



engineering Python-to-Fortran bindings  
in C++, for use in Julia and Matlab

Sylwester Arabas<sup>1</sup>, Zach D'Aquino<sup>2</sup>, Jeff Curtis<sup>2</sup>, Nicole Riemer<sup>2</sup>, Matt West<sup>3</sup>  
& [Py]PartMC contributors



FOSDEM '24, ULB, Brussels



atmos.illinois.edu

<sup>1</sup>Physics & Applied CS, AGH University of Krakow, Poland ([agh.edu.pl](http://agh.edu.pl))

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<https://lagrange.mechse.illinois.edu/partmc/>



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- ▶ Monte-Carlo aerosol dynamics simulation package



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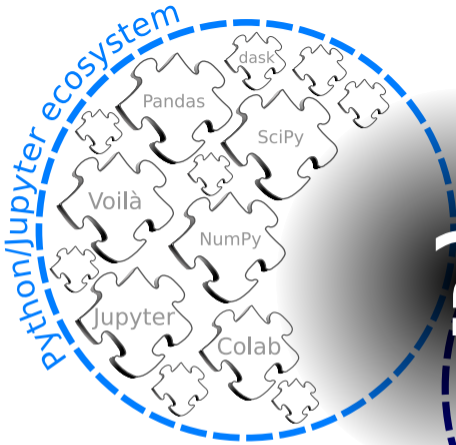
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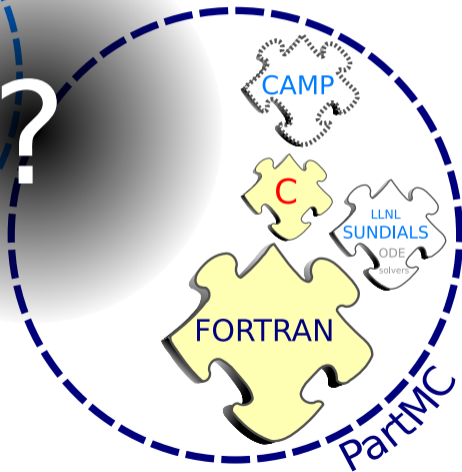


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- ▶ "box model" (process studies) with a coupler to WRF (weather prediction model)
- ▶ simulating air pollution evolution through particle coagulation, condensation, chemical reactions, ...
- ▶ object-oriented architecture, F90, extensive automated test suite
- ▶ usage poses challenges, e.g., to students intending to use it from Jupyter notebooks (dependencies, compilation, updates, automation usually through shell, multi-text-file i/o, output analysis requiring bringing in Fortran, ...)



?



## project goals

- ▶ **lower the entry threshold for installing and setting up of PartMC**  
down to `pip install PyPartMC`, i.e., no manual dependency installation,  
no compilation, user doesn't even need to know FORTRAN is involved

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- ▶ ensure the same experience on Linux, macOS & Windows
- ▶ **lower the entry threshold for usage with Jupyter-based example notebooks**
- ▶ streamline the dissemination of paper-result reproducers (peer review)

status of the project: v1.0 in Dec 2023 (started 2021)

# SoftwareX

ORIGINAL SOFTWARE PUBLICATION

## PyPartMC: A Pythonic interface to a particle-resolved, Monte Carlo aerosol simulation framework

Zachary D'Aquino • Sylwester Arabas • Jeffrey H. Curtis • Akshunna Vaishnav • Nicole Riemer   • Matthew West

[Open Access](#) • Published: December 23, 2023 • DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.softx.2023.101613>



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## PyPartMC 1.0.2



[Latest version](#)

```
pip install PyPartMC
```



Released: Jan 31, 2024



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README License Security

# pybind11

pybind11 — Seamless operability between C++11 and Python

docs passing docs stable chat on gitter Discussions Ask CI passing build passing

latest packaged version 2.11.1 pypi v2.11.1 conda-forge v2.11.0 python 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.10 | 3.11 | 3.12

[Setuptools example](#) • [Scikit-build example](#) • [CMake example](#)

pybind11 is a lightweight header-only library that exposes C++ types in Python and vice versa, mainly to create Python bindings of existing C++ code. Its goals and syntax are similar to the excellent [Boost.Python](#) library by David Abrahams: to minimize boilerplate code in traditional extension modules by inferring type information using compile-time introspection.

## About

Seamless operability between C++11 and Python

[pybind11.readthedocs.io/](https://pybind11.readthedocs.io/)

#python #bindings

- Readme
- View license
- Security policy
- Activity
- Custom properties

14.3k stars

250 watching

2.1k forks

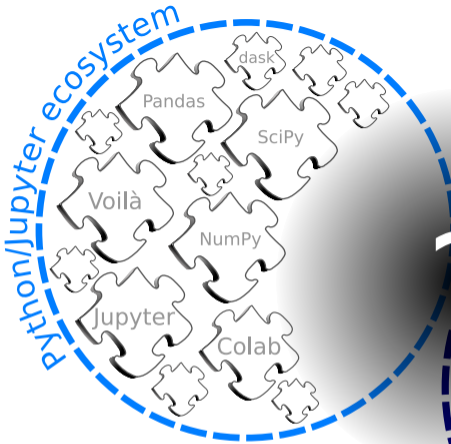
Report repository

## Releases 21

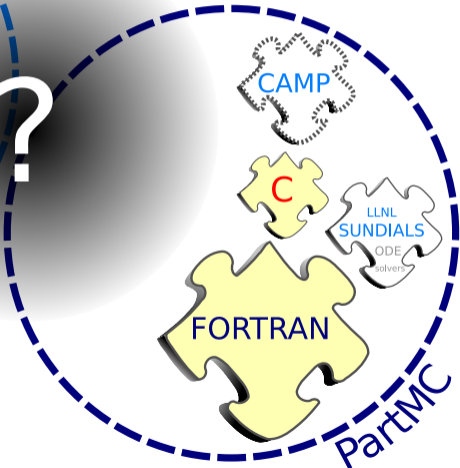
Version 2.11.1 Latest  
on Jul 17, 2023

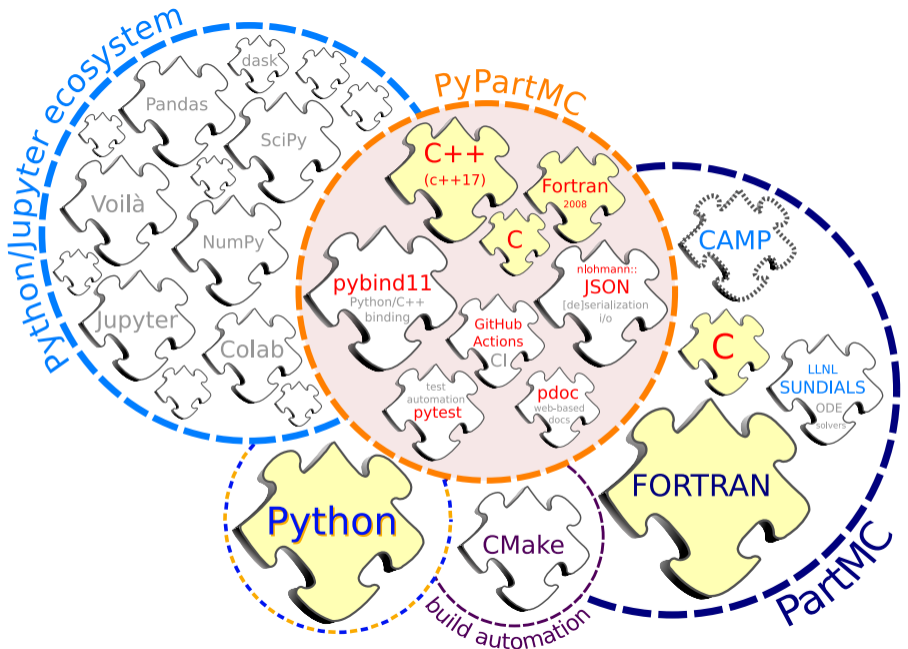
+ 20 releases

Contributors 337



?





- ▶ written in C/Fortran/C++ as **C++ bindings** to PartMC internals (derived types), Python bindings generated using **pybind11**

## developer perspective

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- ▶ **three-language build automation with CMake, test automation with pytest, CI workflows**

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(unmodified code of PartMC uses original API)  
↔ minimising effort to accommodate future additions to PartMC

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- ▶ **dependency version pinning with git submodules**: PartMC (F), CAMP (C/F), json (C++), pybind11 (C++), json-fortran (F), netCDF (C/F), SUNDIALS (F/C), SuiteSparse (C), ... & backports of C++20 features to C++17 (multilinux!): span, string\_view, optional



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- ▶ **all dependencies (incl. Fortran and C++ runtimes) statically linked (single-file install)**

# user perspective: Fortran (PartMC)

## c: Fortran code

```
program main
  use pmc_spec_file
  use pmc_aero_data
  use pmc_aero_mode
  use pmc_aero_dist
  use pmc_aero_state

  implicit none

  type(spec_file_t) :: f_aero_data, f_aero_dist
  type(aero_data_t) :: aero_data
  type(aero_dist_t) :: aero_dist
  type(aero_state_t) :: aero_state
  integer, parameter :: n_part = 100
  integer :: n_part_add
  real(kind=dp), dimension(n_part) :: num_concs, masses

  call spec_file_open("aero_data.dat", f_aero_data)
  call spec_file_read_aero_data(f_aero_data, aero_data)
  call spec_file_close(f_aero_data)

  call spec_file_open("aero_dist.dat", f_aero_dist)
  call spec_file_read_aero_dist(f_aero_dist, aero_data, aero_dist)
  call spec_file_close(f_aero_dist)

  call aero_state_zero(aero_state)
  call fractal_set_spherical(aero_data%fractal)
  call aero_state_set_weight(aero_state, aero_data, &
    AERO_STATE_WEIGHT_NUMMASS_SOURCE)
  call aero_state_set_n_part_ideal(aero_state, dble(n_part))
  call aero_state_add_aero_dist_sample(aero_state, aero_data, &
    aero_dist, 1d0, 0d0, .true., .true., n_part_add)

  num_concs = aero_state_num_concs(aero_state, aero_data)
  masses = aero_state_masses(aero_state, aero_data)
  print *, dot_product(num_concs, masses), "# kg/m3"
end
```

## d: aero\_dist.dat file (for Fortran code)

```
mode_name cooking
mass_frac cooking_comp.dat
diam_type geometric
mode_type log_normal
num_conc 3.2e9 # (#/m^3)
geom_mean_diam 8.64e-9 # (m)
log10_geom_std_dev 0.28

mode_name diesel
mass_frac diesel_comp.dat
diam_type geometric
mode_type log_normal
num_conc 2.9e9 # (#/m^3)
geom_mean_diam 5e-8
log10_geom_std_dev 0.24
```

## e: cooking\_comp.dat file (for Fortran code)

```
# proportion
OC 1
```

## f: diesel\_comp.dat file (for Fortran code)

```
# proportion
OC 0.3
BC 0.7
```

# user perspective: Python (PyPartMC)

## a: Python code (with embedded data)

```
import numpy as np

import PyPartMC as ppmc
from PyPartMC import si

aero_data = ppmc.AeroData((
    # [density, ions in solution, molecular weight, kappa]
    {"OC": [1000 * si.kg/si.m**3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0.001]},
    {"BC": [1800 * si.kg/si.m**3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0]},
))

aero_dist = ppmc.AeroDist(
    aero_data,
    [{"cooking": {
        "mass_frac": [{"OC": [1]}],
        "diam_type": "geometric",
        "mode_type": "log_normal",
        "num_conc": 3200 / si.cm**3,
        "geom_mean_diam": 8.64 * si.nm,
        "log10_geom_std_dev": 0.28,
    }},
    {"diesel": {
        "mass_frac": [{"OC": [0.3]}, {"BC": [0.7]}],
        "diam_type": "geometric",
        "mode_type": "log_normal",
        "num_conc": 2900 / si.cm**3,
        "geom_mean_diam": 50 * si.nm,
        "log10_geom_std_dev": 0.24,
    }},
    ],
)

n_part = 100
aero_state = ppmc.AeroState(aero_data, n_part, "nummass_source")
aero_state.dist_sample(aero_dist)
print(np.dot(aero_state.masses, aero_state.num_concs), "# kg/m3")
```

# user perspective: Python (PyPartMC) & Julia (via PyCall.jl)

## a: Python code (with embedded data)

```
import numpy as np

import PyPartMC as ppmc
from PyPartMC import si

aero_data = ppmc.AeroData((
    # (density, ions in solution, molecular weight, kappa)
    {"OC": [1000 * si.kg/si.m**3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0.001]},
    {"BC": [1800 * si.kg/si.m**3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0]},
))

aero_dist = ppmc.AeroDist(
    aero_data,
    [{
        "cooking": {
            "mass_frac": [{"OC": [1]}],
            "diam_type": "geometric",
            "mode_type": "log_normal",
            "num_conc": 3200 / si.cm**3,
            "geom_mean_diam": 8.64 * si.nm,
            "log10_geom_std_dev": 0.28,
        }
    },
    {
        "diesel": {
            "mass_frac": [{"OC": [0.3]}, {"BC": [0.7]}],
            "diam_type": "geometric",
            "mode_type": "log_normal",
            "num_conc": 2900 / si.cm**3,
            "geom_mean_diam": 50 * si.nm,
            "log10_geom_std_dev": 0.24,
        }
    }
    ],
)

n_part = 100
aero_state = ppmc.AeroState(aero_data, n_part, "nummass_source")
aero_state.dist_sample(aero_dist)
print(np.dot(aero_state.masses, aero_state.num_concs), "# kg/m3")
```

## b: Julia code (with embedded data)

```
using Pkg
Pkg.add("PyCall")

using PyCall
ppmc = pyimport("PyPartMC")
si = ppmc["si"]

aero_data = ppmc.AeroData((
    # (density, ions in solution, molecular weight, kappa)
    Dict{"OC"=>(1000 * si.kg/si.m^3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0.001)},
    Dict{"BC"=>(1800 * si.kg/si.m^3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0)}
))

aero_dist = ppmc.AeroDist(aero_data, (
    Dict(
        "cooking" => Dict(
            "mass_frac" => (Dict{"OC" => (1,)}),
            "diam_type" => "geometric",
            "mode_type" => "log_normal",
            "num_conc" => 3200 / si.cm^3,
            "geom_mean_diam" => 8.64 * si.nm,
            "log10_geom_std_dev" => .28,
        )
    ),
    Dict(
        "diesel" => Dict(
            "mass_frac" => (Dict{"OC" => (.3,)}, Dict{"BC" => (.7,)}),
            "diam_type" => "geometric",
            "mode_type" => "log_normal",
            "num_conc" => 2900 / si.cm^3,
            "geom_mean_diam" => 50 * si.nm,
            "log10_geom_std_dev" => .24,
        )
    )
))

n_part = 100
aero_state = ppmc.AeroState(aero_data, n_part, "nummass_source")
aero_state.dist_sample(aero_dist)
print(aero_state.masses' aero_state.num_concs, "# kg/m3")
```

## user perspective: Matlab (built-in Python bridge)

```
ppmc = py.importlib.import_module('PyPartMC');
si = py.importlib.import_module('PyPartMC').si;

aero_data = ppmc.AeroData(py.tuple({ ...
    py.dict(pyargs("OC", py.tuple({1000 * si.kg/si.m^3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0.001}))), ...
    py.dict(pyargs("BC", py.tuple({1000 * si.kg/si.m^3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0}))) ...
}));

aero_dist = ppmc.AeroDist(aero_data, py.tuple({ ...
    py.dict(pyargs( ...
        "cooking", py.dict(pyargs( ...
            "mass_frac", py.tuple({py.dict(pyargs("OC", py.tuple({1}))))}, ...
            "diam_type", "geometric", ...
            "mode_type", "log_normal", ...
            "num_conc", 3200 / si.cm^3, ...
            "geom_mean_diam", 8.64 * si.nm, ...
            "log10_geom_std_dev", .28 ...
        )) ...
    )), ...
    py.dict(pyargs( ...
        "diesel", py.dict(pyargs( ...
            "mass_frac", py.tuple({ ...
                py.dict(pyargs("OC", py.tuple({.3}))), ...
                py.dict(pyargs("BC", py.tuple({.7}))), ...
            })), ...
            "diam_type", "geometric", ...
            "mode_type", "log_normal", ...
            "num_conc", 2900 / si.cm^3, ...
            "geom_mean_diam", 50 * si.nm, ...
            "log10_geom_std_dev", .24 ...
        )) ...
    )) ...
}));

n_part = 100;
aero_state = ppmc.AeroState(aero_data, n_part, "nummass_source");
aero_state.dist_sample(aero_dist);
masses = cell(aero_state.masses());
num_concs = cell(aero_state.num_concs());
fprintf('%g # kg/m3\n', dot([masses{:}], [num_concs{:}]));
```

The screenshot shows a GitHub Actions workflow run summary. On the left, a sidebar lists jobs: julia, python, fortran, matlab, and assert, all with green checkmarks. Below this, 'Run details' includes 'Usage' and 'Workflow file'. The main content area shows the workflow was triggered via schedule 2 days ago, with status 'Success' and a total duration of '12m 10s'. It lists one artifact and details for the 'readme\_listings.yml' workflow, which is triggered on a schedule. A job summary table lists: julia (4m 27s), python (3m 44s), fortran (36s), and matlab (4m 57s), all with green checkmarks. An 'assert' job is also shown with a green checkmark. At the bottom right of the job summary are zoom controls.

Summary

Jobs

- ✓ julia
- ✓ python
- ✓ fortran
- ✓ matlab
- ✓ assert

Run details

- Usage
- Workflow file

Triggered via schedule 2 days ago

Status: **Success**

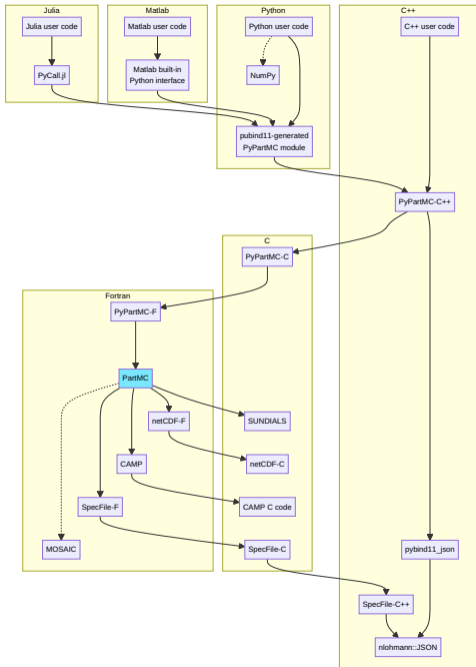
Total duration: **12m 10s**

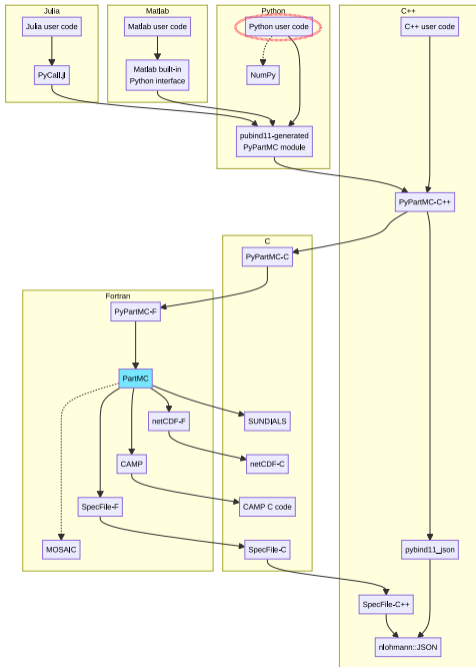
Artifacts: **1**

**readme\_listings.yml**  
on: schedule

✓ julia	4m 27s
✓ python	3m 44s
✓ fortran	36s
✓ matlab	4m 57s

✓ assert





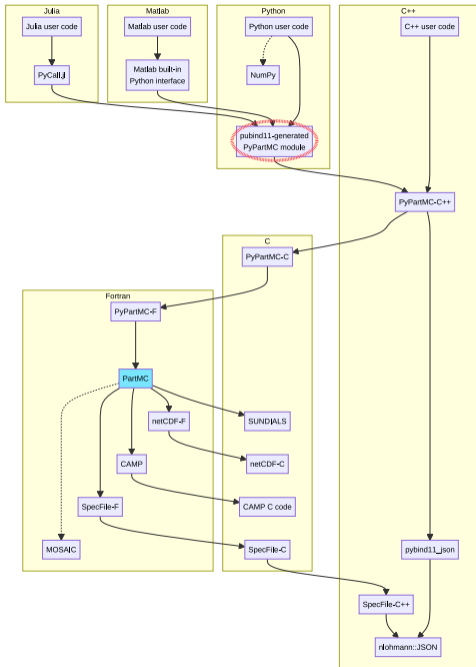
```

import PyPartMC as ppmc
from PyPartMC import si

aero_data = ppmc.AeroData(
    # [density, ions in solution, molecular weight, kappa]
    {"OC": [1000 * si.kg/si.m**3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0.001]},
    {"BC": [1800 * si.kg/si.m**3, 0, 1e-3 * si.kg/si.mol, 0]},
)

```





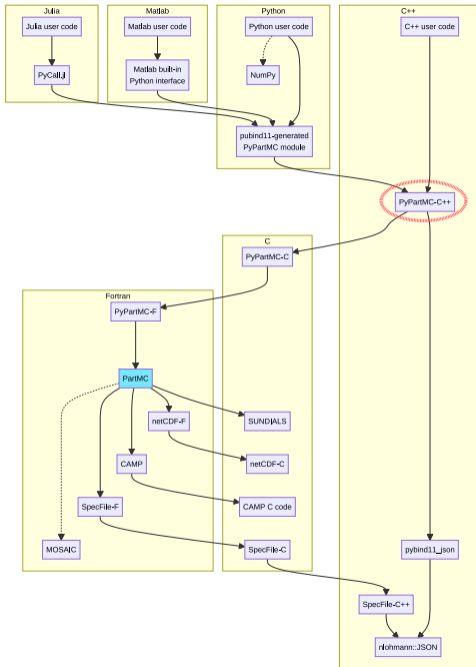
```

import os
from contextlib import contextmanager
from pathlib import Path

# https://github.com/diegoferigo/cmake-build-extension/blob/master/src/cmake_build_extension
@contextmanager
def __build_extension_env():
    cookies = []
    # https://docs.python.org/3/whatsnew/3.8.html#bpo-36885-what'snew
    if hasattr(os, "add_dll_directory"):
        basepath = os.path.dirname(os.path.abspath(__file__))
        dllspath = os.path.join(basepath, "..")
        os.environ["PATH"] = dllspath + os.pathsep + os.environ["PATH"]
        for path in os.environ.get("PATH", "").split(os.pathsep):
            if path and Path(path).is_absolute() and Path(path).is_dir():
                cookies.append(os.add_dll_directory(path))
    try:
        yield
    finally:
        for cookie in cookies:
            cookie.close()

with __build_extension_env():
    import _PyPartMC
    from _PyPartMC import *
    from _PyPartMC import (
        __all__,
        __version__,
        __versions_of_build_time_dependencies__,
    )

```



```

#include "pybind11/pybind11.h"
#include "nlohmann/json.hpp"
#include "pybind11_json/pybind11_json.hpp"

[...]

#include "aero_data.hpp"

[...]

namespace py = pybind11;

[...]

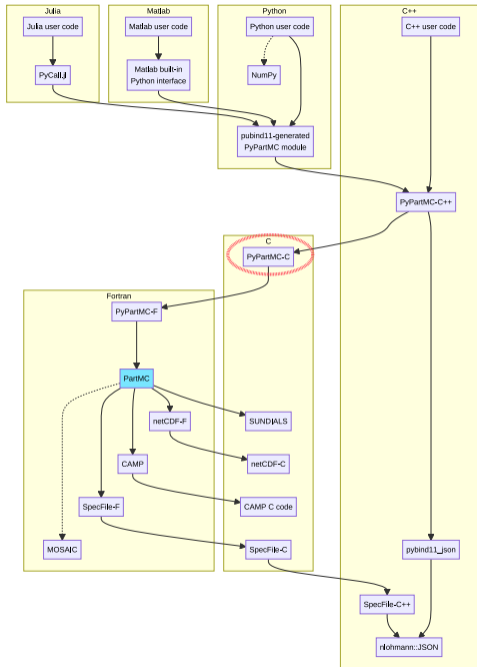
PYBIND11_MODULE(_PyPartMC, m) {

    [...]

    py::class_<
        AeroData,
        std::shared_ptr<AeroData>
    >(m, "AeroData")
        .def(py::init<const nlohmann::json&>())

    [...]

    m.attr("__all__") = py::make_tuple(
        "__version__",
        "AeroData",
        [...]
    );
}
  
```



```

#pragma once

#include "pmc_resource.hpp"
#include "gimmicks.hpp"

[...]

extern "C" void f_aero_data_ctor(void *ptr) noexcept;
extern "C" void f_aero_data_dtor(void *ptr) noexcept;
extern "C" void f_aero_data_from_json(const void *ptr) noexcept;

[...]

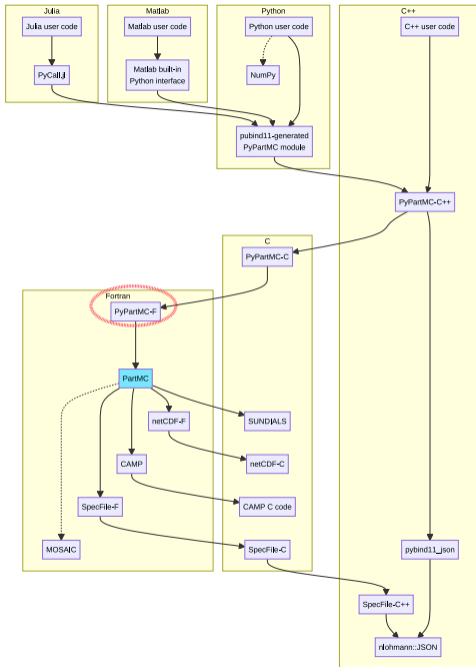
struct AeroData {
    PMCResource ptr;

    AeroData(const nlohmann::json &json) :
        ptr(f_aero_data_ctor, f_aero_data_dtor)
    {
        if (!InputGimmick::unique_keys(json))
            throw std::runtime_error("Species names must be unique");

        GimmickGuard<InputGimmick> guard(json);
        f_aero_data_from_json(this->ptr.f_arg());
    }

    [...]
};

```



```

module PyPartMC_aero_data
  use iso_c_binding
  use pmc_aero_data
  implicit none

  contains

  subroutine f_aero_data_ctor(ptr_c) bind(C)
    type(aero_data_t), pointer :: ptr_f => null()
    type(c_ptr), intent(out) :: ptr_c

    allocate(ptr_f)
    call fractal_set_spherical(ptr_f%fractal)
    ptr_c = c_loc(ptr_f)
  end subroutine

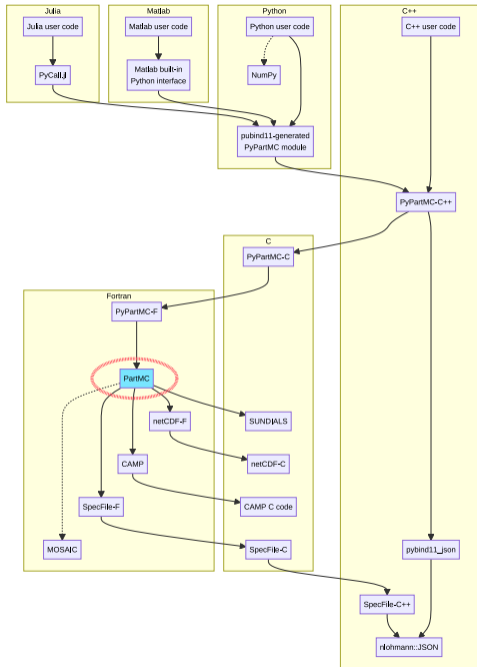
  subroutine f_aero_data_dtor(ptr_c) bind(C)
    type(aero_data_t), pointer :: ptr_f => null()
    type(c_ptr), intent(in) :: ptr_c

    call c_f_pointer(ptr_c, ptr_f)
    deallocate(ptr_f)
  end subroutine

  subroutine f_aero_data_from_json(ptr_c) bind(C)
    type(aero_data_t), pointer :: ptr_f => null()
    type(c_ptr), intent(in) :: ptr_c
    type(spec_file_t) :: file
    call c_f_pointer(ptr_c, ptr_f)
    call spec_file_read_aero_data(file, ptr_f)
  end subroutine

  [...]

end module
  
```



## unmodified PartMC code (git submodule)

```
! Copyright (C) 2005-2012, 2016, 2021 Nicole Riemer and Matthew West
! Licensed under the GNU General Public License version 2 or (at your
! option) any later version. See the file COPYING for details.
```

```
[...]
```

```
module pmc_aero_data
  use pmc_spec_file
```

```
[...]
```

```
contains
```

```
[...]
```

```
subroutine spec_file_read_aero_data(file, aero_data)
```

```
[...]
```

```
type(spec_file_t), intent(inout) :: file
type(aero_data_t), intent(inout) :: aero_data
real(kind=dp), allocatable :: species_data(:,:)
```

```
[...]
```

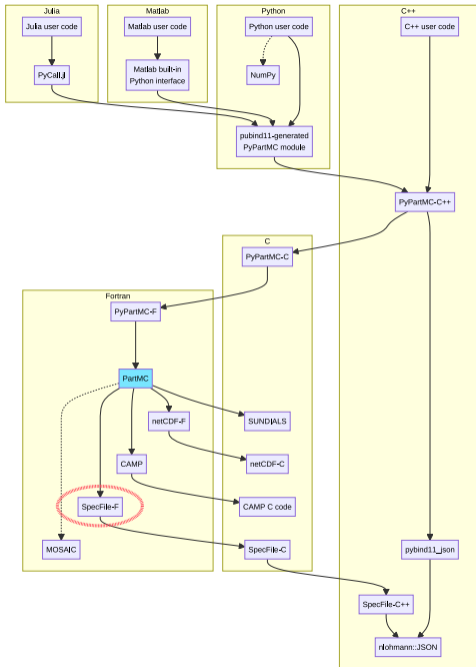
```
call spec_file_read_real_named_array(file, 0, species_name, species_data)
```

```
[...]
```

```
end subroutine spec_file_read_aero_data
```

```
[...]
```

```
end module pmc_aero_data
```



```

module pmc_spec_file
[...]
```

```

interface
[...]
```

```

  subroutine c_spec_file_read_real_named_array_data( &
    row, &
    names_data, names_size, &
    vals_data, vals_size &
  ) bind(C)
    import c_double
    character, intent(in) :: names_data
    real(c_double), intent(out) :: vals_data
    integer, intent(in) :: row, vals_size, names_size
  end subroutine

[...]
```

```

end interface

[...]
```

```

subroutine spec_file_read_real_named_array(file, max_lines, names, vals)
[...]
```

```

  do row = 1, n_rows
    [...]
    call c_spec_file_read_real_named_array_data( &
      row, &
      names(row), name_size, &
      vals_row(1), size(vals, 2) &
    )
    [...]
  end do
  [...]
end subroutine

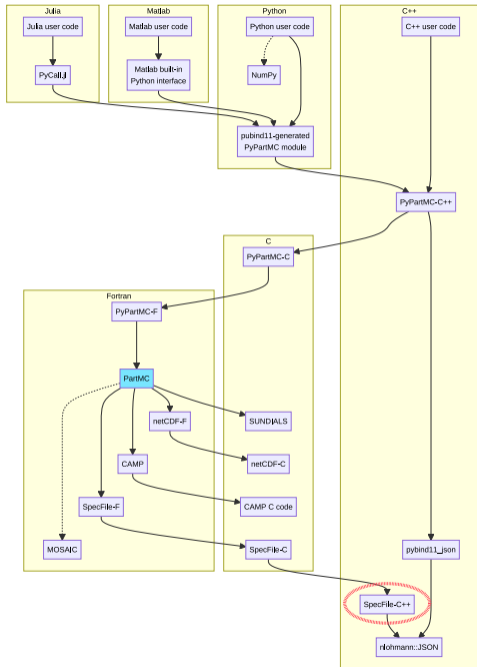
[...]
```

```

end module

```





```

#include "gimmicks.hpp"

[...]
```

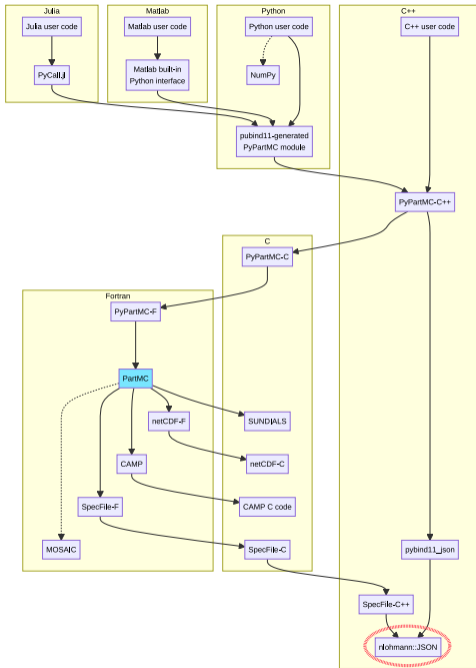
```

void spec_file_read_real_named_array_data(
    const unsigned int row,
    char *name_data,
    int *name_size,
    const tcb::span<double> &vals
) noexcept {
    auto i = 0u, n_numeric_array_entries = gimmick_ptr()->n_numeric_array_entries();
    for (
        auto it = gimmick_ptr()->begin();
        i < n_numeric_array_entries;
        ++i, ++it
    ) {
        assert(it->is_object());
        if (i == row-1) {
            assert(it->size() == 1);
            for (auto &entry : it->items()) {
                for (auto c=0u; c < entry.key().size(); ++c)
                    name_data[c] = entry.key()[c];
                *name_size = entry.key().size();
                [...]
            }
        }
    }
}

extern "C"
void c_spec_file_read_real_named_array_data(
    const int *row,
    char *name_data,
    int *name_size,
    double *vals_data,
    const int *vals_size
) noexcept {
    spec_file_read_real_named_array_data(
        *row,
        name_data, name_size,
        tcb::span<double>(vals_data, *vals_size)
    );
}

[...]
```





json.nlohmann.me

# JSON for Modern C++

## JSON for Modern C++

*What if JSON was part of modern C++?*

3.11.3

PyPartMC API documentation

https://open-atmos.github.io/PyPartMC/

## Index

### Functions

- `condense_equilib_particles`
- `pow2_above`
- `run_part`

### Classes

- `AeroData`
- `AeroState`
- `EnvState`
- `GasData`
- `GasState`
- `RunPartOpt`
- `Scenario`

## Module `PyPartMC`

PyPartMC is a Python interface to PartMC.

### Functions

```
def condense_equilib_particles(arg0: EnvState, arg1: AeroData,
                              arg2: AeroState)
```

Call `condense_equilib_particle()` on each particle in the aerosol to ensure that every particle has its water content in equilibrium.

```
def pow2_above(arg0: int) -> int
```

Return the least power-of-2 that is at least equal to `n`.

```
def run_part(arg0: Scenario, arg1: EnvState, arg2: AeroData, arg3: AeroState,
             arg4: GasData, arg5: GasState, arg6: RunPartOpt)
```

Do a particle-resolved Monte Carlo simulation.

### Classes

```
class AeroData (...)
```

Aerosol material properties and associated data.

The data in this structure is constant, as it represents physical quantities that cannot

14/17



what PyPartMC achieves:



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- ▶ offering users (students) a single-language familiar environment (Colab, ARM JupyterHub)



take-home messages & fun facts:



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- ▶ `pybind11` as a viable tool for interfacing Fortran and Python (especially given integration with CMake which handles Fortran well)















## take-home messages & fun facts:

- ▶ pybind11 as a viable tool for interfacing Fortran and Python (especially given integration with CMake which handles Fortran well)
- ▶ Python's "glue language" role leveraged: Julia, Matlab, ...
- ▶ static linkage: on the one hand essential (lack of standardised Fortran ABI); on the other hand blocks Conda packaging (policy)
- ▶ git[hub] submodules instrumental for handling 10+ Fortran, C and C++ dependencies
- ▶ no universal binaries for macOS yet (gfortran help welcome!)
- ▶ kudos to Mathworks for [github.com/matlab-actions](https://github.com/matlab-actions)
- ▶ **SoftwareX review: actually also concerned code/installation**





Thank you for your attention!

[pypi.org/p/PyPartMC](https://pypi.org/p/PyPartMC)

[github.com/open-atmos/PyPartMC](https://github.com/open-atmos/PyPartMC)

[doi:10.1016/j.softx.2023.101613](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.softx.2023.101613)