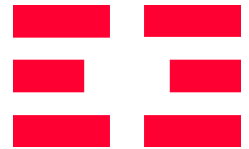


## Walt Disney Co.

Subsidiaries: ESPN, 21st Century Fox, Hulu, Marvel, Pixar, Lucasfilm,  
National Geographic, American Broadcasting Company (ABC)  
Locations: California (HQ)  
Industries: Media and Entertainment

### RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

### DESCRIPTION:

The Walt Disney Company has fired employees, including celebrities, according to political views. Disney also threatened to move business out of Georgia if the governor signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 2016. The Walt Disney Company scored a 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, Walt Disney 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. Walt Disney 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. The company 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. Walt Disney is part of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media. The company regularly uses its reputation and corporate funds to push gender ideology and LGBTQ organizations. This includes a \$5 million donation and platinum partnership with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). Disney pledged \$5 million to BLM and related causes and mandates critical race theory training for its employees. It has also leveraged its vast resources to fight the state policies of Florida. Disney is Ceres Network member, committed to carbon neutrality by 2040. The company opposed various state and local legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces. Walt Disney is a silver partner of PFLAG. For these reasons, The Walt Disney Company 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**

[1](#)/[2](#)). A former Disney cast member claimed he was fired from Walt Disney World after expressing his political opinions on Twitter ([3](#)). Disney drew claims of corporate hypocrisy when it did not fire Carano's fellow star in *The Mandalorian*, Pedro Pascal when he compared Trump supporters to Nazis ([4](#)). In 2016, Disney threatened to stop filming media productions in Georgia over a proposed religious liberty bill ([5](#)). Georgia governor Nathan Deal vetoed the bill shortly thereafter ([6](#)). In 2022, several former employees sued The Walt Disney Co. for religious discrimination after the unvaccinated employees were fired after seeking religious exemptions to the company's Covid-19 policies ([7](#))([8](#))([9](#))([10](#))([11](#)). The company received a score of 100 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 ([12](#))([13](#)). Disney embraces ESG metrics, principles, and reporting ([14](#)).

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

**High Risk**

Disney<sup>(1)(2)</sup>.

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

**High Risk**

Disney 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 specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company <sup>(1)(2)</sup>. Disney protects its employees from viewpoint discrimination <sup>(3)</sup>.

## Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

Disney put into place mandatory critical race theory training for employees, including topics such as “anti-racism,” “systemic racism,” “white privilege,” and other concepts <sup>(1)</sup>. Disney advocated for the Equality Act and against religious freedom legislation in state legislatures <sup>(2)(3)</sup>. Disney’s former CEO Bob Chapek caved to activist pressure and spoke out against the Florida Parental Rights in Education Act, which prohibits teaching gender identity and sexual orientation in schools to kids in K-3rd grade. The company put forward a statement saying that “Our goal as a company is for this law to be repealed by the legislature or struck down in the courts, and we remain committed to supporting the national and state organizations working to achieve that” <sup>(4)(5)</sup>. A group of Disney employees created an unsigned open letter and staged walkouts urging Disney to remain politically neutral <sup>(6)</sup>. Disney put out a statement in response standing in solidarity with LGBTQ employees <sup>(7)</sup>. In an episode of “The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder”, a children’s show, characters promoted reparations for black Americans, saying “Slaves built this country and we the descendants of slaves in America have earned reparations for their suffering and continue to earn reparations every moment we spend submerged in a systemic prejudice, racism, and white supremacy that America was founded with and still has not atoned for” <sup>(8)</sup>. In 2023, Disney closed its Splash Mountain theme park ride due to allegedly racist roots <sup>(9)</sup>. The theme parks division also removed “ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls” from its announcements and changed “fairy godmothers” as part of an effort to promote entirely gender neutral titles <sup>(10)</sup>. Disney has also added warnings of racist themes in its classic movies, like “Lady and the Tramp”, “Peter Pan”, “Dumbo”, and more <sup>(11)</sup>. After corporately denouncing Florida’s Parental Rights in Education Act, corporate executives held a meeting where leaked footage confirmed top employees’ “not-so-secret gay agenda” whereby content producers were purposefully “injecting queerness” into children’s programming <sup>(12)</sup>. CEO Bob Iger is a member of the Business Roundtable, but has not supported its ideological initiatives <sup>(13)</sup>. The company is a Ceres Network Member, committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2040 <sup>(14)(15)</sup>. Disney indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy <sup>(16)(17)</sup>. By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company signed Orlando Economic Partnership’s DEI pledge, committing themselves to fight systemic racism, prioritize the success of diverse people in its workplace, and ensure DEI “is a strategic imperative with demonstrated commitment and actions” <sup>(18)(19)</sup>.

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

Disney 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). Disney 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 (4)(5). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company is a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (6)(7)(8). The company attempted to donate \$5 million to the HRC in the aftermath of its delayed opposition to a Florida bill preventing teaching gender identity and sexual orientation in schools to young children in schools, but the HRC rebuffed the donation "until meaningful action is taken" against the bill (9)(10). Months later, the HRC accepted the same donation (11). Disney is a platinum partner of the HRC (12). Disney pledged \$5 million to the Black Lives Matter movement and related organizations (13)(14). Disney is a Titanium sponsor of Out and Equal and a corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (15)(16)(17). In 2020, Disney pulled its advertising from Tucker Carlson's show on Fox News following comments Carlson made regarding the Black Lives Matter movement and the death of George Floyd. Carlson suggested that the protests were "definitely not about black lives" and described them as "riots" (18)(19)(2021)(22)(23).

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

High Risk

Disney 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. Disney (3)(4)(5).

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