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Multi-package development at Fermilab with Spack

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The Spack package manager has been widely adopted in the supercomputing community as a means of providing consistently built on-demand software for the platform of interest. Members of the high-energy and nuclear physics (HENP) community, in turn, have recognized Spack's strengths, used it for their own projects, and even become active Spack developers to better support HENP needs. Code development in a Spack context, however, can be challenging as the provision of external software via Spack must integrate with the developed packages'build systems. Spack's own development features can be used for this task, but they tend to be inefficient and cumbersome.

We present a solution pursued at Fermilab called MPD (multi-package development). MPD aims to facilitate the development of multiple Spack-based packages in concert without the overhead of Spack's own development facilities. In addition, MPD allows physicists to create multiple development projects with an interface that insulates users from the many commands required to use Spack well.

Primary author: KNOEPFEL, Kyle (Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory)

Presenter: KNOEPFEL, Kyle (Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory)

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