

A Second Order Cone Characterization for Sums of Nonnegative Circuits

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Background on SONC polynomials

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Given a multivariate polynomial f , decide whether f is nonnegative and certify its nonnegativity if it is.

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- Certifying nonnegativity of multivariate polynomials is a central problem in real algebraic geometry and has applications in polynomial optimization, control, combinatorics and so on.
- Generally, deciding nonnegativity of multivariate polynomials is NP-hard.

Sums of squares

A classical approach for certifying nonnegativity of polynomials is using sums of squares.

Sums of squares

Given a polynomial $f \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}] = \mathbb{R}[x_1, \dots, x_n]$, if there exist polynomials $f_1, \dots, f_m \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$ such that

$$f = \sum_{i=1}^m f_i^2,$$

then we say f is a **sum of squares** (SOS).

Note: The computation of SOS decompositions for a given polynomial can be done via semidefinite programming (SDP).

- **Question 1:** Does there exist other nonnegativity certificates in coordination with the sparsity of polynomials?

- **Question 1:** Does there exist other nonnegativity certificates in coordination with the sparsity of polynomials?
- **Question 2:** If the answer is yes, how can we efficiently compute such a nonnegativity certificate for a given polynomial?

Trellis: $\mathcal{A} \subseteq (2\mathbb{N})^n$ comprises the vertices of a simplex

Definition (Iliman and Wolff, 2016)

Let \mathcal{A} be a trellis and $f \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$. Then f is called a **circuit polynomial** if it is of the form

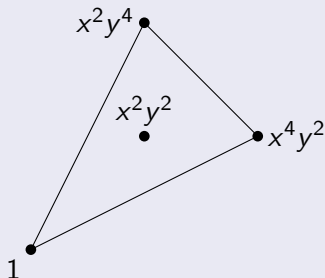
$$f = \sum_{\alpha \in \mathcal{A}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - d \mathbf{x}^{\beta},$$

and satisfies:

- ① $c_{\alpha} > 0$ for $\alpha \in \mathcal{A}$;
- ② $\beta \in \text{conv}(\mathcal{A})^{\circ}$.

Example (Motzkin's polynomial)

The Motzkin's polynomial $M(x, y) = x^4y^2 + x^2y^4 + 1 - 3x^2y^2$ is a nonnegative circuit polynomial.



SONC polynomials

A polynomial decomposes into a **sum of squares** (SOS)

\implies it is nonnegative

A polynomial decomposes into a **sum of nonnegative circuit polynomials**

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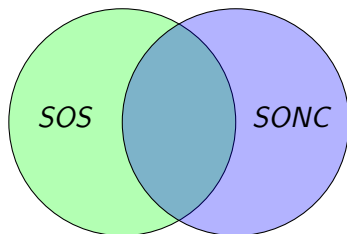
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SONC decompositions preserve sparsity of polynomials

For $f \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$, let

$$\Lambda(f) := \{\alpha \in \text{supp}(f) \mid \alpha \in (2\mathbb{N})^n \text{ and } c_\alpha > 0\}$$

and

$$\Gamma(f) := \text{supp}(f) \setminus \Lambda(f)$$

such that we can write $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_\alpha \mathbf{x}^\alpha - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} d_\beta \mathbf{x}^\beta$.

For each $\beta \in \Gamma(f)$, let

$$\mathcal{F}(\beta) := \{\Delta \mid \Delta \text{ is a simplex, } \beta \in \Delta^\circ, V(\Delta) \subseteq \Lambda(f)\}.$$

SONC decompositions preserve sparsity of polynomials

Theorem (Wang, 2018)

Let $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} d_{\beta} \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$. If $f \in \text{SONC}$, then f admits a SONC decomposition:

$$f = \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} \sum_{\Delta \in \mathcal{F}(\beta)} f_{\beta\Delta} + \sum_{\alpha \in \tilde{\mathcal{A}}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha},$$

where $f_{\beta\Delta}$ is a nonnegative circuit polynomial supported on $V(\Delta) \cup \{\beta\}$ for each Δ and $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} = \{\alpha \in \Lambda(f) \mid \alpha \notin \cup_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} \cup_{\Delta \in \mathcal{F}(\beta)} V(\Delta)\}$.

Remark: This is dramatically different from the SOS case in which extra monomials are needed in general.

SONC polynomials and sums of binomial squares

Circuit polynomials and sums of binomial squares

- For a subset $M \subseteq \mathbb{N}^n$, let
 $\overline{A}(M) := \{\frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{v}) \mid \mathbf{u} \neq \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \in M \cap (2\mathbb{N})^n\}$.
- For a trellis \mathcal{A} , M is an \mathcal{A} -mediated set if $\mathcal{A} \subseteq M \subseteq \overline{A}(M) \cup \mathcal{A}$.

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- For a trellis \mathcal{A} , M is an \mathcal{A} -mediated set if $\mathcal{A} \subseteq M \subseteq \bar{A}(M) \cup \mathcal{A}$.

Theorem (Reznick, 1989; Iliman and Wolff, 2016)

Let $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \mathcal{A}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - d \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$, $d \neq 0$ be a nonnegative circuit polynomial with \mathcal{A} a trellis. Then f is a sum of binomial squares if and only if there exists an \mathcal{A} -mediated set containing β . More specifically, suppose that β belongs to an \mathcal{A} -mediated set $M = \{\mathbf{u}_i\}_{i=1}^s$. For each $\mathbf{u}_i \in M \setminus \mathcal{A}$, let $\mathbf{u}_i = \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{u}_{p(i)} + \mathbf{u}_{q(i)})$. Then f is a sum of binomial squares and $f = \sum_{\mathbf{u}_i \in M \setminus \mathcal{A}} (a_i \mathbf{x}^{\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{u}_{p(i)}} - b_i \mathbf{x}^{\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{u}_{q(i)}})^2$, $a_i, b_i \in \mathbb{R}$.

Theorem (Reznick, 1989; Ilman and Wolff, 2016)

Theorem (Reznick, 1989; Ilman and Wolff, 2016) inspires us to leverage sums of binomial squares to compute SONC decompositions. However, there are two obstacles:

- There may not exist such an \mathcal{A} -mediated set containing a given lattice point;
- Even if such a set exists, there is no efficient algorithm to compute it.

\mathcal{A} -rational mediated sets

For $M \subseteq \mathbb{Q}^n$, let $\tilde{A}(M) := \{\frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{v}) \mid \mathbf{u} \neq \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \in M\}$.

Let \mathcal{A} be a trellis. We say that M is an \mathcal{A} -rational mediated set if $\mathcal{A} \subseteq M \subseteq \tilde{A}(M) \cup \mathcal{A}$.

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Theorem (Wang and Magron, 2020)

Given a trellis \mathcal{A} and a lattice point $\beta \in \text{conv}(\mathcal{A})^\circ$, there is an algorithm to compute an \mathcal{A} -rational mediated set $M_{\mathcal{A}\beta}$ containing β such that the denominators of coordinates of points in $M_{\mathcal{A}\beta}$ are **odd** numbers and the numerators of coordinates of points in $M_{\mathcal{A}\beta} \setminus \{\beta\}$ are **even** numbers.

Theorem (Wang and Magron, 2020)

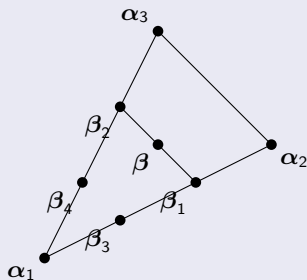
Let $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \mathcal{A}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - d \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$, $d \neq 0$ be a circuit polynomial and assume that $M_{\mathcal{A}\beta} = \{\mathbf{u}_i\}_{i=1}^s$ is an \mathcal{A} -rational mediated set containing β such that the denominators of coordinates of points in $M_{\mathcal{A}\beta}$ are odd numbers and the numerators of coordinates of points in $M_{\mathcal{A}\beta} \setminus \{\beta\}$ are even numbers. For each $\mathbf{u}_i \in M_{\mathcal{A}\beta} \setminus \mathcal{A}$, let $\mathbf{u}_i = \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{u}_{p(i)} + \mathbf{u}_{q(i)})$. Then f is nonnegative if and only if f can be written as

$$f = \sum_{\mathbf{u}_i \in M_{\mathcal{A}\beta} \setminus \mathcal{A}} (a_i \mathbf{x}^{\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{u}_{p(i)}} - b_i \mathbf{x}^{\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{u}_{q(i)}})^2, \quad a_i, b_i \in \mathbb{R}.$$

An example

Example

Let $f = x^4y^2 + x^2y^4 + 1 - 3x^2y^2$ be Motzkin's polynomial and $\mathcal{A} = \{\alpha_1 = (0, 0), \alpha_2 = (4, 2), \alpha_3 = (2, 4)\}$, $\beta = (2, 2)$. Then $M = \{\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3, \beta, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4\}$ is an \mathcal{A} -rational mediated set containing β .



By a simple computation, we have

$$f = \frac{3}{2}(x^{\frac{2}{3}}y^{\frac{4}{3}} - x^{\frac{4}{3}}y^{\frac{2}{3}})^2 + (xy^2 - x^{\frac{1}{3}}y^{\frac{2}{3}})^2 + \frac{1}{2}(x^{\frac{2}{3}}y^{\frac{4}{3}} - 1)^2 + (x^2y - x^{\frac{2}{3}}y^{\frac{1}{3}})^2 + \frac{1}{2}(x^{\frac{4}{3}}y^{\frac{2}{3}} - 1)^2.$$

Theorem (Wang and Magron, 2020)

Let $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} d_{\beta} \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$. For every $\beta \in \Gamma(f)$ and every $\Delta \in \mathcal{F}(\beta)$, let $M_{\beta\Delta}$ be a $V(\Delta)$ -rational mediated set containing β such that the denominators of coordinates of points in $M_{\beta\Delta}$ are odd numbers and the numerators of coordinates of points in $M_{\beta\Delta} \setminus \{\beta\}$ are even numbers. Let $M = \cup_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} \cup_{\Delta \in \mathcal{F}(\beta)} M_{\beta\Delta}$. For each $\mathbf{u} \in M \setminus \Lambda(f)$, let $\mathbf{u} = \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{v}_{\mathbf{u}} + \mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{u}})$, $\mathbf{v}_{\mathbf{u}} \neq \mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{u}} \in M$. Let $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} = \{\alpha \in \Lambda(f) \mid \alpha \notin \cup_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} \cup_{\Delta \in \mathcal{F}(\beta)} V(\Delta)\}$. Then $f \in \text{SONC}$ iff f can be written as $f = \sum_{\mathbf{u} \in M \setminus \Lambda(f)} (a_{\mathbf{u}} \mathbf{x}^{\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{v}_{\mathbf{u}}} - b_{\mathbf{u}} \mathbf{x}^{\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{u}}})^2 + \sum_{\alpha \in \tilde{\mathcal{A}}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha}$, $a_{\mathbf{u}}, b_{\mathbf{u}} \in \mathbb{R}$.

An n -dimensional **second order cone** (SOC) is

$$Q := \{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m : \|\mathbf{A}\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}\|_2 \leq \mathbf{c}^T \mathbf{x} + d\},$$

where $A \in \mathbb{R}^{(n-1) \times m}$, $\mathbf{b} \in \mathbb{R}^{n-1}$, $\mathbf{c} \in \mathbb{R}^m$, $d \in \mathbb{R}$.

Remark: The optimization problem over second order cones can be solved more efficiently than semidefinite programming.

Second order cones

An n -dimensional **second order cone** (SOC) is

$$Q := \{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m : \|\mathbf{Ax} + \mathbf{b}\|_2 \leq \mathbf{c}^T \mathbf{x} + d\},$$

where $A \in \mathbb{R}^{(n-1) \times m}$, $\mathbf{b} \in \mathbb{R}^{n-1}$, $\mathbf{c} \in \mathbb{R}^m$, $d \in \mathbb{R}$.

Remark: The optimization problem over second order cones can be solved more efficiently than semidefinite programming.

Example

$$\mathbb{S}_+^2 := \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ b & c \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{2 \times 2} \mid \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ b & c \end{bmatrix} \text{ is positive semidefinite} \right\}$$

is a 3-dimensional second order cone.

Second order cone lifts of convex cones

$\mathcal{Q}^k = \mathcal{Q} \times \cdots \mathcal{Q}$: the Cartesian product of k copies of a second order cone \mathcal{Q}

Definition

A convex cone $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^m$ has a **second order cone lift of size k** (or simply a **\mathcal{Q}^k -lift**) if it can be written as the projection of a slice of \mathcal{Q}^k , that is, there is a subspace L of \mathcal{Q}^k and a linear map $\pi: \mathcal{Q}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$ such that $C = \pi(\mathcal{Q}^k \cap L)$.

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Theorem (Fawzi, 2018)

The cone $\text{SOS}_{n,2d}$ does not admit any second order cone lift except in the case $(n, 2d) = (1, 2)$.

$(\mathbb{S}_+^2)^k$ -lifts of SONC cones

Given $\mathcal{A} \subseteq (2\mathbb{N})^n$, $\mathcal{B}_1 \subseteq \text{conv}(\mathcal{A}) \cap (2\mathbb{N})^n$ and $\mathcal{B}_2 \subseteq \text{conv}(\mathcal{A}) \cap (\mathbb{N}^n \setminus (2\mathbb{N})^n)$ such that $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{B}_1 = \emptyset$, define the SONC cone supported on $\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B}_1, \mathcal{B}_2$ as

$$\text{SONC}_{\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B}_1, \mathcal{B}_2} := \left\{ (\mathbf{c}_{\mathcal{A}}, \mathbf{d}_{\mathcal{B}_1}, \mathbf{d}_{\mathcal{B}_2}) \in \mathbb{R}_+^{|\mathcal{A}|} \times \mathbb{R}_+^{|\mathcal{B}_1|} \times \mathbb{R}^{|\mathcal{B}_2|} \mid \sum_{\alpha \in \mathcal{A}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \mathcal{B}_1 \cup \mathcal{B}_2} d_{\beta} \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \text{SONC} \right\}.$$

$(\mathbb{S}_+^2)^k$ -lifts of SONC cones

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Theorem (Wang and Magron, 2020)

For $\mathcal{A} \subseteq (2\mathbb{N})^n$, $\mathcal{B}_1 \subseteq \text{conv}(\mathcal{A}) \cap (2\mathbb{N})^n$ and $\mathcal{B}_2 \subseteq \text{conv}(\mathcal{A}) \cap (\mathbb{N}^n \setminus (2\mathbb{N})^n)$ such that $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{B}_1 = \emptyset$, the SONC cone $\text{SONC}_{\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B}_1, \mathcal{B}_2}$ admits an $(\mathbb{S}_+^2)^k$ -lift for some $k \in \mathbb{N}$.

SONC optimization via second order cone programming

Consider the unconstrained polynomial optimization problem:

$$(\text{UPOP}) : \quad \xi^* := \begin{cases} \sup & \xi \\ \text{s.t.} & f(\mathbf{x}) - \xi \geq 0, \quad \forall \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n. \end{cases}$$

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Replacing the nonnegativity condition by SONC to obtain:

$$(\text{SONC}) : \quad \xi_{\text{sonc}} := \begin{cases} \sup & \xi \\ \text{s.t.} & f(\mathbf{x}) - \xi \in \text{SONC}. \end{cases}$$

PN-polynomials

Suppose $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} d_{\beta} \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$. If $d_{\beta} > 0$ for all $\beta \in \Gamma(f)$, then we call f a **PN-polynomial**.

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For a PN-polynomial f , we have

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \geq 0 \text{ for all } \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n \iff f(\mathbf{x}) \geq 0 \text{ for all } \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}_+^n$$

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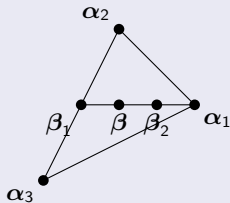
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Hence to represent a SONC PN-polynomial as a sum of binomial squares, we do not require the denominators of coordinates of points in \mathcal{A} -rational mediated sets to be odd. This enables us to decrease the number of binomial squares.

An example

Let $f = x^4y^2 + x^2y^4 + 1 - 3x^2y^2$ be Motzkin's polynomial and $\mathcal{A} = \{\alpha_1 = (4, 2), \alpha_2 = (2, 4), \alpha_3 = (0, 0)\}$, $\beta = (2, 2)$. Then $\beta = \frac{1}{3}\alpha_1 + \frac{1}{3}\alpha_2 + \frac{1}{3}\alpha_3 = \frac{1}{3}\alpha_1 + \frac{2}{3}(\frac{1}{2}\alpha_2 + \frac{1}{2}\alpha_3)$. Let $\beta_1 = \frac{1}{2}\alpha_2 + \frac{1}{2}\alpha_3$ such that $\beta = \frac{1}{3}\alpha_1 + \frac{2}{3}\beta_1$. Let $\beta_2 = \frac{2}{3}\alpha_1 + \frac{1}{3}\beta_1$. It is easy to check that $M = \{\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3, \beta, \beta_1, \beta_2\}$ is an \mathcal{A} -rational mediated set containing β .



By a simple computation, we have $f = (1 - xy^2)^2 + 2(x^{\frac{1}{2}}y - x^{\frac{3}{2}}y)^2 + (xy - x^2y)^2$. Here we represent f as a sum of three binomial squares with rational exponents.

Converting to PN-polynomials

Let $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} d_{\beta} \mathbf{x}^{\beta}$ and let $\tilde{f} = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} |d_{\beta}| \mathbf{x}^{\beta}$ be its associated PN-polynomial.

Fact: $f \in \text{SONC} \iff \tilde{f} \in \text{SONC}$.

Converting to PN-polynomials

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Fact: $f \in \text{SONC} \iff \tilde{f} \in \text{SONC}$.

Hence we can replace f by \tilde{f} in (SONC) without changing the optimal value:

$$(\text{SONC-PN}) : \quad \xi_{\text{sonc}} = \begin{cases} \sup & \xi \\ \text{s.t.} & \tilde{f}(\mathbf{x}) - \xi \in \text{SONC}. \end{cases}$$

SONC optimization via second order cone programming

Suppose $f = \sum_{\alpha \in \Lambda(f)} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha} - \sum_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} d_{\beta} \mathbf{x}^{\beta} \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$. Let $\{(\mathcal{A}_k, \beta_k)\}_{k=1}^l$ be a simplex cover with $\mathcal{A}_k \subseteq \Lambda(f), \forall k$ and $\Gamma(f) \subseteq \cup_{k=1}^l \{\beta_k\}$.

For each k , let M_k be an \mathcal{A}_k -rational mediated set containing β_k and $s_k = \#M_k \setminus \mathcal{A}_k$. For each $\mathbf{u}_i^k \in M_k \setminus \mathcal{A}_k$, let us write $\mathbf{u}_i^k = \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{v}_i^k + \mathbf{w}_i^k)$. Let $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} = \{\alpha \in \Lambda(f) \mid \alpha \notin \cup_{\beta \in \Gamma(f)} \cup_{\Delta \in \mathcal{F}(\beta)} V(\Delta)\}$. Then we can relax (SONC-PN) to a second order cone program (SOCP)

$$\xi_{socp} := \begin{cases} \sup & \xi \\ \text{s.t.} & \tilde{f}(\mathbf{x}) - \xi = \sum_{k=1}^l \sum_{i=1}^{s_k} (2a_i^k \mathbf{x}^{\mathbf{v}_i^k} + b_i^k \mathbf{x}^{\mathbf{w}_i^k} - 2c_i^k \mathbf{x}^{\mathbf{u}_i^k}) + \sum_{\alpha \in \tilde{\mathcal{A}}} c_{\alpha} \mathbf{x}^{\alpha}, \\ & (a_i^k, b_i^k, c_i^k) \in \mathbf{K}, \quad \forall i, k, \end{cases}$$

where \mathbf{K} be a 3-dimensional second order cone.

Note: $\xi_{socp} \leq \xi_{sonc} \leq \xi^*$

Numerical experiments

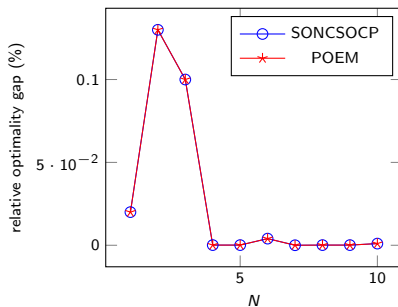
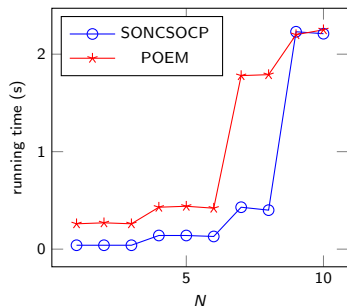
Experiment settings

- SONCSOCP: our tool for SONC optimization via SOCP with Mosek as a SOCP solver
- POEM: Seidler and Wolff's tool for SONC optimization with ECOS as a geometric programming solver
- Benchmarks: Random polynomials generated by Seidler and Wolff
- Relative optimality gap: $\frac{|\xi_{min} - \xi_{lb}|}{|\xi_{min}|}$, where ξ_{min} is a local minimum provided by a local solver and ξ_{lb} is the optimal value given by SONCSOCP or POEM

Results for random polynomials with standard simplex Newton polytopes

Take $N = 10$ polynomials

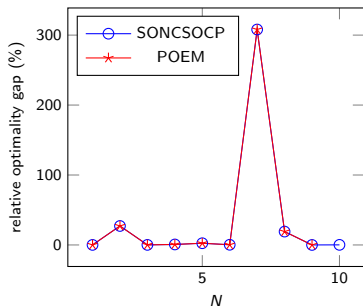
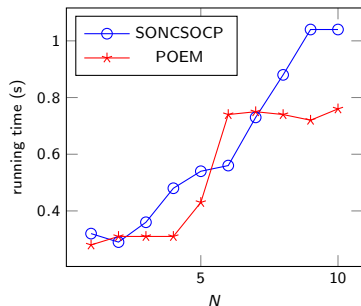
Number of variables: $10 \sim 40$, degree: $40 \sim 60$, number of terms:
 $20 \sim 100$



Results for random polynomials with general simplex Newton polytopes

Take $N = 10$ polynomials

Number of variables: 10, degree: $20 \sim 60$, number of terms: $20 \sim 30$



Results for random polynomials with arbitrary Newton polytopes

Take $N = 20$ polynomials

Number of variables: 10, degree: $20 \sim 50$, number of terms: $30 \sim 300$

