Dear ,

I’m very glad I’ve had the chance to work on this very fine proposal for an ISF grant-funded study. I think you have pitched it excellently and you will see from my detailed edits that much of what I’ve done is more to make the wording a little more economical in places, proofing the English, and suggesting removing a very small number of passages that seemed repetitious. I think it is basically in excellent shape already. On more specific points:

* The ISF guidelines say that they will assess the application on its originality and innovation; importance; methodological adequacy; quality of research team (especially yourself as PI). I think you have in general addressed each of these to the appropriate degree and, of course, in a very well evidenced way. I think it might help just to assert that more fully, especially in relation to originality, with the odd sentence or two as appropriate.
* You will note that I suggest giving a brief summary of the project so that the assessor is not waiting for the detail exposé from Page 7 onward.
* The research methodology is well set out and related to the extant literature well. The graphic that shows the research plan is particularly useful.
* I was not able to do it myself, no doubt due to technical ignorance, but the spacing of the graphics may need a little refining so that boxes line up with each other.
* Although it does not seem this form is seeking accountancy-level costings and you submit a separate document on the financial detail, I would suggest adding a little detail wherever there might be additional cost implications beyond the core work of the research team (conference attendances, casual staff costs etc.). If you agree, please note the guidance in the ISF document on what you can claim as a legitimate cost.
* I accept that it is difficult to find the optimal balance, but I think there are a few areas where you go into a little too much detail on some of the finer points for the purposes of a grant proposal assessed by people who are no doubt very knowledgeable about the precise field but not to the extent you evidently are. I focused on leaving enough quality evidence of you and your team’s very obviously leading expertise in this area, while suggesting excising some of the subsidiary points. Of course, as with all the suggested edits you can override them as you feel appropriate.

The edits I have suggested would remove about 1,300 words from your original draft main document, but I do not think I’ve taken away anything substantive other than where I have flagged it as feasible. This should give you scope to make some of the additions I have suggested, where you agree with them, without making the submission too long.

Finally, may I say that I most sincerely hope your application is approved. The proposed project is so obviously important, with academic and public policy significance, and so complementary with what you have already so successfully achieved already that it deserves the fullest support. I wish you the very best with it and hope at least some of what I have suggested help to sharpen the focus.

With very best wishes,