XEON PHI BASICS

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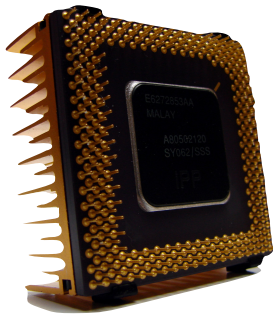
LESSON PLAN

- Programming models
- Parallelisation
- Compilers and Tools
- Performance Considerations

Programming models

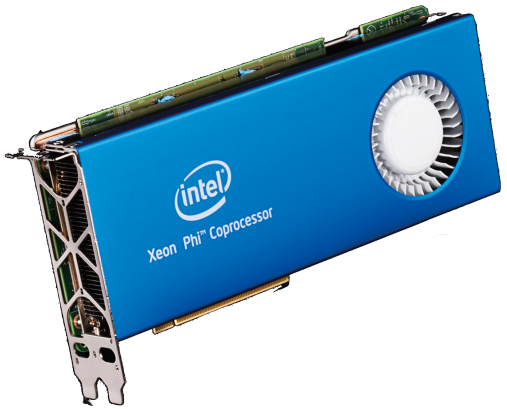
Host



Main Memory

+

Coprocessor

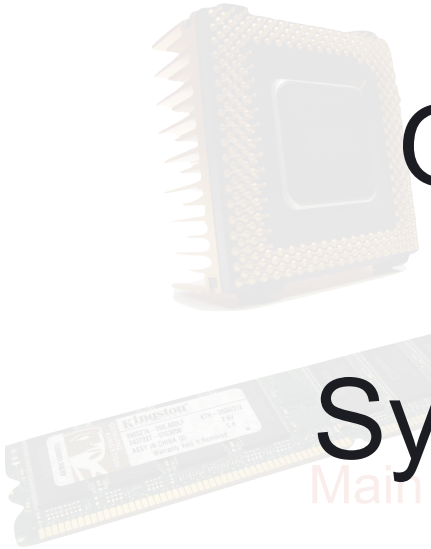


3 Basic Programming Models

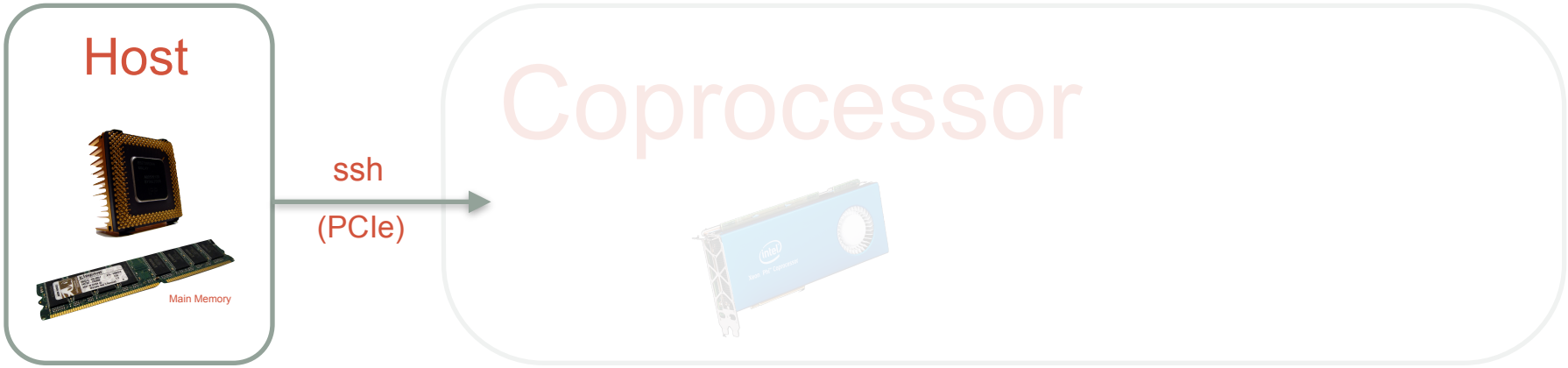
Native mode

Offload execution

Symmetric execution



Native Mode: Xeon Phi only



- Host used for preparation work (e.g. compiling, data copy)
- User initiates run from host or can use host to connect to Xeon Phi via ssh

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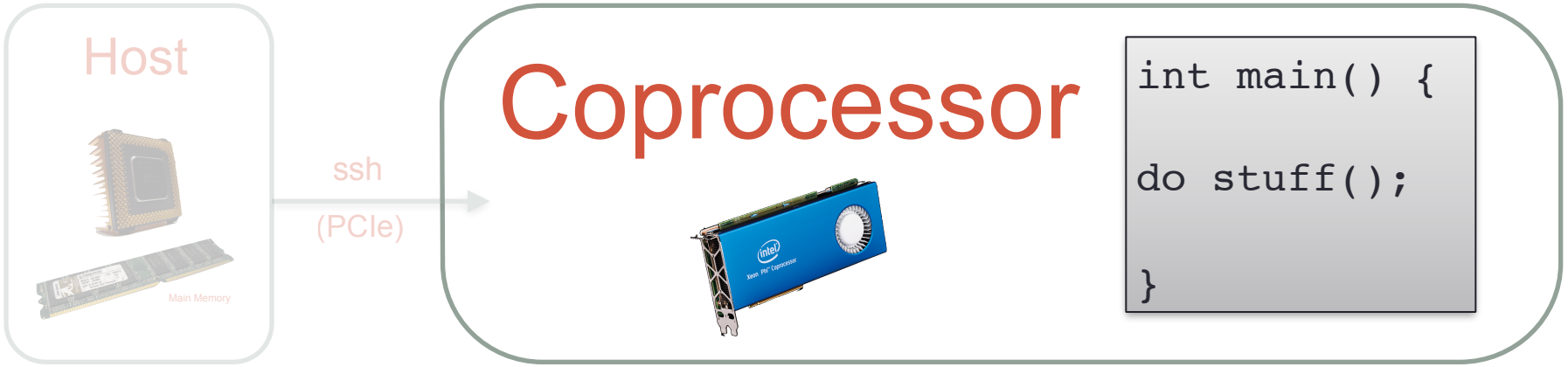

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- User initiates run from host or can use host to connect to Xeon Phi via ssh
- **Programme runs on Xeon Phi from start to finish "as usual"**

Native Mode: Xeon Phi only

Pros:

- Requires minimal effort to “port”
- Works well with ‘flat profile’ applications
- No memory copy required

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Pros:

- Requires minimal effort to “port”
- Works well with ‘flat profile’ applications
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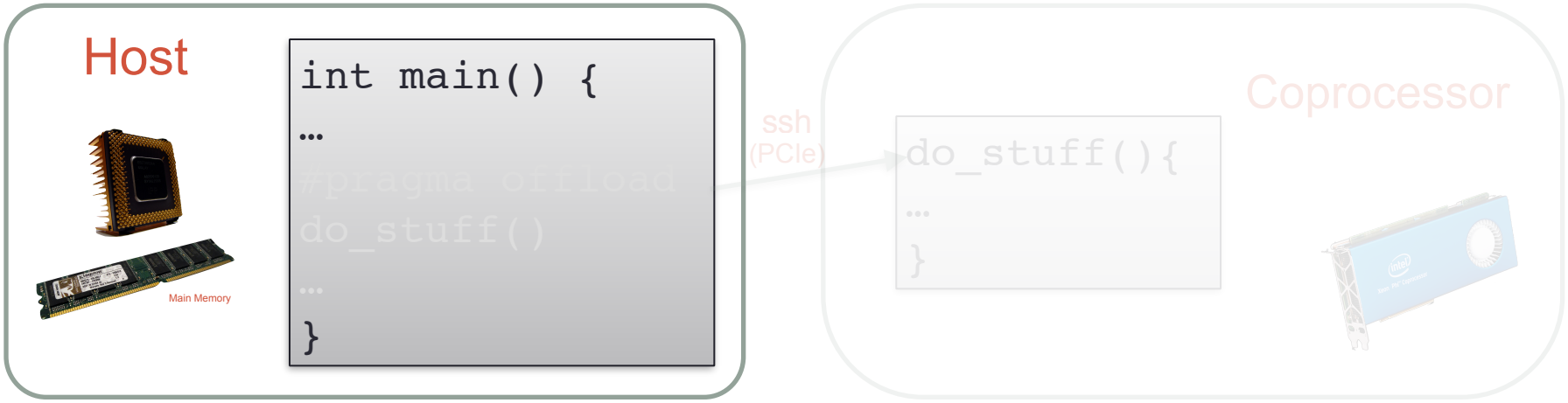
Cons:

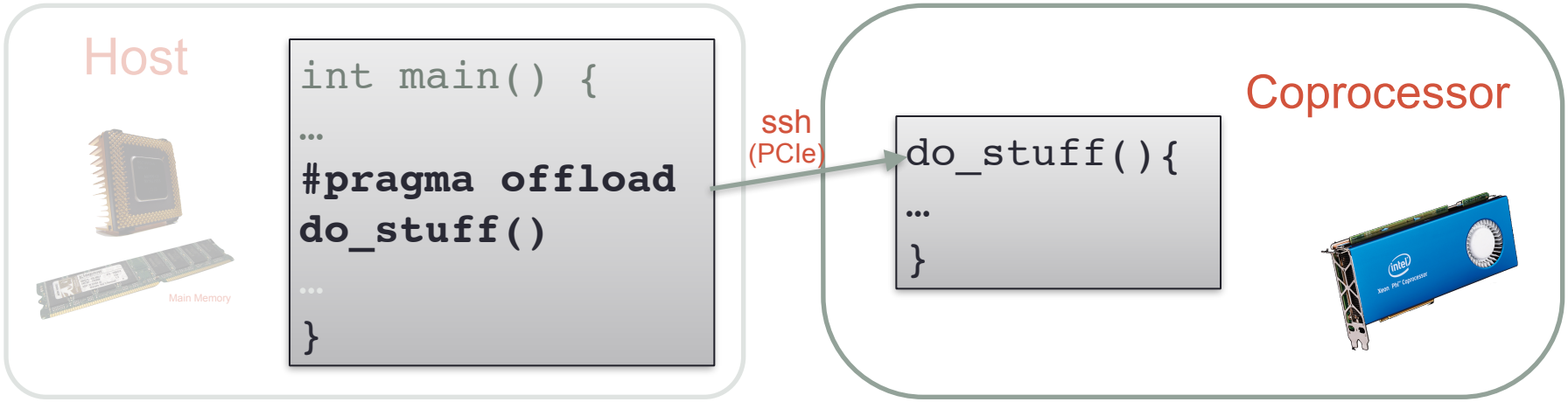
- Poor performance on codes with large serial regions and ‘complex codes’
- Limited Xeon Phi memory

Offload Execution: Hotspot eliminator



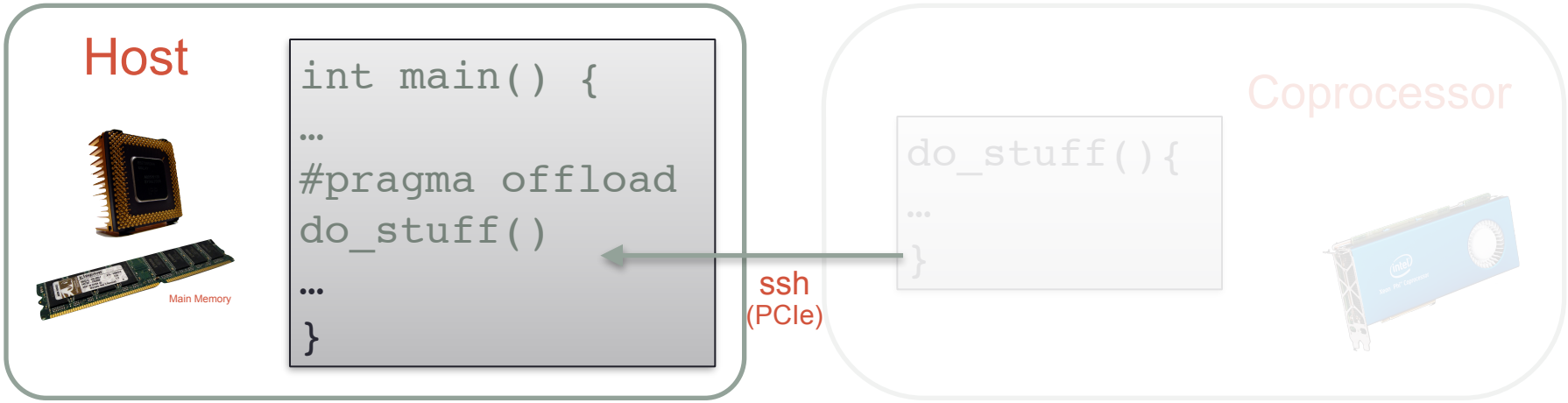
- **Application is initiated on host**

Offload Execution: Hotspot eliminator



- Application is initiated on host
- **Embarrassingly parallel hotspots are offloaded to Xeon Phi**

Offload Execution: Hotspot eliminator



- Application is initiated on host
- Embarrassingly parallel hotspots are offloaded to Xeon Phi
- **Results of offload region are returned to host where execution continues**

Offload Execution: Hotspot eliminator

Pros:

- Serial code handled by advanced CPU cores
- Embarrassingly parallel hotspots are executed efficiently on Xeon Phi
- More efficient use of (limited) Xeon Phi memory

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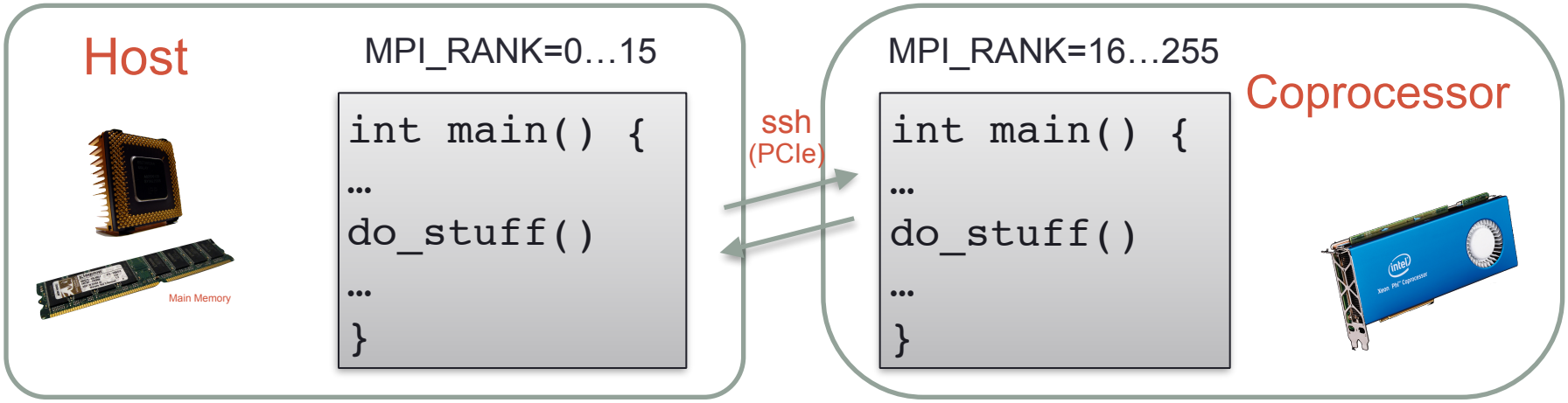
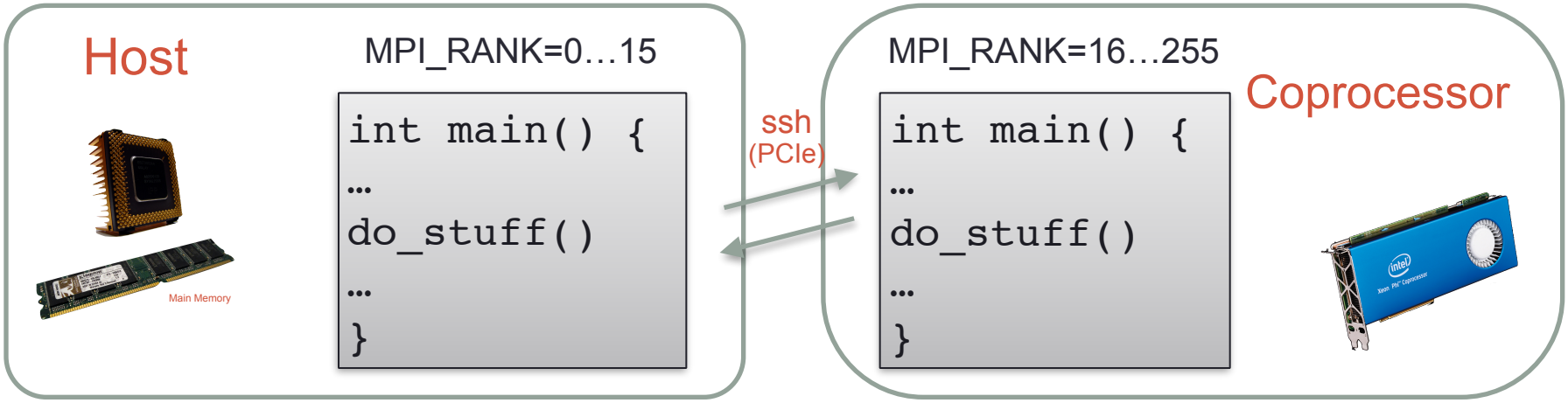
Can be alleviated by asynchronous execution and memory copies

Symmetric Execution: Phi-as-a-node



- **Application is initiated on host but…**

Symmetric Execution: Phi-as-a-node



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- **Runs across both CPU and Xeon Phi cores**

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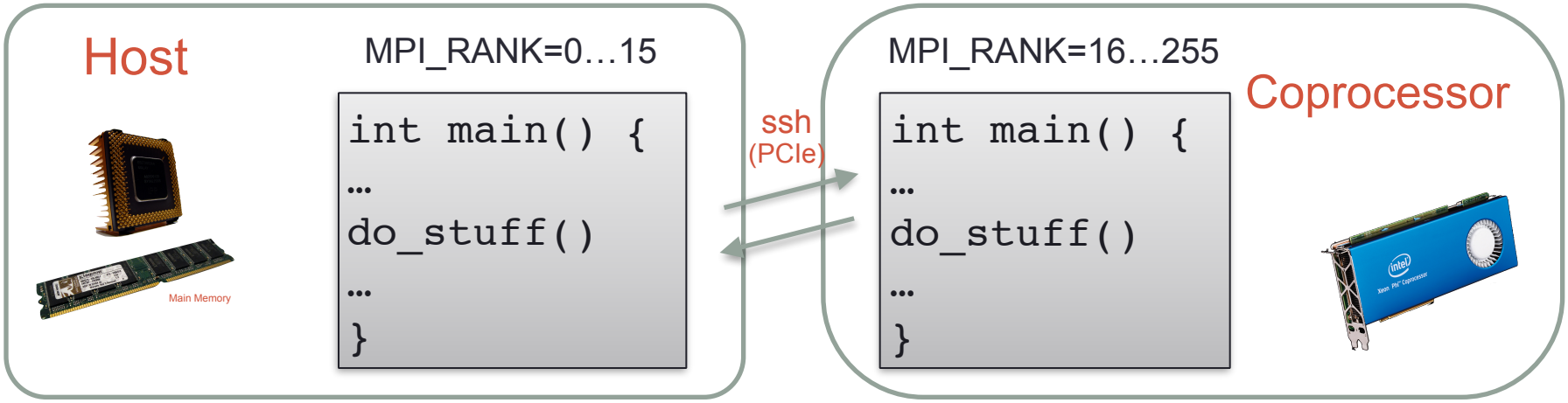


- Application is initiated on host but…
- Runs across both CPU and Xeon Phi cores
- **Effectively using Xeon Phi as just another node for MPI to use**

Symmetric Execution: Phi-as-a-node

Pros:

- Promise of full hardware utilisation
- No need for offloading pragmas and memory copies

Symmetric Execution: Phi-as-a-node

Pros:

- Serial code handled by advanced CPU cores
- Embarrassingly parallel hotspots are executed efficiently on Xeon Phi
- More efficient use of (limited) Xeon Phi memory

Cons:

- Tricky load-balancing
- Code is rarely optimal for both CPU and Xeon Phi

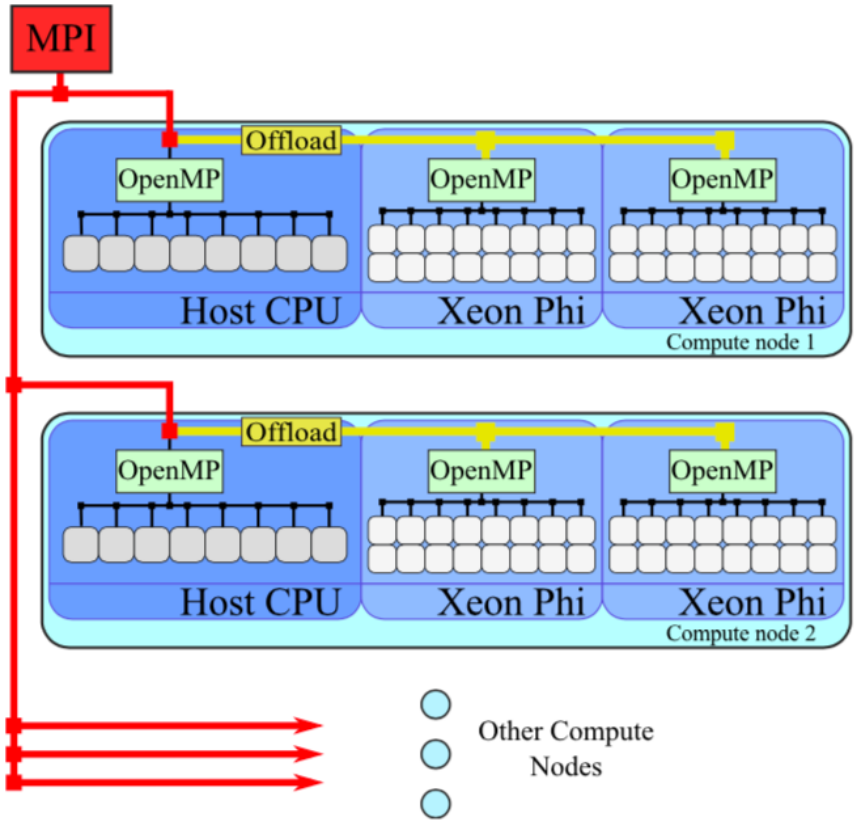
Parallelisation

MPI

and / or

OpenMP

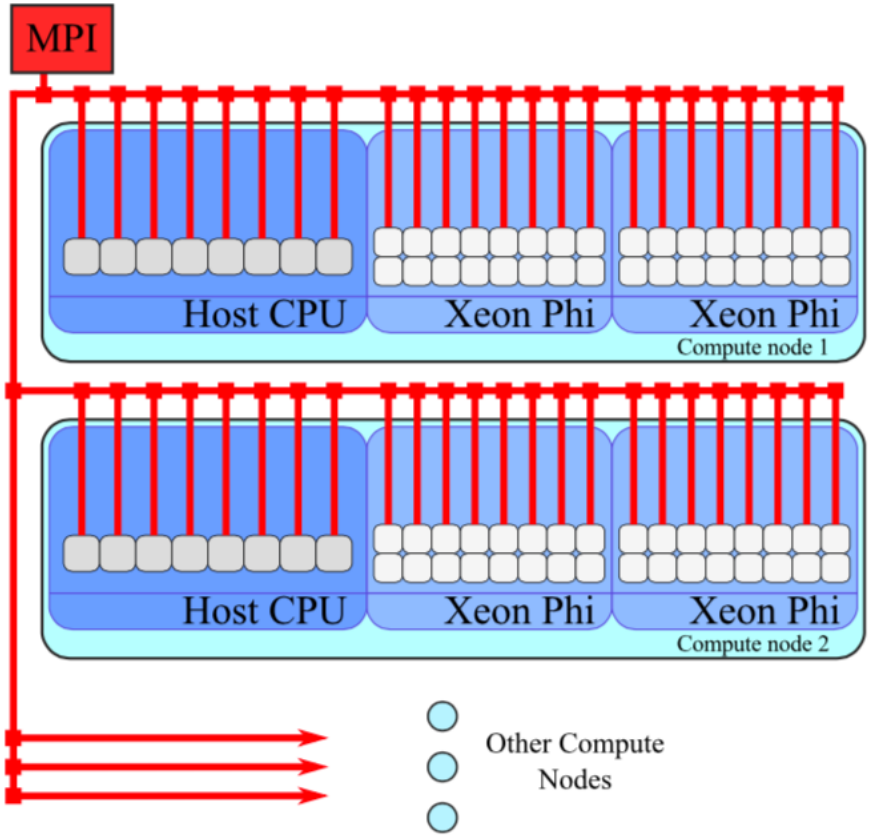
MPI+OpenMP with Offload



- MPI runs only on hosts
- MPI processes offload to Xeon Phi
- OpenMP in MPI processes
- OpenMP in offload regions

Image from Colfax training material

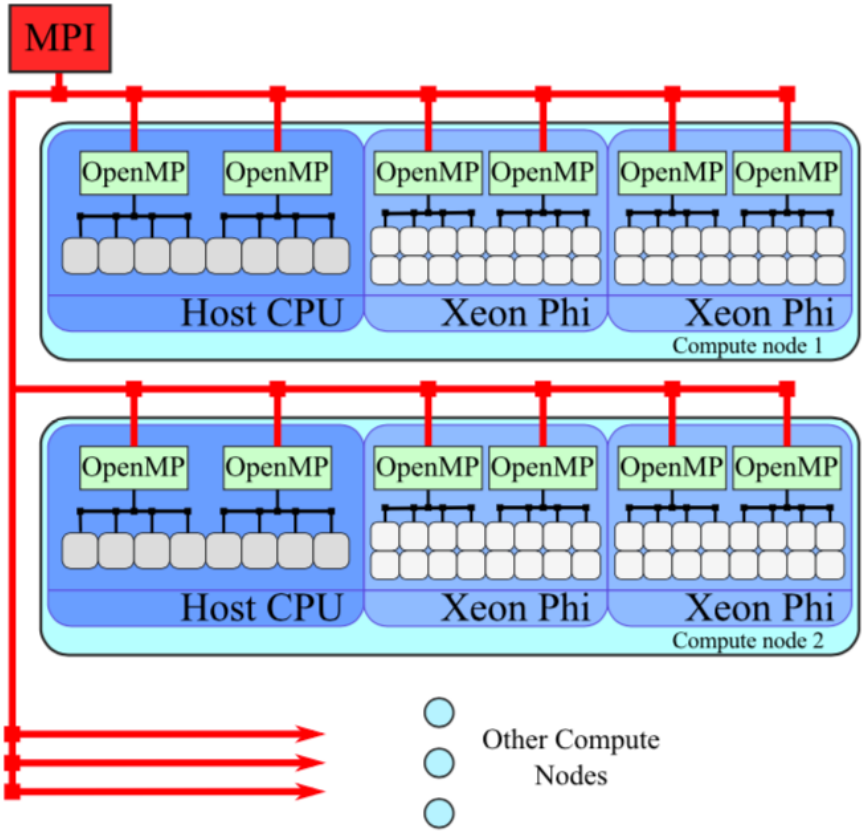
Symmetric Pure MPI



- MPI processes on host
- MPI processes (native) on Xeon Phi
- No OpenMP

Image from Colfax training material

Symmetric hybrid MPI+OpenMP



- MPI processes on host
- MPI processes (native) on Xeon Phi
- All MPI processes use OpenMP multithreading

Image from Colfax training material

What is best?

- What is your goal?
- What is your system?
- What is your application?

- Generally OpenMP faster than MPI on Xeon Phi
  - Poor performance of MPI on Xeon Phi
  - Less memory (especially important on Xeon Phi)

- Worth checking affinity settings (more later)

Compilers & Tools

Compilers

In a word: **Intel**

- Intel **C** Compiler
- Intel **C++** Compiler
- Intel **Fortran** Compiler

Tools

Intel Parallel Studio XE

- Intel C, C++ and Fortran compilers (MIC-capable)
- Intel Math Kernel Library (MKL)
- Intel MPI Library (only in Cluster Edition)
- Intel Trace Analyzer and Collector / ITAC (MPI profiler)
- Intel VTune Amplifier XE (multi-threaded profiler)
- Intel Inspector XE (memory and threading debugging)
- Intel Threading Building Blocks / TBB (threading library)
- Intel Performance Primitives / IPP (media and data)
- Intel Advisor XE (guided parallelism design)

Allinea

- Map (lightweight profiler)
- DDT (debug)
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Tools → Runtime

MPSS

- `micnativeloadex`
- `micinfo`
- `miccheck`
- `micsmc` (GUI)
- `micrasd` (root)

…

Environment Variables

- `MKL_MIC_ENABLE`
- `MIC_ENV_PREFIX`
- `MIC_LD_LIBRARY_PATH`
- `I_MPI_MIC`
- `I_MPI_MIC_POSTFIX`
- `OFFLOAD_REPORT`
- `KMP_AFFINITY`
- `KMP_BLOCKTIME`
- `MIC_USE_2MB_BUFFERS`

…

Linux Commands

- `lspci | grep Phi`
- `cat /etc/hosts | grep mic`
- `cat /proc/cpuinfo | grep proc | tail -n 3`

…

For more details:

http://www.intel.com/content/dam/www/public/us/en/documents/product-briefs/xeon-phi-software-configuration-users-guide.pdf

https://software.intel.com/sites/products/documentation/doclib/iss/2013/compiler/cpp-lin/GUID-E1EC94AE-A13D-463E-B3C3-6D7A7205F5A1.htm

Performance Considerations

Four things to consider first:

Execution mode

Vectorisation

Alignment

Affinity

Application Design

Mode of execution

- Native
- Offload
- Symmetric

Mode chosen should depend on the application and system configuration (as discussed previously)

Vectorisation

- **Xeon Phi performance is greatly dependant on vector units.**
- Intel Xeon CPUs also use (smaller) vector units → Code optimised for Intel Xeon will run faster on Intel Xeon Phi
- KNL (next generation Xeon Phi) will also use 512-AVX vector units → Code optimised for Intel Xeon Phi KNC will also run faster on Intel Xeon Phi KNL

*(KNC-KNL not binary compatible)

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Data Alignment

- **“Loop is vectorised” != faster**
- Data alignment is critical for vectorisation to be beneficial
- Remember to not only align data, but also to tell the compiler that data is aligned at loop.

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Affinity

- **All data moves over high-speed ring interconnect**
- Affinity critical for good performance
- Default settings are not always optimal
- In offload mode, may accidentally use poor settings.

e.g. 240 threads competing for the use of 30 cores, while 30 other cores are idle.

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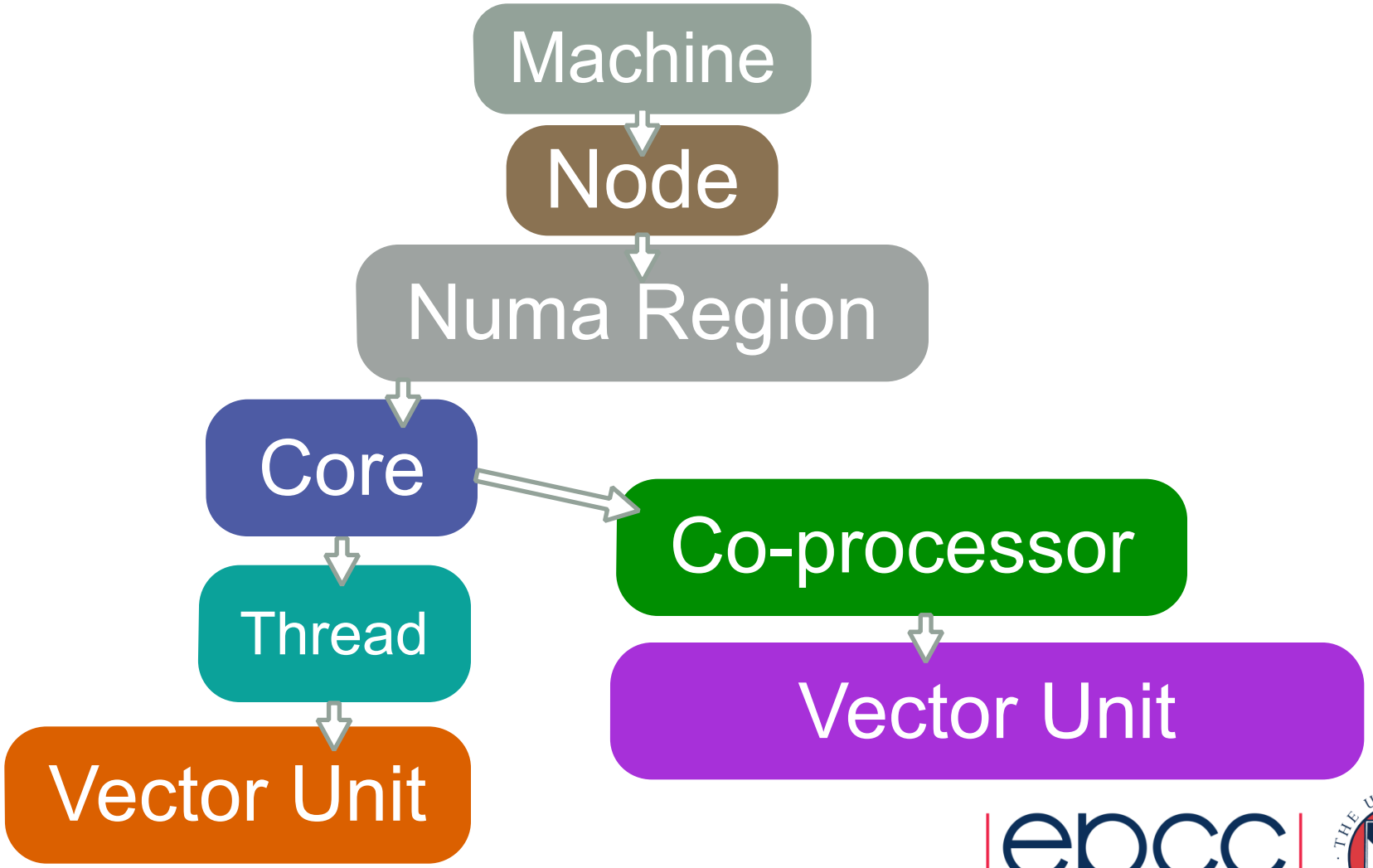
Application Design

- **Design** >> *Optimisation*
- Consider all levels of parallelism available and adapt your algorithm to exploit as many and as much as possible

Levels of parallelism



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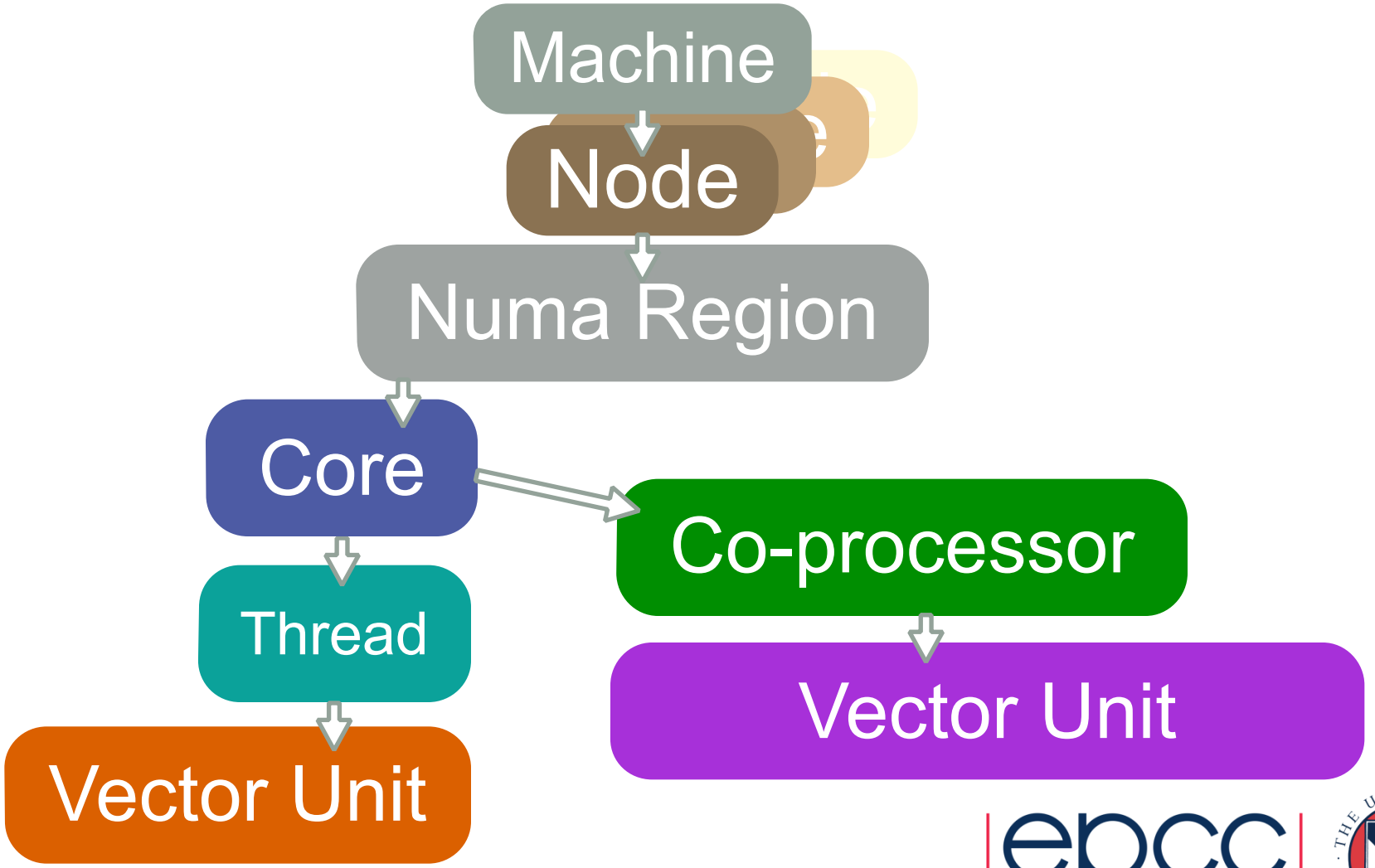

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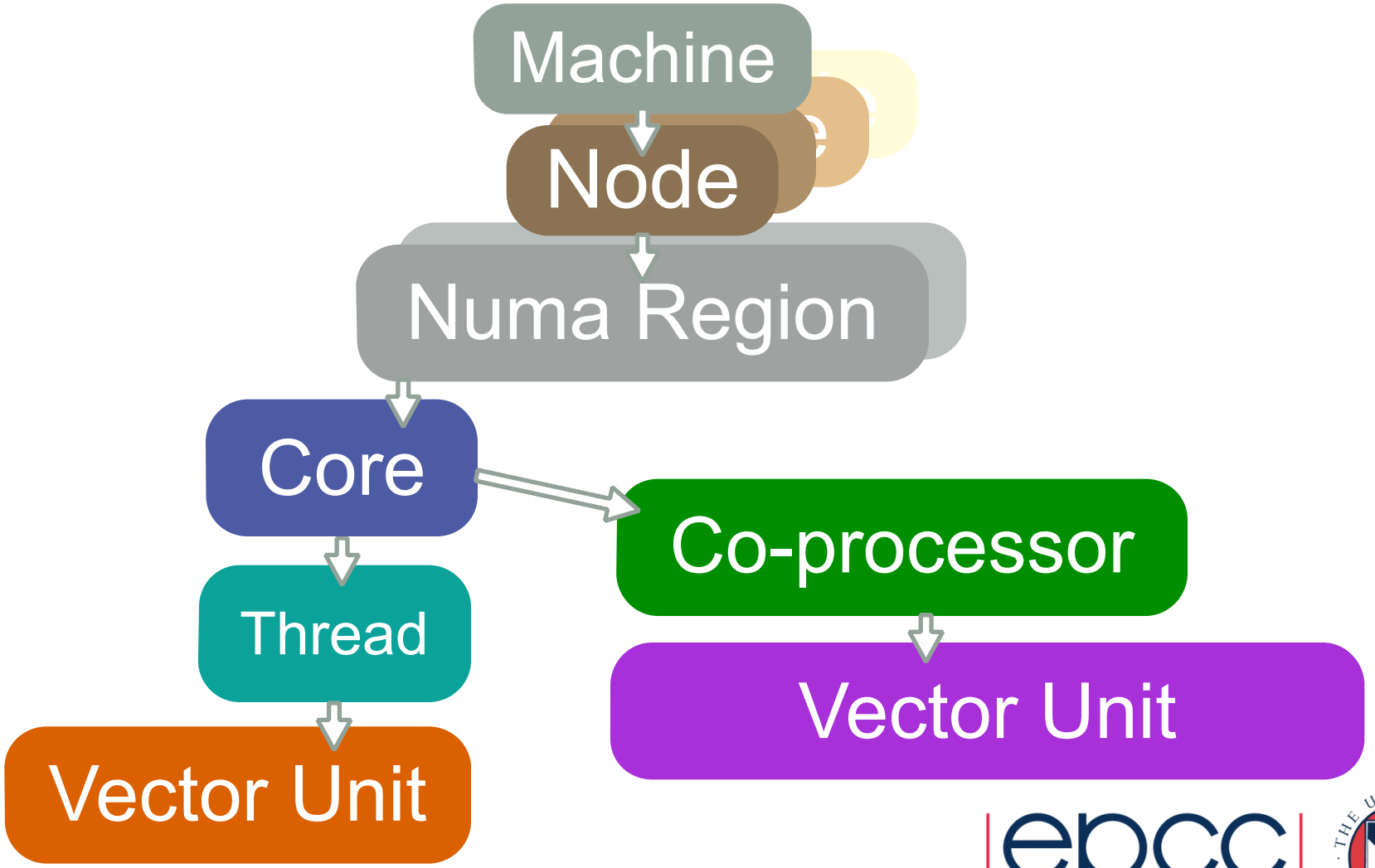

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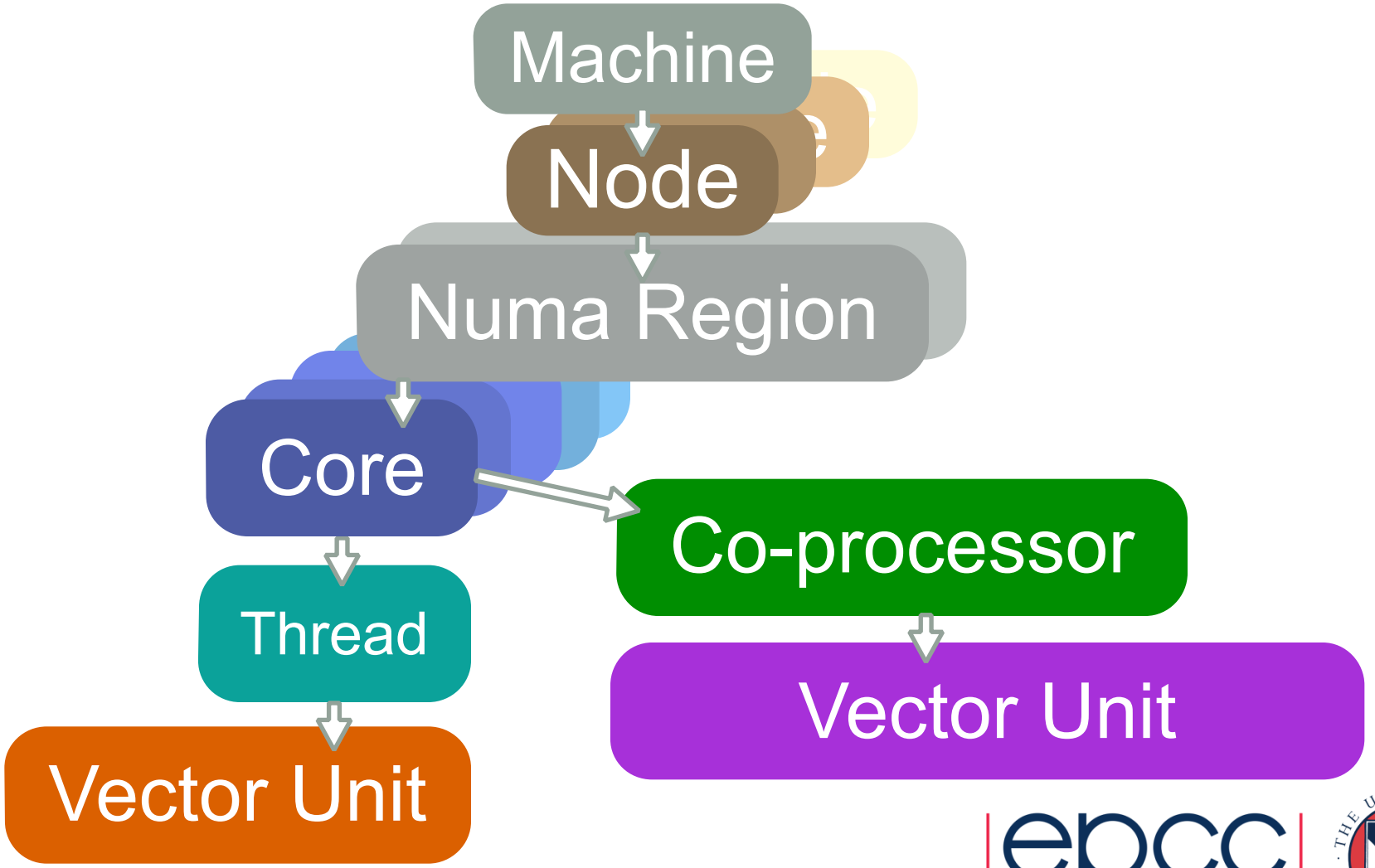

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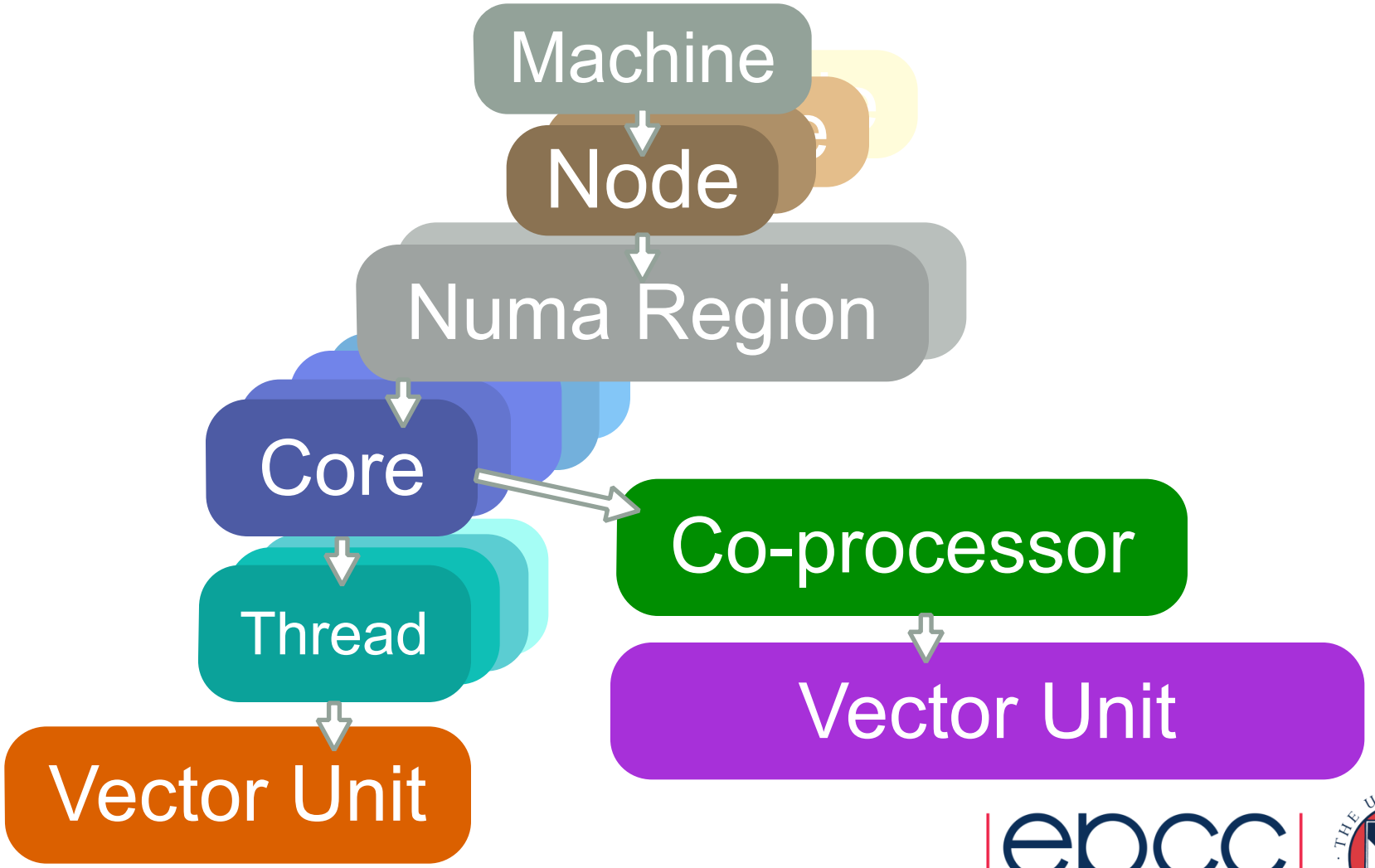

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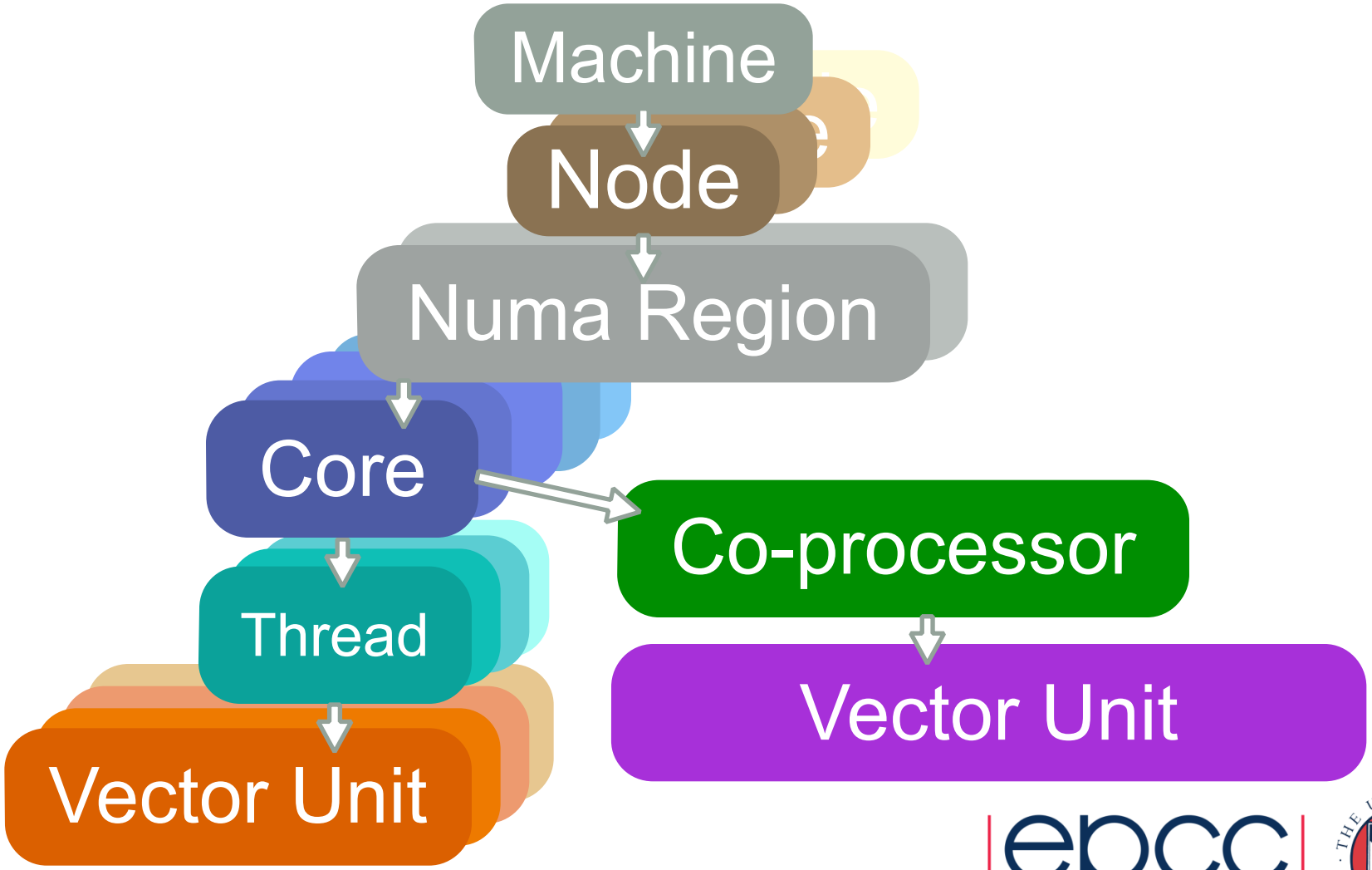

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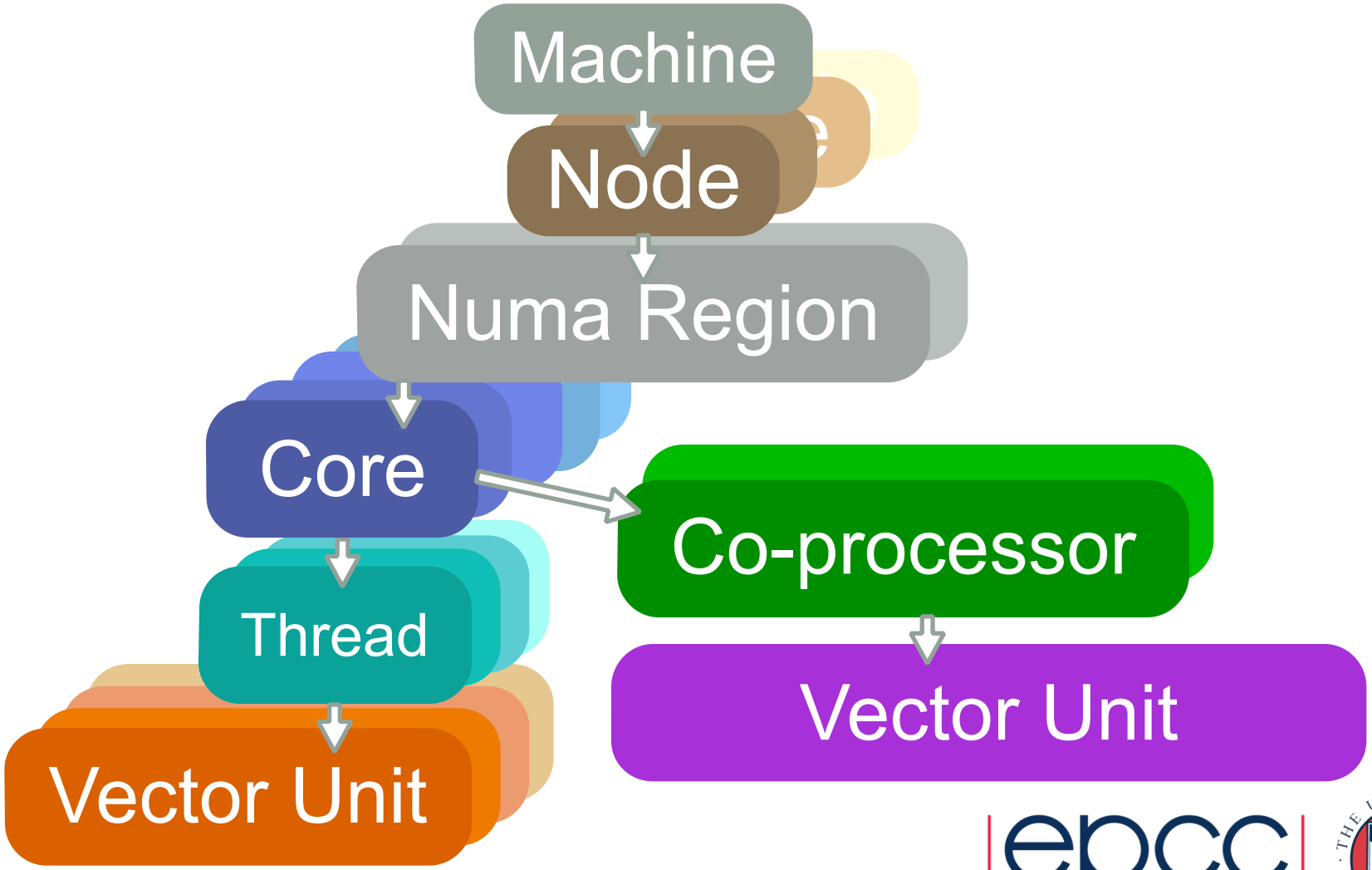

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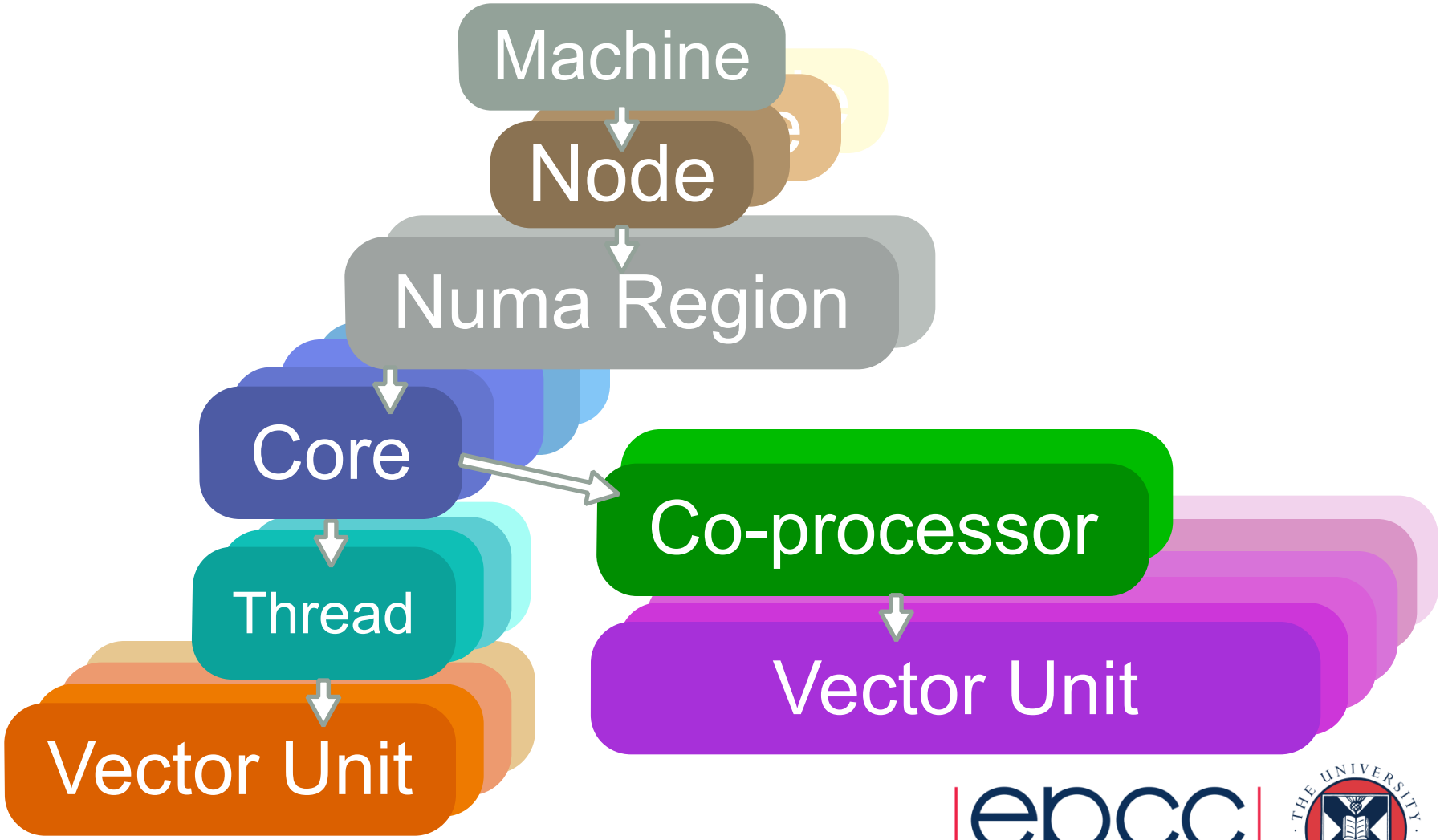

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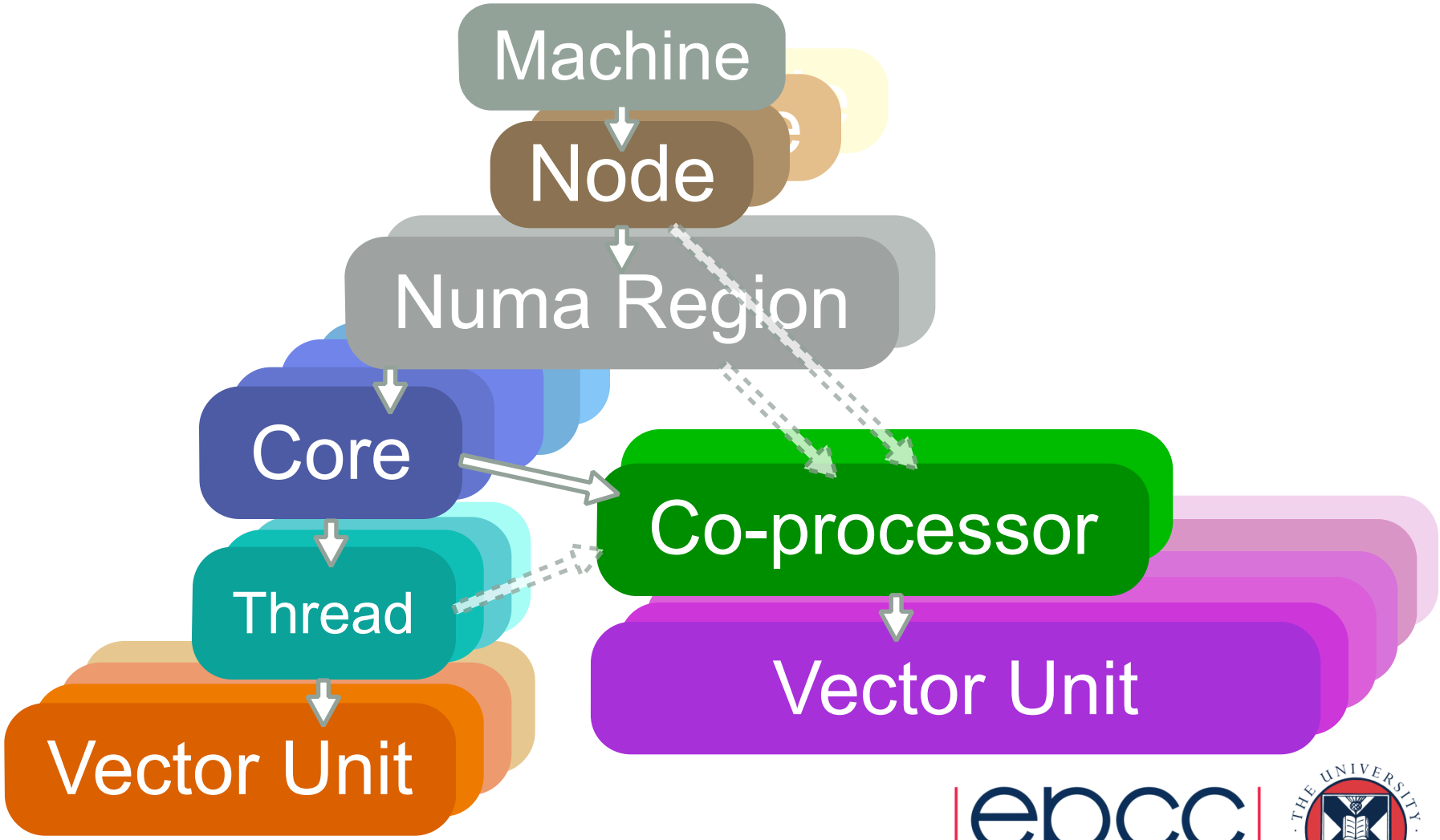

Summary

LESSON PLAN

- Programming models
- Parallelisation
- Compilers and Tools
- Performance Considerations

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- **Programming models**
  - Native, Offload, Symmetric - what's best for you.
- **Parallelisation**
  - MPI, OpenMP -> OpenMP better on Xeon Phi
  - Many ways to mix and match
- **Compilers and Tools**
  - Use Intel compilers (C, C++, Fortran)
  - Intel and Allinea tools: VTune, Map, etc.
  - Wide variety of runtime tools and environment variables: micinfo, KMP_AFFINITY
- **Performance Considerations**
  - Programming model
  - Vectorisation - needed to exploit Xeon Phi compute
  - Data alignment - needed to make vectorisation useful
  - Thread/process affinity - can be critical for performance
  - Application design: Consider levels of parallelism

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Thank You!