



Puerto Rico
Science, Technology
& Research Trust



MEETUP INPUTS FOR
B CORPORATIONS RESEARCH & INNOVATION

B CORPORATIONS PRE – MEETUP
MAY 28TH, 2020

B CORPORATIONS MEETUP - ADVOCACY
OCTOBER 21, 2020



Puerto Rico Research & Innovation Meetups

The Trust's Meetups are done with the intention of exploring perspectives, generating alignment, as well as points of intersection, between the agendas of research, existing resources, and market opportunities; and to highlight Puerto Rico's intellectual capital in order to promote improved technology transfer, development, and commercialization of our intellectual property. The Meetups serve as a vehicle to present the new resources made available by the Trust in these areas while simultaneously building an audience base that will provide the critical mass for ecosystem development in specific fields.

Key points regarding the Meet Ups

Foster encounters, sharing, learning, and improvement

The proposed event seeks to bring together key staff from public and private colleges and universities, private sector stakeholders, civil society organizations in charge of community economic development, business incubators, and key government players in the areas of high potential for economic development and education.

Discussion of important topics pertaining group dynamics and interests

The content agenda revolves around: public policy and indicators for innovation, research and development; technology transfer for innovation; and a new ecosystem for innovation in a variety of sectors within the Island's economy. These subject matters are discussed in a variety of formats, from traditional presentations, workshops, panels, round tables and other open discussion formats.

Increasing social capital by providing space and context from which to engage in crossed networking

The Meetups are geared at creating opportunities for participants in the fields of research, investment, business entrepreneurship, social enterprising, in order to form bridges among groups, promote understanding through social interaction, and empower innovation.



B Corporations pre-Meetup on May 28, 2020, with members of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.



Our main speaker, Mr. Pero Tarak, co-founder of Sistema B, gave an overview of the Sistema B model and why the B Corporation movement is critical in developing a new economic model that balances purpose with profit.

The presentation stressed that B corporations are legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on their workers, customers, suppliers, community, and the environment.

Our second presenter was Ivette Johnsons, Director of Sistema B Perú, who presented the B Impact Assessment Tool, an online platform that evaluates how your company interacts with your workers, customers, community, and environment.

Topics Discussed:

Introduccion to Sistema B – Pedro Tarak cofundador Sistema B
Social Impact Enterprises Vs. Social Benefit Corporation
What is the B Impact Assessment?
What are the benefits of becoming a B Corporation?
Examples of successful B Corporations; Guayaki & Patagonia
Experiences from Sistema B Perú –Ivette Johnson, Directora Ejecutiva, Sistema B Perú
Development of a public policy in favor of B Corporations
Building a B Corporation ecosystem.
B Corporations and social impact investment.

Participants:

Denisse Rodríguez – Colemena 66
Sebastian Vidal – Paralell 18
Laura Cantero – Grupo Guayacan
Nerma Albertorio – Centro para Emprendedores
Isabel Rullan – ConPRMetidos
Nelson Reyes – Consultcom
Blanca Santos – Bravo Family Foundation
Eric Leeson – P.R. Social & Solidarity Network



Overview of the B Corporations Meetup



The B Corporation Meetups come as a response by the PRSTRT to the rapid development of the sustainable business movement, impact investing, and social enterprise sectors.

The sustainable business movement, impact investing, and social enterprise sectors are developing rapidly. Still, they are constrained by an outdated legal framework that is not equipped to accommodate for-profit entities whose social benefit purpose is central to their existence.

Benefit corporations offer clear market differentiation, broad legal protection to directors and officers, expanded shareholder rights, and greater access to capital than current alternative approaches. As a result, the benefit corporation is also attracting broad support from entrepreneurs, investors, legal experts, citizens, and policy makers interested in new corporate form legislation.

The major characteristics of the benefit corporation form are: 1) a requirement that a benefit corporation must have a corporate purpose to create a material positive impact on society and the environment; 2) an expansion of the duties of directors to require consideration of non-financial stakeholders as well as the financial interests of shareholders; and 3) an obligation to report on its overall social and environmental performance using a comprehensive, credible, independent and transparent third-party standard.

You may see the video product of this meetup using the following links:

[Empresas B – Episode 1](#)

[Empresas B- Episode 2](#)

Empresas B – Episodio 3



B Corporations pre-Meetup on May 28, 2020, with members of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.



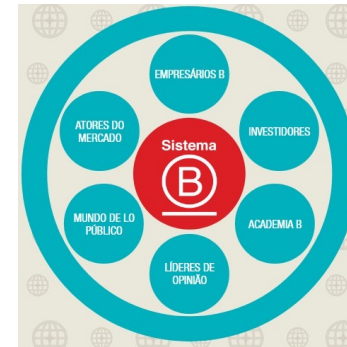
Pre- Meetup Assetment

After interviewing ten directors of the top entrepreneurial and business accelerator programs in Puerto Rico, it was evident that the sustainable business movement in Puerto Rico was not at the forefront of any of these organizations.

Most directors had limited or no knowledge of the sustainable business movement's opportunities for developing Puerto Rico's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Also, most directors recognized that they have had in their programs companies intended to become a benefit corporation but lack the knowledge and resources to guide them in the process.

On engaging with the B Corporations movement, the Trust partnered with Sistema B International, a leading organization in the promotion of an inclusive, equitable and regenerative economic system for all people and the planet.





B Corporations Meetup – October 21, 2020



SAVE THE DATE



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AGENDA

Meetup sobre Empresas B 21 de octubre de 2020

HORA	TEMA	RECURSO
3:00 p.m.	Introducción	Ricardo Burgos, Program Manager Research & Innovation Meetups Program
3:10 p.m.	Bienvenida	Lucy Crespo, CEO Fideicomiso para Ciencia Tecnología e Investigación de Puerto Rico
3:20 p.m.	Red de Economía Social y Solidaria de Puerto Rico	Eric Leenson, Miembro Activo Comité Organizador Red de Economía Social y Solidaria
3:30 p.m.	Economía Solidaria y las estructuras legales que las facilitan y sostienen	Lic. Ricardo Díaz, Fellow Sustainable Economies Law Center, Grupo Legal Acosta & Díaz
3:50 p.m.	Sistema B, posibilidad y camino de cambio hacia un mundo mejor	Pedro Tarak, Cofundador Sistema B
4:20 p.m.	Evaluación de Impacto B Ciudades +B	Ivette Johnson, Directora Ejecutiva Sistema B - Perú
4:40 p.m.	Discusión Abierta con los panelistas	
5:00 p.m.	Conclusión y Cierre	



Audience Participation

Attendance Analysis

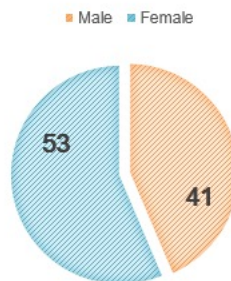


PR RESEARCH
& INNOVATION

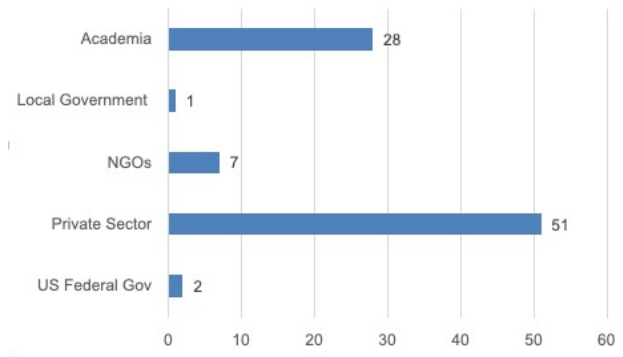
Meet-ups

	Frequency
US Federal Gov	2
Private Sector	51
NGOs	7
Local Government	1
Academia	28
PRSTRT	5
Total	94

GENDER DISTRIBUTION



Stakeholder Distribution



Observations

- **Reservations vs. participation.** 134 Reservations. Peak attendance of 102 participants.
- **Stakeholder composition.** Led by private sector, with strong academic component.



Puerto Rico's B Corporation ecosystem at a glance



- There is very limited understanding of the B Corporation opportunities for entrepreneurs.
- Capacity building and Talent development
 - There are no capacity building programs in the entrepreneurship ecosystem.
- Data
 - Based on B Labs data, only 60 puertorrican companies had started the B Corporation certification process, but only one has actually been certified Roadways (sensors, cameras)
- New business models
 - As per incubators and accelerators programs directors, there is a tendency of more entrepreneurs proposing business models that can be consider B Corporations.
- Legal framework
 - Even though there is no specific public policy supporting and/or promoting the B Corporation concept, our legal system has no barriers for the configuration of such corporations.
 - Puerto Rico has two laws to support social responsibility corporations. Law 233, social benefit corporation and limited liability company, both have to state clearly the social benefit that the company will address. This laws are not a certification, but a legal framework.
 - Puerto Rico joins 36 states of the United States that has passed similar legal frameworks to support social benefit corporations.



Audience Feedback



1. Most of the entrepreneurial organizations were not aware of the B Corporations movement.
2. There was an evident interest as some of the programs expressed that some of the companies they serve have B Corporation potential. Still, they didn't have the knowledge or network to connect them to the proper resources.
3. None of the participants knew about the B Impact Assessment Tool.
4. Need to develop a B Corporation ecosystem that provides the right capital for the B Corporation model.
5. All participants agreed on the B Corporation's opportunity for the Puerto Rico entrepreneurial ecosystem and building the ecosystem with advocacy events, capacity-building initiatives, and social impact investment funds.



Event Analysis Observations



Leadership, emerging social capital

There is ample opportunity and interest from Puerto Rico's entrepreneurial ecosystem to support and develop the B Corporation model.

One of the main challenges remains to implement capacity-building programs that can speed the sector development..

Strengthening linkages between academia and the private sector

Academia is a crucial component of promoting the B Corporation movement in Puerto Rico. Business schools must incorporate into their curriculums the B Corporation concepts.

Government Relations

Puerto Rico can leverage its social benefit corporation and limited liability company regulations by supporting the proliferation of social impact companies with additional public policy that will benefit social impact entrepreneurship, as would be allocating government purchases to companies that comply with social impact standards.



Additional references

- <https://www.sistemab.org/>
- <https://bcorporation.net/about-b-lab>
- <https://wellbeingeconomy.org/>
- <https://www.imperative21.co/>
- <https://neweconomy.net/organization/sustainable-economies-law-center/>