



ApproxRISC: An Approximate Computing Infrastructure For RISC-V

Tiago Trevisan Jost, Geneviève Ndour, Damien Couroussé, Christian Fabre,
Anca Molnos

► **To cite this version:**

Tiago Trevisan Jost, Geneviève Ndour, Damien Couroussé, Christian Fabre, Anca Molnos. Approx-RISC: An Approximate Computing Infrastructure For RISC-V. RISC-V Workshop in Barcelona, May 2018, Barcelona, Spain. cea-01893469

HAL Id: cea-01893469

<https://hal-cea.archives-ouvertes.fr/cea-01893469>

Submitted on 11 Oct 2018

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

ApproxRISC: An Approximate Computing Infrastructure For RISC-V

Authors:

Tiago Trevisan Jost (tiago.trevisanjost@cea.fr),
Geneviève Ndour, Damien Couroussé, Anca Molnos,

Speaker:

Christian Fabre

Introduction

□ Motivation

- Many applications are tolerant to a degree of error without a significant loss in quality of results.
- **Approximate Computing (AC)** aims at exploring the **error resiliency** of applications.
- **Lack of support for Approximate Computing** in RISC processors

□ Challenge

- Help the rapid investigation of **AC** in RISC-V for **energy reduction** purposes

□ Proposal

- **ApproxRISC**, an infrastructure for approximate computing in RISC-V processors.
 - ISA Extension, Simulator, Compilation

ISA

□ ISA Extension

- Set of integer-type instructions for approximate operations.

□ Multiple level of accuracy

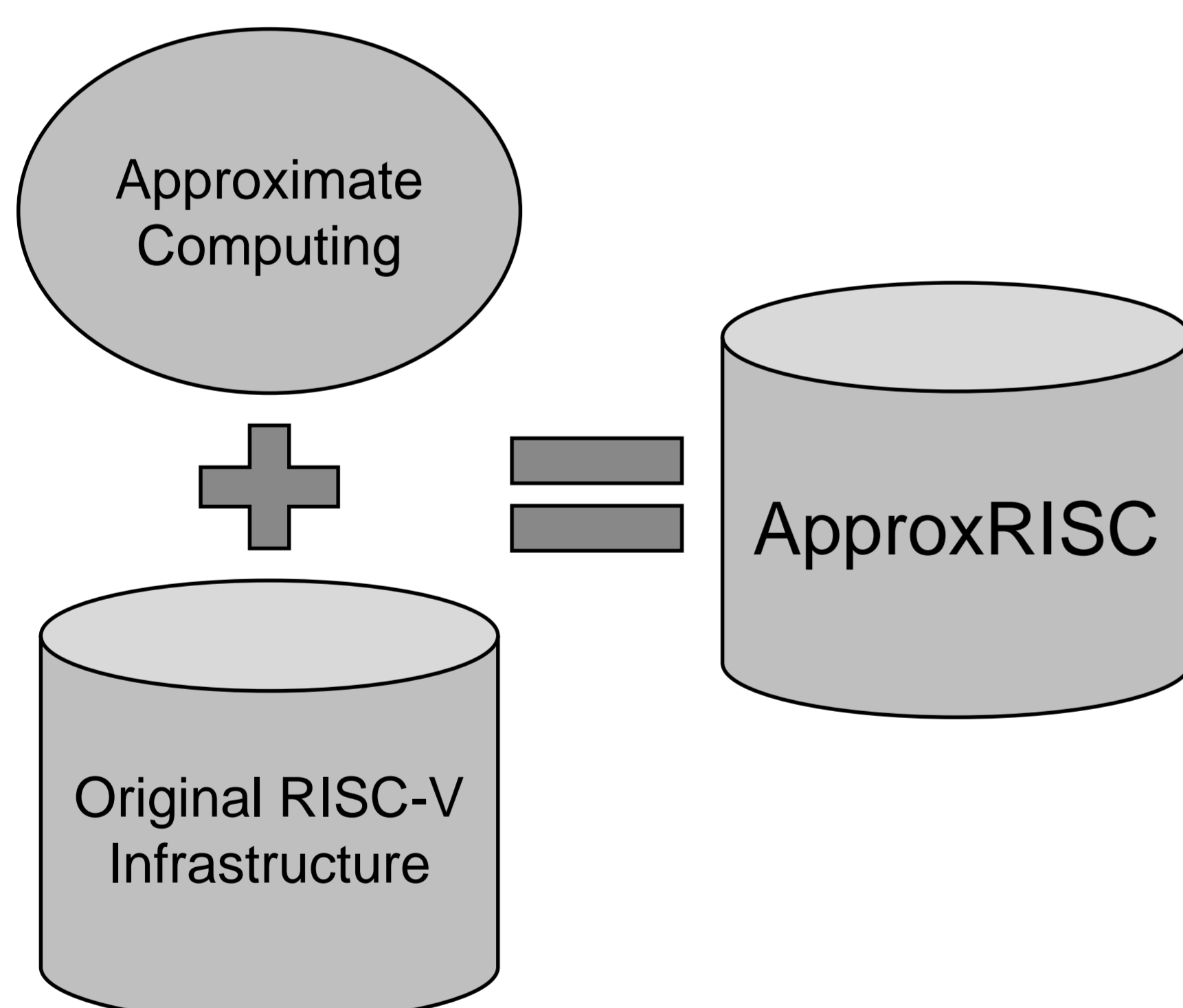
- Processor-wide Approximate Bit Width (ABW) value for all AC instructions.

Instruction	Operation Mode
approx.set.abw	Set the internal ABW
approx.get.abw	Get the internal ABW
approx.add/addi	Approximate Additions
approx.sub/subi	Approximate Subtractions
approx.mul/muli	Approximate Multiplications
approx.udiv/udivi	Approximate Unsigned Divisions
approx.sdiv/sdivi	Approximate Signed Divisions

ApproxRISC Software

Modifications to the Original RISC-V Infrastructure

Spike ISA Simulator
GNU Binutils
LLVM 3.9



#Pragmas extensions to LLVM

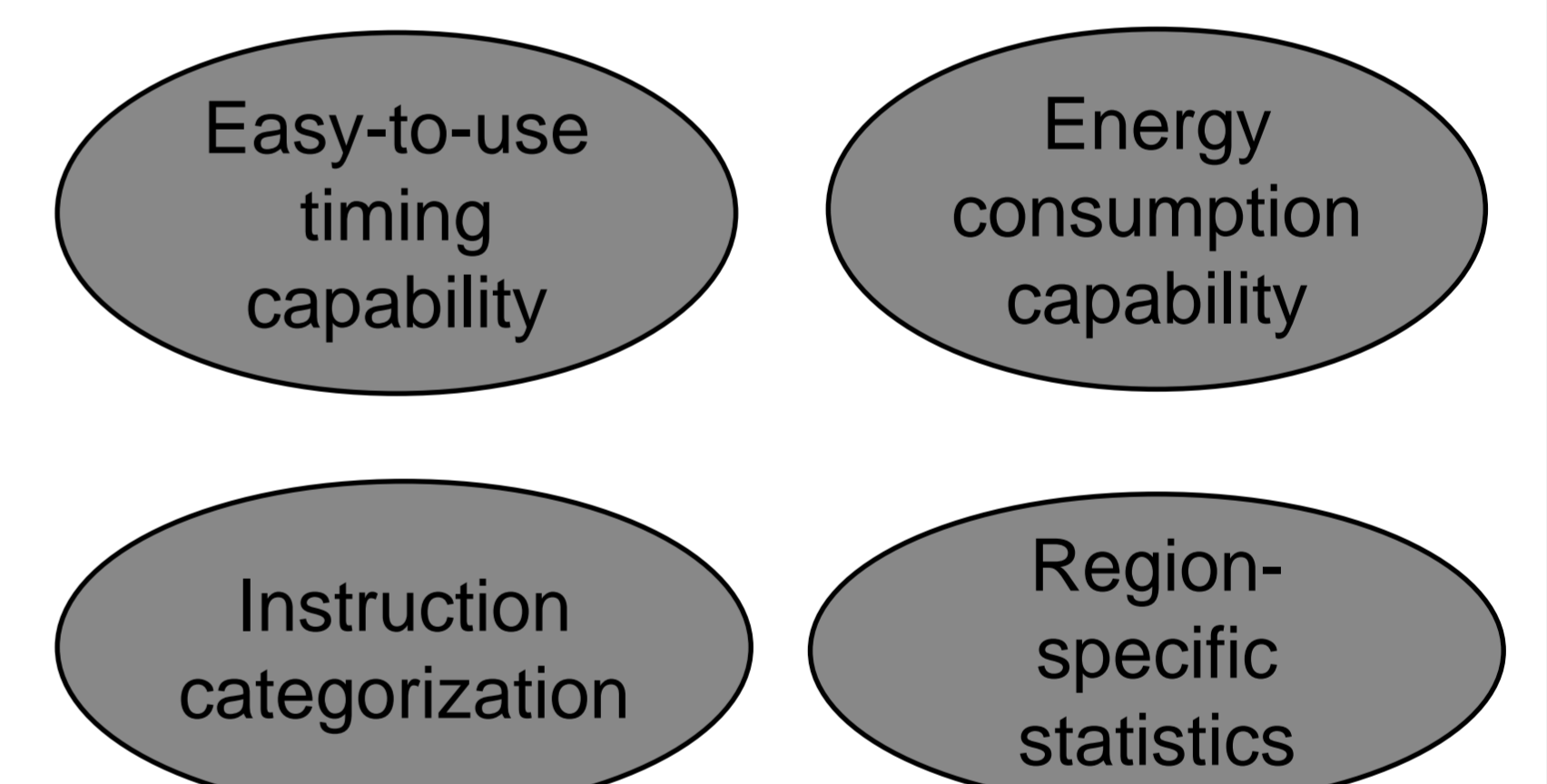
- #pragma approx
 - Only AC integers are supported
- #pragma full_approx
 - Floating point AC is also supported by means of fixed-point
- Pragma parameters:
 - List of AC variables – explicit & implicit
 - Approximate bit widths.
 - Total width, vs fractional width

```
#define ABW 7
#define WIDTH 32
#define FRAC 10

float Example_full_approx() {
    float a = 44.23, b = 2300.12, d, e = 1000;
    #pragma full_approx(a, b) ABW (WIDTH, FRAC)
    True
    {
        d = a + b + e + 1;
    }
    return e;
}
```

Spike

New Features

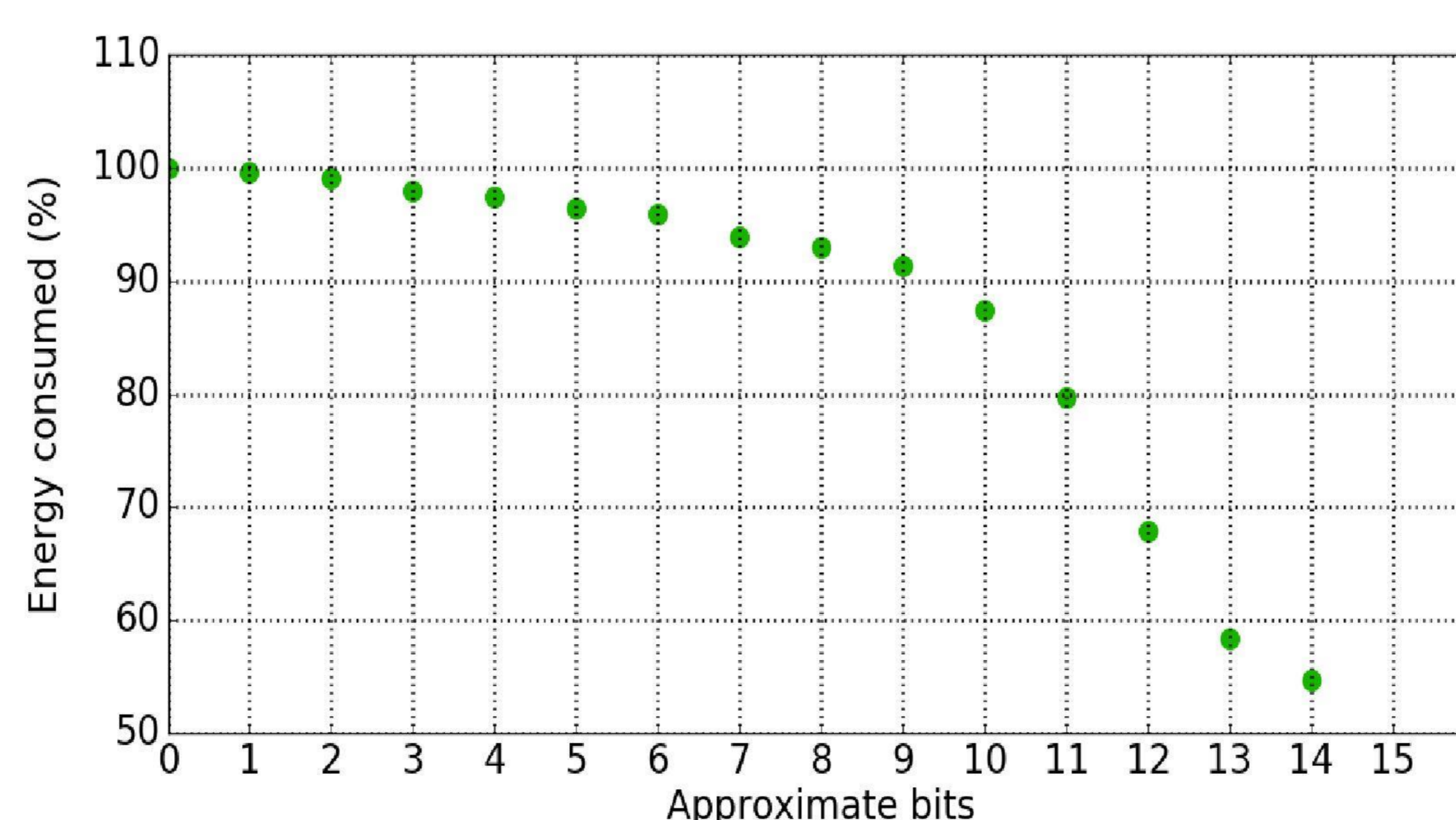


```
int Example_approx() {
    int a = 44, b = 2300, d, e = 1000;
    #pragma approx(a, b) ABW True
    {
        d = a + b + e + 1;
    }
    return d;
}
```

Experimental Results

□ Validation

- **jmeint** from AxBench [1]
- Pragmas in the code
- ABW from 0 (full precision) to 14
- Energy model according to [2]
- Up to 50% of energy reduction



Conclusion

□ ApproxRISC

- An infrastructure for rapid investigation of approximate computing in RISC-V processors.

□ Future Works

- Conduct thorough experimentation to show the benefit of AC and our infra
- Exploration of new instructions

References

- [1] A. Yazdanbakhsh et al. "AxBench: A Multiplatform Benchmark Suite for Approximate Computing". In: IEEE Design Test
- [2] D. J. Pagliari et al. "A methodology for the design of dynamic accuracy operators by runtime back bias". In: DATE, 2017.
- [3] RISC-V Foundation — Instruction Set Architecture (ISA). URL: <https://riscv.org>.

Acknowledgements

This work was partially supported by the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR), under Grant Agreement, ANR-15-CE25-0015, Project ARTEFACT