



**Väv Immersion**  
July 12 - September 3, 2021

An 8 week weaving intensive co-sponsored by  
Fabric of Life and Vävstuga Weaving School  
with generous support from the Ddora Foundation.

# Väv Immersion

## The Program

Väv Immersion is an 8-week in-depth program that reinforces the historic lineage of Scandinavian hand weaving through a range of educational opportunities including: personalized instruction with master weavers, hands-on production of numerous textile projects, attendance at intimately-sized classes that focus on an extensive array of skills, and connection to Immersion alumni from past years to build out your network and for learning how to move into this field as a professional.

You will gain a deep cultural appreciation of the aesthetic and functional way of life within this tradition, and a commitment to enhancing your life and the lives of others with these skills. The knowledge gained from this experience creates a foundation for further professional opportunities such as museum work, production weaving, textile retail, and teaching. Ultimately, the preservation of the tradition, culture, and function of hand weaving for future generations is carried forward through this intensive program.



*"Being here has been amazing, and it will impact everything that I do as a weaver for the rest of my life."*



# Väv Immersion

## The Community



The hilltowns of western Massachusetts are filled with a variety of individuals that are committed to building a future filled with sustainable and creative ways of living collectively. Throughout your time you will have the opportunity to connect with caring and unique individuals who have been part of bringing Fabric of Life into being, some of whom have known Becky since her childhood days. We are connected to local farms and farmers, cider-makers, artisans and craftspersons, and many small businesses in the area and strive to bridge these worlds during your time with us.

Our region boasts incredible opportunities for cycling, hiking, and kayaking, as well as plenty of smaller cities and towns to sample a variety of food, drinks and cultural events.

## Potential Trips



Immersion students will take several field trips to visit local and regional weavers including Lisa Hill, Peggy Hart, Justin Squizzero, and the Marshfield School of Weaving. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to connect with former Immersion students who are actively engaged in weaving practices that influence their lives personally and professionally.

You will also have the opportunity on weekends to explore Massachusetts and the surrounding states. We are within range for a day or weekend trip to Vermont as well as parts of New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Maine, and Connecticut.



## The Culture

Our intention is for your entire experience from the time that you wake to the time that you fall asleep to be one that creates a way of life that is slower, more thoughtful, connected to the Earth, and filled with opportunities for building deeper relationships to your craft, yourself, and those around you. We take the opportunity to use the class day (8:30 AM - 3:00 PM) as a 'cell-phone free' time in order to allow for more focus and engagement in the time we have to spend with each other, with some exceptions made for emergencies as needed. We share three meals a day during the week to foster connection and joy, and sometimes share those meals with individuals attending other programs through our partner, Vävstuga Weaving School.



## The Cohort

In order to maintain an intimate learning experience, we only accept 8 students into our program. We welcome all individuals from 18 years old onward. In addition to this, we are committed to supporting diversity within our program, and have 2 participant/scholarship slots reserved for individuals from the BIPOC community, between the ages of 18 - 35. We are welcoming and affirming to people of all genders and orientations, as well as diverse backgrounds. Some who attend our program have never woven before, others have woven for years. Regardless of where you are in your skills, who you are, or where you will be traveling from, we welcome you to apply to be considered for our 4th Väv Immersion cohort.



*"I didn't expect to become so close with the other students and that was one of the best parts of the program."*



# Väv Immersion

## The Staff

### Becky Ashenden Master Weaver



Becky's 1981 introduction to the wealth of the Swedish textile world at Sätergläntan Hemslöjdens Gård, a school renowned for weaving and other traditional crafts since 1922, gave her the motivation to pursue weaving as a life passion as well as a career. The following 13 years of production and sales added experience to her initial high-level training to build a unique set of complementary skills in both the theory and practice of weaving. Her use of equipment and techniques that have withstood the test of time adds to the value of what she has been offering her students at Vävstuga since 1991. Becky has also worked on a series of publishing projects for her own Vävstuga Press, which includes translating weaving books from Swedish to English and republishing Swedish weaving books that have gone out of print. She has also been the technical editor for several Swedish weaving books that have recently been published in English.

### Lisa Hill Master Weaver



Lisa has been weaving for over 17 years, and completed a 6-year Master Weaver Program at Hill Institute in Florence, MA in 2012. She is the Program Chair for the Weavers of Western Massachusetts and one of a team of tech editors for Handwoven Magazine. She believes cloth and its creation are somehow embedded in our DNA. Making cloth seems fundamental to her; she is saddened by the distance that has been created between the fabric that means so much to us and the making of that fabric. Lisa finds pleasure, challenge, and a fundamental gratification in the colors, patterns, and structures of the pieces she makes. She wants to create items that will be in daily use, but that demonstrate that utility is not "mere utility" but is intimately entwined with our aesthetic needs. Lisa serves as an assistant teacher and teacher in a variety of classes at Vävstuga.

**Eva Gaultney**  
**Program Support & Scandinavian Weaving Teacher-In-Training**



Eva, a student of our 3rd Väv Immersion cohort has returned to western MA to grow her skills as a teacher of Scandinavian textile weaving. Throughout this next year, she'll spend time working closely with Becky to sharpen the foundation of knowledge she carries with her, and support students in classes that Becky teaches. She has her own curriculum to follow and learn from independently — based on some classic texts and weaving designs hand-selected for her — and she'll also work on her design skills. In short, she's our teacher-in-training and we are excited for her added energy! Additionally, she will help to support the physical aspect of production for programs onsite at Bassett Road.

**John Leni Marcy**  
**Western MA based Photographer**

Since retiring in 2018 from his long time work as a black and white photographic print maker, John has been able to reflect on the many projects he was involved in, as well as his experiences working with many great contemporary and historically important photographers. John recognizes that he had a unique working life and is grateful for that. He is now happily engaged in supporting the activities at the Bassett Homestead and Fabric of Life. He is enjoying the learning and the challenges of producing weaving tools for Vävstuga. John is now able to devote his time to his own photographic work. This includes making new images and also producing print collections of his photographs from the past few decades.



# Väv Immersion

## The Education

Students are expected to engage in 40 hours of learning throughout the course of each week, however, most students participate in additional studio hours beyond this. The class day runs from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM, with breaks for lunch, tea, and snacks.

### Personalized & Group Instruction

Students will receive specialized instruction from Becky Ashenden in traditional Scandinavian hand weaving, drafting of structures, fabric analysis, designing several projects, history of the Scandinavian handcraft revival, and from Lisa Hill in color theory, finding their design voice, computer drafting and Nordic deflection. Additionally, Eva Gaultney, a student of our 3rd VävImmersion cohort, and our current Scandinavian weaving teacher apprentice will provide support throughout the class day.

### Technical and Historical Aspects

Students will become intimately familiar with the technical aspects of hand weaving, from calculating warp lengths, to winding and beaming a warp, to threading, designing, and problem-solving to the multi-faceted history behind this tradition.



*"The program well exceeded my expectations, and in all honesty I already expected it was going to be pretty incredible."*

### Hands-on Production/Personal Projects

Students will weave multiple projects in the course of eight weeks, in a range of designs and materials, allowing for depth of engagement in the history of this craft at the most kinesthetic level of learning. Students will have exposure to a variety of projects.

### Individual and Shared Warps

Individual warps include towels in twill variations, yardage, a large blanket, a tow linen tablecloth, plain and patterned bands. Shared warps include a cotton & linen overshot, a drawloom piece, a monksbelt runner, a deflected double weave towel, a Smålandsväv, a 10 shaft damask tablecloth in single ply linen, a Rosepath hanging, and a weft-faced ticking.







While we recognize that each person in our program will arrive with a different set of skills, we invite individuals to come into this program with both a beginner's mind and the awareness that they have something invaluable to offer from their own knowledge base. Each day, students are encouraged to help each other remember what has been taught and to support each other in learning from their mistakes. We celebrate mistakes as incredible opportunities for

learning, and appreciate and value the time that can be given to learning as a result. In this classroom there is no space for pretense or ego; we

gather because we value the art of learning, and because we wish to learn from each other and from our formal instructors.



# Väv Immersion

## The Land



*"This has been one of the best experiences I've ever had -- not just for the weaving but also for the community, the environment, the daily life."*



Fabric of Life partners with the Bassett Road Homestead, LLC for our physical programming needs. The Bassett Road Homestead, of over 100 acres, sits upon the land of the original indigenous people of the Nipmucs, Pocumtucs, and the Wabanaki Confederacy. This land is also the childhood home of the founder, Becky Ashenden and has been within her family for the past 62 years. The majority of this land is in conservancy, with the hopes of preserving access to and enjoyment of this land for many generations for many years to come, while also supporting the growth of the natural habitat and its creatures.

The land is flush with trees and vegetation. Sugar and red maples, white and red oaks, yellow/silver and gray/white birch, sassafras poplar, black cherry, and sumac trees, are just a handful of the many species of trees that are in residence. Additionally there are ferns, fiddleheads, and moss and a variety of animals that call this land 'home', including bears, skunks, groundhogs, turtles, toads, and an amazing variety of birds, hawks, and other woodland creatures.

There are opportunities for walks in the woods, a dip in the brook, sitting in the meadows and watching the stars, or simply having a snack under one of the many beautiful trees. There is also a garden on the property, a timber structure that houses a wood-fired oven, a beautiful large barn, a couple of small outbuildings, and the farmhouse.



## The Food

Meals are a way of life in our program. They are the cornerstone of building community, creating spaces of beauty, nourishing our bodies, and establishing connection with whole foods. Past students have voiced their love of the opportunity to slow down, share meals with others, connect, and hold reverence for the abundance of what it is that the Earth has to offer.



*"... the shared group meals ... was critical for our bonding - to have that set meal time and break bread together gave us the opportunity to reflect on what was going on during the program, share our thoughts and learnings, and just get to know each other better. It was also just nice to see the staff every day. It felt like we had a really great support group helping us along and sharing in our experiences."*



# Väv Immersion

## The Schedule

Students should plan to arrive on Sunday, July 11th, 2021 and to depart by Saturday, September 4th, 2021.

Students are expected to be in class weekdays from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM and will need to plan for additional hours outside of the class day and on weekends to work on their weaving projects, drafting sheets, and other course-related materials.

Informal opportunities for hikes and short day trips on the weekend may be offered during the program, but are not a required part of attendance.

There are currently no planned holidays or breaks during this time, but if students have a personal or religious commitment that would take them away from the program for a short period of time, prior communication is appreciated and necessary.



*"The greatest thing about the program was how much we got to weave and I feel like I learned a lot."*

*"Becky is an absolutely wonderful teacher, was accessible and approachable, full of knowledge and is always willing to share and explain, and the program was incredibly comprehensive."*





## The Cost

The cost of this experience is \$6,500. Students are responsible for the cost of materials for their projects, which can average up to \$60/week.



## The Scholarships

While this program will accept applications from individuals aged 18 onward, there is an intentional focus to engage and support those in the age range of 18 to 35.

This year we are offering 2 full scholarships of \$6,500, based on financial need and merit and geared towards BIPOC between ages 18 - 35.

We are also offering 2 scholarships of \$3,500 for any individual between the ages 18 - 35 based on financial need and merit. Information for how to apply for a scholarship is listed on the program application.

## Refund Policy



All students will be required to pay a non-refundable program fee of \$1,000 within 7 days of acceptance into the program; if this presents a hardship, please speak with us during the interview process.

- If a student is unable to attend the program for non-COVID reasons, the balance paid (minus the \$1000 non-refundable deposit) will be reimbursed.
- If a student contracts COVID-19 before the program begins and is unable to attend the program at all as a result, a full refund will be provided; this will require a doctor's letter and/or a positive COVID test result to be submitted.
- If a student becomes sick with COVID-19 during the program and has to leave there will be no refund given, however a short-term class video subscription and the remainder of the course handouts will be provided.

# Väv Immersion

## COVID Considerations



Given the unknown landscape of COVID-19, we are planning our program with adherence to CDC and state recommendations, which we will update if recommendations change. It is critical that each student recognizes their personal role and responsibility in maintaining the health and well-being of themselves and those around them. Students who do not follow the safety protocols will be dismissed from the program without receiving a refund.

### **Regardless of whether students have received vaccines or not, the following measures will be in place:**

- All students will need to self-isolate/quarantine for fourteen days prior to the program start date, and will need to provide proof of a negative COVID test from within 72 hours of the program start date. Further details regarding this can be discussed during your interview to confirm the logistics of the quarantine component and testing sites.
- Class will take place outside in the barn structure which allows for ample amounts of fresh air; masks are required to be worn during this time as well, with the only exception being during meal times.
- Students will maintain appropriate physical distancing of 6 feet.
- Hand sanitizer and handwashing stations will be available for use throughout the day and students will be asked to regularly wash their hands.
- Students will be asked to regularly wipe down their workspaces and looms.
- All students will wear masks while inside of the Farmhouse; exceptions to this rule apply only to when students are in their own private rooms.
- Fabric of Life will contract with cleaners to routinely clean the bathrooms, classroom spaces and the common areas throughout the week.
- Signs will be posted sharing regulations and protocols regarding entering and leaving spaces and other important guidelines.
- Any concern around symptoms that may be COVID-related will require immediate reporting of information to staff and immediate reporting to a testing site. Quarantine will be required until a negative test result has been obtained.





### For the first two weeks of the program:

- Students will be issued KN95 masks to be used at all times, except when sleeping and in personal quarters.
- Students will be expected to utilize either delivery or curbside pick-up as their sole means of gathering groceries and toiletries; we recognize that certain personal items or medical necessities such as prescriptions may require short visits inside of a retail store and ask only that you minimize these visits to what is absolutely necessary.
- Wearing of masks in all indoor public spaces is required.
- Recreational trips such as hiking, biking, etc. are encouraged and the use of masks and appropriate physical distancing from others is required.
- Outside dining at restaurants is not permitted; curbside pick-up or take-out is required.
- Going to public gatherings (inside or outside) or going into public spaces for any reason beyond the necessities mentioned above is not allowed.
- Social gatherings with others outside of the Fabric of Life staff and its immediate community and the Immersion cohort is not permitted.

After the initial two weeks of the program, Fabric of Life staff will evaluate the above guidelines and make shifts as needed in order to maintain the health and well-being of all students, as this is our first priority. It is our hope that these first two weeks represent the most restrictive aspect of our safety protocols and that after we have established our program pod, there will be opportunities to ease some of these restrictions. Fabric of Life is absorbing significant additional costs as a result of our commitment to maintaining a healthy environment for our students and staff.



# Väv Immersion

## The Application



All interested individuals are required to submit an application that includes:

- the application form
- a resume
- a letter of no more than 2 pages, explaining your background/interest in weaving and your goals
- Names, telephone #s and emails of 2 character references - ie. teachers, employers, business associates, etc.

After receipt of these materials, a video or phone interview will be scheduled. After acceptance into the program, a completed health form signed by your Primary Care Physician will be required.

For those wishing to apply for scholarship support, additional application information is required, including in either a PDF or paper copy form sent directly to us:

- A letter of no more than 2 pages, that addresses why paying the cost for this program would be a hardship and how you feel you would benefit from receiving a scholarship to attend the program.
- 2 letters of reference that address your work ethic and commitment to learning and that include contact information for any further questions we may have (sent separately from your application); letters must not be from family, friends, or relatives.
- A copy of your birth certificate, license, passport or other official ID that confirms your date of birth.



The application and requirements and scholarship application information can also be found on our website:

**[www.fabric-of-life.org](http://www.fabric-of-life.org)**

All materials should be sent as a PDF to:  
**[office@fabric-of-life.org](mailto:office@fabric-of-life.org)**

or mailed to:

**Fabric of Life**  
**47 Bassett Road**  
**Shelburne, MA 01370**





# Fabric of Life & Vävstuga Weaving School 2021 Väv Immersion Application

Early Application Deadline: Friday, April 16th, 2021

Final Application Deadline: Friday, May 14th, 2021

*(Acceptance and award decisions made by April 23rd and May 21st, respectively.)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Application Materials Checklist

- \_\_\_ Väv Immersion Application Form (PDF or paper copy)
- \_\_\_ Resume (PDF or paper copy)
- \_\_\_ A letter of no more than 2 pages, explaining your background/interest in weaving and your goals (no prior weaving experience is necessary) (PDF or paper copy)
- \_\_\_ Names, telephone #s and emails of 2 character references - ie. teachers, employers, business associates, etc.
- \_\_\_ Phone or video interview (to be scheduled once your materials have been received)

\* After acceptance into the program we will also require a completed health form (attached to this application) signed by your Primary Care Physician (PDF or paper copy) prior to your arrival to the program.

## Scholarship Materials Checklist

Due to the generosity of the Ddora Foundation, we are able to offer 2 full scholarships of \$6,500, based on financial need and merit to BIPOC individuals between ages 18 - 35 and 2 scholarships of \$3,500 for any individual between the ages 18 - 35, based on financial need and merit.

- \_\_\_ A letter of no more than 2 pages, that addresses why paying for this program would be a hardship and how you feel you would benefit from receiving a scholarship to attend the program (PDF or paper copy)
- \_\_\_ 2 letters of reference that address your work ethic and commitment to learning and that include contact information for any further questions we may have (PDF or paper copy sent directly to us and separate from your application); letters must not be from family, friends, or relatives.
- \_\_\_ A copy of your birth certificate, license, passport or other official ID that confirms your DOB.



# Fabric of Life & Vävstuga Weaving School 2021 Väv Immersion Application

## Character References

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Years known: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Years known: \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment/Refunds

When offers of acceptance are made, a non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 is due within 7 days to confirm your spot in this program. The remainder of the balance is due by Friday, June 11th unless other arrangements have been made. Please confirm how you plan to pay, if you are accepted:

I will pay online with my Visa/MC.

I will mail a check.

*Please send your completed application  
and scholarship materials in one email to:*  
**office@fabric-of-life.org**

*or mail a hard copy to:*  
**Fabric of Life  
47 Bassett Road  
Shelburne, MA 01370**



# Fabric of Life & Vävstuga Weaving School

## 2021 Väv Immersion Health Form

### Health Information

*(This form is completely confidential and is not used as part of our decision to accept you into this program. This form serves to support you in case of an emergency only. It should be signed by your primary care physician.)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any of the following conditions?

Asthma

Diabetes

Cardiac Issues

Seizure Disorder/Epilepsy

Taking Medications

Blood Disorders

Bone/Joint Issues

Mental Health Issues

if yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies that require Epi-pen or that causes hives, rash or difficulty breathing;

if yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Anything else that would be helpful for us to know?

I hereby certify that this individual is mentally, physically, and emotionally fit to attend the Väv Immersion 8-week weaving intensive program and that the information provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



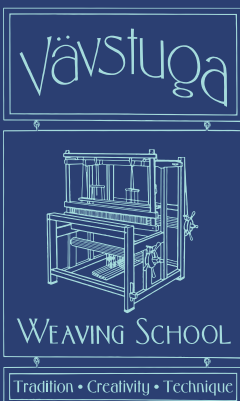
## Fabric of Life

*Fabric of Life is a 501(c)3 not for profit educational organization dedicated to the preservation and passing on of knowledge and skills that enrich our daily lives. We strive to see traditional skills flourish in our modern world and make these educational opportunities available to future generations. Working together creating practical things of beauty not only improves quality of life, but also strengthens communities.*

At the heart of Fabric of Life are individuals who believe in the value of learning traditional agricultural, construction, music, craft and hand skills. An education steeped in these skills creates opportunities for each of us to understand who we are in relation to ourselves, the natural world, and within our communities. In turn, we have found that these skills and this self-knowledge bolsters individuals, communities and cultures, serving as a source of renewal and regeneration for generations to come. Our work and our learning is founded in a commitment to lifelong learning and to equally valuing the culture, identity, and knowledge of all nations, peoples and generations.

80 Bassett Road  
Shelburne MA 01370

[office@fabric-of-life.org](mailto:office@fabric-of-life.org)  
[www.fabric-of-life.org](http://www.fabric-of-life.org)



## Vävstuga Weaving School

Vävstuga Weaving School has been our longstanding partner in implementing the Väv Immersion Weaving program since its inception. We are thankful for this continued opportunity to work with them in producing this unique opportunity.

[www.vavstuga.com](http://www.vavstuga.com)