

# Function approximation using finite element

$$f = 2xy - x^2 \quad (1)$$

We want to check how to reproduce this function in a discrete space. The function  $u$  represents an approximation of  $f$ :

$$u = f \quad (2)$$

After the approximation using finite element, the following error (L2 norm) should be small enough:

$$\text{error} = \sum_{i=1}^n (u_i - f_i)^2 \quad (3)$$

where  $n$  is the number of degrees of freedom (e.g. the number of nodes).

We multiply each term of the Eq. 2 by an arbitrary test function  $v$ :

$$uv = fv \quad (4)$$

Integrating over the whole domain (e.g. a square) yields:

$$\int_{\Omega} uv d\omega = \int_{\Omega} fv d\omega \quad (5)$$

which can be rearranged to:

$$\int_{\Omega} uv d\omega - \int_{\Omega} fv d\omega = 0 \quad (6)$$

This form can be directly implemented in FreeFEM, with  $\Omega$  being the finite element mesh, after which the error can be calculated based on Eq 3 to check if  $u$  is close enough to  $f$ .