

AMERICAN  
EXPRESS

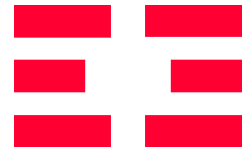
# American Express

Subsidiaries: American Express Global Business Travel, AmEx

Locations: New York (HQ)

Industries: Diversified Financials

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

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## DESCRIPTION:

American Express (AmEx) 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. AmEx 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 High Risk corporately boycotts, divests, or sanctions regions, people groups, or industries.**

American Express received a score of 100 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). The company was a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media, which demonetized and suppressed content that it deemed to spread "hate speech" or "misinformation", discuss "debated social issues in a negative or partisan context", or "vilify" individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity. These arbitrary guidelines were used to censor mainstream perspectives online (3)(4)(5). In 2022, longtime AmEx employee Nick Williams alleges he was fired over the company's diversity initiatives. Williams was terminated shortly after he told a Black, female small business owner that she did not have the necessary documents to obtain a corporate AmEx card. Williams never met her face-to-face and "had no idea" the business was owned by a minority. Williams claims AmEx was trying to avoid the possibility of a lawsuit and was using aggressive and misleading sales tactics to sell company cards to more minority-owned businesses as part of its diversity efforts. Williams admits his perspective is "speculative" but pointed to the Department of Justice's investigation into AmEx's sales practices as proof of his position (6). In 2021, the company reduced MyPillow's credit line by 90% without prior notice. Mike Lindell, CEO of MyPillow, alleged political bias due to his support for President Donald Trump and said this action severely impacted his business operations. Conversely, American Express stated that credit decisions are based on financial considerations, not political affiliations (7). The company integrates ESG into its business practices. From its 2025 Supplier Code of Conduct: "We will also work with our suppliers and encourage them to reduce their impact on our value chain by inviting them to track, reduce, and eventually neutralize their own operational greenhouse gas emissions" (8). The company promotes divisive sex and gender policies. Its Supplier Code of Conduct requires international vendors to include sexual orientation and gender identity in their nondiscrimination policy (9).

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

American Express'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 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 (3)(4)(5).

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

AmEx'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). In 2020, the company offered anti-racism, critical race theory, and intersectionality training to its employees (3). The company appears to prioritize diversity over merit in its recruitment and hiring. From its 2024 Annual Report: "Our inability to attract, develop and retain highly skilled, motivated and diverse personnel could materially adversely affect our business and our culture" (4). The company does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees (5). American Express has a history of divisive corporate policies and practices. However, in February 2026, the company removed gender, racial, and ethnic diversity requirements for potential board members from its Corporate Governance Principles. To date, the company has not publicly addressed this change, leaving shareholders without clarity regarding the company's reasoning or future direction (6)(7)(8).

## Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

AmEx's 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 has 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 (3). The company's board members protested state voting integrity bills (4). The company has also imposed teachings on employees that said certain religious beliefs conferred different levels of privilege, and these radical lectures magnified divisions based on inherent characteristics and beliefs (5). The company opposed the Florida Parental Rights in Education Act, which would prohibit teaching gender identity and sexual orientation to kids in K-3rd grade (6). The company utilizes a new product code for legal firearms, allowing for the potential tracking of legal gun purchases (7). The company's CEO Stephen Squeri is a member of the Business Roundtable and signed its 2019 Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation, which promotes stakeholder capitalism over traditional obligations to shareholders (8)(9). The company various state and local legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces (10)(11). The company opposed legislation in Iowa intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces (12). AmEx Global Business Travel signed the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion pledge, which includes a commitment to promote DEI through bias education training in the workplace (13)(14). The company is committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 (15). The company supports DEI and ESG within its business practices. From its 2023-2024 ESG Report: "In 2021, we established our Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) strategy and goals focused on a number of issues of importance to our stakeholders, composed of three core pillars: Financial Confidence; Climate Solutions; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" (16). The company scored a 100 out of 100 on the 2023-2024 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group (17)(18).

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

AmEx provides a benefits package for employees that covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children (1)(2)(3)(4)(5). The company's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company provides a benefits package for employees that covers transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children. This includes 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 (6)(7). The company has funded Planned Parenthood (8). The company was a Platinum 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 (9)(10)(11)(12)(13). The company was a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (14)(15)(16). The company also paid for critical race theory style seminars for its employees that said that "capitalism is evil," among other things (17). The company has pledged over \$50 million to the Black Lives Matter movement and related causes (18). In October 2020, the company announced a \$1 billion racial and gender equity plan which included funding for "social justice" organizations. It is unclear which organizations received funding (19). The company is a founding corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (20). The company is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race (21)(22). The company is a coalition member of OneTen, appearing to prioritize diversity over merit in its hiring (23)(24)(25).

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

AmEx'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). In 2024, the company donated to Equality PAC (3)(4). The company has not used its lobbying for ideological purposes (5).

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