



# Building Freedom of Religion or Belief Through Faith-and-Belief Friendly Workplaces **A CALL TO ACTION**



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## Foreword

The Freedom of Religion or Belief is a touchstone human right. It enters every aspect of our lives, not only in religious practice. Whether in home life, the workplace, recreation, or any other setting, our belief systems, backgrounds, and identities travel with us. This report is a much-needed step in developing governmental thought on FoRB and business, showcasing the fantastic steps which businesses across the world, including many in the UK, are taking to promote “covenantal pluralism” in their workplaces.

The report is unique in that it provides a very practical toolkit for businesses to promote FoRB, thus improving employee experience and business output. The recommendations, tried and proven by top corporations, will prove valuable in promoting fundamental human rights in organic ways, through the “building method” of FoRB promotion.

When building, we seek to promote openness and acceptance of various religious and belief backgrounds, including those of no belief. In so doing, we feel free to express ourselves in a more authentic way, allowing for greater trust and cooperation among colleagues.

As a parliamentarian, I look forward to the combination of “building” and “advocacy” strategies playing out in the business world and in parliament. There is much we can learn in government from such positive methods. I look forward to applying the recommendations in my own work as an MP, with the hope that our diversity and celebration of FoRB will blossom, laying the foundation for FoRB policy innovations that may benefit millions.

Jim Shannon MP

Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief



# I. Introduction: A Builders' Approach and Call to Action

There are two philosophies of advancing freedom of religion or belief (FoRB). In the first camp are those referred to as “advocates” and in the second are “builders.”

**Advocates** often focus on the moral and legal responsibility to protect the human right of freedom of religion or belief. They also focus on generating awareness about violations of FoRB and push governments to address them.

**Builders** also seek to advance freedom of religion or belief, but they focus on pragmatic arguments, highlighting the practical benefits of FoRB. Builders may employ innovative approaches to harness local self-interest and present FoRB as relevant to such things as the economy, peace, and security. In practical terms, builders engage directly with people in companies, organisations and governments to work together for mutually beneficial outcomes, often highlighting case studies of what’s working and best practices.

This report introduces the “builder’s approach” as an innovative new tool in the international FoRB toolkit, using as a case study one of the most successful movements to build FoRB, namely, building FoRB through faith-and-belief friendly workplaces.

This report also presents research showing that FoRB benefits not only economies at the macro level but also companies at the micro level. The Appendices provide practical help in advancing faith-and-belief friendly workplaces, including principles on how a company can welcome religious diversity; how faith-and-belief-oriented employee resource groups (ERGs) work; a summary of the free industry standard benchmarking tool for workplace religious inclusion, the REDI Index; and direct reports from U.K. faith-and-belief friendly workplaces. The report issues three calls to action:

- All corporations and organisations should create faith-and-belief friendly workplaces and benchmark progress using the Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index.
- Governments should actively promote the values of faith-and-belief friendly workplaces.
- Advocates of FoRB should avail themselves of this “builder’s” approach by encouraging faith-and-belief friendly workplaces in their spheres of influence.

This report follows on from a 10 July 2023 meeting in Parliament sponsored by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on International Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). Brian Grim, Ph.D., founding president of the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation (RFBF), compiled this report with input from numerous organisations (see Section VII.D). RFBF is an APPG FoRB stakeholder.

## II. Executive Summary

This report begins by giving background on its genesis and focus, and an overview of the macro and micro economic arguments for freedom of religion or belief (FoRB): It is one of three factors associated with global economic growth and highly correlated with the World Economic Forum's pillars of sustainable development.<sup>1</sup> FoRB also sets religious groups free to contribute trillions to national economies.<sup>2</sup> And, backing up these findings is research showing that the protection of FoRB by governments and respect for it by groups in society brings peace, which is both critical for healthy economies and an antidote to religious persecution and conflict.<sup>3</sup>

While companies may welcome this research showing that FoRB is good for the economy, as this report will show, a growing number of organisations are acting on research showing that diversity is good for business, **including religious diversity**. By making workplaces faith-and-belief friendly, this expands the space where people's differing faiths and beliefs are welcome, thereby increasing freedom of religion or belief for millions worldwide.

In this new report you will find background on this growing movement, offers organisational examples of companies' concrete activities to make their workplaces faith-and-belief friendly, and introduces practical tools to help companies do this.

The tools introduced and organisational examples introduced in Section VII include:

- Nine principles on how to approach the topic of faith and belief in the workplace,
- Overview of faith-and-belief employee resource groups (ERGs), one of the main ways companies have successfully incorporated religion and belief as part of diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments, and
- A practical and free benchmarking tool for organisations to track progress in faith-and-belief accommodation and belonging in the workplace, the Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index.

Organisational examples are found throughout the report, but especially in Section VII.B. and VII.D.

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<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum: "The link between economic and religious freedoms", Brian Grim, 2014, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2014/12/the-link-between-economic-and-religious-freedoms/> and the full study, "Is Religious Freedom Good for Business?: A Conceptual and Empirical Analysis," is available at *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* <https://www.religjournal.com/pdf/ijrr10004.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Religion in US 'worth more than Google and Apple combined', Harriet Sherwood, The Guardian, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/15/us-religion-worth-1-trillion-study-economy-apple-google>

<sup>3</sup> *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the 21st Century*, Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

### III. Background: Meetings with APPG FoRB and No. 10 Downing Street

This report follows on from a 10 July 2023 meeting in Parliament sponsored by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on international Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and chaired by Baroness Verma with representatives from leading companies in the United Kingdom. Jim Shannon, MP for Strangford and APPG FoRB Chairman, also participated. Representatives of companies provided first-hand reports of building freedom of religion or belief through faith-and-belief friendly workplaces.

Top executives from American Express, Baringa, Google, NATS, NHS, OVO Energy, Salesforce, Rolls-Royce, Transform Work UK, University of Derby, among others, each shared how they are embracing faith in the workplace, seeing a person's religious beliefs as an asset with bottom line benefits rather than a problem to be solved or avoided. For these companies, faith is now viewed as an integral part of diversity as race, gender, and sexual orientation, and that people's beliefs were not only more respected but also seen as helpful in the workplace. This includes not only formal religious faiths such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and so forth, but also non-theistic belief systems such as atheism.

This meeting got the attention of the Prime Minister's Office, and the same group were invited on 11 July 2023 to No. 10 Downing Street for a summit on faith in the workplace. The summit, chaired by John Glen, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, allowed some of the best companies in the UK – both national and multinational – to share how they are welcoming employees to bring their whole selves to work, faith and all, by encouraging faith friendly policies.

The group announced that a national summit on Faith-and-Belief@Work will be held on November 20, 2023, at the Salesforce Tower in London. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, the UK's first Hindu Prime Minister, has been invited to keynote the November summit.

At No. 10 Downing Street, OVO Energy received the award for being the most faith-friendly national UK workplace in 2023, earning the number one spot in the U.K. on the Religious Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) Index, which is global a benchmarking measure of an organisation's commitment to including religion as part of its overall diversity initiatives.

At Parliament, NATS was recognized as a top faith-friendly workplace, earning the number two spot in the U.K. on the 2023 REDI Index. See Appendix C for information on the 2024 REDI Index survey (opens January 1, 2024). See pictures below.



No. 10 Downing Street Summit

Parliament APPG ForB Meeting



No. 10 L-R: Brian Grim, President Religious Freedom & Business Foundation; John Glen, Chief Secretary to the UK Treasury; Ahmed Yusuf, Co Lead for OVO Believe; Alex Storer, Head of Inclusion & Belonging OVO

Parliament L-R: Jim Shannon, Member of Parliament for Strangford; Helen Fuge, NATS; Sam Matthews, NATS; Sandip K. Verma, Baroness Verma; Ridgely Johnson, NATS; Jodie McMenamin, NATS; Brian J. Grim, Ph.D., President Religious Freedom & Business Foundation.



## IV. Conceptual Background on “Building” FoRB

A recent article by Templeton Religion Trust principal advisor Dr. Chris Seiple<sup>4</sup> draws attention to the pros and cons of two different philosophies of advancing freedom of religion or belief (FoRB). In the first camp are those he refers to as “advocates” and in the second are “builders.”

Advocates often focus on the moral and legal responsibility to protect the human right of freedom of religion or belief as defined at the international level by Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

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Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.<sup>5</sup>

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Advocates also focus on generating awareness about violations of freedom of religion or belief and push governments to address them. Advocates may do this through the courts or by calling to account governments and/or groups in societies that restrict the ability of anyone to live out their deeply held beliefs, free from any coercion.

Builders also seek to advance the human right of freedom of religion or belief as defined in Article 18, but they focus on pragmatic arguments, highlighting the practical benefits of FoRB. Builders may employ innovative approaches to harness local self-interest and present FoRB as relevant to such things as the economy, peace, and security.

Builders tend to deeply engage with local communities seeking to foster what is referred to as covenantal pluralism<sup>6</sup>, i.e., the social harmony that is possible when citizens of multifaith and multiethnic countries are equipped to mutually engage with and even respect one another across deep differences. Covenantal pluralism involves standing up for each other's rights to

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<sup>4</sup> Advocates and builders, advancing religious freedom together by Chris Seiple, RNS, 25 January, 2023: <https://religionnews.com/2023/01/25/advocates-and-builders-advancing-religious-freedom-together/>

<sup>5</sup> See UDHR Article 18: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

<sup>6</sup> For more on covenantal pluralism, read: “Corporate religious diversity, equity, and inclusion as covenantal pluralism,” by Brian J. Grim and Kent Johnson, Chapter 13 in *The Routledge Handbook of Religious Literacy, Pluralism, and Global Engagement*, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.4324/9781003036555-20/corporate-religious-diversity-equity-inclusion-covenantal-pluralism-brian-grim-kent-johnson> and also see <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/covenantal-pluralism-business>



hold deeply held beliefs and live according to them without necessarily agreeing with the other's beliefs or implying that all beliefs are morally equivalent.

In practical terms, builders engage directly with people in companies, organisations and governments to work together for mutually beneficial outcomes, often highlighting case studies of what's working and best practices.

A FoRB builder's approach in the workplace is fairly straightforward: All it takes to build freedom of religion and belief in a community and workplace is to put into practice love of neighbour and the Golden Rule: *In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you*. It's that simple and profound.

There are four key elements of a "builder's approach" to freedom of religion or belief that apply to corporations as well as any organisation.<sup>7</sup>

- First, its motivation is love. Because love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things, a builder's approach is positive, lighting candles rather than cursing the darkness. It affirms goodness and highlights what works. It is optimistic, not adversarial. It celebrates and finds God/The Higher Good in all things and all people.
- Second, it evaluates. A builder's approach learns from data-driven evaluation and anticipates that change is constant and acts on information, intuitively connecting dots. It moves on from things that don't work. It learns from failures. It is humble.
- Third, it creates. It builds creatively. It invents. It is expansive. It creates something out of nothing. It sees a need and fills it. It's entrepreneurial. It requires risks. It doesn't always work as expected, but often exceeds what could be asked or dreamed for.
- Fourth, it procreates. It builds collaboratively. It builds on itself. It emancipates and draws in others. It doesn't try to own its efforts but pushes them from the nest. It's catalytic. It's not controlling. It is self-interested but selfless. It's a calling, not a career.

A builder's approach to advancing FoRB in the corporate space begins with pragmatic economic arguments and proceeds to look at how companies can put these findings to practise within their workplaces.

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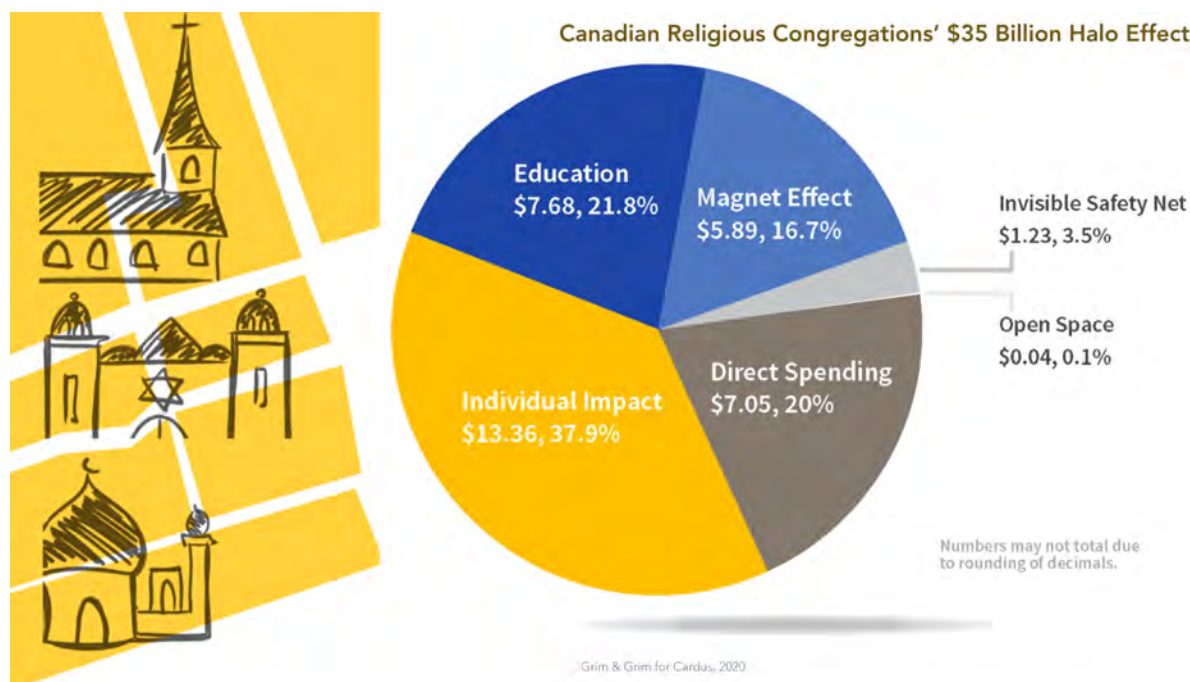
<sup>7</sup> "The bridge builder: How religious engagement increases freedoms around the world," by Brian Grim, Deseret News: <https://www.deseret.com/2023/3/30/23643559/religious-freedom-research-rfbf> 20 April 2023.

## V. FoRB Helps Businesses & Economies Grow

### A. Macro Argument

Data from the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation present a compelling case. **First**, freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) creates an active religious sector in countries, which directly contributes to a nation's wealth.

In Canada, for example, their research finds that religion's annual contribution to Canadian society is worth an estimated \$67.5 billion.<sup>8</sup> That's large enough to be the ninth biggest enterprise in the country – ahead of the Bank of Montreal. More than half of the \$67.5 billion figure comes from the activities of tens of thousands of religious congregations (churches, temples, mosques, and synagogues) in Canada. Nationwide, they have a \$35-billion “halo effect” – the value congregations provide to their surrounding communities.



A similar study by the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation found that the religion sector has an even greater impact in the United States. Religion annually contributes nearly \$1.2 trillion of socio-economic value to the U.S. economy.<sup>9</sup>

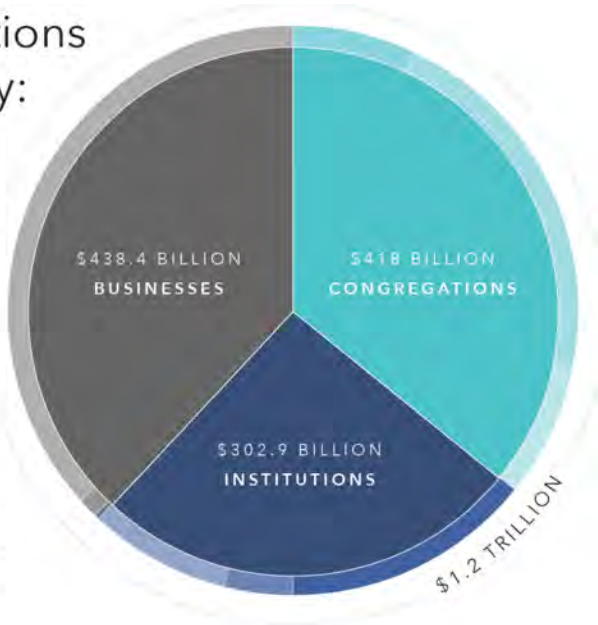
<sup>8</sup> Brian Grim & Melissa Grim, 2020, The Hidden Economy: How Faith Helps Fuel Canada's GDP <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/2/post/2020/09/faith-helps-fuel-canadas-gdp.html>

<sup>9</sup> Brian Grim & Melissa Grim, 2016, The Socio-economic Contribution of Religion to American Society: An Empirical Analysis, <https://www.religjournal.com/pdf/ijrr12003.pdf>

That is equivalent to being the world’s 15th largest national economy, putting it ahead of about 180 other countries. It’s more than the annual revenues of the world’s top 10 tech companies, including Apple, Amazon and Google. And it’s also more than 50% larger than that of the annual global revenues of America’s 6 largest oil and gas companies. So, you might say, that represents a lot of spiritually inspired fuel being pumped into the U.S. economy.

## The Socio-Economic Contributions of Religion to American Society: An Empirical Analysis

Religion in the United States today contributes \$1.2 trillion each year to our economy and society. These contributions range from the basic economic drivers of any business—staff, overhead, utilities—to billions spent on philanthropic programs, educational institutions and health care services. Congregations, businesses inspired by faith, faith-based charities and institutions not only build communities and families but also strengthen our economy in every town and city of the country.



### BUSINESSES

SECTOR	\$ IN BILLIONS	% OF TOTAL
Religious Media	\$1.3	0.1%
Food (Traditional Kosher and Halal)	\$14.4	1.2%
Businesses with Religious Backgrounds	\$422.7	36.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$438.4</b>	<b>37.8%</b>

### CONGREGATIONS

SECTOR	\$ IN BILLIONS	% OF TOTAL
Direct Spending	\$83.8	7.2%
Individual and Social Impact	\$243.9	21%
Schools and Daycare	\$91.3	7.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$418*</b>	<b>36.1%</b>

\*The sum of line items factors in the exclusion of inter-congregational giving.

### INSTITUTIONS

SECTOR	\$ IN BILLIONS	% OF TOTAL
Health Care	\$161.0	13.9%
Higher Education	\$46.8	4.0%
Charities	\$95.2	8.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$302.9*</b>	<b>26.1%</b>

\*Numbers do not total due to rounding.

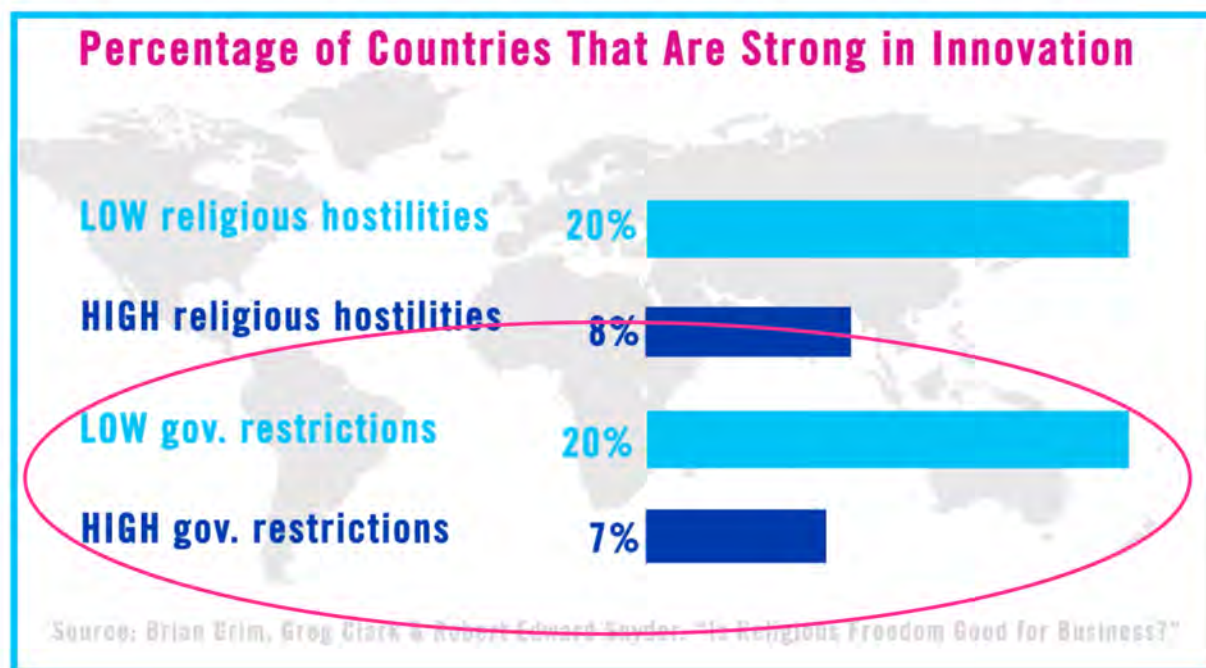
The tables and chart above represent the over 344,000 religious congregations across the United States, which collectively employ hundreds of thousands of staff members, and buy billions in products and services in their local communities. The tables also include the tens of thousands of religiously-affiliated charities, health care providers, institutions of higher learning, and business activities—ranging from the purchase of Kosher and Halal food products to religious media and other faith-based companies.

**Second**, research also shows when restrictions on freedom of religion or belief are kept low, the conditions for sustainable development and economic growth are high.

Freedom of religion or belief is one of three factors significantly associated with global economic growth, according to a 2014 study.<sup>10</sup> The study looked at the GDP growth of 173 countries in 2011 and controlled for two-dozen different financial, social and regulatory influences.

While a study such as this does not prove that religious freedom causes economic growth, it does suggest the matter deserves more consideration. Indeed, as the world navigates away from years of poor economic performance, freedom of religion or belief may be an unrecognised asset.

For instance, the same study finds a positive relationship between religious freedom and 10 of the 12 pillars of global competitiveness, as measured by the World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Index.

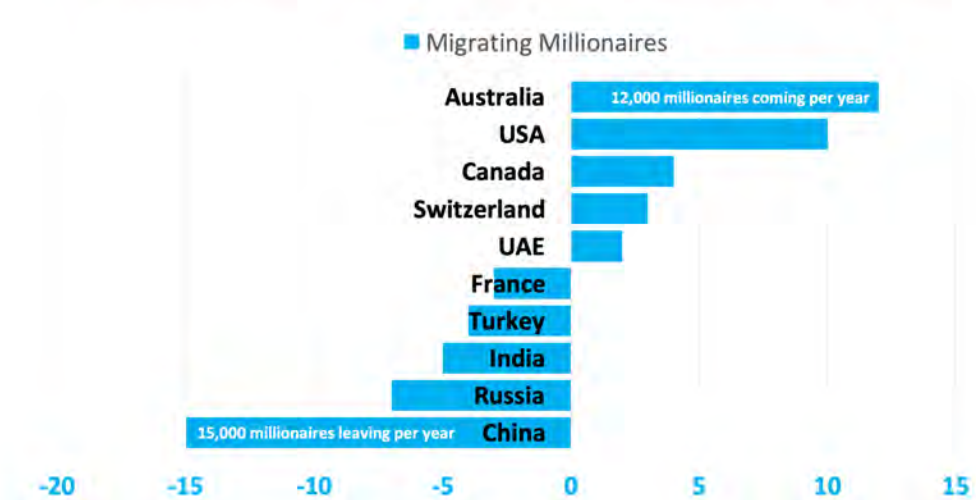


One indicator of that is whether some of a country’s top entrepreneurs and successful business people stay in a country or leave it. Bloomberg’s recent research shows which countries are losing or gaining millionaires through migration, with Australia gaining the most and China losing the most. How does this compare with the level of government restrictions on religion and belief in a country?

<sup>10</sup> See footnote 2.

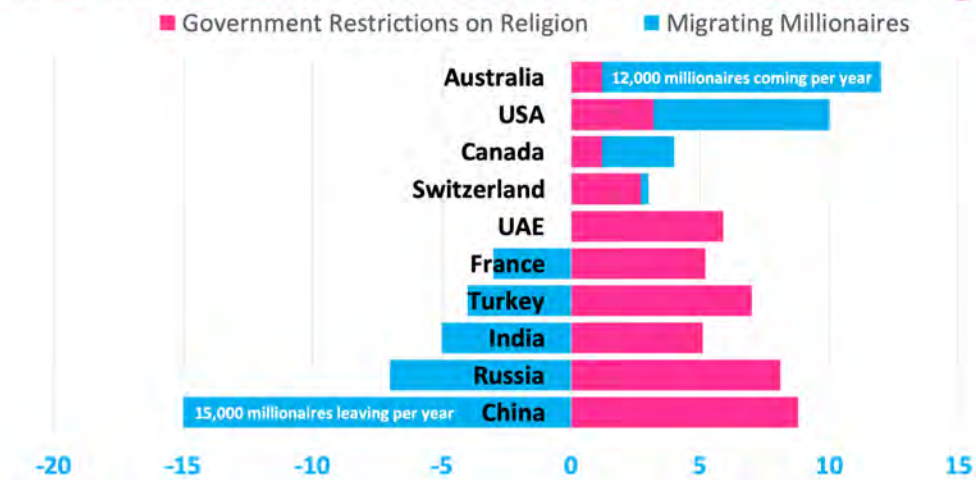


## Net Loss or Gain of Millionaires (1000s)



It's not surprising that China, the country with the highest government restrictions on religion – as measured by the Pew Research Center<sup>11</sup> (see chart next page) – is also losing the highest number of millionaires seeking freer, more secure opportunities elsewhere. And Australia, a country with low government restrictions on religion, is benefiting the most from this migration of talent and resources.

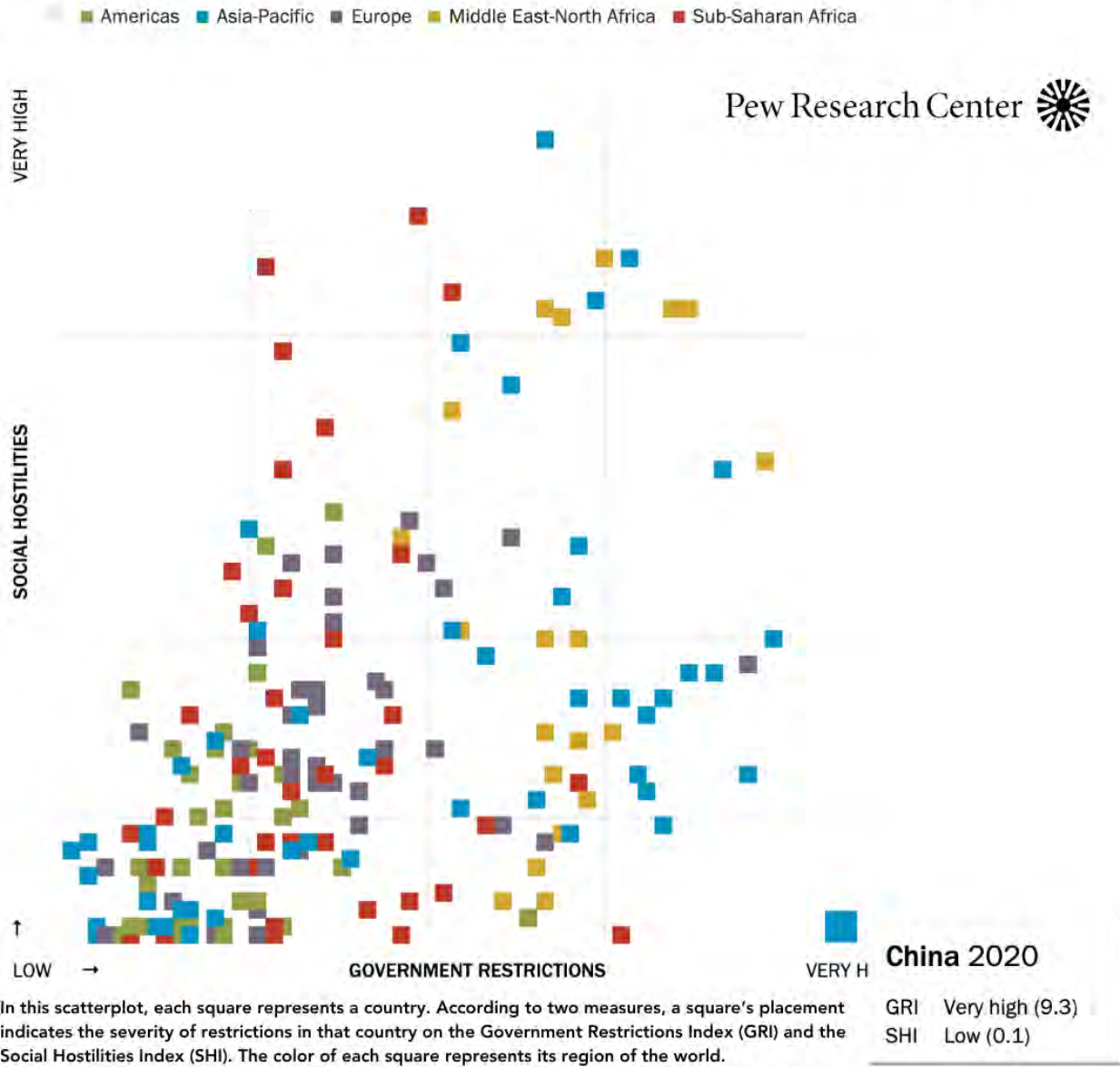
## Net Loss or Gain of Millionaires (1000s) vs. Level of Government Restrictions on Religion



<sup>11</sup> Pew Research Center: Religious restrictions around the world, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/interactives/religious-restrictions-around-the-world/>



## China has world's highest level of Government restrictions on religion



## B. Micro Argument

While companies may welcome research showing that FoRB is good for the economy, they act on research showing that diversity is good for business,<sup>12</sup> **including religious diversity.**<sup>13</sup> By making workplaces faith-and-belief friendly, this expands the space where people’s differing faiths and beliefs are welcome, thereby increasing freedom of religion or belief for millions worldwide.

One of the early pioneers of including religion and belief diversity into its corporate culture was technology powerhouse Texas Instruments; their faith-based groups dating back more than 20 years. The company fully embraces the premise that a diverse employee base is likely to facilitate fresh and valuable ideas; and that employees perform at higher levels when they’re permitted to “bring their whole selves to work,” and at TI that includes faiths and beliefs.



<sup>12</sup> See: Deloitte: The diversity and inclusion revolution: Eight powerful truths, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/deloitte-review/issue-22/diversity-and-inclusion-at-work-eight-powerful-truths.html>; Boston Consulting Group: The Business Imperative of Diversity, <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2019/winning-the-20s-business-imperative-of-diversity>; Harvard Business Review: Getting Serious About Diversity: Enough Already with the Business Case, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/getting-serious-about-diversity-enough-already-with-the-business-case>; and McKinsey & Company, Is there a payoff from top-team diversity? <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/is-there-a-pay-off-from-top-team-diversity>.

<sup>13</sup> See: Harvard Business Review: Where Religious Identity Fits into Your DEI Strategy, <https://hbr.org/2023/06/where-religious-identity-fits-into-your-dei-strategy>; and “Corporate religious diversity, equity, and inclusion as covenantal pluralism,” by Brian J. Grim and Kent Johnson <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.4324/9781003036555-20/corporate-religious-diversity-equity-inclusion-covenantal-pluralism-brian-grim-kent-johnson>.

Indeed, research<sup>14</sup> shows that a growing number of global workplaces are “building” freedom of religion or belief by welcoming faith and belief to be a formal part of their overall commitments to promote workplace equity and inclusion.

For example, among U.S. Fortune 500 companies, 219 companies (44%) mention, refer to or illustrate religion on their main diversity landing page, up from 202 (40%) in 2022. And 43 companies (8.6%) publicly report having faith-oriented ERGs, up from 37 companies (7.4%) in 2022, as shown in the chart.

And in a 22 September 2023 New York Times investigative article into this movement, Jennifer Miller concludes that "secular companies have invited employees to bring their 'whole selves' to work. That increasingly includes their religion."<sup>15</sup>

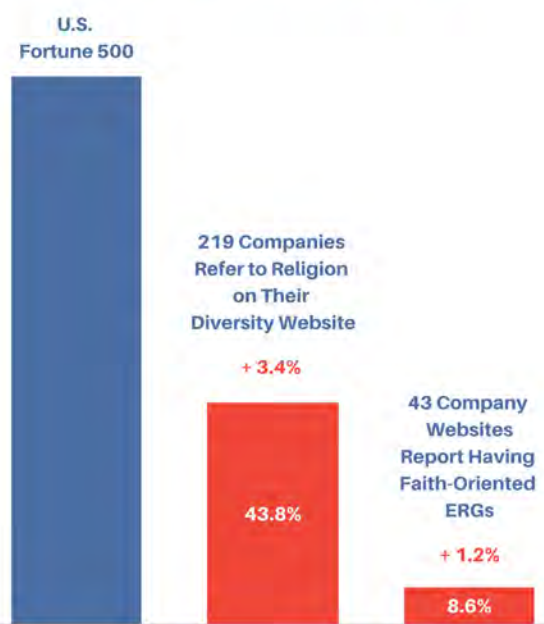
This is a practical and effective way for millions of people to not only experience but also build freedom of religion or belief for all right where they work.

Some corporations have been doing this for decades, like Accenture, the Intel Corporation, American Airlines, Ford, Texas Instruments and American Express. For others, like SAP, Bosch, Salesforce, Google, PayPal, OVO and NATS, it's new and rapidly growing.

The Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's Corporate Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index<sup>16</sup> finds that this trend is propelled by company-sponsored faith-oriented employee-led groups and other programs, such as corporate chaplains. One of American Airlines' Chief Flight Controllers is a priest and company chaplain. In fact, Tyson Foods has



### Religion on Fortune 500 Diversity Pages Change from 2022-2023



#### General Fortune 500 Findings:

- 219 companies (43.8%) mention, refer to or illustrate religion on their main diversity landing page, up from 202 (40.4%) in 2022
- 43 companies (8.6%) publicly report having faith-oriented ERGs, up from 37 companies (7.4%) in 2022

<sup>14</sup> See: Corporate Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index 2023, <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/redi-index-2023>

<sup>15</sup> What Happens When the Boss Invites You to Bible Study? New York Times, Jennifer Miller, 22 Sept. 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/22/business/religion-work-diversity-equity-inclusion.html>

<sup>16</sup> See: <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/redi>

chaplains on staff at all their major plants serving the needs of all employees regardless of faith or belief.

Why do these companies do it? It's good for employees. It gives companies a competitive advantage. And that's good for recruitment, retention and revenue, i.e. it's good for business. And it actually builds FoRB.

On 20 November 2023, Salesforce UK will host a Faith and Work Summit, in follow up to the July 2023 meetings at No. 10 Downing Street and at Parliament. Later in this report, the UK Salesforce faith-based employee business resource group, Faithforce, story is told. But the story as told by Sue Warnke,<sup>17</sup> one of one of the early founders of Faithforce, shows just how this freedom of religion or belief becomes manifest once a company embraces religion as part of diversity:

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“About two years ago I converted to Christianity after a lifetime as a very proud agnostic (I've shared my testimony on YouTube). Suddenly, I was a different person showing up at work, and faith, for the first time in my life, was important. And it wasn't just important, it was the most important thing in my entire life. And suddenly I felt very alone in the workplace.

I looked around and wondered if I'm the only Christian in this entire company. San Francisco is the second least religious city in the United States out of over 19,000 cities. So that was the environment I was in. And I made all sorts of assumptions, based on the little data that I had, that everybody was going to think I was a freak or was going to be against me.

But I took a step of researching, and I found other Christians and we started to pray. And I thought, 'that's not enough.' I kept seeking, and I found that people of all faiths were actually feeling a little bit alone. And I even found that a couple Trailblazers had started the process, with our leaders, to form this group called Faithforce. And about a year-and-a-half ago we officially launched Faithforce.

The leaders were nervous about this. Would this work? Will this cause problems? What if it offends somebody? The way that they implemented this was very wise.

**Number one**, we were very clear about what we are not. We are not proselytising. This isn't about changing your beliefs. It's simply about allowing faith to enter the diversity discussion.

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<sup>17</sup> “Salesforce is out to make the world a better place: Salesforce has a Faithforce,” Sue Warnke (at the time, Salesforce Senior Director of Content Experience; President of Faithforce San Francisco at Salesforce), <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/salesforce-has-a-faithforce>.

When we say, ‘bring your whole authentic self to work,’ what if faith is your number one identifier? Can you still bring your authentic self to work? That’s all that this is about. It’s not pushing or trying to change somebody. It’s just, ‘Can I be seen just like you’re seen?’

**Number two**, it’s not political. This is not a front for some political agenda. We make that clear when we have events.

Faithforce has three pillars: Enlighten, Inspire, and Celebrate. We have huge events – Diwali, Eid coming up after Ramadan, Easter, and Purim. They’re not exclusive. They are put on by Faithforce, and that’s really honouring to people.

And we’ve started to have vigils for the [2019] horrendous attacks in Sri Lanka, New Zealand and the US. We’ve had employees who have lost family members in these attacks around the world. We can’t ignore that.

We’ve had thousands of employees from all around the world and all faith backgrounds come and give their support (see Tweet from Salesforce CEO, Marc Benioff).



One thing that all faiths agree on is the need for compassion for those in need – philanthropy. And there’s a lot of need in San Francisco and all around the world. We primarily give to homeless causes, but all sorts of causes.

This includes thousands of employee hours, and millions of dollars of employee donations and company matches, including for faith-based institutions.”

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The acceptance of religion and belief as part of diversity is not just a U.S. phenomenon, it is spreading worldwide. For example, the growth in companies including religion and belief as part of diversity has global reach because these are by and large global corporations. In general, when a multinational corporation includes religion and belief as part of its diversity, equity and conclusion (DEI) commitments, they do so with either global or regional rollout. For example, the faith-and-belief employee (business) resource groups *Faithforce* (of Salesforce), *Believe* (of



PayPal) and *FaithConnect* (of Equinix), are all rolled out globally. In fact, Faithforce's largest chapter is in India.<sup>18</sup>

In October 2023, senior leaders from each of these companies are participating in a global summit in New Delhi sharing about these faith-and-belief employee resource groups with the wider business community in India in conversation with the Editorial Director of New Delhi TV, the first 24x7 news channel in India (see below).



**4TH OCTOBER 10:35-11:20 AM**

**DARE TO OVERCOME**  
Global Business and Peace Awards & Symposium

**MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION (MNC) KEYNOTE PANEL**

**Karun Gupta**  
Finance Director - India, Salesforce

**Manoj Paul**  
Managing Director - India, Equinix

**V Chandramouliswaran (Mouli)**  
Vice President Data - PayPal

**Jeremy Deutsch**  
President of Asia-Pacific, Equinix  
*[Video Message]*

**Sonia Singh**  
Editorial Director, NDTV

PRODUCED BY  
**TEAMWORK**  
CELEBRATING THE ARTS

<sup>18</sup> Also see "Multinationals in India benefit from country's diversity: Salesforce's Faithforce shines light on service & celebrating each other's festivals," <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/2/post/2023/06/multinationals-in-india-benefit-from-countrys-diversity.html>.

Faith-and-belief friendly workplaces are spreading among the **Global** Fortune 500, with several not on the US Fortune 500 list opting into the REDI Index survey, including Accenture, SAP and Bosch, with Accenture scoring within the top 10 companies overall (see chart below).

Also, for the first time in 2023, three European-based companies participated in the REDI Index survey: Italy-based TeaPak (a Yogi Tea partner), UK-based OVO Energy, and NATS (the UK's leading provider of air traffic control services). OVO Energy was recognized in July at an event hosted by No. 10 Downing Street (office/residence of the British Prime Minister) and NATS at a British Parliament event.



The REDI Index is a proven and accepted international benchmarking tool that provides not only accountability and best practices, but good spirited competition to see who can have the most inclusive workplaces when it comes to faith and belief. The REDI Index includes 10 areas for an organisation to benchmark its progress in workplace religious and belief inclusion.

The 10 benchmarking areas are summarised in the graphic below, and Appendix C provides an in depth description of the REDI Index.



# REDI Index 2024

CORPORATE RELIGIOUS EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INDEX  
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & BUSINESS FOUNDATION

11-topic survey, plus bonus • [ReligiousFreedomAndBusiness.org/REDI-Survey](https://ReligiousFreedomAndBusiness.org/REDI-Survey)



**1. Religion is featured on company's main diversity page**

**7. Accommodates religious needs of employees**



**2. Company sponsors faith and belief employee resource groups (ERGs)**

**8. Clear procedures for reporting discrimination**



**3. Company shares best practices with other companies**

**9. Employees attend religious diversity conferences**



**4. Religion is clearly addressed in diversity training**

**10. Company matches employee donations to religious charities**



**5. Company provides spiritual care and/or chaplaincy services**

**11. Company equitably celebrates or honors holy days of employees**



**6. Attentive to how religion impacts stakeholders**

**\* Other ways company promotes religious inclusion**



## VI. Calls to Action

Given the research showing that freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is a macro benefit to economies, and the research and evidence supporting the micro argument that faith-and-belief friendly workplaces are good for the bottom line by increasing retention, recruitment and revenue as well as a growing and effective way to build FoRB for all, we issue the following calls to action.

- All corporations and organisations should create faith-and-belief friendly workplaces and benchmark progress using the Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index.
- Governments should create policies that go beyond just ensuring nondiscrimination in workplaces; they should actively promote the values of faith-and-belief friendly workplaces through various means, including but not limited to funding training and benchmarking initiatives as well as public campaigns raising public awareness of the socio-economic value of such workplaces.
- Advocates of freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) should avail themselves of this “builder’s” approach to FoRB, encouraging their respective workplaces, sponsoring organisations, universities and companies with which they have relationships to create faith-and-belief friendly workplaces and benchmark progress using the Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index.



## VII. Tools and Organisational Examples

### A. How to Approach the Topic of Faith and Belief in the Workplace

*Kent Johnson, J.D., recently retired from his role as a Senior Counsel at the technology giant Texas Instruments Incorporated and now serves as Senior Corporate Advisor for the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation (RFBF). The following are the edited speaking notes from Kent Johnson's November 2020 presentation to companies with or interested in having faith-orient Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).*

#### OVERVIEW

Companies are increasingly intrigued or concerned about the growing emphasis on religious diversity at work. Company leaders are realising that for many employees it is their faith, more than any other single factor, that defines their core identity.

When corporate culture constrains them from referring to their faith at work, they feel devalued, and forced “under cover.” They feel they can’t “be themselves.” They can become alienated from their work. Yet, many business leaders have no idea how to approach the topic of faith and belief in the workplace. They wonder: What are the best practices in this area? What are pitfalls to avoid? What can/should be done?

#### How to Welcome Faith-Oriented Diversity & Communications in the Workplace



1. Faith and belief should be part of a larger emphasis on valuing ALL individuals for who they are.
2. Consider how freedom of religion and belief dovetails with your business priorities.
3. Clearly define your intentions – why you’re doing this.
4. Begin at the “grassroots.”
5. Persuade your leaders. Don’t force it.
6. Document a vision.
7. Define reasonable processes.
8. Help people of various faiths equip their own constituents.
9. Seek expert advice.



At many companies, faith and spirituality aren't considered appropriate topics of conversation. People feel constrained from connecting their faith to their work. They feel they can't "be themselves." They can become alienated from their work. They often feel unsafe. The message between the lines seems to be that their faith is something to be ashamed of. And sometimes, they feel they can only relate deeply with those who are "like them."

There's a deep yearning today for AUTHENTICITY. Sincerity. Mutual trust. Deeper connections. In that vein, there's lots of discussion about the need to engage the whole person at work. We hear about psychological safety. About the need to listen to one another. About overcoming biases – conscious and unconscious – that keep us from building stronger relationships with one another.

All these topics are closely related to people's faith and beliefs. Yet, many business leaders have no idea how to approach the topic of faith in the workplace. It feels scary. They wonder: What are the best practices in this area? What are pitfalls to avoid? What can/should be done?

Misunderstandings and unfounded fears constrain progress in this area. For instance:

- People of faith worry that, if they were to tell others about what forms the core of their identity, they'd be subjected to criticism and rejection - they worry that they'd be labelled as narrow-minded, or superstitious, or intolerant, or something worse
- Then there's the fact that insensitive and unkind expressions of faith can offend people who don't share those beliefs. Some people have had bad experiences with so-called "organised religion... and they're apprehensive.
- And there are misunderstandings about the legal requirements
  - When does religious expression cross the line and create an oppressive environment?
  - When do restrictions on religious expression violate people's religious freedom?

These are all valid concerns. But in our experience, they can be easily addressed. What's holding companies back is not these problems, but a lack of information and lack of coaching in this field.

Today I have nine coaching points for companies interested in constructively opening the door to religious expression and making things better:

1. Faith and belief should be part of a larger emphasis on valuing all individuals for who they are

It is important that from the outset of any “what if” management discussions about a possible focus on religious diversity to make clear that religious equity and inclusion would be part of a larger emphasis on valuing all individuals for who they are. The *big idea* is that the right to “be yourself” at work extends to people of all faiths and beliefs, including to atheists.

A corollary to this principle is that faith-oriented communication will always be entirely voluntary. It’s up to the individual. This sounds simple, but it’s hugely important, right at the beginning.

## 2. Consider how freedom of religion and belief dovetails with your business priorities.

Here are two examples:

PayPal issued a statement when it launched its interfaith Employee Resource Group called “Believe.” The statement includes this:

“We believe all employees have the right to bring their whole self to work. Faith and worldviews are core to who we are – our values and beliefs – and to how we conduct business.”

It goes on: “The mission of Believe is to foster an inclusive work culture and to promote holistic wellbeing by providing a forum to openly exercise and celebrate all faiths and worldviews while working. *Believe* exists to create awareness and understanding of faith, hope, love, empathy, respect for one another and service toward our customers, communities and co-workers.”

Texas Instruments’ faith-oriented diversity initiatives have the same purposes as the company’s other diversity groups:

1. To promote a collaborative and respectful culture,
2. To recruit and cultivate talent,
3. To stimulate innovation and engagement, and
4. To give back to their communities, “believing that stronger companies create stronger communities and stronger communities build stronger companies.”

The focus on religious diversity should be seen as part of a bigger objective. This is not about an isolated “hobby horse” project. It’s not about stocking the freezer with chocolate ice cream because many employees like that flavour. This is at the core of your company’s passion for its most valuable asset: its *people*.

This is not just about what’s happening in our companies. In focusing on religious diversity at work, we’re building a culture of civility that has “legs.” Our companies are producing cultural

byproducts that impact the world outside their workplaces. People are learning how to connect more respectfully and civilly as they work side by side. In a world wracked with bias, tribalism and distrust, this matters.

### 3. Clearly define your intentions why you're doing this

Those advocating for workplace religious equity and inclusion should explain why they're enabling religious expression at work. There shouldn't be any hidden motives. In addition to the business cases just mentioned, many companies express purposes like these:

1. To support company values like personal integrity, goodwill; employee well-being; and psychological and spiritual wellness
2. To foster bridge-building across cultures.
  - a. Keep in mind that this is not just about making religious people comfortable; it's also about fostering cross-cultural relationships
  - b. This bridge-building goes beyond mere "tolerance" - see more on moving beyond tolerance at [Covenantal Pluralism & Business](#)
3. It's also important to explain what this focus on faith and belief is NOT.
  - a. This is *NOT* a "Trojan Horse," designed to enable a particular group to dominate.
  - b. And we're *NOT* pushing employees to say that all beliefs are equal. Diversity isn't about making everyone alike! We've got to create a culture that enables diverse employees to engage, to learn deeply about one another, to remain true to their core beliefs, and to disagree civilly.

### 4. Begin at the "grassroots."

Often, this focus on spiritual identity starts with informal, unofficial, grassroots events that emerge spontaneously from your employees.

If you think there's no grassroots interest in faith expression, the silence of your workers on this topic may well be caused by an impression that your culture would frown on any discussion of faith at work. You'll probably be surprised to learn that behind-the-scenes religious and spiritual "skunkworks" are already underway in your companies.

It's far better to have this going on out in the open than to have it take place in the shadows, as if it's something to be ashamed of.

The grassroots are important. Don't misunderstand: There's certainly a lot that top management can do to nurture this movement toward authenticity. Business leaders and faith leaders can

officially free people to engage openly with anyone who is interested to learn about their core identity and beliefs. That's great.

But the enduring and most impactful work of building trust and civility takes place outside the C-suite - in thousands upon thousands of personal interactions - characterised by a humble desire to learn about one another's ultimate "why." The grassroots is where this transformative change happens. So, get in touch with it!

## 5. Persuade your leaders. Don't force it.

It's often counterproductive to try to force leaders to permit religious expression by citing the minimum legal requirement of "reasonable accommodation" for religions, or by threatening disciplinary actions. Compulsion in this area can lead managers to "check the box" by doing the bare minimum to meet the requirement.

It's far more effective when leaders are persuaded of the benefits of religious expression, and genuinely advocate it.

So, how to persuade your leaders? Use real-life, personal examples, preferably firsthand accounts of bridge building and what that's meant to coworkers - at your company or elsewhere. Real life, personal experiences are transformative. We've got a lot of stories like this. Seeing people's lives transformed by this movement is why I've devoted my life after Texas Instruments to this cause.

I've seen Muslims, Christians and Jews and Buddhists joining together as one to help communities torn by sectarian violence. I've heard from people of various faiths who joined the company, or stayed, because they felt the company *cared* about them enough to let them live out their faith openly. Then there are tales of friendships across sectarian lines. Example: The enduring friendship of the late Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Antonin Scalia. These are transformative.

## 6. Document a vision.

Document a vision of what it would look like, day to day, to openly enable and encourage employees to integrate spirituality into their work. Include specific proposals, not just generalities. Some suggestions:

1. Joint outreach activities among faith-oriented ERGs to the community (such as tutoring, food for poor, outreach in times of crisis).

2. A unified multifaith voice on topics of commonality, supporting, for instance, the rights of those who are under-appreciated, regardless of their religion or belief system - or race, or status – or sexual orientation, or spot on the org chart.
3. Educational programs concerning relevant faith doctrines that are shared by many established faiths. For example:
  - a. Integrity/ethics, truth telling, forgiveness, compassion. One faith-oriented group focuses on what they call “Integriosity” – blending both integrity and generosity.
  - b. The “golden rule” – treating others the way you’d want to be treated
  - c. A high view of the value of all human beings
  - d. Principles of humility and openness to listen to constructive criticism –especially from people who are not like us
  - e. Holiday observances; including the rationale/history behind significant days on various religious calendars. This is not trivial

## 7. Define reasonable processes.

Before officially embracing religion as a component of your company’s larger diversity focus, follow a defined initial decision-making process to help management weigh the issues and make appropriate plans.

1. Consult people/groups that have experience in this arena, and who have done this well.
2. Consult internal company stakeholders. Encourage them to raise questions and concerns early in the process.
3. Look specifically for leaders who might be apprehensive about religious expression. Don’t bypass them! Urge them to meet regularly with those who are advocates, to build relationships with one another as they wrestle with this.
4. Many people have had bad experiences with “organized religion.” They’ve been hurt, felt put down and condemned. It’s crucial to listen to them, and to be careful not to offend.
5. This vetting process is crucial. It isn’t necessarily easy. Among other benefits, it serves as a demonstration of the *need for* a focus on religious diversity. It also serves as a demonstration of the *feasibility of* a focus on religious diversity. When people of different beliefs and perspectives come out the other side in unison with a proposal, that is transformative!
6. Then there’s processes governing internal communications. You need to carefully craft internal communications about the idea; especially when announcing a new policy or approach or diversity emphasis. Don’t just announce that your company is launching a new “faith-friendly” program. That can be misinterpreted as “open season” on so-called unbelievers.



7. Provide for ongoing executive sponsorship and guidance. This is not to police and restrict. Executive sponsorship reinforces the fact that this is an important strategic effort for the good of the company

8. Help people of various faiths equip their own constituents to interact well when communicating about spiritual matters at work.

Don't impose thought police; help them coach their own. Among other things, encourage them to be careful about religious jargon. The work should be done "in the open." Secrecy can lead to unwarranted suspicions about ulterior motives.

9. Finally, seek expert advice.

Look for guidance to companies and experts that have done this well. The Religious Freedom & Business Foundation (RFBF) has collected voices from across corporate America - voices of people of many faiths and backgrounds in our conferences and through our surveys.

Our speakers – many of them senior executives - describe why this is important, including in a collection of conference proceedings and essays. From them, we have identified "The Faith and Business Movement: 10 Principles Defining its Success in Corporations." The principles are:

1. It's organic, not just a program
2. It's good for business
3. It's a mosaic focused on service
4. It enhances overall diversity
5. It's more than just ERGs, it includes chaplains at over 1000 companies
6. It's humbly coming out of the closet, inclusive of all, cutting across all other diversity categories
7. It adds ethical resources
8. It promotes authenticity
9. It's good for our health, as science shows
10. It will not go away:
  - a. Religion is one of the few social institutions that accompanies people from cradle to grave. It marks rites of passage in youth, such as baptisms and bar/bat mitzvahs, and it is present in last rites and (in most religions) the hope of resurrection – that all is not done at death.



- b. To be competitive in today's and tomorrow's marketplaces, companies need to set this force for good free by including religion as a full-fledged part of their diversity, equity and inclusion commitments.
- c. Companies that don't will hurt their competitiveness and will stifle the spiritual lives of their employees.

By helping to shape our workplace cultures in these ways, we can break down those walls. We can see reconciliation and civility. Our companies need this.

**And the world needs this.** We hope many of you will be bold catalysts for this kind of change, by championing freedom of religion and belief at work.

## B. Faith-related Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

### Purpose

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are company-sponsored, employee-led affinity and allyship organisations within companies. They provide an official channel for differing communities within a company to support one another and engage with and inform others.

These networks have the business purpose of making each employee feel welcomed and valued; they also open the space for business inputs from diverse perspectives. For example Google began offering faith-related products, such religion-themed Google doodles and as interactive religious holiday pages after setting up the Inter Belief Network (IBN). They are therefore also known as Employee Business Resource Groups (EBRGs).

Research shows that when faith-and-belief-oriented ERGs are present, it increases the overall inclusion of other groups, including race/ethnicity, women/gender, sexual orientation, veterans/military, dis/ability, age, and family.<sup>19</sup>

Faith and interfaith ERGs also build corporate cultures where antisemitism and any form of religious hatred or prejudice have no place.<sup>20</sup>

### Types

Faith-and-belief-related ERGs take many forms. Historically, they were formed as faith-specific ERGs when there was sufficient interest and numbers of people of a particular faith to start the process within their organisations to establish on. For instance, at Texas Instruments the Christian group came out of informal Bible studies that then led to a formal ERG. Groups for Muslims and Jewish employees were later added along with groups that catered to regional identities associated with religions, such as the India group which takes the lead on India-specific holiday and religious celebrations such as Diwali.

The current trend is for companies to set up an interfaith or interbelief ERG with sub faith chapters or pillars when there was sufficient interest and numbers of people of a particular faith to start one. The advantage of having faith-specific sub chapters is that, by some estimates, 80% of members of an interfaith group will come through their faith chapters, which they see more relevant to their needs and interests.

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<sup>19</sup> REDI Report 2020, "Key finding: Companies Scoring Better on REDI Also Score Better on All Other Diversity Areas" <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/redi-index-2020>

<sup>20</sup> Combatting Antisemitism and All forms of Religious Bias and Discrimination: US National Strategy & Our Pledge, <https://religiousfreedomandbusiness.org/combating-antisemitism>

Some companies keep the interfaith ERG as a stand-alone. Success of that model depends on developing programs and activities that pull people in.

## Examples

Appendix D provides examples of ERGs and other faith-and-belief friendly activities and policies from organisations in the UK.

The following provides a summary of ten Fortune 100 companies and their faith-related ERGs or initiatives, such as corporate chaplains, taken from the 2020 Corporate Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index report.

The texts are taken directly from company sources at the time (with some light editing) to demonstrate how each company frames the importance of faith in their workplace environment. Links are provided to the company pages.

[Alphabet/Google](#) scores high on the REDI Index because of the number and diversity of faith- and belief-based Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) mentioned on the company's website. Google's Inter Belief Network (IBN) aims to create a culture of inclusion, tolerance, and mutual understanding at Google for a diversity of beliefs, where Googlers of all beliefs feel welcome, included, and supported. Google's Inter Belief Network also aims to ensure that the voices of belief-based communities are represented in Google's products. IBN consists of multiple member chapters representing specific communities of interest, including but not limited to Buddhists, Christians, Jewglers [Google's term], and Muslims.

[Intel](#) strives to provide an environment where employees from diverse backgrounds are valued, respected, challenged, acknowledged, and rewarded so they can achieve their potential and fulfill their career aspirations. Intel encourages employee connection through their network of Intel Chartered Employee Resource Groups. Intel's groups unite around a significant common affinity or element of their personal identity and are focused on internal and external activities that build an environment of inclusion. Through recruiting, networking, mentoring, resource sharing and sponsored development events, Intel's Employee Resource Groups are an important part of their culture and aim to show that Intel is a great place to work. Intel's Employee Resource Groups related to faith and belief include: Agnostics and Atheists at Intel (AAI), Intel Bible-Based Christian Network (IBCN); Intel Jewish Community (IJC), and Intel Muslim Employee Group (IMEG).

[Tyson Foods](#) believes that when all beliefs and ideas are expressed in the workplace, everyone benefits. At Tyson Foods, faith and spiritual commitments are valued and respected. Tyson Foods' culture is what they call, "faith-friendly." Many of their team members come to work with

a set of beliefs about themselves, their world and how they should live in it. Tyson Foods' welcomes the whole person, when it comes to matters of faith, even those who don't identify as "religious." Tyson Foods' team members' beliefs matter and their respectful expressions are welcomed. Ninety-eight dedicated chaplains provide compassionate pastoral care to team members and their families, no matter what their religious affiliation or beliefs might be. Some 122,000 Team Members can reach out at any time to a dedicated chaplain when they need to someone to listen to them, encourage them, or even pray with them if they wish. Tyson Foods' chairman helped coordinate the first group of chaplains, who began their service in October of 2000.

[Target](#) aims to foster inclusion among team members of all religions and faiths. Target's faith-oriented ERGs include their Christian, Jewish and Muslim Networks. These groups are part of Target's networks that provide community, support and connection to their team members.

[American Airlines'](#) goal is to provide an inclusive environment for all. American Airlines' Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) leads diversity efforts across the company by fostering company-wide educational, community service and personal enrichment opportunities. The council also supports local Employee Business Resource Groups (EBRGs), which represent many employees and their beliefs, nationalities and backgrounds. Faith-related groups include Christian, Jewish and Muslim Employee Business Resource Groups.

[Facebook](#) welcomes employees from all faiths and spiritual groups to practise and celebrate their beliefs. Facebook Resource Groups provide all Facebook employees with a platform to celebrate culture, connect and engage with colleagues, support professional development, community engagement and drive initiatives that support Facebook's business objectives. Facebook's Interfaith@Facebook Resource Group is one of several influential networks of people within the company who share similar values of supporting and encouraging diversity

[Apple](#) employees find community and connection in Apple's Diversity Network Associations, which are employee-led groups that foster a culture of belonging through education, leadership programs, and networking. Today thousands of Apple employees belong to various Diversity Network Associations including a range of faith-based groups.

[Dell's](#) team members come from all backgrounds, religions, nationalities, gender orientations and races. Race, ethnicity and culture (socio-economic status, religion, language) are dimensions of diversity that often create barriers to full equity and inclusion in parts of the world. Dell's [Interfaith Employee Resource Group](#) – along with other ERGs in the company – creates impact by: (a) connecting over 37K+ team members across more than 340+ chapters worldwide, furthering an inclusive work environment; (b) encouraging career progression by providing opportunities to engage with executives and a broad network of peers; (c) giving team members a place to share ideas for market intelligence and product development; and (d) creating a sense of community to build enduring relationships inside and outside of Dell.

[American Express's](#) Employee Networks have brought together people with shared backgrounds and interests to engage with and learn from each other since 1987. Organically grown and employee driven, American Express Employee Networks broaden participants' community of colleagues, as well as their knowledge of the business by driving employee engagement and promoting a culture of inclusion. With 16 networks and nearly 100 chapters globally, American Express Employee Networks encompass the full spectrum of diversity at American Express including disability, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, generations, sexual orientation and veteran's status. Faith-oriented groups include: (a) Christian Employee Network (SALT), which serves as a resource group for the Christian employee community. Its members strive to make a positive difference in the workplace by demonstrating a commitment to the values and leadership principles set forth by the company. SALT is open to all denominations. (b) Jewish Employee Network (CHAI), from the Hebrew word meaning "life," hosts educational and community-oriented events to foster awareness of Jewish culture. (c) Muslim Employee Network (PEACE) fosters an environment of awareness, understanding and education through lunch and learns, informational booths and participation in community activities to counter the stereotypes and misinformation surrounding Islam and Muslims.

[Goldman Sachs'](#) employee affinity networks and interest forums – including their Informal Religious Support Groups – are open to all professionals at Goldman Sachs. They offer training and educational programs, create networking forums, host leadership conferences, and sponsor client events. These groups provide an opportunity for Goldman Sachs' people to share concerns and feedback, and to develop professional relationships with those from other business units and divisions. Additionally, they help their people to identify opportunities for professional development and advancement to help them achieve their full potential.



# C. Corporate Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index: Free Benchmarking Tool

The REDI Index is a benchmarking measure of a company's commitment to including religion as part of its overall diversity initiatives, tracking 10 topics, 60 indicators, and an open-ended bonus.



**REDI Index 2024**  
CORPORATE RELIGIOUS EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INDEX  
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & BUSINESS FOUNDATION

11-topic survey, plus bonus • [ReligiousFreedomAndBusiness.org/REDI-Survey](https://ReligiousFreedomAndBusiness.org/REDI-Survey)

	<b>1. Religion is featured on company's main diversity page</b>	<b>7. Accommodates religious needs of employees</b>	
	<b>2. Company sponsors faith and belief employee resource groups (ERGs)</b>	<b>8. Clear procedures for reporting discrimination</b>	
	<b>3. Company shares best practices with other companies</b>	<b>9. Employees attend religious diversity conferences</b>	
	<b>4. Religion is clearly addressed in diversity training</b>	<b>10. Company matches employee donations to religious charities</b>	
	<b>5. Company provides spiritual care and/or chaplaincy services</b>	<b>11. Company equitably celebrates or honors holy days of employees</b>	
	<b>6. Attentive to how religion impacts stakeholders</b>	<b>* Other ways company promotes religious inclusion</b>	

## History

2024 marks the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's fifth annual [REDI Index](#). This edition is the third time to be offered as an opt-in survey. In the first two years, the research staff of the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation scored companies only in three areas: (1) content analysis of the company's main diversity landing page for religion-related content, (2) acknowledgement on company websites of faith-oriented ERGs, and (3) verified external training efforts/workshops in which companies share their best practices related to faith-oriented ERGs with other companies.

## 2024 Version

The 2024 REDI Index survey asks about activities occurring during the 12 months ending March 15, 2024.

The 2024 survey has 11 questions: the same 10 topics as in the 2023 survey — plus one new question\* — each worth 10 points, for a total of 110 points. Scoring for each point will be based on (a) answering in the affirmative with some evidence (5 points), and (b) demonstrating that the efforts are substantial (up to 5 additional points). The “b” part of each question offers the same “tick” lists as in 2023, which were based on company open-ended responses from the 2022 REDI Index survey.

*\* New question in 2024 reflects input from companies based outside of the US, which are participating in greater numbers each year.*

11. Does the company celebrate and educate about the various cultures and faiths of its employees and equitably promote religious inclusion publicly in the communities where the company works?

- Yes, both internally and publicly (5 points)
- Yes, with other organisations but not open to the public (3 points)
- Yes, only internally (1 point)
- If yes, list up to five internal and/or external events held in the past 12 months with the number of people involved in each (up to 5 additional points)

Evidence for and/or a brief explanation of answers provided must also be typed in or uploaded.

As in the previous two years, the 2024 edition also has an optional BONUS question, which can add up to an additional 10 bonus points for a maximum total of 120 points. The bonus recognizes that companies may be doing other religiously inclusive activities that are not covered in the survey that are worthy of recognition.



**The deadline for completion is March 15, 2024.** Companies not completing a survey will be scored only on the REDI Monitor based on what is available on their main diversity webpages, which puts them at a disadvantage but still allows us to monitor the state of religious inclusion in all Fortune 500 corporations.

**Final tabulation of a company's score** is pending verification of answers against supporting details provided as well as evaluation of answers to open-ended questions and any responses to the bonus question.

**BENEFITS:** Doing well on the REDI Index provides companies with a competitive advantage in recruiting new staff in retaining them once on board because the items on the REDI Index measure best practices for creating a workplace that is inclusive of all faiths and beliefs and is at the same time nurturing and supportive of teammates in this important area. This directly benefits the bottom line by building stronger and more committed teams and provides competencies in better understanding and relating to faith-related preferences of customers and clients, thereby positively impacting the communities and societies in which companies operate.

Results are released and participating companies will be recognized at the **Spring 2024 UK Faith at Work Conference** and at the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's national Faith@Work ERG [Dare to Overcome conference, May 21-22, 2023](#), in Washington, DC. Dare to Overcome is the premier annual conference where Fortune 500 faith-and-belief employee resource groups (ERGs) and corporate chaplains come together as allies of others to share best practices and build stronger, more diverse networks among the faith-and-belief ERG community in the U.S. and worldwide.

#### **2024 REDI Index Survey Questionnaire:**

##### **CONSENT**

- Yes, supporting information we provide may be used to illustrate the numeric data and best practices
- Maybe, please check with us before using the supporting information we provide in the report
- No

\* By clicking BEGIN SURVEY, you agree to have your score be reported in the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's 2024 REDI Index report.

BEGIN SURVEY

Not yet

## COMPANY AND RESPONDENT INFORMATION

\* Company Information

Company name:

Corporate website:

Main diversity website:

\*Information on Respondent (person completing survey on behalf of the company)

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Department:

Position/Title:

Name and email of alternate contact:

## Question 1 - Religion on **main diversity page**



1. Does your company's **main public-facing diversity** landing page mention religion and/or describe how religion is part of your diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) commitments?

If the main or another public company webpage does, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

Yes (5 points)

No, but another webpage on our public-facing website does (1 point)

No

In what ways does your company's main public-facing diversity landing page or another public-facing company diversity webpage mention religion and/or describe how religion is part of your diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) commitments? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- Mentions and/or describes faith/belief employee resource groups (ERGs)
- Mentions the business case and/or rationale for including faith/belief as part of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)
- Includes images or videos of faith/belief-oriented activities or accommodations
- Mentions participation or ranking on the REDI Index
- Links to additional information on your activities to promote a religiously inclusive workplace, corporate culture and/or community
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

\*Please provide link(s) to your company's webpage(s) with the content you've indicated above.

- Link 1
- Link 2
- Link 3
- Link 4

\*Because websites can change, please also upload one or more screenshots supporting the answers above.

- Choose file

## Question 2 - Faith and belief ERGs



2. Does your company have formally approved, faith-and/or-belief-oriented employee resource groups (ERGs) or other such official employee-led groups whose aim is to foster a diverse, religiously inclusive workplace aligned with your company's purpose?

If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.





- Yes (5 points)
- No, but we allow such groups to meet informally (1 point)
- No

In what ways does your company's faith-related ERG(s) foster a diverse, religiously inclusive workplace aligned with your company's purpose? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- The company informs its existing employees of the faith/belief based ERG's existence and also describes the ERG(s) in the course of its recruiting and onboarding processes
- The company provides an official channel for employees' faith/belief-related workplace and policy issues to be discussed and considered
- The company allows faith/belief communities (e.g., atheist/agnostic, Buddhist, Christian, etc.) to have their own chapters within an interfaith/belief ERG or their own stand-alone ERGs
- The company's faith/belief ERG(s) (and chapters, if any) actively work with each other as well as collaborate with other ERGs, DEI groups and initiatives
- The company expresses in internal and external communications how its faith/belief ERG(s) contribute to the achievement of its corporate purpose and/or mission. (If the company seeks to quantify that contribution, please describe that quantification below.)
- Other (please specify)**

\*Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below and/or by uploading a file. If you only upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here  
and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 3 - Sharing best practices with other companies



### 3. Company shares best practices with other companies

3. Has your company described its practices related to faith-oriented ERGs or other faith-oriented activities to other companies through individual consultations, diversity conferences, or otherwise during previous 12 months?

If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

Yes (5 points)

No

In what ways has your company described its practices related to faith-oriented ERGs or other faith-oriented activities to other companies through individual consultations, diversity conferences, or otherwise during the previous 12 months? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- We have had individual consultations related to faith-oriented ERGs or other faith-oriented activities with other companies
- We have described our faith-oriented work to other companies at faith-oriented diversity conferences or conference sessions
- We have created bespoke media or other resources about our faith-related activities that other companies can access to learn from
- We have contributed to a news or business article and/or conducted an external interview or podcast about our faith-oriented DEI work, thus making the information available to other companies
- We have (a) encouraged other companies to participate in the REDI Index, and/or (b) encouraged other companies to join a faith-related or faith-led social impact initiative, and /or (c) hosted other companies (in person or virtually) to discuss faith/belief-oriented issues
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below and/or by uploading a file. If you only upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or
- Upload file/s

## Question 4 - Religious diversity training



4. Has your company specifically addressed religion (incl. faith and belief) as a topic in your internal diversity and inclusion training during the previous 12 months?

If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes (5 points)
- No

In what ways has your company addressed religion (incl. faith and belief) in your internal DEI training during the previous 12 months? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- Our religion-related DEI training equitably addresses issues faced by all faith and belief communities
- Our religion-related content is (or can be) a stand-alone module, i.e., it's not just examples in the larger DEI training
- Our religion-related DEI training covers ways to counter religious discrimination
- Our religion-related DEI training was required for all employees
- We engage expert consultants to help us better accommodate religion and avoid religious discrimination, and/or improve religious literacy, and/or improve our faith-friendliness
- Other (please specify)**

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 5 - Chaplaincy/Spiritual Care



5. Does your company provide professional chaplaincy\* services to serve its employees?

If yes (or if you provide other professional spiritual care options), you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes (5 points)
- No, we don't have professional chaplains, but we provide formal professional care services that include spiritual care options and/or opportunities for employees\*\* (1 point)
- No

\* Professional chaplains are people of any faith community – Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and more – ordained or endorsed by that community, also with specific training and chaplaincy certification. Their role is to provide emotional, spiritual, religious, pastoral, ethical, and/or existential care in a secular setting. Those secular settings include hospitals, corrections, long-term care, sports teams, palliative care, military, hospices, workplaces, mental health and universities. Providing this care in secular settings means that professional chaplains speak, listen to and care for people of any faith or of no faith. Their job is not to proselytise or convert the people they care for.

\*\* Note that "formal professional care services that include spiritual care options and/or opportunities for employees" include such things as the option to choose faith-based counselling as part of the company's employee assistance program (EAP).

What services are provided through your professional chaplaincy program or other formal professional care services that include spiritual care options and/or opportunities for employees? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- Employees have physical access to a professional chaplaincy program
- Employees have virtual access to a professional chaplaincy program
- Company's senior leadership has access to a professional chaplaincy program
- The option for faith-based counselling is provided as part of the company's employee assistance program (EAP)
- All the company's employees have access to our professional chaplaincy program and/or other formal professional care services that include spiritual care options and/or opportunities
- Other (please specify)**

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 6 - Religion and stakeholders



**6. Attentive to how religion impacts stakeholders**

6. Does your company seek to understand the faiths and beliefs of its clients, customers, partners and/or stakeholders, in order to serve them?

If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes (5 points)
- No

In what ways does your company seek to understand how to serve clients, customers, partners, and stakeholders for whom religion is important? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).



- We strive to understand how to serve our CLIENTS and/or PARTNERS for whom religion is important, including understanding how religious dynamics may impact working relationships
- We strive to understand how to serve our CUSTOMERS, including understanding how religion impacts the use and/or acceptance of our products and/or services
- We strive to understand how to serve our other STAKEHOLDERS for whom religion is important, including the communities and societies where we work
- We strive to understand how to serve our EMPLOYEES for whom religion is important, including how corporate culture and policies may impact them
- We strive to understand how religious dynamics impact MARKETS and/or the ECONOMY
- Other (please specify)**

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 7 - Accommodation

**7. Accommodates religious needs of employees**



7. Does your company have procedures that are communicated annually to employees about how to request a religious accommodation, such as time off for a religious sabbath, holiday or prayer time?

If you have such procedures, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes, at least annually (5 points)
- Yes, but not annually (1 point)

No

Which of the following religious needs do you seek to reasonably accommodate? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- Regular sabbaths, days of worship, and religious holidays
- Religious dress and grooming requirements
- Religious dietary requirements
- Prayer times
- Space at work for those who wish to pray, meditate, etc.
- Other (please specify)

Please provide your written religious accommodation policy and/or brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 8 - Reporting

**8. Clear procedures for reporting discrimination**



8. Does your company have procedures that are communicated annually to employees about how to report instances of religious discrimination (including religious non-accommodation)?

If you have such procedures, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes, at least annually (5 points)
- Yes, but not annually (1 point)
- No

Which of the following are included in your procedures for reporting religious discrimination (including religious non-accommodation)? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- The procedure requires that all employees receive instructions on how to make a report and issue a complaint
- The procedure provides an alternate channel of communication if the alleged perpetrator would normally receive the complaint
- The procedure makes clear that retaliation for such a report will not be tolerated
- The procedure prescribes a process to track reports and complaints over time, and to periodically check to assure that there is careful review and timely responses
- The procedure requires that appropriate and timely action be taken to address patterns of discrimination
- Other (please specify)

Please provide your written religious non-discrimination policy and/or brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 9 - Diversity Conferences



9. Have your employees – in an official capacity – participated in any external religious diversity conferences or faith-related professional events or company-sponsored/approved religious inclusion events during the previous 12 months?

- If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.
- Yes (5 points)
- No

In which of the following events did your employees participate in an official capacity? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- 3rd National Faith@Work ERG Conference "Dare to Overcome" May 23-25, 2022, Washington DC
- In-person or virtual event hosted by another company or entity
- An event at which our company hosted other companies
- An internal event
- Company-facilitated volunteer time or social outreach with faith-based initiatives
- Other (please specify)

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 10 - Matching Donations



10. Does your company currently match employee donations to faith-based and religious organisations?

If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes (5 points)
- No

In which of the following ways does your company match employee donations to faith-based and religious organisations? Select all that apply (max. 5 points).

- We match donations up to \$500
- We also match donations of more than \$500 (tick first box if you also tick this box)
- We have a procedure for performing due diligence checks on the organisations receiving matching donations
- We have innovative ways of contributing, such as converting employee volunteer time into cash donations from the company
- Our company also makes donations to faith-based and religious organisations in addition to the matching program
- Other (please specify)

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## Question 11 - Celebration



11. Does the company celebrate and educate about the various cultures and faiths of its employees and equitably promote religious inclusion publicly in the communities where the company works?

If yes, you will be asked to provide details in a follow-up question.

- Yes, both internally and publicly (5 points)
- Yes, with other organisations but not open to the public (3 points)
- Yes, only internally (1 point)



No

List up to five internal and/or external events held in the past 12 months with the number of people involved in each in which the company celebrated and/or educated about the various cultures and faiths of its employees (max. 5 points).

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	No. people: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	No. people: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	No. people: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	No. people: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	No. people: _____

Please provide brief examples of items you've indicated above. You may do this in the text box below or by uploading a file. If you upload a file, please write "See file" in the text box.

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

### BONUS Question



\*Additional ways company promotes and supports religious diversity, equity and inclusion in workplaces & communities.

**BONUS:** Please feel free to add any other information not already covered about how your company promotes and supports religious diversity, equity, and inclusion in your workplace and/or communities. (Additional information can contribute up to 10 bonus points to your score.)

You may do this in the text box below and/or by uploading files. If you are uploading one or more files, please write "See file" in the text box.

**This question will be scored by survey staff manually.**

- Answer here and/or,
- Upload file/s

## D. Organisational Examples in the UK

In this section, UK-based companies, multinational corporations and organisations share a brief description of their religion-and-belief friendly workplace initiatives. They are presented in alphabetical order.

### Baringa

#### Name

- Baringa's Interfaith & Belief Network

#### Description

At Baringa, we recognise how important faith, belief & spiritual health are to the lives of billions of people around the world. After all, it concerns our core beliefs, values, and principles. Just as firms should think carefully about the values they wish to uphold, it is also vital that they take the time to understand the values of the people within the firm, the clients they work with on a day-to-day basis and the communities in which they operate.

At Baringa we ***put people first***, which can only be done effectively if we first understand what is important to our people. Our network plays a crucial role in building those bridges of understanding and we work hard to help our people bring their full selves to work in an authentic way and not feel as though they need to compromise on their core beliefs and principles in order to be successful in the workplace.

Although c.40% of Baringa self identify as being 'of faith', our network is as much for people who aren't of faith as for those who are, perhaps even more so. We deliver training on different faiths to all areas of the firm and raise awareness of the various beliefs and practices. We strongly encourage everyone to get involved in the events we hold throughout the year, to celebrate our diversity and increase our understanding of one another.

#### Our key priorities

- **Providing a safe space**
  - To discuss and address faith, belief & spiritual health related matters in the workplace
  - To provide a reflection room across all our offices globally - a physical and mental space for our people and clients, to take time out of their busy days for peaceful contemplation, reflection, meditation, prayer or healthy quiet time
- **Celebrating our diversity**
  - To maintain a culture that recognises and embraces diverse faiths and beliefs

- To deliver engaging events throughout the year that seek to educate people about different faiths and beliefs
- **Advising our business**
  - To provide invaluable advice and support to our colleagues on faith, belief & spiritual health related health matters in the workplace and help navigate sensitive issues in an inclusive way
- **Attracting and retaining diverse talent**
  - To attract and retain diverse talent in the market by enabling people to bring their full selves to Baringa regardless of their personal faiths or beliefs. We look for kindness and understanding in our recruitment practices, and deliver cultural programs focused on supporting each other to all employees. We work hard to ensure our firm is *truly* faith & belief inclusive throughout the employee journey, from the point of application, throughout the recruitment process, and as part of the employee experience of working at Baringa
- **Educating our people**
  - To provide interfaith and belief training to all our employees
  - To share communications in relation to key religious festivals and practices
- **Networking**
  - To bring people together internally across Baringa and externally with our clients and communities

### Some of our Interfaith & Belief events

- **Interfaith Harmony Week** - A series of events to showcase the diversity of faiths and beliefs of our people and clients
- **BaringaFAST** - A day during the month of Ramadan where all employees have the opportunity to fast
- **An Overview of Vaisakhi** - A presentation explaining the history of Vaisakhi and how it is celebrated by Sikhs around the world
- **What does Easter & Pesach mean to me?** - An interactive webinar providing an overview of these two important festivals and how they are linked together
- **Infra-faith: Diverse perspectives within Hinduism** - A panel discussion sharing different perspectives and practices within the umbrella of Hinduism
- **Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur Blog** - A blog sharing personal perspectives from some of our Jewish colleagues on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
- **Diwali Celebrations** - A set of activities across the firm to celebrate the Festival of Lights, including a colour clash art workshop, a traditional Indian Garba dancing masterclass and a Henna workshop
- **Christmas Carols** - A Christmas carols service open to our people, families and clients at a church in our local community

- **What does Christmas mean to me?** - A panel discussion sharing the importance of Christmas and the different ways it is celebrated across different faiths, cultures and traditions

Faith was also highlighted in [our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Personal Journeys](#) series on our website.

### **Global Interfaith & Belief Network Sponsor**

- Ellen Fraser

### **Global Interfaith & Belief Network Leads**

- Yusuf Ahmet & Fahad Akhter

### **Faith & Belief Leads**

- Buddhism - Tania Hughes
- Christianity - Helen Walker & Stephen Humphreys
- Hinduism - Ashutosh Samal & Saanya Sarin
- Islam - Anneka Sheikh & Shaheen Syed
- Judaism - Oli Barnett
- Sikhism - Gavin Singh
- Zoroastrianism - Jamshed Patel & Victor Batliwalla

We also welcome additional faiths and / or beliefs in addition to the list above upon request

### **Regional Leads**

- UK, Eastern Europe, US, Singapore, Australia

## DELL Technologies

### **Name**

- Dell Technologies Interfaith ERG

### **Description**

Our faith is reflected in the work we do, the markets we serve and the talent we attract. Faith is central to our authentic self; it impacts our thoughts, actions, and daily life.

Representing many faiths, we are one Interfaith family— open to all faiths, always.

Our mission is to drive awareness, promote understanding, and foster camaraderie within our workplace and communities.

We find strength in our differences and are better together.

### **Meaningful Win**

We are pleased to announce that Dell Technologies has achieved remarkable recognition in the latest [2023 Religious Equity Diversity and Inclusion \(REDI\) Index](#) where we secured the #6 spot among Fortune 500 companies and #1 rank in the Computer Hardware / Software Category.

### **Global Network Sponsors:**

- Bill Scannell

### **Global Interfaith Network Leads:**

- Shawn Trotter, Glenda Cameron, Leonardo Gonzalez

### **Faith Leads:**

- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

### **Regional Leads:**

- North America: Troy Daeschner, Albert Whitestone
- Latin America: Andre Mello, Alfredo Taborga
- EMEA: Hagar Mohsen, Lukas Vina



## Google

### Name

- Google Inter Belief Network

Google has 17 Employee Resource Groups and one of these is called Inter Belief Network, an umbrella for all the employees with faith in the workplace. In the UK, the Muslim, Jewish and Christian chapters are *currently* active and further afield there are also Hindu and Budish chapters.

For each of these groups, the activities look different as all serve to bring people with shared faith identity together in a way they choose. Several thousand employees opt in to participate in these groups globally, and the UK has a healthy proportion of these.

Structurally, a global steering committee exists to coordinate activities and deal with escalations. Locally, employees self-organise the activities they want to run under the umbrella of the global IBN ERG.

Some of the key challenges we experience includes

- Visibility - finding and pointing people of faith to their relevant groups are challenging as some people of faith are uncertain what the risks of connecting might be.
- Many colleagues that are not familiar with faith groups or do not identify as having a faith, can be overly cautious about supporting or engaging in any of the faith activities. Frequently initiatives are first blocked before it's understood to be OK, sometimes too late.

## NATS

Ridgely C Johnson, Chair

### Name

- NATS Faith Network (one of six Employee Network)

The objectives are:

- To develop a network of employees with the broadest range of faith experiences as possible. Everyone is welcome! We have contacts across our business with Buddhism, Christian, Hinduism, Islam, Morman, and Sikhism Religions and other non-religious beliefs across six sites and two countries.
- To ensure leadership and colleagues can hear and learn from the experiences of those from different faiths, working within NATS. Via our Company Intranet Articles and Viva Engage social media channel we encourage everyone to celebrate and share their

experiences and for colleagues to respond and connect giving opportunities for good off-line conversations. As part of our Faith Friendly Friday initiative, we post something our colleagues might not know each week. We collaborate with other Networks on intersectional topics.

- To develop a community of openness and support through the [maintenance of a faith contact list so colleagues can connect](#). Through our contact list, we introduce network members to new Company joiners, colleagues of the same faith and different faiths across our organization allowing them to meet up/connect and encourage each other at work.
- To engage with faith communities to further [understand aviation specific needs and opportunities](#). We have participated in [Faith Friendly Workplaces](#) in the UK and the [REDI index](#) globally to learn how other Companies care for multiple faiths (or none) in their workplace.

## History of the group's development

NATS Faith Network first began at our West Drayton site in 2004. After a set of employee grievance hearings, Kevin Dean, a trade union representative, realized that there was a need to help some people find a space in their working lives for prayer and a weekly Prayer Group was set-up.

In 2007, on transferring from London to NATS new Corporate & Technical Centre (CTC) in Whiteley England, Kevin submitted a proposal to the NATS Director of Human Resources and the CTC Facilities Manager to host a weekly Prayer Group on site. The meetings were to be open to anyone, both Christian and non-Christian staff. Agreement was approved to use a conference room for a weekly Prayer Group on condition that it was either before or after normal working hours and the early morning CTC Weekly Prayer Group meetings started on 17 April 2007 and have continued ever since.

In 2008, approval was given by NATS senior management to run an [Alpha Course](#) at CTC which took place from January to April. We have also held an Alpha International course called '[God at Work](#)' at lunchtimes.

In the early days of providing support and welfare for controller-involved in incidents, the CTC Prayer Group was named in the Corporate Crisis Management Blue Plan for Controller Spiritual Support in 2010.

In 2012, the Prayer Group organised an in-person "Hour Out" Christmas Carol service at [Duncan Road Church](#) mid-way between our Corporate & Technical Centre (CTC) and Swanwick Control Centre with a post-service lunch supported by CTC & Swanwick Sport & Social Clubs. The Carol Service went online during the COVID pandemic and has continued on-line with in-person gatherings at our larger sites in 2022. In April 2014, an Easter Service was held.

In 2016, the First Thursday Lunch Club started. This was a meeting providing an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the moral implications about topical issues of the day and met on the first Thursday of the month.

On 18 March 2020, at the beginning of COVID, a member of the Prayer Group realised that these are unsettling times for everyone within NATS and reminded us that we serve a Saviour who is in control and has not been caught by surprise by Coronavirus or the impact it will have. She suggested having a daily TEAMS call prayer time at the start of each day to support everyone through the pandemic. These daily prayer times lasted more than half a year and continue in a Tuesday/Thursday weekly format today.

During COVID, the Prayer Group tripled in size and progressed many initiatives: supported colleagues through NATS Voluntary Redundancy Programme at the end of 2020, held Training courses from [LICC](#) on Christian Identity and Relationships at Work, promoted other On-Line Events and established NATS Christian Network (NCN) as an Employee Network using NATS and [Transform Work](#) guidance. In discussions with NATS, we started the Faith Network in July 2022. Until that time, Faith was covered under our GlobeAll (race & ethnicity) Employee Network.

### **Structure of the group including leadership, executive sponsorship, number, and profile of members**

The group leadership positions are Chair/Co-Chairs, Comms Lead, Events lead, Admin lead, Support & Coaching lead and Ambassadors. The Organising Committee comprises these positions, Faith leads, Major Site Leads and members who have expressed an interest in the Network's leadership. As the Faith Network is only one year old, Executive Sponsor is under consideration. The membership is thirty-five and members range from early career to late career, men and women, Director/General Manager and entry positions, permanent employees, and contractors across six sites and two countries.

### **Description of the group's main activities and any particularly impactful initiatives or successes**

In our first year, we sponsored a new company policy (reassigning religious holidays for all), marked the Queen's contribution as a woman of faith (3,240 reads), learned from other Faith Friendly Workplaces, held our first hybrid major site & on TEAMS Christmas Carol Service, sponsored a "No Faith Holiday" Song poll, co-hosted Lunch n Learns, published articles on Religion and Belief celebrations, posted weekly Faith Friendly Friday Viva Engage (Yammer) posts and participated in the [REDI](#) benchmarking study which led to being awarded second place in the UK at an event in [Parliament's APPG on Freedom of Religion & Belief](#) and attended a meeting at No 10 on Faith at Work.

### **Assessment of the business impact of the group.**

Group has provided presentation support and company/local contact materials for our on-boarding processes, given line-management support and coaching advice on how to reasonably accommodate a member of staff who has adopted a Faith that expresses itself by wearing religious dress to work, informed facilities how to reasonably accommodate religious dietary need of staff and offered prayer support for colleagues that found themselves “on empty” during the Christmas period for whatever reason. We are in the process of asking our colleagues: “Has the existence of the Faith Network over the past year at NATS, increased your “openness” of the faith backgrounds of your colleagues (openness being defined as increased understanding, knowledge, and freedom to ask questions)?” and “Has the existence of the Faith Network over the past year made NATS a better Company to work for” in support of NATS D&I and Top 25 Company to work for objectives.

### **Prospects for the future, including challenges and opportunities.**

The prospects for the Faith Network are to continue to meet our objectives in both existing and new ways in the workplace drawing on internal creativity, external learning, member & colleague feedback and being shaped by prayer, hospitality, mission, and justice opportunities/issues we are called into. Challenges are leadership growth and succession as well as moulding the culture into a Faith Friendly Workplace where our Faith backgrounds are valued and respected, our successes and celebrations are welcomed and shared by all teams across the business, encouraged to speak up and strive for better to create a positive working environment where we feel safe ... and are safe to bring our whole selves and souls to work.

## OVO Energy

Jag Jethwa, OVO Believe Network Lead.

### **Name and brief description of the group or groups or initiatives**

- OVO Believe Network

We work hard to create an open environment where everyone can learn about, embrace and celebrate each other’s cultures, beliefs and customs. Working to raise awareness, provide education and support, and make sure we have the right practices and policies in place. We work intersectionality to ensure that all other Belonging networks are represented and get involved such as arranging a learning session on domestic abuse by the Asian Women's Refuge Centre and a talk from Hidayah for Pride.

We encourage people to talk about their beliefs and share a story every month. We've had talks about Islam, Paganism, Buddhism and Rastafarianism, even Yoga to name a few. These sessions allow our people to share their faiths, religions & beliefs with us to help us learn more and what we need to do differently to ensure we support our people leading to a change of the bank holiday policy so our people have days off that are important to them, a guide to supporting people during Ramadan such as and flexible working during this time and our engineers having spare boots to change into for homes where outdoor shoes are not permitted and we are working hard to be the first company in the UK to supply safety compliant religious headwear such as Hijabs and Turbans.

### **History of the group's development**

The Believe Network at OVO Energy was started in 2020, this was one of the 8 Networks for Inclusion and Diversity.

When setting up the Network we looked at how other organisations have set up the ERG for promoting Beliefs. A lot of Organisations included Beliefs as part of the Ethnicity group or had individual groups for Faiths. We found that both of the set-ups excluded most of the working population.

### **Structure of the group including leadership, executive sponsorship.**

- Executive Sponsor
- Network Lead
- Network Co-Lead
- Members

## Rolls-Royce plc

Andy D Smith

### **Name and brief description of the group or groups or initiatives**

- Rolls-Royce Multi-Faith Network (MFN)

Our purpose is to raise awareness of various faiths and beliefs through dialogue, education and social events to help create a more diverse and inclusive Rolls-Royce.

What do we get up to?

- Visits to places of worship
- Celebrate various religious festivals
- STEM in faith schools, disadvantaged children
- Community support & engagement, recruitment campaigns

- Charitable work to support various crisis
- Annual MFN Conference

#### History of the group's development

From January 2017 to May 2017, the concept of a Multi-Faith Network was developed. This was supported internally by representatives of several faith groups who formed a working party together with external support from organisations such as transformwork with relevant resources. The MFN charter was bought off by the company in May 2017.

The launch event took place in September 2017 with more than 200 attendees and several external speakers, the first being the director of the University of Derby Multi-Faith Centre (MFC).

Every year, each faith group is encouraged to select one or two key events in their calendar and hold an event. This has allowed understanding of faith and belief to increase within the company and enable members to feel more included.

In 2018 and 2019 MFN held annual in person conferences.

In 2020 and 2021, the annual conferences moved to a virtual setting, which allowed Rolls-Royce employees in other sites and other countries to participate.

In 2022, the annual conference moved to a hybrid format permitting in-person attendance as well as virtual participation globally.

One of the positive outcomes of virtual meetings and the means to effectively run them has been the opportunity to invite speakers for a lunch and learn discussion on a particular topic which would have previously been prohibitive with the travel and time requirements.

MFN continues to develop links with other companies and the MFC.

Structure of the group including leadership, executive sponsorship, number and profile of members

MFN is developing a committee structure in line with all Rolls-Royce Global Inclusion Networks (GINs).

This consists of:

- Chair
- Deputy Chair
- Finance Lead
- Membership Lead
- Strategic partner Lead
- Events Lead
- Education Lead



- Communications Lead
- Professional Development Lead
- Regional champions
- Faith Leads – this is a specific MFN role
  - Responsible for promoting their respective faith
  - Organise events relating to their faith – lunch & learn; event speakers

Company support is provided through the global ED&I lead, together with sponsorship by a senior manager and additional support by a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

Membership is around 250. Members do not have to identify with any faith or belief. Rolls-Royce encourages employees to be allies of GINs. The membership spans many faiths, many sites within the UK and in other countries.

Description of the group's main activities and any particularly impactful initiatives or successes

Visits to places of worship

There have been several visits to different places of worship. These events are well supported including employees who do not normally participate in MFN activities.

Celebrate various religious festivals

These are organised by the relevant faith lead. Ramadan, Eid, Easter, Christmas, Diwali etc. Information is shared either as an Engine Room article, Viva Engage or Lunch and Learn.

In cases such as Ramadan, there is a request for non-Muslims to be mindful of their Muslim colleagues who are fasting during daylight hours. Non-Muslims are also invited to participate in a one-day fast challenge so they have appreciation of what their colleagues are doing and also raise money for charity.

STEM in faith schools, disadvantaged children

MFN has supported running STEM events in faith schools which is always well received.

### **Community support & engagement, recruitment campaigns**

MFN members participate in activities outside of work helping homeless and marginalised members of society. Lunch & learn sharing of such activities is always well attended and helps promote compassion outside of work.

Past recruitment campaigns within certain sectors of Derby had previously seen low attendance. Using contacts within the relevant faith communities of these groups, saw a ten-fold increase in engagement and myth busting that Rolls-Royce only recruited certain types of people.

Charitable work to support various crisis

There has been support for many humanitarian crises around the world. It is always encouraging to see the wider engagement with employees who want to extend compassion outside of Rolls-Royce but don't always have the opportunity.

#### Annual MFN Conference

The MFN annual conference is one of the big events of the year, usually held in November during or close to inter-faith week. Each conference is around a specific theme and can include stands as well as the main speaking event. Sharing food together afterwards is also a great opportunity to engage more widely with people.

The theme of each conference is generally aligned to one of the themes the company is promoting that year or something significant in the world.

- 2017 – Launch event
- 2018 – Be inspiring
- 2019 – How does faith influence our view of sustainability?
- 2020 – Living with uncertainty
- 2021 – Bringing humanity together
- 2022 – Servant leadership

#### Assessment of the business impact of the group

Employees who identify with a faith or belief feel more engaged with the company and are more invested in the company.

The support for recruitment campaigns, induction events across all areas of the business enables a more diverse workforce who view Rolls-Royce as an employer they would consider working for and once employed, to remain with.

MFN along with all GINs support the “Being like me” stories where employees can share something about themselves. For the faith community, this can be dealing with personal challenges or going on a pilgrimage for example.

MFN works alongside the other GINs. This has been in wider events meeting all levels of the business and supporting specific conferences. Additionally, MFN has worked with a specific GIN where we share a common purpose around a topic or responding to a humanitarian issue. This promotes inclusivity within the company.

When there have been attacks against a specific faith community elsewhere in the world, the impact on members of that faith community within Rolls-Royce is recognised and supported. In 2019, there were attacks in New Zealand and in Sri Lanka and memorial events were organised to allow anyone within Rolls-Royce to come together and remember the victims. These were well supported including senior leaders and were appreciated by all who attended.

Prospects for the future, including challenges and opportunities

As with all GIN committees, the time demands are notable and therefore the strategy is to rotate the chair, co-chair positions every couple of years to reduce the burden on specific individuals and allow others to develop themselves and bring fresh ideas.

The usual time pressures of work and developing members from being associated with MFN to being actively involved is a challenge. The promotion of GINs continues within the company and therefore could encourage employees to be more involved – this is both a challenge and an opportunity for the coming years.

Engaging with faith representatives through initiatives such as Faith Friendly Workplaces has offered opportunities to showcase what MFN is doing and to learn from other faith networks. The desire and dynamic of these faith representatives is encouraging and offers a good long-term opportunity for UK plc.

## Thames Water

### **Name**

- Thames Water Multifaith group

### **History**

The Thames Water Multifaith group came about in 2018, following Thames Water's decision to set up diversity networks.

The group initially had a Christian network, that had been in existence, but not recognised by the business since the mid 1990's and an informal Muslim network, who had been meeting for Friday prayers on one of our sites since 2007. Along with Sikh, Hindu and Jewish representatives. Once recognised and integrated into the company diversity networks, the individual faith networks grew and flourished. The Christian group trebled in size and before COVID19 and hybrid working, they were meeting across 4 sites.

We currently incorporate Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism and we are open to other faith and belief groups joining us, such as Paganism, Atheism & veganism. However, we do ask that these groups form a network, even if it is just 2 or 3 people and then join us.

Enabling the coming together of members of faiths to support each other has been the main aim and we have a thriving Christian (Christians in Thames) and Islamic network (Peace (Islamic) network) each with around 100 members and smaller Hindu and Sikh networks with around 20 members in each, from a workforce of around 8000, spread across London and the Thames Valley areas.

We are structured with a network chair and vice chair who coordinate the day-to-day activities, supported and championed by an exec sponsor and a senior sponsor. The sponsors enable a direct connection to senior leadership and guidance at a much higher level, as the chair and vice chair are open to any colleague and typically are much more junior staff.

The individual faith networks are allowed to structure themselves as they see fit, with their lead and deputy making up the remainder of the Multifaith group leadership.

The leadership meets monthly and feeds into the company Equity, Diversity and Inclusion network. These networks work closely with the EDI lead and central team within the people department and are usually represented by the chair and vice chair.

The network has always sought to move the dial for all faiths in the workplace. We have held celebrations for Eid and run Carols in our head office reception for Christmas. We have also run lunchtime webinars talking about how our faiths relate to various aspects, such as Faith and Water, Faith communities and COVID.

The biggest impact has come from just talking about what we believe.

The first of these was our launch where the leads from each of our networks were recorded around a table discussing what it means to be open about faith. It was shared by Internal comms and had very positive feedback, including comments such as “I never realised you could have discussions like this in Thames”.

This was followed up in 2020 by a campaign called “Just ask”, Inspired by something that had been tried in Network Rail. We ran a webinar where members of one faith asked a member of another faith something about what they believed.

This included asking the Christian lead “please could you explain what Pentecost is all about” And to the Hindu lead “do you really believe in multiple Gods and how does that work in practice” The aim of this session was to demonstrate that you shouldn’t be sacred to ask someone about their faith, if it is done in a polite and respectful way, as most people of faith would be very happy to talk about what they believe in, and this makes a person of faith feel included.

The latest initiative is My Face, My Faith where we interview a senior member of staff about what faith means to them, focusing on what faith meant to them when they were young, what it means to them now and how this affects their work.

All of these initiatives have been designed to remove the stigma that employees of faith often have about disclosing their faith in the workplace, encourage the disclosure of faith within our HR system and create a culture of openness within the company, because if you can talk about

a traditionally taboo subject such as religion, it is less likely that there will be a culture of keeping secrets and this can only be good for the business.

Alongside these campaigns, the network has worked with the company looking at the results from the colleague engagement survey to look at where bullying and harassment might be connected to a faith group. Mostly we found that within the company, this was no different to those who did not declare a faith.

The individual faith networks meet regularly for prayer and organise faith specific events, such as Christmas Carols, Eid and Diwali celebrations. They have also taken advantage of Learning at work week to offer people a chance to understand what those who practise the faith believe and dispel stereotypes.

The networks have also run charity events, these have included the Sikh network giving out food on the streets of Reading with a local charity and supporting a project that brought hand cranked washing machines to rural India, the Christian group paying for Christmas dinner at a local homeless shelter and coordinating the collection of Easter eggs for underprivileged children.

The networks have also supported the creation of dedicated faith rooms on our larger sites, the story of one of these comes from a member of the Peace (Islamic) network.

This gives me the opportunity to tell a lovely story of how Kemble court introduced and integrated a dedicated multi faith area within the building. When I joined TW and started around 8 years ago, we only had what was a small walk-in wardrobe type stationery cupboard room to use as a prayer facility. At best we were able to get 2-3max people in the room at one point to perform congregation daily prayers – at this stage Friday prayers were performed in an available room on either the 2nd or 3rd floor depending on availability. Within a few years of being at Thames Water this quickly changed, and a dedicated multi faith room was set up in the same room, but it was extended, and all stationery storage was removed. This room gave us the opportunity for all religious groups/faiths to go and spend some time in there whether it be to pray, relax, meditate or reflect. There was/is enough space for at least 20 people to be in there at any one time so a significant change from the original facility. The Muslims working within the Kemble court were fortunate to partake in Friday prayers on site which were led by Ahmed Maalik and this also allowed colleagues to perform the obligatory Friday prayers on site without having to go to a local mosque.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and people moving on congregational Friday prayers are no longer performed on site but the facility is available on a 24/7 basis for anybody and everybody to visit.

## University of Derby

Dr Jo Bishton, Geoff Sweeney and Dr Ali Akbar

### **Name and brief description of the group or groups or initiatives**

University of Derby Faith and Belief Network in partnership with the Chaplaincy and Multi-Faith Centre.

The University of Derby created Europe's first purpose-built Multi-Faith Centre in collaboration with the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim and Zoroastrian traditions. We take a proactive approach to faith and belief, having the benefit of an onsite Chaplaincy provision and in the unique position of its partnership with the Multi-Faith Centre, located on the footprint of the main University campus. Our Inclusion philosophy is to provide people with purpose, place and belonging and we see faith and belief intrinsic to this ethos, establishing Faith and Belief as a core pillar of the University Wellbeing Framework.

We recognise that faith and belief is an important part of how people identify, and we founded a Faith and Belief network to allow people to come together for a shared purpose. One of the first cross-university outcomes from the network was the launch of a Faith and Belief month, marked each May.

#### The Faith and Belief Network

The Faith and Belief Network's role is to raise awareness and enable interfaith/inter-belief dialogue to ensure that all faiths and beliefs as defined are supported, embraced and visible in the workplace and study space at the University of Derby.

The network aims are:

- To enable every member of staff and student to fully live their faith and/or beliefs to enable them to be their true self at work
- To offer peer-peer support to colleagues of faith and belief when they are faced with faith and belief related challenges
- Provide positive role models and allies for faith and belief within our university communities and beyond
- To work collaboratively with the Chaplaincy and Multi-Faith Centre to ensure that all staff and students at the University of Derby have access to faith-based facilities
- To work collaboratively with the Chaplaincy and Multi-Faith Centre to raise awareness of and promote faith and belief dialogue and understanding
- To work collaboratively with the Union of Students and student faith-based societies to promote awareness of faith and belief within our university communities



- To work collaboratively with the University to embed the Inclusion Strategy and ensure that faith and belief is considered within our decision-making processes

#### What the Faith and Belief Network does

As well as meeting frequently as a network to discuss matters relating to faith and belief, they undertake activity to promote belonging through faith and belief. These include:

- Planning annual activity to help further knowledge and learning and help identify key for the University's diversity calendar and central development programme
- Collaborating with chairs of other inclusion-related networks to consider intersectionality where possible, such as supporting Trans Day of Remembrance
- Running events and activities that includes writing special interest pieces for the University's communities, facilitating workshops, holding seminars on faith and belief and delivering keynotes as part of faith and belief month

#### The Ecumenical Christian and Muslim Chaplaincy Team

The Ecumenical Christian and Muslim chaplaincy team are a team of Christian and Muslim ministers, drawn from different denominations (Anglican, Christian, Ecumenical, Christian, Russian Orthodox, Muslim, Christian, Roman Catholic and Christian, Methodist). As a team, they are distributed across the University campus sites and provide a welcome and safe space for everyone, whatever faith, or worldview. In addition to the chaplaincy team, pastoral support covers a wide range of faiths and is supported by a team of faith consultants from Buddhist faith, Jewish faith, Sikh faith, and Humanism.

The Chaplaincy aims are:

- To provide chaplains and faith consultant support for all staff and students, including people without faith
- To provide advice on matters of faith and belief
- To provide space and an environment in which to practise and learn about faith communities

#### What the Ecumenical Christian and Muslim chaplaincy team do

As well as offering pastoral support and care, the chaplaincy also run a regular events and activities for staff and students. These include:

- Prayer and study circles: Christian prayer, Friday and daily prayers in the Islamic tradition, Bible study and weekly Quran circles and Arabic classes
- Health and wellbeing initiatives: run in collaboration with the University and include Yoga and the University choir

- Discussions and dialogue: facilitates discussion groups and informal conversations around the faith and belief and its role in society
- Community engagement and hospitality: Wednesday charity lunches, social space with free tea and coffee

### The Multi-Faith Centre (MFC)

The Multi-Faith Centre was founded in 2001 to build respect between people across different faiths and cultures. Since opening, they have created a strong network of contacts in faith communities and with key public and voluntary organisations and developed a range of training and community projects with these partners.

Chaired by the Rt Revd Libby Lane, Bishop of Derby, the MFC is an independent charity with trustees representing each faith community (Muslim faith, Sikh faith, Baha'I faith, Jewish faith, Hindu faith and Christian faith) and the University of Derby. Honorary President is Terry Waite CBE (former advisor to the Archbishop of Canterbury and hostage negotiator).

More recently, the Centre has recognised that it can play an important role as a connecting bridge between faith communities and civic society. It is an opportunity for the Centre to use its existing network and experience to forge a stronger strategic purpose and have a wider positive impact on local communities.

### The Multi-Faith Centre Objectives

- **Create an infrastructure:** Produce a platform for the faith sector to come together to act strategically and maximise their impact
- **Facilitate communication:** Create safe spaces for faith groups to hold conversations on social and community issues common to everyone
- **Nurture collaboration:** Encourage faith groups to join together and then create partnerships with local authorities and key agencies
- **Promote celebration:** Shine a light on good news stories around the positive contribution faith communities make to our society

### Multi-Faith Centre Achievements

- Creating Europe's first purpose-built Multi-Faith Centre through shared endeavour
- Developing award-winning training offers
- Working closely with the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner and communities across Derbyshire to support victims of race and religious hate crime
- Engaging in community cohesion initiatives (refugees, young people in Pear Tree area)
- Supporting the University of Derby and their Chaplaincy

- Launching the Roma Community Care project, offering support to Eastern European Roma

### Multi-Faith Centre Projects

As well as being a key partner with the University in its provision of faith and belief within the workplace and study space, we engage in a number of community-related projects. Examples include:

- Derby Faith Alliance: Building a partnership of faiths and contribute to the wider community of Derby. Our vision is a city where the diversity, expertise and richness of faith communities contributes to the building of vibrant and growing neighbourhoods
- Race and Religion Hate Crime: Our Race and Religion Hate Crime project creates safe spaces to foster dialogue, build resilience and develop networks that support victims and witnesses of hate crimes and incidents across Derbyshire
- The Club: We worked directly with young people through a range of activities and created a positive, safe space for practitioners in youth work to share good practice. Within both these roles we delivered training, organised events and advocated for young people and the youth work sector
- Surviving Climate Catastrophe: Surviving Climate Catastrophe aimed to motivate young people to reflect and act on climate change, working in collaboration with local Derby communities
- Survive and Thrive: Survive and Thrive worked on integration and training with refugees and asylum seekers in Derby and the surrounding area, supporting them to deal with crises and isolation. The project was led by the British Red Cross, partnered with Upbeat Communities and Multi-Faith Centre
- Roma Community Care: Roma Community Care was established in 2013 as the only Roma led support organisation in Derby and Derbyshire providing advice and advocacy to Eastern European Roma communities

The University works collaboratively and collegially with our staff and students, Chaplaincy and Multi-Faith Centre to provide a broad and holistic approach to faith and belief, so that everyone has the opportunity to engage and contribute in whatever way they can.

### UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Kate Guberg & Andrew Raeburn

#### **Name and brief description of the group or groups or initiatives:**

- Multifaith Staff Network

#### **Aim:**

Make UKRI an even more welcoming place for staff and stakeholders of all faiths and spiritual and non-spiritual beliefs.

### **History of the group's development**

The group was launched on the summer solstice in June 2021 as part of the UKRI Staff Network initiative. One of seven groups based around the 7 protected characteristics and was the final network to be formed.

The network continues to run, despite challenging times within the public sector – and has achieved much even with its limited leadership group numbers compared to other networks. Multifaith networks are a relatively recent addition to many organisations EDI offering, and as such, there has been time required to determine aims, remit and impact.

### **Structure of the group including leadership, executive sponsorship, number and profile of members**

Joint chaired by two staff members who do this as a voluntary part of their job.

Two executive sponsors at Executive Chair (Council President / CEO) and Director level.

Several leadership group members including those with portfolio (comms lead) and those without.

Several members who join us on our regular coffee mornings. Contribute to articles and attend webinars.

Several individual Faith groups (3) across the organisation which whilst not under the governance of the network, form part of UKRI faith networks and allow the individual faiths to gather and celebrate.

### **Description of the group's main activities and any particularly impactful initiatives or successes - assessment of the business impact of the group**

We have been given space in the organisations regular Stream publication where we have published articles highlighting dates of significance, sharing stories of observance, and a dedicated space on the intranet where we can detail our activities. We also have sub-pages where each of the faiths who have identified themselves to us, are able to say a bit about their own faith.

We have started a “Pilgrimage stories” series, which is an opportunity for a virtual field trip... Where someone who has been on a pilgrimage gets to talk about their experience and reasons for going on the trip on a webinar, this is followed by an audience Q&A. Recordings have been made after the event and are available in perpetuity.

We hosted an “Ancient Religions” series, in which we brought in several specialists to share their expertise in ancient forms of religion such as Roman, Greek, Persian etc. This included one of our executive sponsors who works in the arts and humanities field.

The network has secured an improved Multifaith room which is far larger and more suitable than the previous room (small and windowless) and will have better provision for use by differing faiths. There has been good engagement from the organisation on this, with resources dedicated by UKRI for the project guided by feedback from the Network.

### **Benefits and change observed from the organisation**

Given space to publicise in whole company comms. We have seen positive feedback on such articles from colleagues. (Official Press & Acknowledgement)

We have seen interest in our work from the organisations EDI teams and the occasional shout out in organisational comms, including our Chief Executive, Dame Ottoline Leyser in the all-staff webinar. (Official Press & Acknowledgement)

We have seen the EDI team checking up with the group when organising workshops, to make sure they do not clash with religious festivals which people routinely take off for observance. This is anticipated to filter across the organisation. (Awareness and acknowledgement by formal organisation teams)

There has been an increased awareness of the importance of faith spaces, with areas of the organisation adopting a policy for faith spaces. This continues to be a campaign for the network as the organisation has many sites, some with very challenging environments I.e., British Antarctic survey and Boulby mine. (Increased resourcing)

We have seen the establishment of new Individual faith groups such as the Pagan moot. (Increased resourcing)

We have seen colleagues able to connect with our faith groups with the Multifaith Network acting as the first point of call who were able to direct them to the resource (better signposting) (Employee resilience)

## Faith Friendly Workplaces (Network)

Andy D Smith and Jagdish Jethwa

### **Name and brief description of the group or groups or initiatives**

- Faith Friendly Workplaces (FFW)

Our Purpose is to raise awareness of faith and belief as a crucial part of healthy and happy workforces, that can improve and enhance organisational performance and productivity; and to promote staff faith networks as creating value, providing a sense of belonging in the workplace and contributing to emotional and spiritual well-being.

This is by undertaking a programme of desk research and consultation in the business community around the development of a Faith Kitemark accreditation, which is currently missing

from corporate provision of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion frameworks within companies and institutions.

### **History of the group's development**

The group began forming during 2021 when TransformWork enabled a network of businesses (including Rolls-Royce plc, Thames Water, OVO Energy) to become connected and out of this FFW started. Initial engagement indicated there was a need to support workplaces creating and developing faith networks but also there was a lack of information on what good looked like, how that could be measured and what were the main obstacles.

From these initial discussions a FFW committee was set up to develop ideas.

In 2022, FFW reached out to the University of Derby Multi-Faith Centre (MFC) who are now credited as a partner and are carrying out research into this topic.

The formal launch and the first quarterly meeting was in September 2022.

In July 2023, members of the FFW network supported the Faith and Belief forum in Parliament and 10 Downing Street.

### **Structure of the group including leadership, executive sponsorship, number and profile of members**

FFW is now in contact with representatives from around 60 UK companies which vary from small to large numbers of employees and are in both the private and public sectors.

The FFW committee consists of:

- Chair
- Co-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

### **Description of the group's main activities and any particularly impactful initiatives or successes**

#### Quarterly meetings

Every quarter there is a FFW meeting when an invited guest speaker shares some aspect of workplace networks. This can vary between their own workplace network to the role workplace groups such as unions can have supporting faith networks.

#### Research support

The workplace network research being carried out by the University of Derby's Multi-Faith Centre is periodically reviewed with members of the FFW committee and support, advice, and input are provided.



### Encourage and Share Events

Representatives of the FFW group hold events within their company and where appropriate, these are shared with the wider network.

In the run up to key calendar dates such as Inter-Faith week, network groups are encouraged to participate in events within their company and share ideas of what they are doing which can inspire others to do similar.

### National dialogue

FFW is a key participant in the national dialogue currently underway on workplace faith and belief networks. FFW was part of the Faith and Belief Forum held in July 2023 at Parliament and 10 Downing Street, London.

### **Assessment of the business impact of the group**

The weight of companies connected with FFW is enabling the place of workplace faith and belief networks to be considered at national level.

The project focuses on the belief that faith is a crucial part of healthy and happy workforces and that it can improve and enhance organisational performance and productivity.

It is recognised that staff faith networks create value, a sense of belonging in the workplace and contribute to emotional and spiritual well-being.

### **Prospects for the future, including challenges and opportunities**

FFW seeks to continue expanding the number of companies associated with FFW.

Challenges are maintaining momentum with all the other demands members have in terms of their main work, supporting their own workplace network and contributing to the work of FFW and wider national dialogue.

Engagement with the MFC, Religious Freedom & Business Foundation, Good Faith Partnership amongst others has expanded the opportunity to develop the national awareness of workplace faith and belief networks.

There is relevance and a business need for some form of 'faith kitemark'. This would enable organisations to articulate their commitment and engagement with faith as well as a continuous improvement framework for dealing with people and matters of faith in the workplace.

External validation of faith friendly workplaces would strengthen the evidence base that faith makes good business sense.