

Alphabet urged to address AI-related risks of targeted ads

TORONTO/VANCOUVER, June 4, 2025 – A coalition of investors led by [SHARE](#), the Shareholder Association for Research and Education, continues to put pressure on Alphabet Inc., parent company of Google, over the technology giant's use of artificial intelligence (AI) in targeted advertising.

The investor coalition is urging shareholders to support a proposal (Proposal Number 12 in the Company's [2025 Proxy Statement](#)) directing Alphabet to publish an independent, third-party Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) to examine the actual and potential human rights impacts of Google's AI-driven targeted ads. The proposal will go to a vote at Alphabet's Annual General Meeting (AGM) this week.

SHARE and other investors have been engaging with Alphabet on this issue since 2021, citing the risks that such technology may pose to the company and its shareholders. A similar proposal last year [received more than 48 per cent support](#) from independent shareholders.

A spokesperson for the Pension Plan of The United Church of Canada (UCC), the lead filer of this year's proposal, said investors have made it clear: returns cannot come at the cost of human dignity and well-being.

"Alphabet's continued expansion of AI-driven targeted advertising not only has the potential to cause real harms, including undermining privacy and reinforcing discrimination; it also exposes investors to the risks those harms create," said Alan Hall, Executive Officer at UCC.

"This proposal is about ensuring that human rights are respected in the design and deployment of these powerful technologies."

Alphabet's targeted advertising leverages AI to determine what users see and to maximize reach. As the technology continues to evolve, and Alphabet expands its investment in AI across its operations, inadequate due diligence may expose the company and its shareholders to significant risk.

Alphabet itself has recognized these risks: the company's [2024 annual report](#) cites potential consequences to users, including risks of discrimination and human rights harms.

For investors, the risk doesn't end there. Juana Lee, Associate Director of Corporate Engagement at SHARE, notes that advertising accounted for more than 75 per cent of Alphabet's revenue in 2024, making the business case crystal clear.

"It is simply critical that Alphabet enhance its human rights due diligence efforts in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of its business," said Lee.

"Particularly given the ever-evolving regulatory and policy landscape around AI, companies must identify the guardrails needed to mitigate risks and enhance shareholders' long-term value."

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