

# Community Mandate Villa Vallila 2022 - 2026



Dear member of Villa Vallila,

We are happy to propose this community mandate to you. It is not a job-description for the new community leader and it is not a check-list. The mandate contains orientations for a 'future Villa Vallila' and steps the community could take to bring this future closer. The mandate therefore is a fundamental document for the elaboration of action plans for the future. Prioritizing will be crucial in making these plans feasible.

You are all conscious about the important transition that will take place in the coming months and years. A transition of the founding leader(s) to a new leader is always a major challenge. We believe this mandate will help the community to make this transition - this change - in a constructive manner.



When we were looking for an image that could speak about the future Villa Vallila you are dreaming of, we drew this image of a tree.

We can distinguish three major parts of a tree: roots, a trunk and a crown. These form the three chapters of the mandate. You can easily imagine that these three parts are very much connected. Without a strong trunk Villa will not be able to maintain its crown. Without deep roots, you will not be able to keep being the community you want to be. With deep roots and a stronger trunk, Villa Vallila should be able to grow new branches or twigs.

**The anchor** we drew emphasizes the importance of staying rooted in your core values. Rootedness gives trust and the ability to grow. Yet this anchor also invites you as a member and as a community to be open to change.

Like a boat anchored off the coast, it can still move in any direction depending on the wind and current. Villa Vallila needs to be able to change and adapt to new realities outside and within the community in the same way.

Staying rooted, the trust and the openness to live new experiences, will be crucial for the future of Villa Vallila. We invite all of you to be open to a new style of leadership, open to new ideas, open to a more structured way of organizing, open to perhaps cutting away a branch so that a new and better one can grow.

When you continue reading, thank you for reading "I" where you see "we".

We invite you to say YES! to this mandate, to the calls and challenges described in it.

Thank you for your gift to Villa Vallila,

Roman, Renata, Vít, Denisa & Johan  
The discernment team  
March 2022

## **The roots**

L'Arche Villa Vallila has roots that reach deep. These 'roots' help the community to live its mission. They bring forward the authentic taste and colour; the charisma of Villa Vallila.

It is important to know the history, the founding values, the traditions and rituals of the community in times of transition. In the future we want to continue to see these values lived out in how we do things and forge our relationships.

For this purpose ...

- We actively participate in the international Charter process.
- We record our history and we make our values, traditions and rituals explicit.
- The new community leader will invest the necessary time to know and understand the essential values of community life in Villa.
- The community will take care for the founders Eva & Mirek. We make the necessary arrangements with them and appoint people who will follow this up.
- We invite all members to see the gift, the wonder of Villa.
- We foster the spiritual life of the community and its members, the openness to the outside world, the ties with the village and the warm mutual relationships.
- We celebrate and we go on excursions.
- We continue to work together - in and with our differences - towards common goals.
- We learn to accept each other as we are.
- We are here one for another in closeness and trust on a common journey.
- The joy we experience together is an important indicator in evaluating our work.

## **The trunk**

The trunk carries the branches of the tree. The stronger it is, the more branches and fruits it will be able to maintain and to grow.

In an organisation (and a community), the trunk represents clear and known structures, processes, systems, task distribution, responsibilities and so on.

Transition from leadership is often accompanied by reduced stability. The organizational structure of Villa Vallila needs to be strengthened in order to continue the present functioning and to allow for new future developments.

For this purpose ...

- We need to strengthen our financial basis:
  - by investing more in fundraising
  - by finding a way to have the workshop activities funded
  - by developing new funded activities
- We will strengthen the brand "L'Arche" by investing more in our external communication and the promotion of our activities.
- We will work more professionally without losing heart in our commitment.
  - We will find a psychologist or other specialist to support the team in supporting people with disabilities.
  - We will have clear standards of care and we will evaluate if we are able to meet these standards in a systematic way.
  - We will define the necessary roles and functions, and we will delegate responsibilities and powers to those in charge. We will decide whether we need a separate person responsible for the infrastructure, the workshop, the spirituality, volunteers, etc.

- We will engage with the safeguarding standards of L'Arche International, develop the necessary procedures and training so that everyone is safe.
- We will develop a fair and transparent salary policy.
- We will prepare other regulations if we decide it is necessary.
- Leaders will develop the community in a participative way, i.e. the people that have a stake are invited to speak out and participate in decision making.
- Unless we find a better way for members to participate, we will create a community council that reflects the different parts of and opinions in our community. This council will advise the community leader in all important major decisions and help the community to stay faithful to its core values (see roots).
- The way we organize our internal communication helps people to feel they belong. We will communicate in a transparent way with all our members.
- We will actively work together with others:
  - We will continue to invest in the membership process of L'Arche and in the relationship with the international envoy. We will decide on ways members can grow closer to the wider reality of L'Arche and connect with other L'Arche communities.
  - L'Arche Benediktus is our privileged partner. We will find ways to work together with them. we will visit them and invite them to join us for activities.
  - We will increase our contacts and work together with other organizations in Central Bohemia to learn from them, to offer them our expertise, and to help find answers to the needs of our members with a disability (relationships, work, ...).
  - We will welcome more (international) volunteers.

### **The crown (branches, leafs and fruits)**

A tree expresses itself through its branches and the leaves and fruits they bear. It must be cared for. Pruning promotes the growth of new shoots and fruit.

We like the crown of the tree that symbolizes Villa Vallila! We like our house and all the activities. If possible, we would like to maintain everything we do today and find ways to develop new projects in the future.

For this purpose ...

- During the transition we prioritize all that is needed to help bring stability and continuity.
- The new community leader will take time to listen and to have an overview and better understanding of the needs of the community and of individual members, many of which are named in this mandate. Together with the community he/she will plan and decide on new activities and projects.
- We will organize ourselves to better understand and respond to some of the individual needs of the people with a learning disability that we welcome:
  - The need to have a personal room. (privacy)
  - The need for more independent living. (independence and autonomy)
  - The need for exercise and sport. (physical well-being)
  - The need to live an intimate relationship.
  - The need to have a job outside the community. (social participation and status)
  - The need to be able to speak with a confidant/e.
- We look for opportunities to answer needs in a collective way. We decide if we organize projects ourselves, in a partnership or if we refer our people to an external service.
  - We decide whether we can expand the workshop in space and number of people welcomed.

- We decide whether we want to start new activities like making and selling noodles.
  - We decide whether we can start a coffeeshop (social enterprise) in a bigger town nearby.
  - We decide what to do with the guesthouse.
  - We decide what to do with the barn.
  - We work on a vision for a second house.
- We decide whether we are able to welcome volunteers through the European Solidarity Corps – program.
- We continue to improve the villa so that it is more pleasant to live and work there.