

CELLULAR MATERIALS WITH GIANT POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE THERMAL EXPANSION

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ABSTRACT

When temperature increases, the volume of an object changes. This property was quantified as the coefficient of thermal expansion only a few hundred years ago. Part of the reason is that the change of volume due to the variation of temperature is in general extremely small and imperceptible. Here we report abnormal giant linear thermal expansions in different types of two-ingredient micro-structured hierarchical and self-similar cellular materials [1]. The cellular materials can be two-dimensional or three-dimensional, and isotropic or anisotropic, with a positive or negative thermal expansion due to the convex or/and concave shape in their representative volume elements respectively. The magnitude of the thermal expansion coefficient could be five orders larger than that of most natural materials, and about one order larger than the highest value reported in the literature [2]. This study suggests an innovative approach to develop temperature-sensitive functional materials and devices.

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