

Todd Sears

Founder, Out Leadership

Todd Sears has a long history of innovation, integrating business opportunity with next-generation leadership and diversity.

A former investment banker at Schrodgers and DeSilva & Phillips, as well as a first-quintile financial advisor at Merrill Lynch, he brings an in-depth understanding of the challenges facing senior leadership in corporations today, as well as how to leverage diversity initiatives to increase and retain diverse talent and market share. After creating the first national team of financial advisors on Wall Street to focus on the LGBT+ community, which brought over \$1.5 billion of new assets to Merrill Lynch, Todd moved into diversity leadership. Since that time, he has pioneered diversity initiatives at Merrill Lynch, where he was Head of Strategic Initiatives for the Office of Diversity, as well as at Credit Suisse, where he served as Americas Head of Diversity and Inclusion. Both organizations continue to be ranked among the top companies in the Fortune 500 by diversity organizations like Working Mother, Black MBA, the Human Rights Campaign, and others. In his capacity as a leadership pioneer, Todd has launched groundbreaking initiatives with recognized trailblazers among diverse communities, from Martina Navratilova to Joe Jonas to General Colin Powell. Todd is an international expert and lecturer and appears at leading conferences to impart his methods, experiences and vision for diversity innovation. Todd, a graduate of Duke University and Woodberry Forrest School, is also an active philanthropist and community leader. He is the founding co-chair of Jeffrey Fashion Cares, a fashion show fundraiser supporting LGBT+ civil rights, youth and HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, which has applied an innovative cost-structure to raise millions of dollars since its inception. Todd is a senior advisor to the Task Force for Talent Innovation as well as Christopher Street Financial. He also serves on the non-profit boards of The Williams Institute of UCLA, The Palette Fund, The Asia Society Diversity Board, and Lambda Legal National Leadership Council.