



American Express (AmEx)

Locations: New York (HQ)

Industries: Diversified Financials

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

American Express (AmEx) scored an 100 on the 2023 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. By complying with the HRC's controversial demands, the company increases the risk of dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company covers transgender-related medical costs for its employees and their children and provides specific sexual orientation and gender identity-based benefits. It also uses sex and gender ideology criteria in employee recruitment, vendor selection, marketing, and philanthropic support. AmEx forces employees to undergo multiple ideological trainings and uses its reputation, corporate funds, and political influence to support controversial sex and gender ideologies, organizations, and legislation. AmEX provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children. The company is part of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media. AmEx is also a signatory of the Business Roundtable's 2019 Statement on the Purpose of Corporation, which promotes stakeholder capitalism. The company pledged \$50 million to BLM and related causes, funds Planned Parenthood, and uses a product code for legal firearm purchases. AmEx is a founding corporate partner of the national LGBT Chamber of Commerce. The company opposed various state and local legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces. American Express is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race. For these reasons, American Express 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**

American Express received a score of 100 recruit's 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). 3)(4)(5). In 2022, longtime American Express 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).

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

American Express' HRC CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). American Express does not discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or beliefs (3)(4).

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

High Risk

(1)(2). The company protects its employees against viewpoint discrimination (3).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

High Risk

American Express's HRC 2023 CEI rating indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy (1)(2). By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. AmEx (3). The company's board members protested state voting integrity bills (4). AmEx 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). AmEx utilizes a new product code for legal firearms, allowing for the potential tracking of legal gun purchases (7). American Express is a member of the OneTen coalition, meaning that the company has pledged to further emphasize race in hiring (8)(9). American Express CEO Stephen Squeri is a member of the Business Roundtable and signed its 2019 Statement on the Purpose of Corporation, which promotes stakeholder capitalism over traditional obligations to shareholders and customers (10)(11)(12).

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

High Risk

American Express provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children (1)(2)(3)(4)(5). American Express' HRC 2023 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 (6)(7). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. AmEx has funded Planned Parenthood (8). The company is a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (9)(10)(11). AmEx also paid for critical race theory style seminars for its employees that said that "capitalism is evil," among other things (12). The company has pledged over \$50 million to the Black Lives Matter movement and related causes (13)(14). AmEx is a founding corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (15). The company is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race (16)(17).

Uses corporate political contributions for ideological, non-business purposes.

High Risk

American Express's HRC 2023 CEI rating indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives (1)(2). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the

company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. AmEx donated to the Equality PAC but has not lobbied for ideological purposes (3)(4)(5).

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