Realization of a parametric interaction between two photons from independent sources

Bruno Sanguinetti\textsuperscript{1}, Thiago Guerreiro\textsuperscript{1}, Enrico Pomarico\textsuperscript{1}, Nicolas Sangouard\textsuperscript{1}, Jason S. Pelc\textsuperscript{2}, Carsten Langrock\textsuperscript{2}, Martin M. Fejer\textsuperscript{2}, Hugo Zbinden\textsuperscript{1}, Rob Thew\textsuperscript{1}, and Nicolas Gisin\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}GAP Optique, University of Geneva, Chemin de Pinchat 22, Carouge CH-1227, Switzerland
\textsuperscript{2}E. L. Ginzton Laboratory, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305, USA

Photons are ideal carriers of quantum information, as they can be easily created and manipulated and can travel long distances without being affected by decoherence [1]. They are the workhorse of quantum communication. However, under normal circumstances, they do not interact with each other. Realising such an interaction is not only fundamentally fascinating but holds great potential for emerging technologies. In fact, even a weak interaction between single photons can be used to perform quantum communication tasks more efficiently than what can be achieved with ideal linear optics and probabilistic sources [2]. For example, one could herald entanglement over a long distance, and move a step closer to futuristic applications such as device-independent quantum key distribution. Nonlinear interactions at the single-photon level are mainly being explored in atomic systems. However, the wavelengths, bandwidth, temperature and scale of these atomic systems make them incompatible with quantum communication applications. Here we take a different approach and use a state-of-the-art nonlinear waveguide to demonstrate a parametric interaction between a single photon and a single-photon-level coherent state from independent sources. The measured system efficiency is $1.5 \times 10^{-8}$, made up for by a high repetition rate of $4.3 \times 10^8$/s. This provides an integrated, room-temperature, high-bandwidth device operating at telecom wavelengths.
