

To whom it may concern,

I am delighted to write this letter of support for the incomparable Catherine Deveny, who is seeking grant funding to further her practice as a teacher, writer and community builder through a language exchange in Paris.

My name is Clementine Ford and I'm a writer, podcaster and internationally published author living in Melbourne. In 2017, I won the Matt Richell prize for Best New Writer of the Year at the Australian Book Industry Awards. I have written four books, all of which have become bestsellers. Throughout my career as a writer, I have found few people as supportive as Catherine. She has been an exceptional mentor, friend and reader. In fact, many years before I became a writer, I wrote to her to express my admiration for her columns. Her response was swift and incredibly warm.

It is with the spirit of kindness and generosity that Catherine conducts herself in all of her work. Having attended her Gunnas writing workshops, I have seen firsthand how valuable the experience has been to her students. Many of them have gone on to publish work, and I know this is in part due to the confidence Catherine has given them to believe in themselves.

As a Melbourne community figure, Catherine is larger than life. It is not an exaggeration to say that she is iconic. It's my belief that not only does she deserve the opportunity to expand and enrich her practice, but that she will be committed to repaying this privilege via her community work and artistic contributions. I am very excited to see what Catherine, a master of communication, does with her expanding French vocabulary. As a dyslexic person, I also believe she will be able to demonstrate the importance of exploring alternative models of information processing to the ones we traditionally hold onto while endorsing the great benefit art offers to those of us with neurodivergence.

I fully support Catherine in all she does and I hope you give her the opportunity to realise her dreams.

Yours sincerely,  
Clementine Ford