



Herbert Smith Freehills

Subsidiaries: Herbert Smith Freehills New York LLP

Locations: New York (HQ), United Kingdom

Industries: Legal

RISK LEVEL:



Medium Risk

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DESCRIPTION:

Herbert Smith Freehills is Medium Risk. The company often yields to political activism in shaping corporate governance, potentially alienating consumers, dividing employees, and harming shareholders. The company elevates merit, excellence, and integrity ahead of race and identity-based policies. Herbert Smith Freehills 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

Herbert Smith Freehills integrates ESG into its business practices. From its Pathway to net zero page: it has committed to "by 2025, actively engag[e] with our suppliers and ensur[e] that 55% of our suppliers by spend have science-based targets for reducing their emissions" (1). However, Herbert Smith Freehills has not canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs (2)(3)(4).

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

Herbert Smith Freehills does not publish charitable giving guidelines (1).

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

Herbert Smith Freehills appears to prioritize diversity over merit in its business structure through the establishment of gender and racial targets for its hiring and leadership composition. Herbert Smith Freehills is seeking 40% of partners and partner leadership roles to be women by May 1, 2030, as well as 10% of partners to be minority ethnic groups by 2025 (1). Herbert Smith Freehills does not publish a nondiscrimination policy (2).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

Herbert Smith Freehills has signed the Equal Representation for Expert Witnesses Pledge and the Equal Representation in Arbitration Pledge, which aim to increase the proportion of female expert witnesses and arbitrators (1)(2)(3)(4)(5). Herbert Smith Freehills is a member of the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, which aims to influence regulatory bodies and legal associations with net-zero emission and subsequent decarbonization goals (6)(7).

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

Herbert Smith Freehills partnered with USFolk to produce T-shirts featuring pro-LGBTQ artwork for employees, friends, and family to wear to the Belfast Pride parade (1). Otherwise, there are no publicly known cases of Herbert Smith Freehills using corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies (2).

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

Herbert Smith Freehills is a partner of the Center for Reproductive Rights, building case law, advocating before policy makers, and engaging in litigation to challenge bans and restrictions on access to abortion (1). Herbert Smith Freehills is a part of the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance, committed to work on initiatives that fight "systemic racism" (2)(3). Herbert Smith Freehills does not operate a PAC or engage in lobbying at this time (4)(5)(6).

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