



Federal University of Amazonas (UFAM)  
Postgraduate Program in Electrical Engineering (PPGEE)

# OptCE: A Counterexample-Guided Inductive Optimization Solver

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# Agenda

- Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples
- Illustrative Example
- CEGIO Algorithms
- OptCE Tool
- Experimental Evaluation

# General Steps from Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples

- **Modeling** – In the modeling step, the optimization problem is defined for a cost function and then its constraints are introduced
- **Specification** – This step consists of describing the behavior of the system and properties to be verified. A C code is generated with ESBMC functions to restrict the state space
- **Verification** - This step performs the verification of the C code, and informs if it has found a global optimization

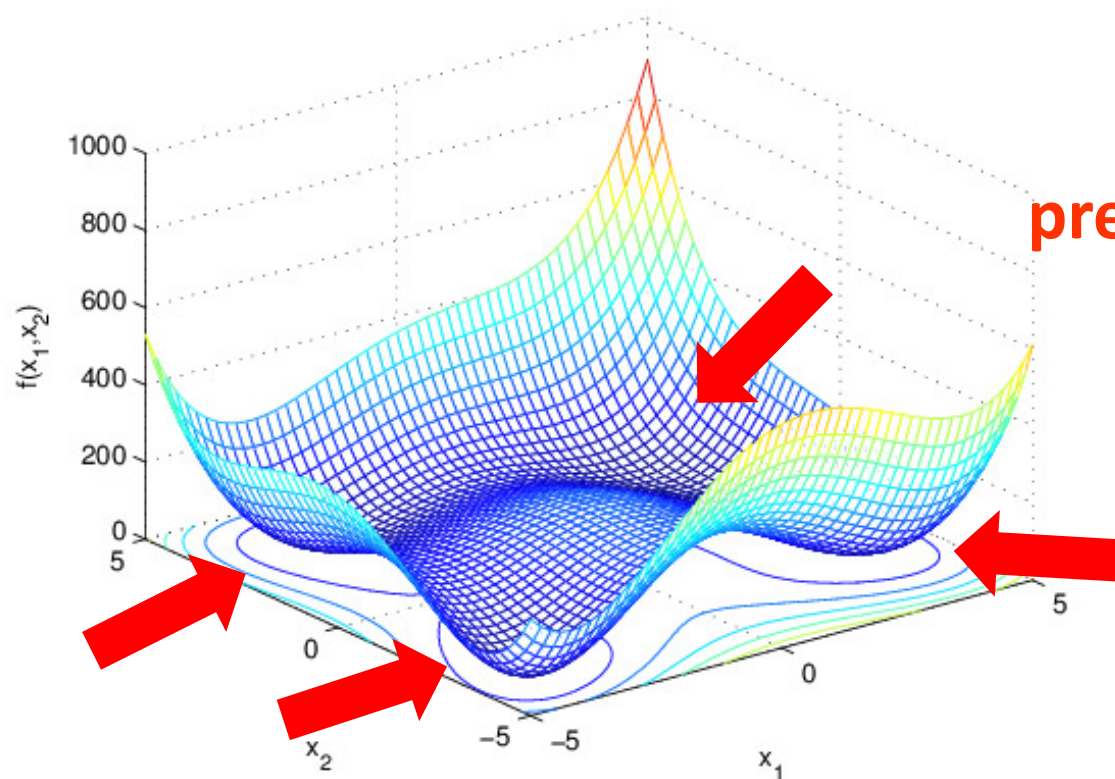
# Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples

- Given a cost function  $f: X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , such that  $X \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  is the space of decision variables and  $\Omega \subset X$ , where  $\Omega$  is the set of constraints
- A multivariate optimization problem consists of finding the vector of optimal decision variables  $x^*$ , which minimizes  $f$  considering  $\Omega$

$$\min f(x) \quad s.t. \quad \Omega$$

- The problem will be non-convex, *if and only if*  $f(x)$  is a non-convex function

# Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples



Function of  
Himmelblau  
presents four global  
minima

$$f(x_1, x_2) = (x_1^2 + x_2 - 11)^2 + (x_1 + x_2^2 - 7)^2$$

# Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples

- To extend the verifier to solve an optimization problem, two code directives are used: **ASSUME** and **ASSERT**
- **ASSUME** is responsible for defining the constraints over the non-deterministic variables, from which the verifier restricts the state space
- **ASSERT** is used to define the property to be verified and return “True” or “False” for the optimization check

# Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples

- The decision variables of the problem are defined as non-deterministic integers
- An integer variable controls the accuracy and discretization of the state space

$$p = 10^n$$

- where  $n$  is the number of decimal places of the decision variables

# Inductive Optimization Based on Counterexamples

- Successive verifications are executed iteratively increasing the precision, to converge to the optimal solution
- Each verification run checks the following property:

$$l_{\text{optimum}} \Leftrightarrow f(x) > f_c$$



# Illustrative Example

- Given the following optimization problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x_1, x_2} f(x_1, x_2) &= (x_1^2 + x_2 - 11)^2 + (x_1 + x_2^2 - 7)^2 \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & -5 \leq x_1 \leq 0 \\ & 0 \leq x_2 \leq 5 \end{aligned}$$

- Minimize the Himmelblau function

# Illustrative Example

```
1.  int nondet_int();
2.  int main(){
3.      int p = 1;
4.      float fc = 100;
5.      int X1 = nondet_int();
6.      int X2 = nondet_int();
7.      float x1, x2, fobj;
8.      __ESBMC_assume((X1>=-5*p) && (X1<=0*p));
9.      __ESBMC_assume((X2>=0*p) && (X2<=5*p));
10.     x1 = (float) X1/p;
11.     x2 = (float) X2/p;
12.     fobj = (x1*x1+x2-11)*(x1*x1+x2-11)+(x1+x2*x2-7)*(x1+x2*x2-7);
13.     __ESBMC_assume( fobj < fc );
14.     __ESBMC_assert( fobj > fc, "" );
15.     return 0;
16. }
```

# Illustrative Example

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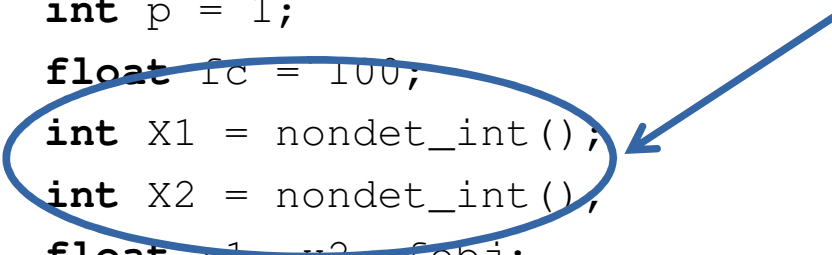
The precision variable  
starts as  $10^0$



# Illustrative Example

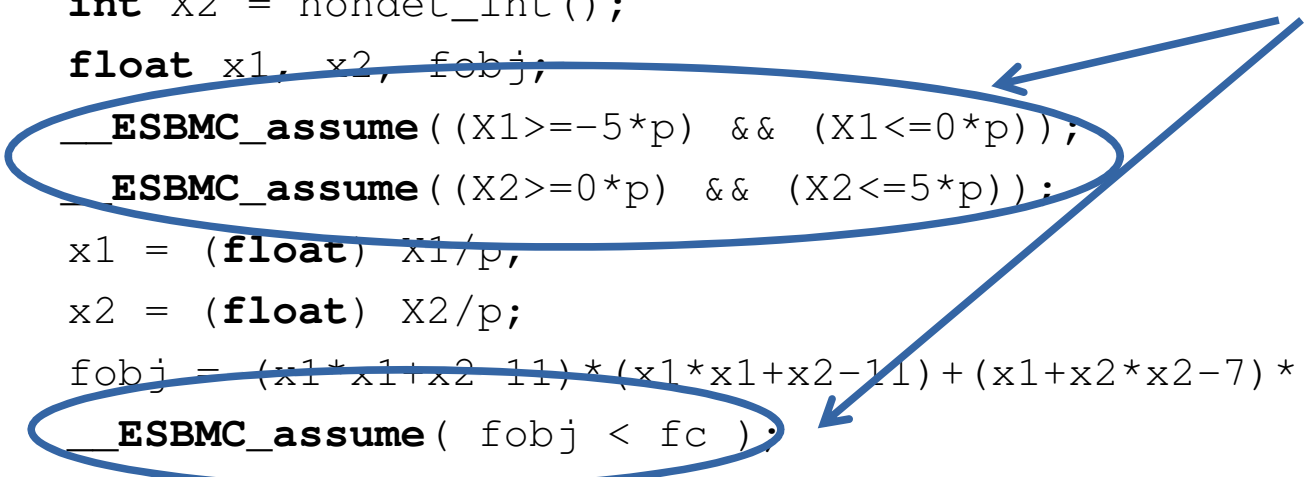
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```

Decision variables are declared as non-deterministic integers



# Illustrative Example

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```



Statements of ASSUMEs are used to specify constraints and reduce state space

# Illustrative Example

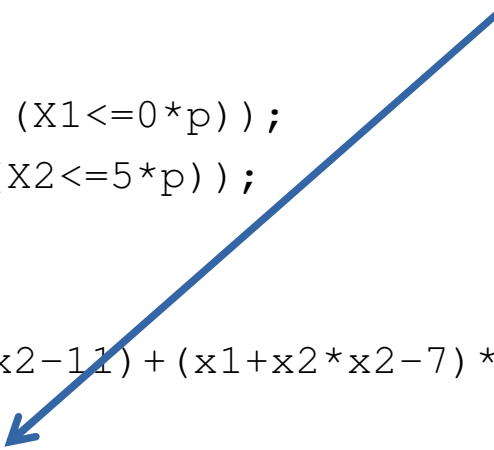
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Property  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is verified

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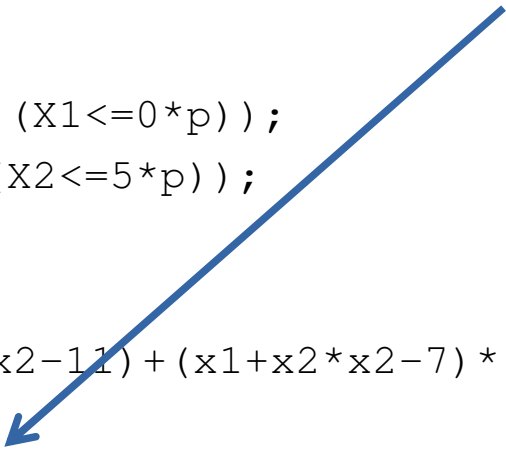
When  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is false,  
 $\exists f(x) < fc$ ,  $fc$  must  
be updated and  
verification repeated.



# Illustrative Example

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16. }
```

If  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is true,  
 $\nexists f(x) < fc$ ,  
 $fc$  is the  
optimal value





# CEGIO Algorithms

- **CEGIO-G** - Applies to general functions
- **CEGIO-F** - Applies to semi-definite and positive functions
- **CEGIO-S** - Applies to convex functions

# CEGIO-G Algorithm

Data: A cost function  $f(x)$ , a set of constraints  $\Omega$ , and a desired precision  $\eta$ .

Results: The optimal decision vector  $x^*$  and the optimal cost function  $f(x^*)$ .

```
1 Initialize  $f(x^{(0)})$  randomly;  
2 Initialize precision variables with  $p = 1, i = 1$  e  $k = \log p$ ;  
3 Declare the decision variables  $x^{(i)}$  as non-deterministic integer variables;  
4 while  $k \leq \eta$  do  
5     set the limits of  $x$  with the ASSUME directive, such that  $x \in \Omega^k$ ;  
6     describe the model for  $f(x)$ ;  
7     do  
8         set constraint  $f(x^{(i)}) < f(x^{(i-1)})$  as the ASSUM directive;  
9         check for satisfiability of  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  given by equation (slide 8) with the ASSERT directive;  
10        analysis  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$  based on the counter-example;  
11        make  $i = i + 1$ ;  
12        while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying;  
13        update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;  
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If  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfactory

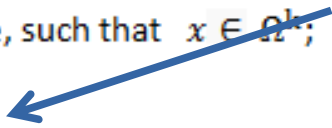
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15     $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;  
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```

Updates the  
restrictions based on  
the counter example



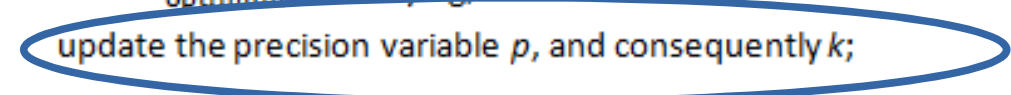
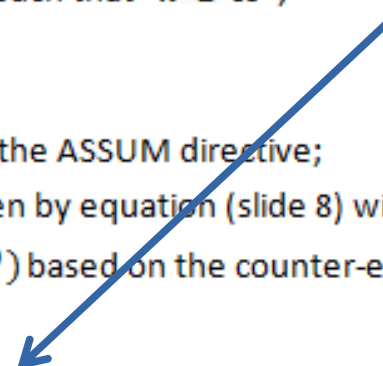
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11        make  $i = i + 1$ ;  
12        while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying:  
13            update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;  
14    end  
15  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;  
16 return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;
```

If No, update  
the precision  
variable



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14    end  
15     $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;  
16    return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;
```

Repeat until desired accuracy is reached

# Deviating from local minima

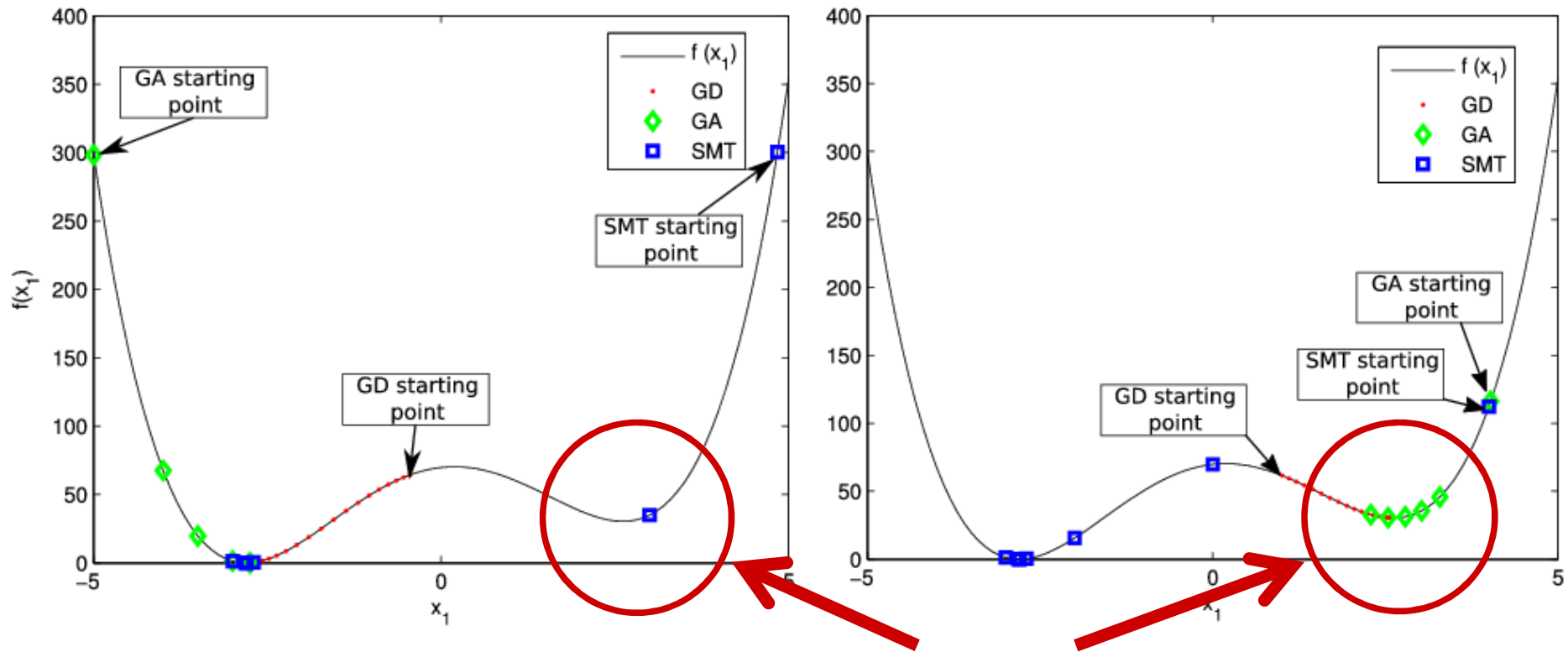
- We evaluated the performance of our methodology to minimize the Himmelblau function, and we compared with the downward gradient (GD) and genetic algorithm (GA) methods.

$$f(x_1, x_2) = (x_1^2 + x_2 - 11)^2 + (x_1 + x_2^2 - 7)^2$$

- The proposed methodology does not report minimum locations as in GD and GA, and it is able to find the global minimum

# Deviating from local minima

- Mathematical techniques and heuristics depend on initialization and can not ensure overall optimization.

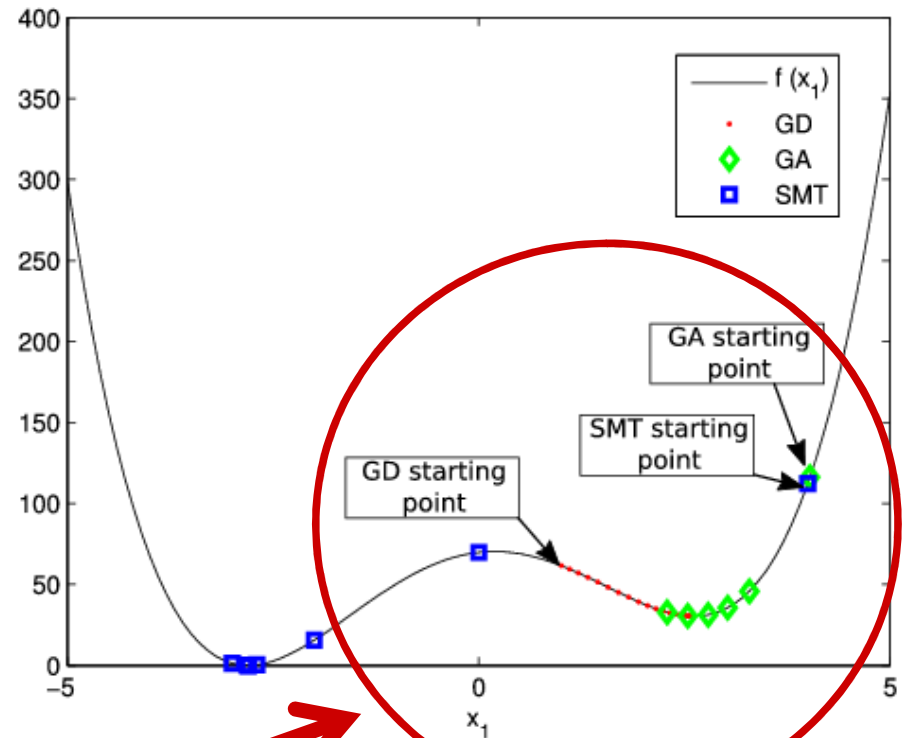
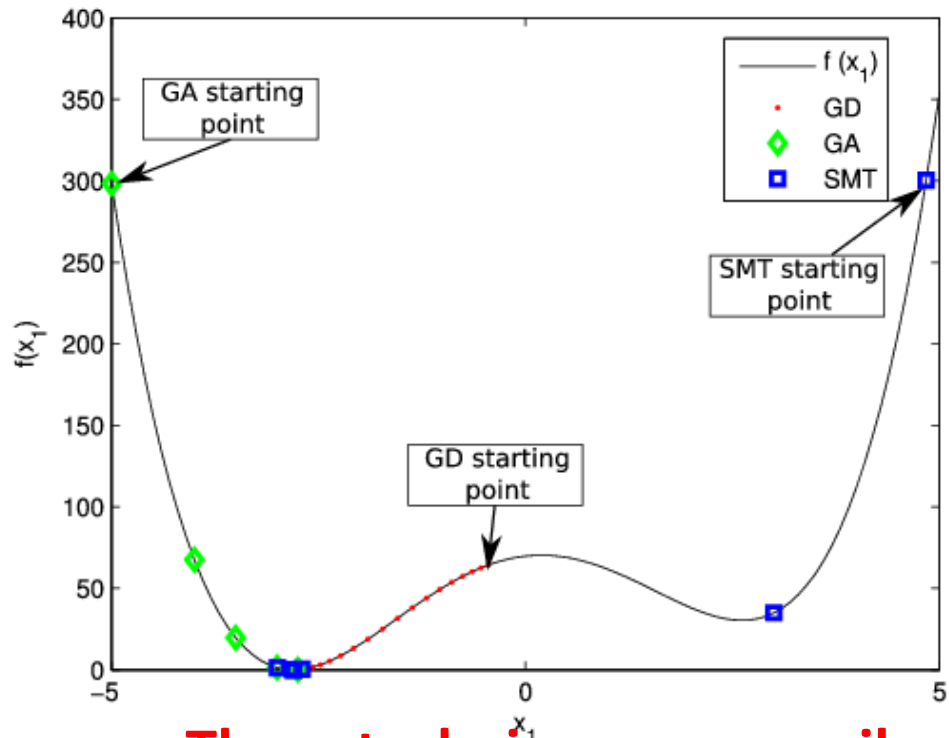


**Local Minimum**



# Deviating from local minima

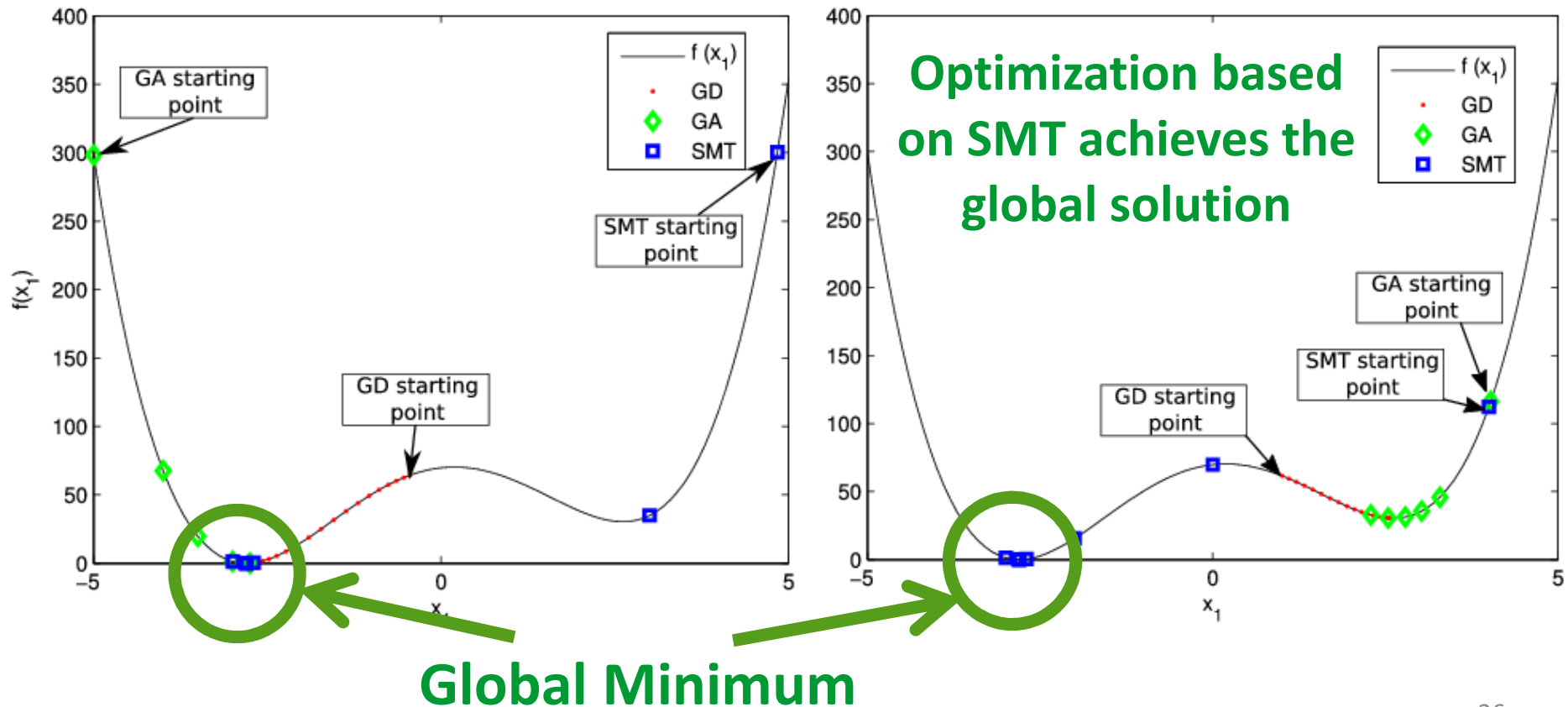
- Mathematical techniques and heuristics depend on initialization and can not ensure overall optimization.



**These techniques can easily stop in a local minimum**

# Deviating from local minima

- Mathematical techniques and heuristics dependent on initialization and can not assure global optimization



# Functions with prior knowledge

- There are functions, in which we have some a priori knowledge, for example, semi-defined or positive definite functions.

$$f(x) \geq 0 \text{ e } f(x) > 0$$

- Distance or energy functions belong to that class of functions
- From this, it is possible to propose modifications in the previous algorithm to improve the convergence time

# CEGIO-F Algorithm

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Results: The optimal decision vector  $x^*$  and the optimal cost function  $f(x^*)$ .

```

1   Initialize  $f_m = 0$ ;
2   Initialize  $f(x^{(0)})$  randomly;
3   Initialize precision variables with  $p = 1, i = 1$  e  $k = \log p$ ;
4   Declare the decision variables  $x^{(i)}$  as non-deterministic integer variables;
5   while  $k \leq \eta$  do
6       set the limits of  $x$  with the ASSUME directive, such that  $x \in \Omega^k$ ;
7       describe the model for  $f(x)$ ;
8       describe  $\delta = (f(x^{(i-1)}) - f_m)/\alpha$ ;
9       if  $(f(x^{(i-1)}) - f_m > 0.00001)$  then
10          do
11              set constraint  $f(x^{(i)}) < f(x^{(i-1)})$  as the ASSUM directive;
12              while  $(f_m \leq f(x^{(i-1)}))$  do
13                  check for satisfiability of  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  given by equation (slide 8) with the ASSERT directive;
14                  make  $f_m = f_m + \delta$ ;
15              end
16              update  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$  based on the counter-example;
17              make  $i = i + 1$ ;
18          while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying;
19      end
20      else
21          break;
22      end
23      update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;
24  end
25   $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;
26  return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;

```

# CEGIO-F Algorithm

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```

$\delta$ , sets the increment step  
for the candidate  
values to minimum

# CEGIO-F Algorithm

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Results: The optimal decision vector  $x^*$  and the optimal cost function  $f(x^*)$ .

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12             while  $(f_m \leq f(x^{(i-1)}))$  do
13                 check for satisfiability of  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  given by equation (slide 8) with the ASSERT directive;
14                 make  $f_m = f_m + \delta$ ;
15             end
16             update  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$  based on the counter-example;
17             make  $i = i + 1$ ;
18         while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying;
19     end
20     else
21         break;
22     end
23     update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;
24 end
25  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;
26 return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;

```

No checking  
is required if  
 $f(x^*) = 0$

# CEGIO-F Algorithm

Data: A cost function  $f(x)$ , a set of constraints  $\Omega$ , and a desired precision  $\eta$ .

Results: The optimal decision vector  $x^*$  and the optimal cost function  $f(x^*)$ .

```

1   Initialize  $f_m = 0$ ;
2   Initialize  $f(x^{(0)})$  randomly;
3   Initialize precision variables with  $p = 1, i = 1, k = \log p$ ;
4   Declare the decision variables  $x^{(i)}$  as non-deterministic integer variables;
5   while  $k \leq \eta$  do
6       set the limits of  $x$  with the ASSUME directive, such that  $x \in \Omega^k$ ;
7       describe the model for  $f(x)$ ;
8       describe  $\delta = (f(x^{(i-1)}) - f_m)/\alpha$ ;
9       if  $(f(x^{(i-1)}) - f_m > 0.00001)$  then
10          do
11              set constraint  $f(x^{(i)}) < f(x^{(i-1)})$  as the ASSUM directive;
12              while  $(f_m \leq f(x^{(i-1)}))$  do
13                  check for satisfiability of  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  given by equation (slide 8) with the ASSERT directive;
14                  make  $f_m = f_m + \delta$ ;
15              end
16              update  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$  based on the counter-example;
17              make  $i = i + 1$ ;
18          while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying;
19          end
20          else
21              break;
22          end
23          update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;
24      end
25       $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;
26      return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;

```

The WHILE creates  
 $\alpha + 1$  properties  
to check



# Convex functions

- Another type of special functions are convex functions. These are functions that satisfy triangular inequality.

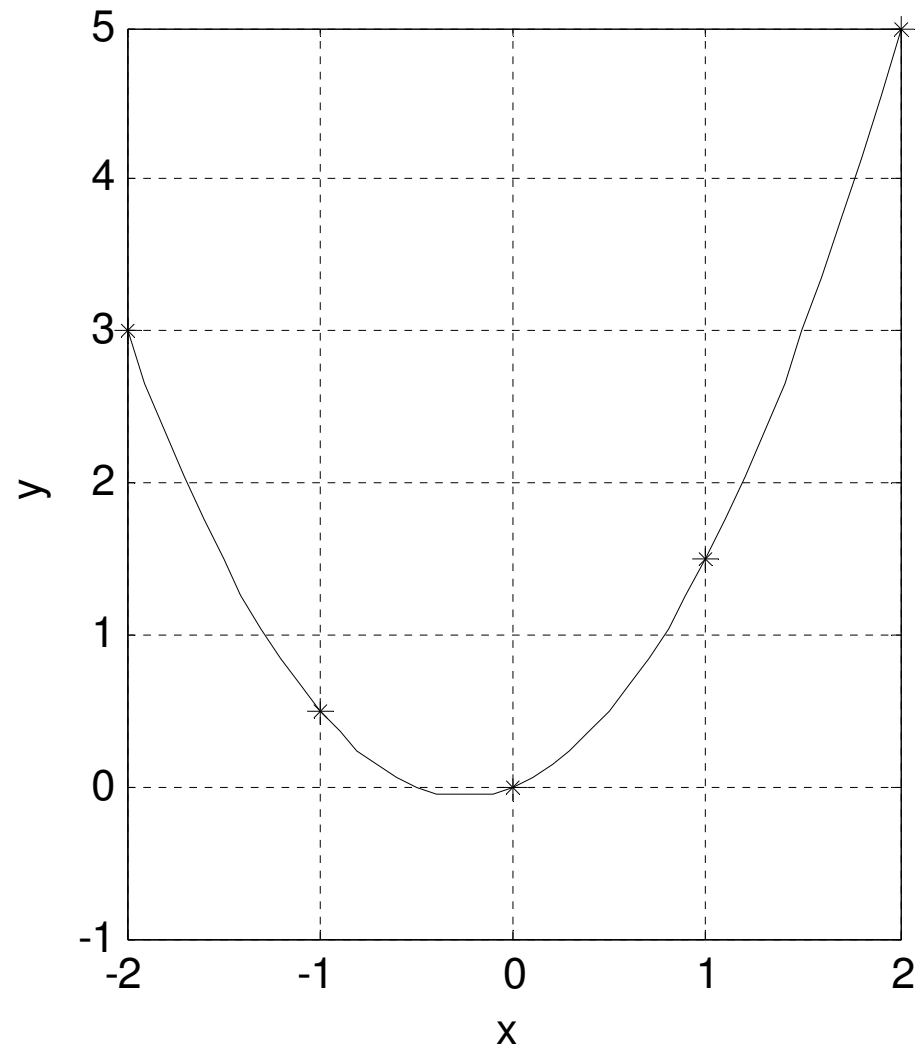
$$f(\alpha x_1 + \beta x_2) \leq \alpha f(x_1) + \beta f(x_2)$$

$$x_i \in \mathbb{R}^n, \text{ with } i = 1, 2$$

$$\alpha, \beta \in \mathbb{R}, \text{ with } \alpha + \beta = 1, \alpha \geq 0 \text{ e } \beta \geq 0$$



# Convex functions



# Convex functions

- A local minimum of a convex function  $f$ , in a convex set, is always a global minimum of  $f$
- It is possible to update the set of constraints of the problem from the solution obtained before increasing the precision
  - The limits are defined by the predecessor and successor values of the solution found so far

# CEGIO-S Algorithm

Data: A cost function  $f(x)$ , a set of constraints  $\Omega$ , and a desired precision  $\eta$ .

Results: The optimal decision vector  $x^*$  and the optimal cost function  $f(x^*)$ .

```
1  Initialize  $f(x^{(0)})$  randomly;
2  Initialize precision variables with  $p = 1, i = 1$  e  $k = \log p$ ;
3  Declare the decision variables  $x^{(i)}$  as non-deterministic integer variables;
4  while  $k \leq \eta$  do
5      set the limits of  $x$  with the ASSUME directive, such that  $x \in \Omega^k$ ;
6      describe the model for  $f(x)$ ;
7      do
8          set constraint  $f(x^{(i)}) < f(x^{(i-1)})$  as the ASSUM directive;
9          check for satisfiability of  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  given by equation (slide 8) with the ASSERT directive;
10         analysis  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$  based on the counter-example;
11         make  $i = i + 1$ ;
12     while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying;
13     update the set  $\Omega^k$ ;
14     update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;
15 end
16  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;
17 return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;
```

# CEGIO-S Algorithm

Data: A cost function  $f(x)$ , a set of constraints  $\Omega$ , and a desired precision  $\eta$ .

Results: The optimal decision vector  $x^*$  and the optimal cost function  $f(x^*)$ .

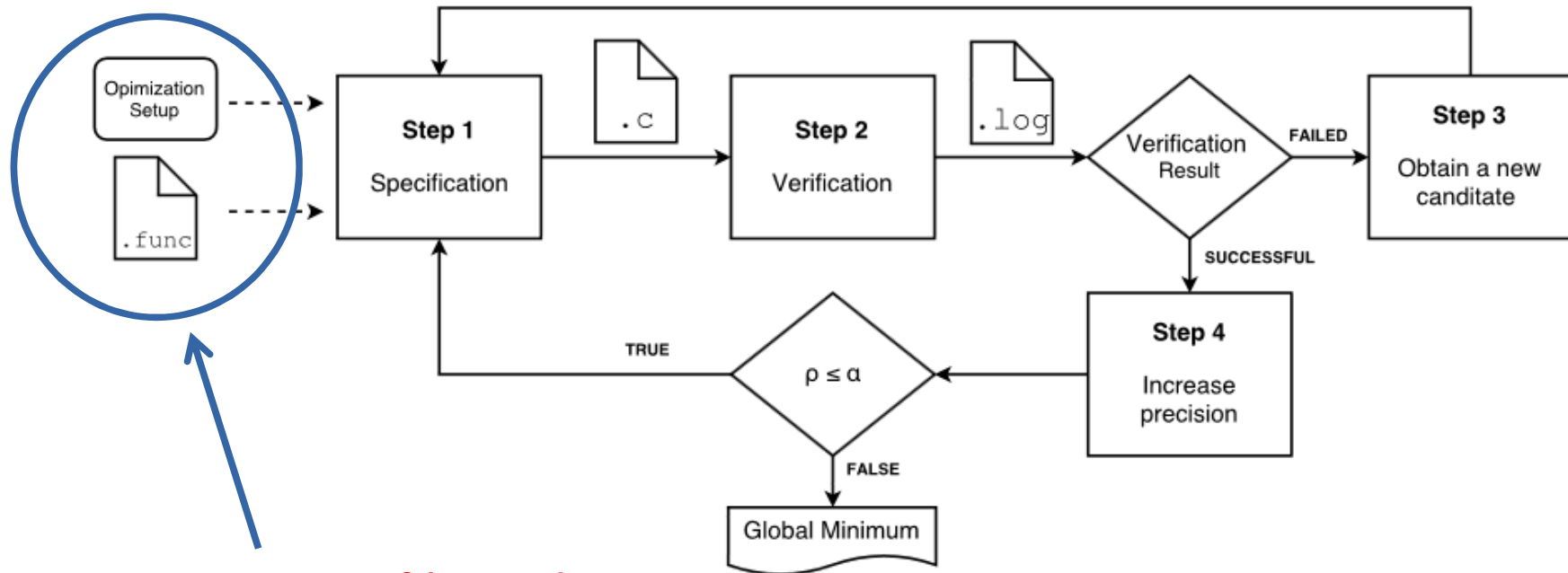
```
1 Initialize  $f(x^{(0)})$  randomly;
2 Initialize precision variables with  $p = 1, i = 1$  e  $k = \log p$ ;
3 Declare the decision variables  $x^{(i)}$  as non-deterministic integer variables;
4 while  $k \leq \eta$  do
5     set the limits of  $x$  with the ASSUME directive, such that  $x \in \Omega^k$ ;
6     describe the model for  $f(x)$ ;
7     do
8         set constraint  $f(x^{(i)}) < f(x^{(i-1)})$  as the ASSUM directive;
9         check for satisfiability of  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  given by equation (slide 8) with the ASSERT directive;
10        analysis  $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$  based on the counter-example;
11        make  $i = i + 1$ ;
12        while  $l_{\text{optimum}}$  is satisfying;
13            update the set  $\Omega^k$ ;
14            update the precision variable  $p$ , and consequently  $k$ ;
15    end
16     $x^* = x^{(i)}$  and  $f(x^*) = f(x^{(i)})$ ;
17    return  $x^* = x^{(i)}$ ;
```

Restriction set  
update

# OptCE: A Counterexample-Guided Inductive Optimization Solver

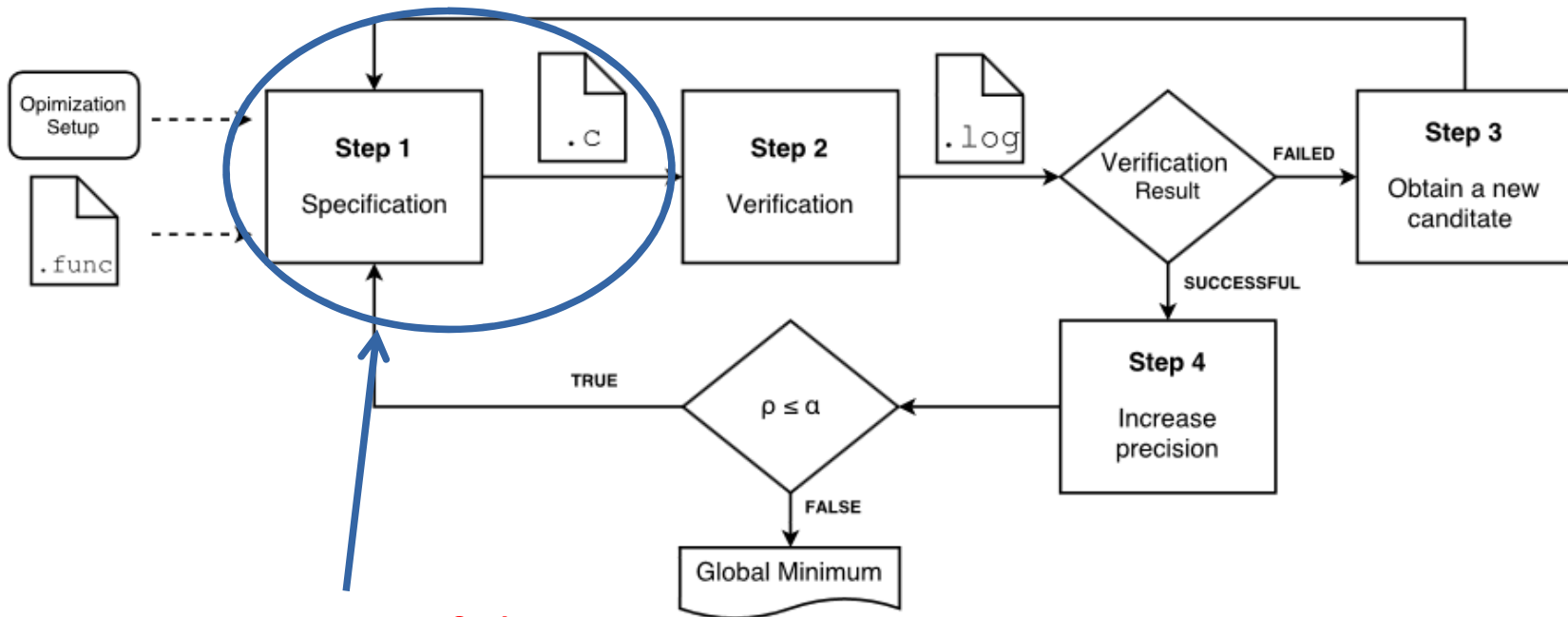
- The OptCE tool implements the CEGIOs algorithms
- Performs optimization based on counterexamples with various configurations of verifiers and solvers
- Establishes a new approach to optimize functions

# OptCE: Architecture



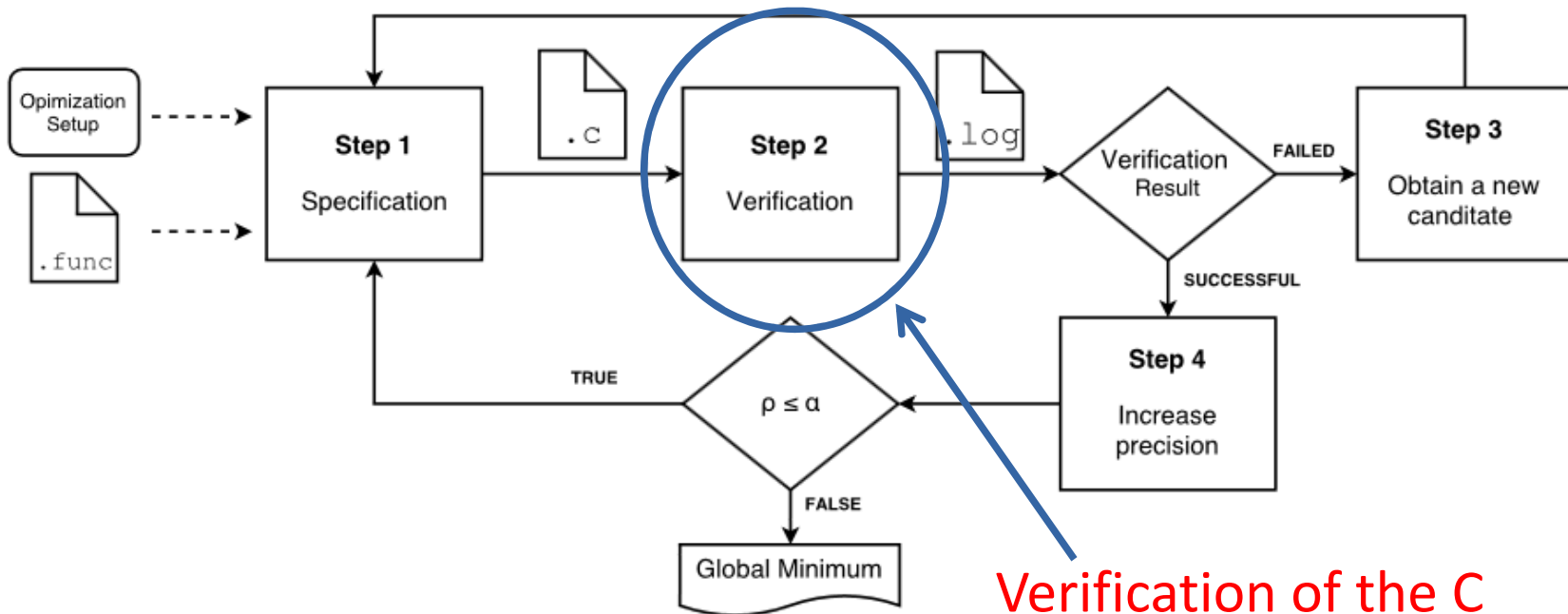
input file and  
parameters in  
terminal

# OptCE: Architecture



generation of the  
C file with  
specification

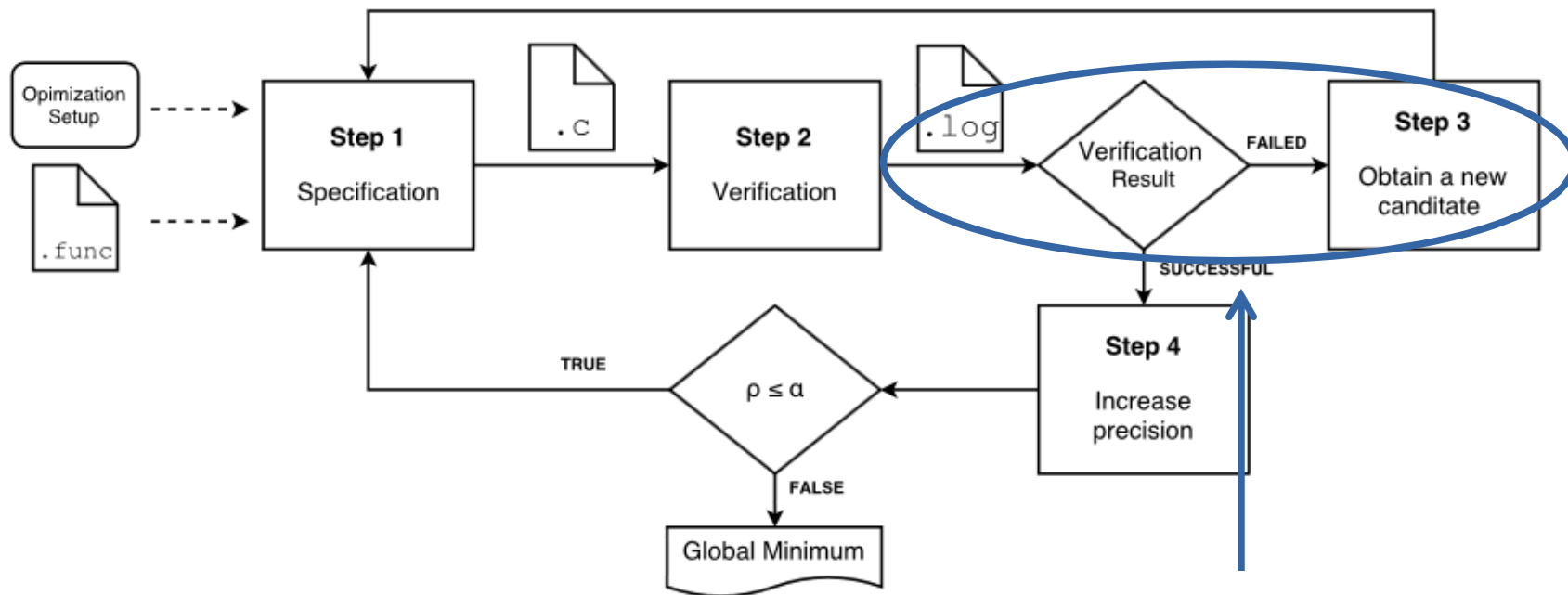
# OptCE: Architecture



Verification of the C code with the verifier and solver established

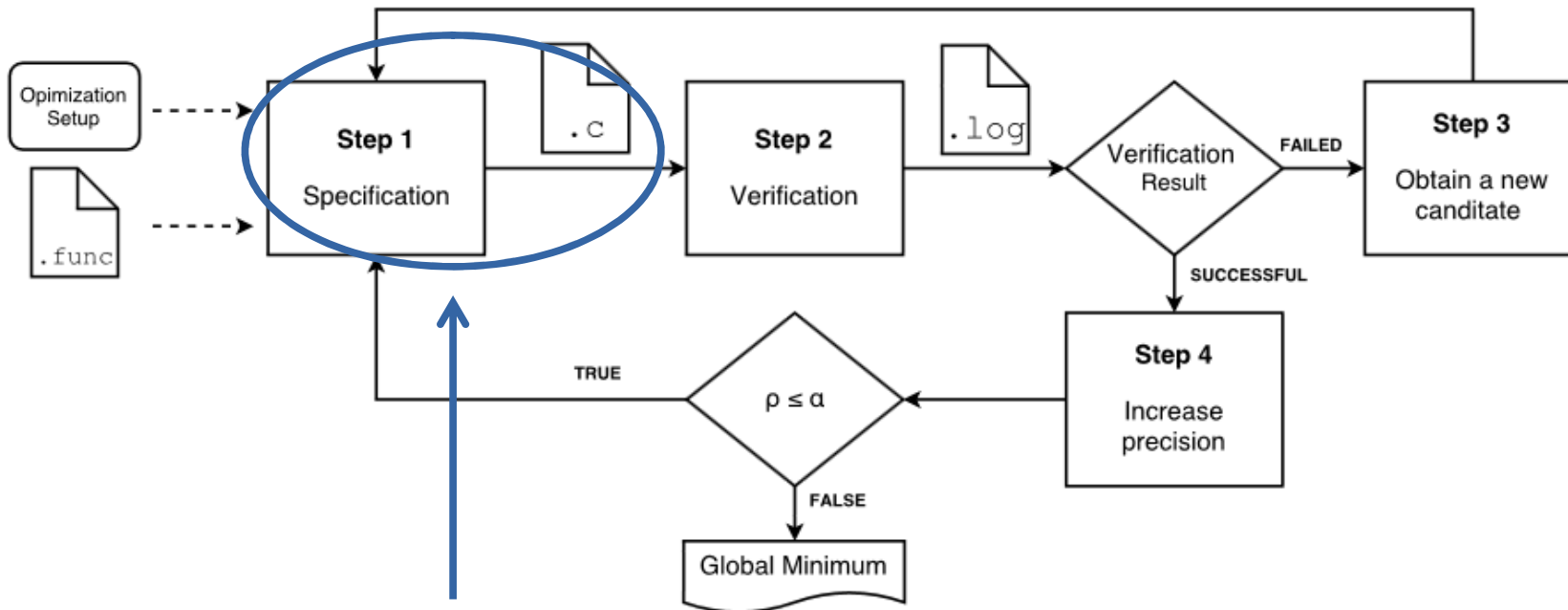


# OptCE: Architecture



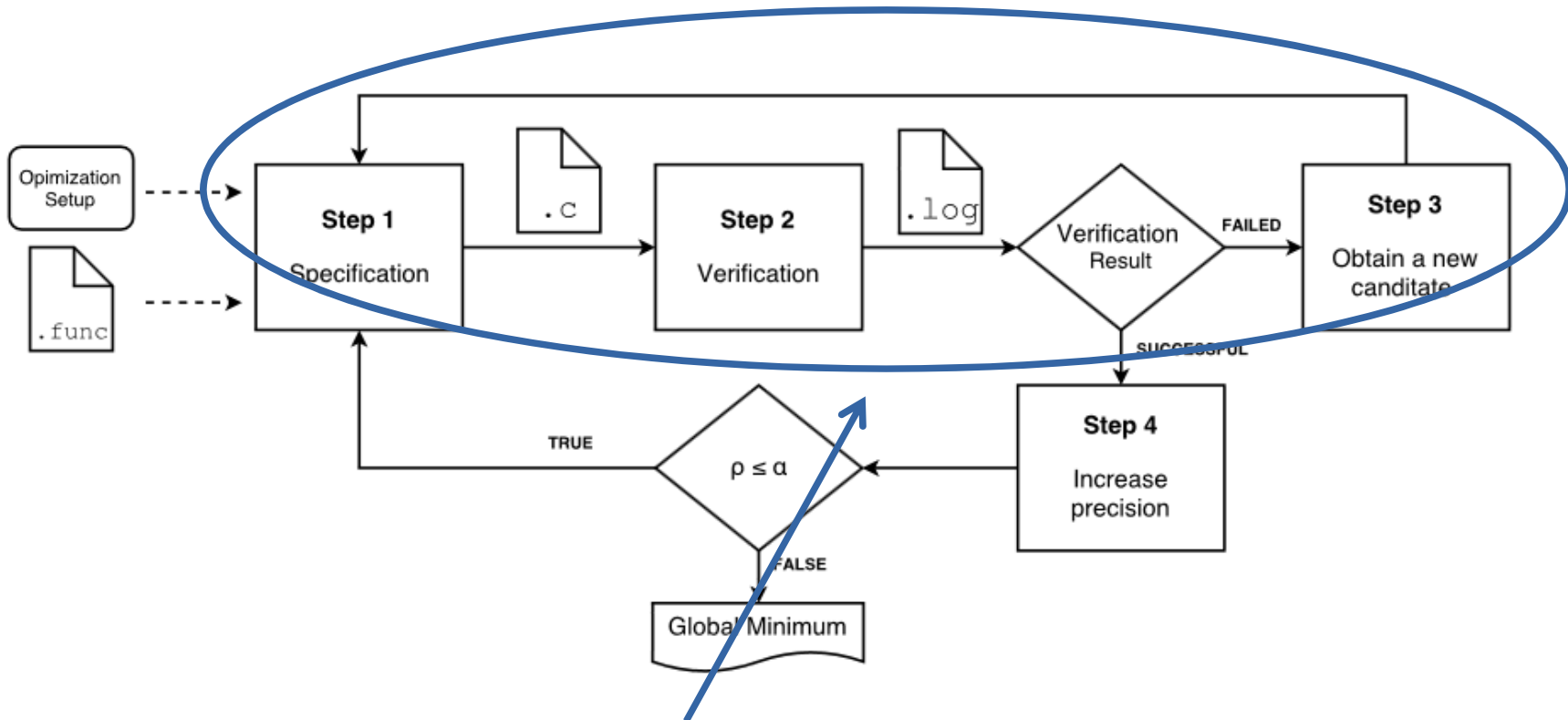
if the result is “failed”,  
we obtain a new  
minimum candidate  
function

# OptCE: Architecture



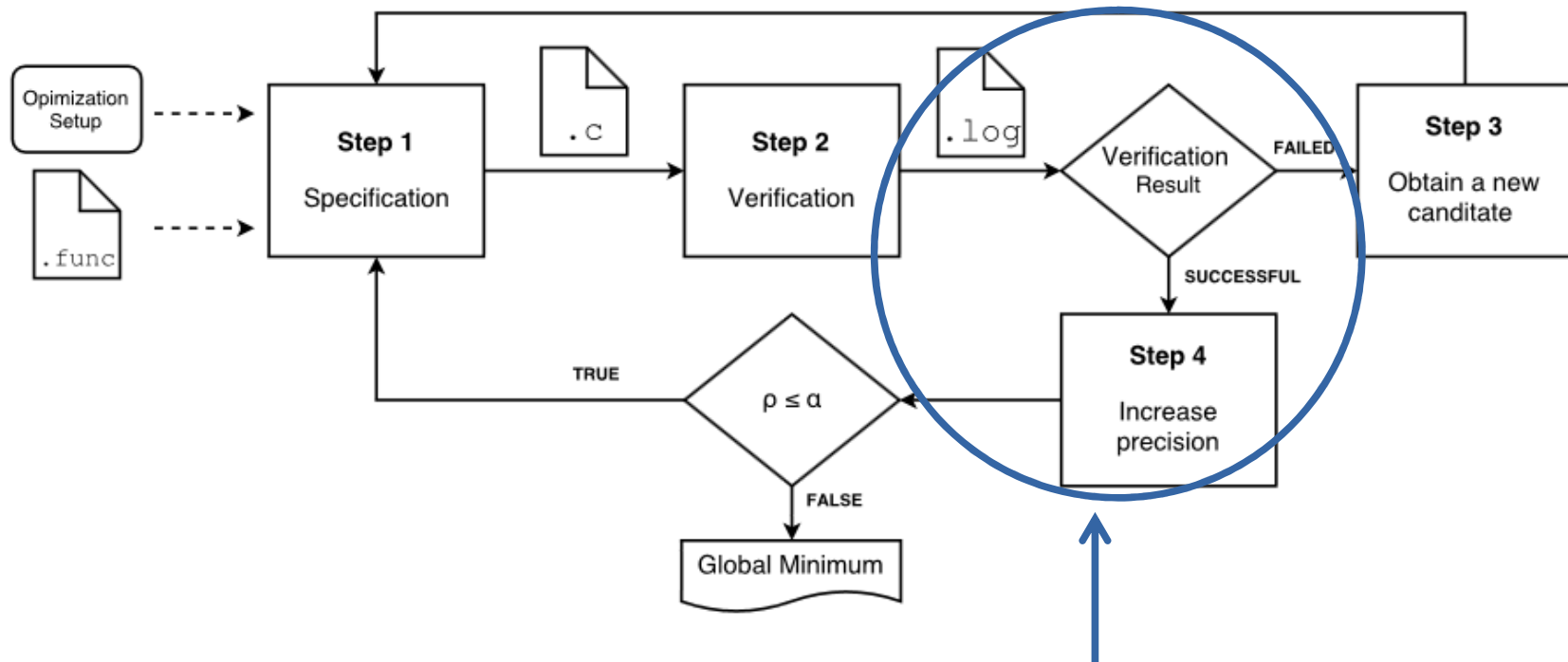
The value found is used to specify a new C file,  
The new candidate function value is used as the  
start of the algorithm

# OptCE: Architecture



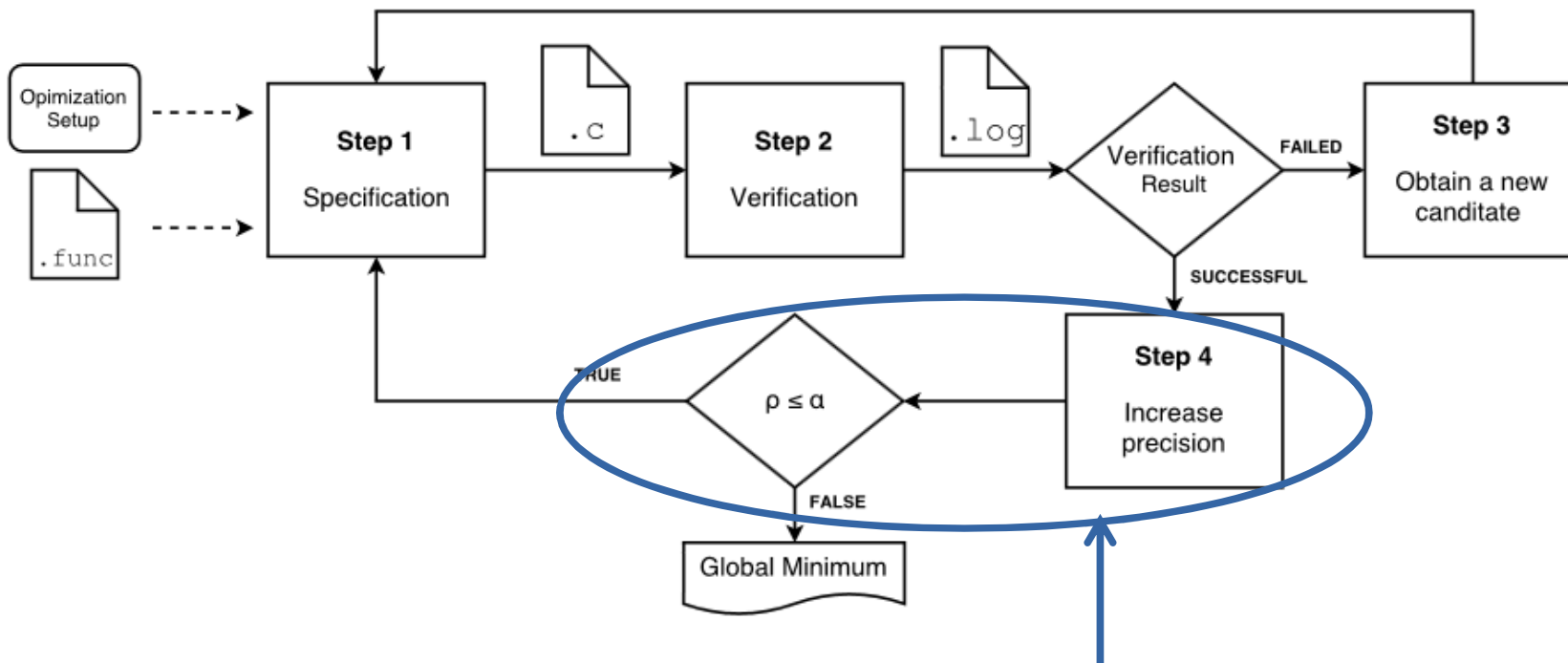
This cycle remains until the check is **SUCCESSFUL**.

# OptCE: Architecture



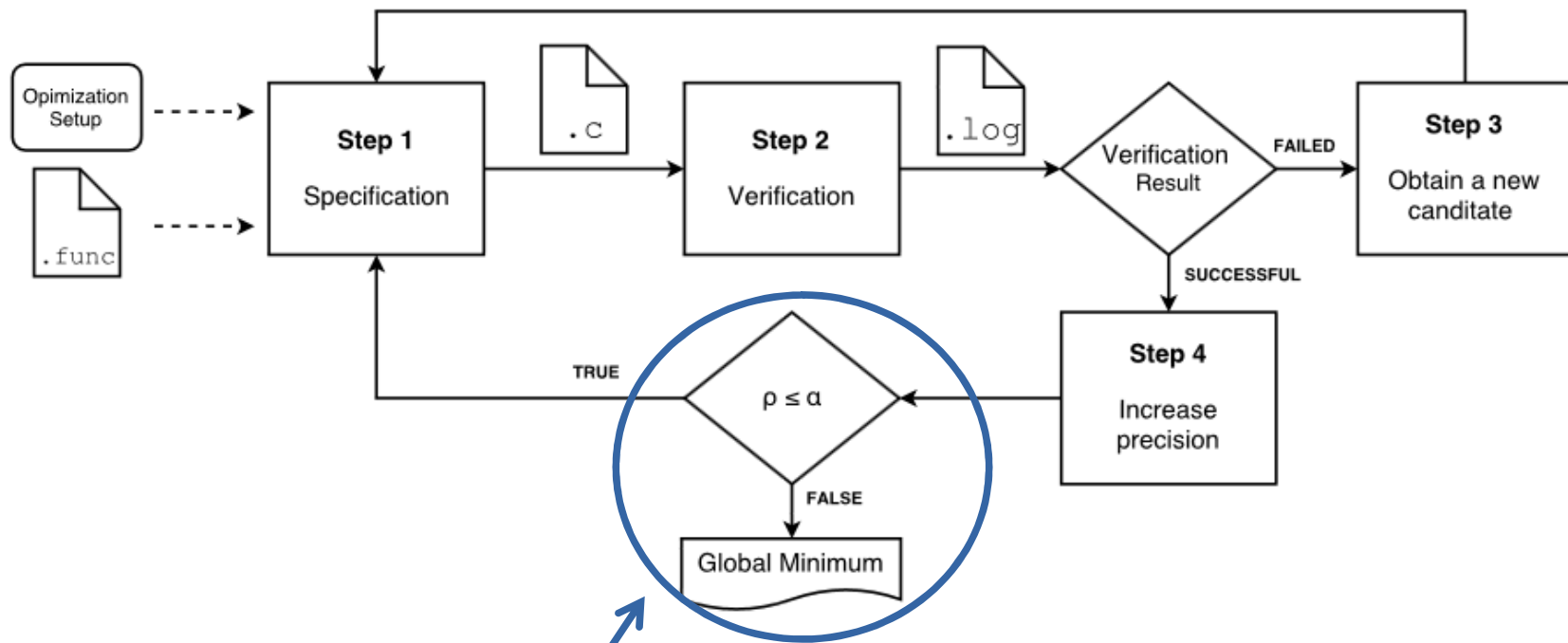
When the check is SUCCESSFUL, it means that we have found the global minimum of the function with the defined precision

# OptCE: Architecture



Precision is incremented and checked if it still belongs to the desired precision limit

# OptCE: Architecture



If not (FALSE), we find the global minimum wanted with that precision.  
If yes (TRUE), we update the precision in the algorithm at runtime to generate a new specification

# OptCE: Input File

- Format adopted for constraint matrices
- Ex: Input file for function *adjiman*

$$\begin{bmatrix} x_{11} & x_{12} \\ x_{21} & x_{22} \\ \dots & \dots \\ x_{n1} & x_{n2} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$Fobj = \cos^2(x_1) * \sin^2(x_2) - ( x_1 / (x_2 * x_2 + 1) );$$

#

$$A = [-1 \ 2; -1 \ 1];$$

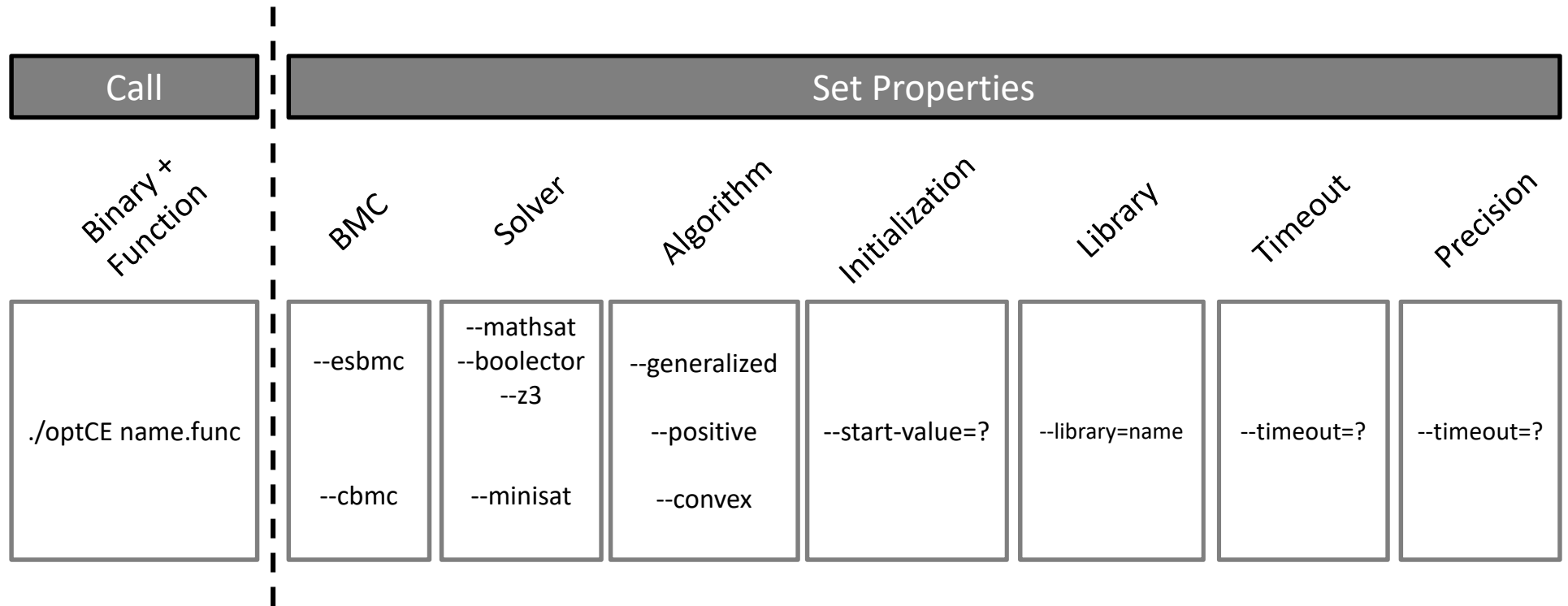
- Mathematical functions have been rewritten to simplify the verification process
- The user can write the math function and insert it into the OptCE math library

# OptCE Features

- **BMC Configuration:** CBMC or ESBMC
- **Solver Configuration:** Boolector, Z3, MathSAT, MiniSAT
- **Algorithm Configuration:** CEGIO-G, CEGIO-S, CEGIO-F
- **Initialization:** Set the optimization start point
- **Insert Library:** Insert personal libraries with math functions
- **Timeout:** configures the time limit, in seconds
- **Precision:** set the desired precision, number of decimal places of a solution



# Optimizing via OptCE



# Experimental Evaluation

- Objectives
  - Evaluate the performance of the proposed algorithms
  - Check the performance of the SAT and SMT solvers for optimizing the functions
  - Compare the methodology with traditional techniques, such as: genetic algorithm, particle swarm, pattern search, simulated annealing and nonlinear programming

# Experimental Evaluation

- Configuration of Experiments
  - A set of 10 functions used for testing optimization algorithms. These have different characteristics, such as: differentiable or non-differentiable, separable or non-separable, unimodal or multimodal etc.

#	Benchmark	Domain	Global Minimum
1	Alpine 1	$-10 \leq x_i \leq 10$	$f(0,0) = 0$
2	Cosine	$-1 \leq x_i \leq 1$	$f(0,0) = -0,2$
3	Styblinski Tang	$-5 \leq x_i \leq 5$	$f(2.903,2.903) = -78.332$
4	Zirilli	$-10 \leq x_i \leq 10$	$f(1.046,0) \approx -0,3523$
5	Booth	$-10 \leq x_i \leq 10$	$f(1,3) = 0$
6	Himmelblau	$-5 \leq x_i \leq 5$	$f(3,2) = 0$
7	Leon	$-2 \leq x_i \leq 2$	$f(1,1) = 0$
8	Zettl	$-5 \leq x_i \leq 10$	$f(0.029,0) = -0.0037$
9	Sum Square	$-10 \leq x_i \leq 10$	$f(0,0) = 0$
10	Rotated Ellipse	$-500 \leq x_i \leq 500$	$f(0,0) = 0$

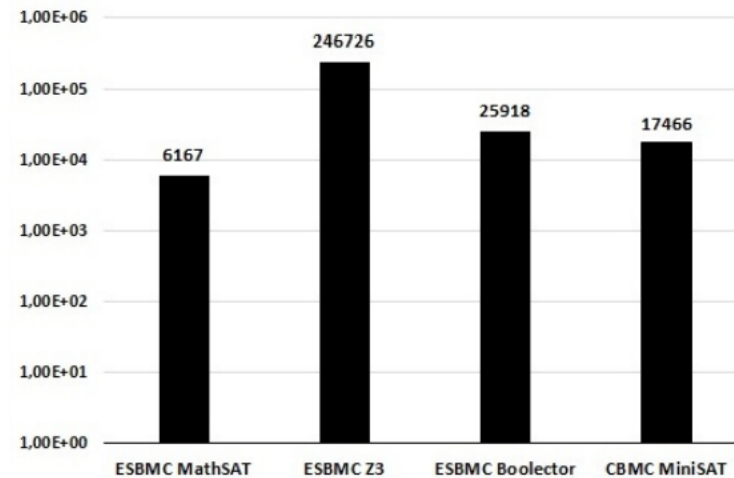
# Experimental Evaluation

- Configuration of Experiments
  - CEGIO-G Algorithm { --generalized } - was employed in all functions
  - CEGIO-S Algorithm { --positive } - was applied to functions Booth, Himmelblau and Leon
  - CEGIO-F Algorithm { --convex } - was used for functions Zettl, Rotated Ellipse and Sum Square

# Experimental Evaluation

- Experimental Results - CEGIO-G { --generalized }

#	ESBMC			CBMC
	MathSAT (s)	Z3(s)	Boolector(s)	MiniSAT(s)
1	1068	105192	3387	5344
2	4130	80481	5003	8509
3	443	37778	2027	2438
4	468	387	190	1143
5	7	1244	4016	2
6	12	14205	6217	4
7	5	2443	212	2
8	13	753	389	9
9	18	4171	4438	13
10	3	72	39	2



- Considering the proposed combinations, the optimization time varies significantly, where ESBMC + MathSAT is 2.8 times faster than CBMC + MiniSAT, while ESBMC + Z3 presents higher execution time.

# Experimental Evaluation

- Experimental Results - CEGIO-S { --positive }

#	--positive				--generalized			
	ESBMC			CBMC	ESBMC			CBMC
	MathSAT (s)	Z3(s)	Boolector(s)	MiniSAT(s)	MathSAT(s)	Z3(s)	Boolector(s)	MiniSAT(s)
5	3	<1	1	3	7	1244	4016	2
6	4	1	1	2	12	14205	6217	4
7	3	<1	1	2	5	2443	212	2

- The benchmarks executed with the --positive flag had the time reduced considerably, therefore, no checks are made in the negative domain, which reduces the search space.

# Experimental Evaluation

- Experimental Results – CEGIO-F { --convex }

#	--convex				--generalized			
	ESBMC			CBMC	ESBMC			CBMC
	MathSAT (s)	Z3 (s)	Boolector (s)	MiniSAT (s)	MathSAT (s)	Z3 (s)	Boolector (s)	MiniSAT (s)
8	15	6	21	5	13	753	389	9
9	14	3	19	5	18	4171	4438	13
10	3	1	2	2	3	72	39	2

- The tests with the benchmarks 8,9,10 using the flag -convex presented a significant reduction in the optimization time, this because, with each step of the verification the search space is reduced.

# Experimental Evaluation

- Experimental Results – CEGIO algorithms x traditional techniques

#	OptCE			GA		ParSwarm		PatSearch		SA		NLP	
	Configuration	R%	T(s)	R%	T(s)	R%	T(s)	R%	T(s)	R%	T(s)	R%	T(s)
1	G + ESBMC + MathSAT	100	1068	29.1	1	22.2	3	16	4	0.4	1	4.8	9
2	G + ESBMC + MathSAT	100	4130	100	9	9.8	1	96.7	3	88.5	2	28.4	2
3	G + ESBMC + MathSAT	100	443	68.1	9	47.8	1	51.8	3	99.5	1	35.8	2
4	G + ESBMC + Boolector	100	190	95.7	9	53.9	1	98.8	3	74.4	1	62.5	2
5	P + ESBMC + Z3	100	< 1	100	10	100	2	100	6	93.5	1	100	2
6	P + ESBMC + Z3	100	1	42.4	9	43.9	1	26	3	21	1	35	2
7	P + ESBMC + Z3	100	< 1	84.4	1	80.3	2	1	7	24.3	1	100	4
8	C + CBMC + MiniSAT	100	5	100	9	48.1	1	99.8	4	26.4	1	100	3
9	C + ESBMC + Z3	100	3	100	9	71.5	1	100	4	96.9	1	100	2
10	C + ESBMC + Z3	100	1	100	9	100	2	100	7	99.8	1	100	2

- The great difference of the OptCE in relation to the other techniques is the rate of success. While the other technicians get stuck in local minima, OptCE finds the global minimum.



# Conclusion

- The OptCE tool formalizes a new optimization proposal, which is based on the counter-example analysis of software verifiers.
- This work allowed to implement the GEGIOs algorithms.
- The comparisons show that the approach evolved among the CEGIO algorithms, proposing better and more specific solutions in the case of convex and non-negative functions.
- It is also seen that the tool hit rate is higher than the other analysis techniques.

# Future work

- Incorporate checks using other solvers with the MiniSAT.
- Adapt the tool to run in different cores, increasing the optimization time linearly.
- Improve the input file.