# Small grants, big issues

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A comic book that highlights the dangers of alcohol misuse is being developed by Spirit Dreaming with assistance from young Aboriginal people in Lismore, New South Wales. This is one of ten projects being funded by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE). Totalling $193,713 FARE’s 2013 Good Practice Grants awarded up to $20,000 to community organisations throughout Australia to strengthen their capacity to respond to alcohol-related harms. The grants aim to foster innovation and encourage community organisations to develop new products or systems that can be used by alcohol and other drug agencies throughout Australia. FARE Chief Executive Michael Thorn said it is encouraging to see so many new and innovative ideas being developed in the fight against alcohol. “I am truly pleased to see such a diverse range of community organisations and tactics being implemented to raise the awareness of alcohol-related harms in Australia, all with the ultimate goal of changing our drinking culture”, Mr Thorn said. The Spirit Dreaming project in Lismore is one of five projects aimed at reducing harmful drinking among young people. Alcohol is a major cause of death and hospitalisation for young Australians aged 15 to 24, accounting for 5 deaths and 213 hospitalisations each week. Mr Thorn says alcohol harms are extensive and increasing across Australia. “Alcohol impacts negatively on too many lives. We need to be working together as a community to reduce this harm, and community projects such as these go some way towards achieving this goal”, Mr Thorn said. Other projects funded include a toolkit being developed by Lives Lived Well in Queensland to address young people’s drinking and a film and community forum project at Tennant Creek, Northern Territory which uses puppets to inform and educate Indigenous Australians about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). FARE has a strong partnership with community organisations and has supported hundreds of community projects since its establishment in 2001. Mr Thorn believes community grants are an efficient and effective way to give much needed resources to community organisations. “These grants get important community projects off the ground where they can start providing individuals with real support, and once proven these solutions can then be embraced by other organisations around Australia”, Mr Thorn said.

### Metadata