

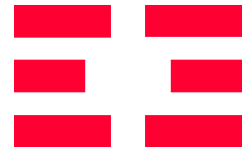


Ben & Jerry's

Locations: Vermont (HQ)

Industries: Food Beverage and Tobacco

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Ben & Jerry's is a self-described activist company that regularly uses its corporate resources to promote legislative agendas such as cannabis legalization, increased abortion access, restrictions on free speech, and more. The company covers the cost of "medically necessary transition-related care" for its employees and their children. Ben & Jerry's has donated to ideological groups such as Color of Change. Its attempt to pull its business out of Israel prompted its parent, Unilever, to step in and sell Ben & Jerry's Israeli branch. The company does not grant donations to faith-based charities and vets suppliers for LGBTQ policies. Ben & Jerry's does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees and is committed to carbon neutrality by 2040. For these reasons, Ben & Jerry's receives a High Risk rating.

Corporate Weaponization

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

Ben & Jerry's received a score of 100 on the Corporate Equality Index from the Human Rights Campaign (1). Among other requirements, this means the company has pledged to vet vendors for LGBTQ policies. In July 2021, Ben & Jerry's announced that it would end sales in the West Bank, which the company referred to as "Occupied Palestinian Territory" (2). Upon pushback from local subsidiary Ben & Jerry's Israel, the company suddenly decided to end the franchise. When the ice cream chain's parent company Unilever attempted damage control by preemptively selling off the Israeli franchise, Ben & Jerry's immediately attempted to sue Unilever (3).

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

Ben & Jerry's will not donate to religious nonprofits (1)(2).

Employment policies fail to protect against discrimination based on political affiliation/views and/or religion. High Risk

Ben & Jerry's does not provide protections against viewpoint discrimination (1).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support ideological causes and/or organizations hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

The company publicly opposes election security legislation (such as the Georgia voting bill), and the company cites the ACLU and Color of Change as “Friends in the Movement” (3). Ben & Jerry’s has been a consistent supporter of the Black Lives Matter movement and has publicly supported the Defund the Police slogan and racial reparation policy (4)(5). Ben & Jerry’s posted a defense of the Equality Act on its site entitled “The Equality Act and Why We Need It” (6). Ben & Jerry’s has tweeted that the justice system “can’t be reformed” and “must be dismantled” (7). In 2020, Ben & Jerry’s joined the “#StopHateForProfit” boycott of Facebook intended to force the social media site to enact stricter speech rules (8). Ben & Jerry’s signed onto the Human Rights Campaign’s Business Coalition on Anti-LGBTQ Legislation, as well as further statements expressing opposition to a Florida law prohibiting the teaching of gender identity and sexual orientation to children in K-3rd grade (9)(1011). The company had published similar commentaries regarding state-level abortion laws previously (12). In 2022, Ben & Jerry’s led a campaign in favor of cannabis reform (13). The company is a Ceres Network Member, committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2040 (14)(15). Ben & Jerry’s posted a Tweet statement on July 4, 2023 stating that “it’s high time we recognize that the US exists on stolen Indigenous land and commit to returning it” and “The faces on Mount Rushmore are the faces of men who actively worked to destroy Indigenous cultures and ways of life, to deny Indigenous people their basic rights” (16)(17).

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

In 2018, Ben & Jerry’s donated \$25,000 to Color of Change (12). In 2017, Ben & Jerry’s donated to the Anti-Defamation League and called upon others to do the same (34)(5).

Uses corporate political contributions for ideological, non-business purposes.**N/A**

Neither Ben & Jerry’s nor its parent Unilever has an active PAC.

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