



# DiffCloth: Differentiable Cloth Simulation with Dry Frictional Contact

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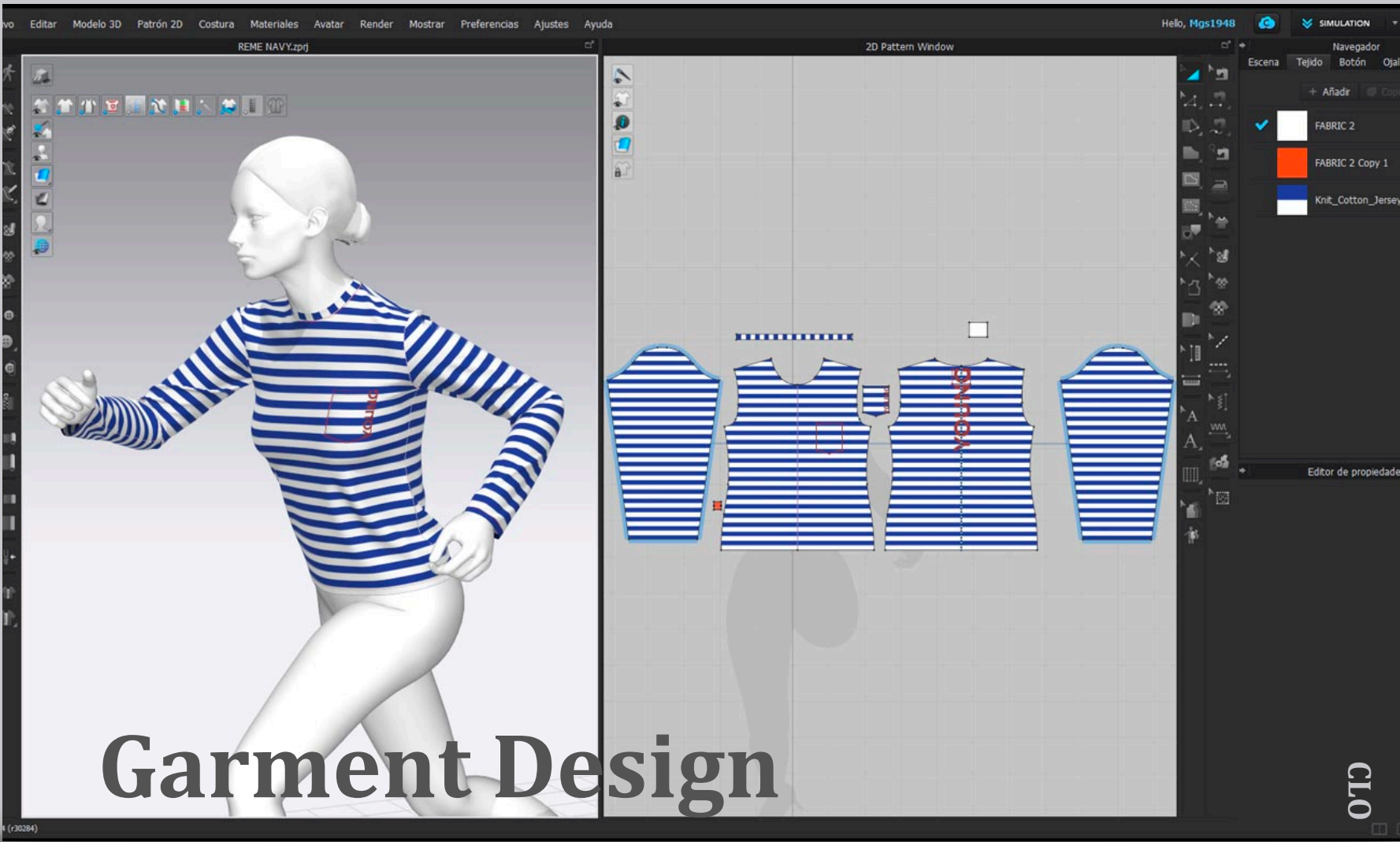


Massachusetts  
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Technology





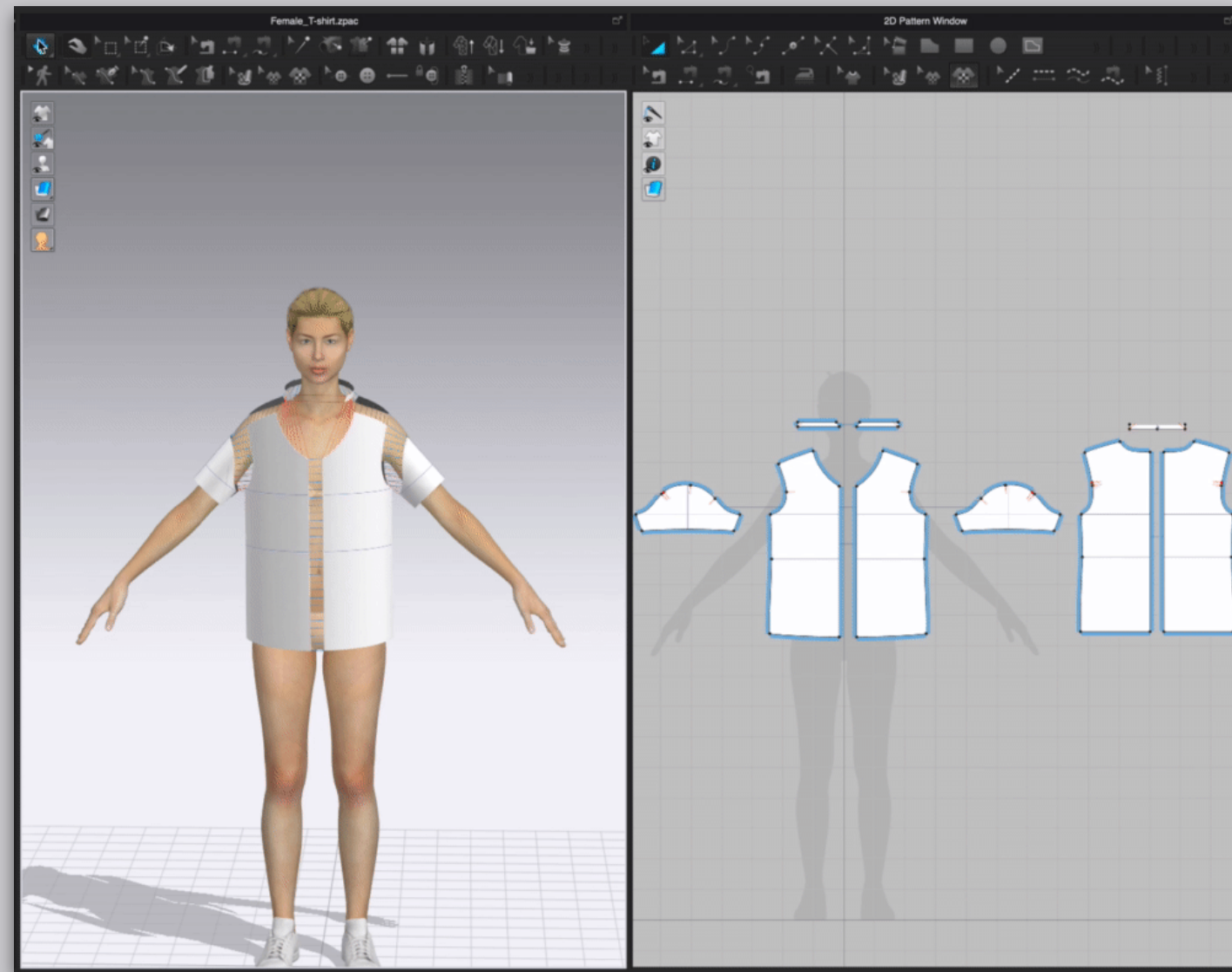
# Cloth simulation has wide applications...



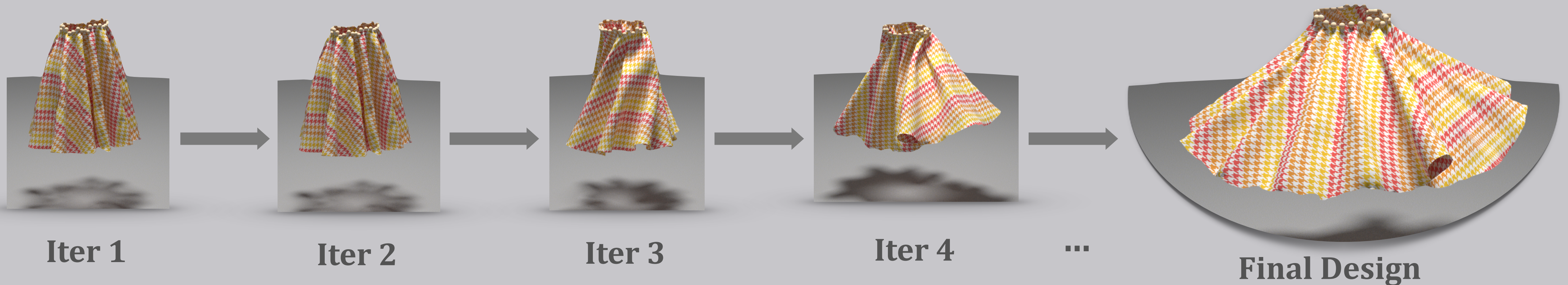


# Slow & Tedious Manual Workflow

Edit



Simulate





# Differentiable Cloth Simulation

Goal: Optimize  $\theta$  (e.g. cloth material) to perform a task (e.g. garment design)

## Dress Design





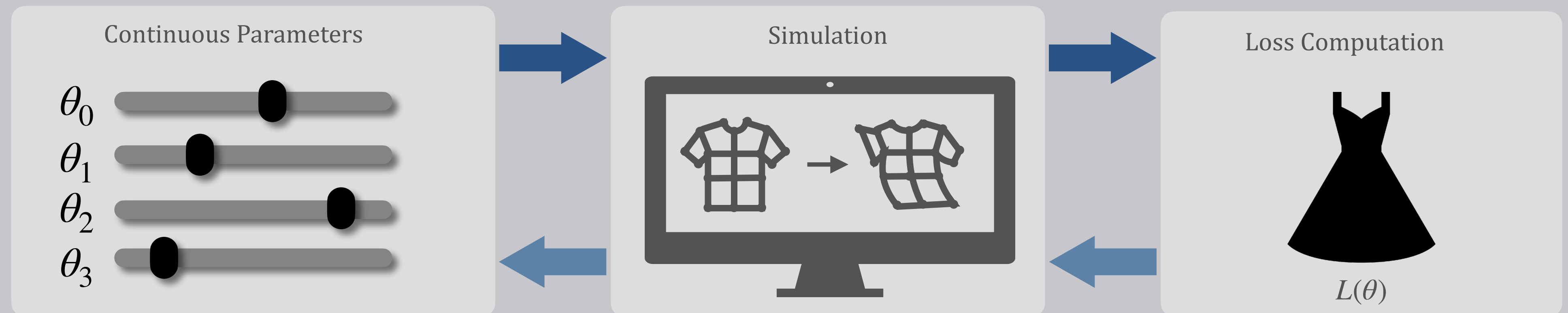
# Differentiable Cloth Simulation

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## Dress Design



### 1 Forward Simulation through time to obtain $L(\theta)$



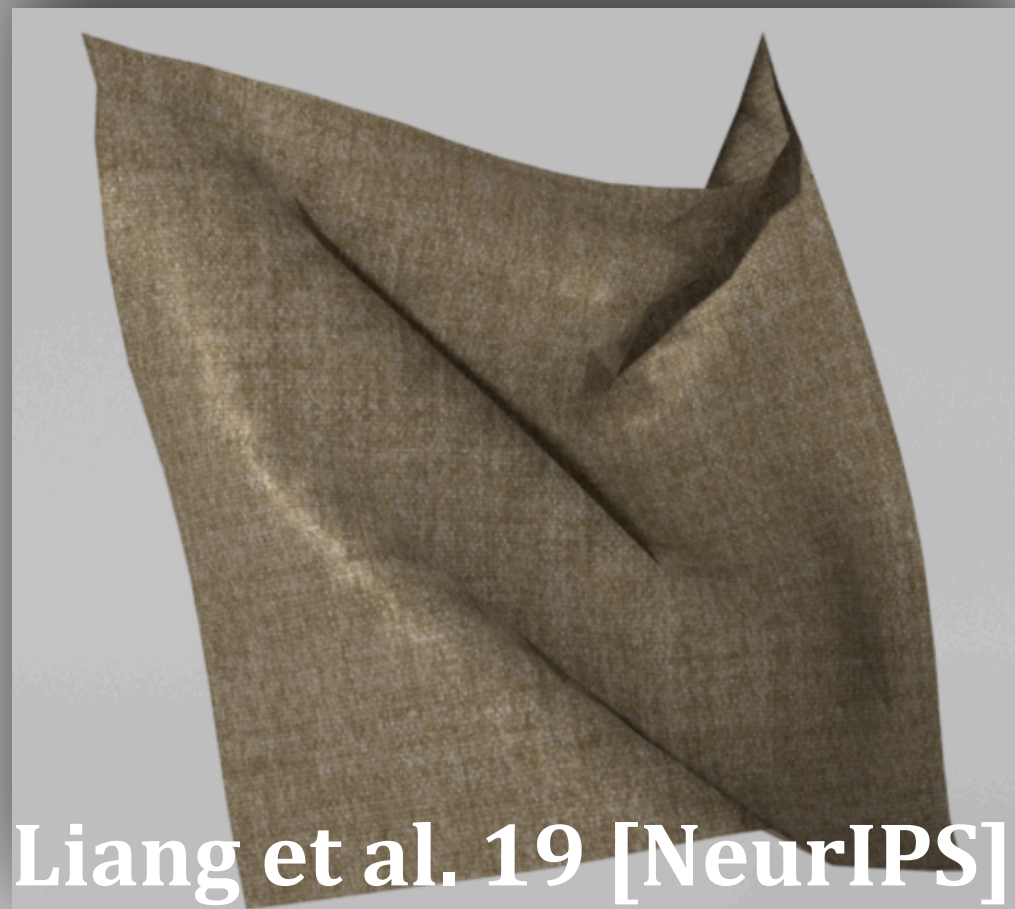
### 2 Gradient Back Propagation $\frac{\partial L}{\partial \theta} \leftarrow L$ to obtain $\frac{\partial L}{\partial \theta}$

### 3 Use gradient-based optimizer to update $\theta$

$$\theta_{new} \leftarrow \theta_{old} - \frac{\partial L}{\partial \theta} \cdot k$$

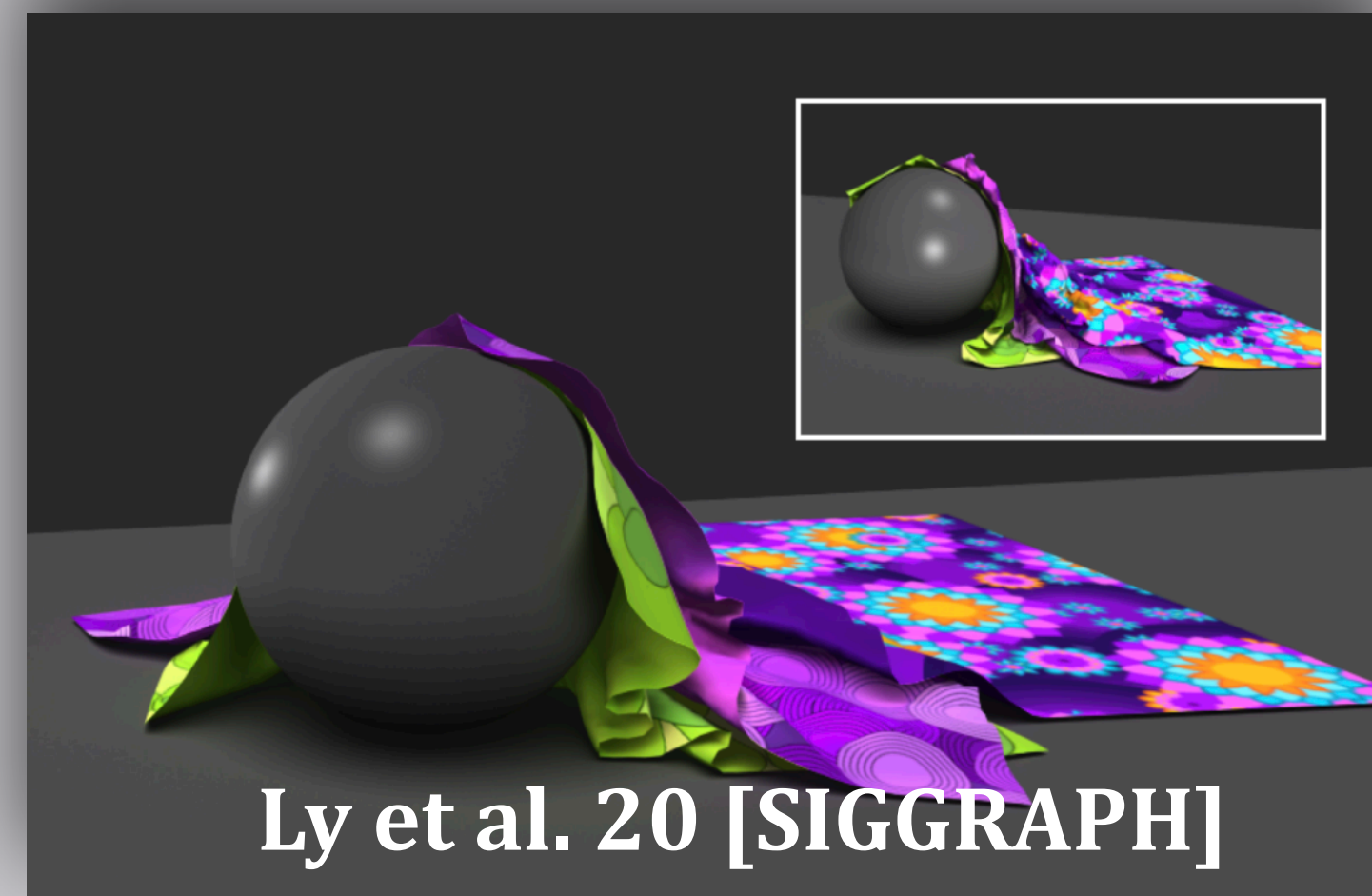


# Related Works



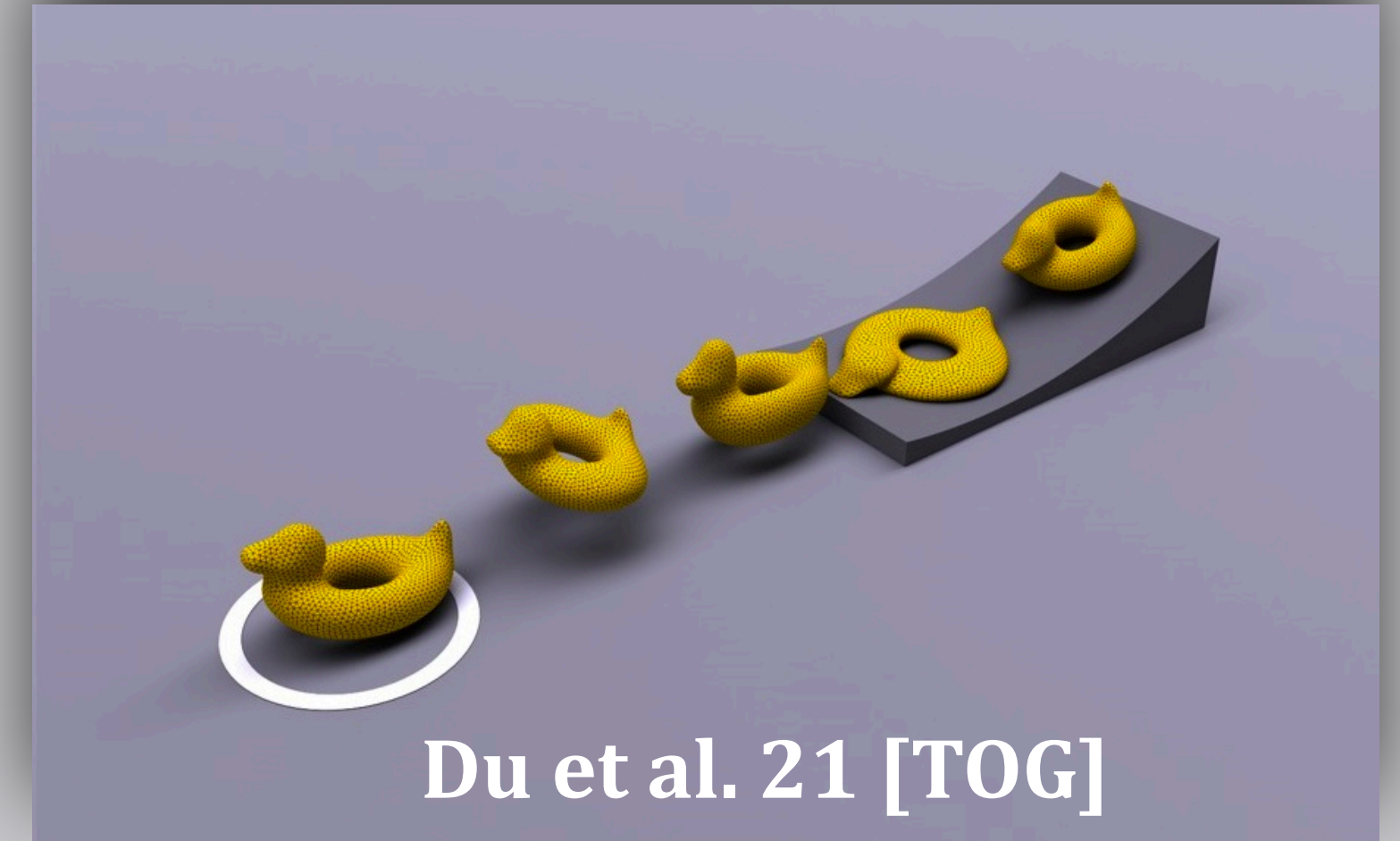
Liang et al. 19 [NeurIPS]

**Differentiable cloth simulation  
for inverse problems**



Ly et al. 20 [SIGGRAPH]

**Projective Dynamics with dry  
frictional contact**



Du et al. 21 [TOG]

**DiffPD: Differentiable Projective  
Dynamics**



# Contributions of DiffCloth

## Fast Simulation + Gradient Derivation

- Projective-Dynamics-based forward simulation
- Novel gradient computation to speed up back-propagation

## Accurate Contact Modeling

Dry-frictional contact

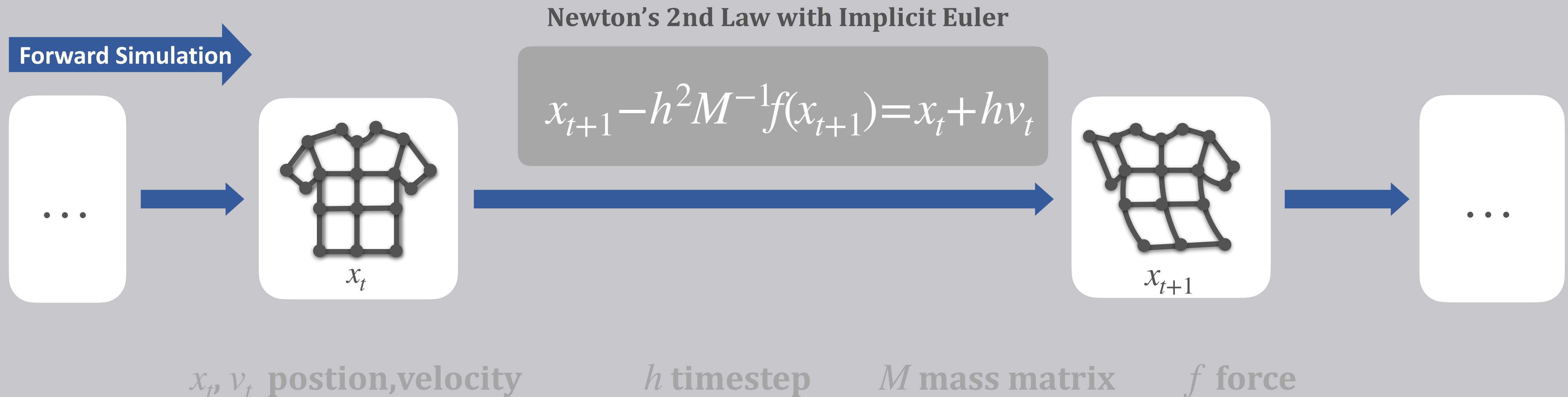
## Effective in Inverse Tasks

- Trajectory Optimization
- Closed-Loop Control
- Inverse Design
- System Identification
- Real-to-Sim



# Simulating Cloth Dynamics

Implicit Euler integration is robust

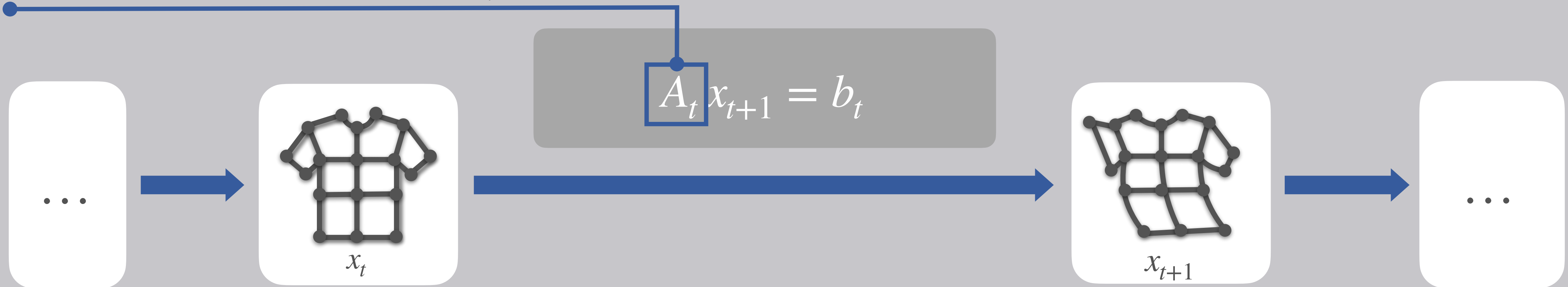




# Simulating Cloth Dynamics

Implicit Euler integration is robust but expensive

Using Newton's method requires costly Hessian matrix computation and factorization of  $A_t$  at *every timestep* (slow)

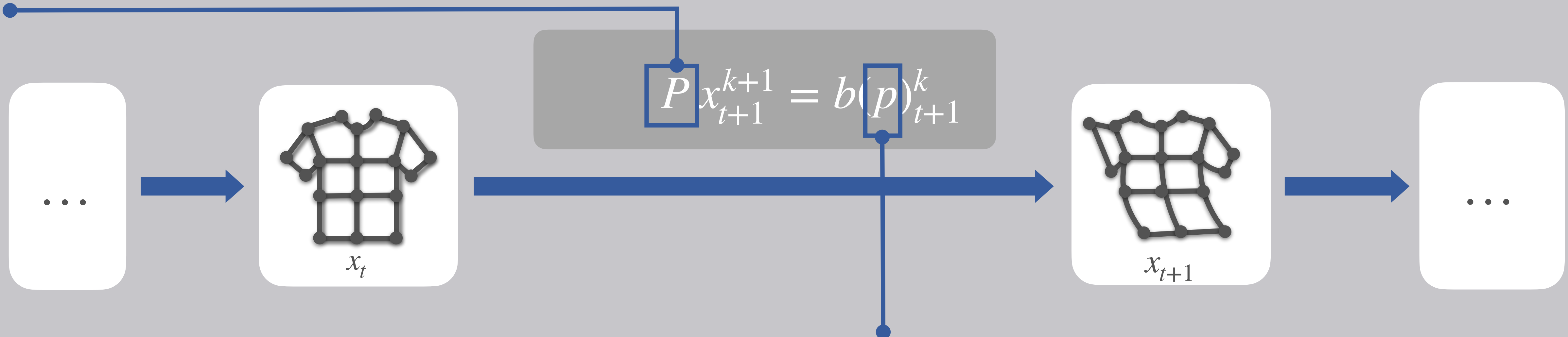




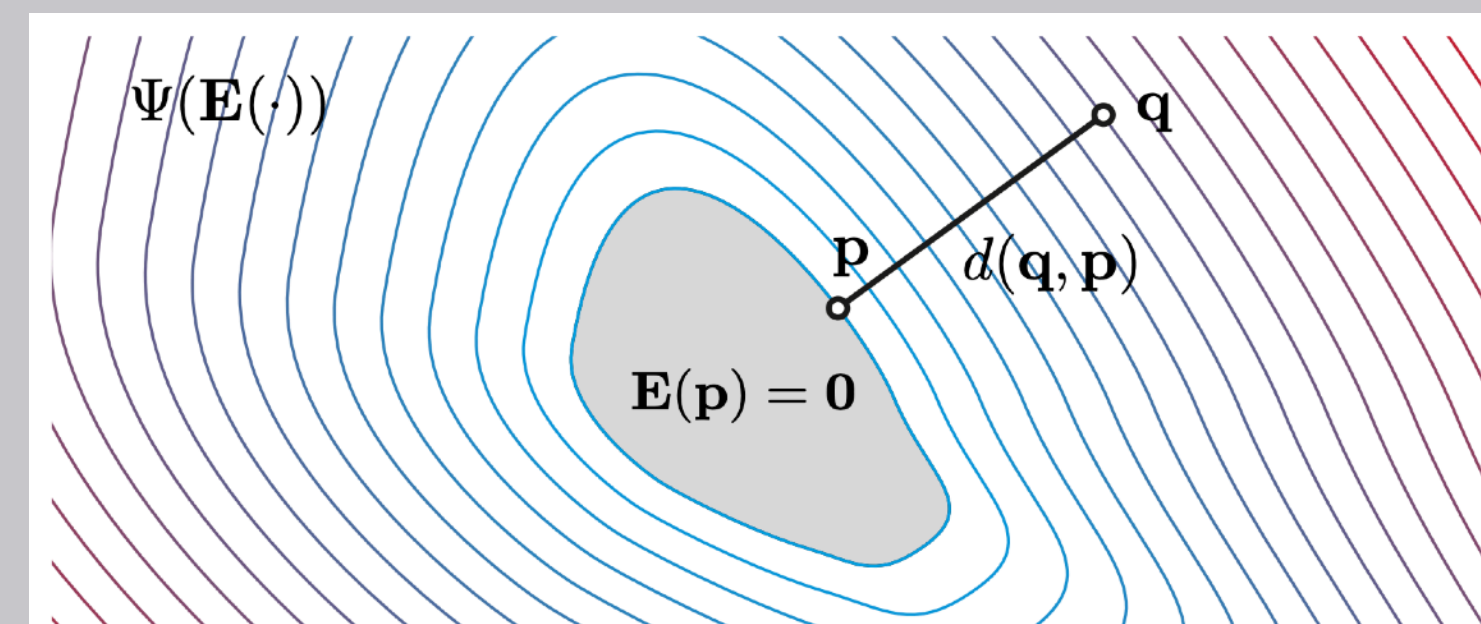
# Fast Simulation with Projective Dynamics

local/global iterative scheme [Bouaziz et al. 14]

**Global:** Same system matrix  $P$  at every timestep



**Local:** parallel local projections  $p$





# PD with Dry Frictional Contact [Ly et al. 20]

enforce vertex-vertex frictional contact semi-implicitly to  
satisfy Signorine-Coulomb condition

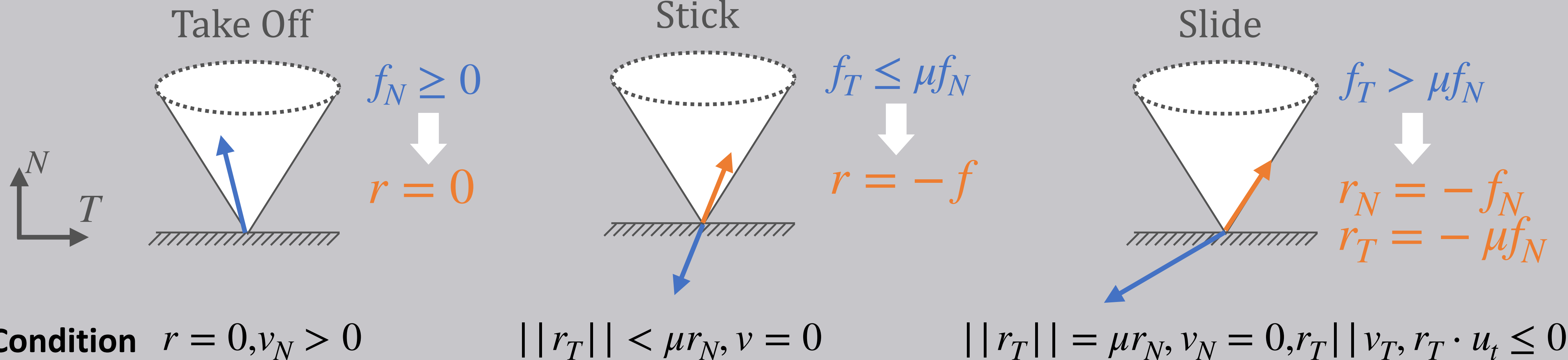
$$P_{v^{k+1}} = b(p)^k$$
$$:= \underbrace{f(p)^k}_{\text{impulse}} + \underbrace{r^k}_{\text{contact impulse}}$$



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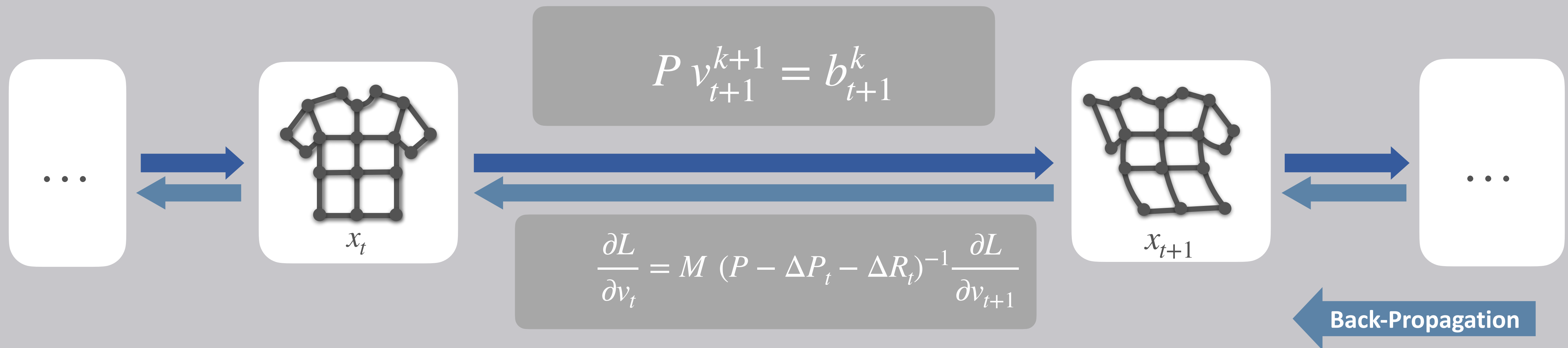
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# Slow Gradient Computation

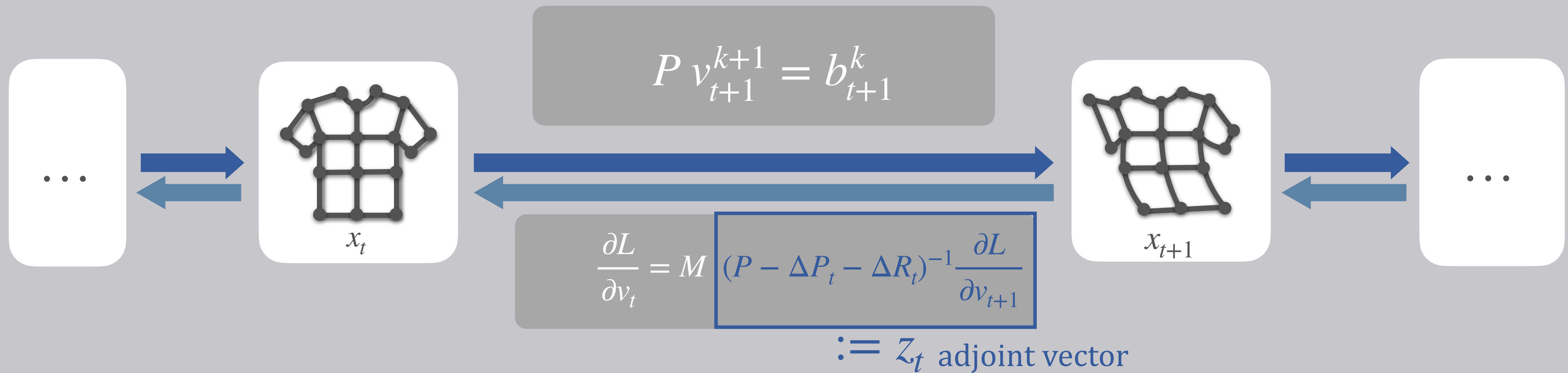
gradient computation via adjoint method



$\Delta P$  Gradient for the projection vector  $p$

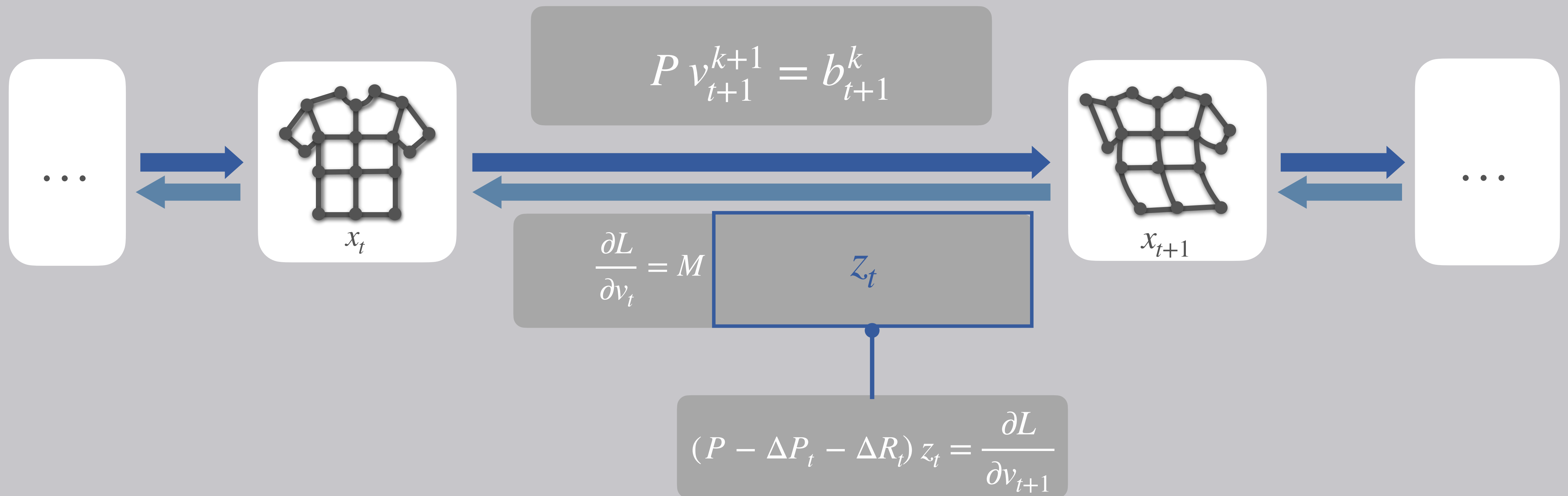
$\Delta R$  Gradient for the contact impulse response vector  $r$

# Slow Gradient Computation



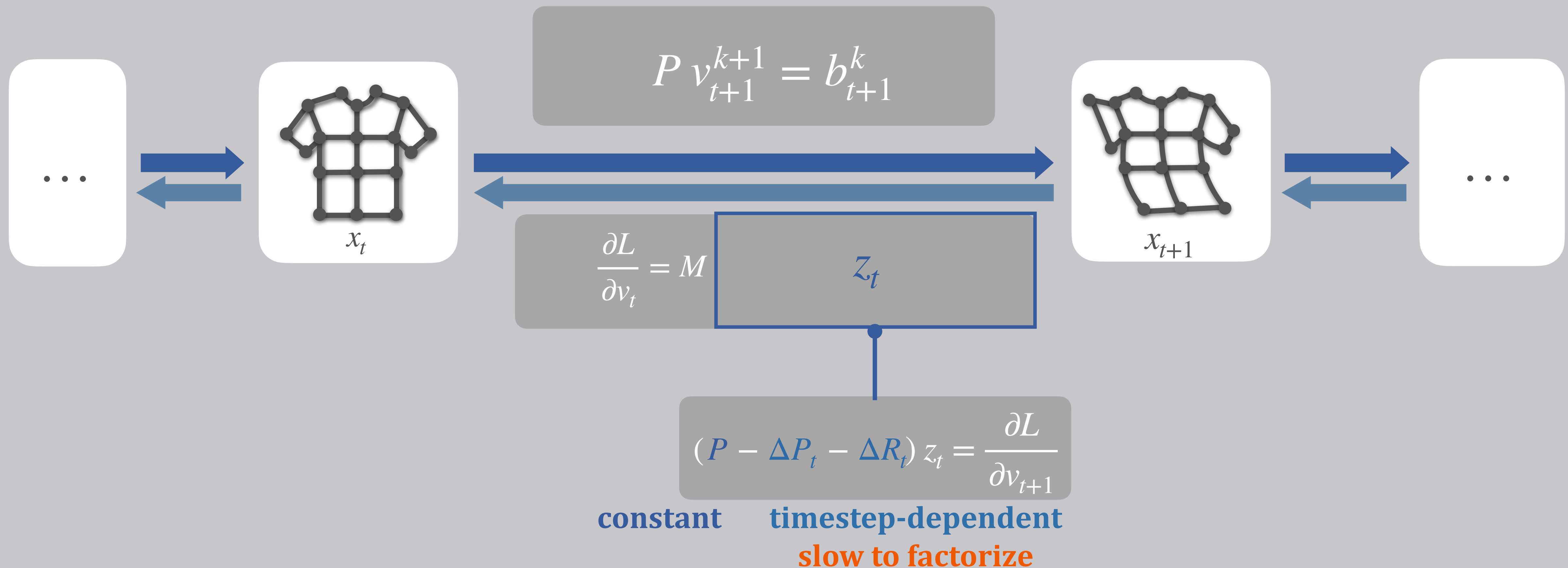


# Slow Gradient Computation



# Slow Gradient Computation

Can we exploit the source of efficiency in forward solve for backward solve?





# Fast Gradient Computation

constant timestep-dependent

$$(\boxed{P} - \boxed{\Delta P_t - \Delta R_t}) z_t = \frac{\partial L}{\partial v_{t+1}}$$

Direct Solve

Matrix Splitting



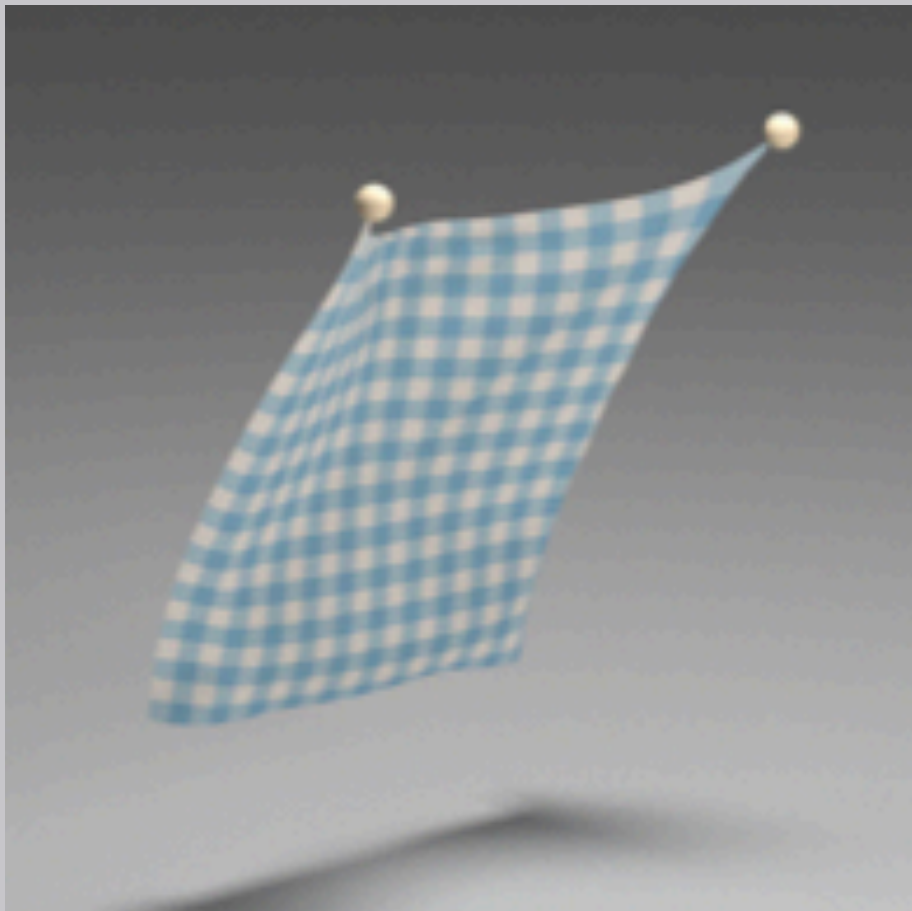
constant: pre-factorize

$$\boxed{P} z_t^{k+1} = (\Delta P_t + \Delta R_t) z_t^k + \frac{\partial L}{\partial v_{t+1}}$$

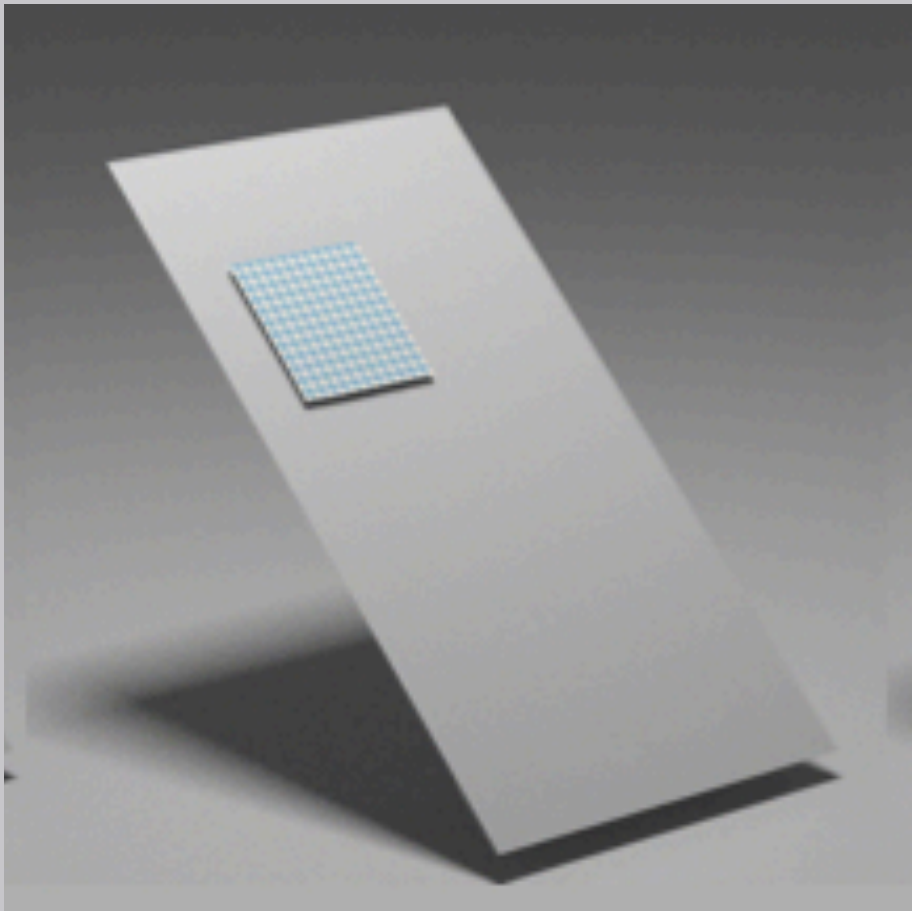
Iterative Solve: Good convergence in practice

# Fast Differentiable Cloth Simulation (Backward)

Iterative Solver Speedup (convergence  $\epsilon = 1e-4$ ): 3x - 12x



Wind: minimal contact



Slope: maximal contact

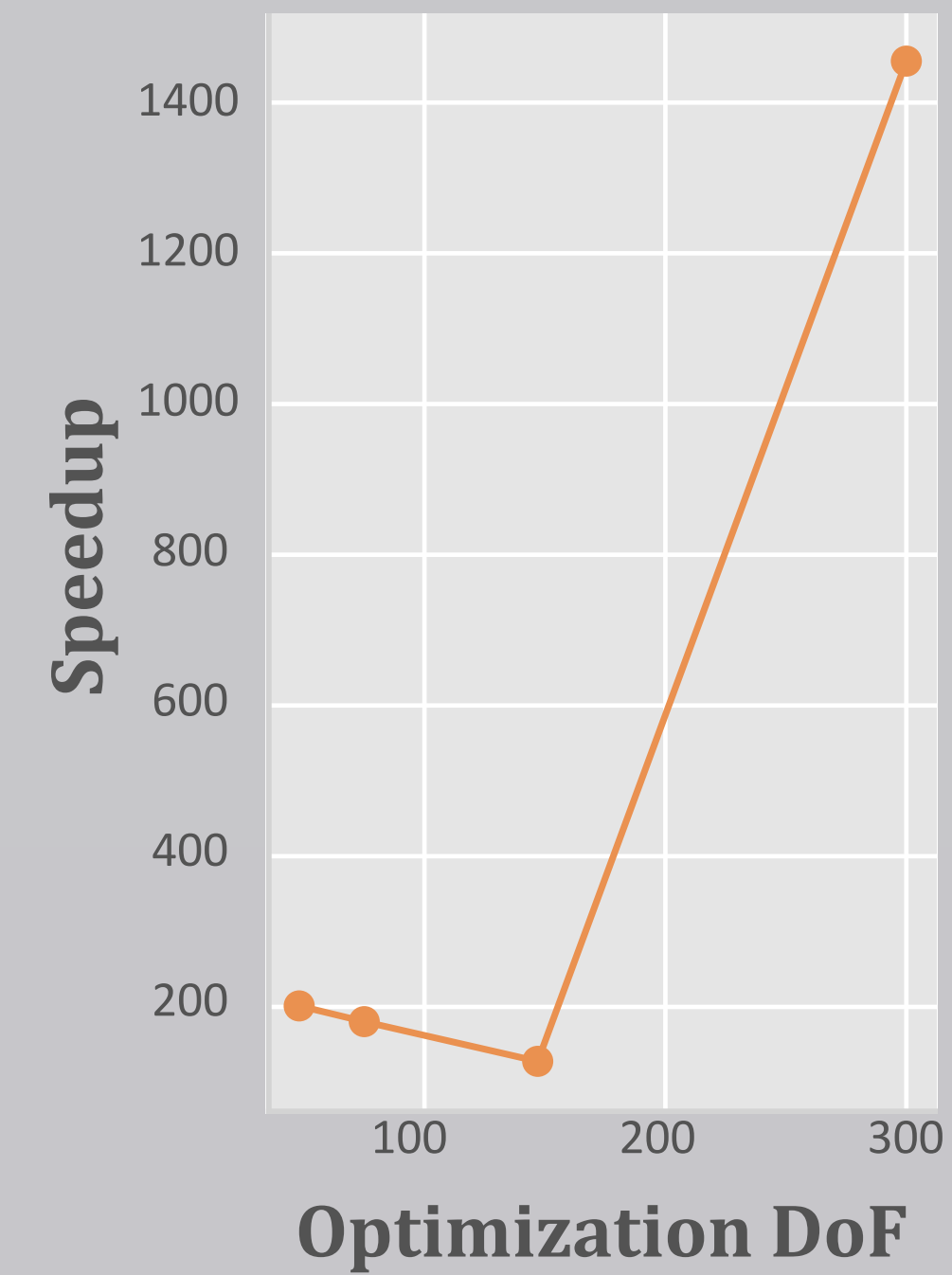
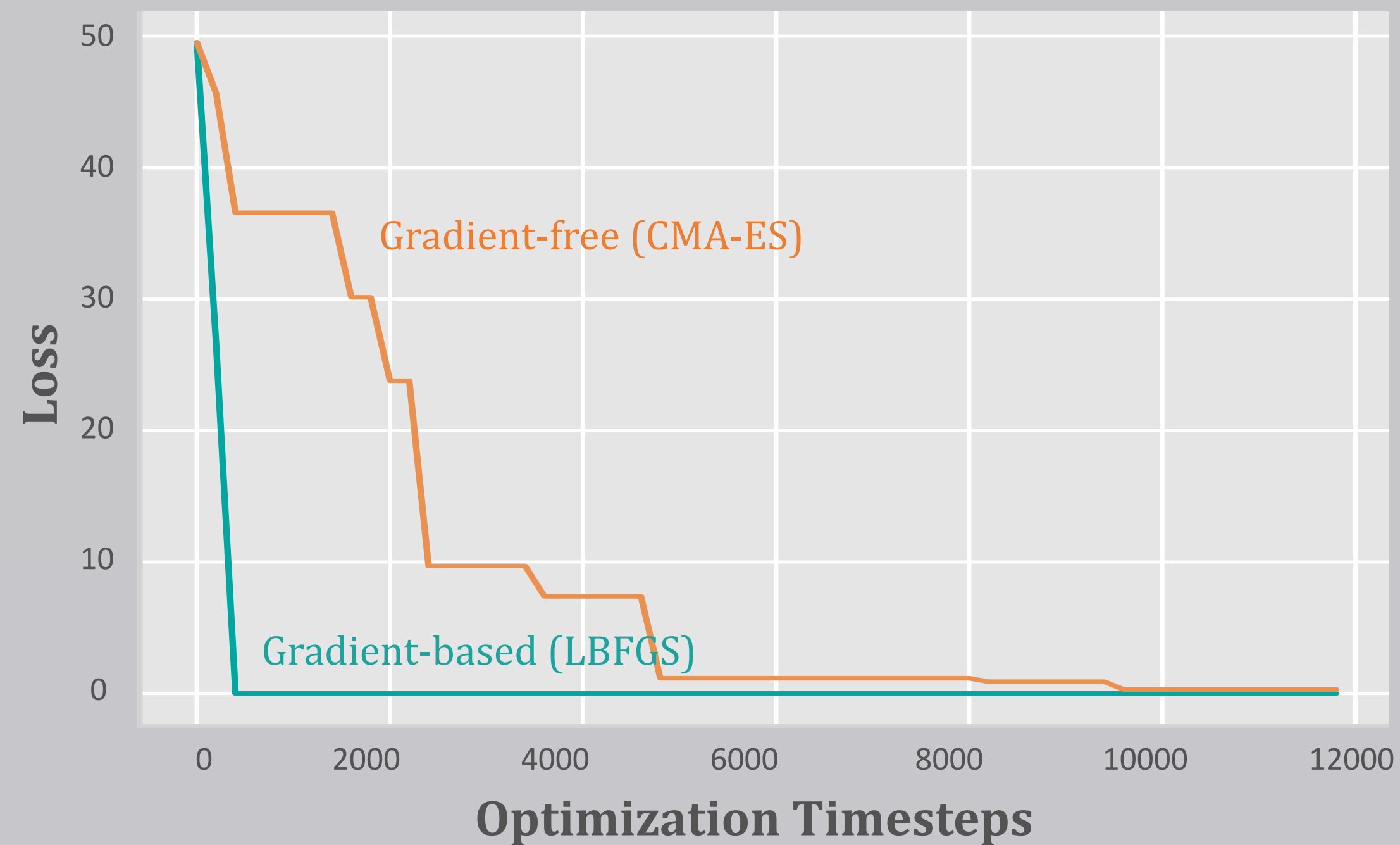
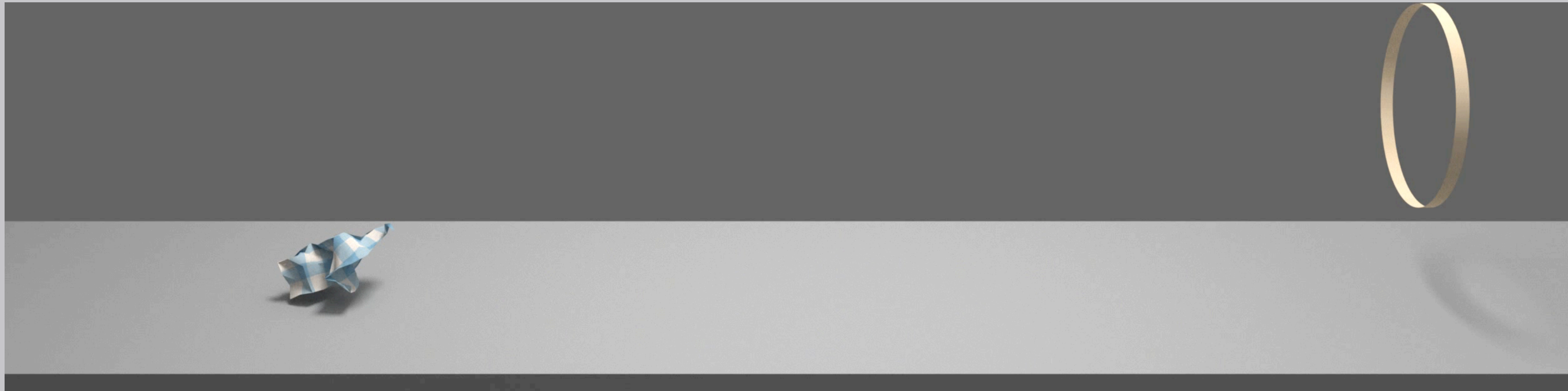
	Cloth Grid Resolution		
	12x12	24x24	48x48
Wind	2.9x	5.7x	10.6x
Slope	3.1x	6.8x	12.0x

Iterative Solver Speedup



# Inverse Task Comparison with Gradient-Free Methods

Benchmark Test: Optimize force field on the cloth to reach the ring



**Task: Identify wind model and material parameters to match target trajectory**



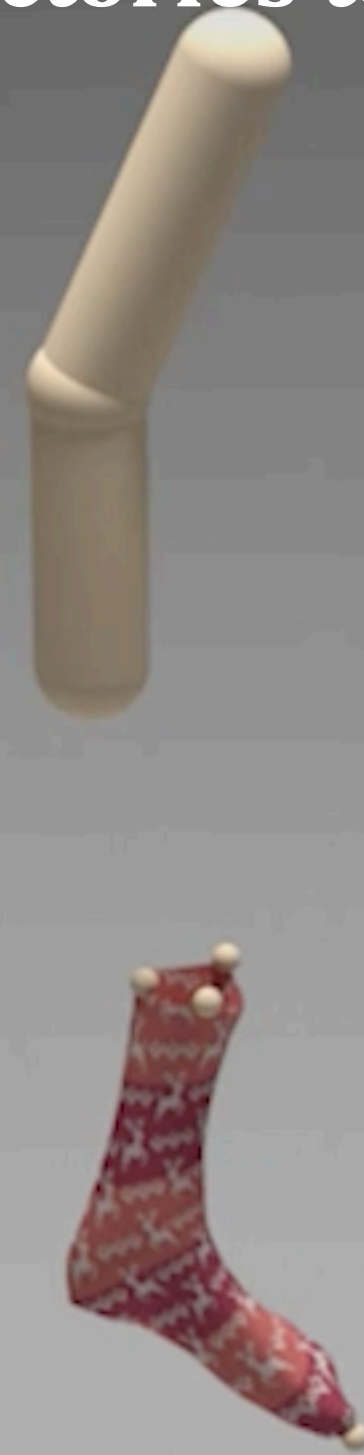
**4300 DoF | 250 Timesteps |  $\Delta t = 1/90s$**

**6 Design Parameters: cloth stretching stiffness and sinusoidal wind model parameters**



# Trajectory Optimization

**Task:** Optimize manipulator end effector trajectories to pull a sock on the foot model



Optimized Trajectory

**1700 DoF | 400 Timesteps |  $\Delta t = 1/100s$**

**36 Design Parameters: Tangents and endpoints of the 4 Hermite Splines**

# Inverse Design

**Task: Optimize dress material parameters so that the spinning angle of the dress is 50 degrees**



Initial Guess

Optimized

**19000 DoF | 125 Timesteps |  $\Delta t = 1/120s$**

**2 Design Parameters: density and bending stiffness**



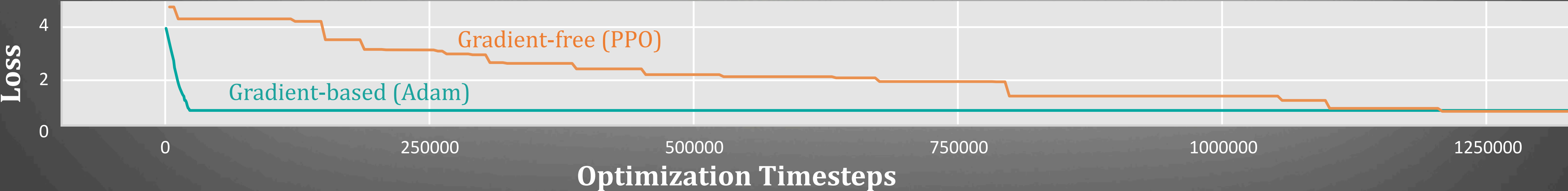
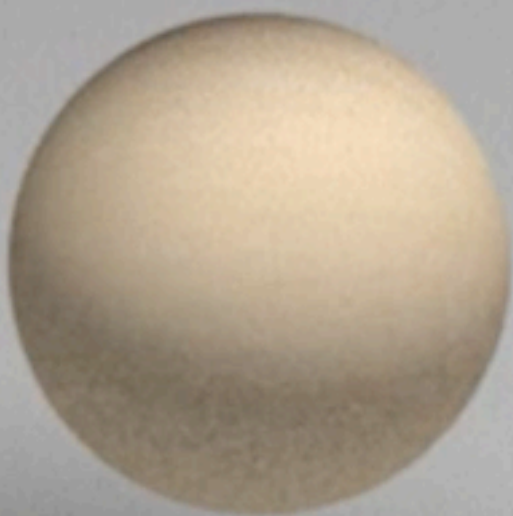
A 3D rendering of a red top hat with a small black band, floating in the air above a yellow sphere. The sphere is resting on a gray, reflective surface, which shows a clear reflection of the sphere. The background is a dark, gradient gray.

**Task: A generalizable NN controller that puts hat onto the head from any initial positions around the upper hemisphere**

**1700 DoF | 400 Timesteps |  $\Delta t = 1/100\text{s}$**

**117000 Design Parameters: Network parameters of the 2-layer MLP**

85x more sampling efficient compare with Reinforcement Learning baseline





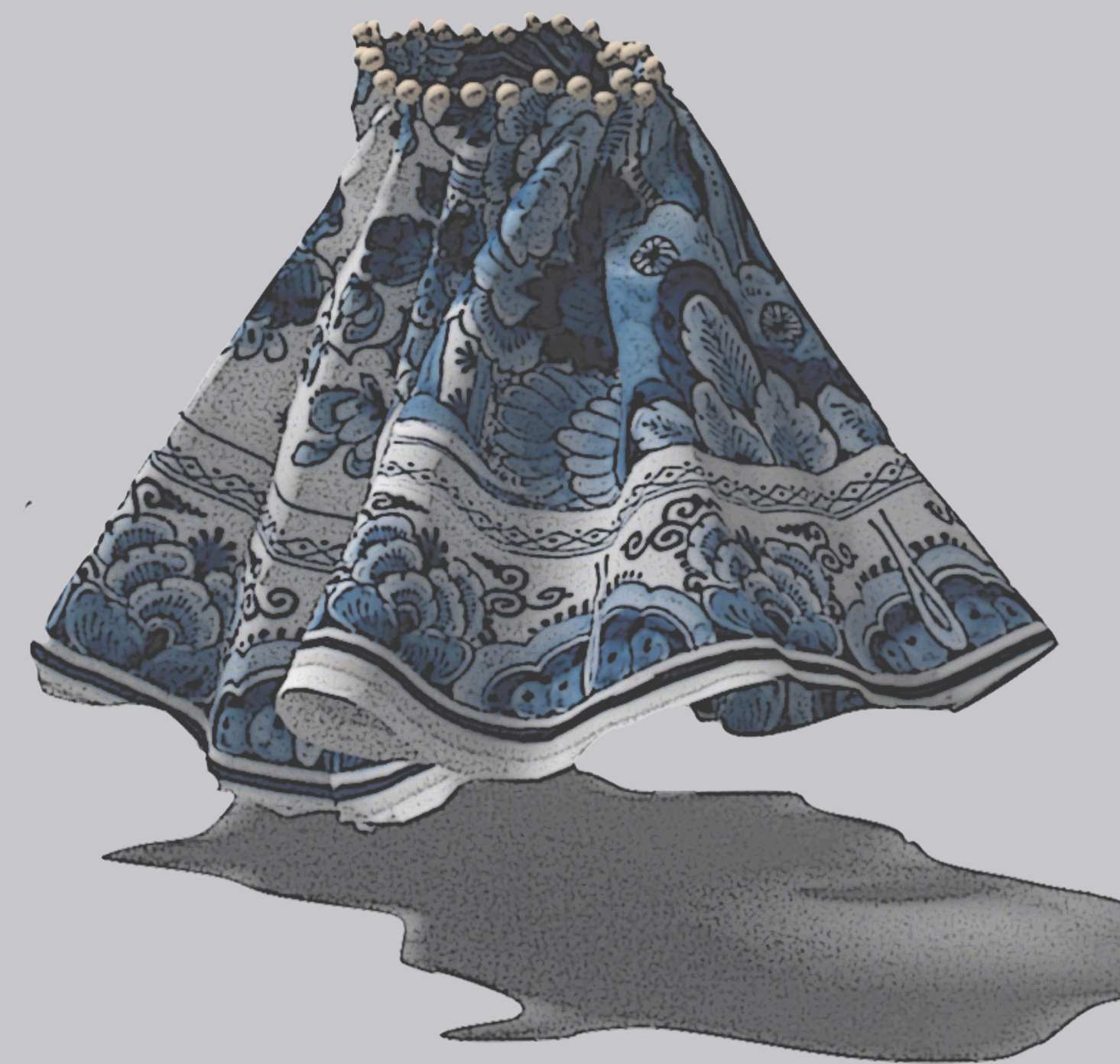
# Summary & Takeaway

**A differentiable cloth  
simulator with dry  
frictional contact**

Fast simulation with Projective Dynamics  
& fast back-propagation with iterative solver

More sampling efficient than  
gradient-free methods

Effective in a wide range of inverse tasks



[github.com/omegaiota/DiffCloth](https://github.com/omegaiota/DiffCloth)



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[people.csail.mit.edu/liyifei/diffcloth/](https://people.csail.mit.edu/liyifei/diffcloth/)