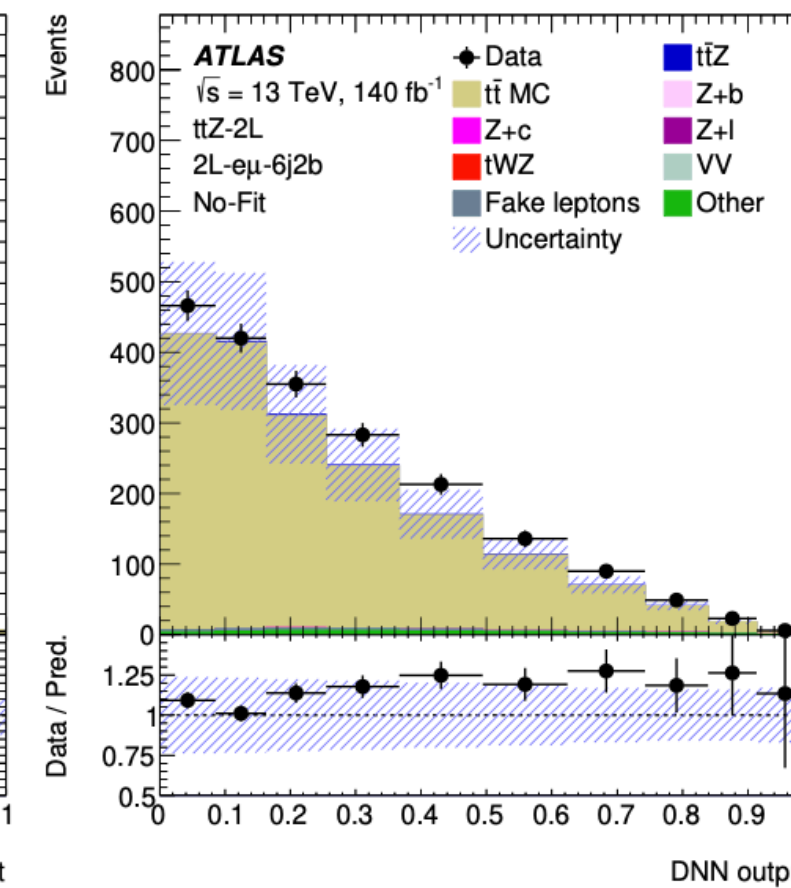
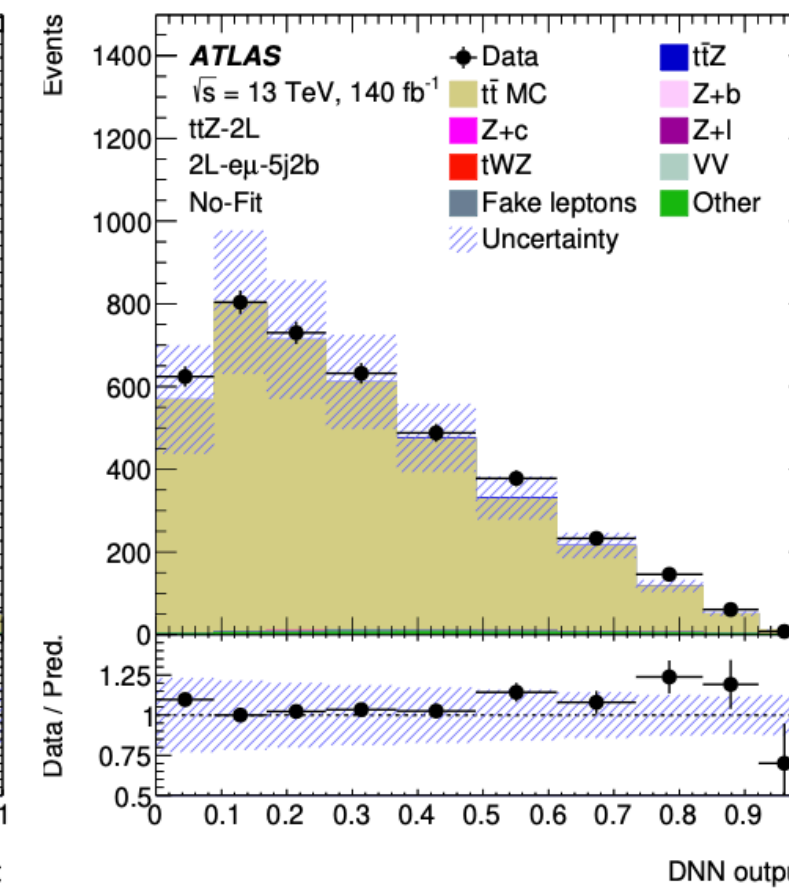
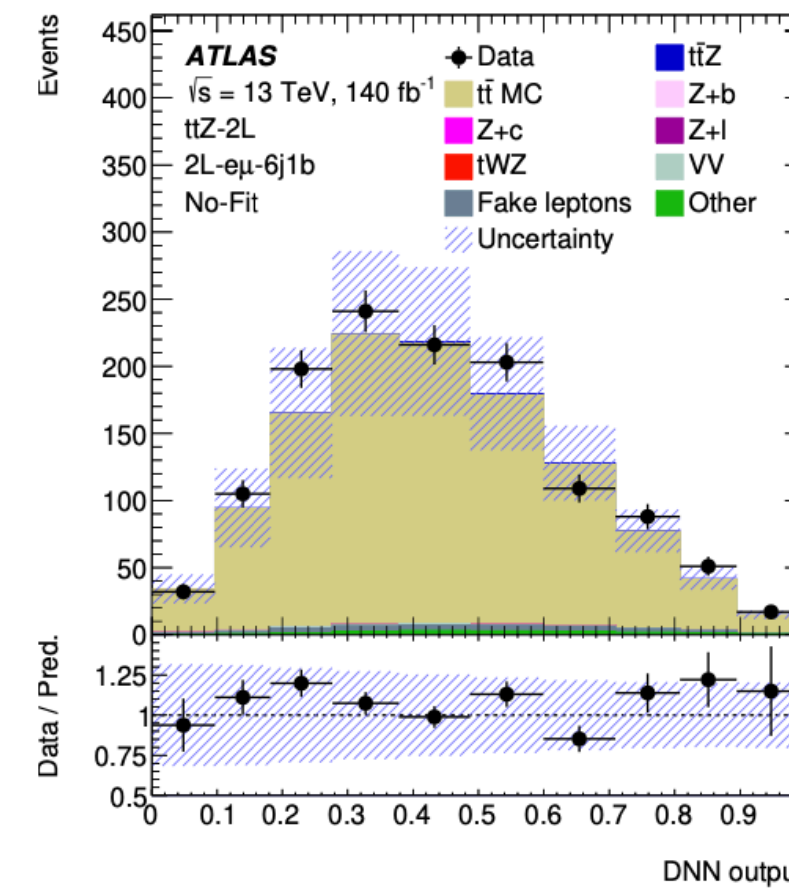
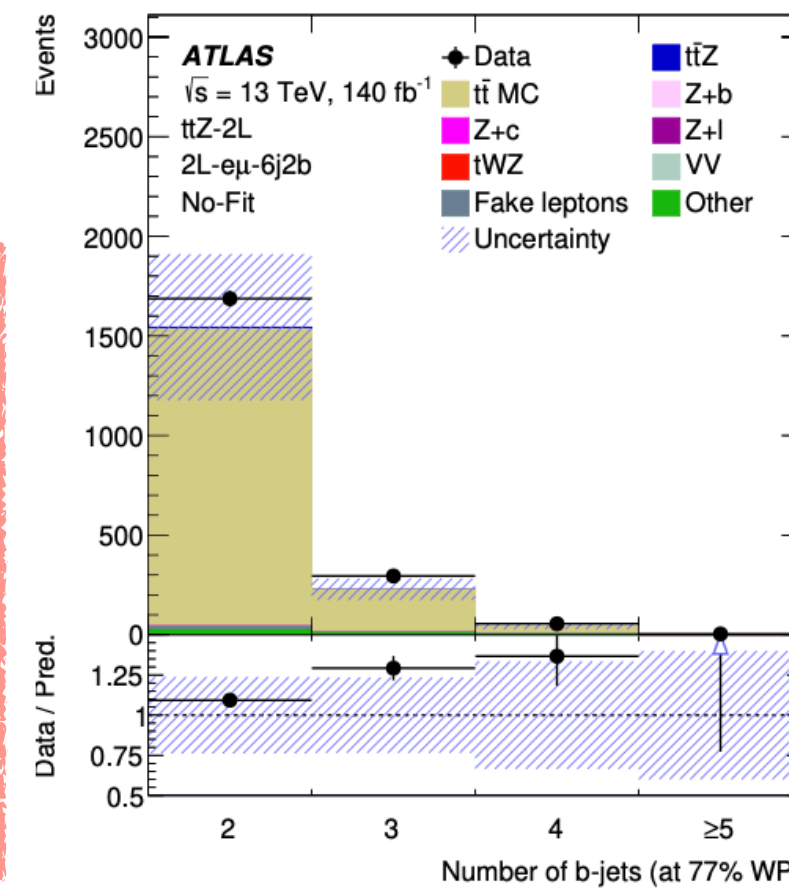
SM@LHC2025, Durham

9th April 2025

- $2l0S$ uses both *multi-hypothesis hadronic top/W reconstruction* and SPANet where the transverse momentum of the reconstructed $t\bar{t}$ system is input in the MVA.
- $3l t\bar{t}$ reconstruction is done by first reconstructing the hadronic-side top quark from jets compatible with a W candidate and b -jet then building the leptonic-side top quark.
- Two Neutrino Scanning Method used in $4l$ region to reconstruct $t\bar{t}Z$ with output weight used as input to $4l$ MVA to discriminate between $t\bar{t}Z$ and $t\bar{t}$.

Data-driven $t\bar{t}$ estimation:

A template-fit method estimates contribution of non-prompt leptons in $3l$ channel using CRs requiring one fail-tight lepton.

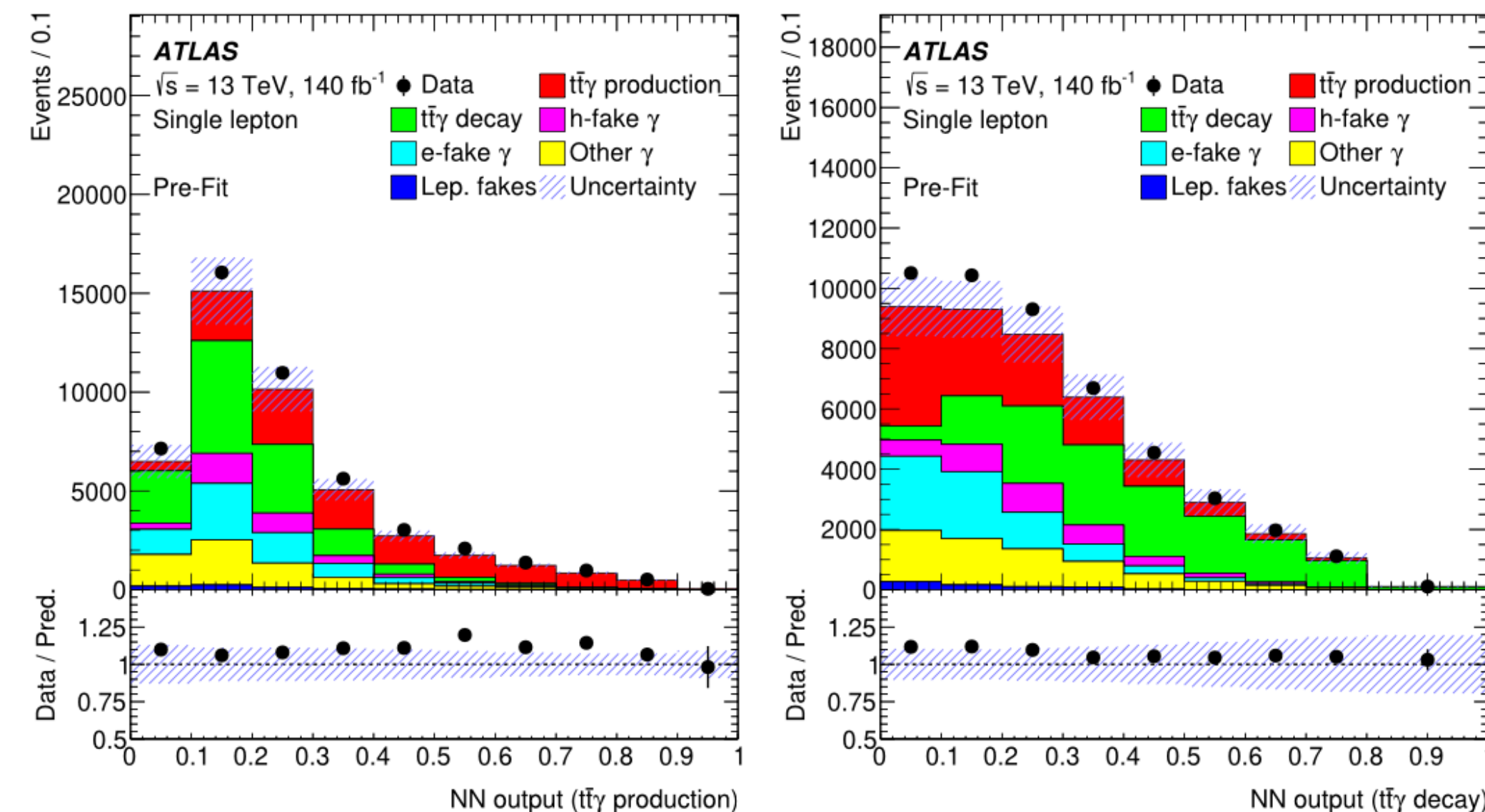


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- Non-prompt/fake backgrounds estimated using data-driven techniques.
- 3-class NN ($t\bar{t}\gamma$ prod. vs dec. vs bkgs) with 40 input variables is used in single-lepton channel - uses invariant masses from $t\bar{t}\gamma$ reconstruction.

Category	Single-lepton channel	Dilepton channel
$t\bar{t}\gamma$ production	12450 ± 740	2400 ± 99
$t\bar{t}\gamma$ decay	13400 ± 3100	3100 ± 640
'ABCD method' → h-fake	3600 ± 1200	220 ± 82
Tag-and-probe → e-fake	6900 ± 980	57.9 ± 7.0
$W\gamma$	2700 ± 1400	—
$tW\gamma$	1180 ± 580	290 ± 150
Other prompt γ	2500 ± 600	820 ± 170
'matrix method' → Lepton fake	640 ± 110	—
Total	43900 ± 4600	6900 ± 710
Data	47767	7379

Category	$t\bar{t}\gamma$ decay classifier	fake γ classifier	other prompt γ classifier	purity
SR $t\bar{t}\gamma$ production	< 0.15	< 0.2	< 0.5	73%
CR $t\bar{t}\gamma$ decay	> 0.25	—	< 0.4	71%
CR fake γ	< 0.15	> 0.2	< 0.5	50%
CR Other γ		remaining events		26%



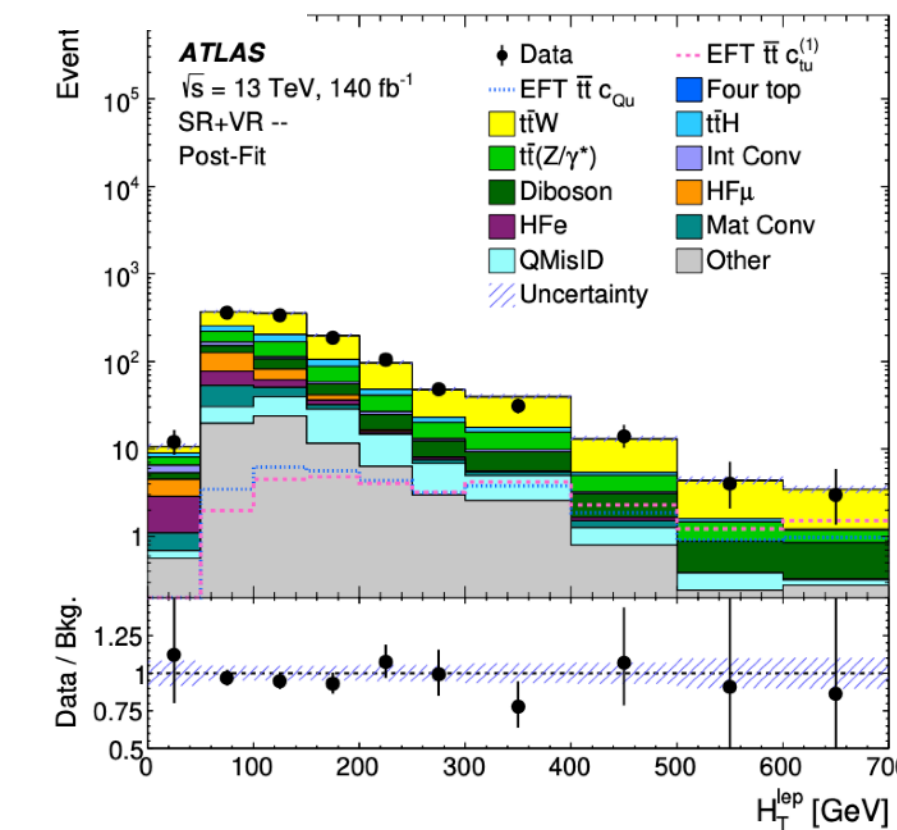
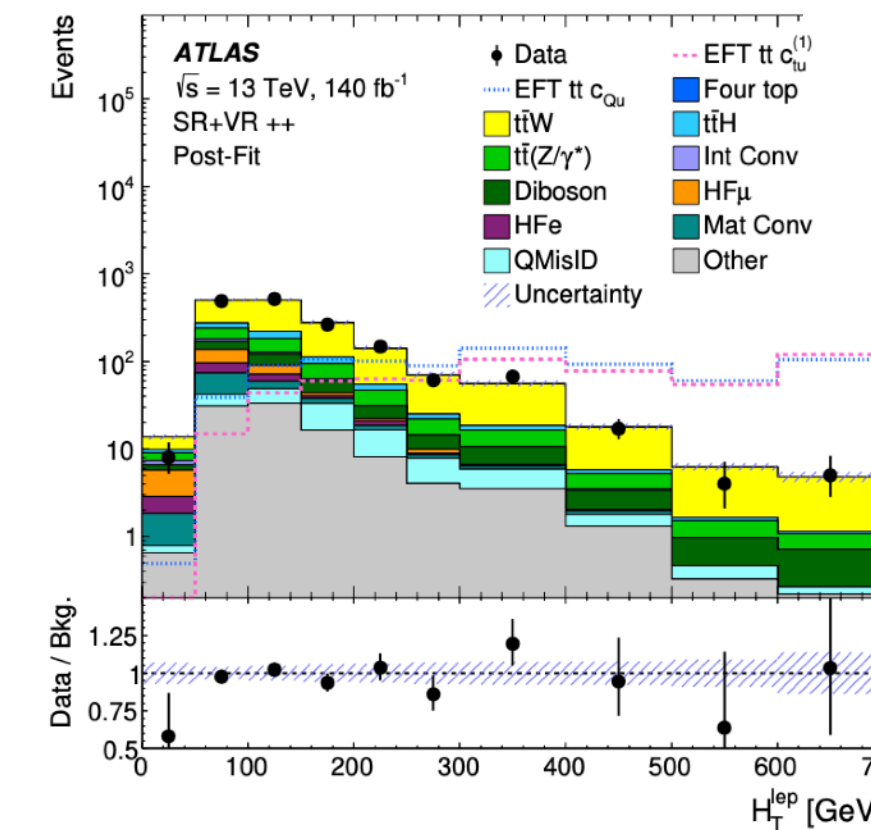
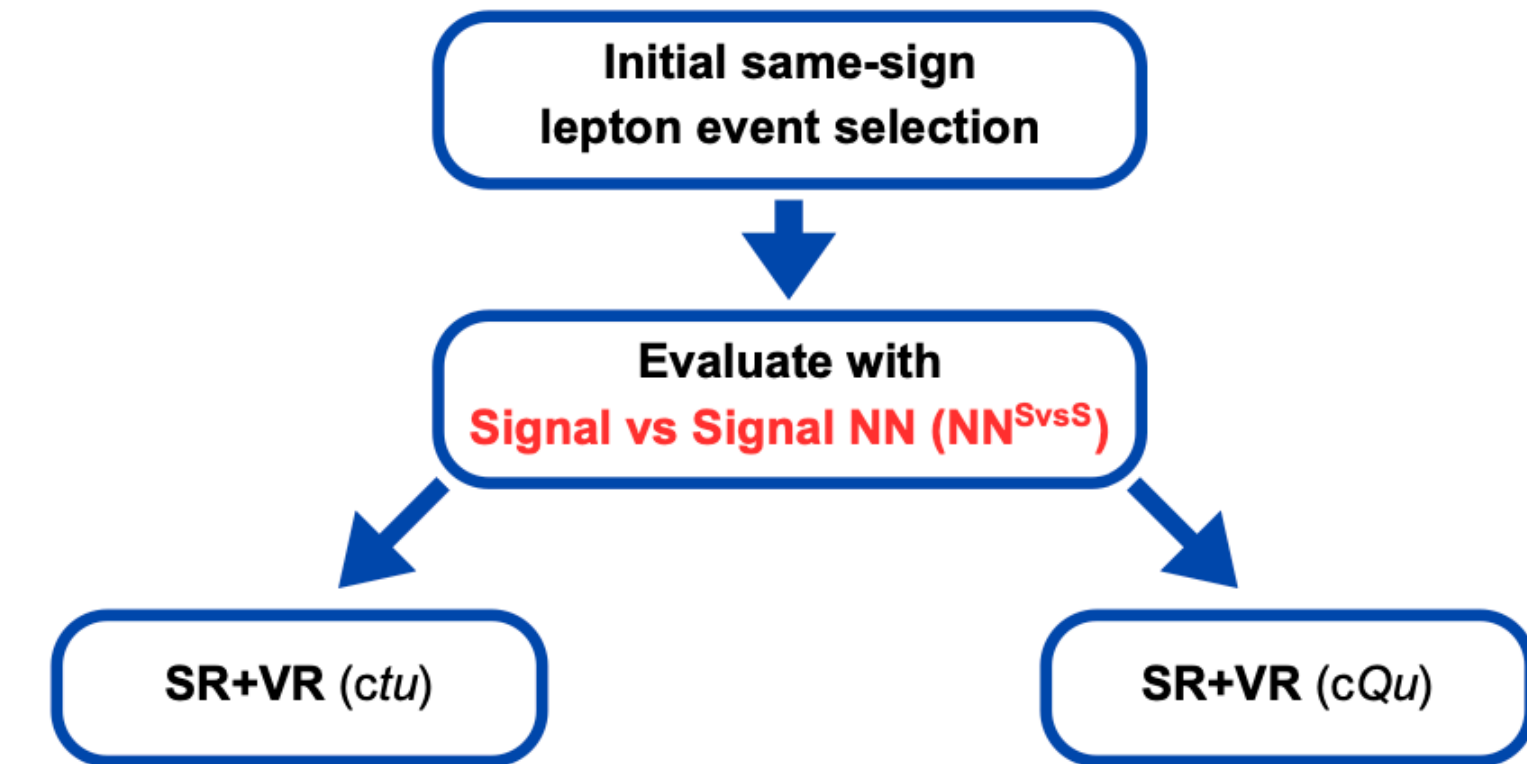
- Subleading b -tagging score provides discrimination.
- Binary NN with 26 variables used in dilepton channel.
- Slight underestimate of data is likely due to smaller production cross-section in MC which was observed in previous measurements.

- Pre-selection makes use of non-prompt lepton BDT WP:

Precisely two SS leptons with $p_T > 20$ GeV & at least two jets
 Either leptons are *Tight* & both jets satisfy 77% *b*-tag WP;
 Or leptons are *VeryTight* & one jet fulfills *b*-tag WP.

- **Signal vs Signal NN:** Trained on two SS-top benchmarks
 Selection on NN has 65% classification efficiency:

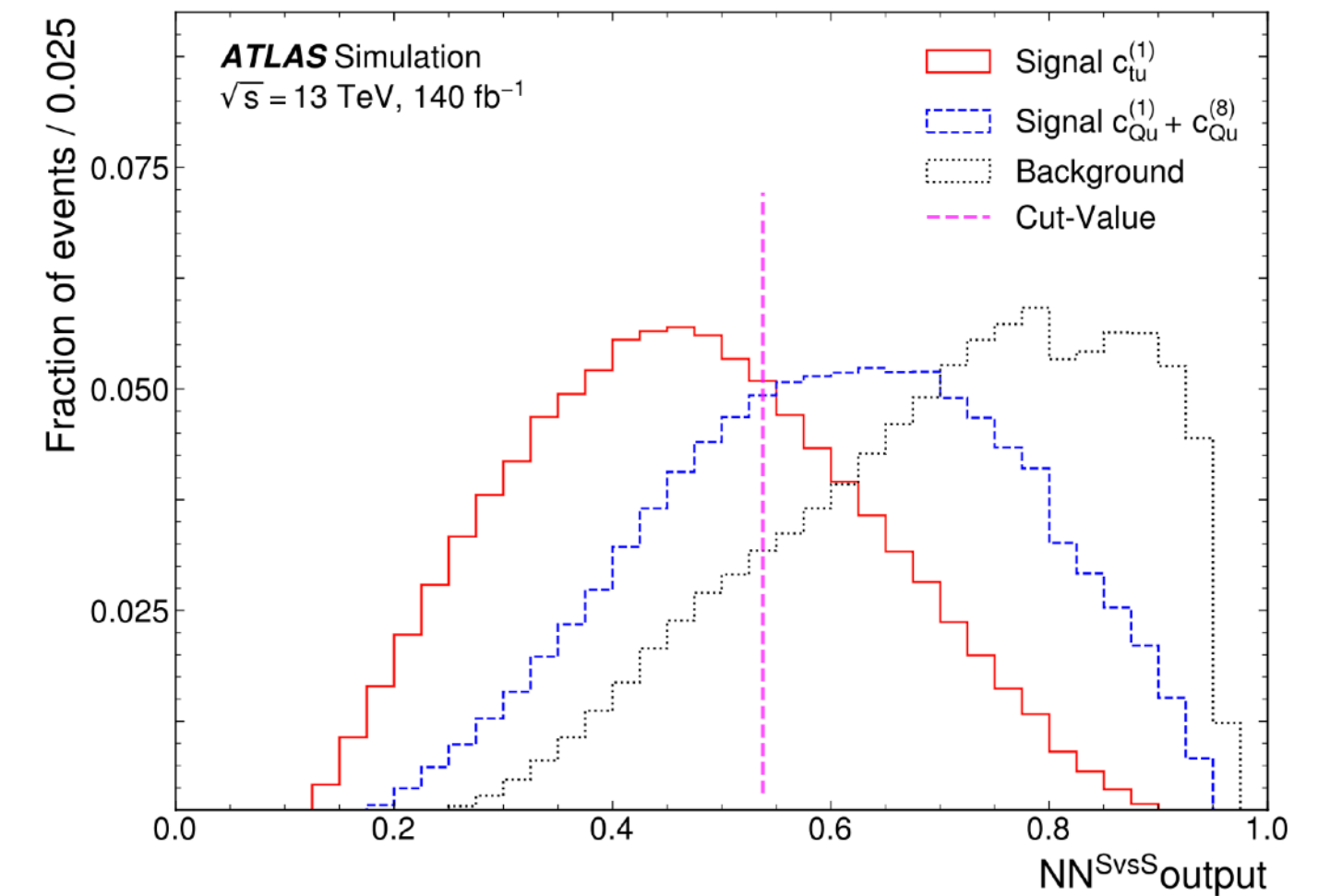
Efficiency * acceptance	SRtu	SRQu
$\mathcal{O}_{tu}^{(1)}$	26.8%	12.4%
\mathcal{O}_{Qu}	15.8%	19.5%



$$c_{tu}^{(1)} = 0.04, c_{Qu}^{(1)} = 0, c_{Qu}^{(8)} = 0$$

$$c_{tu}^{(1)} = 0, c_{Qu}^{(1)} = 0.1, c_{Qu}^{(8)} = 0.2$$

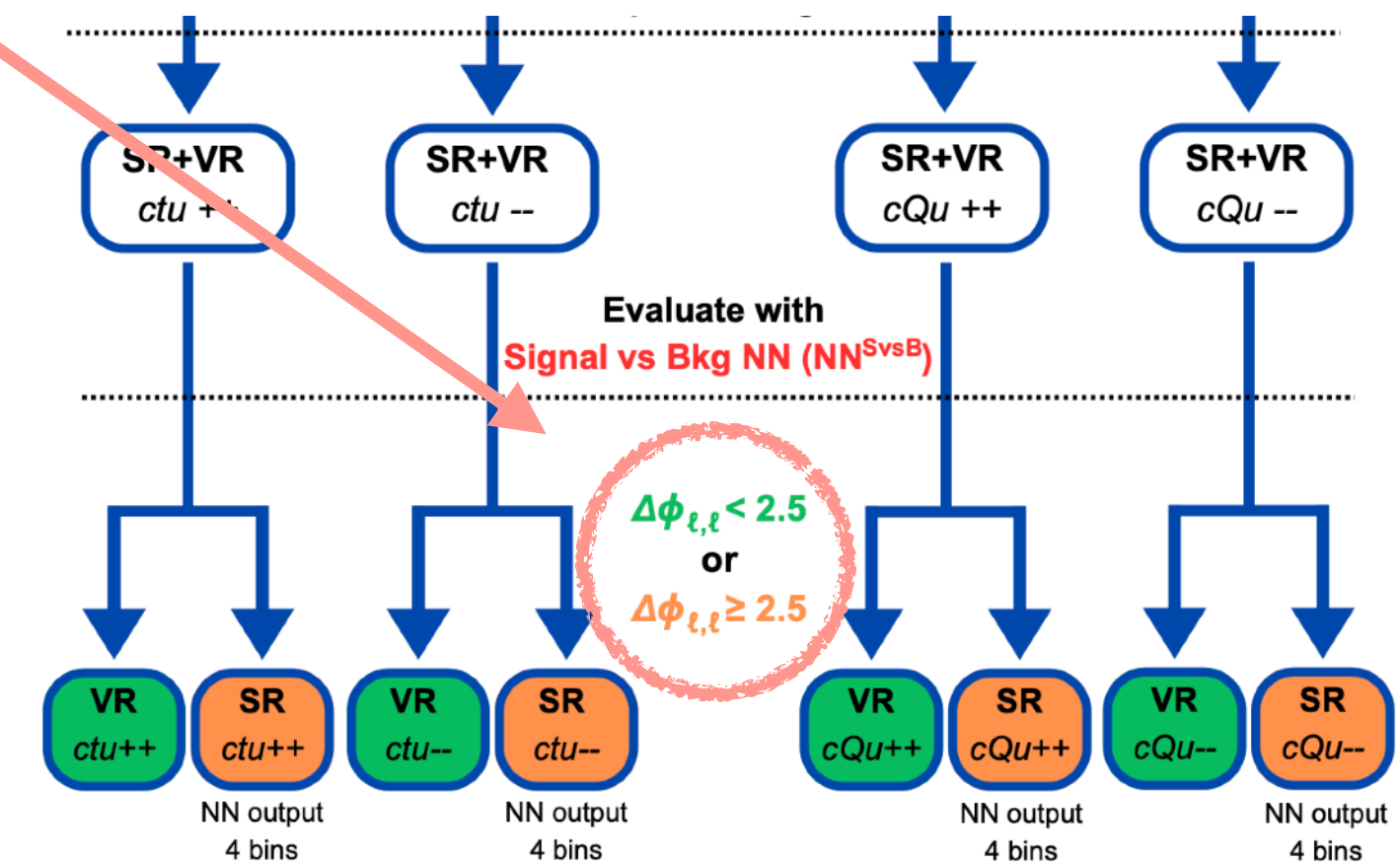
- **Signal vs Bkg NN:** Uses six kinematic quantities which show significant differences between target operator & charge configuration thus trained separately for each of the four SRs.
- Subsequent cut on angular distribution results in background rejection of $\sim 25\%$ for SR(tu) and $\sim 86\%$ for SR(Qu).



- **Dedicated control regions**

$t\bar{t}Z$ and VV : Require two OSSF + one lepton.

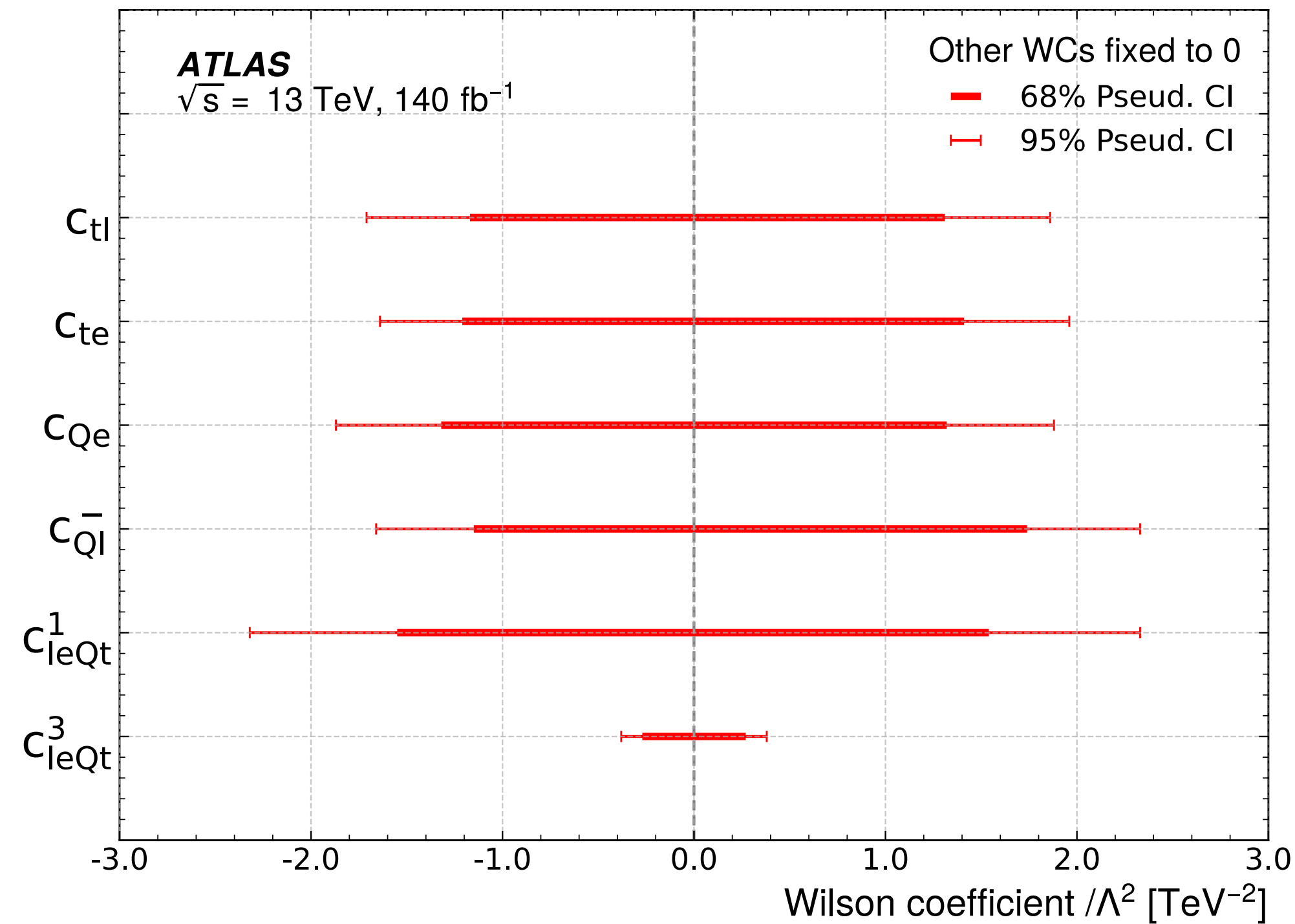
Non-prompt leptons from decay of hadrons: at least one lepton is *Tight-not-VeryTight*.



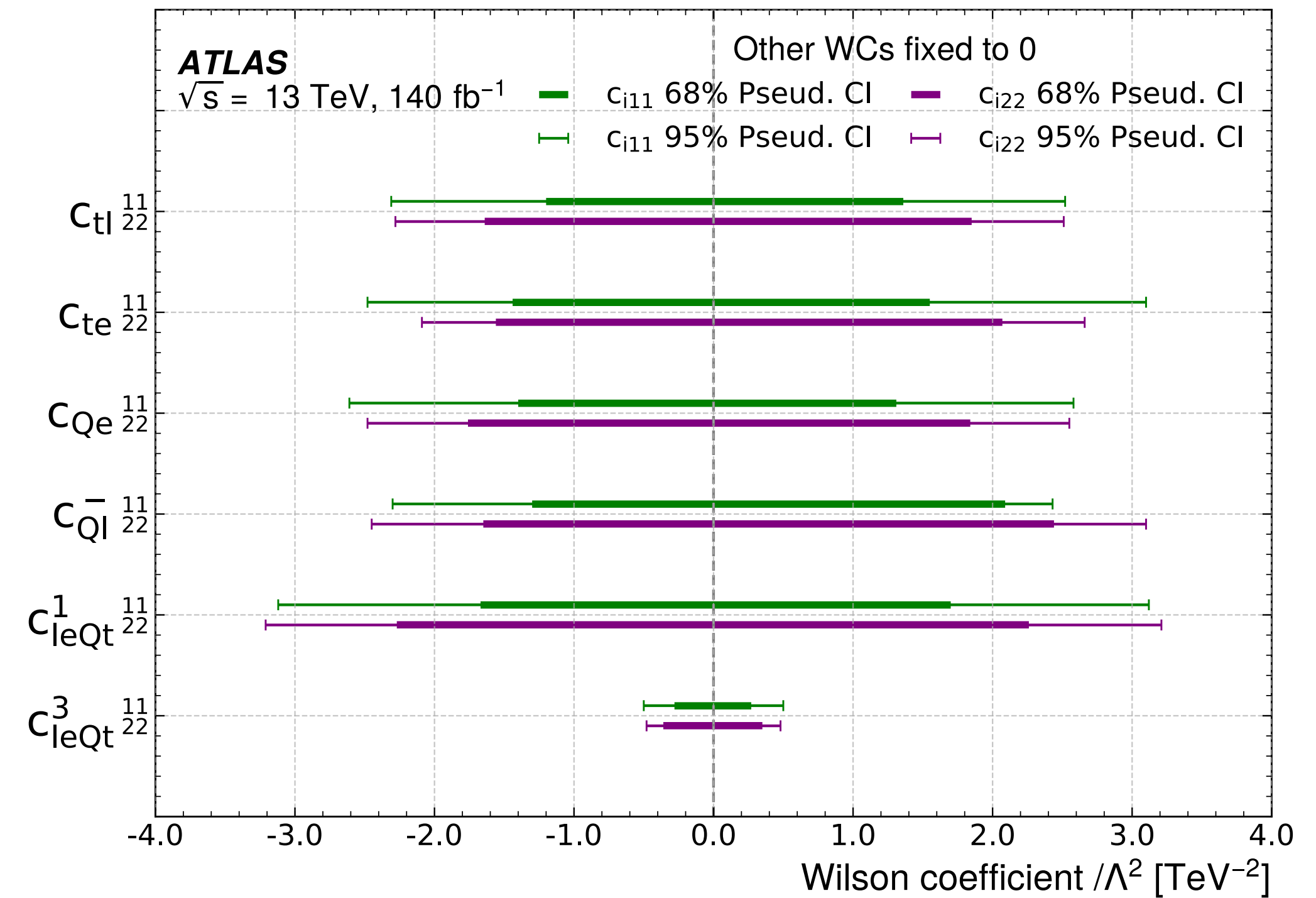
- The set of NN^{SvsS} are trained to classify EFT benchmarks using the following nine kinematics quantities:
 - $\Delta\phi_{l,l}$, $\Delta R_{l,l}$, $\Delta\eta_{l,l}$ between the two leptons and $m(l, l)$
 - Scalar sum of the p_T of all the jets and scalar sum of the p_T of all the leptons
 - p_T of the leading jet, E_T^{miss} and the invariant mass of the leptons and E_T^{miss}
- The set of NN^{SvsB} are trained to classify SS top-quark signal from backgrounds using the following:
 - Sum of the p_T of the leptons, the p_T of the leading jet, and N_{jets}
 - b -tagging scores of the leading and sub-leading p_T jets
 - The transverse mass of the leptons and E_T^{miss}

- Wilks' theorem violation justifies coverage-adjusted CIs using toy pseudodata.

Flavour inclusive



Flavour split



- Wilks' theorem violation justifies coverage-adjusted CIs using toy pseudodata.

