

OUT LEADERSHIP LAUNCHES FIRST-EVER LGBTQ+ BOARD DIVERSITY GUIDELINES FOR HONG KONG

HONG KONG – Out Leadership is thrilled to announce the publication of our LGBTQ+ Board Diversity Guidelines for Hong Kong, in partnership with DLA Piper.

For the first time in history, Hong Kong-based companies will have a blueprint to draft board diversity policies that include LGBTQ+ people. This historic development is an important step in advancing LGBTQ+ equality across Asia. As of 2023, just 5.3% of companies in the Hang Seng Index had LGBTQ+ inclusive board diversity policies. As a global financial hub and a prime driver of modern business practices, Hong Kong is primed to lead Asia and the world as a pioneer for LGBTQ+ inclusion as a business imperative. Curated specifically for corporations listed on the Hang Seng, our LGBTQ+ Board Diversity Guidelines for Hong Kong provide business leaders with the policy tools and road map they need to implement LGBTQ+ inclusive board diversity policies today.

Out Leadership has been leading the charge for board diversity globally with its OutQUORUM initiative, which was launched in 2015. At that time, just two companies in the Fortune 500 included sexual orientation or gender identity as a metric for board diversity. Due to Out Leadership's efforts since then, more and more companies are including LGBTQ+ in their definition of board diversity, and we are starting to see the placement of more LGBTQ+ individuals on corporate boards.

In 2016, we launched BoardFit, the first program designed to prepare LGBTQ+ candidates to add value to corporate boards, sponsored by KPMG. That same year, Out Leadership created the world's first and largest database of board-ready LGBTQ+ candidates and worked with the four largest pension funds in the United States to expand the diversity definition of their investment mandates to include LGBTQ+ for the first time in history. **In 2017, Out Leadership and KPMG published the first-ever LGBTQ+ inclusive board diversity guidelines, focused on US corporations.**

In 2020, Out Leadership member firm Goldman Sachs' CEO David Solomon announced a board diversity mandate for their IPO clients, including LGBTQ+ in their definition of board diversity. **In 2021, the SEC approved the Board Diversity Rule from Nasdaq, which cited our OutQUORUM research seven times in its letter to regulators. The same year, OutQUORUM publicly mapped the board diversity policies of the entire Fortune 500.** In 2023, a United States Appeals Court upheld the validity of the Nasdaq Board Diversity Rule.

In 2023, OutQUORUM will analyze the board diversity policies of the Fortune 1000, the FTSE 350, the Hang Seng Index, the NASDAQ, and the ASX 200. This global approach to our board diversity research complements the release of our LGBTQ+ Board Diversity Guidelines for Hong Kong, highlighting the need for LGBTQ+ board diversity worldwide. Out Leadership calls on every company listed on the Hang Seng Index to leverage our guidelines in order to update their board diversity policies to include LGBTQ+ people in their definitions of board diversity. In addition to Hong Kong, Out Leadership's Board Diversity Guidelines are currently available to companies in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

Our OutQUORUM research is sponsored by KPMG, Egon Zehnder, and Diligent.

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