



In Conversation with;

NAWIC Bright Ideas Grant Winners Christie Savage and Tonielle Dempers.

Christie Savage and Tonielle Dempers were the winners of our 2020 NAWIC Bright Ideas Grant which is designed to provide seed funding to help launch a new idea, programme or business venture related to the construction industry.

Tell us a little about the idea?

Without giving too much away, we are proposing to create a tool to make your dream home more tangible by providing collated interior design palettes that are local, easy to source and customise to your desired price range.

We are aiming to make the interior design process more efficient and less daunting for builders, design professionals and home renovators who may be unsure how to bring their vision to life.

How did you come up with the idea?

We noticed inefficiencies within the interior design process and wanted to streamline how we could deliver a better service to our clients through a simple and easy to use tool.

In recent years, home DIYs have become a growing market with the development of Pinterest and home renovation media. We are seeking to develop this further and create an easy link for home renovators to access high quality designed spaces from local Australian suppliers and designers.

What are your backgrounds and how did you meet?

We both studied Architecture at the University of Western Australia and were lucky enough to meet in our second year studio during our undergraduate degree. We completed the rest of our Masters of Architecture together, and spent countless hours in the design studio. Along the way, we discovered that we have very similar design styles as well as a similar snack schedule.

After completing her Masters, Christie moved to Victoria and has been working as an Architect at fjmt studio, working on a variety of public, community, commercial, multi-residential and residential projects. Christie has gained experience in a range of fit-out and interiors projects.

Tonielle has been working at Parry & Rosenthal Architects in Western Australia on a variety of public, educational, commercial and residential projects. She has also worked on a variety of interiors projects and has gained furniture design experience.

We have maintained our shared Pinterest board and love for interiors through the years and as we have progressed in our careers, we have strived to create beautiful spaces for people to enjoy, whether that is in the public or private realm.

What made you apply for the Bright Ideas grant?

We have been thinking about our business idea for a while and how we could bring it to market. When the Bright Ideas grant came up we saw a great opportunity, to support women within the design industry.

With the Grant, NAWIC has delivered a unique opportunity to encourage and promote women to strive for innovation and success in our industry. It has always been incredible to see all the women that are recognised for their vast achievements at NAWIC and has provided us with great inspiration for what is possible.

What does the Bright Ideas award mean to you?

We feel incredibly fortunate to have won the grant. The award has given us amazing support from the NAWIC committee and access to mentors connected to the organisation, who have been able to provide us with invaluable advice and guidance in the development of our idea. The award has also provided us with the opportunity to have freedom in developing our idea without the pressure of obtaining investors to kick start the process.

Where to next for both of you and your project?

We are currently developing the back of house criteria for the website, and everything that comes along with creating, setting up and developing a business. We have also been working to test the feasibility and product functions. We are working with suppliers and website developers to ensure we are creating a user-friendly product that is functional, unique and easy to use.

We will be releasing more information about the idea towards the end of the year as it is developed further.