

**METHODOLOGY**  
**RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND LIMITATIONS**



*Measuring the **Fortune 100's** commitment to religious inclusion*





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Lead Researchers

**Brian J. Grim, Ph.D.**  
President

**Melissa E. Grim, J.D.**  
Project Director

Research Consultants

**Greg Clark, J.D.**  
Vice President

**Kent Johnson, J.D.**  
Senior Corporate Advisor

**Paul Lambert, M.A.**  
Senior Business Fellow

Research Assistants

**Caitlyn Bishop**

**Brady Early**

**Gideon Miles**

**Giulia Nembrini**

Media Inquiries

**Tom Basile**

Email: [media@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org](mailto:media@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org)

## FOREWORD

### THE LAW AND THE BOTTOM LINE

**I**n the United States, under the laws<sup>1</sup> enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC):

*it is illegal for employers to discriminate against someone (applicant or employee) on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information;*

*and an employer is required to reasonably accommodate an employee's religious beliefs or practices, unless doing so would cause difficulty or expense for the employer. This means an employer may have to make reasonable adjustments at work that will allow the employee to practice his or her religion, such as allowing an employee to voluntarily swap shifts with a co-worker so that he or she can attend religious services.*

Laws concerning accommodation of religion, freedom of speech and protection against oppressive work environments inform companies' minimum requirements for accommodation of religion. As corporate America has become increasingly focused on creating environments where people can bring their whole selves to work regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, some companies are embracing diversity practices that go beyond the minimum legal requirements for accommodation.<sup>2</sup> This focus on diversity comes in the wake of overwhelming research and evidence showing that a company's bottom line grows when it values each employee's uniqueness and equitably includes diverse perspectives in the workplace.<sup>3</sup>

**Indeed, including religion is a litmus test for whether a company fully embraces diversity, equity and inclusion.**

Most of America's Fortune 100 companies have well-developed diversity, equity and inclusion programs, sometimes headed by a senior C-suite director<sup>4</sup>. Many also include company-sponsored employee resource groups (ERGs) that support people from these protected categories.

Of the identities protected by the EEOC mentioned above, one stands out as being under-addressed by America's largest companies: religion. Our content analysis of the main diversity and inclusion landing pages of Fortune 100 companies shows that religion receives less attention than all the other major identity categories: race/ethnicity, women/gender, sexual orientation, veterans/military, dis/ability, age, and family.

Our research, however, also indicates that corporate America is at a tipping point toward giving religion similar attention to that given the other major diversity categories, especially as our nation is becoming more religiously diverse with no one religious denomination holding a majority.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, including religion is a litmus test for whether a company fully embraces diversity, equity and inclusion.

Brian Grim, Ph.D  
 President  
 Religious Freedom & Business Foundation

1 These laws apply to all private sector and state/local government employers with at least 15 employees, see: <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/> and [https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/index.cfm#ra\\_religion](https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/index.cfm#ra_religion). Religious corporations, associations, educational institutions, or societies are exempt from the federal laws that EEOC enforces when it comes to the employment of individuals based on their particular religion [https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/inquiries\\_religious.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/inquiries_religious.cfm). 2 See the US Attorney General's 2017 "Memorandum for Executive Departments and Agencies" <https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/1001891/download>, and the 1997 "Clinton Guidelines on Religious Exercise and Religious Expression in the Federal Workplace" <https://clintonwhitehouse2.archives.gov/WH/New/html/19970819-3275.html>

2 For instance, see how Microsoft puts the benefits of diversity and inclusion above EEOC compliance on their legal policies page <https://careers.microsoft.com/us/en/legalpolicies>.

3 The business case for diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace is now overwhelming <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/04/business-case-for-diversity-in-the-workplace/>.

4 Companies Falter in Making Diversity and Inclusion a C-Suite Job: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/companies-falter-in-making-diversity-and-inclusion-a-c-suite-job-11572091208>

5 In U.S., decline of Christianity continues at rapid pace: <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>.

## METHODOLOGY

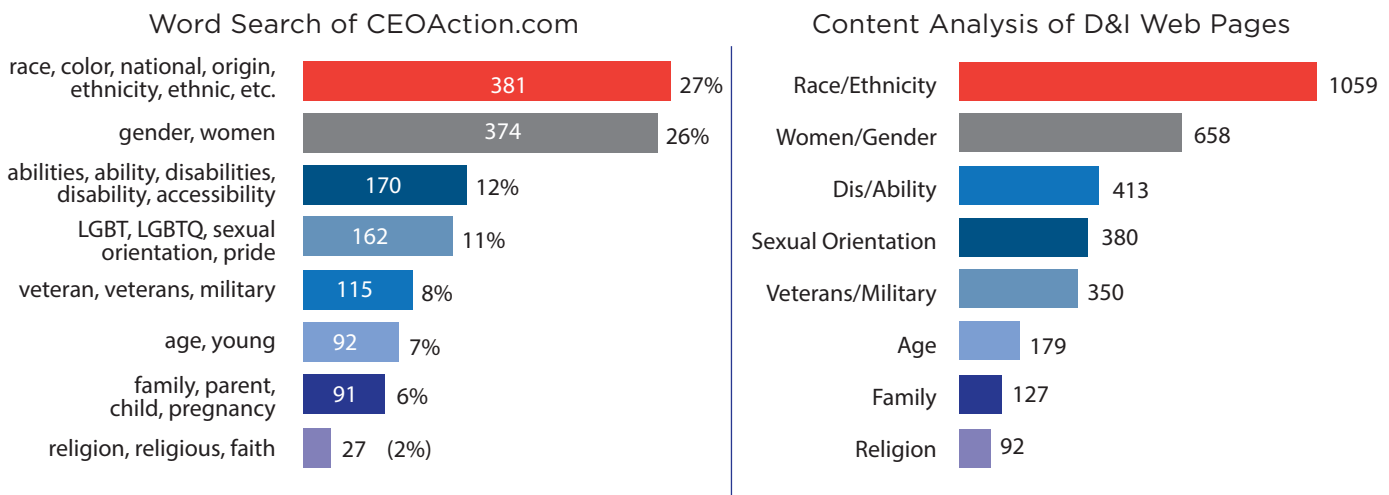
### RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND LIMITATIONS

The Religious Freedom & Business Foundation had a dedicated research team *code*, i.e., categorize and count, protected groups of people referred to on the main workplace diversity and inclusion landing pages of Fortune 100. We coded the content into the following categories: race/ethnicity; women/gender; abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation/gender identity; veterans/military; age; family; and religion. We also identified employee resource groups (ERGs) in each of these companies based on information from their websites and coded them according to the same categories. The links to the pages used are in the appended for Diversity Other Than Religion Topline results. Web pages were coded in summer/fall 2019.

For reliability, we double-blind coded every company with separate coders Inter-rater reliability was high.

For validity, we compared the results to our separate analysis of the content of CEOAction.com, which has a repository of diversity and inclusion initiatives and ideas from companies represented by some 700 CEOs who have signed the CEO Action Pledge on diversity and inclusion (see following charts). The results are almost identical, indicating that our results are valid since they are mirrored almost exactly in a completely separate data source.

#### Validity Check: Word Search of CEOAction.com vs. RFBF Content Analysis



Source: Religious Freedom & Business Foundation (RFBF), 2019; comparing RFBF content analysis with word search results from CEOAction.com

**Limitations:** To ensure comparability across companies, RFBF only looked at the main diversity and inclusion landing page for each company without following any links that took us to a separate page, such as corporate social responsibility reports or more in depth discussion of certain diversity programs. This limited counting additional mentions of the categories coded. This would have further skewed the results because we did not observe religion ever being a topic that had its own separate page, with the exception of Target, which is where information on their faith-oriented ERGs was reported.

For the ERG coding, we searched throughout the companies websites to find the place where ERGs were discussed. We did not, however, use any sources external to the companies own websites.

The main limitation is that no Fortune 100 companies have yet disclosed that they have (a) done specialized training on religious diversity and inclusion or (b) self-reported on their diversity initiatives related to religion using the Corporate Religious Diversity Assessment (CRDA) tool rolled out in February 2019. Because the CRDA is a major part of the index, which includes reporting on programs and policies that are not public, we anticipate that as companies make use of this tool, subsequent years' REDI index will have much more detail on the degree to which corporate America is including religion as part of their diversity initiatives.





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# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & BUSINESS FOUNDATION

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1A Perry Circle • Annapolis, MD 21402  
1-410-268-7809

[www.religiousfreedomandbusiness.org](http://www.religiousfreedomandbusiness.org)

