

RFS | ASCEND

BUILDING THE BENCH FOR THE FUTURE

Run for Something (RFS) is a 527 political action committee and 501(c)(4) organization that recruits and supports young, diverse progressives to run for down-ballot races, building the bench of talented Democratic candidates for the future. In 2020, we're excited to launch our RFS Ascend program, aimed at providing high-impact donations to our top endorsed candidates.

BACKGROUND

Since 2017, RFS has become the preeminent organization supporting young, progressive candidates running for local and state legislative office. We've propelled hundreds of candidates to victory by providing 1:1 campaign support, elevating their profiles with the press, and connecting them to top-level resources provided by partner organizations.

We're thrilled that this year, Ascend PAC — an organization that has similarly focused on building the bench of Democratic candidates by providing direct financial support — is merging with RFS to help directly fund select RFS candidates in key target states, starting with Texas and Pennsylvania.

OUR APPROACH

The RFS Ascend program's approach reflects key elements of both Ascend and RFS's values and strategies:

The Long View. Our mission is to build the next generation of Democratic Party leaders. This work is less about 2019 and 2020 and more about 2030 and 2040. We only support first and second-time candidates running for local races — like school board, county commissioner, city council, district attorney, and state representative.

Impact. Our priority for investment will be high-leverage races. Candidates with budgets lower than \$250,000 will be prioritized over those with higher budget goals, so your donation will have a bigger impact. We'll also work with candidates in flippable races who are getting less attention.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Diversity, inclusivity, and creating a representative democracy are part of our core values — and are vital to a functioning democracy. We will endorse and support candidates whose diversity in gender, race, and sexual orientation moves us closer to that goal.

OUR WORK IN 2020

RFS plans to endorse at least 500 candidates in 2020. In the RFS Ascend program's first year, we aim to raise \$250,000 to benefit 20-30 candidates, all selected from the overall pool of RFS endorsees. We plan to expand our geographic footprint and the types of races RFS Ascend supports as we refine the process, but in this first year, we're focusing on state legislative candidates in Texas and Pennsylvania. They represent two critical states in 2020, and states we know well.

