

## My First AAWE Event

I joined AAWE in November 2021, and on Saturday March 19, participated in my first event – the Environmental Task Force Sewing Workshop. As a newcomer, I had some nervous energy about whether I would feel comfortable and connected to the ladies at the event. However, within minutes of meeting the group and starting the afternoon, I felt totally welcome, and at home, as if I had always been a part of AAWE. My husband and I have been moving around Europe since September 2015. It's been my experience when moving to a new place, and not having an established network or community, to feel alone and disconnected. I am super grateful the ladies of AAWE wasted no time in making me feel welcome, confirming for me that I am in the right place and with the

right group.

Claudine welcomed us into her beautiful and inspiring sewing atelier. She warmly offered her time and insight for our projects, as well as supplying repurposed fabrics. All had been donated to Claudine, so it was a pay it forward event. The fabrics were gorgeous, some upholstery, some curtains, and some cotton prints. With the current state of the world, it was a welcome afternoon to share, create, eat sweet treats, discuss the heavier topics shadowing everyone's lives, and to discuss lighter topics as well. We worked together to create our projects. We expressed our ideas and creativity. We made mistakes and had to make corrections, and by the end of the afternoon, we made a toast to finished projects and friendship. Getting together with a group of different women, sharing our stories, making new friends, and making a tote bag in one afternoon was very satisfying. In fact, we can't wait for the next session to do it all again!! It was a lovely afternoon workshop with a lovely group.



*Photo courtesy of the author*