

# Letter of Support

15 Dec 2016



Denise Bowden  
Chief Executive Officer  
Director of Garma  
Yothu Yindi Foundation  
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Dear Denise,

On behalf of NITV I am pleased to provide the Yothu Yindi Foundation with a letter supporting the annual 2017 Garma Festival.

Our company has a history of attending the Garma festival. Each year we host a delegation of 5 to 10 leaders from NITV and SBS as well as some industry partners connected to our organisation.

NITV were the proud media partner for the 2016 festival, taking a contingent of production staff and channel leaders to the event. The channel broadcast the forums live each day, bringing the issues discussed to our communities across the country. We also made efforts to represent the Yolngu people and their unique connection to land and culture.

NITV recognises the importance of the annual Garma Festival and are keen to secure our media partnership for 2017.

Garma offers attendees a personal cultural experience like no other; our delegates are able to immerse themselves in Yolngu culture, learn from each other and connect on a meaningful level.

We look to Garma as the leading example of sharing across a national Indigenous platform, and best practice business development from a regional grass roots approach. Our past participants have expressed the profound effect it has had on their own corporate and personal journeys. Some of the feedback we have received from participants has included:

*“A place you can sit by the campfire chatting with an elder and hear about the complex and fascinating system of rules governing who can and can’t interact and who can and can’t marry. A place you can find yourself in the midst of a remembrance ceremony, hearing the beauty of the local language and placing candles by a rock in memory of those no longer with us. A place where you can attend the opening of an open air art gallery set amongst the trees. A place where you can sit and learn basket weaving from the elders... who are generous with their time. And a place where can you learn that you can survive without your hair straightener... and that you are much more than how you look.*

*For years I’ve thought Australia was lacking in culture, and spent much of my twenties travelling in search of what I considered “culture”... the architecture of*

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*Rome and Barcelona, the culinary delights of France... you get the drift. What I discovered at Garma is that the richest culture is right here in my country... and the people who live it, want to share it. It's my culture too and one of which I am very proud.*

*As part of Garma, I attended a series of keynotes and forums on the issues still facing our First People... land rights, education, domestic violence, youth justice system... and I feel angry and frustrated, but also better informed. I engaged with Indigenous people of all ages living remotely as part of NITV's engagement program, and I now understand what the channel means for Indigenous Australians – quite simply, they love the channel as it gives them a voice and reflects them.*

*I was invited to Garma by NITV's Channel Manager Tanya Orman, who saw the merit of this event as part of my professional development, and for that I am very grateful. It has been an experience of a lifetime... and an experience that will keep on giving over the coming weeks, months and years. I've come back from Garma "reset", with a sense of calm I have never felt. What an absolute privilege."*

*"Firstly, I found the forum sessions both, inspiring and challenging. It gave me a greater insight into the most challenging topics in Indigenous Affairs today and a better understanding of their complexity. It was inspiring to hear firsthand from so many great Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in the fields of Indigenous affairs across land rights, health, education and the commercial world.*

*Secondly, it was a privilege to be able to experience Indigenous culture first hand, from ceremony, to music, to art, as well as some pretty ropy basket weaving from me.*

*Thirdly, the site of Garma is a magical setting and whether watching the sun rise at the morning star ceremony or walking through the red dust, it's one of those places that fills the spirit. I came away feeling an inner calm."*

The Yothu Yindi Foundation delivers a remarkable and professional global event each year. NITV are proud to support Garma and have been fortunate to witness the continued growth and innovation of the Garma program. We look forward to another inspiring, educating and entertaining program in 2017 and hope to again partner with YYF to broadcast Garma nationally on free to air television.

NITV is a proud supporter of Garma. We look forward to joining the Yolngu people in 2017 on their traditional ceremonial meeting ground at the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Garma event hosted by the Yothu Yindi Foundation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tanya Orman".

**Tanya Orman**  
**NITV Channel Manager**