



Morphology Optimization of a Tilt-Rotor MAV

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Master Thesis

Supervised by Karen Bodie and Zachary Taylor



Autonomous Systems Lab

Motivation



<https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/3849087-mndot-test-bridge-inspecting-drones-duluth>



<http://www.constructionmanagermagazine.com/news/uk-construction-use-thousands-drones-2030/>



<https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/3849087-mndot-test-bridge-inspecting-drones-duluth>



Problem Statement

- Omni-directionality
- Existing omnidirectional MAV have mostly ad hoc designs
- Optimize the design of a MAV with tilting propellers



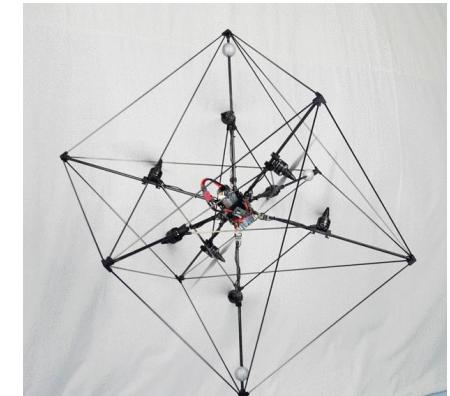
State of the Art

D. Brescianini and R. D'Andrea, "Design, modeling and control of an omnidirectional aerial vehicle," in *2016 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)*, May 2016, pp. 3261–3266.



M. Kamel, S. Verling, O. Elkhatib, C. Sprecher, P. Wulkop, Z. Taylor, R. Siegwart, and I. Gilitschenski, "Voliro: An Omnidirectional Hexacopter With Tilttable Rotors," *arXiv:1801.04581 [cs]*, Jan. 2018, arXiv: 1801.04581.

S. Rajappa, M. Ryll, H. H. Bülfhoff, and A. Franchi, "Modeling, control and design optimization for a fully-actuated hexarotor aerial vehicle with tilted propellers," in *2015 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)*, May 2015, pp. 4006–4013.



Optimization Tool User Guide

Choose parameters to optimize



Specify design parameters



Specify an initial solution



Specify a cost function



Launch optimization



Obtain result

Parameters to optimize:

- β (angles that the arm form in the vertical plane)
- θ (angles that the arm form in the horizontal plane)
- L (arm length)
- n (number of rotors)

Initial solution representation:

Initial solution:

$\beta_1: 35.21 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_2: -35.21 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_3: 35.26 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_4: -35.21 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_5: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_6: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_7: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\beta_8: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$
$\theta_1: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_2: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_3: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_4: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_5: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_6: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_7: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_8: 0 \frac{\pi}{180}$
$L_1: 0.3 \frac{m}{m}$	Design parameters:						
	$L: 0.3 \frac{m}{m}$	Number of rotors		<input type="text" value="4"/>			

Parameters bounds:

$\beta_{\min}: -90 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_{\min}: -90 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$L_{\min}: 0.2 \frac{m}{m}$	Minimum number of rotors:	<input type="text" value="3"/>
$\beta_{\max}: 90 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$\theta_{\max}: 90 \frac{\pi}{180}$	$L_{\max}: 0.4 \frac{m}{m}$	Maximum number of rotors:	<input type="text" value="8"/>

Cost function: Maximize the minimal torque and force that the drone can apply
Maximize the minimal torque and force that the drone can apply and minimize the inertia of the drone
Maximize the force and torque in every direction and the hover efficiency in any orientation
Maximize the force and torque that the drone can apply in one direction (d)
Maximize the force and torque that the drone can apply in one direction (d), with a hover in any orientation condition

Advanced parameters of fmmincom:

Algorithm:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> sqp	Display:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> displays no output
	<input type="radio"/> sqp-legacy		<input type="radio"/> displays output at each iteration
	<input type="radio"/> interior-point		<input type="radio"/> displays output only if the function does not converge
	<input type="radio"/> active-set		<input type="radio"/> displays only the final output

Direction d: x:
y:
z:

Maximum iterations of the algorithm:

Tolerance on the constraint violation:

Termination tolerance on the opt. arg.:

Maximal number of times fmmincom is iterated to find the optimal solution:

Parameters for the plot of the force and torque space:

Number of points of the torque and force space:

Design number:

Perform an optimization on the tilting angles and on the rotor speed for every points of the torque/force space (time consuming):

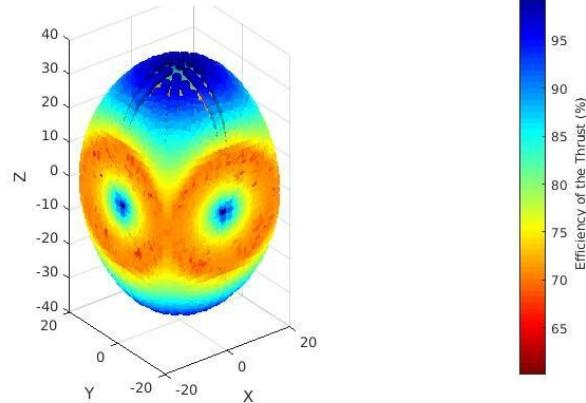
Start optimization

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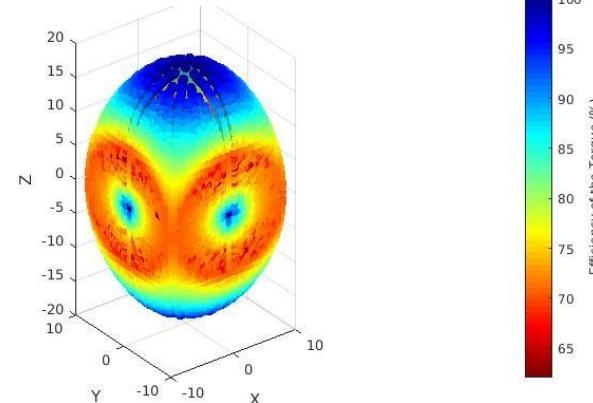
Luca Rinsoz | 30. August 2018 | 5

Optimization Tool Output

Reachable Force Space



Reachable Torque Space



Hover Efficiency in every direction

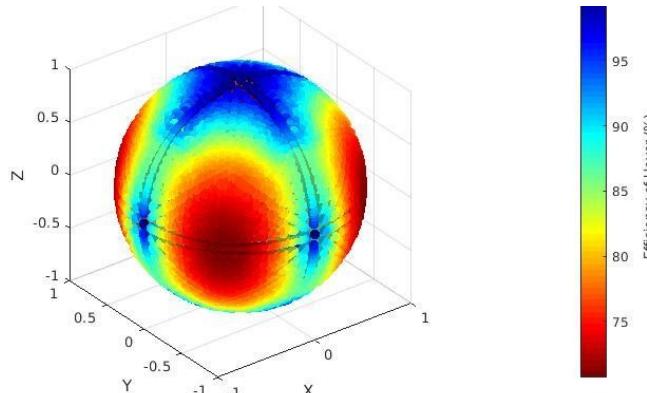
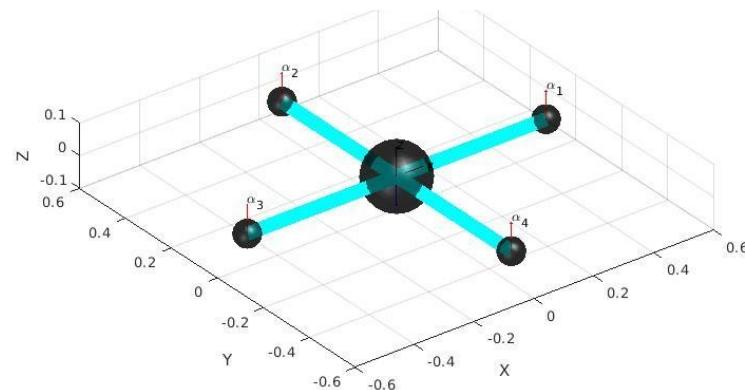


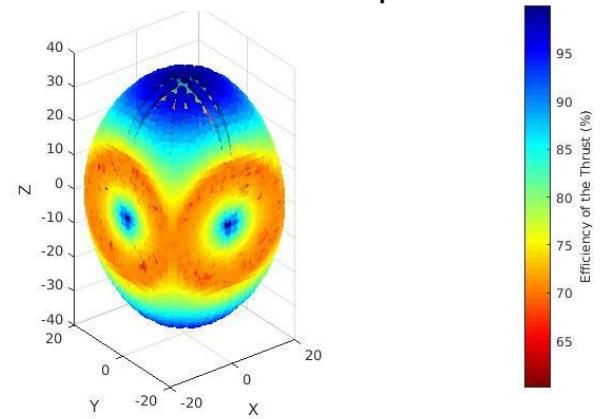
Illustration of the design



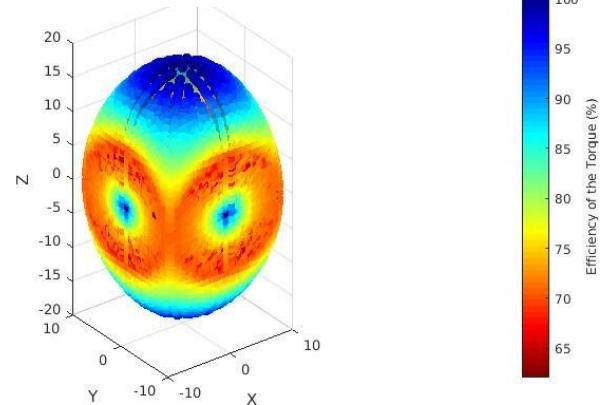
Optimization Tool Output

- Information on the design:
 - Volume of the reachable force and torque space
 - Surface of the reachable force and torque space
 - Maximal and minimal forces and torques
 - Mean of the force, torque and hover efficiency
 - Absolute mean deviation of the force, torque and hover efficiency

Reachable Force Space



Reachable Torque Space



MAV Morphology Optimization Tool

- The MAV's design is the result of an optimization problem

$$\min_x f(x) \text{ such that} \begin{cases} c(x) \leq 0 \\ ceq(x) = 0 \\ A \cdot x \leq b \\ Aeq \cdot x = beq \\ lb \leq x \leq ub \end{cases}$$

- The optimisation solved by matlab and an Sequential quadratic programming (sqp) algorithm

Cost functions

- Maximize the minimal force and the minimal torque
- Maximize the force and torque in x, y and z directions
- Maximize the volume of the reachable force and torque space
- Maximize the force, the torque and the hover efficiency in every direction
- Maximize the force and the torque in one defined direction d

Limitations

- Non-linear cost functions
- Algorithm provides local minima
- Solution dependent on the chosen initial solution
- The more parameters to optimize the more it gets stuck in local optima

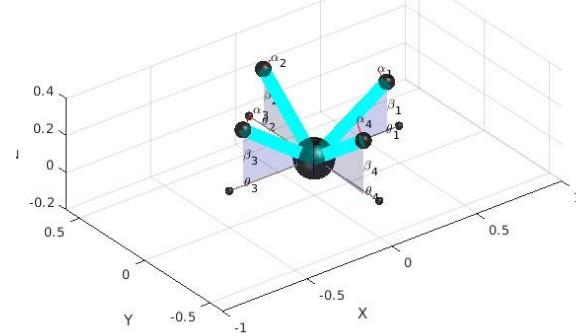


Results

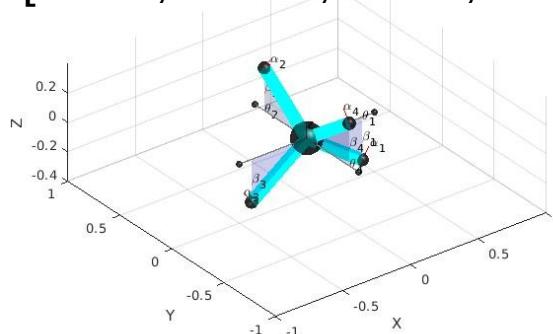
- Drone design obtained for different numbers of propellers
 - Three propellers → Tri-copter
 - Four propellers → Quad-copter
 - Five propellers → Penta-copter
 - Six propellers → Hexa-copter
 - Seven propellers → Hepta-copter
 - Eight propellers → Octa-copter

Results

- Quad-copter
 - Maximizing the minimal force and torque
 - Starting as with $\beta_0 = [0, 0, 0, 0]$ $\rightarrow \beta = [-32.42, -35.49, -35.44, -35.49]$



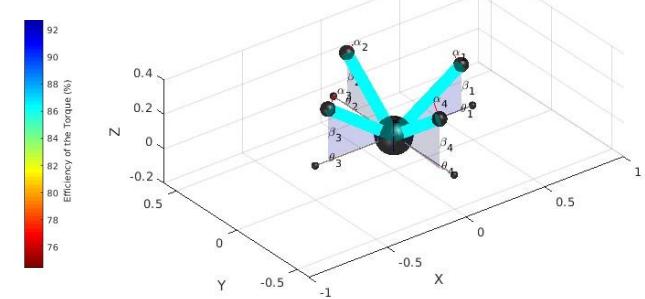
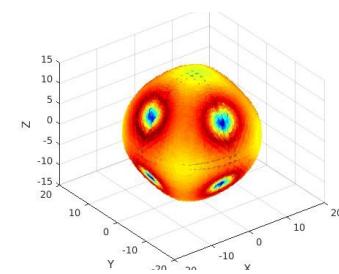
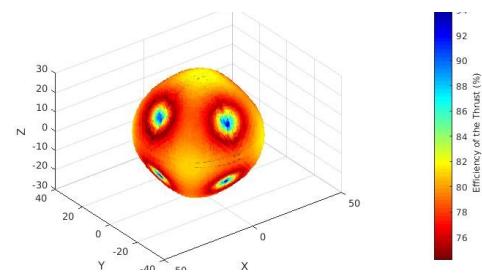
- Starting with $\beta_0 = [35.26, -35.26, 35.26, -35.26]$ $\rightarrow \beta = [35.26, -35.26, 35.26, -35.26]$



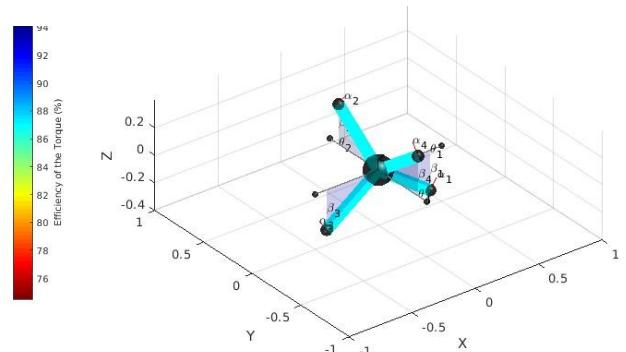
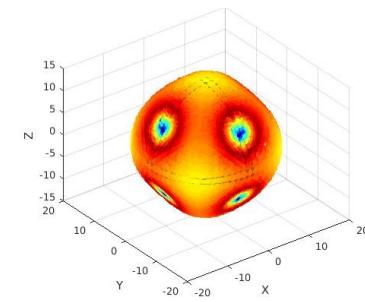
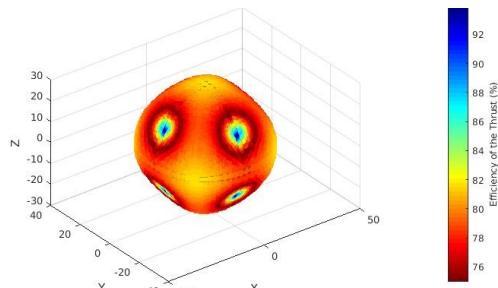
Results

- Quad-copter

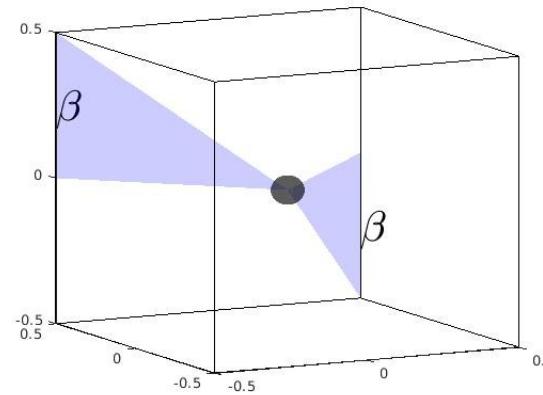
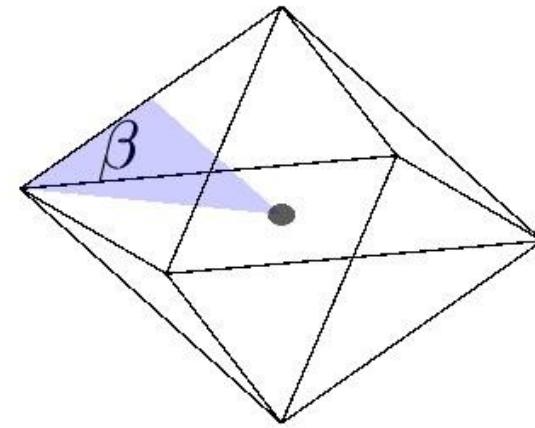
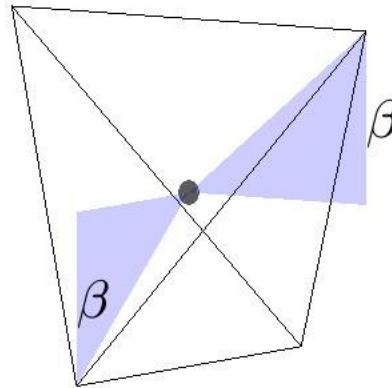
Design 1: $F_{min} = 23.18, F_{max} = 28.56, M_{min} = 11.61, M_{max} = 14.3, H_{eff,min} = 81.11\%, H_{eff,max} = 95.2\%$



Design 2: $F_{min} = 23.22, F_{max} = 28.37, M_{min} = 11.65, M_{max} = 14.23, H_{eff,min} = 81.65\%, H_{eff,max} = 94.73\%$



Platonic solids and Tetrahedron angle

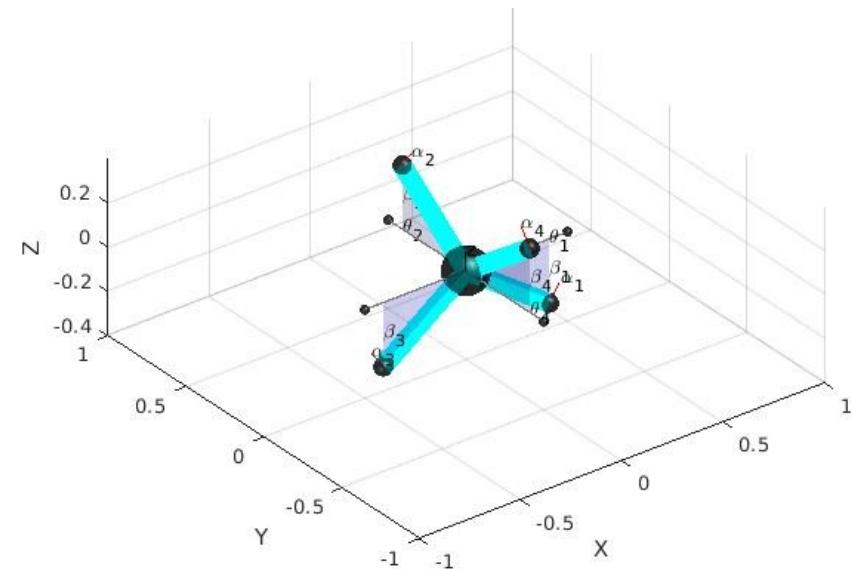
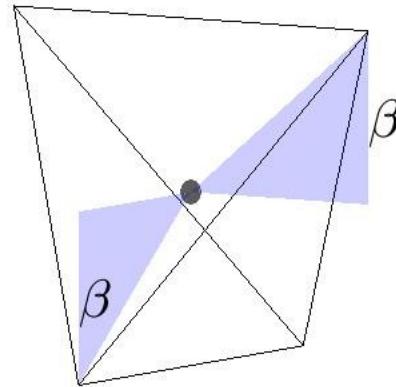


$$\cos(\beta) = \sqrt{\left(\frac{2}{3}\right)} \Rightarrow \beta = 35.26^\circ$$



Results

- Quad-copter

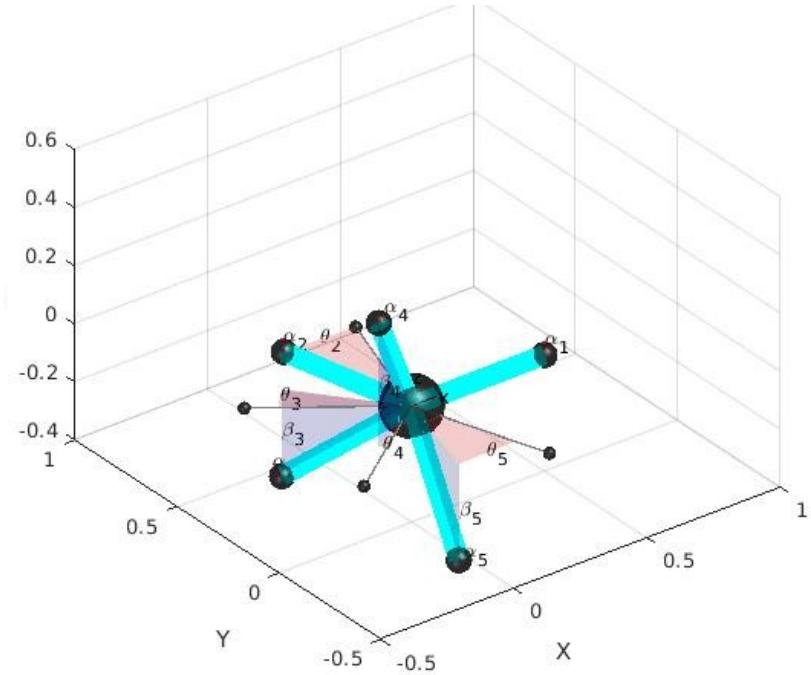


Results

- Penta-copter
 - Maximizing the minimal force and torque and minimzing the drone inertia
 - Starting with $\beta_0 = [0, 0, 0, 0, 0]$



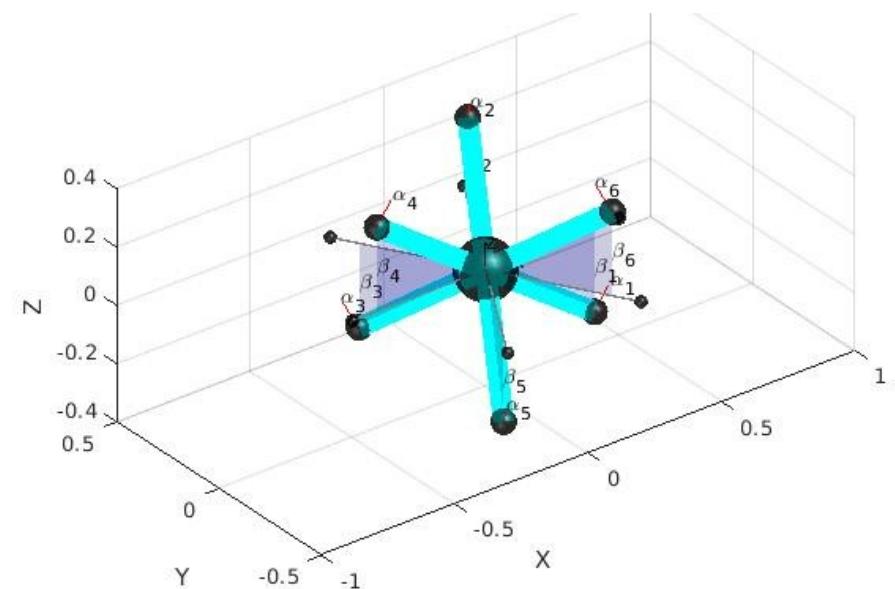
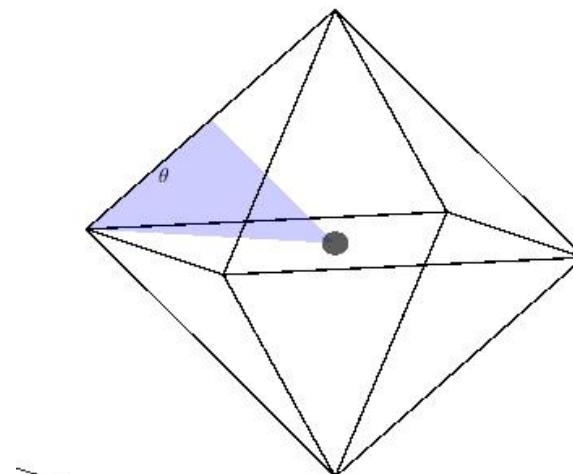
Solution $\beta = [0, 0, 36.9, -58.4, -41.5]$



Results

- Hexa-copter

- Solution $\beta = [35.26, -35.26, -35.26, 35.26, -35.26, 35.26]$



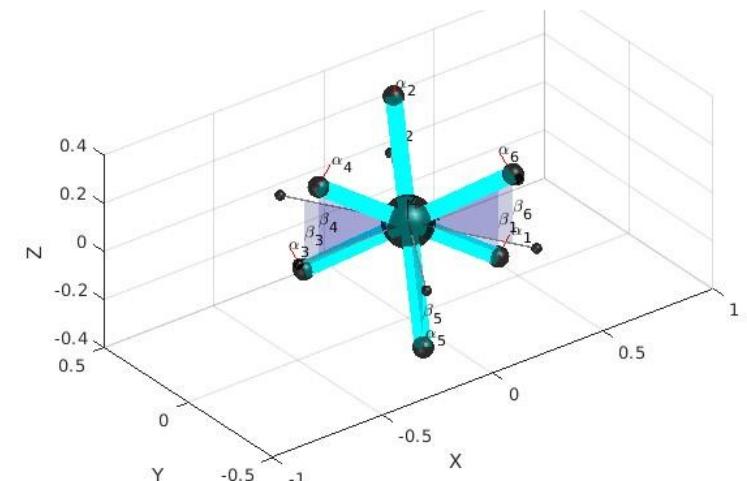
Results

- Hexa-copter

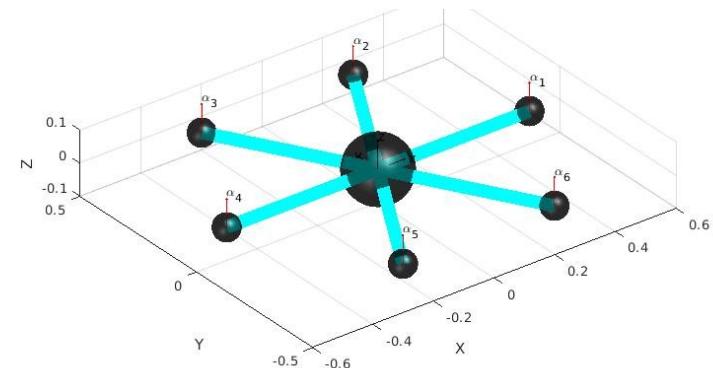
$F_{min} = 34.74, F_{max} = 42.55, M_{min} = 17.42, M_{max} = 21.34, H_{eff,min} = 81.65\%, H_{eff,max} = 100\%$

- Obtained maximizing the volumes of the force and torque spaces

- Voliro



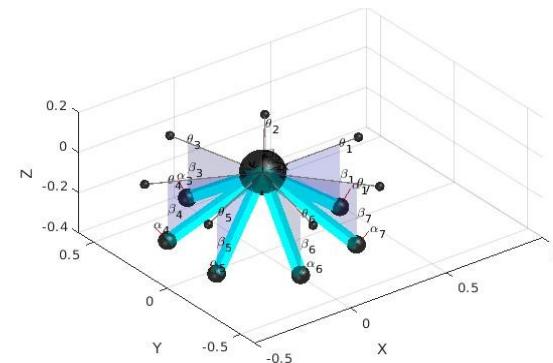
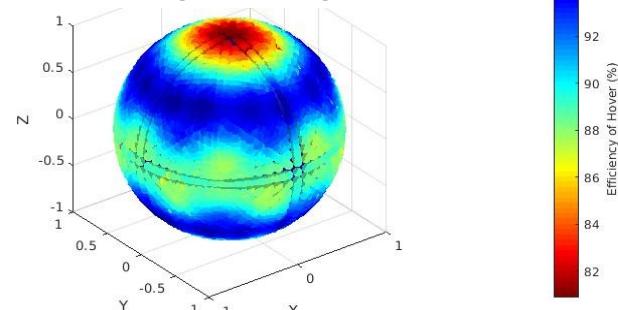
$F_{min} = 26.6, F_{max} = 52.11, M_{min} = 15.1, M_{max} = 26.13, H_{eff,min} = 75\%, H_{eff,max} = 100\%$



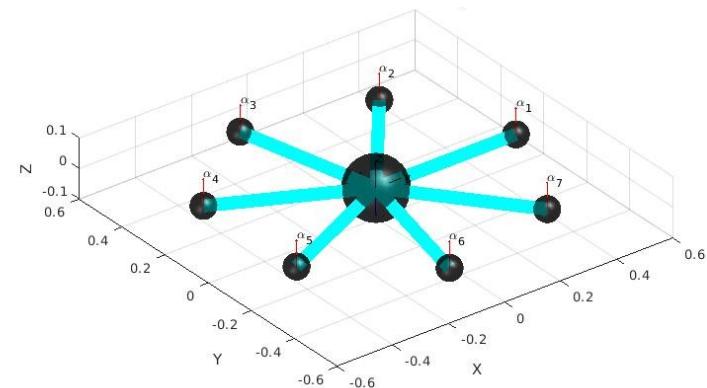
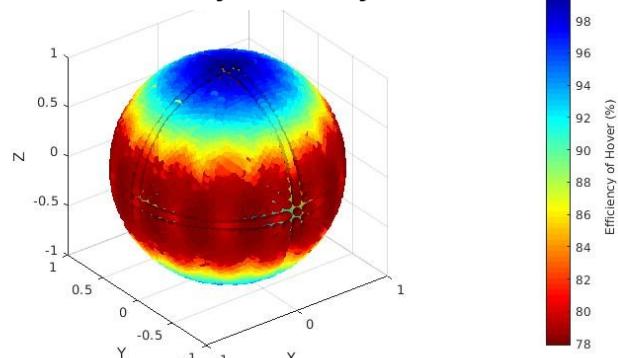
Results

- Hepta-copter

Hover Efficiency in every direction

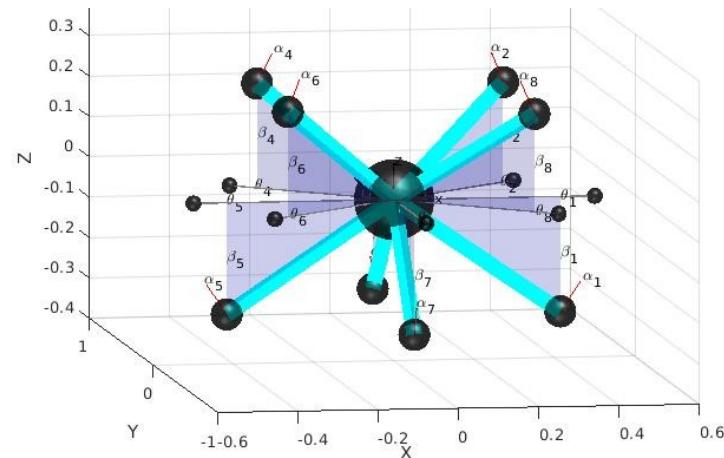


Hover Efficiency in every direction



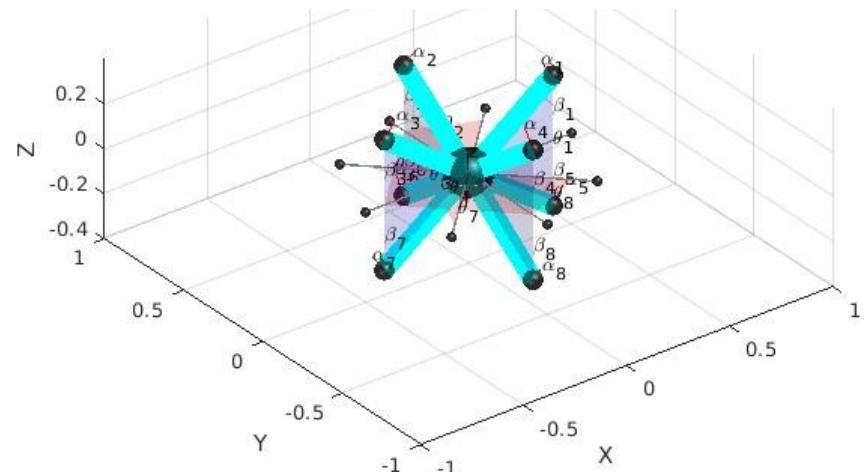
Results

- Octa-copter



$F_{min} = 44.7, F_{max} = 58.8, M_{min} = 22.4, M_{max} = 29.5, H_{eff,min} = 81.78\%, H_{eff,max} = 96.65\%$

- IDSC's Omnicopter



$F_{min} = 46.46, F_{max} = 56.73, M_{min} = 23.3, M_{max} = 28.45, H_{eff,min} = 81.64\%, H_{eff,max} = 94.77\%$

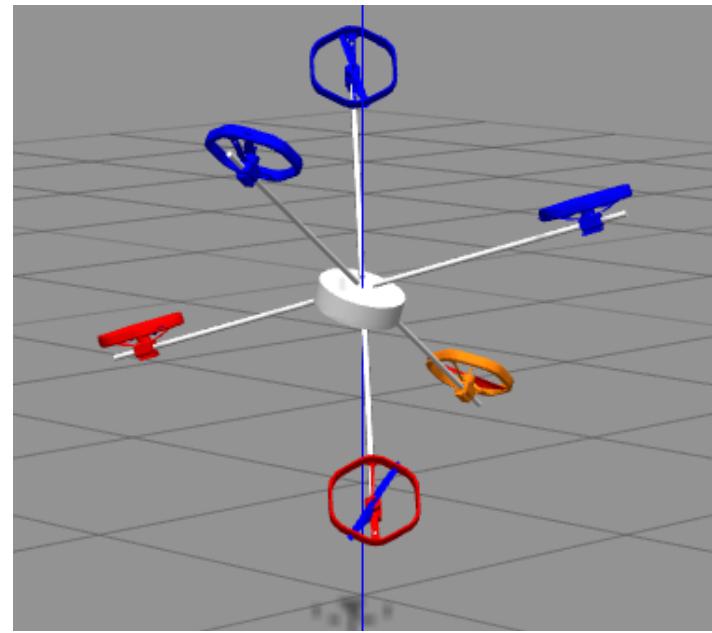
Results

- Comparison

MAV Design	$F_{min}[N]$	$F_{max}[N]$	$F_{mean}[N]$	$M_{min}[Nm]$	$M_{max}[Nm]$	$M_{mean}[Nm]$	$H_{eff,mean}[\%]$
Tri-copter	17.17	21.21	17.95	8.61	10.64	9	85.46
Quad-copter	23.22	28.37	26.87	11.65	14.23	13.47	87.1
Penta-copter	28.95	35.46	29.4	14.52	17.78	14.74	85.35
Hexa-copter	34.74	42.55	39.52	17.42	21.34	19.82	88.9
Hepta-copter	39.96	49.44	47.2	20.04	24.8	23.66	91.1
Octa-copter	44.7	58.8	53.95	22.4	29.48	27.06	91.42

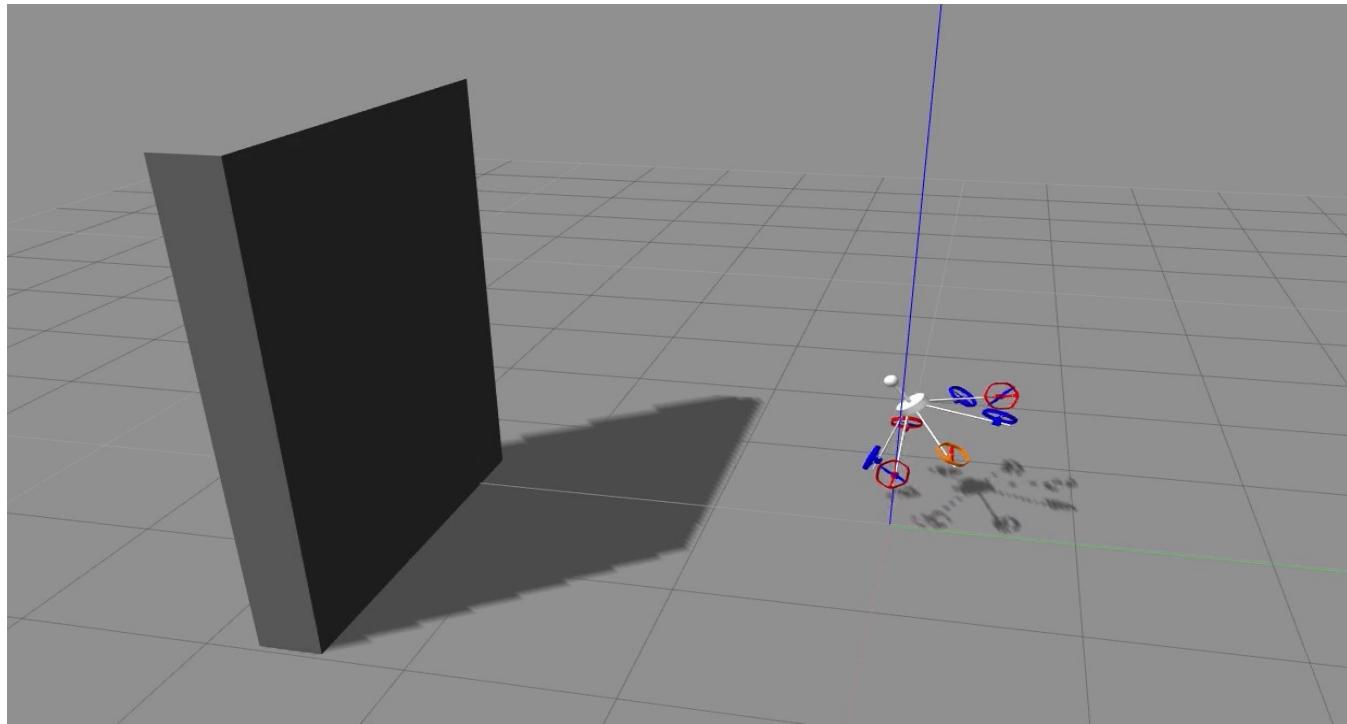
Simulation

- Simulated different model in ROS to test them



Simulation

- Hepta-copter interaction with a wall



Conclusion

- Developped a design optimization tool

Parameters to optimize:

(β (angles that the arm form in the vertical plane))
 θ (angles that the arm form in the horizontal plane)
 L (arm length)
 n (number of rotors)

Initial solution representation:

Initial solution:

$\beta_1: 35.21^\circ$	$\beta_2: -35.21^\circ$	$\beta_3: 35.26^\circ$	$\beta_4: -35.21^\circ$	$\beta_5: 0^\circ$	$\beta_6: 0^\circ$	$\beta_7: 0^\circ$	$\beta_8: 0^\circ$
$\theta_1: 0^\circ$	$\theta_2: 0^\circ$	$\theta_3: 0^\circ$	$\theta_4: 0^\circ$	$\theta_5: 0^\circ$	$\theta_6: 0^\circ$	$\theta_7: 0^\circ$	$\theta_8: 0^\circ$
L: 0.3 m	Design parameters:	L: 0.3 m	Number of rotors: 4				

Parameters bounds:

$\beta_{\min}: -90^\circ$	$\theta_{\min}: -90^\circ$	$L_{\min}: 0.2 m$	Minimum number of rotors: 3
$\beta_{\max}: 90^\circ$	$\theta_{\max}: 90^\circ$	$L_{\max}: 0.4 m$	Maximum number of rotors: 8

Cost function: Maximize the minimal torque and force that the drone can apply
Maximize the minimal torque and force that the drone can apply and minimize the inertia of the drone
Maximize the force and torque in every direction and the hover efficiency in any orientation
Maximize the force and torque that the drone can apply in one direction (d)
Maximize the force and torque that the drone can apply in one direction (d), with a hover in any orientation condition

Direction d: x: 0°, y: 0°, z: 1°

Advanced parameters of fmincon:

Algorithm: <input checked="" type="radio"/> sqp <input type="radio"/> sqp-legacy <input type="radio"/> interior-point <input type="radio"/> active-set	Display: <input checked="" type="radio"/> displays no output <input type="radio"/> displays output at each iteration <input type="radio"/> displays output only if the function does not converge <input type="radio"/> displays only the final output.	Maximum iterations of the algorithm: 1e+04
		Tolerance on the constraint violation: 1e-06
		Termination tolerance on the opt. arg.: 1e-06

Maximal number of times fmincon is iterated to find the optimal solution: 150

Parameters for the plot of the force and torque space:

Number of points of the torque and force space: 7490 Design number: 1

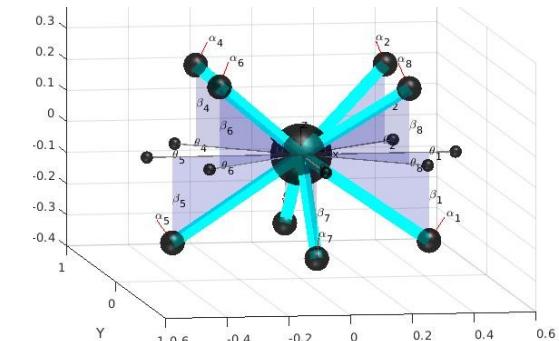
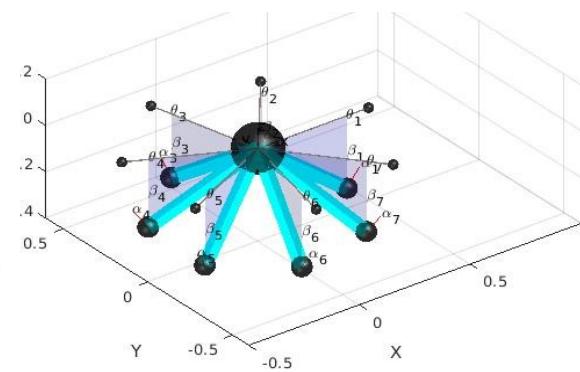
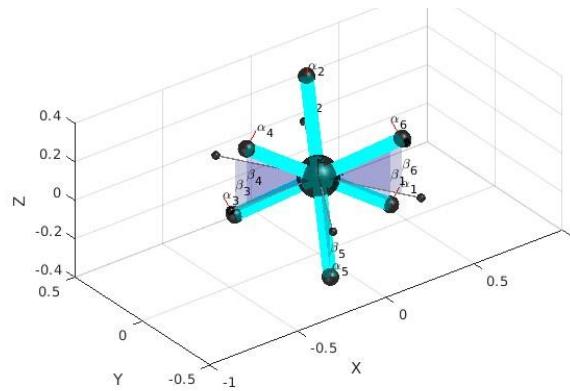
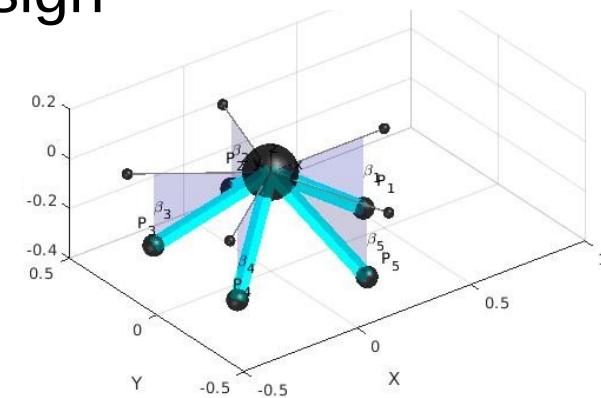
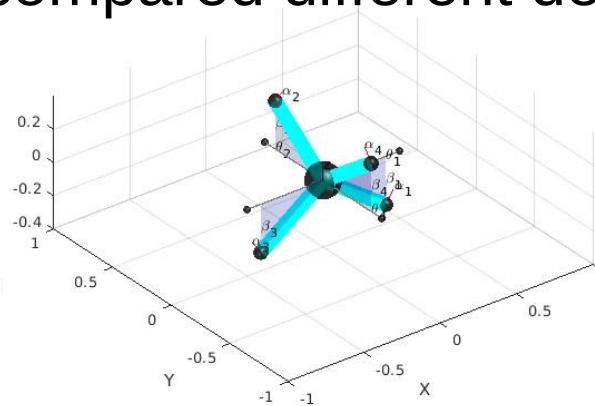
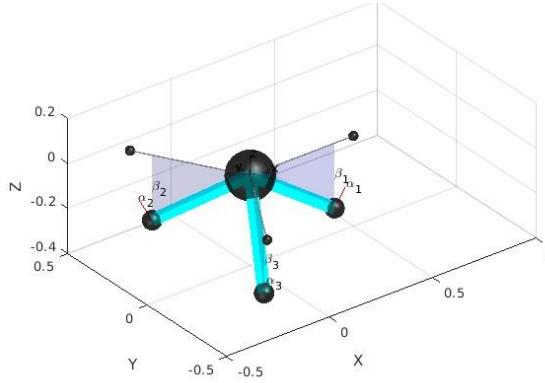
Perform an optimization on the tilting angles and on the rotor speed for every points of the torque/force space (time consuming):

Start optimization



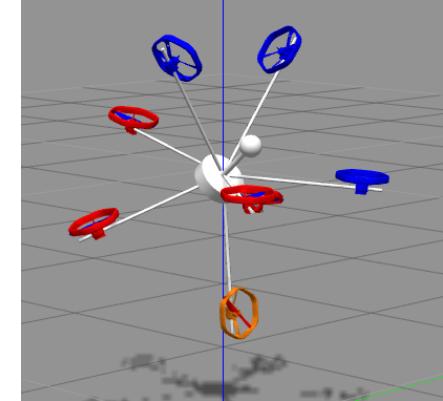
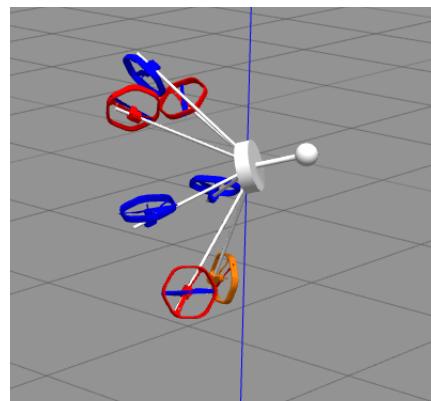
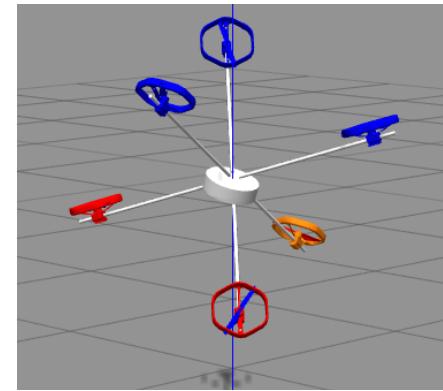
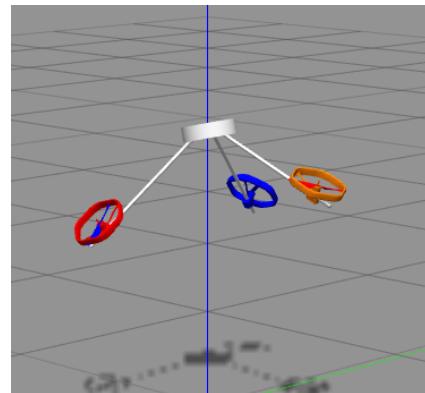
Conclusion

- Obtained results using different cost functions and parameters and compared different design



Conclusion

- Simulated some of the results in ROS environment



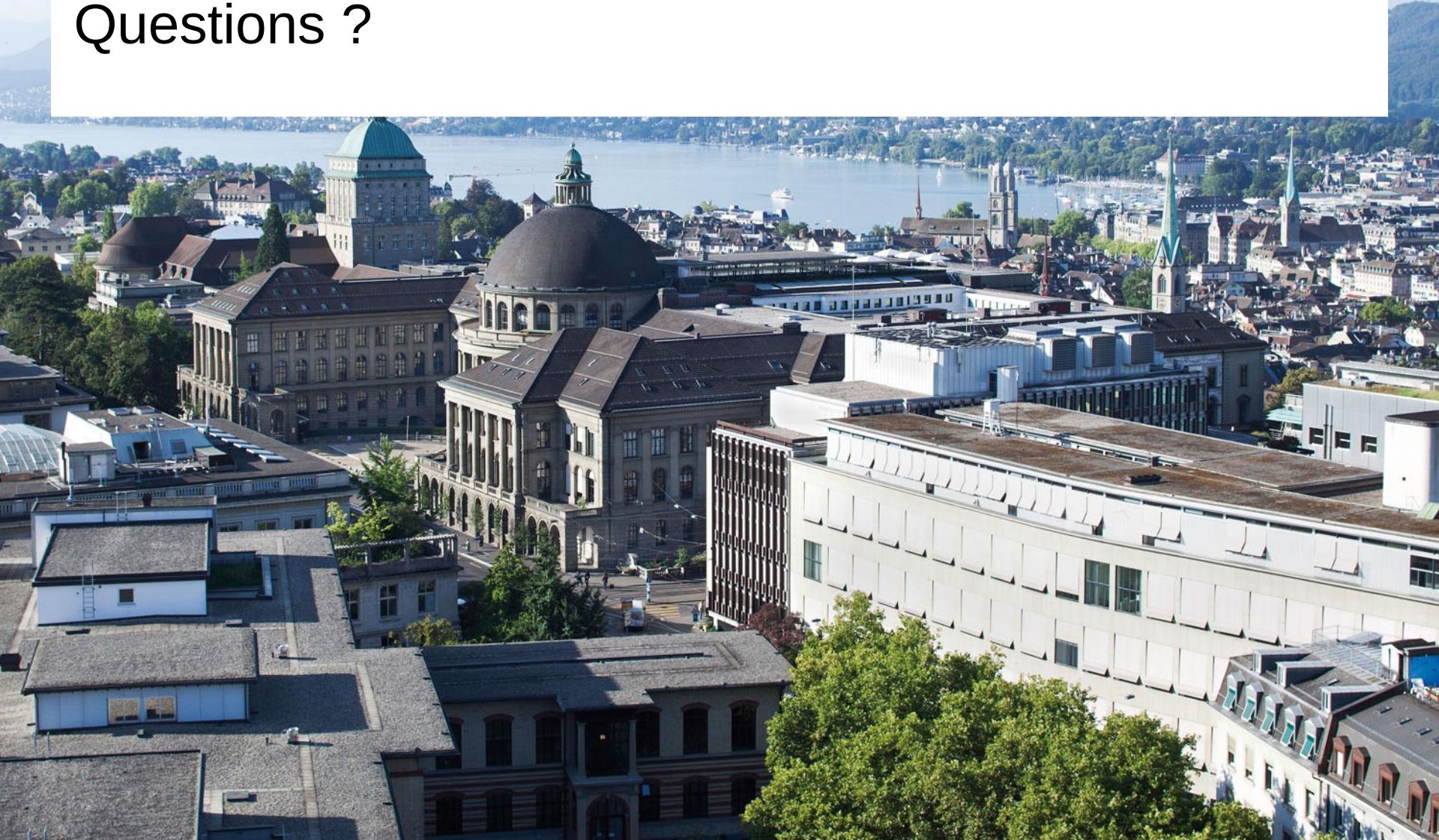
Outlook

- Improvement to the project
- Further development



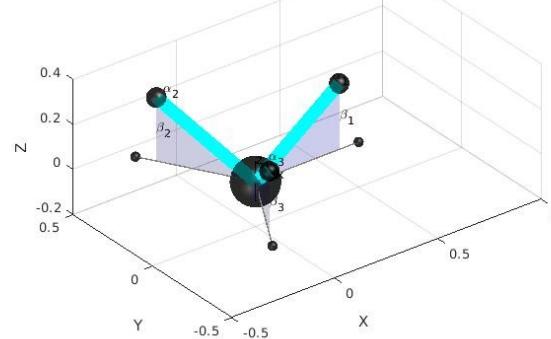
Thank you for your attention !

Questions ?



Supplementary Slides

- Quad-copter
 - Maximizing the minimal force and torque
 - Starting as with $\beta_0 = [0, 0, 0]$ $\rightarrow \beta = [-32.42, -35.49, -35.44, -35.49]$



- Starting with $\beta_0 = [35.26, -35.26, 35.26, -35.26]$ $\rightarrow \beta = [35.26, -35.26, 35.26, -35.26]$

