

The Higgs boson and the Coronavirus

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Abstract

The peculiar title of this talk momentarily hides its true purpose: to remind the attendees of something that they all know, but on which we do not, perhaps, place sufficient emphasis. That is the enormous extent to which basic research has benefitted humanity. Not only in the sciences which, like molecular biology, are fairly close to practical applications, but also in sciences like elementary-particle physics, that seem to have no “use” other than the pursuit of “pure” knowledge.

At the start of a meeting on the future *Grand Challenges in Physics for Society* it may be invigorating to reminisce some grand past accomplishments.