**July 26, 2016**

**<Insert Appropriate Sponsor Program Manager Name>**

**<Insert Sponsor Organization Name>**

**Dear Mr./Ms. <Insert Name>:**

I’m writing this letter of inquiry for the <insert foundation name> to gauge your interest in an important water conservation project and documentary film, *Woman of the Water*.

**Introduction**: The global redistribution of water is affecting populations differently worldwide. Communities are working to develop solutions in their regional locations, but few are relying on indigenous people with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (also known as TEK) who know their local regions deeply and have a long history overcoming water issues. The documentary film, *Woman of the Water*, magnifies the idea that our planet has no borders by gathering rare footage from international locations documenting indigenous women as they allow us to participate and witness their relationship with water. The documentary allows us to gain a deeper understanding into water and represents the voices of many respected and honored women throughout the world, and their deep connection to ancient knowledge and humanity as a whole.

**The Need**: Natural disasters like floods and droughts, and man-made changes like the damming or redirecting of waterways are causing worldwide infrastructural issues. Consider the recent floods in West Virginia causing death, destruction and displacement, or the redirecting of the Yaqui River in Mexico leaving countless indigenous people without water. While many of these issues are new to specific areas, other regions around the world have experienced similar issues and can share their solutions and coping methods. Indigenous people have a unique knowledge of and connection with water; however, with most indigenous TEK being passed down orally through generations, and many new generations assimilating into contemporary culture without gaining this knowledge from ancestors, much TEK is being lost as these elders age and pass away. This knowledge must be captured and shared before it is lost.

**Project Description:** For the past year, my team has collected footage of rituals and interviews with international indigenous women to document their TEK. So far we have filmed in Texas, Mexico, Florida, Arizona, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Columbia, and Bali, and have been invited to film in Ecuador, other parts of Mexico, Ottowa (Canada), Hawaii, and New Zealand.

**Future Goals:** After completing the documentary, we plan to: 1) Fully develop a living digital library of short film clips focused on TEK and water issues, currently viewable on YouTube as the *Jittoa* (Medicine) *Productions* channel; 2) Develop curricula for K-12 and college instructors to teach water conservation concepts; 3) Build on the digital library to implement an online community outreach campaign encouraging international discussion that connects communities across the world to address their common water issues.

**Conclusion:** Overall, the film celebrates that despite our differences, we are one people who share one world. We are all responsible for the sustainability and conservation of our resources. As we look to our elders for insight, these women become heroes enriching our lives with traditional ecological knowledge that may be the key to our own prosperity.

I’m visiting New York City this week, and would love to set up a time to talk with you more.

Sincerely,

Tahila X. Mintz

**Woman of the Water:**

**Understanding Indigenous Women's Sacred Relationship to Water and its Sustainability**

**Director/Producer: Tahila Xicahuamatzl Mintz**

