

# Non-blocking Point to Point Communications

# MPI\_Isend and MPI\_Irecv

```
int MPI_Isend(  
    const void *buf,  
    int count,  
    MPI_Datatype datatype,  
    int dest,  
    int tag,  
    MPI_Comm comm,  
    MPI_Request *request)
```

```
int MPI_Irecv(  
    void *buf,  
    int count,  
    MPI_Datatype datatype,  
    int source,  
    int tag,  
    MPI_Comm comm,  
    MPI_Request * request)
```

- You will notice that `MPI_Isend` and `MPI_Irecv` are very similar to `MPI_Send` and `MPI_Recv`. There are two difference:
  - They both include a `request` variable – more on that later
  - `MPI_Irecv` does not have a status variable – this is because the receive is not blocking and so `MPI_Irecv` actually exits before the communication is necessarily finished and so we do not know the status of the communication at this point

# An example with non-blocking sends and receives

```
#include <mpi.h>
#include <iostream>
#include <cstdlib>
#include <time.h>
```

```
using namespace std;
```

```
int id, p;
```

```
int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
```

```
    MPI_Init(&argc, &argv);
```

```
    MPI_Comm_rank(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &id);
```

```
    MPI_Comm_size(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p);
```

```
    srand(time(NULL)+id*10);
```

```
    int tag_num = 1;
```

```
    if (id == 0)
    {
        MPI_Request* request=new MPI_Request[p-1];
        int *send_data = new int[p-1];

        for (int i = 1; i < p; i++)
        {
            send_data[i - 1] = rand();
            MPI_Isend(&send_data[i-1], 1, MPI_INT, i, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request[i-1]);
            cout << send_data[i-1] << " sent to processor " << i << endl;
            cout.flush();
        }
        MPI_Waitall(p - 1, request, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE);

        delete[] send_data;
        delete[] request;
    }
    else
    {
        int rcv_data;
        MPI_Request request;
        MPI_Irecv(&rcv_data, 1, MPI_INT, 0, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request);

        MPI_Wait(&request, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE);

        cout << rcv_data << " received on processor " << id << endl;
        cout.flush();
    }
    MPI_Finalize();
}
```

# Non-blocking communication

- At first glance this might seem to be doing exactly the same thing as the first example in the blocking communication lecture
  - Overall it does achieve the same thing, but some important differences:
    - The `MPI_Isend` and `MPI_Irecv` exit straight away without waiting for the communications to complete
    - The data will be sent in the background. You can carry out computations while the data is being sent:

```
MPI_Irecv(&recv_data, 1, MPI_INT, 0, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request);  
//You can do stuff here that doesn't require the communication to have finished  
MPI_Wait(&request, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE);
```
    - The data will be sent from processor zero to whichever process is first able to receive the data
    - Note that I have an array to store the send data. This is so that all values are still available until `MPI_Waitall`

# MPI\_Wait and MPI\_Waitall

- While it is useful to do things while waiting for the communications to finish, at some point you need to be able ensure that a communication has completed so that you can use the data that has been sent
  - This is what `MPI_Wait` and `MPI_Waitall` achieves
  - `MPI_Wait` is used to wait for a single communication to complete
  - `MPI_Waitall` is used to wait for a list of communications to complete
- Note that `MPI_Wait` and `MPI_Waitall` are blocking for the specific communications involved
  - It will continue once its specific communications are finished, irrespective of communications involving other processes

# MPI\_Wait and MPI\_Waitall

```
int MPI_Wait(  
    MPI_Request *request,  
    MPI_Status *status)
```

```
int MPI_Waitall(int count,  
    MPI_Request *request_list,  
    MPI_Status *status_list)
```

- `request` is a pointer to a single request object
  - This must match a single `MPI_Isend` or `MPI_Irecv`
- `status` is a pointer to an object which will receive the communication status
  - This can be `MPI_STATUS_IGNORE` if you do not need the status information
- `count` is the number of communications that `MPI_Waitall` will be processing
  - These can be a combination of `MPI_Isend` and `MPI_Irecv`s
- `request_list` is an array that contains `count` request objects, one for each communication
- `status_list` is an array of status objects in which the status of each communication will be stored
  - This can again be `MPI_STATUS_IGNORE`

# Sending from everyone to everyone

- This is now easy to achieve using non-blocking communications, but this is still less efficient than a collective operation (which we will cover later)
  - Typically do non-blocking communications such as this where processes are communicating with a subset of the other processes and where these subsets overlap
    - Domain decomposition is an example of this type of problem

# Sending from everyone to everyone

```
#include <mpi.h>
#include <iostream>
#include <cstdlib>
#include <time.h>
```

```
using namespace std;
```

```
int id, p;
```

```
int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
```

```
    MPI_Init(&argc, &argv);
```

```
    MPI_Comm_rank(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &id);
```

```
    MPI_Comm_size(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p);
```

```
    srand(time(NULL)+id*10);
```

```
    int tag_num = 1;
```

```
    MPI_Request* request = new MPI_Request[(p - 1)*2];
```

```
    double *send_data = new double[p];
```

```
    double *recv_data = new double[p];
```

```
    int cnt = 0;
```

```
    for (int i=0;i<p;i++)
```

```
        if (i != id)
```

```
        {
```

```
            MPI_Irecv(&recv_data[i], 1, MPI_DOUBLE, i, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request[cnt]);
```

```
            cnt++;
```

```
        }
```

```
        else recv_data[i] = 0;
```

```
    for (int i = 0; i<p; i++)
```

```
        if (i != id)
```

```
        {
```

```
            send_data[i] = (double)id / (double)p;
```

```
            MPI_Isend(&send_data[i], 1, MPI_DOUBLE, i, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request[cnt]);
```

```
            cnt++;
```

```
        }
```

```
        else send_data[i] = 0;
```

```
    MPI_Waitall(cnt, request, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE);
```

```
    for (int i = 0; i < p; i++)    cout << "Processor " << id << " recieved " << recv_data[i] << " from processor " << i << endl;
```

```
    delete[] request;
```

```
    delete[] recv_data;
```

```
    delete[] send_data;
```

```
    MPI_Finalize();
```

```
}
```



# A couple of things to notice...

- With the `MPI_Isend` I had to store the values of each of the data points as a separate variable in an array
  - This is because the data can be sent anytime until the `MPI_Waitall` is called
  - This means that the data musn't be change/overwritten or go out of scope within this interval
  - This is different to `MPI_Send`, where the data to be sent is buffered and/or actually sent by the time `MPI_Send` completes
  - The same is true of `MPI_Irecv`, though this is more obvious as you want to have the data
- You will notice that I set up the receives before the sends. This is because data can be sent as soon as there is a matching pair of sends and receives
  - Therefore slightly more efficient to have receive ready and waiting for a send
  - Possibly even more efficient to have receives and sends interleaved with an ordering such that some of the communications can get started while others are still being set up
    - Alternatively you can set up the receives, do some calculations, and then set up the sends
  - Remember that all the non-blocking communications are occurring in the background on a separate communications thread

Do Worksheet 2 Exercise 1

# Checking if communications are open

- In non-blocking communications it is sometimes useful to check if the communications are finished without requiring them to be finished
  - For instance, you could have a loop in which you do some work that does not require the data communication to be finished, with the loop continuing until the communication is finished
  - If you are repeatedly sending more data to a process to do calculations on, you could create the next receive as soon as the previous send has been done and then check if the communication has completed, more data being sent as soon as it completes
    - This should be the basis for worksheet 2 workshop exercise 1
- There are two functions for achieving this – `MPI_Test` and `MPI_Testall`

# MPI\_Test and MPI\_Testall

```
int MPI_Test(  
    MPI_Request *request,  
    int *flag,  
    MPI_Status *status)
```

```
int MPI_Testall(int count,  
    MPI_Request *request_list,  
    int *flag,  
    MPI_Status *status_list)
```

- These functions are similar to `MPI_Wait` and `MPI_Waitall` in terms of the required parameters
- The difference is the `flag` parameter, which is a pointer to an integer that will be 1 or 0 (true or false) depending on whether the communications associated with `request` or `request_list` have completed or not
  - Note that in `MPI_Testall` the flag will be true only if all the communications are finished

# Example using MPI\_Test and MPI\_Testall

- In this example we send a lot of data and do things (albeit not very useful things!) while waiting for the communication to finish

```
#include <mpi.h>
#include <iostream>
#include <cstdlib>
#include <time.h>

using namespace std;

int id, p;

void Do_Work(void)    //Some (not very useful) work
{
    int sum = 0;
    for (int i = 0; i < 100; i++) sum = sum + 10;
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
    MPI_Init(&argc, &argv);

    MPI_Comm_rank(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &id);
    MPI_Comm_size(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p);
    srand(time(NULL)+id*10);
```

```
    int tag_num = 1, sent_num = 100000, cnt = 0, flag = 0;

    if (id == 0)
    {
        MPI_Request* request = new MPI_Request[p - 1];
        int **send_data = new int*[p - 1];
        for (int i = 0; i < p - 1; i++)
        {
            send_data[i] = new int[sent_num];
            for (int j = 0; j < sent_num; j++)
                send_data[i][j] = rand();
        }

        for (int i = 1; i < p; i++)
            MPI_Isend(send_data[i-1], sent_num, MPI_INT, i, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request[i - 1]);

        while (MPI_Testall(p - 1, request, &flag, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE) == MPI_SUCCESS && flag == 0)
        {
            Do_Work();
            cnt++;
        }
    }
```

# Example using MPI\_Test and MPI\_Testall

```
        for (int i = 0; i < p - 1; i++)
            delete[] send_data[i];
        delete[] send_data;
        delete[] request;
    }
    else
    {
        int *recv_data = new int[sent_num];
        MPI_Request request;
        MPI_Irecv(recv_data, sent_num, MPI_INT, 0, tag_num, MPI_COMM_WORLD, &request);

        while (MPI_Test(&request, &flag, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE) == MPI_SUCCESS && flag == 0)
        {
            Do_Work();
            cnt++;
        }

        delete[] recv_data;
    }

    cout << "Process " << id << " did " << cnt << " cycles of work while waiting " << endl;
    cout.flush();

    MPI_Finalize();
}
```

- Note that I don't actually need to use the `MPI_Wait` or `MPI_Waitall` as I know that all the communications are complete when the while loop exits
- The reason why I have `(MPI_Test(&request, &flag, MPI_STATUS_IGNORE) == MPI_SUCCESS && flag == 0)` as the condition is so that I can both call `MPI_Test` and check the value of the flag within the condition
  - In C/C++ conditions are evaluated from left to right and therefore the `MPI_Test` is done first
  - The check for `MPI_SUCCESS` is not in expectation of it not being a success, but rather so that the function can be called – If the return is not a success as it implies a communication failure and the program is likely to crash anyway

# Communications between all processes

- We have shown that non-blocking communications help when sending data between multiple processes
  - Also allows you to do things while waiting
  - Will also continue as soon as a communication is finished – communications don't need to “wait their turn”
- Non-blocking communications are generally better than blocking communications
  - Best alternative when communicating with a number of “neighbouring processes”, but not all the processes
    - E.g. processes connected as graph
    - This is what will be the case in, for instance, domain decomposition – more on this later
- If you want to communicate between all processes at the same time collective communications are generally best

Do Worksheet 2 Exercise 3