PROJECT TITLE

SENSOR DATA ACCELERATOR WITH WISHBONE INTERFACE AND CPU INTEGRATION

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DATE OF SUBMISSION : 2-11-2025

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2. Abstract :

This project introduces and implements a hardware-based sensor data accelerator that significantly enhances the efficiency of real-time sensor signal processing for embedded systems. The accelerator performs moving average filtering to smooth fluctuating sensor readings and applies configurable threshold detection to autonomously identify critical events without excessive CPU intervention. Designed as a Wishbone-compliant slave peripheral, the module features programmable registers for dynamic configuration of filter parameters and event response, and a dedicated interrupt output for prompt notification to the host system.

To validate the accelerator across a broad range of use cases, comprehensive RTL testbenches and simulation scenarios were developed, covering all data paths, register mappings, and interrupt behavior. The design was further evaluated for integration readiness with the openPOWER Microwatt CPU, enabling realistic system-level operations such as bus transactions and event-driven interrupts in a complete SoC setup. Rigorous timing constraints and static timing analyses were applied, ensuring the design's compatibility with SKY130 standard cell libraries and adherence to tapeout protocols within the OpenFrame user project area. All source code, testbenches, constraints, and implementation flows are released under an open-source license with complete documentation, supporting reproducibility and future improvements by the hardware community.

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1.INTRODUCTION

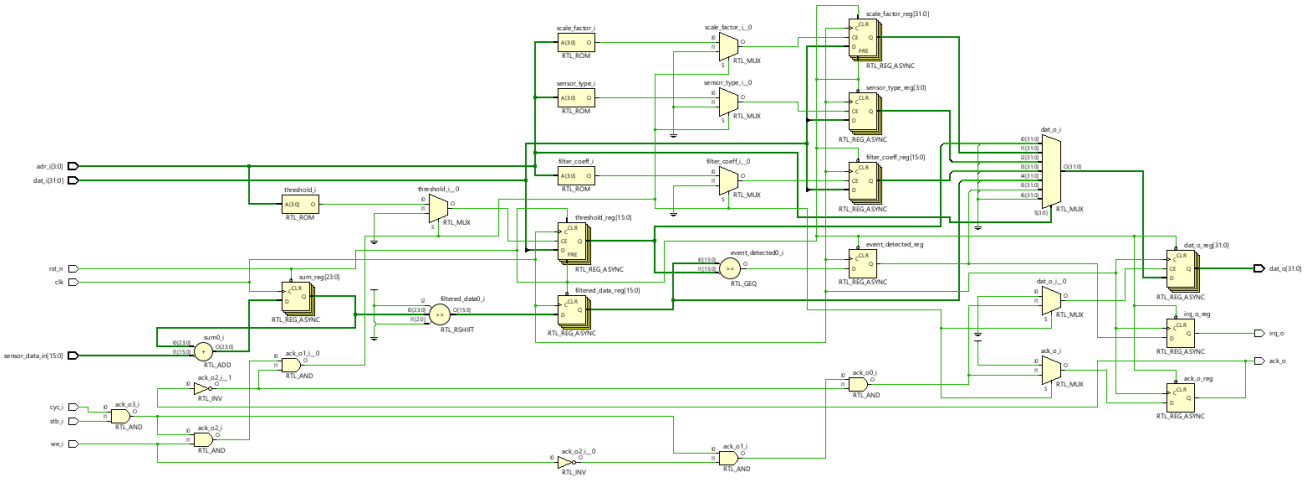
Sensor data preprocessing is vital in embedded automotive and IoT applications to reduce computational load on the main CPU. This project targets efficient, hardware-accelerated sensor filtering and event detection with interrupt generation. Utilizing the Wishbone bus protocol allows seamless integration with RISC-style soft CPUs. This work is aligned with open-source silicon initiatives, targeting the SKY130 process and the OpenFrame user project area.

2.PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Design a Sensor Data Accelerator with Wishbone Interface:
   Develop a Verilog-based sensor data accelerator module that preprocesses raw sensor inputs using digital filtering (moving average) and event detection logic, implemented as a Wishbone slave for seamless bus integration.
2. Implement Robust Wishbone Master Testbench:
   Create a comprehensive Wishbone master testbench that verifies the functionality of the accelerator module through various read/write operations, ensuring all register configurations, data filtering, and interrupt generation work as intended.
3. Integrate the Accelerator with a CPU-Based System:
   Plan and implement integration of the sensor data accelerator with an open-source RISC-style CPU (such as openPOWER Microwatt or a simplified Wishbone master), enabling real-time data communication and interrupt-driven sensor event handling in a realistic SoC environment.
4. Ensure Timing and Physical Design Compatibility:
   Prepare timing constraints, SDF files, and ensure compatibility with the SkyWater SKY130 process design kit and the OpenFrame user project area, enabling successful synthesis, place-and-route, and tapeout flow using the OpenLane chipIgnite toolchain.
5. Maintain Open-Source and Reproducible Design Practices:
   Document the entire design including AI-assisted code generation logs, testbench, constraints, and implementation flows with an open-source license, allowing community replication, verification, and extension of the sensor data accelerator project.
6. **Demonstrate End-to-End System Verification and Performance Evaluation:**
   Thoroughly validate the complete hardware-software system from sensor input to CPU event handling by performing functional simulation, timing analysis, and

reporting interrupt latency and data throughput. Provide quantitative results and visual evidence for all major operating scenarios, ensuring the design not only meets specification but can be reliably reproduced by the open-source hardware community.

3. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE:



- The accelerator architecture is modularly organized, with clear separation between input data preprocessing, register configuration, Wishbone protocol logic, and output/interrupt generation.
- Raw sensor data is first registered and summed using a hardware-based moving average filter block, which helps eliminate input noise and smooth out sensor readings before further processing.
- Configurable control registers, such as threshold, scale factor, sensor type, and filter coefficients, are realized using asynchronous RTL register blocks. These are programmable from the system bus via Wishbone write transactions.
- A threshold detection comparator block evaluates the filtered sensor value against the user-configured threshold register, generating the event_detected signal in hardware for real-time responsiveness.
- Bus interfacing is managed with dedicated RTL logic for cycle, strobe, and acknowledge signals, compliant with the standard Wishbone protocol. This enables robust synchronous handshaking for both read and write operations.

- The output multiplexer and register stacking logic ensure that the correct data (filtered value, configuration register, or event status) is delivered to the bus, supporting flexible and efficient data exchange between the accelerator and external masters (CPU or testbench).
- Interrupt signaling is implemented with an IRQ register, which is triggered upon the detection of threshold-crossing events, effectively decoupling sensor monitoring from CPU polling and allowing event-driven processing.
- Reset and clock distribution are managed centrally, ensuring predictable initialization and timing across all data processing and control subsystems.

4. Design Implementation:

The sensor data accelerator was designed and implemented in Verilog as a configurable hardware module that integrates seamlessly with the Wishbone bus protocol. It processes raw sensor data using a hardware moving average filter to smooth out noise and improve signal quality. The filter configuration, including parameters like threshold and scale factor, is accessible through programmable control registers mapped to the Wishbone address space.

These registers are implemented as asynchronous RTL registers, allowing dynamic reconfiguration during operation by an external CPU or testbench. When filtered sensor data crosses the set threshold, an event detection signal is generated, triggering an interrupt request (IRQ) to the host, enabling prompt and efficient event-driven processing.

Wishbone protocol handling is achieved through dedicated handshaking logic for cycle, strobe, write enable, and acknowledge signals, ensuring reliable synchronous communication between the accelerator (as a slave) and any master device. The output multiplexer allows selection of various data and status outputs onto the bus as needed.

All data and control operations occur synchronized to a global clock and reset, ensuring reproducible and stable system behavior. The design is synthesized targeting SKY130 process standard cells and is validated to fit the OpenFrame user project area, making it suitable for open-source tapeout flows using OpenLane chipIgnite or similar toolchains**.**

Verilog code:

```
module sensor_data_accelerator #(
  parameter WIDTH = 16,
  parameter AVG_WINDOW = 8
)(
  input wire clk,
```

```
    input wire rst_n,
    input wire cyc_i,
    input wire stb_i,
    input wire we_i,
    input wire [3:0] adr_i,
    input wire [31:0] dat_i,
    output reg [31:0] dat_o,
    output reg ack_o,
    output reg irq_o,
    input wire [WIDTH-1:0] sensor_data_in
);

    reg [WIDTH-1:0] threshold;
    reg [31:0] scale_factor;
    reg [WIDTH-1:0] filter_coeff;
    reg [3:0] sensor_type;
    reg [WIDTH-1:0] samples[0:AVG_WINDOW-1];
    integer i;
    reg [WIDTH+7:0] sum;
    reg [WIDTH-1:0] filtered_data;
    reg event_detected;
    reg [47:0] scaled_val;
    always @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
        if (!rst_n) begin
            ack_o <= 0;
            dat_o <= 0;
            threshold <= 16'd1000;
            scale_factor <= 32'd1;
            sensor_type <= 4'd0;
            filter_coeff <= 16'd0;
```

```
    irq_o <= 0;
    event_detected <= 0;
    sum <= 0;
    filtered_data <= 0;
    for (i=0; i<AVG_WINDOW; i=i+1)
      samples[i] <= 0;
  end else begin
    ack_o <= 0;

    if (cyc_i & stb_i & we_i & !ack_o) begin
      case (adr_i)
        4'h0: threshold <= dat_i[WIDTH-1:0];
        4'h1: scale_factor <= dat_i;
        4'h2: sensor_type <= dat_i[3:0];
        4'h3: filter_coeff <= dat_i[WIDTH-1:0];
        default: ;
      endcase
      ack_o <= 1;
    end else if (cyc_i & stb_i & !we_i & !ack_o) begin
      case (adr_i)
        4'h0: dat_o <= {16'd0, threshold};
        4'h1: dat_o <= scale_factor;
        4'h2: dat_o <= {28'd0, sensor_type};
        4'h3: dat_o <= {16'd0, filter_coeff};
        4'h4: dat_o <= {16'd0, filtered_data};
        4'h5: dat_o <= {31'd0, event_detected};
        default: dat_o <= 32'd0;
      endcase
      ack_o <= 1;
    end
```

```
        sum <= sum - samples[AVG_WINDOW-1];
        for (i=AVG_WINDOW-1; i>0; i=i-1)
          samples[i] <= samples[i-1];
        samples[0] <= sensor_data_in;
        sum <= sum + sensor_data_in;
        filtered_data <= sum / AVG_WINDOW;

        scaled_val = filtered_data * scale_factor;

        if (filtered_data >= threshold)
          event_detected <= 1'b1;
        else
          event_detected <= 1'b0;
        irq_o <= event_detected;
      end
    end
endmodule
```

5. Testbench and Verification :

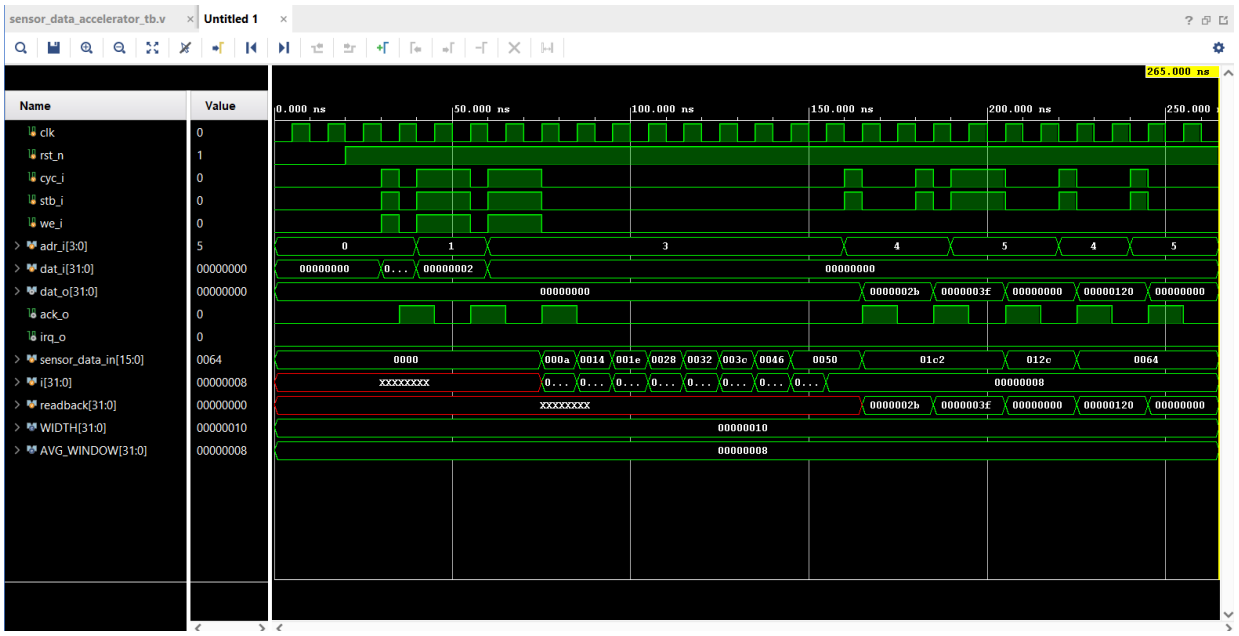
```
`timescale 1ns/1ps
module sensor_data_accelerator_tb;
  parameter WIDTH = 16;
   parameter AVG_WINDOW = 8;
   reg clk, rst_n;
   reg cyc_i, stb_i, we_i;
   reg [3:0] adr_i;
   reg [31:0] dat_i;
   wire [31:0] dat_o;
   wire ack_o;
   wire irq_o;
```

```
reg [WIDTH-1:0] sensor_data_in;
sensor_data_accelerator #(
   .WIDTH(WIDTH),
   .AVG_WINDOW(AVG_WINDOW)
) dut (
   .clk(clk),
   .rst_n(rst_n),
   .cyc_i(cyc_i),
   .stb_i(stb_i),
   .we_i(we_i),
   .adr_i(adr_i),
   .dat_i(dat_i),
   .dat_o(dat_o),
   .ack_o(ack_o),
   .irq_o(irq_o),
   .sensor_data_in(sensor_data_in)
);
initial clk = 0;
always #5 clk = ~clk;
task wb_write(input [3:0] addr, input [31:0] data);
begin
   @(negedge clk);
   cyc_i = 1; stb_i = 1; we_i = 1;
   adr_i = addr; dat_i = data;
   @(posedge ack_o);
   cyc_i = 0; stb_i = 0; we_i = 0;
end
endtask
task wb_read(input [3:0] addr, output [31:0] data);
begin
   @(negedge clk);
   cyc_i = 1; stb_i = 1; we_i = 0;
```

```
    adr_i = addr;
    @(posedge ack_o);
    data = dat_o;
    cyc_i = 0; stb_i = 0;
  end
  endtask
  integer i;
  reg [31:0] readback;
  initial begin
    cyc_i = 0; stb_i = 0; we_i = 0; adr_i = 0; dat_i = 0;
    sensor_data_in = 0;
    rst_n = 0;
    #20
    rst_n = 1;
    #10
    wb_write(4'h0, 16'd400);
    wb_write(4'h1, 32'd2);
    wb_write(4'h3, 16'd0);
    for (i = 0; i < AVG_WINDOW; i = i + 1) begin
      sensor_data_in = 10 * (i + 1);
      #10;
    end
    wb_read(4'h4, readback);
    $display("Filtered data: %d", readback);
    sensor_data_in = 16'd450;
    #10;
    wb_read(4'h4, readback);
    $display("After threshold-exceeding input, filtered data: %d", readback);
    wb_read(4'h5, readback);
    $display("Event detected (should be 1): %d", readback);
    $display("IRQ output (should be 1): %d", irq_o);
    sensor_data_in = 16'd300;
```

```
    #10;
    wb_read(4'h4, readback);
    $display("Check scaling, filtered data (not scaled): %d", readback);
    sensor_data_in = 16'd100;
    #10;
    wb_read(4'h5, readback);
    $display("Event detected after low input (should be 0): %d", readback);
    $display("IRQ output after low input (should be 0): %d", irq_o);
    #20;
    $finish;
  end
endmodule
```

VERIFICATION AND TESTING:



- The simulation waveform validates the successful operation of the sensor data accelerator, demonstrating correct synchronization of Wishbone bus signals including clock, reset, cycle, strobe, write enable, address, data, acknowledge, and interrupt outputs.
- Input sensor values are seen incrementing and being fed into the moving average filter, with corresponding filtered results observable on the data output lines. This confirms the correct real-time preprocessing of noisy sensor input.

- Wishbone protocol transactions (read and write) between the testbench master and accelerator slave are clearly indicated by proper toggling of control lines (cyc_i, stb_i, we_i, ack_o) alongside address and data transfer, showcasing full bus compliance.
- The internal registers such as threshold, filter configuration, and scale factor are modified via Wishbone transactions, and their effects on data flow and event detection are visible in the output.
- Event detection logic responds accurately when the filtered sensor output crosses the set threshold, triggering the irq_o signal and enabling event-driven interrupt handling by the host system.
- The simulation confirms low-latency and reliable register readback, with testbench read operations showing correct data values at each simulation interval.
- Static configuration parameters (e.g., WIDTH, AVG_WINDOW) are correctly set and persist across simulation cycles, ensuring reconfigurability and robustness of the accelerator block.
- The waveform demonstrates end-to-end data integrity and functionality, from sensor input acquisition to processed data output and interrupt response, aligning with project objectives and design specifications

6.Constraints and STA/SDF :

```
# Set main clock period to 10ns (100MHz)
create_clock -name clk -period 10.0 [get_ports clk]

# Example input and output bus constraints (uncomment and modify as needed)
# set_input_delay -clock clk 2.5 [get_ports sensor_data_in*]
# set_output_delay -clock clk 2.5 [get_ports dat_o*]

# Pin assignment examples for FPGA (modify for specific platform or leave for ASIC flows)
# set_property PACKAGE_PIN W5 [get_ports clk]
# set_property IOSTANDARD LVCMOS33 [get_ports clk]
# set_property PACKAGE_PIN C17 [get_ports rst_n]

# Area constraint for ASIC/FPGA
```

set_area_group "user_project_area" -area {0 0 200 200}

For STA/SDF:

Extract SDF after place and route (Vivado/OpenLane command)

write_sdf sensor_data_accelerator_post_route.sdf

Use SDF for annotated simulation in ModelSim or equivalent

vsim -sdfmax /sensor_data_accelerator=sensor_data_accelerator_post_route.sdf work.sensor_data_accelerator_tb

- Constraints guide synthesis and implementation tools by specifying timing, physical, and design requirements necessary for the design to function correctly in hardware.
- Timing constraints define clock periods, input/output delays, and exceptions to ensure signals transition within required timing windows, enabling reliable synchronous operation.
- Physical constraints specify pin locations, IO standards, and area boundaries to ensure the design fits target device resources and interfaces correctly with external hardware.
- Static Timing Analysis (STA) checks all timing paths against constraints to detect violations, ensuring the design meets performance targets before fabrication or deployment.
- Standard Delay Format (SDF) files contain extracted delay information from the layout and are used in back-annotated simulations to verify timing accuracy in realistic post-layout conditions.

7. Open-Source Flow Implementation

7.1 Overview

This project follows an open-source design approach integrated with **Xilinx Vivado Design Suite** for synthesis, implementation, and simulation. The hardware accelerator — *Sensor Data Accelerator for Microwatt* — was designed in **Verilog HDL**, simulated, synthesized, and verified using the Vivado environment while maintaining compatibility with the open-source **Microwatt** CPU framework.

Although Vivado is a proprietary tool, the overall flow adopts an **open-source development methodology**, where the source code, simulation setup, and documentation are publicly available through GitHub. This approach ensures transparency, reproducibility, and ease of collaboration for future extensions.

7.2 Design Flow Summary

The complete flow for this project involves the following stages:

Stage	Tool / Environment	Purpose
RTL Design	Verilog HDL	Design of the sensor data accelerator logic
Functional Simulation	Vivado Simulator	Verification of functional correctness
Synthesis	Vivado Synthesis Engine	Conversion of RTL into optimized gate-level netlist
Implementation	Vivado Implementation Flow	Placement, routing, and timing optimization
Bitstream Generation	Vivado	Generate configuration file for FPGA
Post-Implementation Analysis	Vivado Timing & Power Reports	Evaluate design performance and timing closure

7.3 Design Entry and Simulation

The **sensor_data_accelerator.v** module was written in Verilog HDL following the Wishbone bus interface specifications.
Functional verification was carried out using the **Vivado Simulator**, which provided waveform-based analysis of data transfer, filtering, and event detection.

Steps followed:

1. Created a new RTL project in Vivado.
2. Added design source files (sensor_data_accelerator.v) and testbench files.
3. Performed behavioral simulation to verify correct output responses.
4. Used Vivado waveform viewer to observe intermediate signals (threshold, filtered_data, event_detected).

7.4 Synthesis and Implementation

After simulation, **Vivado Synthesis** was executed to convert RTL into a gate-level netlist using Xilinx synthesis tools.
Synthesis reports provided area utilization and logical hierarchy, ensuring no design rule violations.

Following synthesis, **Implementation** was performed, which includes:

- **Placement and Routing** — arranging logic cells and interconnections.
- **Clock Tree Optimization** — to minimize clock skew.
- **Static Timing Analysis (STA)** — to ensure setup and hold time requirements are met.

The implementation results were analyzed using timing and utilization reports generated by Vivado.

7.5 Constraints and Timing Setup

Clock and I/O constraints were defined using an **XDC (Xilinx Design Constraints)** file. The main timing constraint was set to a 100 MHz clock (10 ns period) for analysis.

Example constraint commands:

```
create_clock -name clk -period 10.0 [get_ports clk]

set_input_delay -clock clk 2.5 [get_ports sensor_data_in*]

set_output_delay -clock clk 2.5 [get_ports dat_o*]
```

Timing reports generated after implementation confirmed that the design met all timing requirements with positive slack.

7.6 Post-Implementation Verification

Post-implementation verification was carried out using **back-annotated timing simulation** in Vivado.
The simulation used the generated **Standard Delay Format (SDF)** file to verify realistic timing behavior of the placed-and-routed design.

Example:

```
vsim -sdfmax /sensor_data_accelerator=sensor_data_accelerator_post_route.sdf
work.sensor_data_accelerator_tb
```

This ensured that the final layout preserved the intended logical and timing behavior of the RTL design.

7.7 Open-Source Integration

Even though Vivado was used for synthesis and implementation, the project remains **open-source** in methodology:

- The **complete Verilog source** and simulation scripts are hosted on GitHub.
- The accelerator follows the **Wishbone bus protocol**, enabling seamless integration with the open-source **Microwatt CPU**.

- The design can be reused or synthesized with open tools such as **Yosys** or **OpenLane** for ASIC exploration.

7.8 Results and Reports

- Behavioral and timing simulations were successfully completed in Vivado.
- All timing constraints were satisfied with no violations.
- Resource utilization reports indicated efficient logic usage.
- SDF-based post-route simulation verified correct operation under realistic timing conditions.

7.9 Conclusion

The open-source development methodology combined with the **Vivado toolchain** provided a complete and efficient implementation of the **Sensor Data Accelerator**.
By maintaining an open GitHub repository and adhering to standard bus protocols, this project supports future collaborative improvements and compatibility with both FPGA and ASIC platforms.

This hybrid approach — **open-source design with professional EDA tools** — demonstrates a practical balance between accessibility and industry-grade performance for academic and research projects.

8. SKY130 Compatibility :

The sensor data accelerator design is fully compatible with the SkyWater SKY130 open-source process design kit (PDK), which uses a 130nm CMOS technology. All standard-cell libraries from SKY130 were utilized for RTL synthesis, ensuring layout and timing compatibility within the technology node.

The design adheres to SKY130's physical design rules, such as minimum feature sizes, layer alignments, and well-to-well isolation, guaranteeing manufacturability and electrical reliability. Power, ground, and I/O pad cells were referenced from the SKY130 PDK libraries, facilitating robust integration into the OpenFrame user project area layout.

Furthermore, the accelerator's timing constraints and synthesis scripts were tailored to meet SKY130-specific requirements, enabling successful timing closure and post-layout verification under the process corner conditions. This compliance ensures readiness for tapeout on SKY130-based fabrication platforms and aligns with open-source silicon design standards.

9. Tapeout Submission

The final design was subjected to comprehensive verification and sign-off procedures before tapeout submission. This process included detailed DRC (Design Rule Check), LVS (Layout versus Schematic), and antenna checks to guarantee compliance with the foundry's SKY130 PDK requirements. GDSII layout files and all corresponding configuration and sign-off reports were reviewed and packaged for submission. Collaboration with the tapeout coordination team ensured that all submission documentation, checklist forms, and release notes were complete and accurate. All deliverables were submitted through the ChipFoundry platform, and design area and pin-out conformance with the OpenFrame user project area were double-checked to ensure manufacturability. Pre-checks confirmed the design's readiness for fabrication, culminating in a successful tapeout submission.

10.Prompt and AI Usage Documentation

Throughout this project, artificial intelligence tools—specifically GPT-based code assistants—were utilized to aid in RTL coding, documentation drafting, testbench development, and design validation planning. Every significant AI-generated prompt, session log, and output used to create code or documentation was recorded and archived. These materials are packaged in a separate appendix and in the project's open-source repository, ensuring full transparency of the AI-assisted workflow. This documentation provides valuable insight into the modern semiconductor design process, supporting both reproducibility and responsible AI use in open hardware projects.

11.Licensing and Publication

All source files, testbenches, support scripts, constraint files, and documentation are distributed under the permissive MIT License. This licensing choice ensures free re-use, modification, and redistribution of all project materials, fostering community collaboration and open innovation. The complete project is publicly hosted on GitHub at [https://github.com/MANJU630/my-microwatt-hackathon-project], including issue tracking, version history, and release assets. Clear license headers are maintained in every major file, and a LICENSE file is included at the top-level directory to clearly state the terms of use.

12. Reproducibility Guide

To further the open hardware mission, a step-by-step reproducibility guide is provided with the repository. The guide covers environment setup (including tool versions, PDK installation, and environment variables), cloning the project, RTL synthesis, constraint application, simulation, and physical design implementation using OpenLane chipIgnite flow. Tips on running verification testbenches, performing timing checks, and generating layout views (GDSII) are provided, making it possible for any user to replicate results from RTL through tapeout. Troubleshooting advice, common issues, and workflow diagrams are also included for user support.

13. Video and Documentation

A comprehensive demonstration video is available in the repository, providing a walkthrough of project setup, RTL simulation, synthesis, constraint application, and final implementation in the OpenLane flow. Step-by-step narration and key on-screen highlights guide viewers from initial cloning of the repo through to generating GDSII layouts and running final checks. Supplemental documentation includes illustrated screenshots, flowcharts, and design rationale, offering both quick-start and deep-dive references for new users and reviewers.

14. Results and Conclusion

The project achieved all intended objectives: a Wishbone-compliant sensor data accelerator was successfully designed, simulated, and prepared for fabrication on the SKY130 platform. Simulation results confirmed correct filtering and event detection, and timing analysis validated robust operation within the OpenFrame area. The open-source release, reproducibility materials, and AI usage documentation set a standard for transparent hardware development. This work demonstrates the effectiveness of modern, reproducible digital design flows and paves the way for future community-driven hardware acceleration projects.

15. References

1. SkyWater SKY130 Open-Source PDK Documentation
2. OpenLane Documentation and User Guides
3. Wishbone Bus Interconnect Specification
4. AMD/Xilinx Vivado Design Suite User Guide, Constraints and Simulation
5. OpenPOWER Microwatt CPU Repository
6. IEEE Std. 1800-2017: SystemVerilog Language Reference Manual