Abstract. Theoretical and empirical research on entrepreneurial networks is largely outcome-oriented and little integrated with family firm research. In this paper, we draw on social network and entrepreneurship literatures in order to investigate how family businesses build and make use of a variety of embedded and arm's-length ties. We present novel data self-collected in qualitative, inductive fieldwork from more than 50 interviews in mainstream film production in Bollywood. Our findings contrast with extant research by showing that in the socio-cultural context of India the use of embedded ties is higher than predictions in the theoretical literature and empirical findings in cross-country studies suggest. Moreover, we show that the ‘Indian’ family is an institution that dominates embedded ties. The Banyan tree symbolizes this interconnectedness of the different branches of an Indian family compared to the plain structure of a birch tree describing Hollywood, where embedded ties can be different from familial ties.