

'Do not give up my sisters' says Yvonne Iyer, founder of Yin Connect



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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As the founder of [Yin Connect](#), a 100% BEE woman-owned boutique consultancy, Yvonne Iyer is also the South African representative for Senior Experten Services (SES), a German organisation that connects retired German experts to voluntarily mentoring assignments.



Yvonne Iyer, founder of Yin Connect

Originally from Durban, but now based in Johannesburg, over the past two years, Yvonne Iyer has placed over 25 German mentors in companies across South Africa, as well as Mauritius, to share their skills and knowledge.

Yin Connect, the company Yvonne founded, is the "go to" consultancy if your company is looking to benefit from German skills, technology or investments.

Yvonne shares more with us about the power of securing collaborative partnerships.

■ ***Can you tell us a bit about yourself?***

I am a wife, a mother of two and an entrepreneur. I absolutely love being a parent. My daughter is also an entrepreneur and my son is training to become a pilot. It's my family that brings me the utmost amount of joy and happiness into my life. I love reading inspirational books and gardening is also interesting especially when I see my flowers blooming.

I absolutely love communicating and working with fellow entrepreneurs both locally and globally. We all have a common pursuit to bring economic growth and sustainable development to the people in our countries.

■ ***You're the founder of Yin Connect (YinC). Tell us more about the company and your role here***

YinC is a business consulting company with its primary focus on connecting South African businesses with international investors, traders and expertise.

“ Yin Connect focuses on purpose driven cooperation's globally. ”

My role is to bridge that connection between small and medium-sized South African businesses with global businesses and provide cost effective solutions to their needs. Digitalisation has brought forth vast opportunities for these businesses to

grow and gain higher revenues beyond the SA boundaries. YinC differentiates itself by being an active driver of implementation to their customers.

■ ***Do you have any role models? If so, who?***

Yes, I do. My top three role models that come to mind are: Vandana Shiva. She is an Indian scholar and an environmental activist. She is an advocate for the poor and marginalised rural women of the world. Vandana is based in Delhi, India. Then there is Marie Diamond a transformational leader in Feng Shui, meditation, a motivational speaker and an author. Marie is based in Belgium.

Closer to home is Devi Sankaree Govender. An investigative journalist who worked for 18 years on *Carte Blanche* and recently started her own TV show.

■ ***You're a successful female entrepreneur with experience in the startup ecosystem. Tell us about your journey.***

I started my working career with the DCCI, based in the department of economic development as an assistant to the Director of that department. In this position I gained invaluable experience of the corporate world and facilitating partnerships within the various sectors of the economy. Then I further developed my people and negotiation skills.

While working at the DCCI I was offered a position by SAGCC which I accepted. I was the KZN Regional representative responsible for facilitating bilateral trade and investment between Germany and the province of KZN.

Having gained sufficient international experience I decided to venture off on my own initiating a partnership between SES and myself. This was a skills development program aimed at transferring German professional technical expertise and skills to south African small and medium sized businesses.

I decided to leverage off my increased network of German businesses and created a new opportunity to facilitate and connect South African Businesses with international investors, traders and expertise. This was how YinC was born.

■ ***You've guided many entrepreneurs. What advice do you have to share with the future generation of entrepreneurs?***

Please do not feel afraid, embarrassed or undermined when reaching out for help.

“ Surrounded yourself with strong helpful leaders, friends and family. Be very cautious with who you spend most of your time with. ”

Give help and you will receive help tenfold. Remember you reap what you sow. Being an entrepreneur is a very lonely journey. Believing in your product and service is what matters the most.

■ **What role can governments play to help drive women entrepreneurs?**

I think governments should provide women entrepreneurs with special tax incentives; minimise government corruption within their own ranks and pass a new law that allows free tertiary education for all women in South Africa.

■ **What would you like to see changed in the African startup landscape? All women irrespective of their colour, race group or income should be treated fairly and given the equal opportunities.**

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■ **What developments do you see in the local startup ecosystem post Covid-19?**

Well, that's a tough question to answer right now given the fact that SA's economy is slipped dismally on a downward spiral. However, my hope for the future and post Covid-19 is for government and big businesses budget's to be geared and strategically focused on the green energy, digitalisation and rural developments.

■ **As we celebrate Women's Month in South Africa. Do you have any words of encouragement for women entrepreneurs out there? Persevere, persevere and preserve, please do not give up my sisters. Begin by re-igniting that sisterhood love within yourselves by consistently inspiring, uplifting and supporting other women to their highest potential and God's will for their lives. This act of kindness will bring you so much of inner satisfaction.**

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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