



SOMAIYA
VIDYAVIHAR UNIVERSITY



REACH FELLOWSHIP 2026-27

THEMATIC AREA 'LIVING TRADITIONS'

- **Ajarkpur Chapter**
- **Soil Probiotics Chapter**
- **Gond Chapter**
- **Warli Chapter**

REACH-4

Ecocultural Narratives and Storytelling Traditions (Warli Chapter)

Residential Fellowship tethered to **Living & Learning Lab**- Nareshwadi Learning Centre, Dahanu, Palghar, Maharashtra, Bharat.

Eligibility / Academic Requirement

Applicants must be alumni and should have completed their postgraduation in any of the disciplines : Art History, Social Anthropology Civilisation Studies, Art Psychology, Design, Mass Communication, and Education with an interest in culture, sustainability, storytelling, community engagement, and traditional knowledge systems are encouraged to apply.

Applicants **must be proficient in Marathi (Read, Write, and Speak)**, as the fellowship requires extensive interaction with local communities and documentation of regional knowledge systems.



The REACH Fellowship offers Fellows an opportunity to undertake immersive field-based engagement with tribal and rural communities to document storytelling traditions connected with ecology, biodiversity, culture, and community memory, with a particular focus on Warli and other Adivasi communities of Maharashtra. Through field interactions with storytellers, artisans, and local practitioners, Fellows will explore Warli as a community-based narrative system that functions simultaneously as visual art, ritual expression, performative tradition, and oral storytelling practice.

The primary task of the Fellow is to document diverse storytelling systems—visual, oral, ritual, and performative—with a focused exploration of Warli traditions as a visual narrative art form interconnected with oral traditions, ritual practices, folklore, living practices, traditional architecture, crafts, seed storage systems, and indigenous material use. Through interviews, participatory observation, sketches, photographs, audio-visual documentation, and literature review, the Fellow will examine how relationships between humans, animals, forests, agriculture, landscapes, and spiritual systems are represented within Warli narratives and artistic practices, reflecting collective life, coexistence, labour, celebration, and cosmology. The fellow will also explore the contemporary potential of Warli as a medium for ecological storytelling, minimalist design, art therapy, visual communication, educational interpretation, and sustainable product development through collaborations with artisans, storytelling communities, and design teams to co-develop context-sensitive Warli-inspired products, storytelling formats, and creative outputs linked to cultural awareness and sustainable livelihoods.

Deliverables

Ecocultural Narrative Compendium

A structured documentation and curated archive of oral narratives, songs, ritual storytelling traditions, visual narratives, ecological motifs, interviews, field recordings, photographs, sketches, story maps, and narrative records related to Warli storytelling traditions and ecological knowledge systems.

Experiential Learning & Workshop Module

Design of workshops, storytelling-based learning experiences, immersive courses, and educational modules linking biodiversity, sustainability, folklore, coexistence, and indigenous knowledge systems

Warli-Inspired Co-creations

Collaborative development of Warli-inspired products, visual communication materials, and creative outputs with artisans, storytellers, and design teams, culminating in showcases and Sustainable livelihoods



Dedicated Showcase in Sustainability Dialogue Flagship and Afsana respectively



This work contributes to the development of an Ecocultural and Narrative Living Lab at Somaiya Vidyavihar University, Mumbai that integrates indigenous knowledge systems into education, sustainability, creative practice, and public engagement

Why Join REACH?

The Fellow will gain skills and exposure in:

- Immersive field learning and engagement with tribal communities, storytellers, artisans, and practitioners
- Documentation, audio-visual storytelling, archiving, visual communication, and research synthesis
- Collaborative exploration across sustainability, biodiversity, folklore, anthropology, design, culture, and indigenous knowledge systems
- Contribution to knowledge repositories, public showcases, educational initiatives, and creative projects centred on ecological storytelling and coexistence