

Corporate Secretary Forum: Governance priorities in 2021

Managing renewed investor expectations

Thursday, May 6, 2021

Live: 11.00 am – 3.00 pm ET. Virtual event

About the event

The events of the past year have shaken up both the way companies look at themselves and how investors see them. Investors have evolving expectations of how companies – and their boards – are approaching issues ranging from social and racial equity to operational imperatives, human capital and the growing sense of urgency surrounding climate change.

Governance teams have key roles to play both in ensuring that boards are aware of these changing expectations and in helping address them through engagement, disclosures and internal processes. This special virtual event will provide insight and practical guidance on fulfilling these roles and meeting the challenges they present in 2021.

Agenda (Timings in ET)

10.45 am **Welcome to the forum: Virtual platform opens and networking begins**

10.55 am **Opening remarks: Keeping up with an evolving agenda**

Ben Maiden, editor-at-large, Corporate Secretary

11.00 am **Executive compensation amid a pandemic and economic crisis**

This session will focus on how Covid-19 and the associated economic fallout have created great difficulties for boards in terms of setting and reporting on executive compensation. Our panel of experts will discuss investors' expectations in terms of executive compensation this year, including linking rewards to ESG issues. They will also look at effective disclosure, how governance teams should approach the issue in engagement and how companies are approaching compliance with the CEO pay-ratio rule.

Wendy Cassity, EVP and chief legal officer, Nuance Communications

Todd Krauser, managing director, FW Cook

Jonas Kron, chief advocacy officer, Trillium Asset Management

Moderator: Ben Maiden, editor-at-large, Corporate Secretary

11.45 am **Networking break**

12.00 pm **Diversity on the board and beyond**

In this session, our panel will look at the growing pressure from investors to increase diversity on companies' boards and address racial and ethnic inequities across their workforces. They will discuss issues such as how general counsel and corporate secretaries can help their boards recruit a wider variety of members and how they can approach reporting around workforce and board composition.

Amy Augustine, director of ESG investing, Boston Trust Walden

Lucy Fato, executive VP, GC and global head of communications and government affairs, AIG

Kaley Karaffa, director of board engagement, Nasdaq

Derek Windham, vice president and associate general counsel, Hewlett Packard Enterprise Company

Moderator: Ben Ashwell, editor, Corporate Secretary and IR Magazine

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12.45 pm **What's next for virtual shareholder meetings?**

Increased adoption of virtual shareholder meetings has highlighted the need to improve processes and policies surrounding the format. This session will discuss the practical and strategic issues around admitting beneficial shareholders and delivering an effective AGM. We will share lessons learned, challenges faced during previous virtual shareholder meetings and the practical steps you can take to provide access to beneficial owners.

[Douglas Chia](#), president, [Soundboard Governance](#)

[Sherry Murdock Moreland](#), president and chief operating officer, [Mediant Communications](#)

[Katie Sevcik](#), executive vice president and chief operating officer, [EQ](#)

Moderator: [Ben Maiden](#), editor-at-large, [Corporate Secretary](#)

1.30 pm **Networking break**

1.45 pm **Lobbying and political spending in the spotlight**

Investors are increasingly looking for greater transparency into companies' lobbying efforts, either directly or through industry groups, not least as they relate to ESG issues. The riot at the Capitol in Washington, DC on January 6 has also shone a spotlight on companies' payments to political campaigns. Our panel of experts will look at the board's role in assessing and directing these activities, best practices for disclosures and how to talk to investors about potentially sensitive topics.

[Bruce Freed](#), president, [Center for Political Accountability](#)

[Veena Ramani](#), senior program director, capital market systems, [Ceres](#)

Moderator: [Ben Ashwell](#), editor, [Corporate Secretary](#) and [IR Magazine](#)

2.30 pm **Summary and end of event**

[Ben Maiden](#), editor-at-large, [Corporate Secretary](#)