Dear Martin,

Thank you for your comment. I have looked at your comments, the submitted paper, and the two companion papers you have submitted, alongside the reviewer comments. Your proposal at the moment still reads, to me at least, as a broad and sweeping outline and discussion of PRiSE, rather than a clearly focussed piece. I still find it hard to discern the specific academic purpose of the paper, which will allow you to simplify and clarify it. To this end, I have taken the liberty of attempting to re-write the abstract and make a few suggestions. I realise that it is difficult to step back, view with fresh eyes, and substantially modify a paper with a substantial history, but I encourage you to attempt this.

The abstract I suggest is shorter, and gives you space to firstly describe PRiSE, then after this set-up get onto the research that is the core of the paper. Currently the introductory description of PRiSE is 18 pages, and all of the research (methods/results etc ...) is 10 pages. Although this paper can be to some extent a vehicle for a description of PRiSE, this balance may explain some of the reviewer reactions. The clear description of the paper's content I suggest may mitigate this partially, but some re-balancing is probably also necessary, using appendices if you must. In terms of what should be cut, the 10 pages of research seems to be a reasonable length.

> **Title:** Evaluating participants' experience of an initiative (PRiSE) to inspire school students to continue studying physics by extended interaction with cutting-edge research.

> **Abstract:** Physics in schools is distinctly different from university, research-level work, which may hinder participation in science at higher education. Initiatives wherein students engage in independent research linked to cutting-edge research within their school over several months may mitigate this. However, how this is best done remains unclear. This paper evaluates the PRiSE initiative through participants' experience of the scalable framework used. First, the PRiSE initiative and the theory of change used to break down its aims into a series of realistic intended outcomes for 14–18-year-old students are described. Then, the framework used is evaluated using survey data from participating students, teachers, and university collaborators. Overall, PRiSE appears to provide highly positive experiences that schools cannot provide internally, and the intensive support offered is deemed necessary with all elements appearing equally important. We suggest that the framework could be adopted at other institutions and applied to their own areas of scientific research, something which has already started to occur.

Please find below a non-exhaustive list of comments that I hope might help. Please also respond to <u>all</u> of the reviewers' comments, although because you are seeking to focus and shorten the piece this may be given as a valid reason for not acting upon some of them.

- "Developing" in the title. Developing, implies a narrative description of the process of development, which is difficult to reconcile with a research article.
- "PRiSE is a positive experience", but for a research article there is a need to focus on whether this is better or worse than other frameworks/initiatives.
- Scalability, if emphasized, needs to be evaluated. If there is no empirical evidence to assess this, I suggest you downplay it; including, for example a paragraph describing how the framework might be scaled up.
- Please seek to state your work concisely e.g. the abstract is now 160 words down from 264. You may be assisted in making the paper concise once the purpose of the paper is clearly identified. An illustration of this is Section 2.5 in version 1 of the manuscript ("Current Projects"). This probably needs no more than a relatively short paragraph and a single line for each project. Please ask yourselves for each section: How is this critical to either (i) a

clear concise description of the framework or (ii) its evaluation. Other material should be removed please, although appendices can be used if needed. I also suggest keeping descriptions of parts of the framework that are uncontroversial or not evaluated short, allowing some more space for the elements of interest to the research into participants' experience you present.

- I changed the text to "schools cannot provide internally" as the experiences could be possible through other frameworks / initiatives.
- I removed inverted commas and jargon from the first sentences of the abstract for clarity of communication.