



Public Affairs
Council

PACs:

The Importance of Association Political Involvement

What is a PAC?



Why Have PACs?

- Associations are prohibited from directly contributing to federal candidates – but they may operate a PAC.
- A PAC is strictly regulated by the FEC and only allows for voluntary, individual contributions under stringent guidelines for participation.
- A PAC is a legal, transparent and federally monitored means of expressing united interests with one powerful voice.
- A PAC is ***power in numbers***.

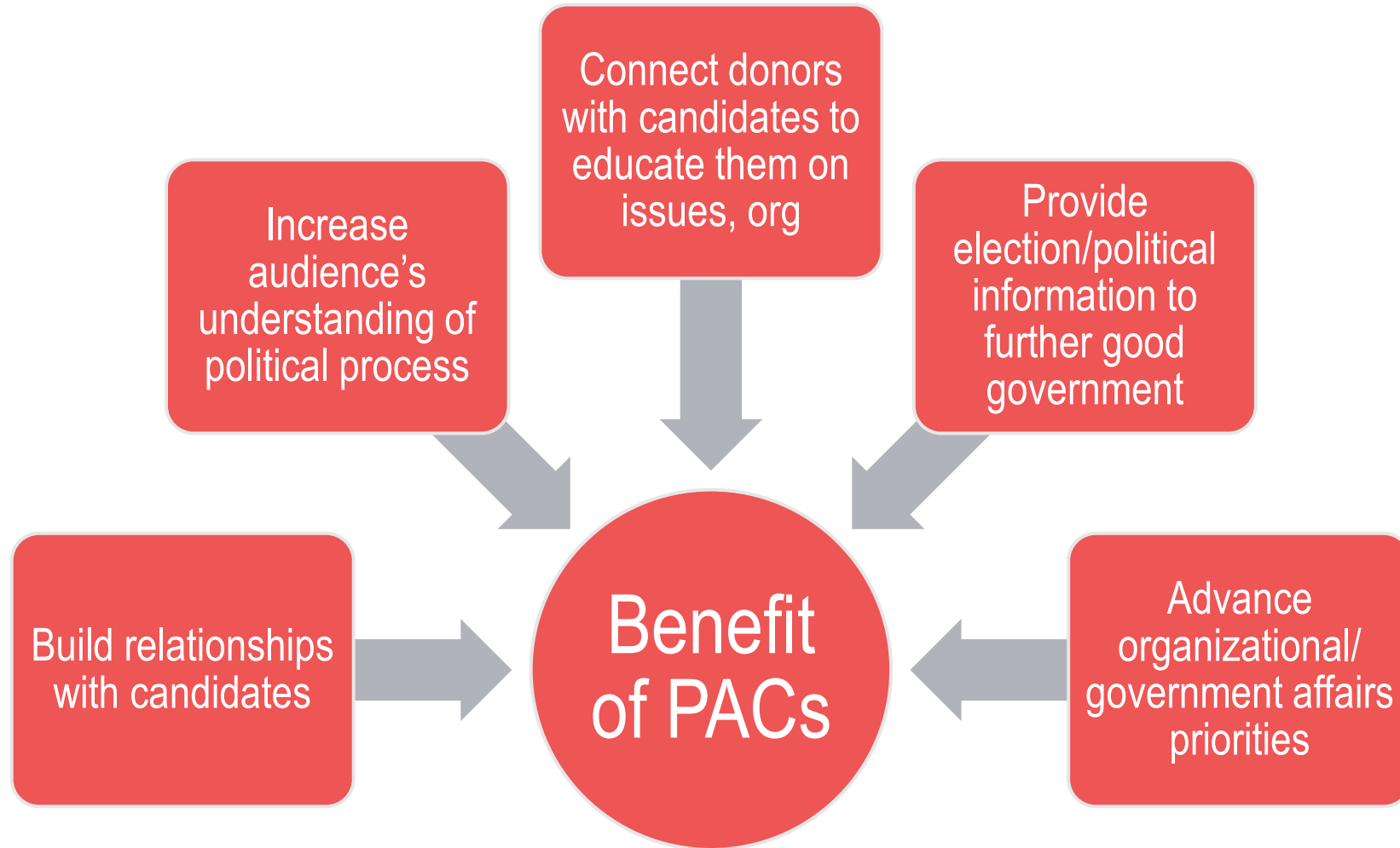


Why PACs?

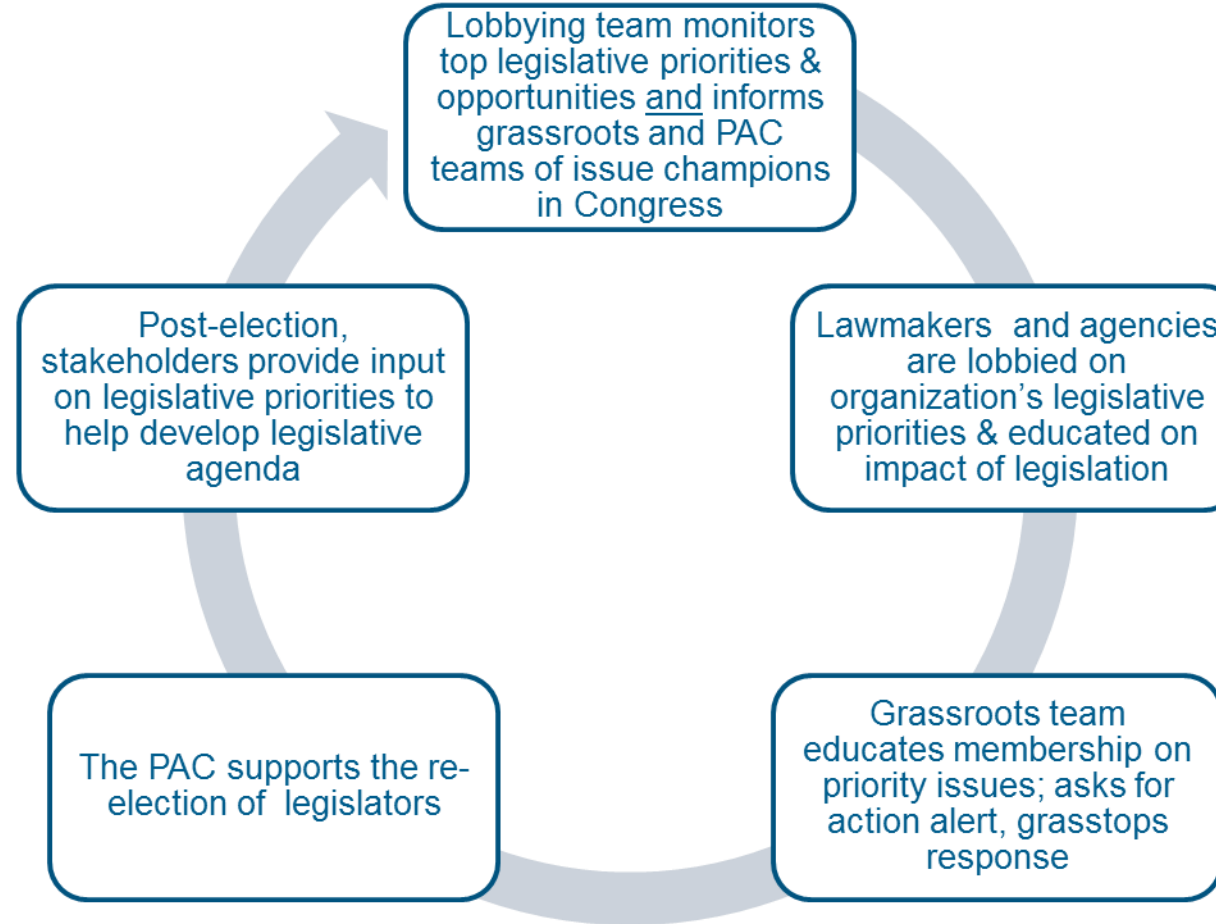
PACs and supporting candidates are the only things an association cannot do for itself and for which it relies on its members for support.



Why Have PACs?



Where Does the PAC Fit?



PACs in 2021

There are more than 3,000 connected PACs in the United States, connected to an association, labor organization or corporation.

Approximately 950 are association PACs

Association PACs contributed approximately \$230 million to federal candidates in the 2020 election cycle.

Super PACs and Association PACs

An association PAC is not a super PAC.

Super PACs are:

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

FACT

The only entities that can give to candidates are individuals and PACs connected to organizations.

Distinguishing Between association PACs and super PACs

FEC REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	
Corporate and Association PACs	Super PACs
Report to the FEC (not the IRS, like 527s)	
Required to report all receipts and expenditures	
Register with the FEC as a connected PAC	Register with the FEC as a non-connected political committee
Not effected by <i>Citizens United</i>	Largely the result of <i>Citizens United</i>

USE OF CORPORATE FUNDS	
Corporate and Association PACs	Super PACs
General treasury funds from connected organizations (corporations or associations) may be used only to pay fees associated with PAC administration	Can raise money from corporations, associations, unions and individuals
Corporations and associations cannot contribute directly to the PAC	

Distinguishing Between association PACs and super PACs

FUNDRAISING AND DISBURSEMENT LIMITS	
Corporate and Association PACs	Super PACs
Strict limits — Can accept a maximum of only \$5,000 per year from eligible individuals	No limits — Can accept unlimited contributions from corporations, associations, unions and individuals
Disbursement limits — Can contribute up to \$5,000 per federal candidate committee per election	No disbursement limits — Can spend unlimited amounts of money on independent expenditures only (i.e. radio, TV, print ads)

EXPENDITURE RULES	
Corporate and Association PACs	Super PACs
Funds can be given directly to federal candidate committees Allowed to communicate and coordinate with candidates and other recipients	Cannot contribute to federal candidate committees
	Contributions are made in the form of independent expenditures
	Cannot coordinate independent expenditures with candidate committees

The Truth About PACs

Facts About PACs

- PACs are an offensive measure in government affairs efforts
- PACs are a tool to build relationships with candidates along with other advocacy efforts
- PACs get more Americans engaged in the political process
- PACs enhance your association's visibility
- PACs are highly regulated and serve as an example of “campaign finance reform that works”
- PACs go through a thorough, carefully reviewed budgeting process to allocate funds
- PACs are governed by advisory committees/boards comprised of association members

Benefits of the PAC: Individual

- Access to political process
- Information source
- Gifts/recognition
- Special events
- Political involvement & information
- Election resources

Benefits of the PAC: Association

- Proactive measure
- Supplements government relations efforts
- Assists association to be a visible player in DC
- Promotes good government and civic engagement



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