

Western Digital

Western Digital

Subsidiaries: SanDisk

Locations: California (HQ)

Industries: Technology Hardware and Equipment

RISK LEVEL:**Medium Risk****DESCRIPTION:**

Western Digital is Medium Risk. The company often yields to political activism in shaping corporate governance, potentially alienating consumers, dividing employees, and harming shareholders. The company implements race and identity-based policies that replace merit, excellence, and integrity with preferential treatment and outcomes. Western Digital occasionally embraces corporate initiatives that redirect its central focus from business goals to partisan policies and divisive issues at times. This approach fails to safeguard free exercise, free speech, and free enterprise.

Corporate Weaponization

Has canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors due to their political views or religious beliefs OR corporately boycotts, divests, or sanctions regions, people groups, or industries. Medium Risk

Western Digital received a score of 70 on the 2025 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. The company recruits employees based on sexual identity issues. The company discriminates against vendors that do not promote divisive sex and gender policies, indicating it prioritizes sexual issues over merit (1)(2). However, Western Digital has not canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs (3).

Charitable giving (including employee matching programs) policies or practices discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or religious beliefs. High Risk

Western Digital's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). Western Digital's global giving guidelines require that organizations abide by its nondiscrimination policy, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, thereby excluding some religious charities (3). The company likely uses Benevity as its charitable giving platform. Benevity vets charities according to the Southern Poverty Law Center's Hate List, which includes mainstream libertarian, conservative, family, and religious advocacy organizations (4)(5)(6).

Employment policies fail to protect against viewpoint or other discrimination and/or are ideological in nature. High Risk

Western Digital does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees (1). The company implemented unconscious bias training for its senior leaders and plans on implementing virtual training on managing bias for its people managers (2).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression.

High Risk

Western Digital signed an open letter endorsing the Equality Act, a contentious proposal to amend the 1964 Civil Rights Act by adding sexual orientation and so-called gender identity as protected categories. The legislation would, among other implications, grant biological men access to women-only spaces such as sports teams and public restrooms, and compel healthcare providers to deliver sex-denying healthcare (1). The company's CEO, David Goeckeler, signed the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion pledge, which includes a commitment to promote DEI through bias education training in the workplace, strategize on DEI programs/initiatives with other signatories, and engage boards of directors when developing and evaluating DEI strategies (2)(3).

Uses corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression.

High Risk

Western Digital's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company covers transgender related costs for its employees and their children, including paid short-term leave, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, chest surgeries, genital surgeries, medical visits and lab monitoring, travel and lodging. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2). The company was a Bronze Tier corporate sponsor of the Trevor Project, an organization that advocates for controversial sex and gender ideology, including "gender transition" drugs and surgeries for minors, through legislation, litigation, advertising, and PR campaigns. The organization also hosts online chatrooms that allow adults to communicate with minors as young as 13 about sexually explicit topics. Adults in these chatrooms have encouraged minors to adopt transgender identities and withhold this information from their parents (3)(4)(5)(6)(7). The company is a brass sponsor of Out & Equal (8). Otherwise, there are no publicly known cases of the company using corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies (9).

Uses corporate political actions and/or financial contributions for ideological, non-business purposes.

Lower Risk

Western Digital does not operate a PAC at this time and has not lobbied for ideological purposes (1)(2)(3).

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