



Public Affairs
Council

2019 Association PAC Benchmarking Report

Webinar for Survey Participants

September 12, 2019

About the Council

- Year Founded: 1954
- Total Members: Over 750 organizations
- Total Active People: Over 8,000 professionals
- Total Staff: 23
- Office Locations: Washington & Brussels
- Politics: Nonpolitical & Nonpartisan
- Focus: PACs, Government Relations, Grassroots Advocacy, Policy Communications, Digital Advocacy, Corporate Social Responsibility, Issues Management

Survey Overview

- Comprehensive benchmarking report covering trends and best practices in PAC management, including
 - Management and staffing
 - Governance
 - Leadership engagement
 - Fundraising and recognition strategies
 - Participation and contribution rates
 - Disbursement strategies and political involvement
- 81 participating associations
- Conducted every other year

2019 Association PAC Benchmarking Report

How to Use This Report

Benchmark your activities

- Staffing and operating budgets
- Leadership engagement
- Participation rates and growth
- Fundraising and recognition strategies
- Disbursement planning and execution

Benchmark trends

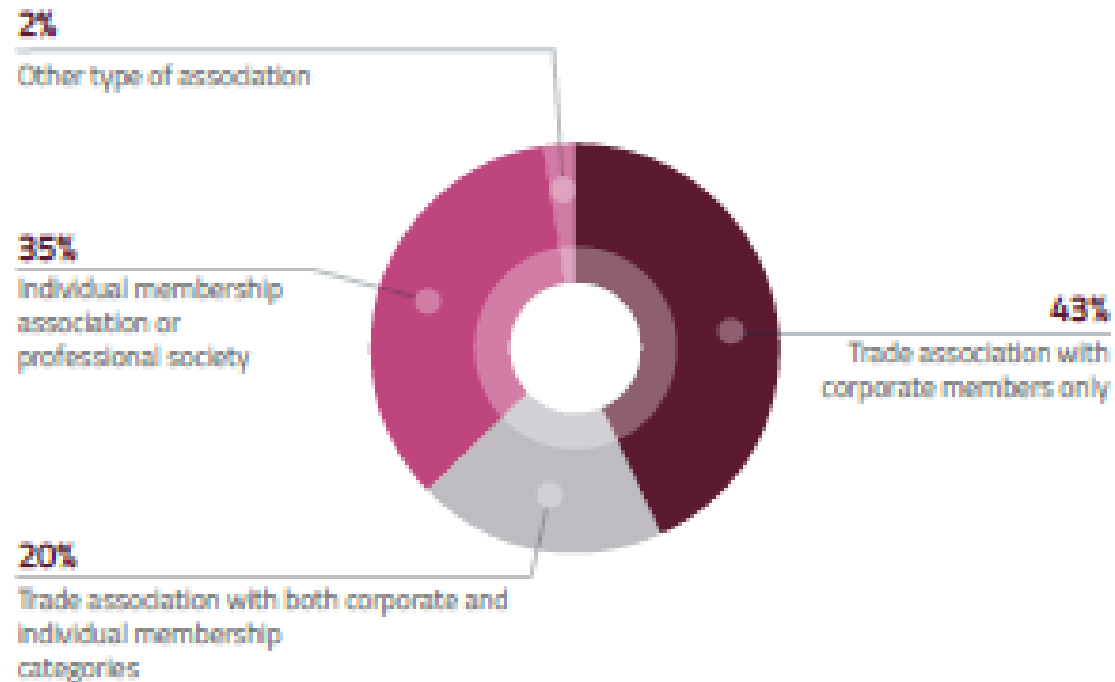
- Transparency, leadership engagement, peer-to-peer, incentives

Conduct a comparative analysis (additional fee, starts at \$500)

- Compare results with a survey subsample (ex. Industry, PAC size)
- For more information, contact kbrackemyre@pac.org

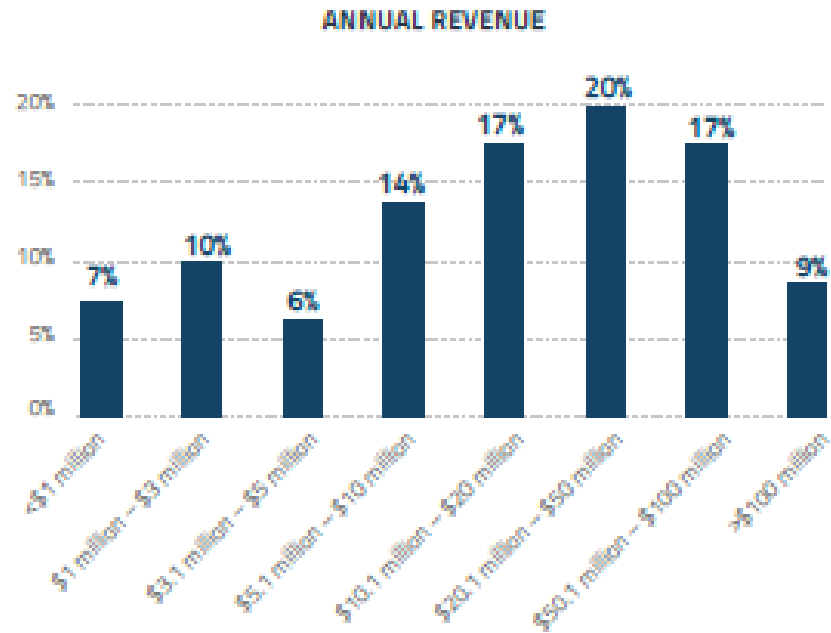
The Data Set: Association Type

■ What is your association type?



The Data Set: Association Annual Revenue

- The following is a breakdown of participants by their association's annual revenue for the most recent fiscal year:



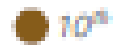
Association PAC Size by Annual Revenue

■ The following is a breakdown of PAC size by the association's annual revenue:

Association Annual Revenue	Median PAC Size
Overall	\$658,716
<\$3 million	\$194,292
\$3.1 million – \$5 million	\$247,000
\$5.1 million – \$10 million	\$483,715
\$10.1 million – \$20 million	\$447,846
\$20.1 million – \$50 million	\$731,024
>\$50 million	\$1,426,550

PAC Size and Growth

Percentiles:



10th



25th



50th (median)



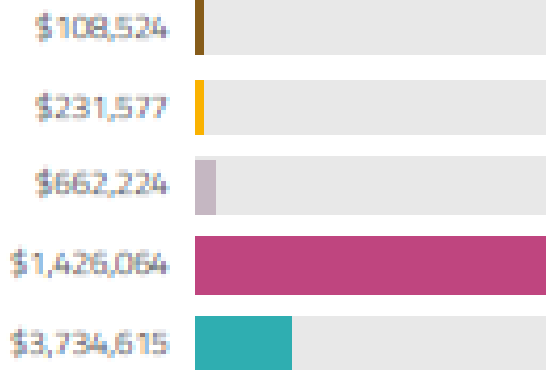
75th



90th

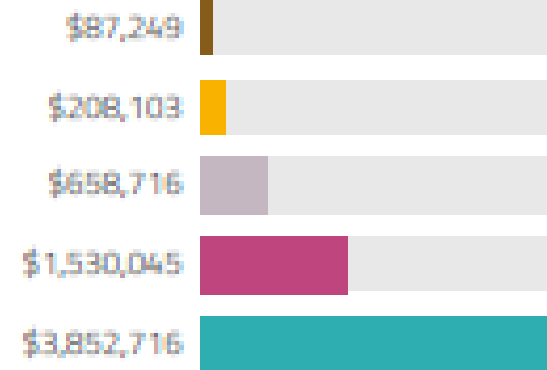
FEC 2016

Median Numbers by Percentile
Size of responding PACs,
2016 (FEC-reported receipts)

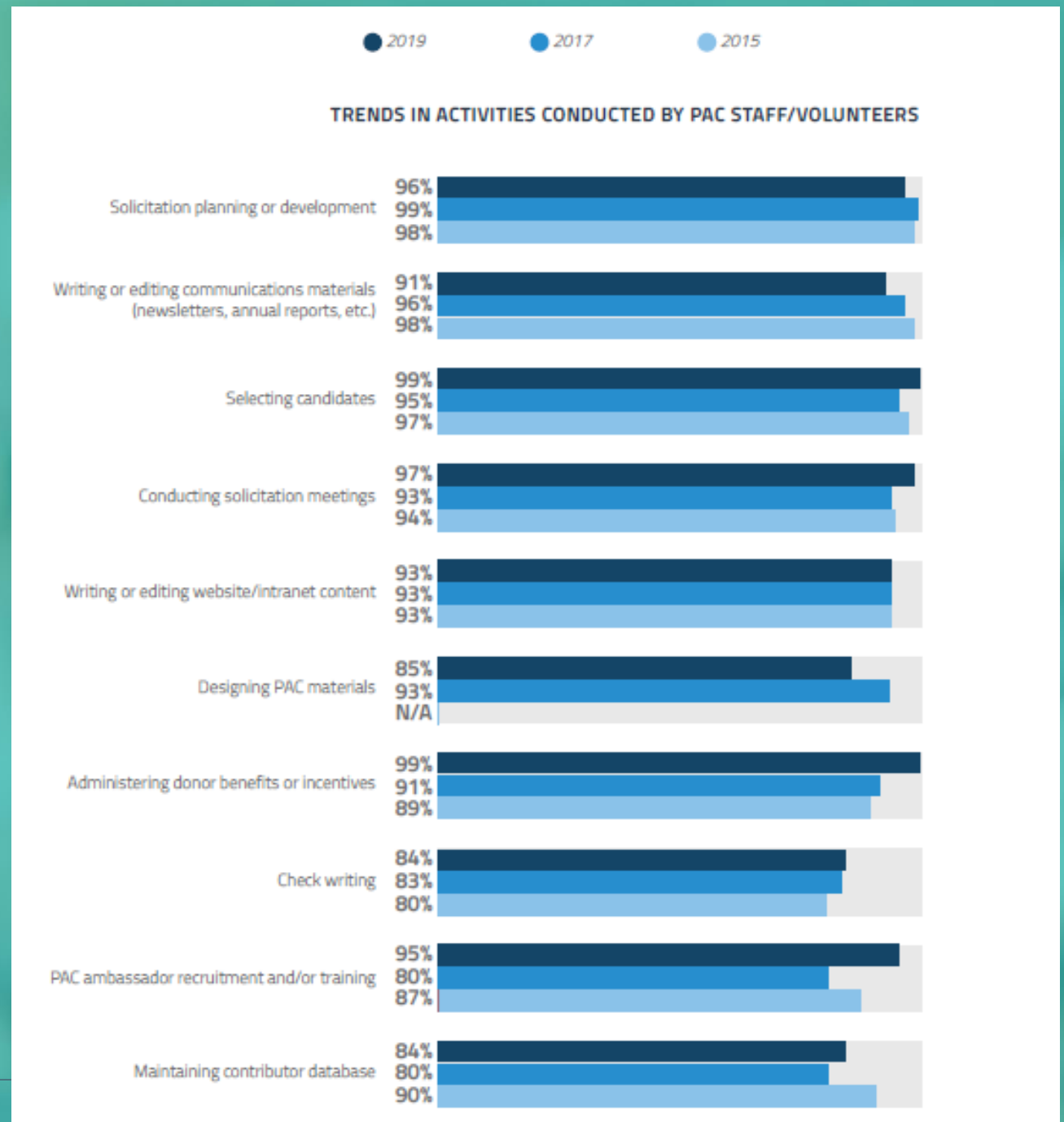


FEC 2018

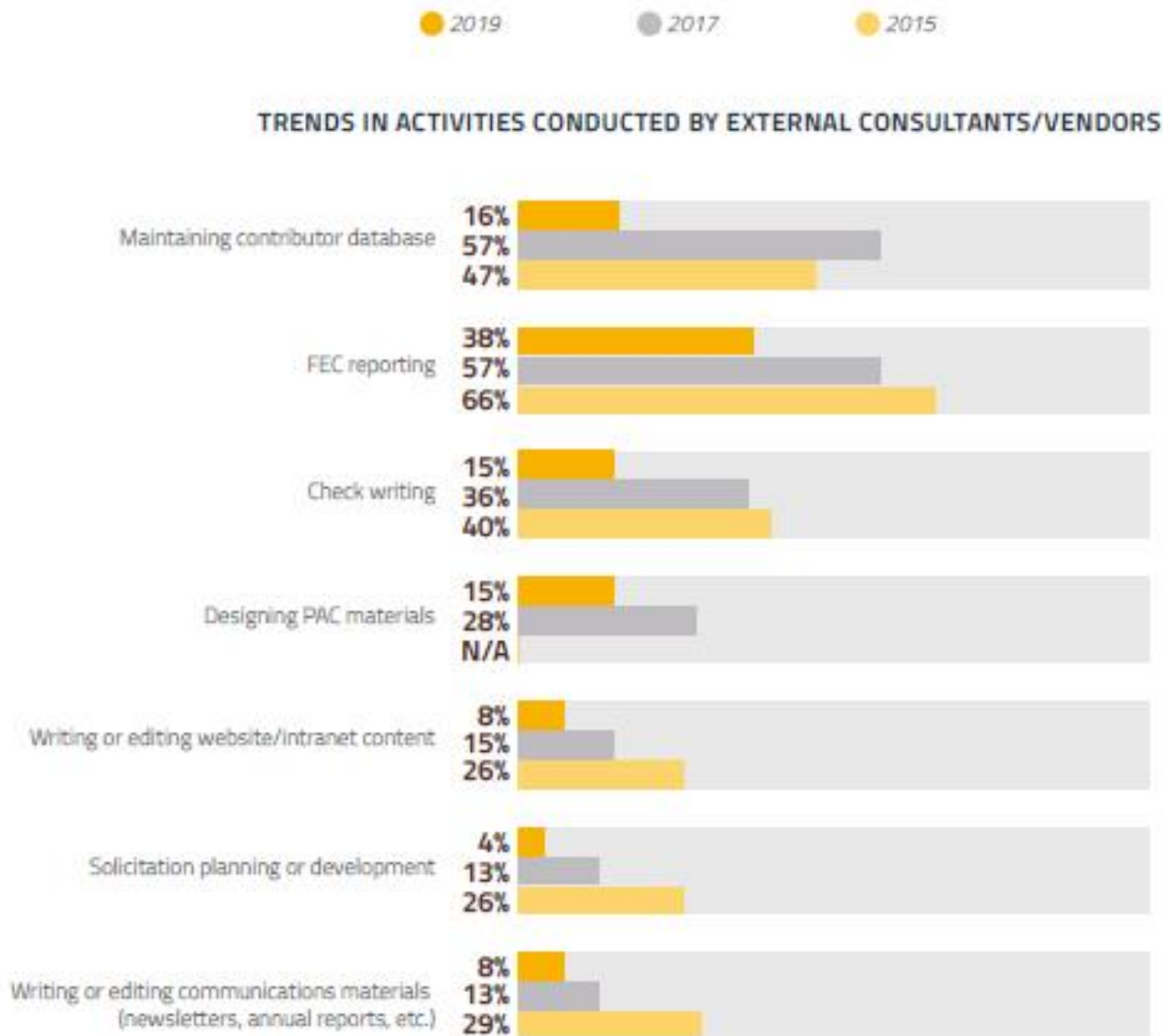
Median Numbers by Percentile
Size of responding PACs,
2018 (FEC-reported receipts)



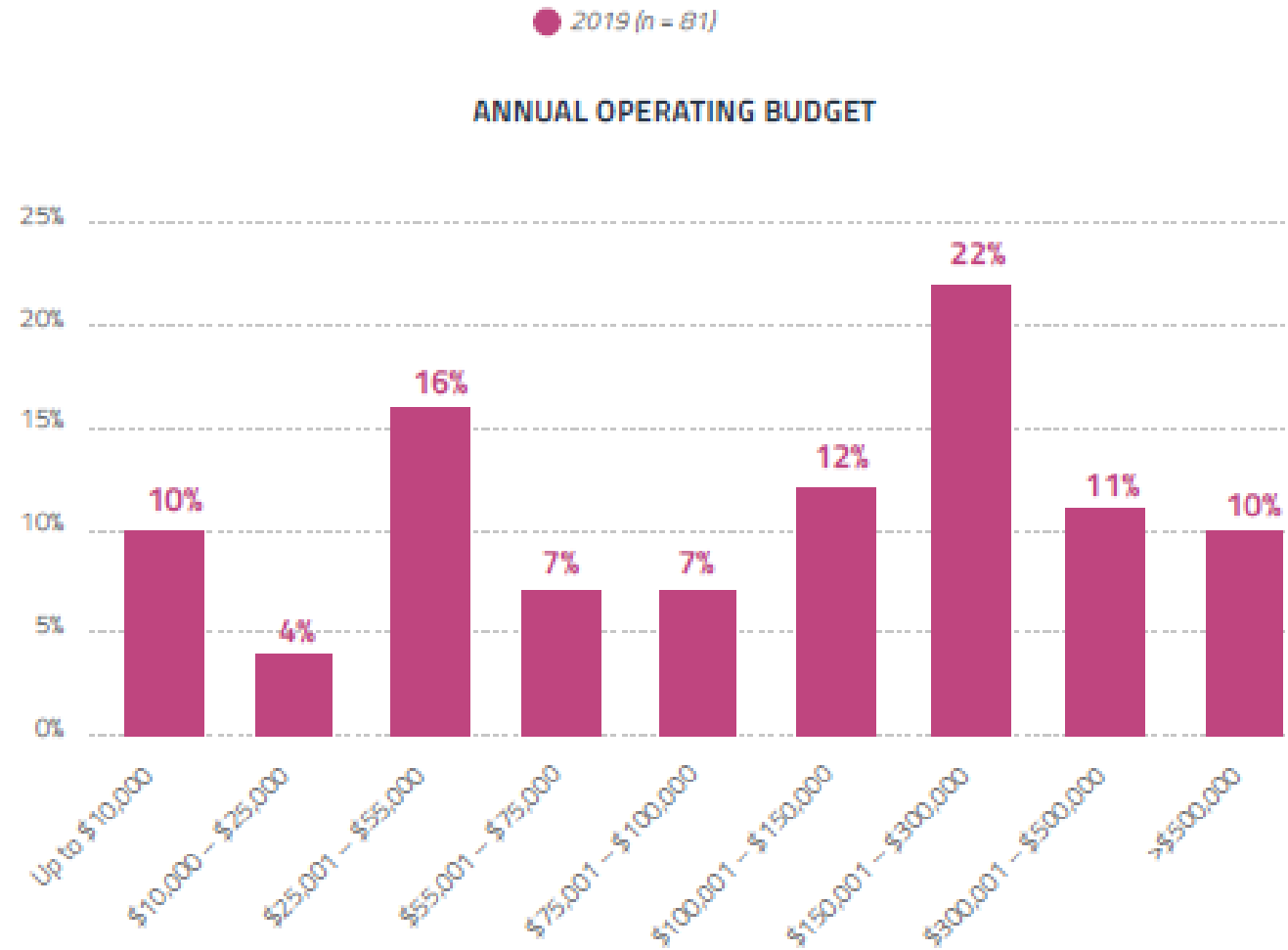
The Median Association PAC: 1 professional staff and .5 administrative staff



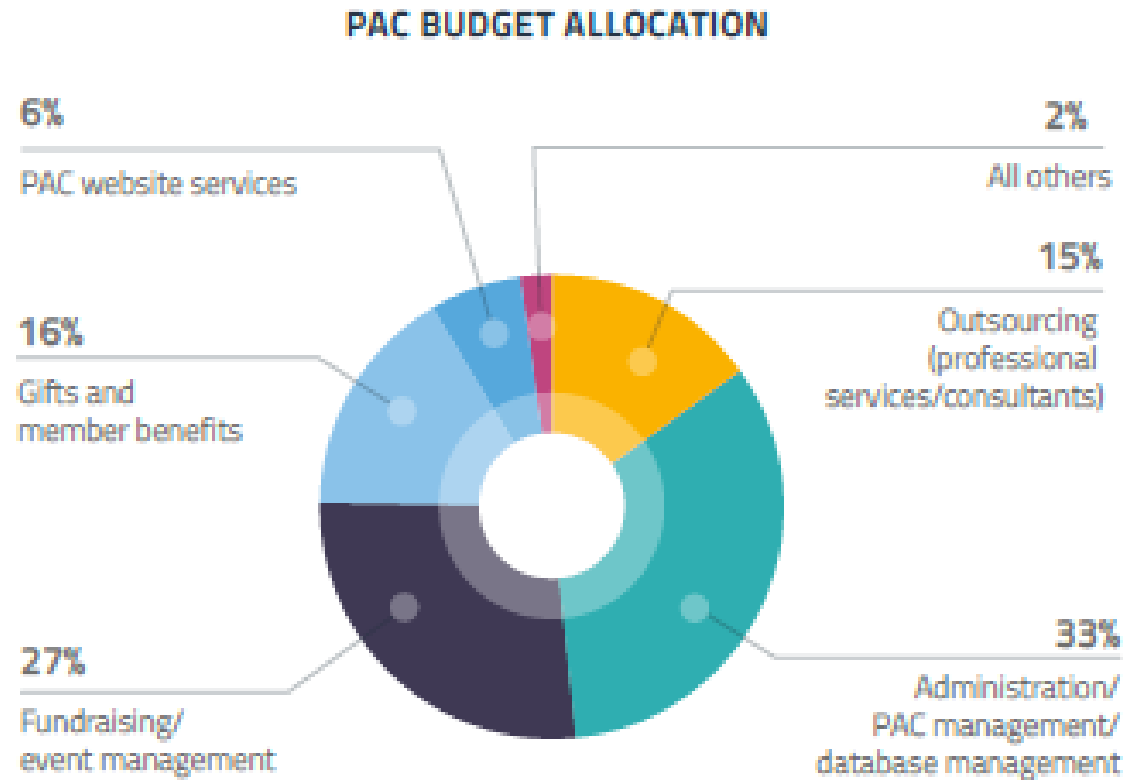
Activities that are Outsourced



Budgets



Budget Allocation



Staff Executive Involvement

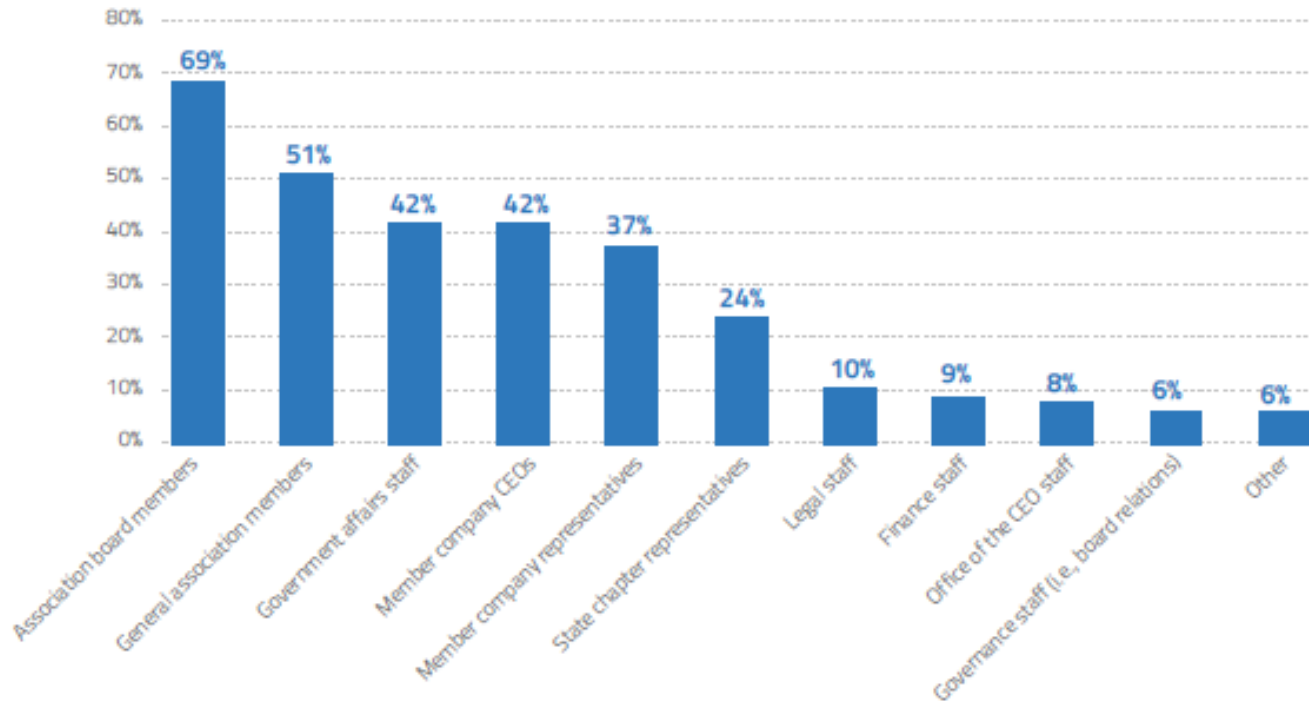
Trends in Staff Executive Involvement	2019	2017
Attends PAC events	77%	89%
Formally endorses the PAC	70%	77%
Signs or sends solicitation letters and emails	57%	62%
Solicits association's board of directors	52%	55%
Makes presentations at or opens solicitation meetings	48%	63%
Signs or sends thank you letters	47%	44%
Contributes below the maximum amount allowed to the PAC	44%	48%
Contributes the maximum amount allowed to the PAC	42%	48%
Hosts PAC donor appreciation events	38%	45%
Sends communications on behalf of the PAC (e.g., PAC newsletter)	31%	40%
Serves on the PAC board	29%	22%
Appears in a PAC video	17%	14%
Chairs the PAC board	3%	0%

Member Leader Involvement

Trends in Member Leader Involvement	2019	2017
Attends PAC events	78%	81%
Formally endorses the PAC	71%	74%
Signs or sends solicitation letters and emails	66%	69%
Serves on the PAC board	65%	39%
Solicits association's board of directors	61%	66%
Makes presentations at or opens solicitation meetings	58%	69%
Chairs the PAC board	57%	22%
Contributes the maximum amount allowed to the PAC	49%	64%
Signs or sends thank you letters	45%	47%
Contributes below the maximum amount allowed to the PAC	43%	55%
Sends communications on behalf of the PAC (e.g., PAC newsletter)	42%	42%
Hosts PAC donor appreciation events	35%	53%
Appears in a PAC video	31%	39%

PAC Governance

TRENDS IN JOBS/SOURCES OF THE PAC BOARD



- 87% of PACs have a PAC Board of Directors
- Median board size: 13

PAC Governance

Trends in PAC Board Activities	2019	2017	2015
Approves changes to bylaws	86%	75%	75%
Attends PAC events	83%	75%	N/A
Provides general PAC oversight/input	80%	75%	30%
Approves contributions to candidates	71%	62%	62%
Manages strategic planning/goal setting	68%	60%	63%
Attends candidate fundraisers	67%	52%	N/A
Conducts in-person fundraising or gives PAC presentations	65%	60%	57%
Recruits PAC ambassadors/champions	58%	37%	N/A
Signs/sends solicitation letters	55%	56%	55%
Hosts PAC donor appreciation events	38%	18%	30%
Selects candidates	30%	27%	28%
Provides internal budget planning/oversight	30%	24%	30%
Plans solicitations	24%	18%	29%
Manages transparency activities	18%	15%	19%
Solicits prior approval (trade associations only)	17%	35%	22%
Manages communications activities	11%	15%	14%

Receipts and Fundraising

- What was the total dollar amount for all PAC contributions from **all** of your donors for the 2017-2018 election cycle?

10 th Percentile	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile (median)	75 th Percentile	90 th Percentile
\$61,695	\$223,135	\$640,000	\$1,520,000	\$4,040,000

- How many members (including employees of member companies that have given prior approval, where applicable) and association employees were **eligible** for your federal PAC for the 2017-2018 election cycle, regardless of whether they were solicited?

10 th Percentile	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile (median)	75 th Percentile	90 th Percentile
99	1,000	14,500	49,906	188,100

Receipts and Fundraising

- Of the eligible individuals reported above, how many were **solicited** for a contribution in the 2017-2018 election cycle?

10 th Percentile	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile (median)	75 th Percentile	90 th Percentile
81	300	8,000	34,000	96,000

- Of the solicited individuals reported above, how many **contributed** to your federal PAC in the 2017-2018 election cycle?

10 th Percentile	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile (median)	75 th Percentile	90 th Percentile
47	101	1,183	3,561	10,280

■ Overall Ratios by Percentage:

	10 th Percentile	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile (median)	75 th Percentile	90 th Percentile
Percentage of eligible individuals who were solicited	13%	61%	97%	100%	100%
Percentage of eligible individuals who contributed	4%	8%	20%	50%	75%

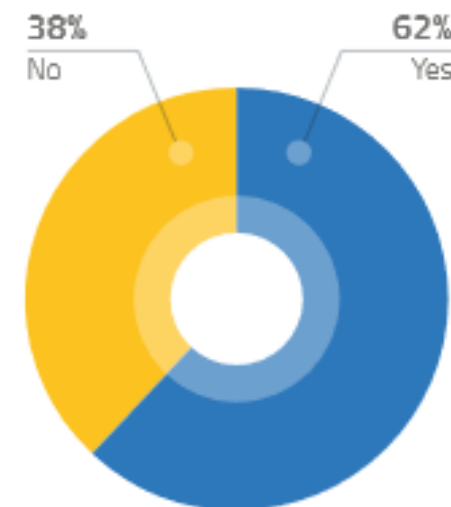
Percentage of total donations received

	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile (median)	75 th Percentile	90 th Percentile
Association senior management	1%	3%	10%	22%
Association staff	0%	1%	5%	20%
Association board of directors members	4%	10%	28%	60%
All other association members	43%	83%	95%	97%

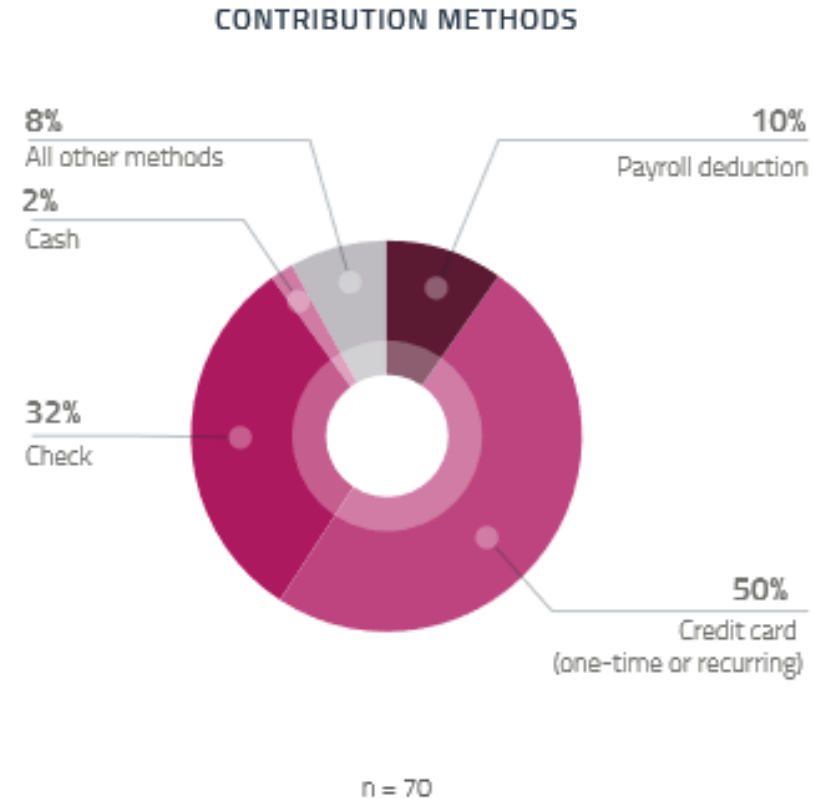
Prior Approval

- What percentage of corporate member companies give your PAC prior approval to solicit some or all of their PAC-eligible employees?

Percent of Member Companies That Grant Prior Approval	Percentage of Respondents
None	11%
1% – 10%	27%
11% – 25%	27%
26% – 50%	14%
51% – 75%	14%
76% – 90%	2%
91% – 100%	5%
Average (from midpoints)	26%



Receipts and Fundraising



Receipts and Fundraising

Trends in Solicitation Frequency	2019	2017	2015
Continuously	44%	50%	51%
Semi-annually	9%	19%	13%
Quarterly	7%	18%	21%
Short campaign once per year	9%	7%	9%
Short campaign once per cycle	0%	3%	7%
Other	0%	3%	0%

Other responses include: About twice a quarter, Some quarters because of events it can be three times.

Fundraising – Top PAC Solicitors

Federal PAC Solicitors	Most Used	Most Effective
PAC board members	79%	59%
PAC manager	70%	40%
CEO/staff executive	67%	40%
Association member leader (e.g., board chair)	67%	24%
Head of government relations department	63%	20%
Peer solicitors (not on the PAC board)	57%	39%
Association board of directors	46%	19%
Government relations staff	43%	6%
Association senior manager (not the CEO)	37%	4%
Member company executives (for trade associations only)	33%	17%
Consultants	7%	1%
Other	3%	3%

Other responses include: Website only.

Fundraising Top Solicitation Approaches:

Solicitation Approaches	Most Used	Most Effective
Online solicitations (e.g., email)	90%	50%
Association's annual meeting or trade show	86%	49%
Peer-to-peer solicitations	83%	59%
Fundraising events (e.g., dinner, reception, auction)	74%	33%
Events (e.g., fly-in)	64%	16%
Phone calls	49%	10%
Direct mail	46%	21%
Small group meetings	43%	7%
Large group meetings	41%	10%
PAC video	31%	3%
Association dues invoice	29%	11%
Association staff fundraising event	24%	1%
New hire communication or orientation	19%	3%
Mobile solicitations via text or app	13%	1%
Regular staff meetings	6%	1%
Interoffice mail	0%	0%
Other	1%	1%

Other responses include: Requests from member CEOs to employees.

Trends in Solicitation Approaches

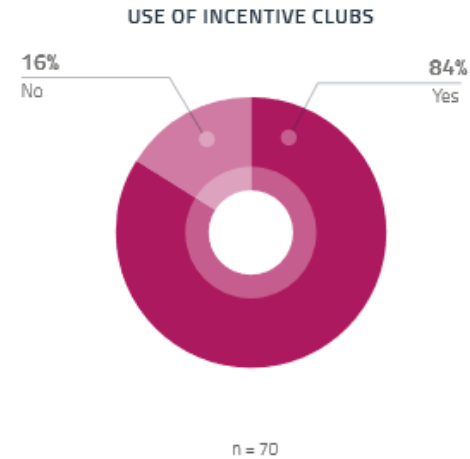
Trends in Solicitation Approaches	2019	2017	2015
Online solicitations (e.g., email)	90%	88%	81%
Association's annual meeting or trade show	86%	78%	83%
Peer-to-peer solicitations	83%	87%	72%
Fundraising events (e.g., dinner, reception, auction)	74%	57%	57%
Events (e.g., fly-in)	64%	59%	64%
Phone calls	49%	54%	44%
Direct mail	46%	60%	43%
Small group meetings	43%	27%	36%
Large group meetings	41%	29%	28%
PAC video	31%	21%	9%
Association dues invoice	29%	24%	27%
Association staff fundraising event	24%	27%	19%
New hire communication or orientation	19%	21%	12%
Mobile solicitations via text or app	13%	4%	2%
Regular staff meetings	6%	18%	9%
Interoffice mail	0%	3%	5%
Other	1%	0%	1%

PAC Size by Tactics

	Median FEC 2018	n=
Use peer solicitors (Q26, n=40)	\$1,130,121	40
Do NOT use peer solicitors (Q26, n=30)	\$276,319	30
Use peer-to-peer solicitations (Q28, n=58)	\$795,392	58
Do NOT use peer-to-peer solicitations (Q28, n=12)	\$420,875	12
Use PAC Board member solicitors (Q26, n=55)	\$787,451	55
Do NOT use PAC Board member solicitors (Q26, n=15)	\$429,209	15
Use special name recognition (*) (Q34/Q35, n=58)	\$795,392	58
Do not use special name recognition (Q34/Q35, n=11)	\$369,679	11
Have corporate members (Q23, n=45)	\$478,818	45
Do not have corporate members (Q23, n=28)	\$880,549	28

* = these are respondents who use special name recognition as a general benefit, an incentive club benefit, or both.

Use of Incentive Clubs



Trends in the Number of Incentive Club Levels Offered by Companies	2019	2017	2015
One	3%	2%	5%
Two	3%	2%	5%
Three	15%	17%	25%
Four	24%	39%	31%
Five or more	54%	39%	34%

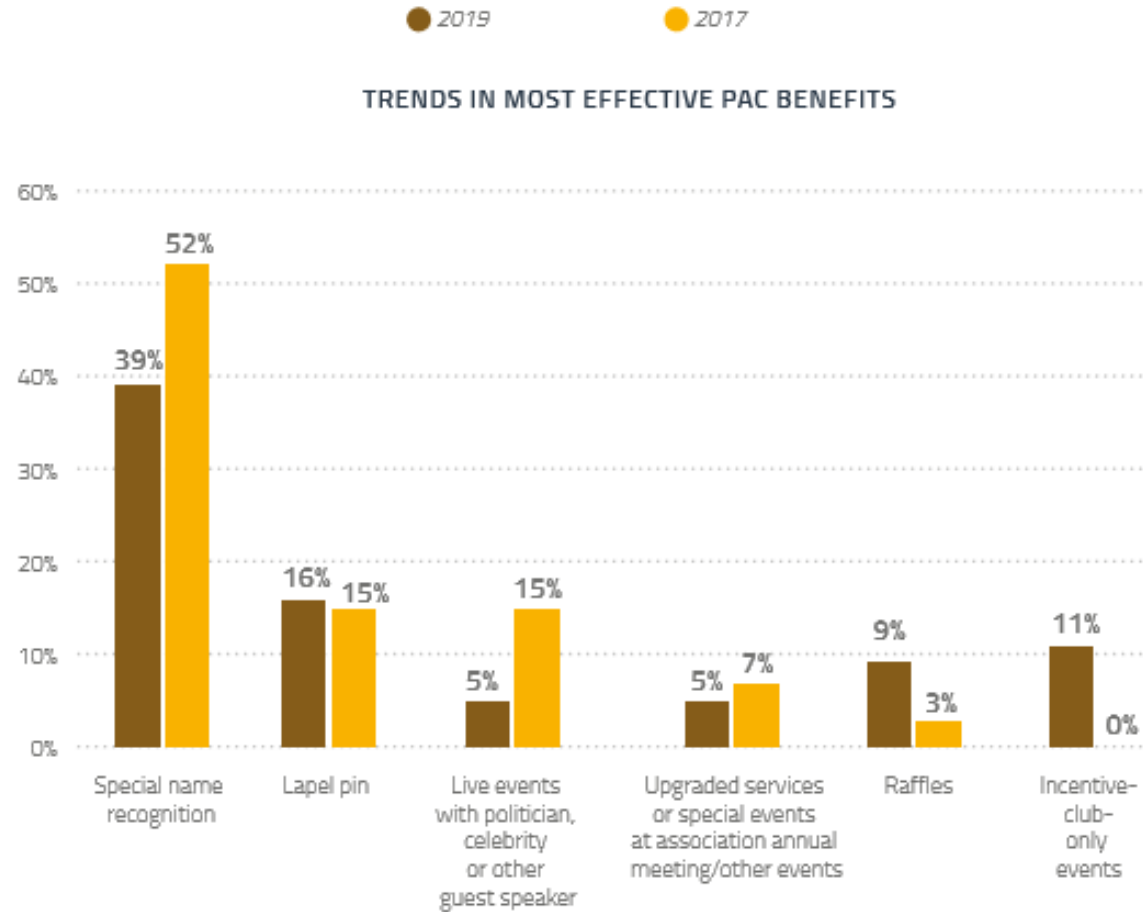
General Membership Benefits

Trends in General Membership Benefits	2019	2017	2015
Special communications (e.g., issue updates or newsletters)	62%	56%	61%
Special name recognition	49%	61%	53%
Lapel pin	46%	42%	42%
Annual gift	32%	19%	26%
Ability to deliver PAC checks to candidates	27%	14%	42%
Raffles	18%	2%	24%
Live events with politician, celebrity or guest speaker	13%	19%	22%
Event with staff executive and/or board leadership	11%	23%	14%
Upgraded services or special events at association annual meeting/other events	10%	11%	8%
Virtual events with politician, celebrity or guest speaker	6%	22%	5%
PAC match	5%	0%	12%
Incentive-club-only events	5%	0%	0%
Trips to Washington or state capital	3%	8%	7%
Trips to vacation destination	2%	13%	5%
Other	2%	0%	5%

Incentive Club Benefits

Trends in Incentive Club Benefits	2019	2017	2015
Special name recognition	85%	93%	85%
Lapel pin	71%	78%	76%
Special communications	53%	61%	55%
Annual gift	51%	42%	72%
Incentive-club-only events	48%	51%	50%
Live events with politician, celebrity or guest speaker	39%	39%	53%
Opportunity to attend candidate fundraiser	37%	34%	N/A
Upgraded services or special events at association annual meeting/other events	36%	49%	48%
Ability to deliver PAC checks to candidates	34%	29%	50%
Event with staff executive and/or board leadership	20%	34%	35%
Virtual events with politician, celebrity or guest speaker	15%	27%	22%
Raffles	14%	15%	22%
Trips to Washington or state capital	5%	5%	10%
PAC match	3%	2%	5%
Other	3%	5%	3%
Trips to vacation destination	2%	12%	3%

Most Effective Benefits



PAC Communications

- Please indicate which of the following communications tools your federal PAC uses to communicate with PAC donors only, and which are used for all PAC eligibles:

	Pac Donors Only	All PAC Eligibles
Live events (e.g., PAC education, issue overviews and meet-and-greets)	36%	21%
PAC annual report	34%	30%
PAC newsletter	34%	28%
Webinars or teleconferences on issues or featuring guest speakers	34%	8%
Issue updates via email or web	24%	39%
PAC advertising/awareness campaign	8%	60%
PAC-specific social media activities	6%	12%
Other	3%	0%
Get-out-the-vote education	2%	33%
Podcasts	0%	5%

Other responses for all PAC donors include: Candidate spotlight emails, Inside Elections

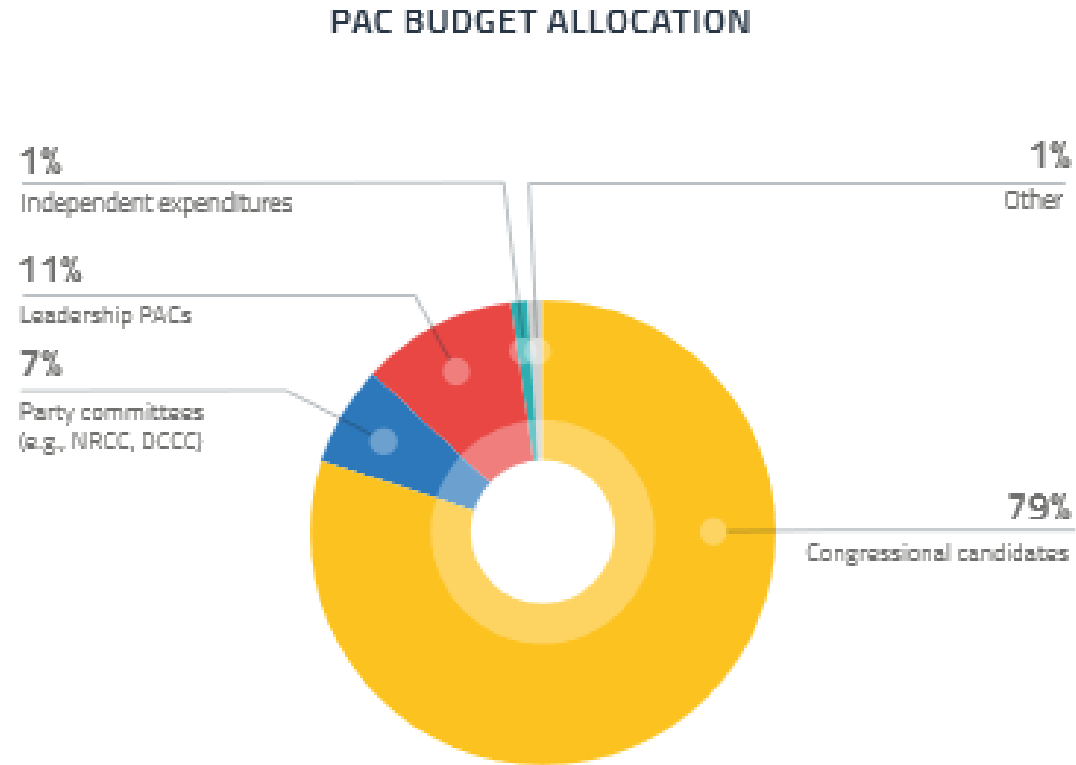
Strategic Support of Candidates

Criteria for PAC Contributions – All Responses	Percentage of Respondents
Voting record consistent with your organization's goals	77%
Membership on key legislative committees	77%
Leadership position	74%
Incumbent status	49%
Recommendation of a PAC member	49%
Likelihood of being reelected	35%
Recommendation of a member company or association chapter	33%
Industry peers are supporting candidate/event	30%
Organization has member company facilities or high concentration of membership in the candidate's district	30%
Candidate's political alignment with association membership	28%
Financial need	17%
President, chair, CEO or board preference for candidate	16%
Party affiliation	12%
N/A – My association does not have formal candidate contribution criteria	10%
Candidate's position on social issues (e.g., human rights, discrimination, etc.)	3%

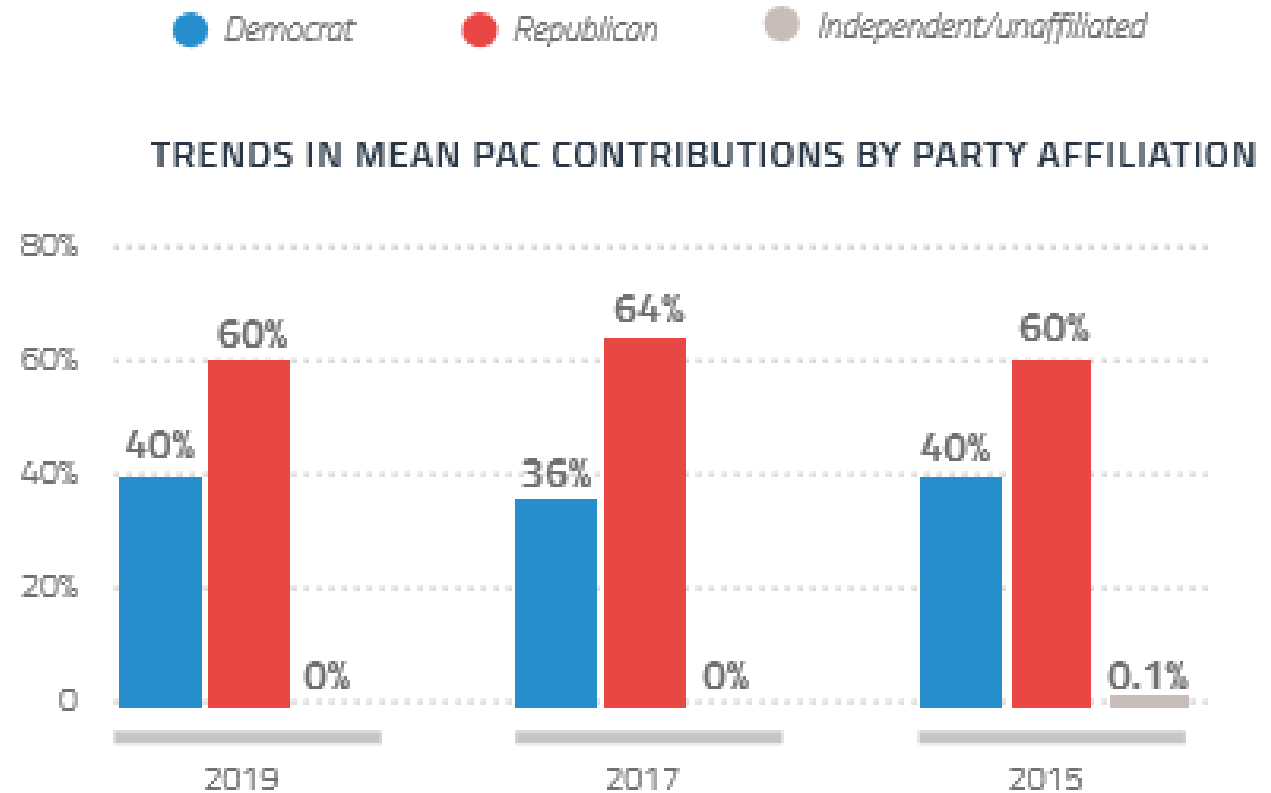
- Which of the following are the three most important criteria in making decisions regarding PAC disbursements to federal candidates?

Top Three Most Important Contribution Criteria	Percentage
Voting record consistent with your organization's goals	69%
Membership on key legislative committees	69%
Leadership position	40%
Candidate's political alignment with association membership	23%
Recommendation of a PAC member	21%
Organization has member company facilities or high concentration of membership in the candidate's district	13%
Incumbent status	11%
Industry peers are supporting candidate/event	11%
Recommendation of a member company or association chapter	10%
Likelihood of being reelected	7%
Financial need	3%
President, chair, CEO or board preference for candidate	3%
Party affiliation	2%
Candidate's position on social issues (e.g., human rights, discrimination, etc.)	0%

Strategic Support of Candidates

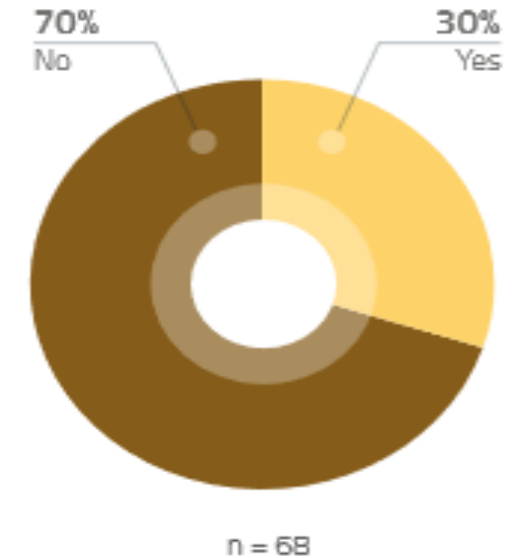


Trends in Contributions by Party



Contributions at the State Level

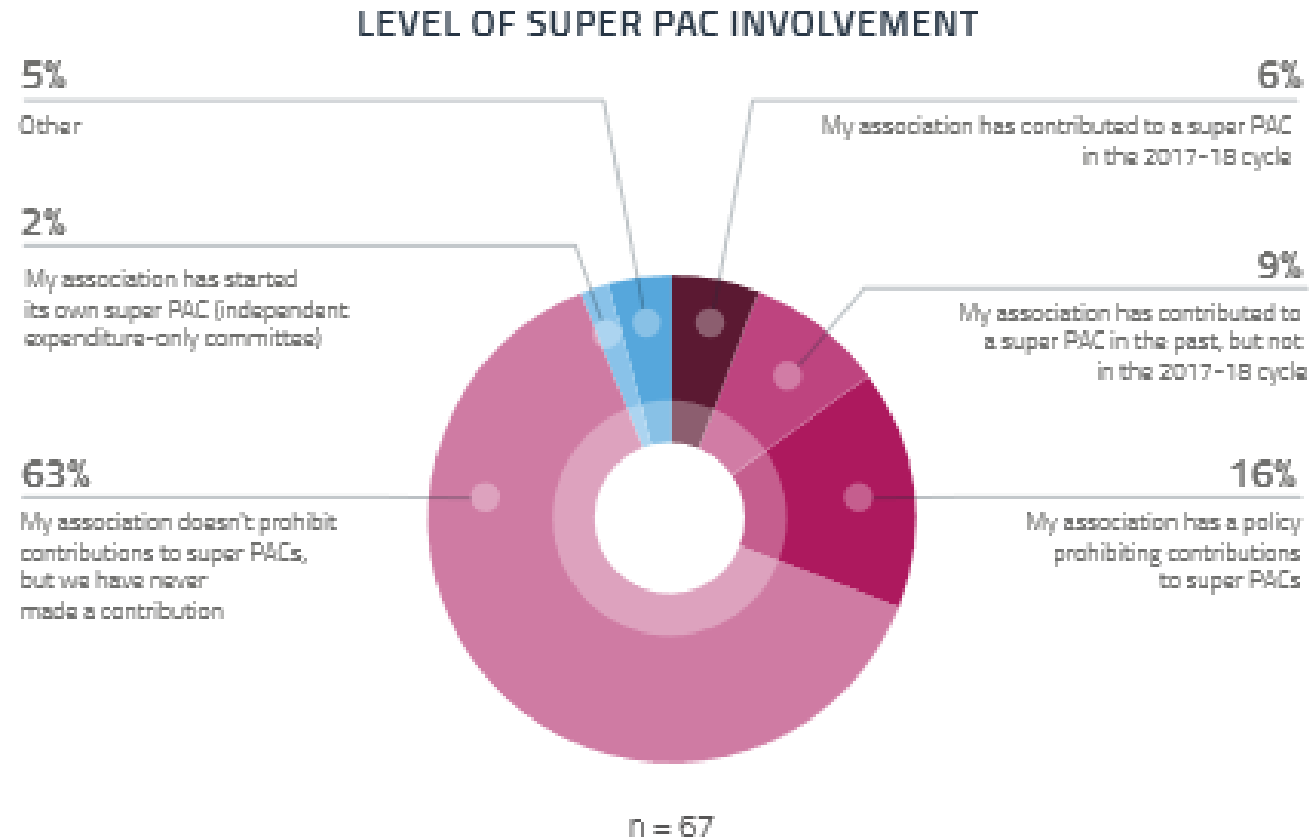
State Level Contribution Activity	Percentage of Respondents
My association has separate state-level PAC(s) managed by the national association	7%
My association has separate state-level PAC(s) managed by state chapters	15%
My association makes contributions at the state level from the same account as the federal PAC, where legal and feasible	10%
Other	3%



Check Provision Methods

Check Provision Method	Percentage of Respondents
Check presented in-person at an event hosted by your association	57%
Check presented in-person at an event hosted by a member company	34%
Check presented in-person at a large group event hosted by another organization	38%
Check mailed to campaign office	87%
Check brought to fundraising event	74%
Check presented during a small group meeting with the candidate in Washington	43%
Check delivered by PAC donor(s) in district	54%
Other	0%

Super PAC Involvement



Major Conclusions

- **Staffing has not changed much.** The median association PAC still has 1 professional staff member and .5 administrative staff member(s) spending at least 50% of their time managing the PAC program.
- **Senior/volunteer leadership engagement** in the PAC continues to rise and indicate the health of the PAC program.
- **Communications strategies** are becoming more diverse and transparency is increasingly expected by donors and internal stakeholders.
- PAC donors are incentivized by **unique opportunities and experiences**, such as exclusive events, access to information and leaders above all else.

Comparative Analysis

Example subsamples:

- Industry
- PAC size
- Professional associations
- Trade associations

Can run the whole survey or specific questions (ex. receipts, solicitation approaches, governance)

Fee: starts at \$500

Timing: typically takes 3 – 4 business days

Contact Information

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