



Public Affairs
Council

Importance of Association PACs

PACs are the most regulated and transparent form of campaign finance



A PAC is *power in numbers*



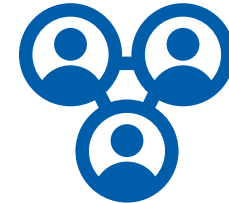
Legal means of political participation

Corporations and associations are prohibited from directly contributing to federal candidates – but they may operate a PAC.



PACs are strictly regulated

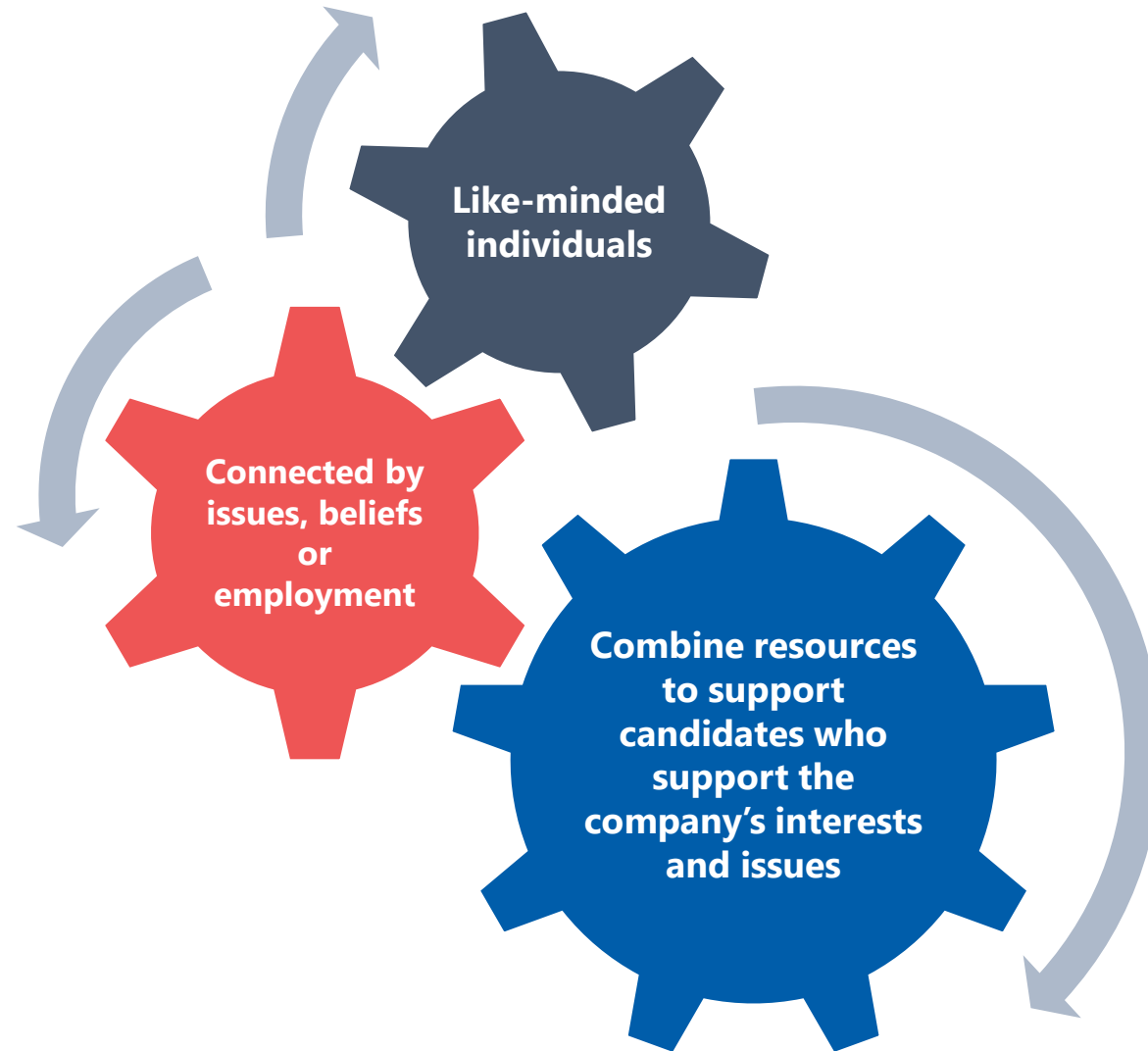
A PAC is regulated by the FEC and only allows for voluntary, individual contributions under stringent guidelines for participation.



PACs are legal, transparent and federally monitored

PACs allow businesses to express united interests with one powerful voice.

What is a PAC?



Debunking myths super PACs vs. traditional PACs

An association PAC is not a super PAC

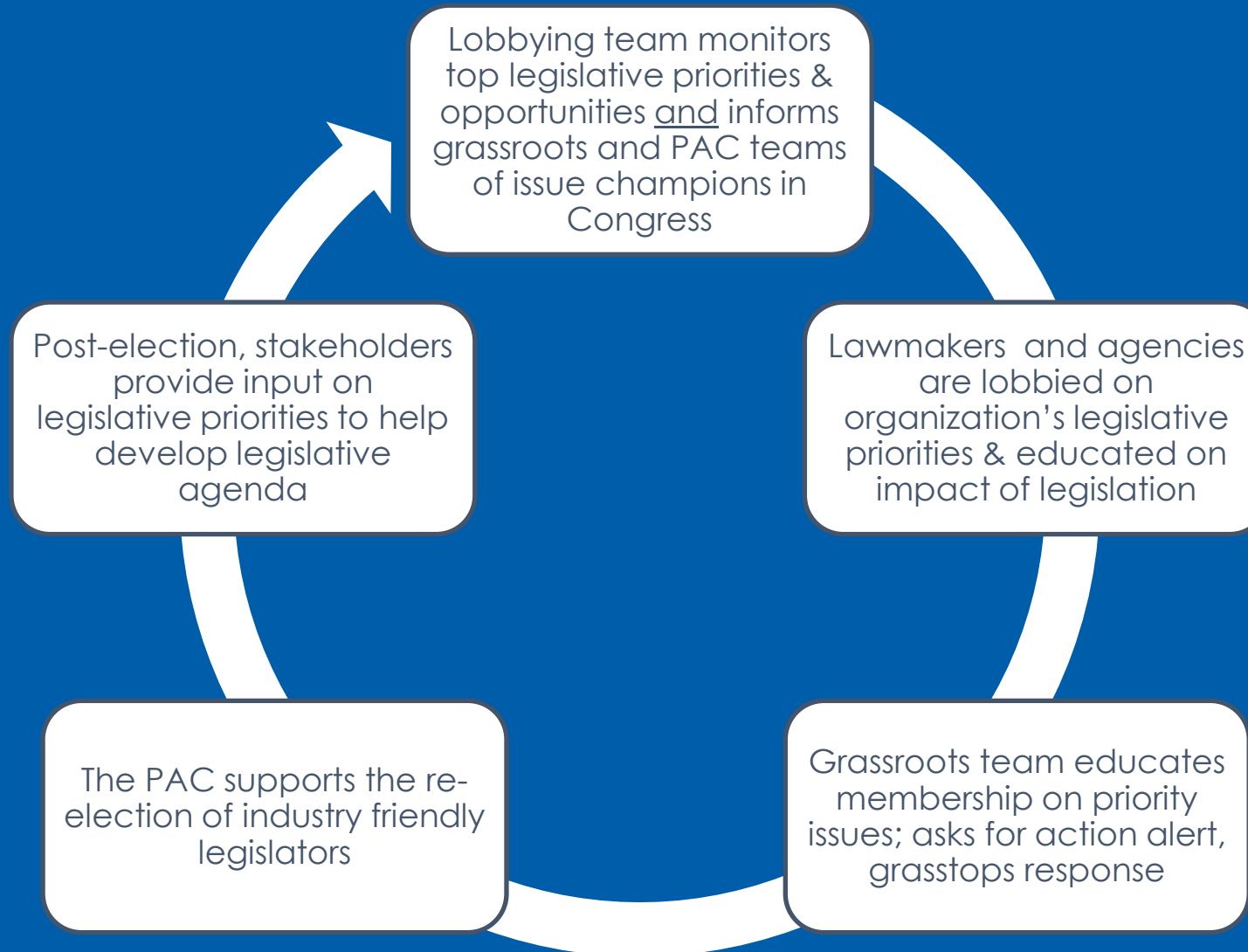
Super PACs:

- Individual and corporate money spent on uncoordinated ads and communications
- Money is not contributed directly to candidates

Traditional PACs:

- Other than individuals, traditional PACs are the only entities that can give to candidates
- Associations avoid Super PAC involvement. Only 8% contributed to Super PACs in the 2021-2022 election cycle according to the 2023 Association PAC Benchmarking Report

Where does the PAC fit?



The PAC supports the cause



“A voting record consistent with the organization’s goals”

was the most commonly used contribution criteria factor and ranked as most important by 66% of PACs.

Source: Public Affairs Council 2023 Association PAC Benchmarking Report

Association PACs in 2023:

Fast Facts

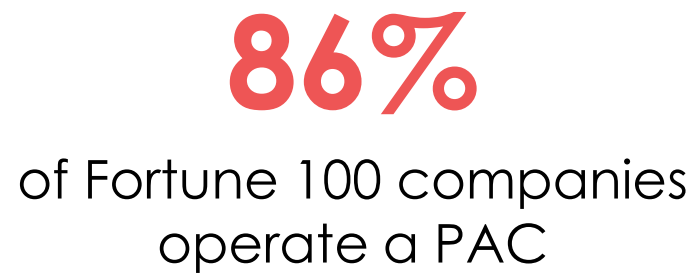
2,875
connected PACs registered
with the FEC
(association, labor, cooperative or corporation)

42%
were association PACs



The infographic features a large red number '2,875' at the top left. Below it, the text 'connected PACs registered with the FEC' is written in black, followed by '(association, labor, cooperative or corporation)' in a smaller font. A black line extends from the right side of '2,875', turning down and then right to point at a large red '42%'. Below the percentage, the text 'were association PACs' is written in black.

86%
of Fortune 100 companies
operate a PAC

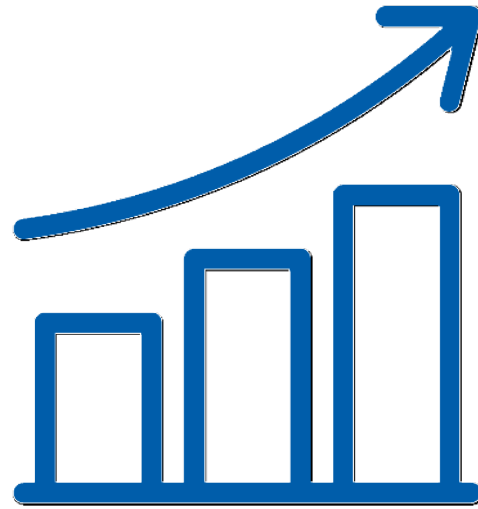


The infographic features a large red '86%' at the top. Below it, the text 'of Fortune 100 companies operate a PAC' is written in black.

Source: FEC.gov



PACs promote a culture of advocacy



Participation rates are climbing

The median participation rate increased from 17% in the 2019-2020 election cycle to 21% in the 2021-2022 cycle.

Source: Public Affairs Council 2023 Association PAC Benchmarking Report

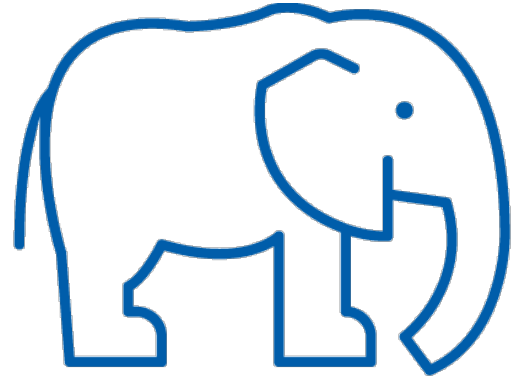
PACs are transparent and limited

Contribution limits for 2023-2024

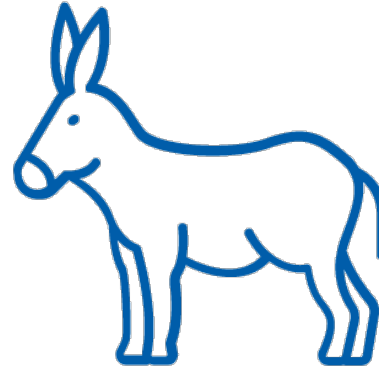
		Recipient				
		Candidate committee	PAC (SSF and nonconnected)	Party committee: state/district/local	Party committee: national	Additional national party committee accounts
Donor	Individual	\$3,300 per election	\$5,000 per year	\$10,000 per year (combined)	\$41,300 per year	\$123,900 per account, per year
	Candidate committee	\$2,000 per election	\$5,000 per year	Unlimited transfers	Unlimited transfers	
	PAC: multicandidate	\$5,000 per election	\$5,000 per year	\$5,000 per year (combined)	\$15,000 per year	\$45,000 per account, per year
	PAC: nonmulticandidate	\$3,300 per election	\$5,000 per year	\$10,000 per year (combined)	\$41,300 per year	\$123,900 per account, per year
	Party committee: State/district/local	\$5,000 per election (combined)	\$5,000 per year (combined)	Unlimited transfers	Unlimited transfers	
	Party committee: national	\$5,000 per election	\$5,000 per year	Unlimited transfers	Unlimited transfers	

Source: FEC.gov <https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/taking-receipts-pac/contribution-limits-nonconnected-pacs/>





51%



49%

Association PACs are bipartisan

An average of 51% of association PAC contributions were disbursed to Republican candidates and 49% to Democrats.

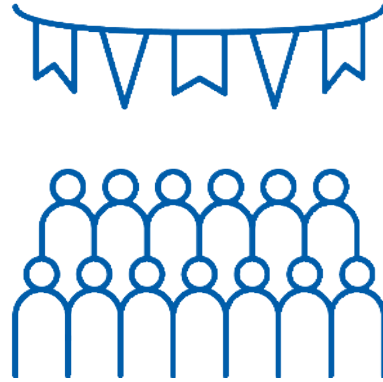
Source: Public Affairs Council 2023 Association PAC Benchmarking Report

Association PACs build community



Peer-to-peer is a popular solicitation tool

80% of PACs use peer-to-peer solicitations.



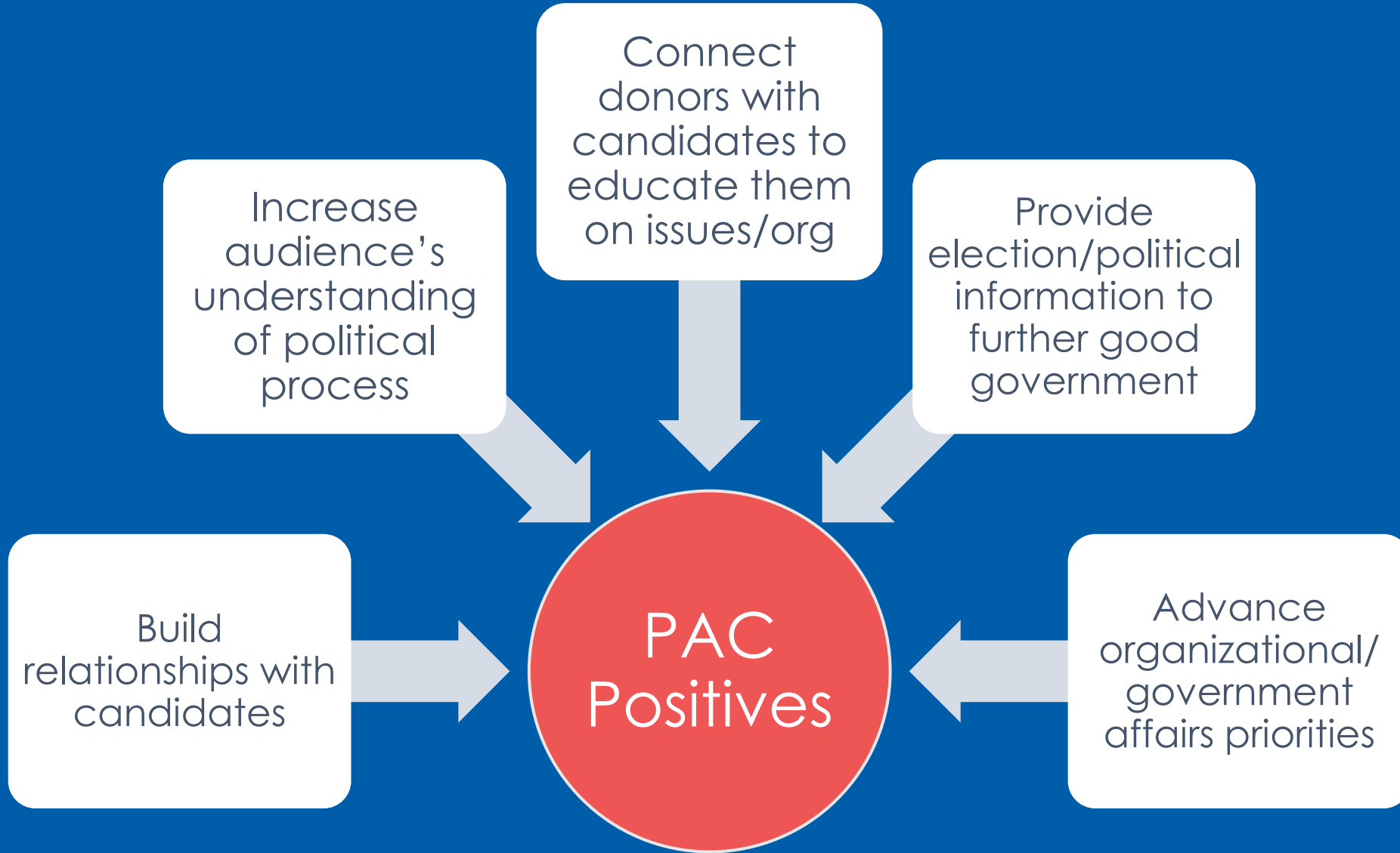
Event-based fundraising has returned

80% of PACs reported conducting solicitations during an annual meeting or trade show.

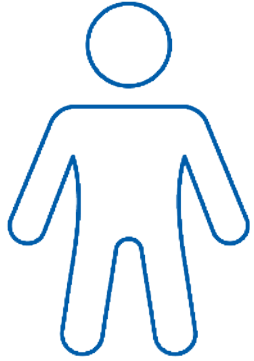


Association leadership supports the PAC

Over half of association PACs have staff executives who solicit, send thank you letters, formally endorse the PAC or attend PAC events.



PAC benefits



Individual

- Access to political process
- Information source
- Gifts/recognition
- Special events
- Political involvement
- PAC charitable match



Association

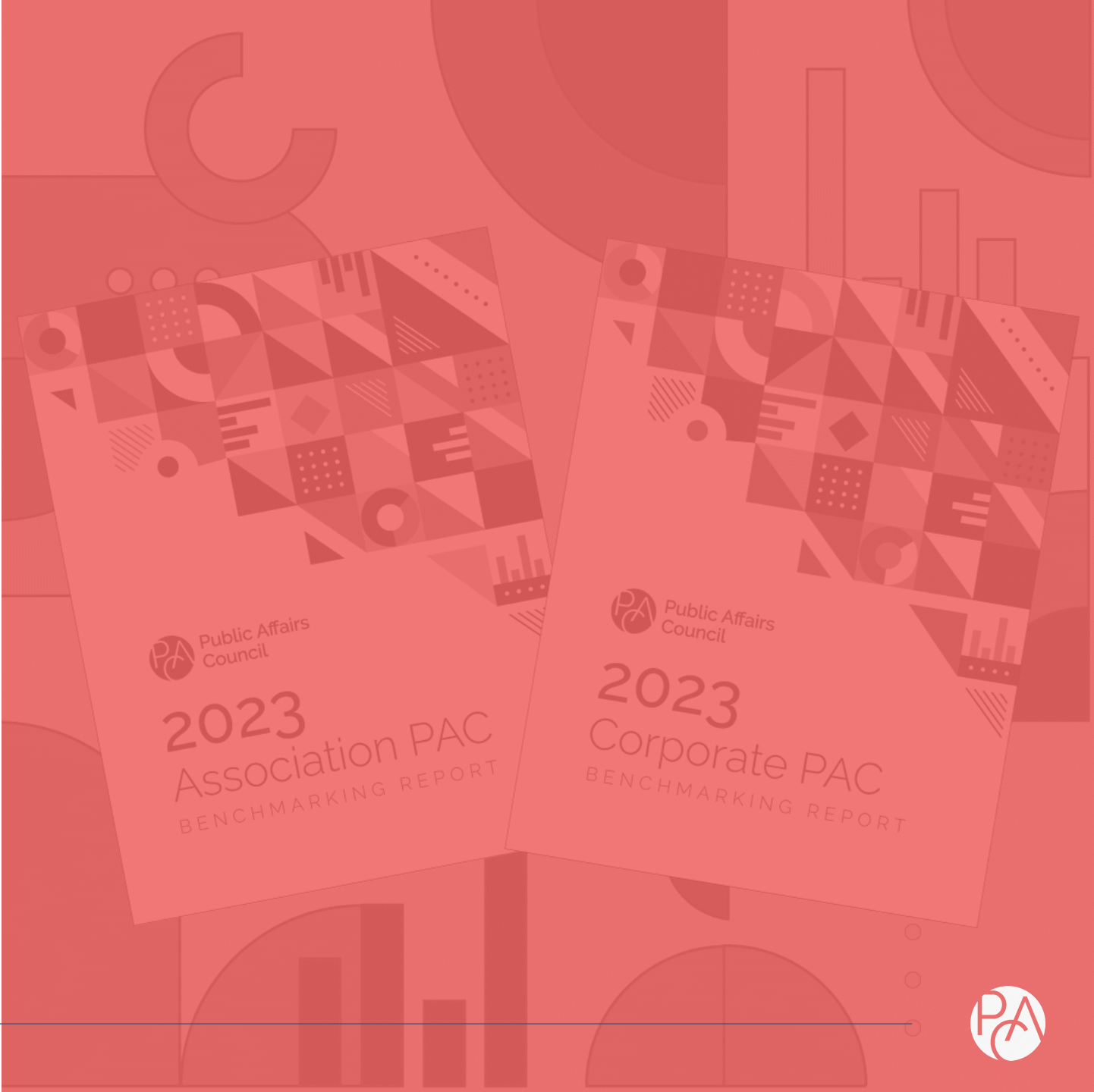
- Proactive measure
- Supplement government relations efforts
- Elect the right people
- Be a visible player
- Good government



PACs inform and educate

Virtual events, webinars or teleconferences on issues or featuring guest speakers were the most frequently offered benefit to PAC donors.

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