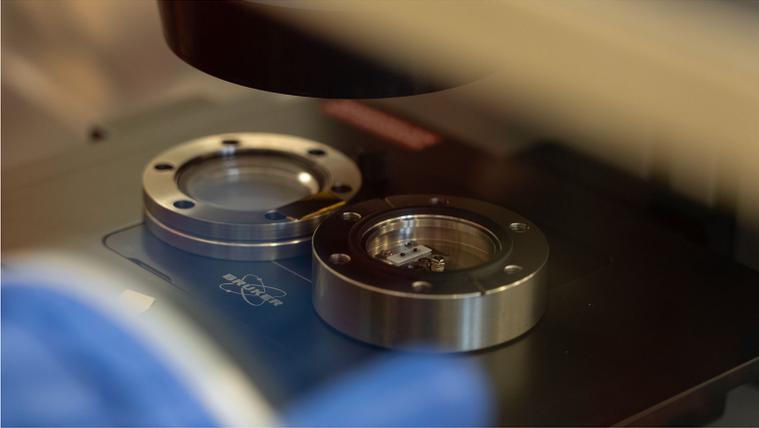


Press Releases

THE ANALYSIS OF FRAGMENTS OF THE RYUGU ASTEROID GETS GOING



An entirely Italian research group composed of scientists of the National Institute for Astrophysics (INAF), the University of Florence, and INFN started analysing two samples of the Ryugu asteroid. These were received in May 2023 as part of an international competition for analysing cosmic material brought back to Earth by the Hayabusa-2 mission of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

The first infrared spectroscopy investigations were conducted in the synchrotron light laboratory *Dafne Luce* of the INFN Frascati National Laboratories, exploiting the radiation produced by the Laboratories' particle accelerator, *Dafne*. With these first analyses, the research group is focusing on studying the mineralogy, organic matter, and water of the samples to obtain the first information from these fossils of the solar system. The fragments probably date back to the very early phases of the formation of our planetary system, i.e. to approximately four billion years ago. After the analyses at the INFN Frascati Laboratories, the Ryugu samples will be brought to the University of Florence for further investigations aimed at acquiring more information on their history.