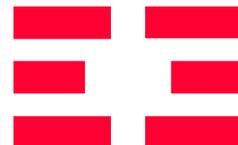




Williams-Sonoma

Subsidiaries: Pottery Barn, West Elm, Rejuvenation, Mark & Graham
Locations: California (HQ)
Industries: Retailing

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

William Sonoma is High Risk. The company 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. William Sonoma embraces corporate initiatives that redirect its central focus from business goals to partisan policies and divisive issues. 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

Williams-Sonoma received a score of 90 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, the company has not publicly 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

Williams-Sonoma's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). The company does not appear to discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or beliefs (3).

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

Williams-Sonoma's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company forces employees to attend multiple, controversial trainings on gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology. The company provides gender transition guidelines for its employees and a specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company (1)(2). The company also implemented unconscious bias training for its employees (3). In September 2024 America First Legal filed a letter with the EEOC requesting a civil rights investigation into Williams-Sonoma over discriminatory practices in hiring, employment, and contracting (4)(5). The company does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees (6).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

Williams-Sonoma HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy. By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2). The company signed the United Nations Free & Equal campaign for LGBTQ policies (3). The company 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 (4)(5). It signed an amicus brief in opposition to the 2016 North Carolina bathroom bill HB2, which required people to use the bathroom of their biological sex (6). The company's CEO, Laura Alber, signed the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion pledge, which includes a commitment to promote DEI through bias education training in the workplace (7)(8). The company scored an 85 out of 100 on the 2023-2024 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group (9)(10).

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

William-Sonoma'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. Additionally, the company has pledged philanthropic support of at least one organization or event that promotes sex and gender ideology. 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 is a Gold 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. West Elm and Pottery Barn, subsidiaries of the company, were Bronze Tier corporate sponsors of the Trevor Project, and the subsidiaries Rejuvenation and Mark & Graham were a Champion Tier sponsors (3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(8)(9)(10). The company donates to many LGBTQ-interest lobbyist organizations (11). The company donated \$250,000 to a list of organizations that included the NAACP and the National Urban League (12). The company's subsidiary West Elm signed the Fifteen Percent Pledge and "committed to dedicate 15% of their shelf space to Black-owned brands" (13)(14). Otherwise, there are no publicly known cases of the company using corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies (15).

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

Williams-Sonoma's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2). The company does not operate a PAC or engage in lobbying at this time (3)(4)(5).

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