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Day convolution, stable ∞ -operads and Goodwillie calculus

For a pointed compactly-generated ∞ -category C, we construct a stable non-unital ∞ -operad I_C^{\otimes} that represents the Goodwillie derivatives of the identity functor on C. The ∞ -operad I_C^{\otimes} is constructed from the Day convolution of two symmetric monoidal structures: the pointwise smash product of spectrum-valued functors on C; and the smash product of spectra. There is a relative version of the construction of I_C^{\otimes} that assigns to any functor $F: C \to D$ a bimodule over the ∞ -operads I_C^{\otimes} and I_D^{\otimes} that consists of the derivatives of F.

Our main examples are the ∞ -category of based spaces, in which case I_C^{\otimes} recovers a spectral version of the Lie operad, and the ∞ -category of spectrum-valued algebras over a stable non-unital ∞ -operad O^{\otimes} , in which case we can identify the ∞ -operad I_C^{\otimes} with a completion of O^{\otimes} itself.

This work is the foundation for a future project to classify Goodwillie towers of functors between ∞ -categories using pro-operads and their bimodules.