

Field-directed assembly of responsive colloids

Peter Schurtenberger

Division of Physical Chemistry, Lund University, Lund, Sweden
peter.schurtenberger@fkem1.lu.se

Field-directed self-assembly (DSA) has recently moved into the focus of the soft-matter and nanotechnology community. It employs the basic principles of self-assembly through carefully chosen building blocks, but the underlying self-assembly process is then aided or modulated using external fields. I will demonstrate how we can apply a combination of responsive nanoparticles and external electromagnetic fields in order to modulate the intrinsic interparticle interactions and tune the subtle balance between thermal motion and the action of interparticle forces, and thus generate novel self-assembled structures. I will show in particular how we can use field-driven self-assembly to induce phase transitions, cycle through various equilibrium and non-equilibrium phases, and study the underlying mechanisms of these phase transitions. Moreover, I will demonstrate the effect of particle anisotropy in field-driven assembly.

References

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