Embracing mobility

An iPhone application for browsing nature.com content may change the way we access research news.

In response to the growing popularity of using mobile devices to access websites[1], Nature Publishing Group has released an application for the iPhone to aid the searching and reading of nature.com content. A similar application for mobile devices using the Android operating system is expected to be released shortly.

The application allows users of Apple's iPhone, iPod Touch and the recently announced iPad to search, browse, read and bookmark full-text content from *Nature* and *Nature News*. It also allows users to search PubMed, a popular citation database search engine for the life sciences. The application itself is free of charge and available for immediate download from the Apple iPhone Store or from www.nature.com/mobileapps.

The tool will allow registered users of nature.com to keep up with the latest published research from Nature Publishing Group wherever they are. To improve readability of research papers and news articles, the application supports

high-resolution zoomable figures and features a special references view. As an introductory offer, access to the full text of all *Nature* and *Nature News* content through the application is free until 30 April 2010 for anyone who registers at nature.com. Subject to feedback, content for other *Nature* journals (such as *Nature Photonics*) and *Scientific American* (now part of Nature Publishing Group) will be rolled out in due course.

There are plans to enhance the functionality of the nature.com iPhone application later in 2010, and Nature Publishing Group has already announced its commitment to producing EPUB files, an open standard for e-book content that is compatible with many platforms, including Apple's iBooks application.

"The nature.com iPhone app makes it easy to keep abreast of the latest science news and research," says Dan Pollock, associate director of nature.com. "We look forward to feedback from the community and to finding out more about how people use their mobile devices to find and read scientific papers and news." ❐

References

1. *Nature Photon.* **4,** 63 (2010).

Next step to laser fusion

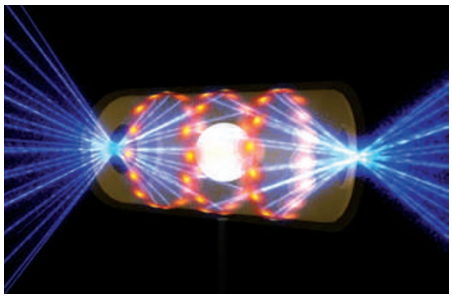
The first test shots at the National Ignition Facility give cause for optimism.

In the April 2009 issue of *Nature Photonics*[1] we reported that the National Ignition Facility, the giant laser-induced nuclear fusion test-bed in the US, was complete and preparing for tests. Now, just 11 months later, the facility has made the headlines again with the news that it has turned on all of its 192 laser beams and used them to successfully demonstrate symmetric implosion of an empty fuel target, a small spherical pellet of beryllium placed inside a tiny gold hollow cylinder with open ends, called a hohlraum.

These results, reported in *Science*[2] by a team of researchers from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory and General Atomics in California, USA, are significant because they suggest that the National Ignition Facility is making good progress towards demonstrating its goal of 'ignition' — the commencement of laser-induced nuclear fusion. Indeed, some believe that if all goes well in the coming months, ignition may be achieved even before the end of the year.

These latest experiments were performed with a combined beam energy of 0.7 MJ. This is nearly half of the National Ignition Facility's target energy of 1.8 MJ — the expected level required to achieve ignition. For those not familiar with the concept of laser fusion, the idea is that the focused laser energy heats the hohlraum up to several million degrees centigrade, causing it to emit X-rays that implode the fuel target and so induce fusion in the deuterium–tritium fuel pellet.

The challenge now is to ensure that the implosion remains symmetrical, and that it continues to successfully occur as the beam power is increased. There have been concerns that the plasma generated around the target may interfere with the laser beams and thus cause the implosion process to cease. However, the researchers have now shown that these laser–plasma interactions can actually be put to good use by creating



NIF

plasma gratings that aid symmetric X-ray compression.

One thing is for sure: the proponents of nuclear fusion will take these results as a cause for optimism, and will be eagerly anticipating the ignition tests due to start this summer. ❐

References

1. *Nature Photon.* **3,** 177 (2009).
2. Glenzer, S. H. *et al. Science* doi:10.1126/science.1185634 (2010).