

Research and Schrödinger's vision

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Sir, – I very much enjoyed Kevin O'Sullivan's summary of the life and times of the great Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger ("[Schrödinger's chat: a meeting of minds in the great physicist's name](#)", [September 1st](#)).

As the first director of the School of Theoretical Physics at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS), Schrödinger made an indelible mark on science in Ireland.

The author notes that Éamon de Valera was often accused of setting up DIAS as a vanity project. De Valera's response was that it was feasible for a small country with limited financial resources to achieve world-class scholarship in fields such as mathematics, theoretical physics and Celtic studies because such fields do not require expensive equipment.

Today, few of our politicians appear to have grasped de Valera's great insight.

While millions of euro are expended annually on applied science and technology, many scholars in fields such as mathematics and the humanities receive no research funding whatever – hardly a fitting legacy to Schrödinger's vision. – Yours, etc,

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