



## **Väv Immersion**

August 26 - October 18, 2024

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 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.



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

## The Cohort

In order to maintain an intimate learning experience, we usually accept only six students into this program.

We welcome all individuals from 18 years old onward. We are committed to supporting diversity within and accessibility to our program, and are actively working to welcome participants from diverse backgrounds and communities.

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 Väv Immersion cohort.





# 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 been published in English.



**Eva Gaultney**  
Program Support & Scandinavian Weaving Teacher

Eva attended the Väv Immersion program in 2019, where she expanded her knowledge of Swedish weaving and techniques. She began her weaving journey at Berea College as a production weaver, where she wove placemats, rag rugs, and rep weave; she also enjoyed exposure to different looms, tools, and weaving techniques. With her interest piqued, she spent much of her free time digging deeper into all aspects of weaving. After graduating from Berea, she accepted a position as an Environmental Educator at Pine Mountain Settlement School. There she discovered the loom room, packed with an assortment of looms of various makes and styles. She learned a lot about loom mechanics from working on and maintaining those looms. In 2020, Eva returned to Fabric of Life as Becky's teaching assistant, and is now an integral part of our teaching staff.



**Eli Akerfeldt-Howard**  
History of Swedish Weaving

Eli was part of our Väv Immersion program in 2022 is a dual US/Swedish citizen. He studied anthropology, Chinese, and fashion history during college before completing a fiber arts internship on the island of Gotland, off the coast of Sweden. Eli will be returning to Väv Immersion as a guest instructor this year to share his knowledge of the history of Swedish textiles. Eli's weaving business is Hemma Textiles: [hemmatextiles.com](http://hemmatextiles.com)





# 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 in traditional Scandinavian hand weaving, drafting of structures, fabric analysis, designing several projects, history of the Scandinavian handcraft revival, color theory, finding their design voice, and Nordic deflection.

### 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.



### 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.

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



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 over 60 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. We feel 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 the Earth has to offer.

A buffet style lunch is served daily throughout the program week and our shared Thursday dinners allow the opportunity for spontaneous conversation and connection between students.

We serve a healthy and delicious whole food diet, with much of the produce coming from the garden near the farmhouse and can usually accommodate vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free meal choices with advance notice.



*"... 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, August 25th, 2023 and to depart by Saturday, October 19th, 2023.

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 will be no instruction on Labor Day, September 2nd, or Indigenous People's Day (Columbus Day) October 14th. 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.

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

## The Accommodations

The Bassett Road Homestead features quaint cabins, cozy glamping tents, and whimsically decorated rooms on the second floor of the Farmhouse. We are also happy to provide suggestions for local accommodation options, if you prefer to stay off-site.



### School House Cabin

*This cabin is complete with a small air conditioner and a tiny refrigerator. Solar shower as weather permits. A great option for rustic comfort. Electricity. Double occupancy.*



### Bear Den Cabin

*Our newest cabin, Bear Den is complete with electricity and topped with a cupola and a shiny copper bear weathervane. Electricity. Double occupancy.*



### Elmside Cabin

*This tiny single occupancy cabin near the garden sits just behind our large elm tree. Cute as a button, it has a desk/bureau, gate-leg round table, and twin size bed. No electricity.*



### Meadowview Cabin

*This is our most luxurious cabin, complete with electricity, a mini kitchen and water. This cabin has two swedish style bunkbeds and is a five minute walk from the Farmhouse.*



### Southern Comfort

*This single occupancy room at the southern end of the Farmhouse sits next to our yarn "playroom" is a good choice for a social night owl.*



### Forest Fancy

*This single occupancy room at the north end of the Farmhouse has plenty of privacy and a large built-in bookshelf.*



### Birder's Delight

*This single occupancy room sits at the top of the main stairway in the Farmhouse and is the closest to both the exit and the bathroom.*



### Shady Nook Tent

*This beautiful glamping option allows for an intimate connection with the natural world. Electricity. Double occupancy.*



# Väv Immersion

## The Costs

**Program cost:** \$6,500

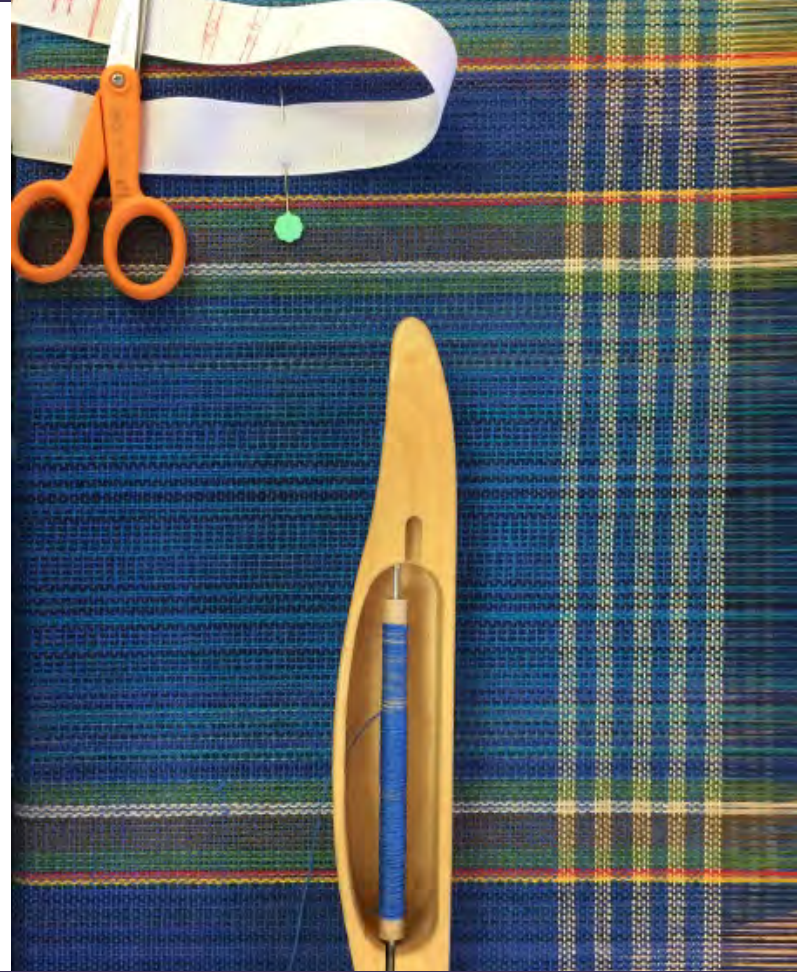
**Materials:** Students are responsible for the cost of materials for their projects, which can average up to \$60/week.

**Room & Board:** \$1,200

Accommodations are available on the Bassett Road Homestead grounds for the duration of the 8 week program. Full meal package is included in room and board.

### Meal Packages:

- **Basic (included in program cost):**  
Lunch Monday through Friday  
Thursday dinner
- **Basic Plus (\$360 for 8 weeks):**  
Lunch Monday through Friday  
Dinners Monday through Thursday
- **Full (\$560 for 8 weeks):**  
Breakfast Monday through Friday  
Lunch Monday through Friday  
Dinners Monday through Thursday



## The Scholarships

We are excited to be able to offer four scholarships to increase the accessibility of this program to motivated young adults.

Two full scholarships of \$6,500 are available to individuals between the ages of 18 and 35, with preference given to applicants from historically marginalized communities.

Two partial scholarships of \$3,500 are available to any individual between the ages of 18 and 35, based on financial need and merit.



## COVID Considerations



We are planning our program with adherence to applicable CDC and state recommendations, which we will update if recommendations change. We expect each student to take responsibility in maintaining the health and well-being of themselves and those around them. Students who do not follow the CDC safety protocols may be dismissed from the program without receiving a refund.

The following measures will be in place:

- Students may be asked to provide proof of a negative COVID test from within 72 hours of the program start date, or proof of vaccination.
- Hand sanitizer and handwashing stations will be available for use throughout the day.
- Fabric of Life will contract with cleaners to routinely clean

- the bathrooms, classroom spaces and the common areas throughout the week.
- Any concern around symptoms that may be COVID-related will require immediate testing and timely updates to Fabric of Life staff.

We encourage students to wear face coverings in indoor public spaces for the safety, health, and well-being of all participants and our staff. We also ask that participants minimize public gatherings with others outside of our staff and immediate community.

## 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 must cancel their attendance in the program for personal reasons, the balance paid (minus the \$1,000 non-refundable program fee) will be refunded.
- If a student is unable to attend the program at all as a result of a medical condition, a full refund will be provided; this will require a doctor's letter to be submitted.
- If a student needs to leave the program after it has begun, there will be no refund given. The remainder of the course handouts will be provided and we may provide a short-term class video subscription, where possible.



# Väv Immersion

## The Application



This program will accept applications from individuals age 18 and older. There is an intentional focus in this program to engage and support those in the age range of 18 to 35.

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

- the application form
- a resume
- a letter of no more than two pages, explaining your background/interest in weaving and your goals
- Names, telephone numbers and email addresses of two character references

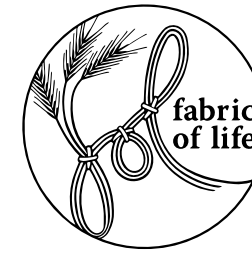
After receipt of these materials, an interview will be scheduled. Upon acceptance into the program, a completed health form, signed by your Primary Care Physician, will be required.

For those wishing to apply for scholarship support, additional application information is required:

- A letter of no more than two 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.
- Two 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.

All materials should be sent as a PDF to:  
**office@fabric-of-life.org**

or mailed to:  
**Fabric of Life**  
**47 Bassett Road**  
**Shelburne, MA 01370**



## Fabric of Life & Vävstuga Weaving School 2024 Väv Immersion Application

Early Application Deadline: Friday, June 28th, 2024

Final Application Deadline: Friday, July 26th, 2024

*(Acceptance and award decisions made by July 5th and August 2nd, 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)

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

### Scholarship Materials Checklist

Due to the generosity of the Ddora Foundation, we are able to offer 2 full scholarships of \$6,500 to individuals between the ages of 18 and 35, with preference given to individuals from historically marginalized communities, and 2 partial scholarships of \$3,500 to any individual between the ages of 18 and 35, based on financial need and merit.

Please specify which scholarship you are applying for: \_\_\_ Full Scholarship  
\_\_\_ Partial Scholarship

- \_\_\_ 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 date of birth.





# Fabric of Life & Vävstuga Weaving School 2024 Väv Immersion Application

### Character References

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

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

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

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

### Payment/Refunds

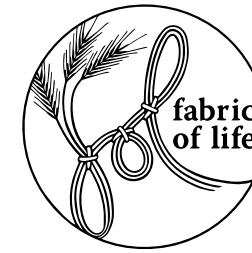
When offers of acceptance are made, a non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 is due within 7 days to confirm your spot in this program. The remainder of the balance is due by Friday, August 9th unless other arrangements have been made. Please confirm how you plan to pay, if you are accepted:

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 2024 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

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

Blood Disorders

Bone/Joint Issues

Mental Health Issues

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





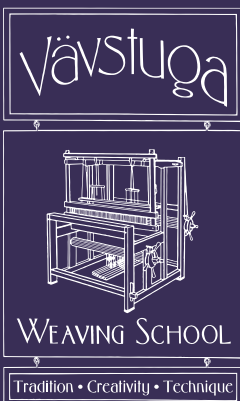
## Fabric of Life

*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 partner with Vävstuga Weaving School to produce this unique opportunity.

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