

Field Assisted Sintering of Functional Nanoparticle Oxide Ceramics for Nanocrystalline Bulk Materials

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Nanocrystalline bulk materials are desirable for many applications as they can result in combinations of unique macroscopic properties. The growing demand for nanocrystalline materials is driven by applications which make use of very specific mechanical, electrical, magnetic, or optical properties of the nanomaterial. In order to achieve this, nanoparticle powders need to be synthesized and consolidated in a way that preserves the specific nanofeatures of the microstructure. The combination of the high sinterability of nanocrystalline powders with the rapid densification rates characteristic of field assisted sintering has been promoted as a method for fabricating nanoscale polycrystalline oxides. This presentation will report on research designed to understand the fundamentals of grain growth and densification by investigating the sintering behaviors and microstructures of nanoparticle barium titanate, lead zirconate titanate (PZT), and a nickel zinc copper ferrite ceramic by use of the field assisted sintering method. The primary objective is to sinter these materials to high density while maintaining a nanoscale microstructure through manipulation of the sintering parameters such as heating rate, sintering temperature, dwelling time and applied pressure.

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