



**VIEWPOINT  
DIVERSITY  
SCORE**

# **2022 Business Index**

Findings and Recommendations



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# About The Viewpoint Diversity Score Business Index

**Viewpoint Diversity Score** is a project of **Alliance Defending Freedom**, one of the nation's most respected and successful Supreme Court advocates, working to preserve the fundamental freedoms of speech and religion for all Americans. Collaborating is **Inspire Insight**, a Christian financial technology firm informing investment decisions on billions of dollars around the globe.



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# Executive Summary

## Jeremy Tedesco

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Viewpoint Diversity Score's annual Business Index is the first comprehensive benchmark designed to measure corporate respect for religious and ideological diversity in the market, workplace, and public square. True diversity requires protecting freedom of expression and belief for employees, customers, shareholders, and other stakeholders. Accordingly, the Business Index evaluates a wide range of corporate policies, practices, and activities to determine whether companies respect these fundamental freedoms as a standard part of doing business.

Respecting everyone, regardless of their religious or ideological beliefs, is good for business and society. Companies that respect viewpoint diversity are better equipped to serve people and communities with diverse values, recruit and retain top talent, build trust with key stakeholders, and contribute to a public culture that supports liberal democracy and open markets.

Many businesses emphasize diversity based on race, gender, ethnicity, and other characteristics, but largely fail to prioritize viewpoint diversity. This is a significant blind spot in Corporate America. To effectively navigate an increasingly complex and polarized social environment, companies need to consider how actions that politicize their services, workplaces, and public advocacy jeopardize their fiduciary interests and harm society. Taking steps to address the most egregious risks highlighted in this report is a good first step to reduce potential harms to business, public trust, and the democratic norms of free speech and religious freedom. But companies should also go further by using the Business Index as a guide to proactively safeguard these fundamental freedoms throughout every aspect of their operations and activities. This isn't just good business sense; it's the right thing for every company to do.

## Index Methodology

The Business Index evaluates companies' social footprints within three categories of activity – **market**, **workplace**, and **public square** – to determine each firm's score.

### 1 Market

The Market section evaluates whether companies' policies and practices respect the freedom of expression and belief of customers, users, sellers, creators, and other external stakeholders.

### 2 Workplace

The Workplace section measures corporate respect for freedom of thought and religious diversity in their workforces, and whether companies proactively prohibit religious discrimination.

### 3 Public Square

The Public Square section evaluates whether corporate giving practices and public advocacy broadly respect free speech, religious tolerance, and open discourse.

## Executive Summary

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### Data Collection

Data was acquired from two primary sources for this project: First, from voluntary disclosures made by individual companies that participated in Inspire Insight's Viewpoint Diversity Survey in late 2021. Second, from publicly available information, including reports, filings, press releases, third-party statements, terms of service, community standards, and general use policies.

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### How Companies were Selected

While viewpoint diversity matters for any company, the Business Index focuses on industries that have the greatest potential to impact free speech and religious freedom. These include industries that provide essential banking, payment processing, and cloud services, or that serve as platforms for third-party expression in the digital space. For the 2022 edition, the index specifically focused on **commercial banks**, as well as providers of **computer software, computers and office equipment, diversified outsourcing services, financial data services, and internet services and retailing**.

For the purposes of the 2022 Business Index, only Fortune 1000 companies in specific sectors of concern were considered for inclusion in the rankings. We scored 50 companies for this inaugural edition of the index, but plan to increase that number each year. While we did not proactively score non-Fortune 1000 companies or firms in sectors outside of tech, banking, finance, and business services, companies of various sizes in other sectors may request to participate.

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### Findings

Benchmarked companies scored an **average of 12% overall** on respecting religious and ideological diversity in the market, workplace, and public square. This poor performance is cause for concern, especially because these companies represent some of the largest businesses in America and provide essential services to millions of people and organizations every day. While no industry exhibited strong performance, there were a handful that scored particularly poorly. The two industries with the lowest overall scores were **computer software** at **6%**, and **internet services and retailing** at **8%**.

The **financial and data services**

industry also came in at a low **overall average score of 11%**. These subpar results paint a grim picture of Corporate America's respect for religious and ideological diversity.

Average overall  
score across  
50 companies

12%

## Executive Summary

One finding of particular concern is that social media companies, which provide services critical to the freedom of individuals and groups to participate equally in the digital public square, are concentrated in an industry (**internet services and retailing**) with one of the lowest average overall scores. Not surprisingly, nearly all of those companies are also among the lowest performers across industries.

6%

Average overall score for computer software.

8%

Average overall score for internet services and retailing.

11%

Average overall score for financial and data services.

One of the reasons for poor performance on the Business Index was a lack of responsiveness to the Viewpoint Diversity Survey conducted in partnership with Inspire Insight during late 2021. Seventeen questions spanning all three sections of the Business Index were scored solely based on company responses to the survey. Companies that declined to provide substantive responses to the survey earned zero points on those questions. In addition, many other questions were scored partially based on company-provided disclosures. Thus, low response rates to the survey also had a broader, negative impact on companies' performance overall. For the 2022 Business Index, only two out of 50 companies—Paychex and Truist—provided substantive responses. Although neither company earned a particularly high score, both outperformed their peers due to greater transparency.

Low scores also resulted from a significant number of red flags identified in corporate policies and practices. The following highlights the primary factors driving low performance on each section of the Business Index:

### Market

1. Terms of service and content policies that pose serious risks to stakeholders' freedom of expression and belief.
2. Insufficient action to prevent viewpoint discrimination in services, protect vendor freedom, and ensure transparency.

### Workplace

1. A widespread failure to address key risk factors that chill employees' exercise of their civil rights off the job, undermine religious freedom, and create division at work.
2. Insufficient action to proactively ensure that freedom of thought and belief are respected at work

### Public Square

1. Use of company resources to engage in political and social activism damaging to stakeholders' fundamental freedoms and harmful to companies' public reputations.
2. Religious discrimination in charitable giving, as well as a widespread failure to proactively support free speech and religious freedom in the public square.

## Taking Action to Respect Viewpoint Diversity

While the results of the inaugural Business Index are disconcerting, there is cause for some optimism. Several companies demonstrated a particularly strong commitment to viewpoint diversity in specific areas that they and others can build on. For example, Truist affirms that it “respects the constitutional and civil rights of all individuals and the companies they own or represent, including the freedom of speech and freedom of religion” and that it “will not discriminate against any supplier or service provider based upon the exercise of these rights and expects its suppliers and service providers to select subcontractors on a nondiscriminatory basis as well.” This language earned Truist full points on respecting supplier and vendor freedom in their hiring and operations. It also exemplifies a crucial way companies can respect the diverse views of their stakeholders—a broader theme that the Business Index seeks to inspire companies to adopt across their enterprises.

More importantly, the Business Index provides a roadmap for companies to better respect customers and other stakeholders who hold a diversity of beliefs, foster viewpoint diversity in their workplaces, and uphold the underlying principles of American democracy through their giving and political engagement. By using this benchmark as a guide for corporate conduct and best practices, companies can build strong cultures and contribute to a healthy society.

Specific model policies and best practices are available at [www.ViewpointDiversityScore.org](http://www.ViewpointDiversityScore.org).

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## Criteria 1: **Market**



## Market:

### Overview of Findings and Recommendations



Viewpoint diversity is good for businesses and society. Companies that respect the diverse religious and ideological views of their customers, users, sellers, creators, and other external stakeholders<sup>1</sup> are better equipped to serve people and communities with diverse values, build lasting trust, and contribute to a public culture of tolerance and openness. When businesses do their part to respect diverse religious and ideological views, people have greater freedom to voice their beliefs, give back, and participate equally in the marketplace.

Benchmarked companies earned a remarkably low **average score of 8%** on this section, indicating significant shortcomings in terms of their respect for viewpoint diversity. This dramatically low average is mainly due to:

1. **Terms of service and content policies that pose serious risks to stakeholders' freedom of expression and belief.**
2. **Insufficient action to prevent viewpoint discrimination in services, protect vendor freedom, and ensure transparency.**



Benchmarked companies averaged a **failing grade of 8%** on respecting viewpoint diversity in their market-based activities.

(1) We collectively refer to this group as "stakeholders" for the purposes of this report.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 1.1

### Companies Should *Avoid* These Key Risk Factors

1

#### Unclear or imprecise policy terms used to regulate third-party content or access to services.

**48%** of companies specify unclear or imprecise restrictions on expression.

- 32% prohibit speech deemed “hateful.”
- 18% prohibit speech deemed “intolerant.”
- 18% prohibit speech deemed “offensive.”

Amid growing public concerns with political bias in Corporate America, it’s important for companies to avoid even the appearance of religious or ideological discrimination. Despite this social risk, many businesses maintain broad, undefined terms of service and content policies that afford them wide discretion to deny service or censor content for biased, arbitrary, or unknown reasons.

While private businesses are free to establish reasonable requirements for accessing and using their services, it’s important to minimize the potential for censorship or discrimination by avoiding vague, sweeping restrictions on third-party speech and conduct. Doing so reduces the risk of unduly burdening expressive freedoms, while also protecting against potential damage to brand trust.



#### Watch out for

**Unclear or imprecise terms** in product and service policies that restrict stakeholders’ speech, defined as any term:

- ✗ So vague that a person of ordinary intelligence is forced to guess at its meaning.
- ✗ That invites arbitrary or discriminatory enforcement due to a grant of unfettered discretion or lack of objective standards.
- ✗ That fails to narrowly target the specific harmful activity that it is intended to prohibit.



#### Take action to

- ✓ **Identify all policies** that may be used to restrict stakeholders’ expression. (E.g., terms of service, content/acceptable use policies, and “social risk” frameworks).
- ✓ Eliminate provisions that could be used to condition/restrict use of a product or service based on stakeholders’ religious or ideological views, or for unspecified reasons.
- ✓ Ensure that any new terms/policies avoid unclear or imprecise terms.

2

## Harmful behavior policies that don't protect everyone or risk discriminating against stakeholders based on their religious or ideological views.

While companies have an interest in protecting customers against legitimate harms like bullying and harassment when interfacing with their services, they should guard against two common shortcomings: (1) failure to protect everyone from harmful behavior that is a legitimate target of restriction, and (2) risk of enforcement in a manner that undermines stakeholders' freedom of expression.



Harmful behavior policies, like those barring the incitement of violence, should protect everyone. Yet too often companies limit these protections to members of protected groups. Worse, these policies sometimes risk chilling speech by using language that permits the restriction of views based on subjective judgments about whether some members of a protected group may find an idea offensive, hurtful, misguided, or otherwise objectionable. Companies should take a balanced approach that prevents legitimate abuse against everyone while respecting stakeholders' freedom of expression and belief.

**26% of companies** disclose harmful behavior policies that either fail to protect everyone or risk restricting expression.



### Watch out for

Harmful behavior policies that:

- ✗ Limit protection against legitimately harmful conduct based on membership in a protected group.
- ✗ Include unclear and imprecise terms that could treat mere expressions of political, religious, or social views on matters of public concern as "harassing," "hateful," "threatening," "violent," "discriminatory," or otherwise objectionable.



### Take action to

- ✓ Identify product and service policies that reference personal identifiers.
- ✓ Specify that restrictions on legitimately harmful behavior apply equally to everyone, irrespective of their personal traits or identifiers.
- ✓ Clarify that any restrictions on legitimately harmful behavior will not be used to chill religious or ideological expression. (See Finding 1.2.1).

## Market

3

### Restricting content or access to services based on a stakeholder's specific views, opinions, or perspectives.

In order to build and maintain public trust, companies should avoid politicizing their services. Corporations put their reputations at risk when their terms of service and content policies facially prohibit the expression of certain views on topics like climate change, sexuality, and other hot-button issues. This jeopardizes trust and is inconsistent with democratic norms of free speech.

20%

At least 20% of companies impose viewpoint-based restrictions on third party speech.

Companies should take steps to rein in terms of service/use and content policies that enable overt viewpoint-based discrimination and censorship.

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS



#### Watch out for

**Policies**, such as the following, that target expression because of its specific motivating ideology, opinion, or perspective:

- ✗ Prohibiting “[u]nreliable claims... related to politics, social issues, or matters of public concern... [including] claims that contradict authoritative, scientific consensus on climate change.”
- ✗ Prohibiting “religious or belief organizations, except when the activities being sponsored are non-sectarian.”



#### Take action to

Identify and eliminate all **viewpoint-based restrictions** on customer/user expression in product and service policies, and:

- ✓ Don't censor or slow the distribution of content deemed “misinformation” or “disinformation.”
- ✓ Don't censor or slow the distribution of content that expresses certain views on matters of public concern (e.g., climate change, elections, social issues, religion, etc.).



Companies should minimize the potential for bias and viewpoint-based discrimination in their terms of service and content policies.



## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 1.2

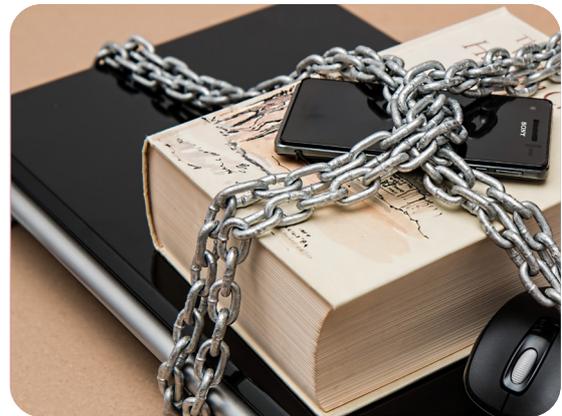
### Companies Should *Implement* These Best Practices

1

#### Prohibit viewpoint discriminatory barriers to accessing services or sharing content.

Companies have long recognized the economic, legal, and ethical importance of respecting customers' civil rights by ensuring equal access to products and services irrespective of race, sex, or other immutable characteristics. Such practices are considered hallmarks of responsible business. Yet comparatively few companies protect customers against discrimination based on their religious or ideological beliefs.

Viewpoint discrimination poses significant risks to companies' brand trust, heightens the potential for blowback from public sector stakeholders, and imperils equal participation in the marketplace and public square. In order to safeguard core business interests and rebuild a public culture of trust and tolerance, companies should proactively commit to respecting viewpoint diversity.



**Only 26%**  
of companies publicly ban  
discrimination against customers  
based on **religion** or **ideology**.

#### Take action to

Implement an [Anti-Viewpoint Discrimination Policy](#) that covers all core products and services.

##### For Digital Service Providers:

- ✓ Prohibit discrimination or censorship of any kind based on the viewpoint of the user (whether or not such views are expressed through the service/platform).
- ✓ Clarify that the expression of viewpoints on matters of public concern will not be treated as "discriminatory" or "harmful" even if some people find them offensive.

##### For Non-Digital Service Providers:

- ✓ Prohibit discrimination based on a customer's religious or ideological viewpoints.
- ✓ Clarify that the expression of viewpoints on matters of public concern will not be treated as "discriminatory" or "harmful" even if some people find them offensive.

## Market

2

## Respect the freedom of vendors, suppliers, and contractors to do business consistent with their values.

Ongoing conversations about race, sexuality, and other controversial issues have prompted many large corporations to require vendors, suppliers, and contractors to take sides in their own workforces, under the banner of “diversity,” “equity,” and “inclusion” (DE&I).

While it is reasonable to expect third parties to comply with laws and act ethically, mandatory DE&I requirements go too far by forcing stakeholders to embrace a one size fits all approach to politicized social topics that may be incompatible with their diverse values, needs, missions, and philosophies. This top-down approach risks limiting the pool of potential vendors, suppliers, and contractors able to meet the needs of large corporate clients, hinders the equal opportunity of some third-party businesses to compete for corporate contracts, and undermines democratic pluralism in the wider marketplace.

Instead of compelling vendors, suppliers, and contractors to adopt any one particular view or approach to “diversity” in the workforce, companies should respect the freedom of third parties to make these important decisions consistent with their values and cultures.



**0 out of 50**  
companies confirm a  
third-party workforce  
freedom policy.

30%

At least 30% of companies impose DE&I requirements on third-party vendors, suppliers, and contractors.

12%

Only 12% of companies publicly say they **won't discriminate** against vendors, suppliers, and contractors based on **religion** or **ideology**.



### Take action to

- ✓ Implement a [Third-Party Workforce Freedom Policy](#) that assures vendors, contractors, and suppliers the freedom to determine hiring and employment policies based on their diverse values and cultures consistent with applicable laws.
- ✓ Prohibit discrimination against vendors, suppliers and contractors on the basis of **religion** or **ideology**.
- ✓ Discontinue any workplace DE&I requirements for third parties.

## Market

3

### Provide appropriate notice and transparency around decisions to restrict content or access to services.

## 0 out of 50

companies confirm that they publicly disclose requests by governments or NGOs to restrict content or access to services.

## 38%

38% of companies provide minimally acceptable notice when service or content is restricted.

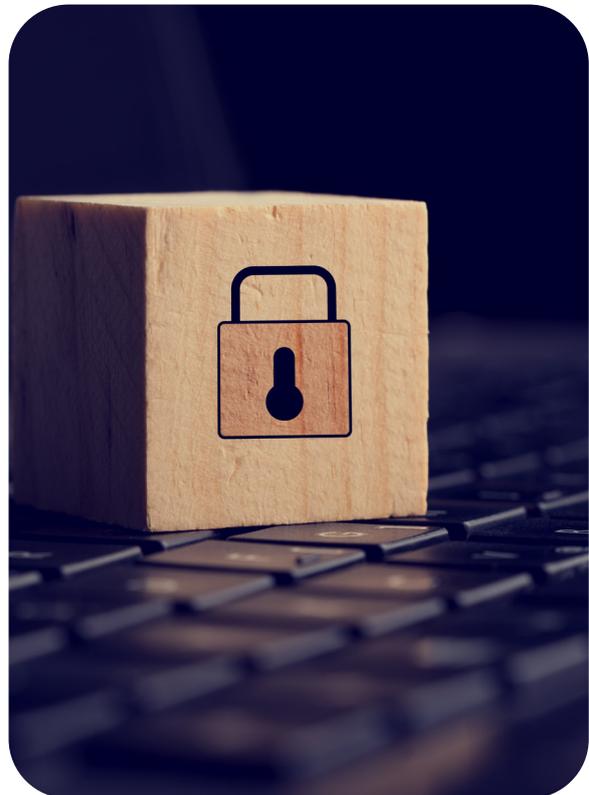
Companies overwhelmingly commit to transparency on an increasingly wide array of issues, including environmental stewardship, diversity practices, and supply chain sustainability. But few have made equivalent efforts to disclose internal processes that impact the freedom of individuals and groups to participate in the digital public square and access essential services.

Companies can make significant strides in protecting freedom of expression and building trust with public and private stakeholders by providing notice when restricting service or content.



#### Take action to

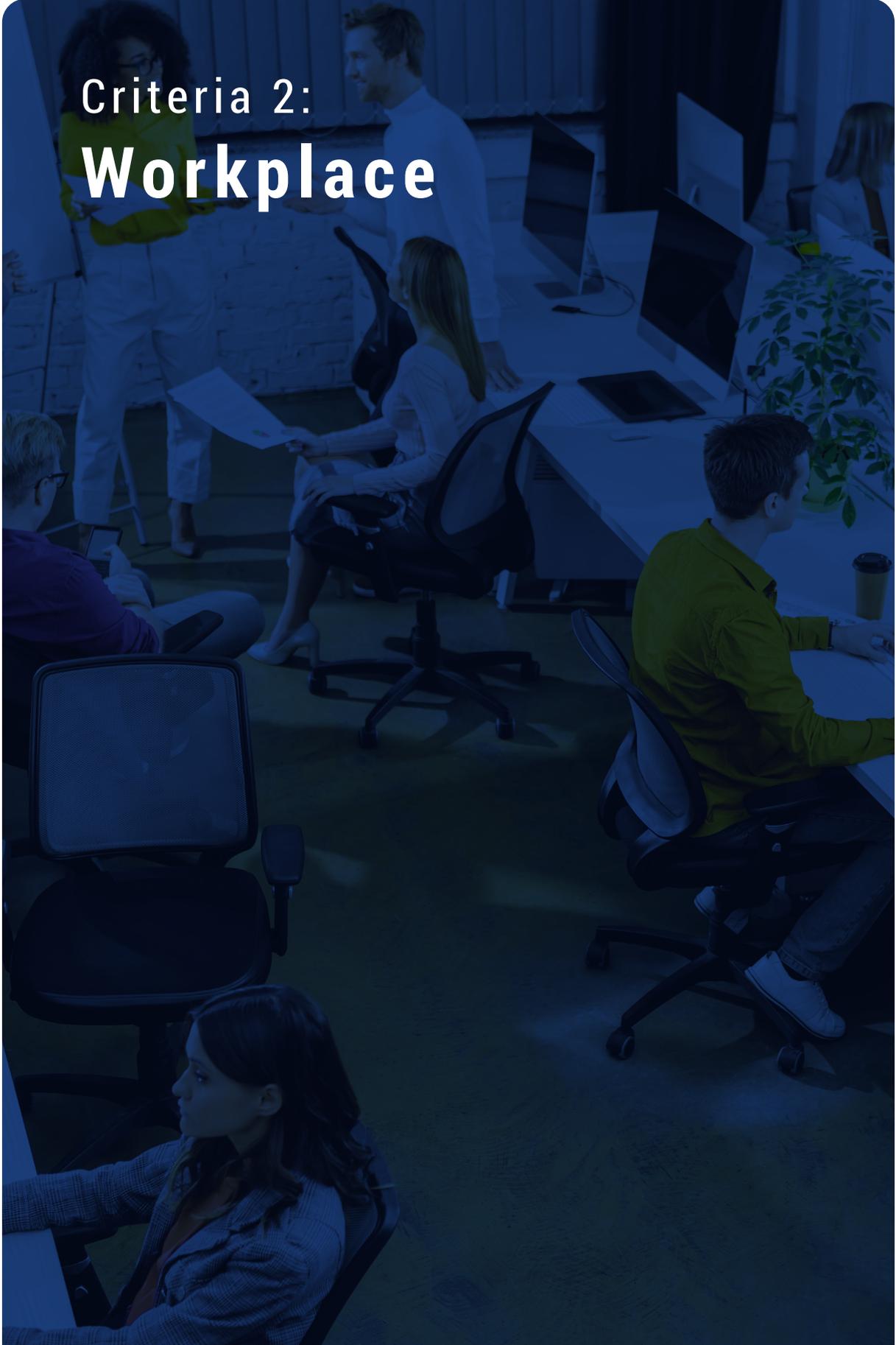
- ✓ **Provide the following notifications to customers or users within 24 hours of restricting content or access to services:**
  - Notice of any content/service affected.
  - The specific reason for any restriction/sanction imposed.
  - The duration of the imposed restriction/sanction.
- ✓ **Publicly disclose any list or database used to restrict certain individuals or groups from posting content or accessing services.**
- ✓ **Publicly disclose any request/recommendation made by governments or NGOs to restrict content or access to services, including:**
  - The name of any government entity or NGO making such requests/recommendations.
  - Any action requested.
  - The rationale for any request/recommendation.
  - The company's response.





Companies should provide viewpoint-neutral services to everyone, regardless of their customer's religious or ideological beliefs.

## Criteria 2: **Workplace**



## Workplace: Overview of Findings and Recommendations

Strong workplace cultures require a robust commitment to freedom of thought. When businesses cultivate a culture of respect for diverse viewpoints, employees can be themselves, fully contribute, and bring their unique perspectives to the table without fear.

Benchmarked companies averaged a critically low **score of 10%** on this section, demonstrating a significant lack of respect for religious and ideological diversity within their workforces. Companies' dramatic underperformance is largely due to:



- 1. A widespread failure to address key risk factors that chill employees' exercise of their civil rights, undermine religious freedom, and create division at work.**
- 2. Insufficient action to proactively ensure that freedom of thought and belief are respected at work.**



Benchmarked companies averaged a **failing grade of 10%** on respecting viewpoint diversity in their workforces.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 2.1

### Companies Should *Avoid* These Key Risk Factors



1

**Workplace conduct or social media policies that could burden employees' lawful exercise of their civil rights off the job.**



**Only 1 out of 50** benchmarked companies confirms that it respects employees' civil rights outside of work.

Respecting the civil rights of all employees is essential to a healthy economy and strong democracy. That's why businesses should avoid placing restrictions on what employees do or say outside the workplace – except where such activity is illegal, violent, or falls within other [reasonable limitations](#).



#### Watch out for

- ✗ Broad, unqualified prohibitions on employees' conduct or expression that may be interpreted to apply outside of work hours. (E.g., "do not make abusive, objectionable, or inflammatory posts.")



#### Take action to

- ✓ Clarify which conduct and speech restrictions apply during work hours, and which apply outside of work.
- ✓ Ensure that restrictions that apply to employee conduct and expression outside of work are objective and do not exceed these [reasonable limitations](#).
- ✓ Implement an [Off-Duty Civil Rights Policy](#), affirming that the company respects employees' exercise of their constitutional rights off the job.

## 2 Promoting divisive concepts in the workforce.

Unity in the workforce requires each individual to consciously choose to value others and treat everyone with dignity and respect. Companies undermine trust, respect, and openness in the workplace when they conduct trainings or recommend resources that divide people based on categories, such as race, sex, ideology, and religion.

**At least 78%**  
of benchmarked companies  
promote *divisive concepts*  
in their workplaces.



### Watch out for

- ✗ Use of “divisive concepts” in employee training materials.
- ✗ “Divisive concepts” are those that disparage or classify a person or group of persons as superior/inferior, oppressors/oppressed, unconsciously biased, or inherently discriminatory because of their religion, race, ideology, or sex.



### Take action to

- ✓ Audit all workplace-related trainings, programming, and resources to ensure they are avoiding divisive concepts.
- ✓ Remove resources or avoid training facilitators known to advocate divisive concepts.
- ✓ For recommended diversity training alternatives, see [our resources](#).



## Workplace

3

## Restricting employee-matching gifts to faith-based non-profits because of religious status, practices, or beliefs.

Workforce matching gift programs are a cornerstone of employee-directed giving to a wide range of charities and causes. However, **40%** of benchmarked companies' matching gift policies prohibit or threaten to prohibit employees from making matching-gift contributions to non-profits based solely on religious status or practices. And at least **34%** restrict or threaten to restrict employee gifts based on charities' faith-based issue advocacy. This overt discrimination restricts charitable choice and forces religious employees to leave their faith at the door when it comes to giving back.

40%

40% of companies have policies that exclude or threaten to exclude charities based solely on their religious status or practices.

34%

34% of companies have policies that exclude or threaten to exclude charities based on their faith-based issue advocacy.



### Watch out for

Policies that restrict employee-matching gifts to religious charities based on:

- ✗ Non-profits' religious status.
- ✗ Charities' use of funds for "religious purposes/uses."
- ✗ Religious-based employment/hiring practices.
- ✗ Administering programs and services in accordance with charities' religious values.
- ✗ Charities' faith-based public advocacy on matters of public concern.



### Take action to

- ✓ Review all eligibility requirements and participation criteria for employee-matching gift programs and eliminate any restrictions based on religious status, practices, or beliefs.
- ✓ Ensure that any third-party administrator of your program (e.g., **Benevity**) does not have policies that restrict or risk preventing donations to non-profits based on religious status, practices, or beliefs.
- ✓ Do not restrict charitable participation based on discriminatory and discredited sources like the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#).
- ✓ Make sure employees know that their religious beliefs and values are welcome in corporate workforce charity program(s).



**Businesses must address practices that undermine employees' civil rights off the job, harm their religious freedom, and create disunity.**

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 2.2

### Companies Should *Implement* These Best Practices



1

**Actively foster workplace environments where people who hold diverse religious and ideological views are valued and respected.**

Trust, openness, and diversity of thought are essential drivers of innovation, engagement, and ethical accountability in every business. Despite this fact, no benchmarked companies disclose any specific policies to promote tolerance for diverse views in their workplaces.

**0 out of 50**  
companies confirm that they have a workforce viewpoint diversity policy.



#### Take action to

Adopt a [Workplace Viewpoint Diversity Policy](#) affirming that the company:

- ✓ Respects each employee's personal religious and ideological beliefs and will not require employees to affirm or accept any viewpoint.
- ✓ Fosters a workplace culture that values civil disagreement and encourages mutual understanding and respect across ideological and religious differences.
- ✓ Believes that respecting the free exchange of ideas leads to a better, stronger company.

\* Workforce Viewpoint Diversity Policy/Statement could be adopted as a stand-alone document, or integrated as a separate section in an existing policy or statement (e.g., code of ethics, human rights policy, DE&I statement, etc.). Standard nondiscrimination policies or EEO statements are NOT equivalent to a Workplace Viewpoint Diversity Policy.

See detailed scoring criteria for index [Workplace question(s) A.1] used to source these findings and recommendations, [here](#).

## Workplace

2

## Cultivate workplaces that welcome and respect religious diversity.

Benchmarked companies overwhelmingly commit to celebrating various types of diversity – including, race, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity – but almost none demonstrate an equivalent commitment to respecting and valuing employees of faith.



24%

Only 24% of benchmarked companies indicate that they currently recognize, or would recognize, a faith-based employee resource group.

4%

Only 4% of benchmarked companies confirm that they have a written workplace **religious accommodation policy**.

Businesses thrive when employees know that their fundamental beliefs matter and are respected. Many employees consider faith central to their purpose, ethical values, and identity. Yet few benchmarked companies disclose specific steps they have taken to ensure that religious workers can bring their whole selves – including their faith and values – to work.

### Take action to

#### Permit employees to form religious employee resource groups (ERGs), and ensure that such groups:

- ✓ May be organized around one or more specific faith traditions (e.g., Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witness, etc.).
- ✓ Have at least one executive sponsor.
- ✓ Are encouraged to speak into company policies, decisions, and other practices.
- ✓ Are listed on the company's website.
- ✓ Enjoy equal access to all company resources provided to non-religious ERGs.

#### Adopt a **Workplace Religious Accommodation Policy** that includes:

- ✓ A stated commitment to respect faith diversity in the workplace.
- ✓ A precise definition of "undue hardship."
- ✓ The precise factors considered in determining "undue hardship."
- ✓ General types/examples of religious accommodations offered under the policy.
- ✓ The process for requesting a religious accommodation.

## Workplace

3

**Integrate respect for viewpoint diversity into workforce trainings.****Only 2 out of 50**

companies confirm that new employee training covers religious discrimination and accommodation policies.

**2%**

Only 2% of companies confirm that their workforce training covers **respect for religious or ideological differences**.



Employee trainings often set the tone for respect and equal treatment in the workplace. That's why it's essential for HR-related resources, instruction, and programming to provide practical guidance on how to respect, trust, and collaborate with others who hold different values and beliefs.

**Take action to****Ensure employee training specifies how to respect and learn from:**

- ✓ Different ideological viewpoints.
- ✓ Different religious beliefs and faith traditions.
- ✓ For recommended diversity training alternatives, see [resources](#).

**Require new hires and supervisors to attend training that:**

- ✓ Clearly states that religion is covered by the workplace nondiscrimination policy.
- ✓ Includes specific guidelines/examples for avoiding religious harassment at work.
- ✓ Covers company's religious accommodation policies (and relevant procedures).



Businesses have an opportunity to foster trust, respect, unity, and excellence by embracing the freedom of thought and belief in their workforces.

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## Criteria 3: **Public Square**



## Public Square: Overview of Findings and Recommendations

Companies aren't just economic actors; many have emerged as social activists on a variety of causes and provide funding and essential services to countless non-profits. Increasingly, however, companies are wielding their political and economic power to enable cancel culture and erode fundamental freedoms, like free speech and religious liberty in the public square. Companies that trade in the suppression of free speech and religious freedom will eventually fall victim to the illiberalism they fund and enable. Complicity in cancel culture is not only harmful to companies' workforces, brand integrity, and bottom lines – it also poses a serious threat to open markets and liberal democracy.

It's time for businesses to recommit to respect the diverse religious and ideological views of their employees, customers, shareholders, and the broader public.

Practically, this means avoiding charitable giving and public advocacy that drive narrow political agendas corrosive to free speech and religious freedom. At minimum, corporations should ensure that their activities have no impact on these fundamental rights. However, beyond a mere commitment to do no harm, businesses should use their unique platforms to work for a society marked by tolerance and civil discourse.



Benchmarked companies averaged a **failing grade of 21%** on respecting viewpoint diversity in their giving practices and public advocacy.

Benchmarked companies earned a remarkably low average score of **21%** on this section, indicating significant shortcomings in ensuring that their giving practices and public advocacy are compatible with the democratic norms of free speech and religious freedom. This dramatically low average is mainly due to:

1. Use of company resources to engage in political and social activism **damaging to stakeholders' fundamental freedoms and harmful to companies' public reputations.**
2. Religious discrimination in charitable giving, as well as a widespread **failure to proactively support free speech and religious freedom** in the public square.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 3.1

### Companies Should *Avoid* These Key Risk Factors

#### 1 Support for political candidates, legal action, or legislation that would undermine free speech or religious freedom.

While large corporations once confined political activity to safeguarding their economic interests, many are abandoning this limited scope of engagement in favor of taking stands on a wide array of social issues not germane to their business.

#### 64% of companies

supported legislation or legal action to rollback protections for free speech and religious freedom.

#### 46% of companies

directed 45% or more of their political spending to candidates with **negative track records** on respecting fundamental freedoms, while only 10% directed 30% or more to candidates with **positive track records**.

This presents a host of new risks for companies that serve, employ, and rely on capital from people and organizations with diverse religious and ideological beliefs. At a minimum, corporate political activism risks alienating employees, customers, shareholders, and other stakeholders. Companies should resist lending support to any action that could undermine protections for the fundamental human rights of free speech and religious freedom.

Practically, this means corporations should avoid using their political clout to threaten these basic freedoms in courts or legislatures.



#### Watch out for

##### Use of corporate resources or advocacy to:

- ✗ Direct over 45% of political spending to U.S. Senate or House candidates with negative track records on free speech and religious freedom.
- ✗ Support laws or litigation that would undermine First Amendment freedoms.
- ✗ Oppose state-based Religious Freedom Restoration Acts, or similar legislation.



#### Take action to

- ✓ Balance political giving by avoiding disproportionate support for political candidates with negative track records on respecting fundamental freedoms, and direct at least 30% of contributions to support candidates with positive track records.
- ✓ Commit to avoid supporting laws or litigation that threaten fundamental freedoms. (See Finding 3.2.2).

2

## Use of corporate resources to back or partner with illiberal groups that advocate for censorship, deplatforming, or the rollback of fundamental freedoms.

### Spotlight: Risky Causes

1

#### Southern Poverty Law Center

Labels organizations that hold traditional views on marriage and sexuality “hate groups,” and actively seeks to exclude them from essential services and the public square.

2

#### Change the Terms

Actively pressures internet service providers to broadly restrict speech on their platforms in an arbitrary and ideologically biased manner.

3

#### Human Rights Campaign

Primary sponsor of legislation that would drastically curtail the freedom of religious people and organizations to live out their beliefs in the public square.

In addition to corporate support for harmful litigation and legislation, these findings raise significant concerns about the number of companies using business resources to support illiberal causes hostile to the values and rights of many stakeholders.

**42% of companies** are publicly known to support illiberal causes.

A growing number of companies are known to financially support or partner with organizations actively working to censor or deplatform users for their expression and rollback legal protections for First Amendment freedoms. This exposes businesses to significant brand and reputational risks, and enables anti-religious bigotry and illiberal suppression of speech.

Businesses should avoid supporting causes or organizations that seek to limit access to information, undermine free speech, or curtail religious freedom



### Watch out for

- ✗ Use of company resources to financially support or collaborate with illiberal groups/causes that actively work to undermine freedom of expression and belief.



### Take action to

- ✓ Identify use of corporate resources to fund illiberal causes that burden freedom of expression or belief, and discontinue any current or future support.
- ✓ Commit to avoid supporting causes that threaten free speech or religious freedom. (See Finding 3.2.2).

3

### Restricting corporate charitable contributions to faith-based non-profits because of religious status, practices, or beliefs.

24%

24% of companies have policies that exclude or threaten to exclude charities based on their religious status or practices.

44%

44% of companies have policies that exclude or threaten to exclude charities based on their religious advocacy.

Corporate-directed charity is a primary way companies give back to their communities and strengthen civil society. While corporations often use business resources to back secular causes – including those associated with controversial issues – many companies restrict faith-based organizations from accessing grants, funding, and discounted services because of what they believe. This is contrary to true “diversity” which many companies purport to value, undermines their ability to give back to the diverse religious and ideological communities they serve, and imposes a discriminatory barrier that prevents religious charities from accessing resources to provide social services and advocate for justice.

If companies choose to use business resources to engage in charitable giving, they should respect the religious diversity of their stakeholders by making such resources available to non-profits, irrespective of religious status, practices, or advocacy.



#### Watch out for

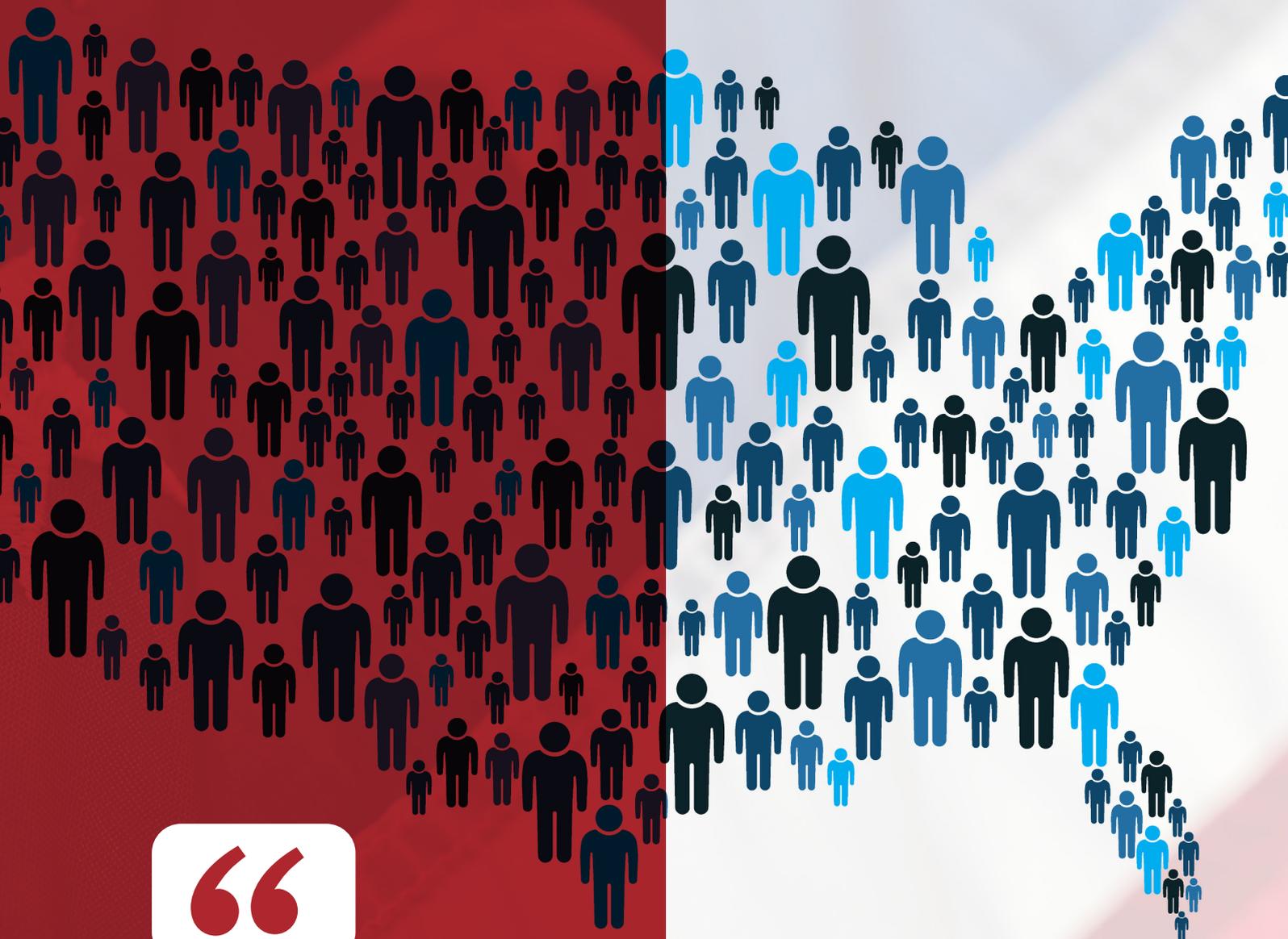
Policies that restrict corporate-directed charitable giving to religious non-profits based on:

- ✗ Non-profit’s religious status.
- ✗ Charities’ use of funds for religious purposes/uses.
- ✗ Religious-based employment/hiring practices.
- ✗ Administering programs and services in accordance with charities’ religious values.
- ✗ Charities’ faith-based public advocacy.



#### Take action to

- ✓ Review all eligibility requirements and participation criteria for corporate-directed charitable giving programs and eliminate any restrictions based on religious status, practices, or beliefs.
- ✓ Ensure that any third-party administrator of your program (e.g., Benevity) do not have policies that restrict, or risk banning non-profits’ participation based on religious status, practices, or beliefs.
- ✓ Do not restrict charitable participation based on discriminatory and discredited sources like the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#).
- ✓ Make sure that the faith-based charities in the communities you serve know that they are welcome to apply for resources.



Businesses should avoid undermining the freedom of expression or belief in their political engagement and charitable giving.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 3.2

### Companies Should *Implement* These Best Practices

1

**Support fundamental freedoms in the marketplace and public square.**

**0 out of 50**

companies disclosed any recent action to publicly support fundamental freedoms.



Many corporations are national and often multinational entities that interface with a multitude of public and private stakeholders, including governments, suppliers, non-profits, and other enterprises. This provides companies with a powerful and unique platform to stand-up for fundamental freedoms integral to both their business success, and the wellbeing of the communities they serve and employ.

Companies already use their brands and influence to advocate on a wide range of issues. Businesses that engage in the public square should lend their voices to protect the fundamental human rights of free speech and religious freedom – both domestically and around the world.



#### Take action to

Engage in direct advocacy, partner with, or financially support campaigns, organizations, or initiatives working to protect free speech and religious freedom in the U.S. or in other parts of the world. Such actions of support could include:

- ✓ Sponsoring or facilitating research that demonstrates the connection between strong protections for free speech and religious freedom and social/economic wellbeing.
- ✓ Issuing public letters or statements supporting religious freedom in a domestic or international context.
- ✓ Direct engagement with government officials, advocating on behalf of religious minorities, or opposing government restrictions on the freedom of expression.
- ✓ Joining an amicus brief supporting free speech or religious freedom claims under federal or state law in the U.S.
- ✓ Public engagement with colleges and universities to cultivate campus environments that promote viewpoint diversity as a crucial aspect of job-readiness.
- ✓ Providing financial support to one or more organizations that advance free speech or religious freedom as a substantial part of their mission(s).

2

**Publicly commit to never support advocacy or causes that threaten to undermine free speech or religious freedom.**



With fundamental freedoms at stake, companies should publicly signal their commitment to avoid supporting causes, political engagement, or legal action aimed at curtailing freedom of expression or the exercise of First Amendment rights. This is ethically responsible and makes good business sense for every company – especially in core sectors like internet communications, software, banking, and financial services.

Publicly committing to respect the freedom of expression and belief in approaching social and political issues is essential for mitigating risk and operating ethically within an increasingly diverse, pluralistic society.



### Take action to

Pledge to respect freedom of expression and belief throughout corporate advocacy and political engagement, by publicly committing to:

- ✓ Recognize the religious and ideological diversity of stakeholders.
- ✓ Never support any political or legal action that would harm First Amendment freedoms.
- ✓ Never support illiberal causes or organizations hostile to free speech and religious freedom.



Businesses should use their unique positions to safeguard free speech and religious freedom, which are integral to their success and the wellbeing of the communities they serve and employ.



## Average Scores: All Industries

**Market: 8%**
**Workplace: 10%**
**Public Square: 21%**
**Overall: 12%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Sector	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
<b>Paychex</b>	Diversified Outsourcing Services	20%	39%	50%	35%
<b>Truist Financial</b>	Commercial Banks	15%	24%	38%	24%
<b>BOK Financial</b>	Commercial Banks	13%	13%	50%	20%
<b>Fidelity National Information Services</b>	Financial Data Services	10%	10%	50%	18%
<b>First Horizon National</b>	Commercial Banks	13%	7%	50%	17%
<b>Comerica</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	15%	38%	16%
<b>Huntington Bancshares</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	12%	38%	16%
<b>Fifth Third Bancorp</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	10%	38%	15%
<b>JPMorgan Chase</b>	Commercial Banks	15%	10%	25%	15%
<b>M&amp;T Bank</b>	Commercial Banks	15%	8%	25%	14%
<b>Regions Financial</b>	Commercial Banks	8%	13%	25%	14%
<b>Rackspace</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	13%	8%	33%	14%
<b>Bank of New York Mellon</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	10%	25%	13%
<b>Capital One Financial</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	15%	13%	13%
<b>Discover Financial Services</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	10%	25%	13%
<b>Wells Fargo</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	13%	25%	13%
<b>PNC Financial Services Group</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	12%	25%	12%
<b>SVB Financial Group</b>	Commercial Banks	8%	10%	25%	12%
<b>US Bancorp</b>	Commercial Banks	8%	10%	25%	12%

\*Scores appear as percentages based on the total number of points each company earned out of the total number of points possible.



<b>Company</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Market</b>	<b>Workplace</b>	<b>Public Square</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
<b>First Republic Bank</b>	Commercial Banks	8%	8%	33%	12%
<b>Bread Financial</b>	Financial Data Services	10%	8%	25%	12%
<b>Fiserv</b>	Financial Data Services	10%	8%	25%	12%
<b>Global Payments</b>	Financial Data Services	10%	13%	13%	12%
<b>Zions Bancorp.</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	8%	25%	12%
<b>KeyCorp</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	10%	25%	11%
<b>Visa</b>	Financial Data Services	8%	13%	13%	11%
<b>Western Union</b>	Financial Data Services	8%	7%	33%	11%
<b>Citizens Financial Group</b>	Commercial Banks	8%	5%	25%	10%
<b>State Street</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	12%	13%	10%
<b>Bank of America</b>	Commercial Banks	8%	10%	11%	10%
<b>Goldman Sachs Group</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	12%	11%	10%
<b>Euronet Worldwide</b>	Financial Data Services	8%	5%	33%	10%
<b>Snap, Inc.</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	0%	10%	33%	10%
<b>Mastercard</b>	Financial Data Services	8%	10%	13%	10%
<b>Morgan Stanley</b>	Commercial Banks	5%	10%	13%	9%
<b>Oracle</b>	Computer Software	5%	10%	13%	9%
<b>Block, Inc.</b>	Financial Data Services	5%	10%	17%	9%
<b>Akamai Technologies</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	5%	10%	17%	9%
<b>Alphabet</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	8%	13%	0%	9%
<b>Meta</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	3%	12%	13%	9%
<b>Citigroup</b>	Commercial Banks	10%	10%	0%	8%
<b>Apple</b>	Computers, Office Equipment	8%	10%	0%	8%
<b>PayPal Holdings</b>	Financial Data Services	5%	12%	0%	7%

\*Scores appear as percentages based on the total number of points each company earned out of the total number of points possible.



## 2022 Business Rankings

All Industries

<b>Company</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Market</b>	<b>Workplace</b>	<b>Public Square</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
<b>eBay</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	3%	7%	13%	7%
<b>Twitter</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	8%	7%	0%	6%
<b>Amazon.com</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	3%	10%	0%	6%
<b>Adobe</b>	Computer Software	0%	5%	17%	5%
<b>Microsoft</b>	Computer Software	8%	5%	0%	5%
<b>Airbnb, Inc.</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	0%	5%	13%	5%
<b>GoDaddy</b>	Internet Services and Retailing	5%	0%	0%	2%



## Average Scores: Commercial Banks

**Market: 9%**
**Workplace: 11%**
**Public Square: 25%**
**Overall: 13%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
<b>Truist Financial</b>	15%	24%	38%	24%
<b>BOK Financial</b>	13%	13%	50%	20%
<b>First Horizon National</b>	13%	7%	50%	17%
<b>Comerica</b>	5%	15%	38%	16%
<b>Huntington Bancshares</b>	10%	12%	38%	16%
<b>Fifth Third Bancorp</b>	10%	10%	38%	15%
<b>JPMorgan Chase</b>	15%	10%	25%	15%
<b>M&amp;T Bank</b>	15%	8%	25%	14%
<b>Regions Financial</b>	8%	13%	25%	14%
<b>Bank of New York Mellon</b>	10%	10%	25%	13%
<b>Capital One Financial</b>	10%	15%	13%	13%
<b>Discover Financial Services</b>	10%	10%	25%	13%
<b>Wells Fargo</b>	5%	13%	25%	13%
<b>PNC Financial Services Group</b>	5%	12%	25%	12%
<b>SVB Financial Group</b>	8%	10%	25%	12%
<b>US Bancorp</b>	8%	10%	25%	12%
<b>First Republic Bank</b>	8%	8%	33%	12%
<b>Zions Bancorp.</b>	10%	8%	25%	12%
<b>KeyCorp</b>	5%	10%	25%	11%

\*Scores appear as percentages based on the total number of points each company earned out of the total number of points possible.



## 2022 Business Rankings

### Commercial Banks

<b>Company</b>	<b>Market</b>	<b>Workplace</b>	<b>Public Square</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
<b>Citizens Financial Group</b>	8%	5%	25%	10%
<b>State Street</b>	5%	12%	13%	10%
<b>Bank of America</b>	8%	10%	11%	10%
<b>Goldman Sachs Group</b>	5%	12%	11%	10%
<b>Morgan Stanley</b>	5%	10%	13%	9%
<b>Citigroup</b>	10%	10%	0%	8%



## Average Scores: Computer Software

**Market: 4%**
**Workplace: 7%**
**Public Square: 9%**
**Overall: 6%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
Oracle	5%	10%	13%	9%
Adobe	0%	5%	17%	5%
Microsoft	8%	5%	0%	5%

## Average Scores: Computers, Office Equipment

**Market: 8%**
**Workplace: 10%**
**Public Square: 0%**
**Overall: 8%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
Apple	8%	10%	0%	8%



## Average Scores: Diversified Outsourcing Services

**Market: 20%**
**Workplace: 39%**
**Public Square: 50%**
**Overall: 35%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
Paychex	20%	39%	50%	35%

## Average Scores: Financial Data Services

**Market: 8%**
**Workplace: 10%**
**Public Square: 22%**
**Overall: 11%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
Fidelity National Information Services	10%	10%	50%	18%
Bread Financial	10%	8%	25%	12%
Fiserv	10%	8%	25%	12%
Global Payments	10%	13%	13%	12%
Visa	8%	13%	13%	11%
Western Union	8%	7%	33%	11%
Euronet Worldwide	8%	5%	33%	10%
Mastercard	8%	10%	13%	10%
Block, Inc.	5%	10%	17%	9%
PayPal Holdings	5%	12%	0%	7%



## Average Scores: Internet Services and Retailing

**Market: 5%**
**Workplace: 8%**
**Public Square: 11%**
**Overall: 8%**

### Ranked by Score

Company	Market	Workplace	Public Square	Overall Score
<b>Rackspace</b>	13%	8%	33%	14%
<b>Snap, Inc.</b>	0%	10%	33%	10%
<b>Akamai Technologies</b>	5%	10%	17%	9%
<b>Alphabet</b>	8%	13%	0%	9%
<b>Meta</b>	3%	12%	13%	9%
<b>eBay</b>	3%	7%	13%	7%
<b>Airbnb, Inc.</b>	0%	5%	13%	5%
<b>Twitter</b>	8%	7%	0%	6%
<b>Amazon.com</b>	3%	10%	0%	6%
<b>GoDaddy</b>	5%	0%	0%	2%

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