

THE PROPOSITION

PhD candidates explain their most thought-provoking proposition. This time it's Barbara Vital, who received her PhD on 11 September. Her research was on fouling and process design in reverse electrodialysis in natural waters.



‘The behaviour of an individual serves as a model for the rest of the society’

‘With a background in environmental engineering, I am deeply concerned about the environmental impact of the waste generated by our consumption patterns. Two years ago, I started making my own laundry detergent. All you need is a bar of natural soap, alcohol and baking soda. It works just as well as shop-bought products, and the added benefit is that there is no packaging waste and no toxic ingredients polluting our water. Initially, my friends and flatmates scorned my DIY approach, thinking it was a waste of time and not significantly cheaper. But as they watched me make and use the products, some of them became

interested and eventually tried it themselves. I have now shared my laundry detergent recipe with several friends and they all love it! I realize that my individual efforts may not have a significant impact on the environment, but what's important is that my actions can inspire others, and that together, our efforts can move society towards more environmentally responsible behaviour. So my advice is, if you believe that doing something is good for the environment, don't let others discourage you. In the end, your behaviour could serve as a model for society, creating a wave of positive change that we all need.’ NF