

A Deductive Refinement Calculus for Differential-Algebraic Equations

IJCAR 2026

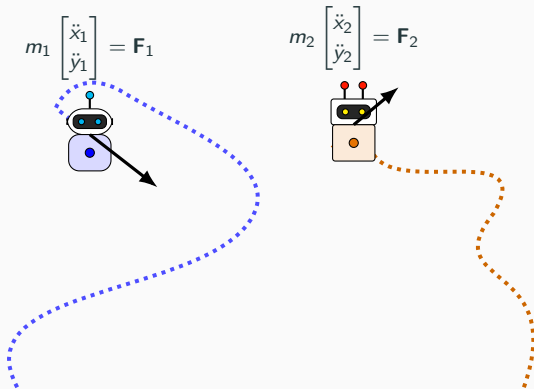
Jonathan Hellwig¹, Long Qian², André Platzer¹

July 28, 2026

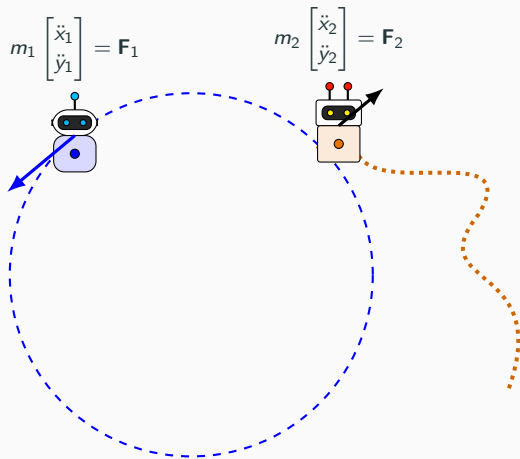
¹Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

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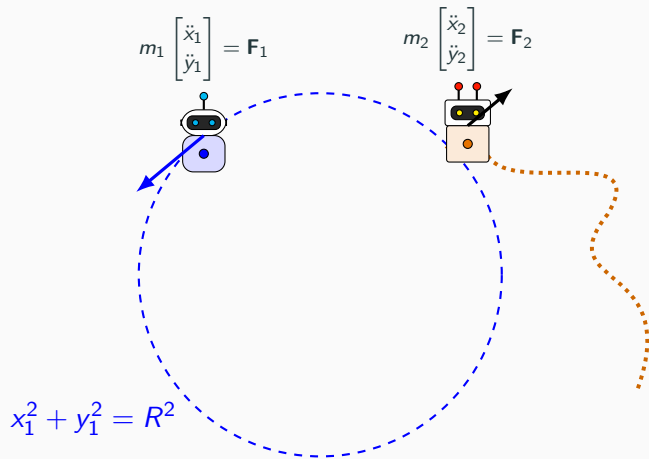
Modeling Physical Systems with DAEs



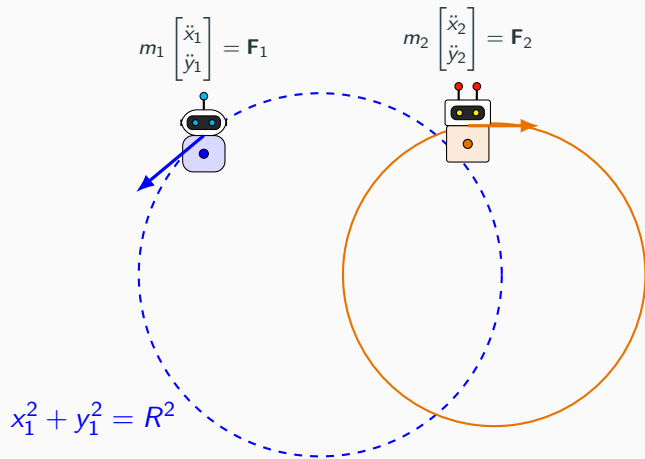
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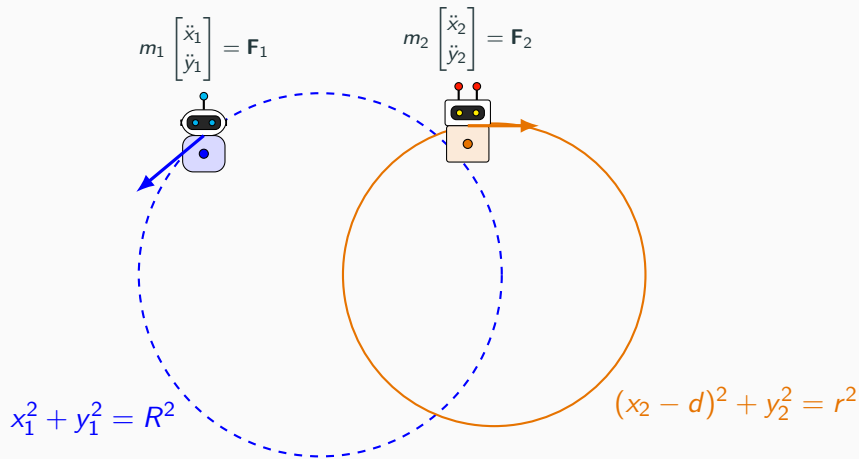
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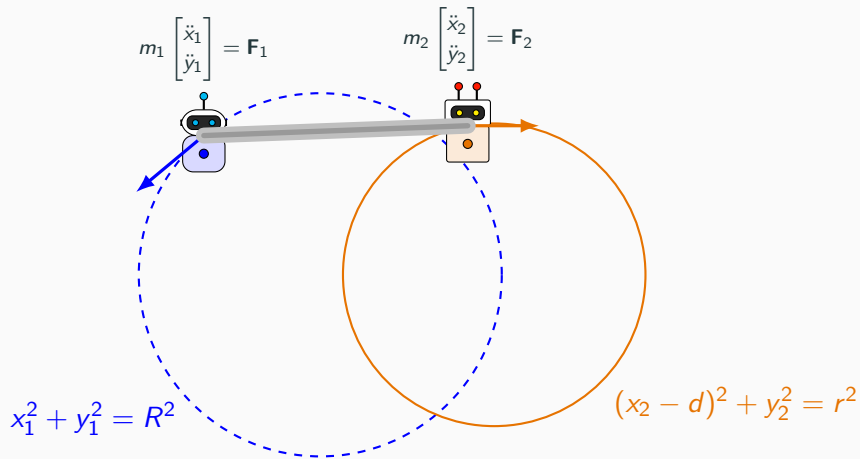
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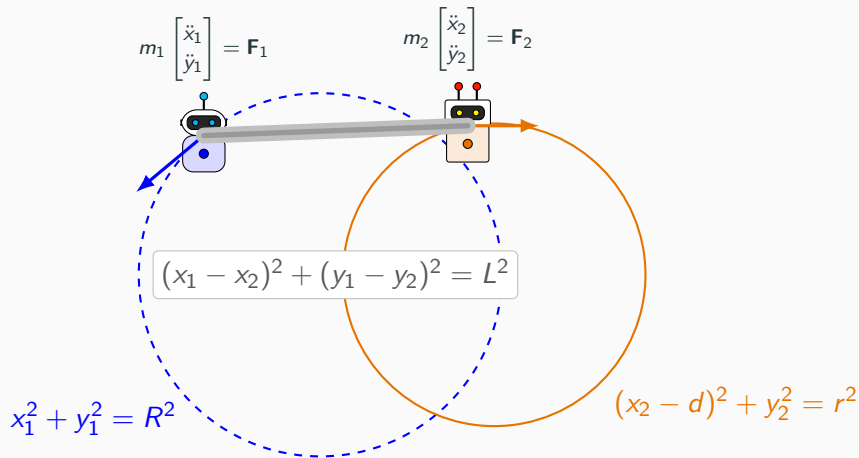
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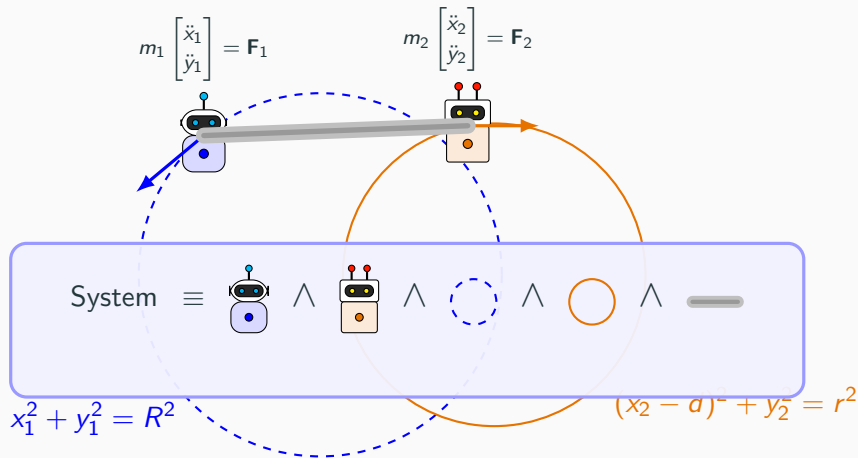
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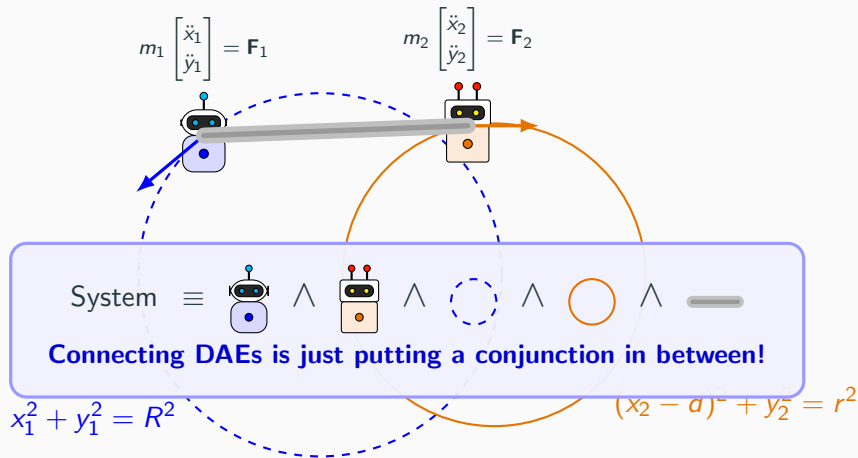
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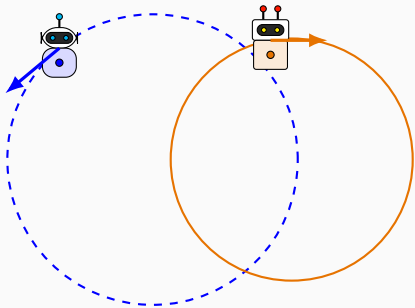
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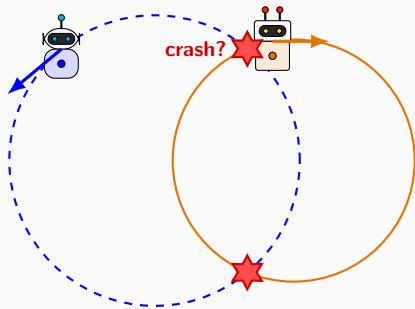
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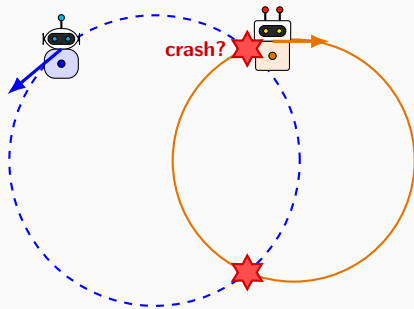
The DAE Verification Problem



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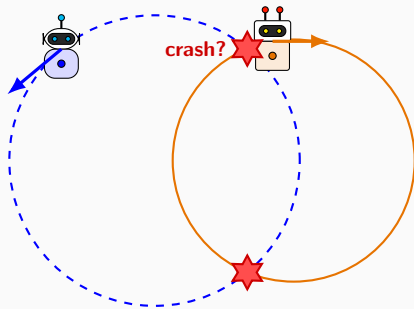
The DAE Verification Problem



DAEs are a powerful modeling paradigm, but

-  solutions are *not unique* and *non-smooth*,
- $x^{100} + xy = 0$ contain *non-linear algebraic equations*,
- $\{x' = ?\}$ leave dynamics *hidden*.

The DAE Verification Problem

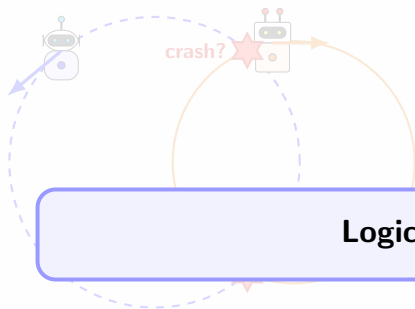


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How can we possibly verify such DAE systems?

The DAE Verification Problem



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Logic to the Rescue!

- $\{x' = ?\}$ leave dynamics *hidden*.

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Contributions: The dARL Proof Calculus

We introduce **dARL** = d $\mathcal{L}$ + DAPs + Refinement:

-  **C^1 Trace Semantics** (Generalizes real-analytic DAPs)
Rigorously defines DAE behavior, handling *non-unique and non-smooth* solutions ($\min, |\cdot|$).
-  **Modular Refinement calculus** ($\alpha \leq_{\mathbf{x}} \beta$) (First for DAEs)
Avoids solving *non-linear algebraic equations* by reasoning about them deductively.
-  **Soundly uncovering hidden dynamics**
Systematically reveals *hidden dynamics* and enables relational reasoning between DAPs.

dARL syntax

$$P, Q ::= \overbrace{e \leq g \mid \neg P \mid P \wedge Q \mid \forall x P} \mid \overbrace{[\alpha]P} \mid \overbrace{\alpha \leq_{\mathbf{x}} \beta}$$
$$\alpha, \beta ::= \underbrace{x := e \mid ?Q} \mid \underbrace{\{\mathbf{x} : F\}} \mid \underbrace{\alpha \cup \beta \mid \alpha; \beta \mid (\alpha)^*}$$

dARL syntax

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Example: Safety Formula in dARL

$$\underbrace{x \neq y}_{\text{Safety}} \rightarrow \underbrace{[\{x, y : \text{Robot}_1 \wedge \text{Robot}_2 \wedge \text{NoCollision} \wedge \text{NoObstacle} \wedge \text{NoBoundary}\}]}_{\text{Safety Formula}} x \neq y$$

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$$\underbrace{x \neq y}_{\text{Initial Condition}} \rightarrow \left[\{x, y : \underbrace{\text{robot1} \wedge \text{robot2} \wedge \text{no_collision} \wedge \text{no_obstacle} \wedge \text{no_goal}}_{\text{Safety Conditions}} \} \right] x \neq y$$

Diagram illustrating a safety formula in dARL. The formula is: $x \neq y \rightarrow [\{x, y : \text{robot1} \wedge \text{robot2} \wedge \text{no_collision} \wedge \text{no_obstacle} \wedge \text{no_goal}\}] x \neq y$. The initial condition $x \neq y$ is shown with a bracket labeled "Initial Condition". The safety conditions are represented by icons: a blue robot (robot1), a white robot (robot2), a dashed blue circle (no collision), an orange circle (no obstacle), and a grey line (no goal). These icons are grouped by a bracket labeled "Safety Conditions".

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Diagram illustrating a Safety Formula in dARL. The formula is: $x \neq y \rightarrow [\{x, y : \text{robot}_1 \wedge \text{robot}_2 \wedge \text{no_collision} \wedge \text{no_obstacle} \wedge \text{no_goal} \}] x \neq y$. The initial condition $x \neq y$ is shown with a bracket labeled "Initial Condition". The DAE (Discrete Abstraction Expression) is shown with a bracket labeled "DAE" and contains the following elements: $\{x, y :$ (with x in orange and y in blue), a blue robot icon, $\wedge$, an orange robot icon, $\wedge$, a dashed blue circle, $\wedge$, an orange circle, $\wedge$, a grey bar, $\}$ (with x in orange and y in blue), and $x \neq y$ (with x in orange and y in blue).

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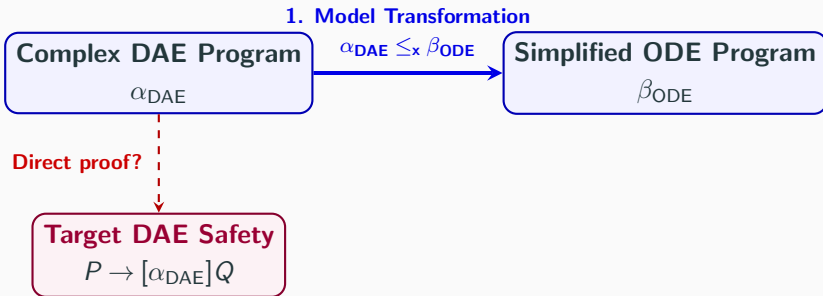
Proof Architecture: Safety via Refinement

Complex DAE Program
 α_{DAE}

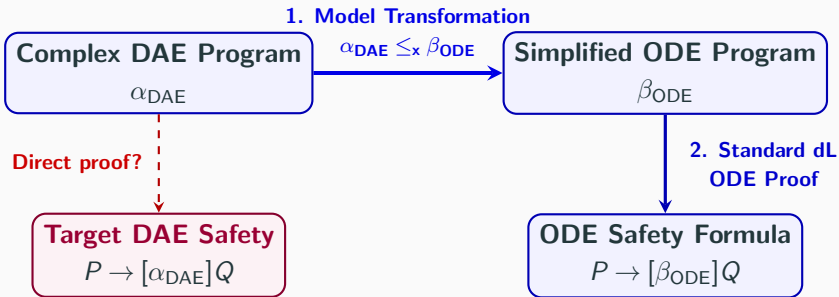
Direct proof?

Target DAE Safety
 $P \rightarrow [\alpha_{\text{DAE}}]Q$

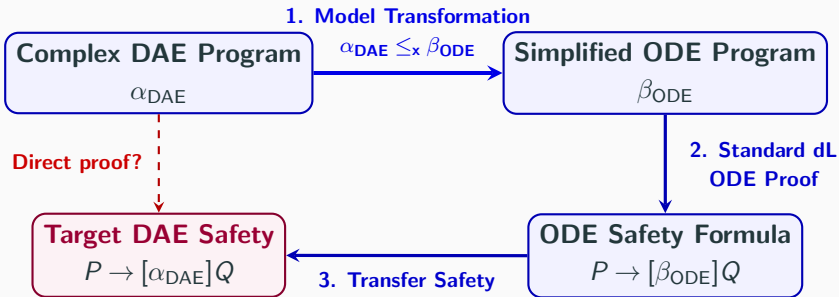
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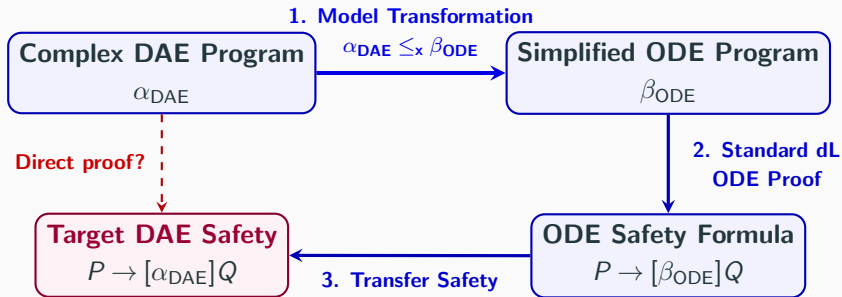
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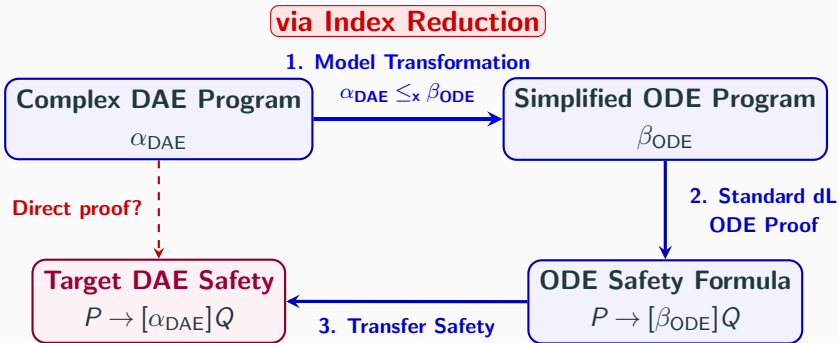


Proof Architecture: Safety via Refinement



Refinement transfers safety from simplified models to complex DAEs!

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Informal Index Reduction

Index reduction reveals hidden constraints by repeated differentiation.

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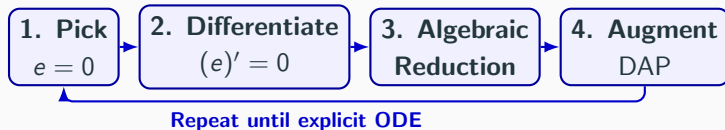
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Derivable Proof Rule: Index Reduction (IR)

Let $\mathbf{r}_0, \dots, \mathbf{r}_m$ be a sequence of term vectors. Then IR is derivable in dARL:

$$\text{IR} \frac{\Gamma \vdash \bigwedge_{k=0}^m (\mathbf{r}_k)' = \mathbf{0} \quad \vdash \bigwedge_{k=0}^m (\mathbf{f}_k = \mathbf{0} \wedge Q \rightarrow \mathbf{r}_k = \mathbf{0})}{\Gamma \vdash \{\mathbf{x} : \mathbf{f}_{m+1} = \mathbf{0} \wedge Q\} =_{\mathbf{x}} \{\mathbf{x} : \mathbf{f}_0 = \mathbf{0} \wedge Q\}} \text{FV}(\mathbf{r}_1, \dots, \mathbf{r}_m) \subseteq \mathbf{x}$$

Why Informal Index Reduction is Unsound

Naive index reduction produces systems incomparable to the original:

1. **Ignoring initial consistency conditions** (introduces drift / spurious behavior)
2. **Unsound algebraic simplifications**
3. **Violating regularity conditions** (may exclude valid C^1 solutions)

Index Reduction in dARL

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The dARL Proof Calculus (excerpt)

Refinement & Cut Axiom

$$[\leq_x] \quad \alpha \leq_x \beta \rightarrow ([\beta]P \rightarrow [\alpha]P)^1$$

$$\leq_x^t \quad \alpha \leq_x \beta \wedge \beta \leq_x \gamma \rightarrow \alpha \leq_x \gamma$$

$$\text{DC} \quad [\{\mathbf{x} : F\}]R \rightarrow \{\mathbf{x} : F\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}^\bullet} \{\mathbf{x} : R\}$$

$$^1 \text{FV}(P) \cap \text{BV}(\alpha, \beta) \subseteq \mathbf{x}$$

Box Axioms

$$\text{DW} \quad [\{\mathbf{x} : F\}]F$$

$$\text{DHC} \quad (e)' = 0 \rightarrow [\{\mathbf{x} : e = 0\}](e)' = 0 \quad \text{FV}(e) \subseteq \mathbf{x}$$

$$\text{DI}_{\preceq} \quad e \preceq 0 \rightarrow [\{\mathbf{x} : (e)' \leq 0\}]e \preceq 0 \quad \text{FV}(e) \subseteq \mathbf{x}$$

Subsystem Axioms (DAE Monotonicity & Reduction)

$$\text{DM} \quad \{\mathbf{x} : F\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}^\bullet} \{\mathbf{x} : G\} \rightarrow \{\mathbf{x} : F \wedge R\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}^\bullet} \{\mathbf{x} : G \wedge R\}$$

$$\text{DR} \quad \forall \mathbf{z} \forall \mathbf{z}' (\{\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{z} : R \wedge F\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}^\bullet} \{\mathbf{x} : F\})$$

Soundness Theorem: The dARL proof calculus is sound w.r.t. C^1 DAE flow semantics.

Core Engine for Modular Transfer: DC, DHC, DM

DC Differential Cut

$$[\{\mathbf{x} : F\}]R \rightarrow \{\mathbf{x} : F\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}} \{\mathbf{x} : R\}$$

Cuts proved continuous invariants R directly into the DAE system.

DHC Differential Hidden Constraint

$$(e)' = 0 \rightarrow [\{\mathbf{x} : e = 0\}](e)' = 0 \quad \text{FV}(e) \subseteq \mathbf{x}$$

Differentiates algebraic constraints $(e = 0 \implies (e)' = 0)$ during index reduction.

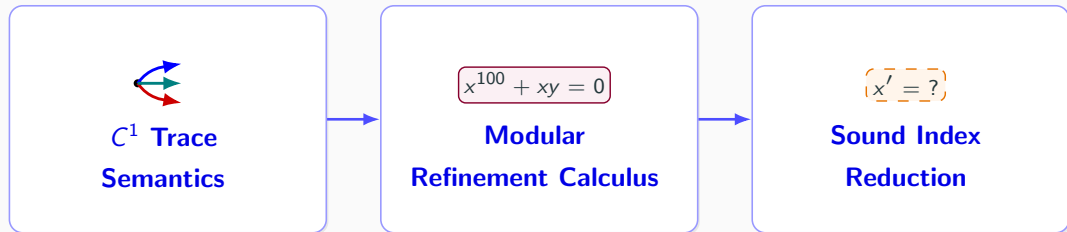
DM Differential Monotonicity

$$\{\mathbf{x} : F\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}} \{\mathbf{x} : G\} \rightarrow \{\mathbf{x} : F \wedge R\} \leq_{\mathbf{x}} \{\mathbf{x} : G \wedge R\}$$

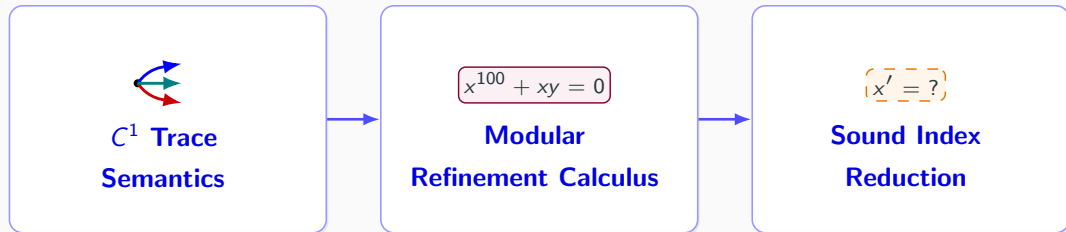
Preserves refinement $\alpha \leq_{\mathbf{x}} \beta$ under shared context constraints R .

Takeaway: Together, DC + DHC + DM enable modular verification of complex systems.

Summary & Future Work



Summary & Future Work



Hidden constraints causing soundness chaos? Logic to the rescue!

Questions? Contact: jonathan.hellwig@kit.edu

Refinement

Refinement Semantics

$$\llbracket \alpha \leq_x \beta \rrbracket = \{ \omega \in \mathbb{S} \mid \forall \varphi \in \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket(\omega) \exists \psi \in \llbracket \beta \rrbracket(\omega) : \psi \sim_x \varphi \}$$

Refinement ($\alpha \leq_{x,y} \beta$)

