

FundWell

Swift Summary of Wellbeing Stuff for Funders
March's edition of FundWell is curated by The Wellbeing Project

Philanthropy loves a spreadsheet. It loves a logic model, a theory of change, a tightly scoped deliverable. And underneath all of that structure is something we don't always name: a quiet anxiety about letting go.

But what if the most strategic thing a funder could do right now was... play?

The [Fito Network's Philanthropy Playground](#) is a collection of 22 low-lift games designed to do exactly what our sector struggles with most: surface the elephants in the room, redistribute power, and build the kind of relational trust that no grant application can manufacture. Their premise is disarmingly simple: changing the world shouldn't feel like a compliance exercise. Real change lives in the relational, emergent work that happens when people are given space to experiment.

In a sector where pressure and burnout are real, creating space for play can also be a way of supporting wellbeing — not as an add-on, but as part of how we work. When funders loosen the grip on outcomes and open up to curiosity, something shifts. Conversations deepen. Trust builds. And the organizations they support get a bit more room to breathe.

Play isn't the opposite of rigor. It's the opposite of rigidity. And right now, the sector could use a lot more of the former.



Photo credits: [Hoi An and Da Nang Photographer on Unsplash](#)
Photo Description: Two children play a ring toss game on a grass lawn, seen from above, colorful bunting visible in the background.

FundWell Essentials

[The Philanthropy Playground](#) — [Fito Network](#)

Twenty-two free, low-lift games organised around themes like power, relationships, listening, and well-being — designed to drop into a board meeting, strategy session, or team offsite. The point isn't fun for fun's sake; it's that play creates conditions where honest conversations can finally happen. A genuinely fresh resource for any funder ready to try something different.

[11 Trends in Philanthropy for 2026](#) — Johnson Center

The tenth edition of this widely-read annual report, published in January 2026. One of the eleven trends named is "employee wellbeing at risk during times of hyper disruption" [Johnsoncenter](#) — a timely reminder that the sector's instinct to tighten up under pressure is exactly what makes flexible, trust-based funding so urgent right now.

[Trust-Based Philanthropy Project](#)

The movement nudging funders away from control and compliance — with practical tools, peer networks, and six concrete grantmaking practices to start putting trust into action. Think of it as the 'why' behind the play: when we stop treating grantees as risks to be managed, everyone's wellbeing improves.

Talking Points: pick one and start a conversation!

Where in your work could you make space for play — and what honest conversations might that unlock?

What would it actually look like for funders to give with less control and more trust?

If burnout is partly a funding problem, what responsibility do funders have in solving it?

Words on Wellbeing

"I suspect that to really transform our society, we will need to make justice one of the most pleasurable experiences we can have."

— adrienne maree brown

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