

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Out Leadership-sponsored study *Out in the World: Securing LGBT Rights in the Global Marketplace* is released by the Center for Talent Innovation in Davos

- *The study was fielded in ten countries among 1,964 LGBT professionals and 10,242 non-LGBT professionals. It was co-authored by legal scholar Kenji Yoshino (a member of Out Leadership's Global Advisory Board) and CTI Founder and President Sylvia Ann Hewlett*
- *Being in the closet negatively impacts LGBT employees' ambition and their ability to innovate: 19% of LGBT employees who are not out and make an effort to pass say that hiding their identity has reduced their ambition and caused them to work less; 27% of LGBT employees who are not out and make an effort to pass say that hiding their identity at work has held them back from speaking up or sharing an idea*
- *72% of respondents who self-identify as LGBT allies say they are more likely to accept a job at a company that supports equal opportunities for LGBT employees. 82% of ally respondents and 71% of LGBT individuals say they are more likely to purchase a good or service from a company that supports LGBT equality*

January 22, 2016, New York – A groundbreaking new global investigation into LGBT workplace inclusion co-authored by Out Leadership Global Advisory Board member Kenji Yoshino (*Chief Justice Earl Warren Professor of Constitutional Law at the NYU School of Law*) and Sylvia Ann Hewlett (*Founder and CEO of the Center for Talent Innovation and co-director of the Women's Leadership Program at Columbia Business School*) was released this morning at a panel held in Davos, where the World Economic Forum is holding its annual meeting. Out Leadership sponsored the study, *Out in the World: Securing LGBT Rights in the Global Marketplace*, as did 6 Out Leadership member companies: Bank of America, Barclays, Bloomberg LP, BNY Mellon, Deutsche Bank, and Ernst & Young LLP. Corporate sponsors of the study also included American Express, BP, Chubb Group of Insurance Companies, and Eli Lilly and Company.

Out in the World maps the world into three categories: countries with LGBT-hostile laws (India, Russia, and Singapore); geographies with LGBT-unfriendly laws (China, Hong Kong, and Turkey); and countries with LGBT-friendly laws (Brazil, South Africa, the UK, and the US). The report highlights ways in which Multinational Companies (MNCs) operating in jurisdictions that are not LGBT-friendly might move markets and mores toward greater LGBT equality. Tactics fall within three models of engagement:

- **The “When in Rome” model**, in which companies adhere to the norms and local laws of the jurisdiction.
- **The “Embassy” model**, in which companies enforce pro-LGBT policies in the workplace but do not implement them outside their walls.
- **The “Advocate” model**, in which companies seek to effect change in cultural attitudes outside the workplace.

A key feature of the report is the maturity curve framework, which describes the three progressively weakening demands for conformity made of LGBT individuals:

- **Conversion:** the demand that LGBT individuals become heterosexual or cisgender.
- **Passing:** the demand that LGBT individuals remain in the closet.
- **Covering:** the demand that LGBT individuals who have come out of the closet “tone down” their sexual orientation or gender identity.

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.19% of those who are not out and make an effort to pass say that hiding their LGBT identity has reduced their ambition and caused them to work less. Conversely, 84% of LGBT employees surveyed who work at LGBT-supportive companies say that they are willing to go the extra mile for their employer —compared to just 73% of employees who work at unsupportive companies.

“Societies and organizations are increasingly awakening to the moral and market costs of asking LGBT individuals to convert, pass, or cover,” says Kenji Yoshino, the Chief Justice Earl Warren Professor of Constitutional Law at New York University. “Only when LGBT individuals feel free to live as openly as their straight or cisgendered colleagues can we say that LGBT equality has been achieved.”

Significantly, the report demonstrates that innovation suffers at non-inclusive companies. Across all studied countries, 27% of LGBT employees who are not out and make an effort to pass say that hiding their identity at work has held them back from speaking up or sharing an idea.

“Companies need to adopt inclusive policies, but they can build more substantial business impacts by creating truly inclusive cultures,” says Todd Sears, Founder & Principal of Out Leadership. “When LGBT employees feel supported at work and are included strategically within business units, and when they can see that LGBT inclusion within their organization extends to the C-Suite, companies see that equality actually drives business.”

The study uncovers talent and consumer market pressures for advancing LGBT equality. A pro-LGBT stance improves a company’s ability to recruit talent and attract consumers, even outside of the LGBT pool: 72% of respondents who self-identify as LGBT allies say they are more likely to accept a job at a company that supports equal opportunities for LGBT employees. 82% of ally respondents and 71% of LGBT individuals say they are more likely to purchase a good or service from a company that supports LGBT equality. LGBT employee engagement is higher, too: 84% of LGBT employees at supportive companies say they are proud to work for their employer (compared to just 68% at unsupportive companies).

“LGBT professionals who work for companies that make them feel safe from discrimination are more likely to be engaged and bring their authentic selves to work,” says Sylvia Ann Hewlett, founder and CEO of the Center for Talent Innovation. “Previous CTI research finds that when employers create an inclusive environment, they enjoy a competitive edge in their ability to recruit top talent, unleash innovative potential, and secure the loyalty of new market segments.”

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About Out Leadership:

Out Leadership is a global LGBT business advisory that partners with the world’s most influential companies to build business opportunities, cultivate talent, and drive LGBT equality forward. We believe that LGBT inclusion positively impacts business results, and that including LGBT people at the most senior level of executive leadership builds business. We call this idea *Return on Equality™*. Comprised of 65 member firms from the financial services, technology, legal and insurance industries, and dedicated to cross-industry collaboration, Out Leadership is a certified B Corporation. Out Leadership operates two industry-specific business initiatives: *Out on the Street* and *Out in Law*, and three talent initiatives: *Quorum*, which aims to increase LGBT representation on corporate boards; *OutNEXT*, the first global talent development program for emerging LGBT leaders; and *OutWOMEN*, connecting senior LGBT women in business.

For more information, please visit www.outleadership.com

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