Ultra-low Power Microwave Oscillators based on Phase Change Oxides as Solid-State Neurons

B. Zhao, J. Ravichandran,
University of Southern California

Voltage or current controlled oscillators are well-established candidates for solid-state implementations of neurons. Metal to insulator transition (MIT) based phase change electrical oscillators are one of the many candidates for solid-state neurons, but current implementations are far from the ideal performance limits of energy and time necessary to induce the transition. We propose the use of nanoscale, epitaxial heterostructures of phase change oxides such as VO_2, NbO_2 and oxides with metallic conductivity as a fundamental unit of a low power electrical oscillator, capable of operating as neurons for neuromorphic computing architectures. Our simulations such that such oscillators can operate in the microwave regime and overcome many of the power consumption issues plagued by phase change electrical oscillators.