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Development of a compact half-cell RF photocathode gun for single-shot keV ultrafast electron diffraction with femtosecond resolution

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Ultrafast electron diffraction (UED) is a powerful tool for the direct visualization of structural dynamic processes in matter on atomic length and time scales. Observations on a femtosecond time scale with atomic resolution spatially have long been a goal in science and are currently achieved with large photo injectors developed for FEL frontends. Here we demonstrate a compact 180 keV photocathode S-band electron gun, which employs field-enhancement at a pin-shaped cathode to produce an extraction field strength of 102 MV/m driven by a rack-mountable solid state 10 kW peak power supply. Simulations predict that high-brightness electron bunches with RMS duration of 10 fs, a radius of 135 μm , and spatial emittance of 0.1 mm-mrad are possible for a bunch charge of 10 fC. The impact of laser spot size and duration, as well as their spatial distribution, on the temporal bunch length of electrons on the specimen was investigated. Following the successful completion of the conditioning phase of the RF gun and multipacting suppression, photo-triggered electrons using a UV laser on the photocathode were observed.

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Footnotes

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Yes

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