

# ANNUAL 2024 REPORT 2025



Puerto Rico  
Science, Technology  
& Research Trust

**Annual Report of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust**

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Antigua Penitenciaría Estatal Carr 21 Bo Monacillos, San Juan, 00927,  
Puerto Rico

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**Puerto Rico is a  
globally recognized  
innovation hub.**

**DESIGNED BY:**

Department of Design, Marketing and Communications  
Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust at San Juan,  
Puerto Rico San Juan, Puerto Rico

**CREDITS:**

All photographs used in this publication have been sourced from the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust. Unless otherwise indicated, all data in this publication have been sourced from the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust.

The Puerto Rico Science, Technology & Research Trust, established in 2004 under Act 214-2004, as amended, as an autonomous entity, stimulates innovation, technology commercialization and the creation of high-technology jobs in Puerto Rico's targeted industry sectors such as: Life Sciences, Alternative Energy, Environmental & Agricultural Sciences, Computer Science & Information Technologies, Medical Devices, and Aerospace & Aeronautics, among others.



Puerto Rico  
Science, Technology  
& Research Trust

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## Letter to Stakeholders

Luz A. Crespo  
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Stakeholders,

As we present this year’s Annual Report, we do so with a deep sense of pride in our accomplishments and a clear-eyed view of the challenges ahead. The Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust **remains unwavering in its mission to invest, enable, and elevate Puerto Rico’s innovation ecosystem**—even as we navigate a year marked by fiscal constraints and a reduction in federal funding.

From a communication perspective, this year the Trust strengthened its brand identity and elevated its communications. We secured \$2.7M+ in non-paid publicity via 916 media appearances.

The Trust managed 113,000+ contacts. Sent 1,066 email campaigns and organized over 31 successful events with over 5,600 participants. Our social media audience grew by 32.4% (12,000+ new followers, 5.1M impressions).

This moment calls for reflection, resilience, and renewed commitment. Despite the headwinds, our programs have continued to deliver measurable impact across research, public health, entrepreneurship, STEM education, and workforce development. These achievements are not just numbers; they represent lives changed, ideas accelerated, and a future being built with purpose.

Our Research Grants Program has supported 162 grantees to date, with over \$17 million awarded and a return on investment nearing \$70 million, a 16% increase from last year and an ROI of 4X. This year alone, we welcomed seven new grantees and trained 102 students through the Milo Climate Action Academy, empowering the next generation to tackle climate challenges head-on. With the Advanced Research Grant: Space Edition, we enabled Puerto Rican researchers to obtain rapid access to the International Space Station. Two projects from UPR Mayagüez focused on stem cell culture and water purification technologies launched in late 2024 and early 2025. Both researchers expect additional grants from NASA and NSF to continue their research.

The Technology Transfer Office advanced 27 new invention disclosures and filed 47 patent applications, including our first plant patent—an agricultural milestone. With 44% of inventors identifying as women, we are proud to foster a diverse and inclusive innovation pipeline. The EnTRUST Program supported 21 researchers from multiple universities through entrepreneurial training, while the XLerator Network provided early-stage capital and education for biomedical research.

The Center for Tropical Biodiversity (CNT) made global strides: CTB-driven projects received over \$10 million in funding, including a \$2.99 million DTRA grant for a dual analysis pipeline to identify natural products and their protein targets, and a \$7 million NSF EPSCoR grant for genetic and proteomic studies of butterflies representing Puerto Rico at COP16. These efforts underscore our leadership in climate resilience and biodiversity science. CTB became the first Puerto Rican observer at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity COP16.

The Research Institute sequenced over 22,500 SARS-CoV-2 genomes since its inception and launched the Caribbean’s first spectral flow cytometry core. As pandemic-specific funding wanes, we are pivoting to genomic surveillance of emerging threats like dengue and antimicrobial resistance—ensuring continued relevance and impact. Over 100 students from local universities received mentorship and research opportunities. At the same time, the first hands-on biomanufacturing training program in Puerto Rico trained 15 STEM students. These initiatives are vital to sustaining Puerto Rico’s biomedical ecosystem and attracting future investment.

The Caribbean Center for Rising Sea submitted 24 climate policy recommendations to the policymakers in Puerto Rico and the professional organizations responsible for driving actions to address Sea Level rise.



# Entrepreneurship and Economic Resilience



Since 2016, Colmena66 has served 20,780 people, made 44,309 referrals, and engaged in 49,274 interactions with entrepreneurs, achieving a 9/10 service rating. The Resource Navigator connects entrepreneurs to over 210 active resources, with 34% deciding to start businesses after contact, reflecting strong ecosystem support. The Boricua Empeñe Fest 2024 generated an estimated \$1.1 million economic impact, while 15 SBIR/STTR proposals were submitted, with six awarded, supported by \$700K in matching funds. The SBIR/STTR program has been achieving a 3X ROI since 2017.

This year, Fase1 incubated 142 startups with a 95% retention rate, 62% of which are women-led—demonstrating our commitment to inclusive growth. Fase1 engaged in over 70 events across 42 municipalities, collaborating with organizations like Colmena66, Parallel18, and the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust to broaden entrepreneurial access and support women entrepreneurs.

Parallel18 graduated 78 companies across four programs this fiscal year, bringing the total to 572 graduates over eight years. Grants distributed this year totaled \$1,495,000, bringing cumulative grants to over \$17 million. Investments deployed during the year totaled \$550,000. The sales generated by P18 Puerto Rican graduates exceeded \$83M, with at least a 5X ROI. BioLeap supports bioscience entrepreneurs focusing on biotechnology and related sectors. The second cohort completed a 12-week business mentorship phase, during which participants received an all-expenses-paid trip to IndieBio in New York as part of a collaborative agreement.

# Public Health for a Healthier Future



The Puerto Rico Public Health Institute, previously known as the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust (PRPHT), is significantly impacting public health in Puerto Rico through community engagement, workforce development, and evidence-based policy advocacy. Some of this year’s key accomplishments include expanding community health outreach with 45 CHWs in 29 municipalities, engaging over 900 children in mental health initiatives, and addressing climate resilience through the CAPBRACE initiative. PRPHT also advanced precision medicine, provided extensive virtual learning and telemedicine services, and recognized CHW contributions. Policy advocacy efforts led to the formal recognition of CHWs, and strategic planning for 2025-2030 aims to enhance public health impact across Puerto Rico.

The Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU) secured over \$2.45 million in new funding, continuing major projects funded by CDC and HUD. They implemented an Integrated Vector Management (IVM) program in Bayamón, resulting in a 25% reduction in mosquito counts. The Dengue Epidemic Response included deploying 1,114 AGO traps and capturing over 2.85 million female *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes. PRVCU also supported the Wolbachia Replacement Project in El Salvador, achieving a 46.45% prevalence.

Additionally, they conducted 168 outreach activities, reaching over 3,200 individuals, and trained over 700 professionals through the Tropical Islands Training and Evaluation Center (TITEC). PRVMA, managed by PRVCU, grew to 466 members and hosted a 2024 Annual Convention focused on the dengue epidemic. PRVCU also collaborated with AMCA, contributing presentations and hosting the 91st AMCA Annual Meeting, which drew nearly 940 professionals attending.

Puerto Rico Consortium for Clinical Investigation (PRCCI) made significant progress in 2024-2025 by expanding its Clinical Research Center, enhancing operational capabilities, and strengthening collaborations to position Puerto Rico as a leading hub for clinical research. Key achievements include supporting over 40 active studies, securing new trials, advancing educational programs, and renewing critical research grants. The organization generated 64 new leads, hosted visits from major pharmaceutical companies, and completed innovative studies. PRCCI also awarded 38 new Clinical Research Coordinator certifications, engaged in community outreach, and ensured HIPAA compliance.

# STEM Education: Investing in the Future

Our STEM initiatives awarded scholarships, hosted aerospace and 3D printing workshops, and certified educators in STEM+AI. Over 250 individuals received workforce training, with a focus on underserved communities. These programs are critical to building a future-ready workforce and ensuring equitable access to opportunity. Our most profound appreciation to the Azmat A. Assur Foundation for their support and collaboration.

This year, for the first time, four Azmat A. Assur Scholarships were awarded, each providing \$5,000 annually for 4 years to support exceptional public school students pursuing STEM degrees.

## A Call for Collective Action

We are entering a new chapter, one that demands strategic adaptation, deeper collaboration, and bold innovation. The limiting local funding and the reduction in federal support are sobering realities, but they also present an opportunity to rethink how we sustain and scale our impact. As stated in our new 2025-2028 strategic plan, we are focusing our resources on targeted programs to continue advancing our mission and vision.

We are actively pursuing new partnerships, diversifying revenue streams, and advocating for continued investment in Puerto Rico's innovation infrastructure. Our commitment to transparency, accountability, and excellence remains firm.

To our Board of Trustees, program directors, associates, partners, and community members: thank you. Your belief in our mission fuels our progress and strengthens our resolve.

Together, we will continue  
to build a resilient,  
inclusive, and globally  
competitive Puerto Rico.

With gratitude and determination,

Luz A. Crespo  
CEO



Puerto Rico  
Science, Technology  
& Research Trust







## Research & Development

162

Grantees since program inception

+\$17

Cumulative grants awarded

\$70M

Return on Funding

27

Inventions disclosures evaluated by TTO

47

Patent applications by TTO



## Entrepreneurship

20,780

Entrepreneurs served by Colmena66 since 2016

572

Startups graduated by Parallel18, cumulative

142

startups incubated by Fase1 this FY

\$1,495,000

Parallel18 grants distributed this FY in P18 & Pre18.



## Public Health

\$2.45M

New funds obtained by PRVCU  
by CDC & HUD during this period

700

Professional trained by TITEC/PRVCU

+40

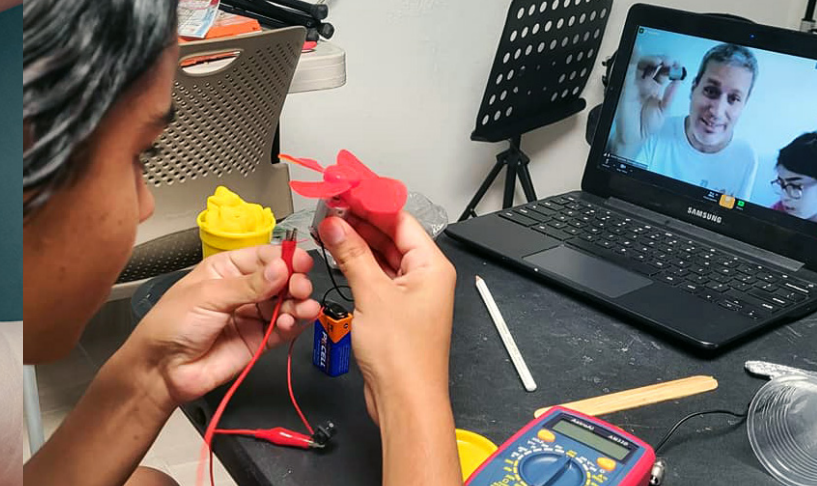
Active clinical studies with PRCCI

38

New Clinical Research Coordinators trained by PRCCI

200

Participants at Precision Medicine  
Symposium presented by PRPHT



## Education

\$5k

Azmat Assur scholarships granted for 4 students

150+

Participants in 3D printing at Hexagon Studio

33

Participants in 2 Hacklab Academy cohorts

820

Participants in 6 Research Meetups convened





# Our Team

# TRUSTEES

Our Board of Trustees is composed of distinguished professionals who support and oversee our work and provide guidance to ensure that the Trust is focused on within its mission and vision.

Alfredo Casta



Alfredo Casta is the Founder and former Chairman of Cascades Technologies, Inc (CTi), which was is recognized as one of Inc. 5000 magazine’s fastest growing companies for eight years. Mr. Casta combined his technical expertise, management skills and an unrelenting mission focus to accomplish results in the service of the American public. Under the tenants of Think – Build – Measure, CTi delivers IT Governance services, Technical Solutions, Data Management, Agile Development, and IT Organization Analysis including Cyber Security expertise to key cabinet agencies such as NIH, CDC, Labor, GSA, US Army, DHS, Justice, and Financial Regulatory Agencies.

Edith A. Pérez, MD



Dr. Pérez is an internationally recognized translational researcher and cancer specialist, Professor of Medicine at Mayo Clinic, and Director of the Mayo Clinic Breast Cancer Translational Genomics Program. Dr. Pérez is known for her strategic vision in designing innovative clinical trials, her passion for patient care, and her strong team leadership. Her experience includes leadership in academic and biopharmaceutical environments, as well as focused philanthropic endeavors.

Daniel Colón Ramos, PhD



Dr. Colón Ramos is the president of the Scientific Coalition of Puerto Rico. He also serves as the Dorys McConnell Duberg Professor of Neuroscience and Cell Biology at Yale University and is the co-founder of Ciencia Puerto Rico, a non-profit organization that promotes local scientific research and education. His lab at Yale studies the development and function of the nervous system, and their work has been recognized by several awards, including the Sloan Fellowship for “outstanding promise”, an award given to recognize the best researchers of the United States and Canada.

Esther M. Alegría, PhD



Dr. Alegria has nearly 30 years of biopharmaceutical industry experience. She serves as a Senior Executive Biopharmaceutical Advisor at Catalyst Excel & Advance lending her expertise to establish and start-up pharmaceutical & biopharmaceutical companies. Prior to this, she held multiple executive roles leading to the success of biopharmaceutical large-scale drug substances, medical devices assembly, finished goods and small molecule manufacturing operations. In 2009, she was named Woman Extraordinaire of the Year by Business NC Magazine for her impact in economic success and forward-thinking strategies. Esther holds a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Hawaii and an Executive Business Management certification from Harvard Business School. She has also served as mentor, advocate and educator throughout her career.

Felix Negrón



With over 30 years of international experience, Félix Negrón, in his tenure as VP of Operations at Medtronic, was responsible for over 6000 employees, serving as Group VP of Operations for the global Diabetes business, VP of Puerto Rico Operations, Corporate Leader for Lean, Six Sigma, Design for Manufacturability and Global Manufacturing Strategy.

Félix was also the Operations Quality VP in Medtronic with responsibility of 27 sites globally. Prior to Medtronic, he was Senior VP of Global Operations in Pall Corporation and Executive Director in J&J. Now, as Founder of NY Consulting, is advising entities such as like Stryker Corp, Sartorius BioTech, J&J and the Department of Economic Development in Puerto Rico.

Michael A. Caligiuri, MD



President of the City of Hope National Medical Center in Los Angeles, California. He previously served as CEO of The Ohio State University James Cancer Hospital and Director of OSU’s Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he oversaw the construction of the third largest cancer hospital in the U.S. and recruited over 300 physicians and scientists. His research on immunotherapy for tumors has led to over 400 peer-reviewed publications and pivotal discoveries in the development of CAR NK cells for cancer therapy. Dr. Caligiuri has conducted clinical studies involving NK cells for over 1,000 cancer patients, mentored over 100 students, and received numerous prestigious awards. He has held leadership roles in various professional organizations and co-founded several initiatives, including Pelotonia and CytolImmune Therapeutics.

Frances Santiago-Schwarz, PhD



Santiago-Schwarz is Professor of Molecular Medicine at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell and Professor, Elmezzi Graduate School, Northwell Health. She has contributed to the advancement of human immunology, and as an educator and biomedical scientist, Dr. Santiago-Schwarz has been actively engaged in a variety of mentoring, diversity, and global humanitarian initiatives. Current activity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes acquiring insight into the immunopathology of COVID-19, unraveling novel therapeutic opportunities and development of COVID-19 medical-educational alliances with the community.

Sebastian Negrón



Sebastián Negrón Reichard holds a strong and distinguished academic background. He earned an MBA with distinction from Harvard Business School and a Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School. He also completed a bachelor’s degree in Economics and International Studies at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania as part of the prestigious Huntsman Program. Additionally, he pursued international studies at Sciences Po Lyon in France.

Throughout his professional career, Negrón Reichard has held key roles in prominent public and private institutions. He served as Chief of Staff for the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico, advisor to the Mayor of Boston, and board member of the Harvard/MIT Cooperative Society. His experience spans strategy, finance, and law, with positions at leading firms such as Accenture, Morgan Stanley, and Sullivan & Cromwell LLP.

Gualberto Medina



Mr. Medina career spans as an attorney, CPA, real estate broker, and New Jersey’s Secretary of Commerce. He also served as the co-founder, president, or general counsel for many technology and biotechnology startups. Because of his successful career in government and business sectors, Mr. Medina was named one of Hispanic Business Magazine’s 100 Most Influential Hispanics. He has ample experience serving as a Trustee for the Trust.

Ubaldo Córdova, PhD



Córdova is a professor in UPRM of chemical engineering, a researcher, and the institution’s former vice president for Academic Affairs and Research. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Puerto Rico (UPRM) and a MS and PhD from California Institute of Technology. His research experience includes the authoring of peer-reviewed articles in Physics Review Letters, Soft Matter, Journal of Fluid Mechanics, Advanced Functional Materials, and Nature Chemistry. In 2011, he was awarded the prestigious NSF CAREER award, and in 2013 as Distinguished Professor in Chemical Engineering.



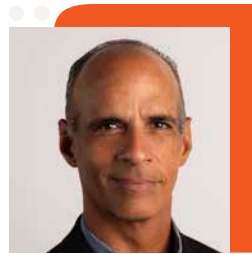
# EXECUTIVE TEAM



**Luz A. Crespo**  
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

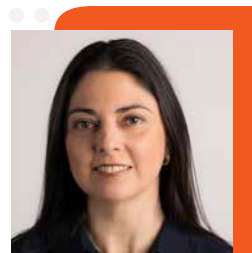
Ms. Crespo has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust since 2015, leading the organization to outstanding achievements and building the innovation capacity of the country. She was previously appointed as General Manager of Hewlett-Packard Puerto Rico, where she served for 31 years. During her tenure, she successfully lead the HP Computing & Printing and Personal Systems business units. She was also the first woman to become president of the Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association.

Lucy is a key figure in the tech and science industry of Puerto Rico due to her ample experience and contributions to these sectors. She holds a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Puerto Rico (Mayagüez Campus), is a graduate from the Kellogg's Graduate School of Management of Northwestern University for Executive Development and a member of the Alpha Pi Mu, the Industrial Engineering Honor Society. She has also served in several advisory roles and received multiple recognitions for her leadership.



**Gilberto Márquez**  
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

In February 2012, Gilberto Márquez joined the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust as Advisor and was promoted to Chief Financial Officer in 2018. Mr. Márquez has over 14 years of experience involved in initiatives related to technology commercialization. Prior to joining the Trust, Mr. Márquez was Director of the Center for Innovation and Technology, a specialty service center of the Puerto Rico Small Business and Technology Development Center hosted by the Inter American University of Puerto Rico. Mr. Márquez has participated as proposal reviewer panelist for the National Science Foundation's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II program. He is an accountant and holds a Master's degree in biotechnology management (MBM) from IE Business School in Madrid, Spain.



**Doira Díaz, Esq.**  
General Counsel  
& Administrator

Since 2018, Ms. Díaz advises the Chief Executive Officer, the Board of Trustees and the Trust's program directors and managers on applicable regulations, processes and procedures related to the administration, human resources, and general services of the Trust. She is also the Vice President of the Board of Trustees of the Puerto Rico Green Energy Trust, a position she holds ad honorem. Prior to joining the Trust, Doira held various positions at top law firms, covering matters in the areas of real estate, environment, land use and telecommunications with emphasis in real estate development, permitting matters and related disputes at the administrative and judicial levels. She also served as Deputy Advisor to the Governor of Puerto Rico for Energy, Environment, and Infrastructure. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania and a Juris Doctor degree from Fordham University and is also a notary public and a certified mediator. She is admitted to practice in the courts of Puerto Rico, New York and New Jersey.



**Inés Álvarez De La Campa**  
Human Resources Director

Ms. Álvarez de la Campa has a track record of analyzing companies and organization needs and executing plans to improve their competitiveness and overall employees' satisfaction. She has dedicated her career to the management of human resources, talent acquisition and administration in companies like Bristol Mayers Squibb and Johnson & Johnson.

Álvarez holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and a master's degree in Business Administration. She is also certified as a Personnel Administrator and Yellow Belt Certified (BMS OpEx).



**Lupe Vázquez**  
Chief Communications  
& Marketing Officer

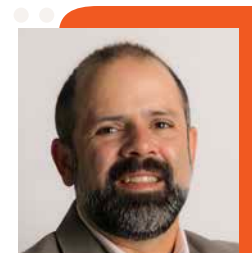
Ms. Vázquez has served as the organization's Chief Communications and Marketing Officer since 2015. Prior to that, she served as editor and reporter for more than 30 years at the local newspaper El Nuevo Día. As a journalist, she led the direction of writers, designers and freelancers for the creation of reports on diverse topics such as news, lifestyle, business, education, among many others. Her experience also includes the redesign to improve the reach of print and digital platforms, the conceptualization of new editorial products, brand management, integration of sales strategies and the execution of initiatives to improve revenue and readership models. Lupe holds a Bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts and a Master's degree in Translation, both from the University of Puerto Rico (Río Piedras Campus). In 2012, she was recognized with the WAN-IFRA award for her leadership in the digital transition of Logon, a newspaper designed for teenagers at El Nuevo Día.



**Luis Nieves, PE**  
Chief Facilities  
Management Officer

Mr. Nieves is the Chief Facilities Management Officer. He worked for Hewlett Packard Enterprise until 2018 where he engaged in rolls which included Project Engineer, Business Development and Supply Chain Management defining logistics solutions for HPE for subcontractors located in eastern Europe and México. He also had a role as Strategic Sourcing Manager at Pall Life Science (now Cytiva) until 2021.

Luis holds a Bachelor's degree and a master's degree in industrial engineering from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus, and completed a minor in accounting from the same institution in 1991.



**César Piovanetti**  
Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Mr. Piovanetti has over 15 years of experience in the geographic information sciences (GIS) field, as GIS and technology consultant in various locations in the United States and Puerto Rico. Throughout his career, he has held various roles in the technology sector integrating cloud software solutions for the public, private and NGO sector. Experienced in designing and deployment of platforms and solutions as a service in the Microsoft Azure Cloud, Office 365 integrations at the enterprise level as well as logistic operations using geolocation technologies. During the last couple of years, as part of the Trust's technology team, Mr. Piovanetti has led implementations for federal, local and NGO funded geospatial projects.

# STRATEGIC PILLARS & PROGRAMS

## Research & Development



Andreica Maldonado  
Program Director



David L. Gulley, PhD, RTTP, CLP  
Program Director



Abel Baerga, PhD  
Program Director



Fernando Pabón AIA, CAAPPR  
Program Director



Marcos López Casillas, PhD  
Program Director

## Entrepreneurship



Héctor Jirau, PhD  
Program Director



Denisse Rodríguez  
Program Director



Barbara Rivera  
Program Director

## Public Health



Amarilys Silva, PharmD  
Program Director



Grayson Brown, PhD  
Program Director



Marianyoly Ortiz-Ortiz, PhD  
Program Director

## Education



Luis Nieves, PE  
Program Director



Ricardo Burgos  
Program Manager

ANNUAL 2024  
REPORT 2025



WE ARE CREATING  
A BETTER FUTURE



# Education and Capacity Building for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

## Mission

Our Education and Capacity Building sponsorships aim to provide participants with instruction, mentorship, and other development opportunities in strategic sectors of science, technology, and entrepreneurship. We strive to give Puerto Ricans the tools they need to be more competitive in science and technology fields or to pursue entrepreneurial initiatives.

The Trust supports and funds various events, conferences, educational activities and summits. Also, through our sponsorship policy, we have powered events and activities related to R&D, entrepreneurship, public health, and innovation.

The Trust invested **\$173,912.00** in science, technology, research & entrepreneurship training initiatives, by sponsoring the following **26 organizations**:

- Colegio de Químicos de P.R.
- Trivium Studios LL C
- Engine-4 Corp.
- Fundación Sila M. Calderón
- Ciencia Puerto Rico
- Women in Business Inc.
- Asociación de Salud Primaria de P.R. Inc.
- Alana Freytes Rivera
- Angie M. González Rosario
- Scuba Dogs Society Inc.
- S.E.E. D.S. Corp
- University of Puerto Rico -Rio Piedras
- Materials Characterization Center Inc.
- SME – Asociación Ejecutivos de ventas y Mercadeo
- Universidad Central del Caribe
- Eureka Enrichment Services Incorporated
- Puerto Rico Information Technology Cluster
- Universidad Adventista de las Antillas
- Puerto Rico Space Foundation Corp.
- Fields of Joy Foundation Inc.
- APM-UHS, Inc
- Daniela Carlo Mejías
- COMPRMETIDOS Corp.
- Jóvenes científicos por Puerto Rico
- EcoExploratorio
- Black Girls Code



Likewise, the following organizations are allies of The Trust. Partnerships are part of our growth and strengthen the relationships within the ecosystems we facilitate. The Trust has received **\$499,116.40**, from these **50 organizations**, which have sponsored some of our events:

- Candace Royals
  - Agroservicios
  - Superior Angran
  - Prymed
  - PanOncology
  - Camuy Health Services
  - Dra. Lorena de Torres
  - Concilio Integral de Loíza
  - Ending HIV Epidemic TIES Munic. San Juan
  - RCMi Program
  - ASSMCA
  - Centro Comprensivo de Cáncer UPR
  - Triple S Management
  - ASU
  - Laboratorios Toledo
  - AMGEN
  - Caris Life Sciences
  - Thermo Fisher
  - Bioanalytical Instruments
  - CorePlus
  - Daniel Bedolla
  - Florian Gaa
  - Pharmaceuticals System International
  - Red Atlas
  - Aeronet
- Banco Popular
  - Invest PR
  - DLA Piper
  - Compañía de Turismo
  - RSM Puerto Rico
  - Ferraiuoli LLC.
  - The Sifre Group LLC
  - DECA Analytics
  - Puerto Rico Farm Credit
  - Walmart
  - Black Girls Code
  - Hello Media
  - Municipio Autónomo de Ponce
  - Carbono 3
  - Yestoday LLC
  - Goldpack
  - Outsourcing Solutions International
  - Sanabria & Associates
  - Oriental Bank
  - First Bank Puerto Rico
  - MCS Foundation
  - Caribbean University
  - Donativos Ambientales Ford
  - División del Caribe AAAS
  - Departamento de Desarrollo Económico y Comercio



# Memoranda of Understanding signed and conceptualized in 2024-2025

The Trust establishes alliances with a diverse range of organizations, educational, private, and non-profit, and the result is a bigger map of stakeholders to reinforce the Trust’s mission & vision.

These are the **more than 40 organizations** with which the PRSTRT and its programs has officialized alliances during this fiscal year.

1. Asociación de Educadores en Salud de Puerto Rico

2. Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget (Puerto Rico Broadband Program)

3. National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved, Inc.

4. Fundación Bucabarón

5. Migrant Health Center, Western Region Inc.

6. Corporación de Servicios de Salud Primaria y Desarrollo Socioeconómico El Otao (COSSAO)

7. Casa Juana Colón Apoyo y Orientación a la Mujer

8. Comité Comunal Corcovada

9. Puestos Pa’ Lo Bueno, Inc

10. Hewlett Packard Enterpirse Company

11. Corporación de Salud Marieña, Migrant Health Center & Plenitud PR
12. Fundación Universitaria Sanitas – Unisanitas

13. Morovis Community Health Center, Inc.

14. Lectores Para El Futuro

15. Departamento de Educación Puerto Rico

16. Universidad de Puerto Rico – Recinto de Ponce

17. Universidad de Puerto Rico – Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez

18. One Tree Foundation

19. Hello Media

20. Conexion Laboral del Municipio de Ponce

21. The Azmat A. Assur Foundation

22. The Ganesha Lab

23. Asociacion Mayaguezana De Personas Con Impedimentos, Inc.
24. Banco de Desarrollo Económico de Puerto Rico

25. La Maraña

26. Emergent Tools

27. Mennonite General Hospital, Inc.

28. Centro de Servicios Primarios de Salud, Patillas Inc.

29. Escuelas Públicas de Puerto Rico:

a. Escuela Carmen Belén Veiga

b. Escuela Josefa Vélez Bauzá

c. Escuela Ponce High School

d. Escuela Elvira Colón Negrón

e. Escuela Luis Llorens Torres

f. Escuela Manuel de la Pila Iglesias

g. Escuela Josefina León Zayas

h. Escuela Luis Muñoz Marín
30. HighTide Intelligence

31. Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez, Inc.

32. San Juan Bautista School of Medicine

33. River Network

34. Universidad de Puerto Rico – Recinto de Ciencias Médicas

35. University of Central Florida Foundation

36. Pacific Island Health Officers’ Association (PIHOA)

37. S. C. Johnson & Johnson, Inc.

38. Ponce Medical School Foundation

39. Universidad Central del Caribe

40. Ponce Medical School Foundation, Inc.

41. Universidad de Puerto Rico – Recinto de Río Piedras

42. The Molecular Science Research Center



# Designations, merits, acknowledgment and accolades

## FY 2024-2025

This year, we made excellent progress in advancing our vision for Puerto Rico to be recognized as a global innovation hub, as demonstrated by the following designations, acknowledgment and accolades.



### P.R. Public Health Trust recognitions:

In July 2024, Act 121-2024 was enacted, successfully completing the CHW Coalition's groundbreaking efforts to recognize and validate the vital role of CHWs within Puerto Rico's public health ecosystem. This is a special merit for the P.R. Public Health Trust.

Two PRPHT members earned the NNPHI's Rising Star and Unsung Grass Roots Hero awards, and seven posters were presented during the 2025 NNPHI Annual Conference.

Unsung Grass Roots Hero - For individuals that are not in a traditional leadership role and encourage organizational cultural that supports belonging. For Israel Román.

Rising Star - For early career or new in their career individuals who are go-getter. For Lizmariel Tirado.

PRPHT's Executive Director, Dr. Marianyoly Ortiz, was welcomed as part of the NNPHI Board of Directors, further expanding PRPHT's influence at the national level.

### Technology Transfer Office Recognitions:

Dr. David Gulley, Technology Transfer Office's executive director was appointed as NIMBL Governing Committee Member and received the AUTM Volunteer Service Award 2025.

### PRSTRT:

The Puerto Rico Science, Technology & Research Trust (PRSTRT) received the 2025 Special Achievement in GIS (SAG) Award from Esri, a global leader in geographic information systems (GIS). This recognition highlights the innovative work of the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU) in leveraging geospatial technology to monitor, prevent, and respond to dengue outbreaks across Puerto Rico.

### PRVCU Awards and Recognitions 2024:

Katherine M. Torres Nieves: completed the FMCA Dodds Short Courses in Gainesville, Florida, enhancing technical expertise in vector control.

Joanelis Medina Quintana: Outstanding Community Service Award, Lab Manager's 2024 Leadership Excellence Awards, Denver, CO.

Marla García: Recipient of the American Mosquito Control Association Boyd-Ariaz Grassroots Award, 2024.

Javier Córdova: Awarded the Southeastern Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Disease DODD Fellowship, 2024.

PRVCU Scientific Publications  
and Conferences 2024:

July – September: Wing Beats (Florida Mosquito Control Association, Winter 2024, Vol. 35, No. 4), Special Edition dedicated to the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU).

Article: Community Engagement – A Foundational Approach in the PRVC

Authors: Dra. Jania P. García-Zeno and Dra. Julieanne Miranda-Bermúdez

Article: Dengue Outbreak in Puerto Rico

Author: Dr. Rafael Saavedra

Article: Establishment of the Tropical Islands Training and Evaluation Center (TITEC) in Puerto Rico

Author: Amarilis Asencio

Article: Molecular Techniques Used by the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit and the Advantages of the Superpool Technique

Author: Joanelis Medina

Article: Puerto Rico Vector Management Association- The Newest Statewide Vector Management Association

Authors: Dr. Julianne Miranda-Bermúdez, Noemí Martínez-Tull, Dr. Grayson Brown

Article: Puerto Rico Vector Surveillance and Quality Control Programs

Author: Cristhian R. Sánchez Rolón

Joanelis Medina, co-author: Phenotypic and Molecular Markers of Insecticide Resistance in Aedes aegypti Populations from Puerto Rico, Campino et al., The Lancet Regional.

PRVCU Awards and Recognitions 2025:

Joanelis Medina Quintana: Early Career Research and Leadership Award, Entomological Society of America (International Branch), Portland, USA.

Luis Quintanilla and Cristhian Sánchez: Recipients of the American Mosquito Control Association Washington Days Travel Award, recognizing support for participation in AMCA advocacy activities.

Marla García: Recipient of the American Mosquito Control Association PR Ambassador, 2025.

PRVCU Scientific Publications  
and Conferences 2025:

American Mosquito Control Association 2025  
Annual Meeting:

PRVCU had the opportunity to lead a dedicated symposium on innovative vector management strategies. The staff presented on topics including surveillance, insecticide resistance, molecular tools, community outreach, communications, and the Bayamón Integrated Vector Management Program.

**Rafael Saavedra**, co-author: Poster Abstract Acceptance, Impact of the Bayamón Integrated Vector Management Program on Aedes aegypti abundance in public housing, Puerto Rico, 2024, American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) 2025 Annual Meeting.

**Nexilianne Borrero Segarra** authored “Protecting Indoor Spaces: Screens and Spatial Repellents” published in Wing Beats, Florida Mosquito Control Association, Vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 2025.

Liliana Sánchez-González, Jacob E. Crawford, Laura Adams, **Grayson Brown**, Kyle R. Ryff, Mark Delorey, Jose Rui-Valcarcel, Nicole Nazario, **Nexilianne Borrero, Julieanne Miranda**, Sara N. Mitchell, Paul I. Howell, Johanna R. Ohm, Charlie Behling, Brian Wasson, Craig Eldershaw, Bradley J. White, Vanessa Rivera-Amill, Roberto Barrera, Gabriela Paz-Bailey: “Incompatible Aedes aegypti Male Releases as an Intervention to Reduce Mosquito Population: A Field Trial in Puerto Rico,” published in PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases, 19(1): e0012839, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0012839>

Roberto Barrera, Verónica Acevedo-Soto, Jose Ruiz-Valcarcel, **Joanelis Medina**, Reinaldo Rivera, Luisa Otero, Rafael Tosado, Freddy A. Medina, **Rafael Saavedra, Julieanne Miranda**, Kyle Ryff, **Grayson Brown**, Zachary J. Madewell, Stephen H. Waterman, Gabriela Paz-Bailey: “Defining Aedes aegypti Density Thresholds for Preventing Human Arboviral Infections,” published in Acta Tropica, Vol. 267, 2025, Article 107688. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actatropica.2025.107688>



# Infrastructure and Operational Areas





Doira Díaz Rivera, Esq.  
General Counsel & Administrator

# ADMINISTRATION

The Administration department serves as the backbone of our organization, seamlessly integrating several areas to ensure smooth operations and support for all staff members, tenants, and service providers. Led by Doira Díaz Rivera, Esq., its responsibilities span across legal advisory services, environmental health and safety, procurement logistics, real estate management, and wellness programs. The Administration department plays a critical and multifaceted role in fostering a supportive and efficient work environment, reflected in their remarkable metrics and broad scope of responsibilities.

## Legal

- Strategic advice to Board of Trustees and Management
- General legal advice to all Trust programs
- Advised and coordinated Sponsorship Program (24 applications processed)
- Negotiation with third parties, including international, federal and local governments
- Drafting and revision of legal documents
- Over 1,800 legal consultations
- Solid continued legal education compliance

## Environmental Health and Safety

- Focused rounds on occupational health and safety risks
- OSHA compliance in electrical rooms
- Updated emergency plans, evacuation routes, and fire prevention procedures
- Collaboration with the Puerto Rico Seismic Network
- Worker Participation - International Day of Health and Safety
- Reorganization of Institutional Biosafety Committee
- Shake Out drill
- Renewal of explosives licenses
- Updated procedures for infectious respiratory diseases

## Training and Workshops:

- Initial EHS Training for New Employees
- Fleet Safety
- Health & Safety Aspects in Emergency Management
- Biosafety Program / Bloodborne Pathogens
- Hazard Communication & PPE
- Exit Routes, Emergency Action Plans & Fire Prevention
- Caribe Wave (Ponce) Legal Aspects of Health and Safety
- EHS Tabletop Exercise – PRPHT Supervisors
- Emergency Preparedness for Hurricanes Earthquake and Tsunami Emergency Management
- COVID-19 Seroprevalence and Genomic Epidemiology Study
- Active Shooter

## Procurement:

- Logistics support to all Trust programs
- Over 1,400 purchase orders processed
- Total purchases: \$7.8MM
- Vehicle fleet management – 26 units
- Travel, flights and hotels reservations management
- Oversees network of over 350 active suppliers

## Wellness Program

- Group exercises three (3) times per week
- Weekly ergonomics exercises
- Physical Evaluations
- Special Activities
- Spa Days
- Yoga, Tea & Paint
- Wellness workshops
- Salsa class
- Zumba
- Goofy Games
- Steps Challenges
- Thanksgiving race

## General

A series of tasks and projects were coordinated with a focus on process improvement and space optimization.

- Main Parcel – Lease of parcels as temporary staging areas
- Forward Center – Inventory and F2 Space
- Inventory process for Single Audit
- Engagement of new vendor Pasajero 17 at Innovation Center
- Systems Updating and Synchronizing – PSI, HubSpot, Stripe, Room Booking



Mr. Gilberto Márquez  
Chief Financial Officer

## FINANCES

The Finances Department keeps making significant strides in enhancing our financial processes and ensuring our organization's stability and growth.

### Highlights and Key Achievements:

- Assisted the CEO with the identification and implementation of alternative sources of funding, including R&D Credits and New Market Tax Credits, both expected to be operational in FY2025-26.

Full automation of finance processes, including invoicing, payment, expense report processing and budgeting.

- Eighth consecutive single audit achieved with a clean opinion.
- Continued implementation of Artificial Intelligence for accounting processes, expecting to be fully operational in FY2025-26.
- Ongoing access for Program Managers to budget reporting without human intervention.



Luis Nieves, PE  
Chief Facilities Management Officer

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The following are the facilities management department's highlights for FY 2024-2025:

- Sealed the roof of the Laboratory building (~15,000 SF).
- Asphalted the entrance of the Trust to cover all potholes.
- Contracted the repair and gave maintenance of the 300 KVA electrical substation that serves the Innovation Center.
- Constructed a provisional parking space with a capacity of 70 Vehicules to easy the parking of both employees and tenants
- Worked with Xavier Ocasio on the signage project for the Trust.
- Worked with Administration/Legal in the drafting of contracts for the following tenants:
  - Emerge
  - Incentives PRO
  - IG Builders
  - Farm in the City
  - Centro Comprensivo de Cancer
  - Cuela Coffee
- Contracted plumbing work to provide the PR Research Institute with water at proper pressure for equipment use.



César Piovanetti  
Chief Information Officer

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This year, the organization has made significant strides across several strategic initiatives, reflecting a commitment to innovation, security, and operational excellence. One of the most notable achievements was receiving the prestigious Esri SAG Award, a recognition that underscores our excellence in geographic information systems (GIS) and our ability to leverage spatial data for impactful decision-making. This award not only validates our technical capabilities but also highlights our leadership in applying GIS to solve complex business challenges.

Complementing this recognition is our successful deployment of the Huntress Cyber Security Education Platform, a critical step in fortifying our cyber defense posture. By empowering employees with real-time threat awareness and training modules tailored to evolving attack vectors, we've cultivated a more resilient and informed workforce. This deployment aligns with our broader cybersecurity strategy, which also includes a robust network modernization effort. Through the integration of next-generation firewalls, zero-trust architecture, and enhanced endpoint protection, we've significantly reduced vulnerabilities and improved threat detection across our digital infrastructure.

Parallel to these security enhancements, we've accelerated the use of AI in automating and standardizing internal processes and workflows. From intelligent document processing to predictive analytics in IT operations, AI has enabled us to streamline repetitive tasks, reduce human error, and enhance decision-making speed. For example, AI-driven bots now handle routine service desk requests, freeing up technical staff to focus on higher-value initiatives. Workflow standardization powered by machine learning has also improved cross-departmental collaboration, ensuring consistency in data handling and compliance reporting. These advancements have not only increased operational efficiency but also laid the groundwork for scalable innovation across departments.

Together, these initiatives reflect a cohesive strategy that blends technological advancement with human-centric design. The Esri SAG Award celebrates our data-driven excellence, while the Huntress platform and network modernization efforts reinforce our commitment to cybersecurity. Meanwhile, AI-driven automation is transforming how we work, making our processes smarter, faster, and more reliable. As we continue to evolve, these pillars—recognition, education, security, and intelligent automation—will remain central to our mission of delivering value through innovation and resilience.

**Recent months have marked a period of innovation, security enhancement, and operational transformation within the organization's IT landscape.**

## Esri SAG Award

## Cybersecurity Advancements

## AI-Driven Automation





Lupe Vázquez  
Chief Communications  
& Marketing Officer

## COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Communications & Marketing delivered strong results in fiscal year 2024–2025 by strengthening brand identity, elevating communications, and executing innovative campaigns that boosted organizational visibility and engagement. The department supported multiple program pillars and leveraged digital tools to enhance customer retention and increase event participation.

**\$2.7M**

**Total Earned Media**

**916**

**Media Appearances**

**66+**

**Owned Active Channels**

**12,000**

**followers total social media  
audience growth**

**1,066**

**email campaigns through  
HubSpot**

**203**

**Audiovisual Productions**

**5,600+**

**tickets booked through Eventbrite**

**165+**

**Help Desk Requests attended**

## Owned Media Ecosystem

The Trust and its programs have a robust digital ecosystem consisting of more than 66 active channels, including websites, social media, newsletters, and multimedia platforms. Web presence is a common denominator in virtually all initiatives, establishing itself as the main basis for institutional communication.

The most widely used social media platforms are Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, reflecting their relevance in connecting with diverse communities, from the public to professionals and entrepreneurs. Platforms such as YouTube and Spotify reinforce the multimedia strategy, while the use of newsletters in various programs allows for direct and sustained contact with audiences.

Notably, the foray into TikTok through programs such as Colmena66 and PRVCU reflects the organization's ability to adapt to new digital trends and connect with younger audiences, thus expanding its reach to emerging segments and diversifying its communication channels.

Many other programs do not maintain a social media channel specific to their project, but they generate content and maintain constant engagement with their audiences through the Trust's channels, where their initiatives are marketed. These are Research Grants, Caribbean Center for Rising Seas, Center for Tropical Biodiversity, Research Institute, STEM & Workforce Development and Meet-ups.

Program	Web	Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn	X	YouTube	TikTok	Spotify	Newsletter	Google business
PR Science Trust	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research Grants	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
Caribbean Center	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
Research Institute	✓									
Center for Tropical Bio	✓									
Parallel18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-		✓	-
Parallel Xpand	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-		-	-
Parallel BioLeap	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-		-	-
Fase 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-		✓	-
Colmena66	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	-
PR Public Health Trust	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-		✓	-
PRVCU	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
PRCCI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-		✓	✓
STEM & Workforce	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
Meetups	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-

Overall, this portfolio of channels reflects broad digital reach and solid institutional positioning, while also pointing to strategic opportunities to optimize platform management and continue innovating in the digital presence.

PR Science Trust Social Media:  
Our Audience Persona

The primary audience consists of professional women aged 35-44 years from the metropolitan area of Puerto Rico, who value local, visual, and science-related content that connects innovation with daily life and community development. This is an active and professionally committed audience, with a notable presence in sectors such as education, health, science, technology, entrepreneurship, and public or community management. They are informed women with a strong sense of belonging and cultural pride, who seek content that keeps them connected to what is happening.

Our social media audience values visual, accessible, and locally relevant content that connects science and innovation to daily life in Puerto Rico. Preferred formats include informative videos, infographics, carousels, and inspiring success stories. Notably, many interactions come from non-followers—offering a strategic chance to grow our audience and deepen engagement.



Professional  
Women  
35-44 years

Main Featured Topics

Our social media channels cover a wide range of topics aligned with our core pillars, as well as our programs and collaborative efforts with partners.

During this fiscal year, the three main topic areas were Research and Development, Education, Workforce Development, and Organizational Initiatives.

Topic	Content Coverage (%)
Research & Development	47.1
Education & Workforce	22.5
Other Initiatives (Organizational)	22.2
Entrepreneurship	5.7
Public Health	2.5

PR Science Trust Social Media:  
Performance Highlights

The Trust’s social media audience grew 32.4% (total audience) by over 12,000 followers with more than 5.1 million impressions, 160,000 interactions, and a 3% engagement rate, with video views doubling to over 1.6 million. Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube were key platforms.

Over the past year, our social media performance showed strong momentum. We achieved a 32% increase in followers, reflecting greater visibility and reach. Engagement nearly doubled, with a 70% rise in interactions and a 39% boost in engagement rate per impression, signaling a more active and responsive community. Video content proved highly effective, with views more than doubling (+112%), confirming audience preference for this format. Additionally, we increased our posting frequency by 16%, which likely contributed to the growth in impressions and overall engagement.

32.4%+  
audience growth

12,000+  
followers

+5.1  
million  
impressions

160,000  
interactions

Social Media Performance Fiscal Year 2024-25 vs Fiscal Year 2023-24

Metric	Jun 2023 – May 2024	Jun 2024 – Jul 2025	Absolute Variation	Relative Variation
Audience (Total Audience)	36,768	48,681	+11,913	+32.4%
Net Audience Growth	6,962	12,088	+5,126	+73.6%
Published Posts	1,938	2,240	+302	+15.6%
Impressions	4,301,883	5,152,048	+850,165	+19.8%
Engagements (Interactions)	94,413	160,256	+65,843	+69.7%
Engagement Rate (per impression)	2.2%	3%	+0.8 pp	+38.8%
Video Views	799,549	1,692,443	+892,894	+111.7%



Campaign Highlights



Documentary “When the Sea Reaches Us”:

The multimedia campaign promoted the launch and free viewing of this educational documentary, produced by the Caribbean Center of Rising Seas, the Rising Seas Insitute and the Trust. This documentary was submitted for the SunCoast Emmys 2025.



Live Broadcast from NASA:

Launch to space of research projects organized by the Research Grants program and the Trust, in collaboration with Rhodium. The research studies the effects of microgravity growth and anti-inflammatory properties of stem cells.



Special event “Feed Your Microbiota”:

A hybrid event hosted by the Center of Tropical Biodiversity, that featured key speakers and educators about the science of food and well-being.



Video The Cuban Frog:

An educational video on-site with local researchers taking samples of the Cuban frog and its impact in our local ecosystem.



Hacklab Academy:

Promotional campaign for the enrollment of Hacklab Academy, featuring young students and their STEM projects.



Website “News” Section:

Launch of new website section featuring latest news and information.

Special Collaborations with influencers and partners



Karla Gilfú & PRPHT:

Participation in the Symposium on Suicide Prevention



Chef’s Garden & TTO:

Development of a patent on seeds and intellectual property rights



Atlantic College University & the Trust:

Roundtable on digital empowerment



UPR-Mayagüez & Center for Tropical Biodiversity:

Research projects on the Cuban frog



Website Improvements and Performance

www.prsciencetrust.org

This fiscal year, the website underwent a strategic UX/UI redesign to improve usability, performance, and operational efficiency.

Key improvements include:

**Integrated Initiative Sections:** New content was embedded within the existing site structure, reducing production time, minimizing maintenance costs, and maintaining a unified user experience.

**Performance Gains:** The updated design significantly enhanced loading speed, contributing to a smoother and more responsive platform.

These enhancements support a streamlined and cost-effective digital experience and enabled improved performance metrics such as:

181k  
Total Visits

73k  
Active Users

98k  
New Users

CRM and Event Management

The team managed over 113,000 contacts across HubSpot and Mailchimp, sent 1,066 email marketing campaigns, and integrated a chatbot and Stripe payment platform to improve customer experience.

Over 31 successful events were held using platforms like HubSpot and Eventbrite, distributing more than 5,600 tickets and generating notable revenue from events and facility reservations.

113k  
contacts

31  
events

+1k  
email marketing campaign

Nonpaid publicity

Non-paid publicity refers to media coverage the organization earns organically, through news stories, interviews, and mentions, rather than paid advertisements. For a nonprofit like the Trust, this type of visibility is especially valuable, as it enhances credibility, builds public trust, and extends reach without additional marketing costs.

This year, the Trust gained over \$2.7M in non-paid publicity by actively engaging with media outlets and securing coverage that highlights its mission, programs, and impact. Public relations efforts resulted in 916 media appearances in local and US outlets, mainly through partnerships with The Big Think Group and Latin2Latin.

\$2.7M  
in non-paid publicity

916  
media appearances

Agency	Earned Media Value	Media Impressions	Media Appearances
The Big Think Group	\$2,671,780.00	5,633,338	911
Latin2Latin	\$11,129.00	157,236	5
Total	\$2,682,909	5,790,574	916



# RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

72  
Research Grants

86  
Technology Transfer Office™

92  
Center for Tropical Biodiversity

102  
Caribbean Center for Rising Seas

110  
Research Institute



# IMPACT NUMBERS

162

Grantees since program inception

7

New Grantees in this Fiscal Year

\$17,082,156.50

in Grants Awarded

\$69,624,720

Return on Funding

102

Students and early career professionals  
completed the Milo Climate Action  
Academy

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**Current Grantees**

From July 2024 until June 2025, active grantees reported the following achievements:

**Students Impacted\***

40 undergraduate students

29 graduate students

\*Out of a total of 588 students impacted since program inception

**Thesis and Dissertations**

As a result of the funding provided by the Research Grants Program, three (3) MS thesis were completed during this period.

**External Funding**

Since July 2024, the total amount of external funding secured that the active grantees reported is \$9,603,000\*. Several grantees are awaiting responses from federal agencies to which they have submitted proposals.

\*Out of \$69,624,720 since program inception.

**PublicationsSince**

July 2023, our active grantees have successfully published 7 peer-reviewed articles across various journals\*.

\*Out of 222 publications since program inception



# WHAT WE DO

As part of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust, the Research Grants Program is a structured, systematic, open, and competitive funding mechanism to support the development of science and technology research projects in Puerto Rico. The mission of the Research Grants Program is to provide proof-of-concept funding and incentives to advance locally developed R&D projects to become more competitive for federal and private funding and/or commercialization.

The Research Grants Program represents a critical source of competitive financial support for fundamental research and commercialization activities that build the knowledge economy, fuel innovation, and empower Puerto Rican scientists and entrepreneurs.

# HOW WE DO IT

Our approach is characterized by competitive mechanisms and rigorous peer review. Through this process, proposals are evaluated by subject matter experts to assess their quality, feasibility, and potential impact. By employing such a system, we ensure that resources are allocated to projects with the highest scientific merit, fostering transparency and encouraging excellence and innovation. Additionally, we are committed to fostering initiatives that promote collaboration within the scientific ecosystem of Puerto Rico. By creating platforms, networks, and opportunities for researchers, we aim to enhance knowledge sharing, interdisciplinary collaborations, and the overall advancement of scientific research in Puerto Rico.

# WHO WE CONNECT WITH

The Research Grants Program takes a “Researchers First” approach, striving to create an environment that empowers and supports researchers in Puerto Rico in their scientific endeavors. In addition, we engage subject matter experts from around the world who play a vital role in evaluating their proposals and providing valuable insights. By harnessing their expertise, we ensure a rigorous and comprehensive assessment process. The program also extends its support to research administrators, acknowledging their vital role in facilitating the smooth management of scientific projects. By assisting them, we contribute to advancing the overall landscape of scientific research.

## Catalyzer Research Grant

The Catalyzer Research Grant (CRG) enhances the competitiveness of local researchers by providing critical bridge funding to help them (1) obtain reproducible and robust preliminary results, (2) address any recommendations from previous grant reviewers to improve their R&D proposals and (3) secure reagents, laboratory materials, collaborations, or additional technical training necessary for the proposed goals. Awards are up to \$70K.

We received 40 letters of intent out of which we invited 32 to submit a full proposal. We received a total of 28 full proposals. During this fiscal year, we completed the peer review of these proposals.

7 Funded Projects

\$486,084.52 Awarded

Type of Proposal	
New submission – Junior faculty	16
New submission – PIs with successful track record	7
Resubmission	5
Strategic Sectors	
Agriculture	1
Biotechnology and Life Sciences	17
Clean Technologies/ Renewable Energy	2
Environmental Sciences	6
Other	2
Institutions	
University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras Campus	7
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez Campus	5
Ponce Health Sciences University	5
University of Puerto Rico - Ponce Campus	3
Carlos Albizu University - San Juan Campus	3
Inter American University of Puerto Rico - Bayamón Campus	1
Inter American University of Puerto Rico - Metropolitan Campus	1
Universidad Central del Caribe	1
University of Puerto Rico - Comprehensive Cancer Center	1
University of Puerto Rico - Medical Sciences Campus	1
University of Puerto Rico - The Molecular Science Research Center	1


Principal Investigator:	Institution	Proposal Title:
Dr. Andre Amador	University of Puerto Rico - Mayagüez Campus	Wave Transformation Dynamics over Coral Reefs: Evaluating Wave Dissipation Formulations for Coastal Defense in Puerto Rico
Dr. Carmen Ortiz-Sanchez	Ponce Medical School Foundation, Inc.	Epigenetic profiling of de novo metastatic prostate cancer in Puerto Rican Hispanic/Latino men
Dr. Fernando Piñero Gonzalez	University of Puerto Rico - Ponce Campus	Unraveling endometriosis CXCR4 antagonist effects in vitro and in silico
Dr. Francisco Bezares	University of Puerto Rico - Mayagüez Campus	Physical Vapor Deposition of Metal Nanoparticles for the Scalable, Cost-effective Fabrication of Novel Nanophotonic Devices
Dr. James Porter	Ponce Medical School Foundation, Inc.	Novel prefrontal proteins regulating stress susceptibility in female rats
Dr. Kelcie L. Chiquillo	University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras Campus	Exploring the mechanisms around vanishing meadows: adaptation and resilience of seagrasses, microbial communities, and biodiversity shifts
Dr. Marcelo Mario Samsa	The Molecular Science Research Center	Development of HIV-gp145 mRNA-based Vaccine: A Comparative Study of Conventional and Self-Amplifying mRNA Platforms

### New Grantees’ Recognition Event

On September 27, 2024, we introduced seven new grantees at the Catalyzer Research Grant Recognition Event, awarding a total of \$486,000 to support their innovative projects.

The event gave recipients the opportunity to present their work and fostered a sense of community. Highlights included a panel with past grantees Dr. Nawal Boukli, Dr. Riccardo Papa, and Dr. Tugrul Giray, who discussed the award’s impact on their careers, and a video testimonial from former recipient Dr. Filipa Godoy.




 Catalyzer Research Grant Recognition Event

### Advanced Research Grant: Space Edition

The Advanced Research Grant: Space Edition, developed with Rhodium Scientific, provided Puerto Rican researchers with rapid access to the International Space Station (ISS) through a competitive proposal process. The goal of this initiative is to accelerate Puerto Rico’s role in space science by supporting innovative projects and facilitating expert mission development. Two projects from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus have already been funded and successfully launched to the ISS, marking significant progress in the island’s contributions to space research and technology.

**Principal Investigator**  
 Dr. Maribella Domenech

**Project**  
 Biotechnology/Biopharma Mission: Impact of Microgravity on microcarrier culture of mesenchymal stem cells

**Launch Date**  
 November 4, 2024

**Principal Investigator**  
 Dr. David Suleiman

**Project**  
 Hardware Technology Development Mission: Polymer Nanocomposite Membrane Assembly for Water Purification on the International Space Station  
**Launch Date**  
 March 14, 2025



## Milo Climate Action

In June 2024, we announced the launch of the Milo Climate Action Academy in collaboration with the Milo Space Science Institute at Arizona State University (ASU). This initiative focused on utilizing satellite data to develop innovative solutions for climate change in Puerto Rico and was featured in the White House’s Fact Sheet’s Call to Action to Bring the Benefits of Space to Communities Across America. The academy commenced on August 19, 2024, marking the first time the Milo Space Science Institute at ASU conducted a global climate-focused space academy, with Puerto Rico as its pilot location. The program was fully funded by our Research Grants Program, allowing participants to engage at no cost, while equipping students and recent graduates with tools to address and mitigate local climate challenges.

The culmination of these efforts took place at the Milo Climate Action Showcase, held on December 7, 2024. During this event, 102 participants presented 28 innovative solutions aimed at tackling climate challenges in Puerto Rico, sharing their work with a diverse audience of academics, industry leaders, and professionals committed to advancing climate action. The showcase not only highlighted the creativity and dedication of emerging climate leaders but also fostered valuable networking opportunities to help propel their ideas forward. The event concluded with the recognition of five outstanding projects for their exceptional contributions to building a sustainable future for Puerto Rico.



↑ Milo Climate Action Academy



↑ Milo Climate Action Academy



↑ Milo Climate Action Academy

102	31
students	early-career
28	5
solutions	awards

## BEACON

Beacon is a centralized platform for collecting, displaying, analyzing, and reporting academic activity across Puerto Rico, supporting collaboration among researchers and institutions.

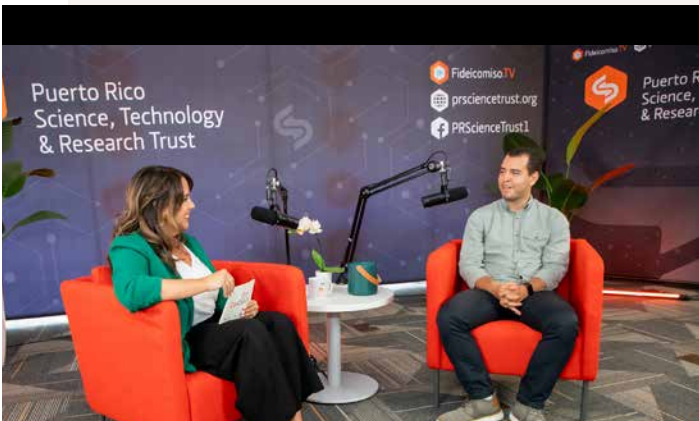
On February 27, 2025, we held a Hands-On Workshop at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez with 39 attendees. Participants received guidance on using the platform, technical support, and professional headshots to enhance their profiles and networks.



↑ Beacon - Hands-On Workshop

## Podcast – ConCiencia

The Program led, and produced the third season of the ConCiencia Podcast, highlighting the scientists we support and the impact of their work locally and globally. A total of six episodes were released, each providing a platform for scientists to share not only their research but also the human stories behind their work. By emphasizing the people behind science, the podcast offered insights into the real-world effects of their discoveries within local communities and on the global stage. Featuring diverse voices and groundbreaking projects, the podcast contributed to greater public understanding of science and fostered meaningful connections between researchers and the communities they serve.



↑ Ep 11 - David Miranda



↑ EP12 - Dra. Beatriz Zayas



## Academix

On July 12, 2024, the Research Grants Program hosted the second edition of AcadeMix: Climate and Tech Edition—a dynamic event created for academics, researchers, and university leaders committed to advancing knowledge and collaboration in climate and technology.

The event featured a diverse lineup of sessions, including:

- Dr. José Javier Hernández Ayala opened with a keynote on Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events in Puerto Rico.

- A panel on Climate & Tech Initiatives of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust brought together:

- Dr. Marianyoly Ortiz Ortiz (Puerto Rico Public Health Trust)
- Dr. Julieanne Miranda Bermúdez (Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit)
- Dr. Carlos Báez (Technology Transfer Office)

to discuss innovative, cross-sector strategies focused on public health, vector control, and technology.

- Dr. Abniel Machín-De Jesús delivered a compelling talk on Renewable Energies and the Situation in Puerto Rico, highlighting challenges and opportunities in the island’s energy transition.

- Kamille Morales Lebrón, our Outreach and Content Specialist, presented the Milo Climate Action Academy—a collaboration with Arizona State University’s Milo Space Science Institute. The academy focused on empowering local climate action through satellite data for early career professionals and students.



↑ AcadeMix



↑ AcadeMix



↑ AcadeMix

- Arch. Fernando Pabón and Gilberto Guevara shared strategies for adaptation and community resilience in Research, Education, and Praxis from within the Caribbean Center for Rising Seas. They also screened the trailer for their documentary “Cuando el Mar nos Alcance”.

Participants also engaged in an interactive Networking Bingo, fostering new academic and professional connections in a fun atmosphere. AcadeMix 2024 served as a powerful platform to explore climate impacts, promote science-driven solutions, and inspire collaborative action for a more resilient Puerto Rico.

## SciComm Trainings

On December 12, 2024 we kicked off our science communication workshop series with “La Ciencia de la Comunicación Científica y el Storytelling,” led by Dr. Kevin Alicea and coordinated by Kamille Lebrón. This first session brought together 26 participants, including researchers, professors, and entrepreneurs from across the island. The training focused on the power of storytelling and the science behind effective communication, offering practical tools such as improvisation techniques, language adaptation strategies, and the use of personal narratives to engage diverse audiences. This initiative aims to empower scientists to better connect with the public and promote the broader dissemination of science. The successful launch set the stage for future workshops in the series.

On April 4, 2025, we hosted the second workshop in our science communication series: “Redacción científica para medios,” led by Dr. Kevin Alicea-Torres. A diverse group of researchers, academics, and science communicators came together to develop skills for writing effective press



↑ SciComm Training



↑ SciComm Training



↑ SciComm Training



releases that are clear, concise, and engaging for media outlets. The session focused on simplifying complex scientific concepts for general audiences and structuring compelling science stories that accurately communicate research findings. This workshop strengthened participants' ability to connect their work with the public and broadened the impact of science and innovation in Puerto Rico.

Due to strong interest from employees, on May 22, 2025, we organized a special edition of our science communication workshop series: “Del Storytelling a los Medios,” led by Dr. Kevin Alicea-Torres. Offered exclusively to Trust employees involved in science outreach, the session provided hands-on training in communicating scientific content within Puerto Rico’s unique context. Participants practiced storytelling, media writing, and audience engagement through dynamic exercises such as elevator pitch dramatizations and headline writing. The workshop focused on translating complex concepts into clear, relevant, and accessible messages for general audiences, further strengthening internal capacity to communicate science effectively



↑ SciComm Training



↑ SciComm Training



↑ SciComm Training

## OTHER INITIATIVES

### ARIS Conference

We participated in the 2025 ARIS (Advancing Research Impact in Society) Conference- Gathering Currents for Change by co-designing and contributing to a special session titled “Exploring the Impact of Puerto Rico’s Research in Society,” which highlighted the island’s vibrant research ecosystem and its contributions to societal progress. Our Director, Andreica Maldonado, presented an overview of the Trust and its role in strengthening local research with global relevance. Dr. Kevin Alicea-Torres discussed his work in science communication through his collaboration with AAAS, and Dr. Mónica Feliú-Mójer shared key initiatives from Ciencia Puerto Rico.

The session also featured impactful presentations from researchers supported through our programs:

- Dr. Filipa Godoy-Vitorino presented her research on the vaginal microbiome as a tool for preventing cervical disease.
- Dr. Ihdaliz Flores shared her ongoing work on non-invasive diagnostics for endometriosis.
- Prof. Ángel Acosta showcased his study of local cave geology and the use of 3D scanned models for education and preservation.

In addition to shaping the session content, we also helped design a networking activity to foster deeper connections between attendees and Puerto Rican researchers. However, due to limited time, the activity was not held. Despite this, the session successfully elevated the visibility of Puerto Rico’s scientific talent and encouraged collaboration across communities.



↑ Advancing Research Impact in Society



↑ Advancing Research Impact in Society



↑ Advancing Research Impact in Society

ACT 60

he Research Grants Program oversees processing and evaluating the applications of the Act 60 tax incentives. The purpose is to foster research and development activity conducted at local universities in Puerto Rico, allowing qualified Principal Investigators or a Co-Principal Investigator to seek tax exemptions for salaries earned from eligible R&D research grants. The main objective of this incentive is to attract and retain competitive researchers to strengthen Puerto Rico’s performance in science and technology and the Island’s position in the knowledge economy.

At the time of this report, for fiscal year 2024, a total of 85 incentive applications have been received. If approved, this will represent over 2.1 million in tax incentives for researchers.

HEARTS

We collaborated in supporting the HEARTS Conference (The Puerto Rican Higher Education Assembly of Researchers, Thriving, not just Surviving), an initiative focused on empowering faculty at Puerto Rico’s Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) to drive lasting change in STEM education. Through expert-led sessions and collaborative discussions, participants explored wellness practices to combat burnout, gained grant-writing and capacity-building skills, and strengthened their professional networks.

The conference emphasized faculty well-being, student success, and institutional resilience, equipping attendees with practical tools to enhance STEM outcomes for Hispanic students across the Island.

Institution	Act 60 Applications	Incentive requested
UAGM	4	\$55,473.00
UCC	6	\$104,327.42
UPR-A	3	\$111,702.84
UPR-CCC	12	\$532,846.70
UPR-M	37	\$680,934.33
UPR-MSC	15	\$474,840.42
UPR-P	3	\$66,066.99
UPR-RP	5	\$114,631.18
Total	85	\$2,140,822.88



↑ The Puerto Rican Higher Education Assembly of Researchers, Thriving, not just Surviving

WHAT'S NEXT

- Expand access to funding and resources for Puerto Rico’s local researchers by strengthening capacity, visibility, and support systems across all regions and academic institutions.
- Publish and actively showcase the results of the Scientific Needs Assessment to guide decisions.
- Cultivate local, national, and international partnerships to maximize research impact and attract additional investment.
- Strengthen internal capacity, tools, and staffing to support sustainable program growth and operational excellence.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of the program through diversified funding strategies and meaningful impact measurement.





# IMPACT NUMBERS

27

New Invention Disclosures

\$1,531,068

in Patent Expenditures Since 2017

137

Active Technologies

44%

of Inventors are Female

47

New Patent Applications

15

Active Licenses

200

Patent and Patent Applications  
Under Management

16%

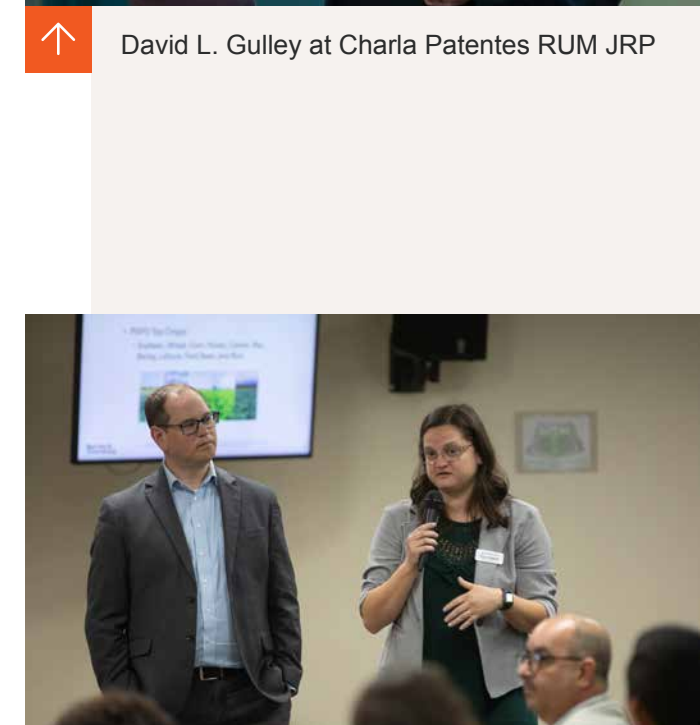
of Inventors Submitted a Disclosure  
for the First Time (55% are Female)

# WHO WE CONNECT WITH

Among these there are about 450 PIs/Co-PIs conducting sponsored research and the most recent official report NSF (FY2022) showed \$108 million in R&D expenditures. Our portfolio of active technologies consists of inventions and intellectual property from our university partners and mirrors the R&D activities of their scientists and researchers.

In a historic first, our office submitted its first-ever plant patent application, covering two unique variants of the pigeon pea (*gandul*). This milestone not only highlights the importance of protecting agricultural innovation but also sets a precedent for future ag-tech developments in Puerto Rico.

The program remained a cornerstone in de-risking early-stage technologies and offering tailored funding and entrepreneurial training for Puerto Rican scientists. Through mentorship and commercialization guidance, the initiative empowers inventors to move their discoveries closer to market adoption.



↑ EnTRUST 2025

XLerator Network

FY25 also saw continued engagement with the XLerator Network, now in its seventh year. The network provided critical early-stage de-risking capital and educational opportunities for biomedical researchers. These activities complemented the TTO’s efforts to expand innovation capacity and translate cutting-edge science into viable products.



XLerator Network

NSF & EDA Initiatives

The TTO’s Executive Director finalized the efforts under 2023-2025 NSF Engine Development award, “Advancing biopharmaceutical technologies and manufacturing practices (PR),” reinforcing our role in national innovation ecosystems. In parallel, the office led the 2023-2025 EDA Tech Hub Phase 1 “PRBio Tech Hub,” the 2024-2026 EDA Consortium Accelerator Award. It contributed to the designation of Puerto Rico as one of the 31 Tech Hubs by the U.S. Department of Commerce. These initiatives brought significant national visibility and will continue to attract resources to our ecosystem.



Charla Patentes RUM JPR



Variants of the pigeon pea (gandul)

WHAT'S NEXT

TTO will continue expanding its innovation pipeline by strengthening relationships with university partners and exploring new institutional collaborations. Efforts will focus on improving coordination across campuses and increasing researcher engagement through targeted outreach and campus-based workshops.

The office will also enhance its ability to support early-stage technologies by deepening connections with accelerators, external mentors, and national innovation networks. These collaborations will help increase the number of funded projects and improve commercialization outcomes.

Internally, the TTO will implement a more specialized approach to technology transfer, assigning team members to focused roles on evaluation, marketing, compliance, and licensing. This model will increase efficiency and allow for greater expertise in each stage of the process. Staff will pursue certifications and training in science, intellectual property law, and business to align with global best practices.

The Fellows Program will be expanded to support early-stage screening and marketing while training next-generation tech transfer professionals, and new processes will ensure consistent compliance and improved IP management. With stronger networks, a skilled team, and an updated operational structure, the TTO is well-positioned to scale its impact and accelerate the translation of Puerto Rican research into real-world solutions.







# IMPACT NUMBERS

\$10,350,000

in grants recently awarded in 2024-25  
to CTB-driven projects

1

Provisional Patent filed on behalf of the  
PR Science Trust

118

compounds deposited in the  
NatPORT Online Repositor

22,000

protein targets that can be probed at once  
by employing new proprietary technology

# WHAT WE DO

The Center for Tropical Biodiversity (CTB) was established in 2015 to guide the efforts of conservation and exploration of Puerto Rico’s unique geography for benefits that can be scientific, societal or economic. Within the purview of the Center are the development of searchable collections of biological specimens, the conservation of biodiversity resources and the commercialization of biodiversity-derived products.

Over the last century, Puerto Rico has enjoyed a rich tradition of scientific research centered on its unique natural environment. There have been numerous projects aimed at observing and cataloging Puerto Rico’s rich biodiversity with the goal of understanding how organisms interact with their surroundings. Lacking through the years has been a local policy to guide and coordinate these efforts, which were often driven by the curiosity of individual researchers in our many universities.

# HOW WE DO IT

The CTB has become an important facilitator for high-impact research in the areas of biodiversity and natural products. We make contact with the appropriate stakeholders to (i) enable their biodiversity research by ensuring access to high- end equipment, (ii) communicate important issues related to the preservation of critical ecosystems for biodiversity , (iii) facilitate the public availability of data pertaining to biodiversity and natural products and (ii) promote that biodiversity researchers fully benefit from other PRSTRT programs, such as PRCCI and the TTO.

# WHO WE CONNECT WITH

Biodiversity research involves stakeholders at many levels: community organizations, environmental protection groups, scientific researchers, universities, commercial partners, government agencies and the media. The CTB has successfully connected several of these stakeholders for fruitful collaborations.

We have (a) engaged with university researchers and placed them in contact with entrepreneurs and innovators, (b) engaged the media for the communication of important issues concerning the conservation of biodiversity, and (c) established links with the business development sector to ensure that Puerto Rico is promoted as a potential source of biodiversity-derived products.

During the 2024-25 period, two major research grants were awarded to projects either performed by, or associated with, the CTB. One of the projects is supported by a proposal to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) with a proposed budget of \$2,991,860 over 5 years. The proposal aims to create a dual analysis pipeline for (A) the identification of natural products in a crude or unprocessed extract, with a highly accurate approximation of the chemical structures for the main components of the mixture, and (B) the identification of protein targets for natural extracts. Work has begun with the hiring of Dr. Grace Vélez for the design of experiments involving this proposal. Dr. Vélez obtained her bachelor’s degree in Biotechnology from Interamerican University in Arecibo and a PhD in Cancer Biology from Universidad Central del Caribe. More recently, Dr. Vélez was a postdoctoral fellow at the Puerto Rico Cancer Center, where she developed her expertise in the data sciences with a solid track record in R and Python. She is shown here, with Dr. Luis Prieto operating the newly acquired GenePix scanner.

The other awarded proposal is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) through its Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) with funds totaling \$7,000,000 over five years to UPR Rio Piedras. The proposal aims to fully describe the genetic and proteomic details that drive the development of the butterfly and its full spectrum of adaptations, colors, and genetic variation. Butterflies represent a unique opportunity to investigate how individual cells diverge to create different tissues. A substantial component of this grant is for the analysis of natural products by the CTB.



↑ Utilizing the GenePix



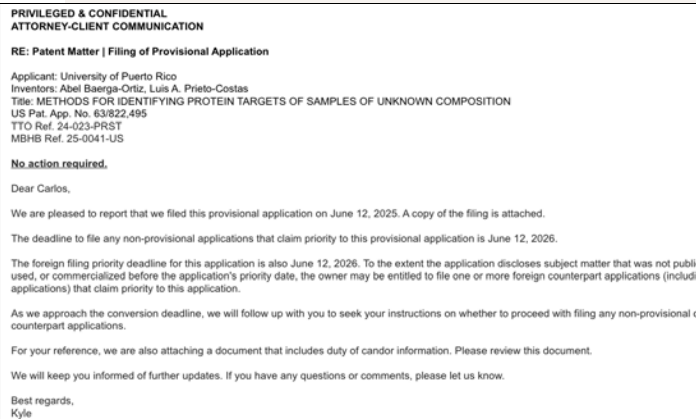
↑ Butterfly



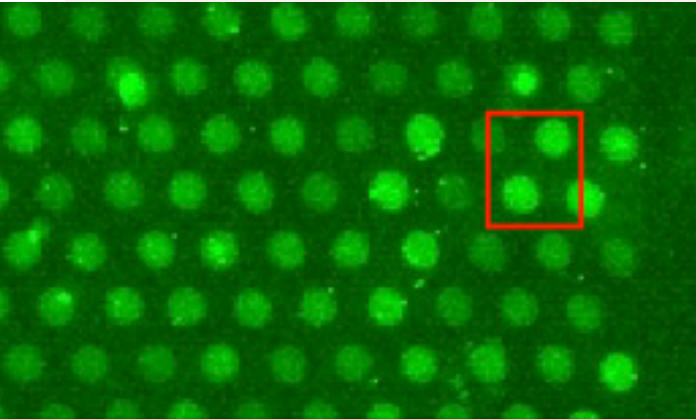
# A provisional patent awarded to an invention by the CTB

During the process of generating preliminary data for the DTRA proposal, directors Luis Prieto and Abel Baerga noticed that there was no precedent for the experiments that were being advanced. Thus, with the help of the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), Prieto and Baerga proceeded with the official disclosure and subsequent IP protection of an original method for the identification of protein targets using a protein array. The provisional patent titled Methods for Identifying Protein Targets of Samples of Unknown Composition (US Pat. App. No. 63/822,495) was filed on June 12, 2025. It describes a novel method called Protein Array Target Search (PATS) that uses protein array technology to search for numerous targets of natural products and other chemical compounds.

The technology quantifies the fluorescence of 22,000 proteins on the array that have been treated with special green, red, or blue dye. The concept is that the binding of a natural product to a specific protein on the array will affect the way that protein interacts with the dye, changing its color properties. The method has potential implications for drug re-purposing, or the search for ‘new targets for old drugs’.



Provisional Patent



Protein Array

# The CTB represents Puerto Rico at the Convention on Biological Diversity

The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the United Nations Conference on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in the city of Cali, Colombia during the dates of October 21 and November 1 of 2024. The CBD was enacted in 1996 by agreement of the parties in recognition that (1) Biodiversity is a global asset regardless of international borders and (2) the protection of Biodiversity requires international cooperation. Every two years, the Convention meets in a Conference of the Parties (COP) to advance agreements on the protection of biological diversity, to monitor the creation of national plans for conservation, and to ensure proper sharing of the benefits of commercialization.

For the 2024 COP16, the CTB submitted an application as an observer organization. In August 2024, our application was answered favorably, as the PR Science Trust became the first-ever observer organization from Puerto Rico at the Convention. During the Conference, CTB Director Abel Baerga participated as a speaker in a panel on Biodiversity and Climate Change. And the Puerto Rico Delegation comprised of Baerga, Prieto and Dr. Carla Restrepo, participated in sub-committees for the “Academic Sector”, the “NGO Sector” and “Caribbean Nations”. The participation of the CTB in this conference is important in order to keep informed on the latest policies on biodiversity management and to ensure Puerto Rico’s contribution to global efforts for the intelligent utilization and conservation of biodiversity.



United Nations Conference on Biological Diversity



Participation on COP16 panel



## “Alimenta tu microbiota”

On March 28, 2025, the CTB hosted an event titled *Alimenta tu Microbiota* (“Feeding your Microbiota”) a conversation on the health benefits of fostering a good microbiota through good eating habits. The event was attended by numerous professionals in the basic sciences and by experts in nutrition and dietetics. The activity began with presentations from agricultural technologist Duamed Colón and Chef Martin Louzao on the availability of local fruits and vegetables to satisfy local demand. The talks were followed by a panel of experts in the field of nutrition and microbiome sciences, focusing on feeding microbiota to increase health benefits.

The panel included microbial ecologist Dr. Filipa Godoy, neurobiologist Dr. Imilce Rodríguez, and nutritionist Dr. Nancy Correa. Finally, the panel was complemented by Ms. Angela Díaz, who leads NutriendoPR, a non-profit organization that promotes healthy eating and community engagement on this topic, and Dr. Maribel Campos, a pediatrician with research projects on childhood obesity and diabetes.

The complete recording of the activity is available on Youtube at the following url:

<https://youtu.be/KKjfp80uKr4?si=71vCioULn7cVQr-q>



Director, Abel Baerga Ortiz, PhD

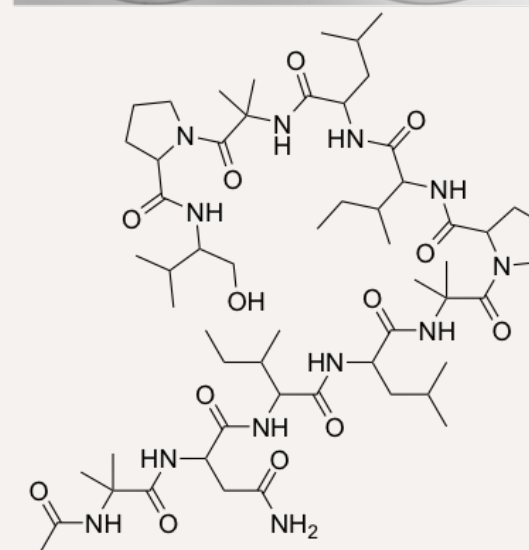
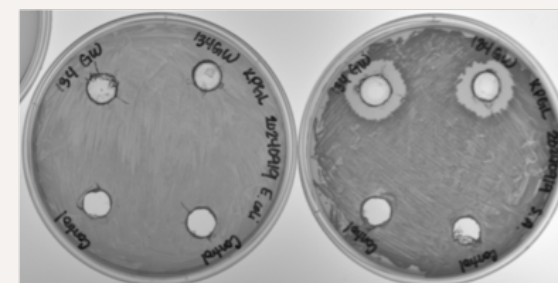


↑ “Alimenta tu microbiota” panel

# Identification of “peptaibols” in fungi associated with the Puerto Rican Boa: a new class of compounds with potent anti-microbial activity.

The Puerto Rican Boa is an endangered endemic species of snake from Puerto Rico. Like many reptiles, the boa has several microbes associated with its skin, and some believe that this microbial community is critical to the survival or decline of the species. And wherever there is an active microbial community competing for scarce resources, there are species that produce antimicrobial compounds. The CTB, in collaboration with the group of Dr. Timothy Colston, of UPR Mayagüez, is driving a program for the identification of antibiotics and antifungals made by the microbial communities associated with the Puerto Rican Boa in hopes of finding some compounds of importance to the species that could be further developed for use in humans.

Our group has identified a new and understudied class of molecules with known potent antimicrobial properties: the peptaibols. CTB Scientific Director Luis Prieto is developing a program for the identification of these molecules and for the characterization of their antibiotic activity. The identification of peptaibols in the Puerto Rican Boa was reported at the 4th Natural Products Symposium hosted by PR-INBRE, where CTB Director Abel Baerga was invited as a keynote speaker.



↑  
Peptaibols



Director, Abel Baerga Ortiz, PhD

Ensuring the visibility of CTB’s continued collaboration with Dr. Timothy Colston

This past year, Dr. Timothy Colston, Assistant Professor at the Department of Biology in UPR Mayagüez and a collaborator of the Center for Tropical Biodiversity, achieved a substantial milestone with a publication in the prestigious Science Magazine. The high-impact article produced by Dr. Colston and a cadre of renowned collaborators details the complex evolution of the snakes’ predatory patterns over 150 million years. The article was deemed of sufficiently high interest and impact to be featured on the magazine’s cover (Photo shown below). Dr. Colston is currently collaborating with the CTB in the identification of toxins produced by invasive species of amphibians in Puerto Rico and the production of antibiotic compounds in the skin of the Puerto Rican Boa.

In other dissemination efforts, the Trust has produced a new video detailing the work of the CTB with UPR Mayagüez, which characterizes the microbial communities associated with the Cuban Tree Frog. Fungal infections increasingly threaten amphibians in the tropics, yet some of them can thrive even in the presence of fungal pathogens. This work by Colston and the CTB aims to elucidate the role of bacteria associated with the frog, which may be responsible for controlling the population of fungi. Some of the work to sample the Cuban Tree Frog has been captured in a series of videos available through FideicomisoTV in collaboration with the Communications Team.



↑ Dr. Timothy Colston



↑ Science Magazine Cover

WHAT’S NEXT

In the coming years, the Center for Tropical Biodiversity should continue to expand knowledge on biodiversity and natural products, continue to establish critical collaborations with field biologists and environmental scientists to develop areas of impact and mutual interest, and continue to advance policies consistent with current global knowledge on how to protect biodiversity best and manage biodiversity resources.

This year, our team has drafted a Strategic Plan that projects our work for three years into the future, with emphasis on areas of strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats.

Our current areas of impact extend beyond the environmental sciences, encompassing the agricultural sciences, nutrition, health, and planning —areas of growth and potential for commercial impact.



Caribbean Center  
for Rising Seas



Puerto Rico  
Science, Technology  
& Research Trust

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

# IMPACT NUMBERS

Distributed educational material to 10 Land Trust venues, **55 Montessori schools**, and **14 host organizations** during our documentary screenings

Delivered **three** sets of policy commentary and recommendations out of **12 occasions** since 2021

Mentored **5** semester-long student cohorts with **29** participants that materialized **3** projects

**48,574** unique views of our Documentary, “Cuando el Mar nos Alcance”

Generated **17.5** professional continuing education credit hours, bringing the total to **46**

Completed **9th** research project with Impacts of Sea Level Rise on Zoned Land Use

**2,565** individuals reached (a **100% increase**) and at least **672** professionals (a **10% increase**) through **48** talks and presentations (a **92% increase**) reaching at least **15** coastal communities (a **200% increase**)



WHAT WE DO

We help prepare Puerto Rico and the Caribbean to adapt and thrive in the new era of increasing flood risk from storms, tides, and sea level rise. This program will further establish Puerto Rico’s leadership and stature as a center of excellence and innovation. The comparable safety and wellbeing afforded by Puerto Rico’s topographic elevation and geologic attributes will become a reference point for other small islands. The Caribbean Center for Rising Seas (“CCRS”) will become a research and education instrument through which capacity might be developed, thereby facilitating and unblocking competitiveness for coastal regions in the coming decades.

HOW WE DO IT

The CCRS works to develop the knowledge and best practices so that buildings and infrastructure are designed and constructed to be resilient to traditional hurricanes, as well as accelerating sea-level rise this century resulting from climate change. While myriad efforts address many of the important challenges of climate change, the center focuses on the critical issue of sea level rise, an unstoppable effect of this crisis. This is an issue that will have a historically unprecedented impact generations into the future. The plan is for Puerto Rico to become a model for an adaptation approach in the Caribbean region and elsewhere.

WHO WE CONNECT WITH

The center works closely with professionals tasked with the stewardship, administration, or design of the natural and built environment such as engineers, architects, planners, and attorneys. They are key stakeholders in the decision- making process aimed at achieving sustainable practices within a legal framework of building codes and regulations’ compliance. Other stakeholders we reach out to include community leaders, elected officials, business leaders, educators, and scientists. To this end, we have a diverse set of leaders in our advisory committee which includes a chair each for the Architects’ and the Engineers’ Guilds.

SHAPING COASTAL POLICY FOR A THRIVING PUERTO RICO:

The policy work of the CCRS plays a critical role in making sure that Puerto Rico is not left behind in national conversations about climate.

Our archipelago requires scientifically sound and socially just policy strategies due to its condition as a territory that faces threats from sea level rise, erosion, and flooding. Over the past year, we have submitted key public comments on federal and local initiatives to shape the future of coastal adaptation on the island, with recommendations addressing 24 specific issues. These include comments advocating for tailored engagement with U.S. territories on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Environmental Justice Strategic Plan; calling for better adaptation investments and recognition of coastal risks in the fourth substantial amendment to the CDBG-MIT Action Plan; and urging for the integration of updated sea level projections and nature-based solutions into erosion management for the Puerto Rico Senate Resolution 68.

The CCRS has also strengthened Puerto Rico’s voice in national dialogues by collaborating with agencies and organizations that discuss FEMA flood risk zones and the National Flood Insurance Program. Our contributions ensured that the vulnerabilities of island geographies are taken into consideration. We have advanced the conversation on coastal adaptation through symposia that engaged legal professionals on the complexities of land use, takings, and climate migration.

24 Policy recommendations

12 public hearings or requests for information

1 Coastal Policy Symposium Lecture titled: Guiding Costal Protection through Decision Making



↑ CCRS at the Ministerio Ecológico PSJ



↑ CCRS at the Fundación por la Arquitectura

We also reached engineers, architects, and financiers at conventions where CCRS presented on the policy dimensions of infrastructure adaptation and long-term planning. We've also established close working relationships with legislative committees and NGOs to promote a shared understanding of what Puerto Rico must do to prepare for rising seas and coastal flooding.

**ADVANCING CLIMATE LITERACY FOR ALL:**

We periodically provide general presentations, especially at shopping centers, thanks to EcoExploratorio, to connect the dots between mainstream knowledge and culture and the most recent scientific knowledge on Global Warming, Climate Impacts, and Sea Level Rise. An average of 63 individuals attend each of these. The Puerto Rico Research and Innovation Meetups program conducted three meetups in November, February, and March to discuss the impacts of Sea Level Rise on Research Facilities, cultural heritage, and Biodiversity (154 attendees). The organizers invited us to talk about the challenges and opportunities that sea level rise and climate change pose to these assets and economic activities in Puerto Rico, and how these phenomena are transforming our island. Furthermore, fourteen special presentations to students and interns were attended by 628 people (a 650% increase over last year).

Other specialized audiences were addressed at events such as the Puerto Rico Engineers' and Surveyors' Guild Convention; AmeriGEO, held in Ecuador; the Planning Week, hosted by the Puerto Rican Planning Society; Recuperación

a la resiliencia: Collaborative Solutions for a Sustainable Puerto Rico, hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank, Enterprise Community Partners, and LISC; the Coastal Symposium 2025: Puerto Rico at the Crux of Climate change and Recovery, sponsored by the Sea Grant Law Center; Earth Hour at the Municipality of Caguas, the 2025 summit of Alerta Colapsan Condominios, Edificios y Cambio Climático, hosted by the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce and Bonnet Insurance; the Public Health and Climate Change Panel as part of Immunization Congress; and the opening address at the Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association Environmental Summit.

**EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

Our program has designed a series of educational engagements to dispel common misconceptions and advance climate literacy. One is a poster that describes the five flood factors and the five most relevant consequences of sea level rise. Together with other materials in development, these posters may stand alone or provide a basis for lesson plans that will ease curricular development on these topics. Ten of these posters have been deployed through the facilities of our collaborators at Para la Naturaleza, a further 55 have been provided to Montessori schools, and 14 others have been delivered to each of our hosts at the screenings of the documentary including the Colegio de Arquitectos y Arquitectos Paisajistas de Puerto Rico, and the Fundación por la Arquitectura.

We are delighted to have collaborated with the MILO Climate Action Academy effort led by partners from Arizona State University and the PRSTRT's Grants Program. During Fall of 2024, in 12 weeks, we joined various specialists within

and beyond the Trust, where 132 participants had the opportunity to form teams to tackle some of the pressing issues faced by the planet and society, like the stability of the coastal zone. We are convinced that helping the next generation complement their formal education with short sprints focused on developing actionable skills around climate literacy will better prepare them for the future.

During this period, we also started our community educational strategy. The first course offered was on nature-based solutions titled ¡Aprende a Reducir los Peligros Costeros con Infraestructura Verde!. It was a collaboration with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER), the Puerto Rico Sea Grant program, and Tetra Tech. Notable presenters included Mr. Ernesto Díaz, Arch. Edmundo Colón, and Mr. Roberto Viqueira (R.I.P.) of Protectores de Cuencas.

We continue advising the managers and principal investigators of the Caribbean All-Hazards Program to Build Resilience and Climate Equity (CAPBRACE) project. We find the input provided by community members who have captured and documented flooding conditions in their surroundings very insightful. We are currently designing ways to give continuity to this critical effort that began last year.

Our Sea Level Rise Documentary, titled "Cuando el Mar Nos Alcance" (When the Sea Reaches Us), has been viewed by over 45,006 unique viewers in its original version on its digital platform since its release online in December. In its revised version, it has been seen by 2,953 online viewers and a further 615 during in-person screenings. This film takes viewers on a journey from the warm shores

of the Caribbean to Greenland's majestic yet melting glaciers, explaining how events in distant places and times have lasting repercussions that will drive decisions into the future. It is an effort to reach a wider audience, beyond Puerto Rico or similar tropical countries, to explain the unfolding story of sea level rise, its impacts, and the opportunities to start adapting to a new, more aquatic environment.

**RESEARCH:**

As we further our research agenda, we are constantly reminded of the critical gap we are covering: much information has been gathered and made available but the questions, analysis, and critical positioning it deserves are scarce.

This is how the Caribbean Center for Rising Seas innovates and charts a path to build resilience and advance adaptation. Various collaborators have contributed to specific projects, including George Mason University and our internal Information Technology and Global Information Systems team. The GMU Data Analytics Engineering Program students presented in December and May their capstone project presentations which the CCRS mentored: Puerto Rico Sea Level Rise Data Portal Dashboard (Emergency Shelter Map Guide, Flood Risks, Infrastructure and Social Vulnerability), Post-Storm Flood Extent Shapefile Generation Using Satellite Imagery and Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index for Adaptation to Rising Seas (SOVIARS). This brings our vicarious intern cohorts to 5 with 29 participants.



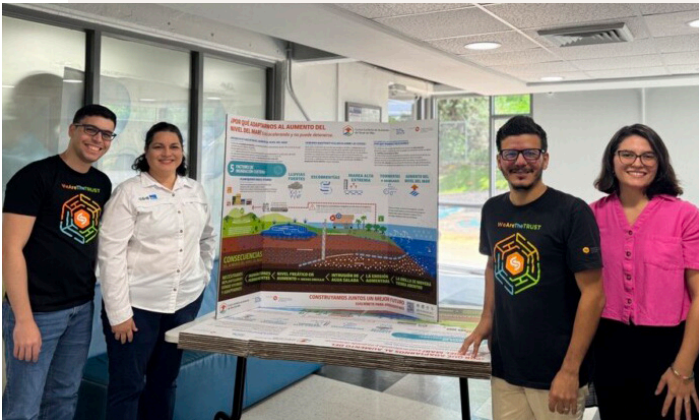
We also completed a dashboard on the Impacts of Sea Level Rise on Zoned Land Use in Puerto Rico. We are thankful for the support of the larger IT and GIS team at PRSTRT. This analysis focused mainly on the ecologically valuable land (SREP-E per PR’s Land Use Plan) that will be impacted by sea level rise in Puerto Rico. This has resulted in the critical finding that this zoning category will represent 80% of permanently flooded land with the first foot of sea level rise (expected by 2050). This brings our research projects conducted to 9.

A TIMELY CONTRIBUTION

As the 2024 general election cycle drew near its closing weeks, the Puerto Rico Science Trust gathered a set of key recommendations. These were delivered to the leadership of the different political parties in the contest, and the Caribbean Center for Rising Seas prepared the final remarks. These included an introduction and analysis of the problem of Sea Level Rise and a set of proposed strategies, including protection and restoration of ecosystem services, the sustainable management of the maritime-terrestrial zone, strategic relocation and resettlement programs, green infrastructure, community-based adaptation, flood risk disclosure, and implementation. The adoption of these policies is crucial to meet the challenges of sea level rise in Puerto Rico. These strategies will improve the island’s resilience to climate challenges and promote social equity and climate justice.



↑ “Cuando el Mar Nos Alcance” showing



↑ Poster presentation

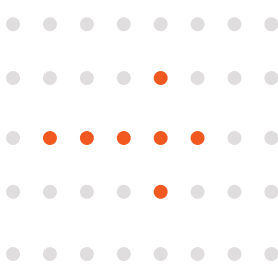


↑ Participation in the Coastal Symposium 2025

WHAT’S NEXT

Looking ahead, the CCRS will continue to champion Puerto Rico’s adaptation to sea level rise and coastal hazards by engaging directly in policy spaces, where decisions are made. The Trust remains committed to advocating for science-based, equitable adaptation measures in island-wide legislative, regulatory, and planning forums. We plan to offer our expertise and tools to support more informed and effective adaptation plans as local agencies refine their climate strategies. We also plan to deepen our role as trusted technical partners while expanding our network of collaborators in the nonprofit sector.

Some of our future objectives include:  
To strengthen community resilience and unlock access to recovery and adaptation funding, we will launch a tailored training program for community leaders, municipal personnel, and NGOs.







# IMPACT NUMBERS

**22,500+**  
Genomes Sequenced

Powering Puerto Rico’s COVID-19 variant surveillance with real-time genomic reporting to the Department of Health and CDC’s national Nowcast system.

**33,000+**  
COVID-19 Samples Processed and Banked

Largest publicly accessible SARS-CoV-2 biorepository in Puerto Rico, serving as a vital resource for public health and genomic research.

**7**  
Projects Presented at ASM NGS Conference in Washington, DC

Investigators from the Research Institute presented seven scientific projects from the Puerto Rico COVID-19 Variant Surveillance Initiative at the prestigious ASM Conference on Rapid Applied Microbial Next-Generation Sequencing and Bioinformatic Pipelines (October 2024), placing Puerto Rico’s genomic surveillance work on the national stage.

**100+**  
Students Trained: Building Puerto Rico’s Scientific Workforce

Offered impactful research, shadowing, and mentorship opportunities to more than 100 undergraduate and graduate students from UPR and UIPR—primarily in the areas of genomics and cancer biology—advancing equitable talent development in STEM and strengthening the island’s next generation of scientific leaders.

**1st**  
Biomanufacturing Hands-On Training Program in Puerto Rico via NIIMBL

In direct collaboration with INDUNIV, PRSTRT hosted the first-ever hands-on biomanufacturing training program in Puerto Rico. The program featured end-to-end production of therapeutic proteins (tPA) using CHO cells, combined with strategic site visits to Amgen, AbbVie, Bristol Myers Squibb, Lilly, and Cytolimmune—offering a comprehensive industry immersion.

**100%**  
Net Promoter Score from NIIMBL Participants

Received perfect satisfaction ratings from the 2025 NIIMBL eXperience cohort, affirming the program’s design, execution, and long-term value for emerging STEM professionals.

# 6

## State-of-the-Art Instruments Acquired and Deployed

Expanded research capacity with key infrastructure investments, including the Cytex Aurora/Northern Lights flow cytometers, Cytation 10 imaging platform, Seahorse XF Pro metabolic analyzer, and two Luminex FLEXMAP 3D multiplex immunoassay systems—strengthening capabilities in cytometry, imaging, metabolism, and immunoquantification.

# 1st

## Spectral Flow Cytometry Core in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean

Launched the region’s first core facility equipped for spectral flow cytometry and imaging cytometry using Cytex and Amnis technologies, enabling high-resolution immunophenotyping and cellular analysis.

# Puerto Rico’s Largest

## Whole-Genome Sequencing Capacity

Operates four Illumina systems (MiSeq, iSeq, NextSeq 550, NextSeq 2000) and two Oxford Nanopore GridION platforms, complemented by a custom-built bioinformatics pipeline—establishing PRSTRT as the most comprehensive WGS provider on the Island for both pathogen and translational genomics.



## WHAT WE DO

The Research Institute (RI), under the auspices of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology, and Research Trust (PRSTRT), is committed to fostering a collaborative and diverse research community. Our mission is to support innovative basic and applied research into the fundamental biological mechanisms underlying diseases that disproportionately impact our population. We focus on developing potential therapies and interventions that can significantly reduce or eliminate health disparities across our archipelago. We encourage investigations into a wide range of diseases associated with significant morbidity and mortality in Puerto Rico, believing that accelerating biomedical research and improving human health requires a diverse community in terms of education, training, background, perspectives, interests, and identity. Our vision at the Research Institute is to serve as a beacon of health innovation and research excellence in Puerto Rico and beyond.

## HOW WE DO IT

We aim to ensure that the benefits of all research outcomes are translated to our people, reaching all the way to the patient’s bedside. We strive to create a tangible difference in the health and well-being of our community, transforming lives through the power of scientific discovery and its application. We envision a future where health disparities are significantly reduced, and every individual has access to the best possible healthcare solutions informed by cutting-edge research.

## WHO WE CONNECT WITH

The Research Institute primarily connects with educational institutions, both public and private, that are involved in scientific and medical research. Our program is designed for researchers, healthcare professionals, and students in Puerto Rico and beyond who are committed to advancing biomedical research and improving health outcomes. We also engage with the healthcare and biotechnology sectors, including hospitals, biopharmaceutical and biomanufacturing companies, and biotech startups. We collaborate with a variety of stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private sector companies, to facilitate research, drive innovation, and translate scientific discoveries into practical healthcare solutions. Our partnerships span local, national, and international levels, fostering a diverse and dynamic research ecosystem.



# Puerto Rico COVID-19 Variant Surveillance Initiative: Sustained Excellence, National Impact, and Strategic Transition to Future Pathogen Threats

Now entering its fourth year, the Puerto Rico COVID-19 Variant Surveillance Initiative (PRCVSI) stands as a nationally recognized model of resilience and scientific excellence in pathogen genomics. Initially funded through federal pandemic response efforts, the PRCVSI remained fully operational through December 2024 and secured a six-month contract extension to continue its mission into 2025—despite widespread reductions in genomic surveillance programs across the United States.

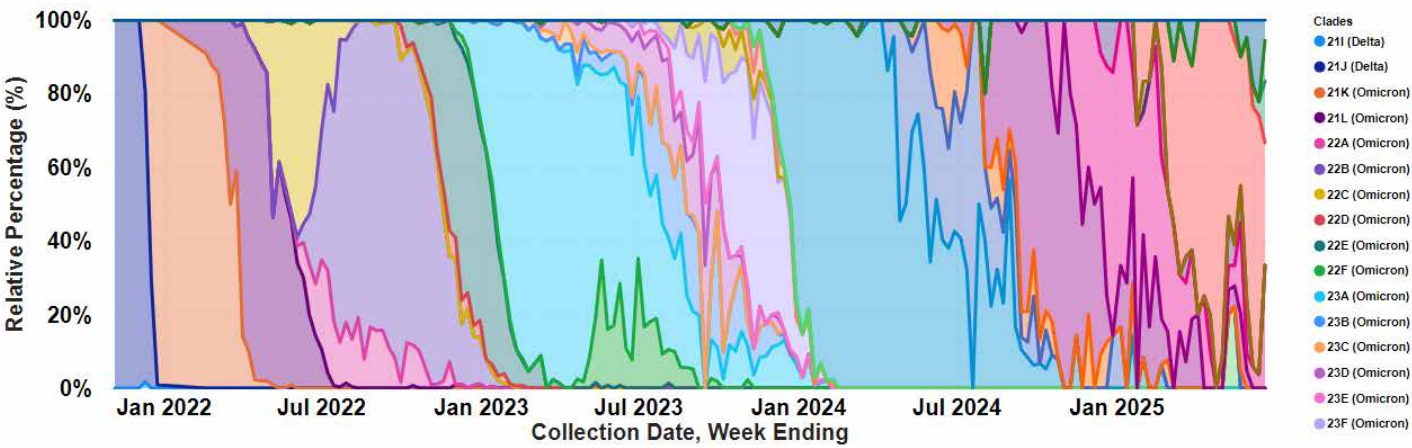
## To date, the PRCVSI has:

- Sequenced over 22,500 SARS-CoV-2 genomes, powering weekly epidemiological reports that directly inform the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDoH) and feed into the CDC’s national Nowcast system and GISAID.
- Processed and banked over 33,000 clinical samples, making it the largest publicly accessible SARS-CoV-2 biorepository in Puerto Rico.
- Maintained weekly reporting continuity, even as case numbers declined—ensuring Puerto Rico remained safe and visible in national surveillance initiatives.

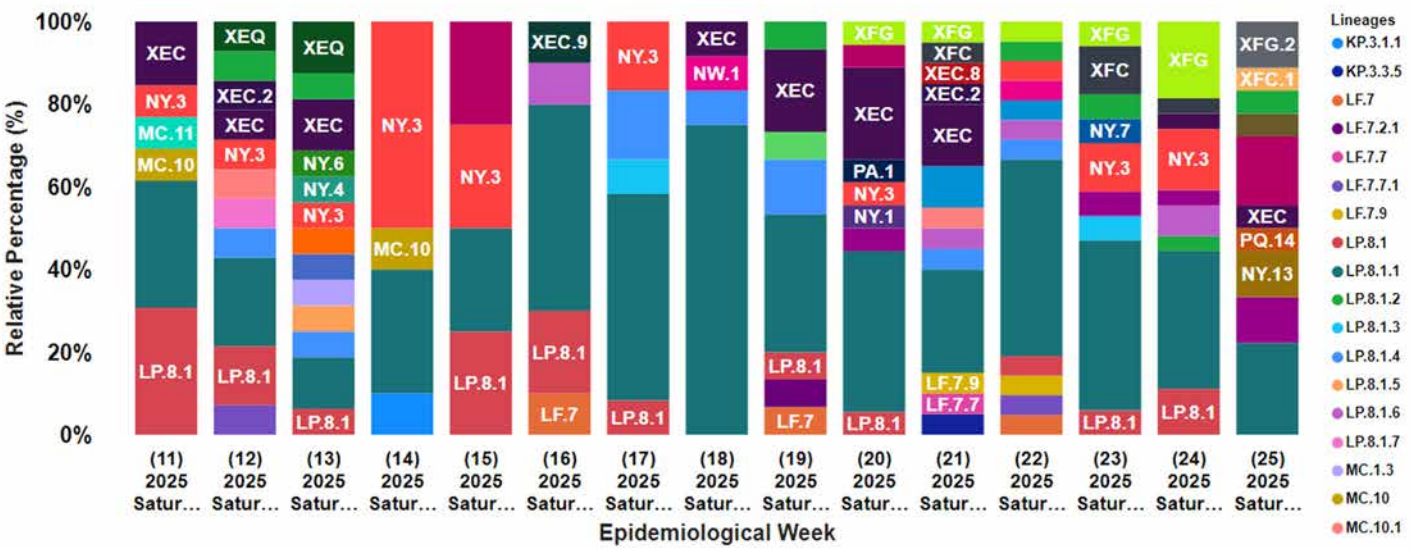
In October 2024, the PRCVSI received national recognition when seven scientific projects were accepted and presented at the prestigious ASM Conference on Rapid Applied Microbial Next-Generation Sequencing and Bioinformatic Pipelines (ASM NGS) in Washington, D.C. These presentations showcased novel findings from Puerto Rico’s variant landscape, viral evolution, and sequencing infrastructure—placing our island’s work on the national stage alongside the CDC and leading U.S. laboratories.

With pandemic funding sunseting, the PRCVSI is now entering a strategic transition phase, leveraging its robust sequencing capacity, advanced bioinformatics pipelines, and biorepository to support future efforts in influenza, dengue, antimicrobial resistance, and other emerging threats. This pivot ensures that the public investments made in the last four years will continue to generate value for Puerto Rico’s public health and research ecosystem in the years ahead.

Relative Percentage of SARS-CoV-2 Clades in Puerto Rico



Relative Percentage of SARS-CoV-2 Clades in Puerto Rico



Relative Percentage of SARS-CoV-2 Lineages in Puerto Rico



**Puerto Rico Showcased on The National Genomics Stage - Seven Scientific Projects Presented at ASM NGS 2024 In Washington, D.C.**

In October 2024, the Puerto Rico COVID-19 Variant Surveillance Initiative (PRCVSI), led by the Research Institute of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology, and Research Trust, reached a historic milestone: seven scientific abstracts from the program were accepted and presented at the prestigious ASM Conference on Rapid Applied Microbial Next-Generation Sequencing and Bioinformatic Pipelines (ASM NGS) in Washington, D.C. This achievement represents a defining moment for Puerto Rico’s visibility in microbial genomics, positioning our local efforts at the same level as those of national institutions such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Broad Institute, and other leading U.S. laboratories.

The following projects were presented, showcasing critical insights derived from real-time genomic surveillance:

- **Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera**, Luis Acevedo-Márquez, Janice Lozada-Delgado, Gabriela Morales-Vilá, Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz, Yrellis Pérez-Negrón, Dariana Morales-Vázquez, Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena, Marcos López-Casillas **Genomic Surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 Recombinants from November 2022 to February 2024 in Puerto Rico** *Comprehensive characterization of XBB recombinant sublineages, including novel variants not previously described globally, underscoring the importance of local surveillance.*

- **Luis Acevedo-Márquez**, Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera, Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena, Dariana Morales-Vázquez, Yrellis Pérez-Negrón, Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz, Gabriela Morales-Vilá, Marcos López-Casillas **JN.1.4: A Genomic Surveillance of an Untracked Predominant Sublineage of JN.1** *Identification of JN.1.4 as a highly prevalent and under-monitored sublineage in Puerto Rico, highlighting critical mutations that may drive its expansion.*
- **Dariana Morales-Vázquez**, Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera, Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena, Luis Acevedo-Márquez, Yrellis Pérez-Negrón, Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz, Gabriela Morales-Vilá, Marcos López-Casillas **Genomic Surveillance of the Recently Emerged SARS-CoV-2 KP.2 Variant in Puerto Rico** *Real-time tracking of the KP.2 variant using NGS and ddPCR, reinforcing the need for continuous monitoring of emerging threats.*
- **Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena**, Luis Acevedo-Márquez, Dariana Morales-Vázquez, Janice Lozada-Delgado, Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera, Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz, Gabriela Morales-Vilá, Yrellis Pérez-Negrón, Marcos López-Casillas **Droplet Digital PCR as a Molecular Tool for Detecting SARS-CoV-2 Mutations** *Validated ddPCR as a high-throughput method for rapid detection of Omicron mutations, enabling faster and more cost-effective surveillance.*
- **Gabriela Morales-Vilá**, Luis Acevedo-Márquez, Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera, Janice Lozada-Delgado, Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz, Yrellis Pérez-Negrón, Dariana Morales-Vázquez, Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena, Marcos López-Casillas

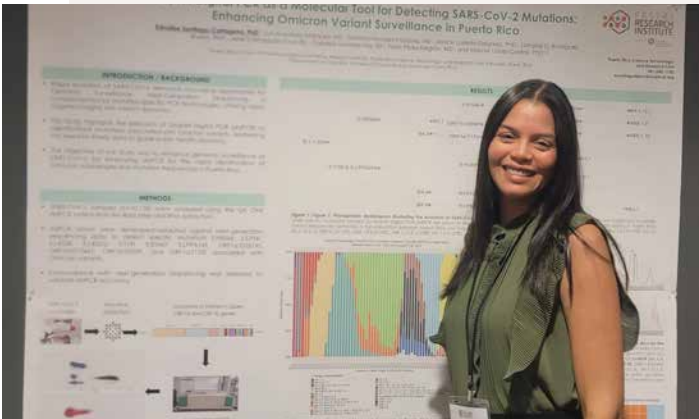
**Integrating Genomic Sequencing and Travel Patterns to Track SARS-CoV-2 Variant Spread in Puerto Rico** *Linked variant introductions to travel from U.S. states like Florida and New York, providing actionable insights for targeted interventions.*

- **Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz**, Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera, Luis Acevedo-Márquez, Janice Lozada-Delgado, Gabriela Morales-Vilá, Yrellis Pérez-Negrón, Dariana Morales-Vázquez, Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena, Marcos López-Casillas **SARS-CoV-2 Variants within Correctional Facilities in Puerto Rico** *Revealed clonal variant outbreaks in correctional facilities, emphasizing the need for enhanced prevention strategies in vulnerable populations.*
- **Yrellis Pérez-Negrón**, Dariana Morales-Vázquez, Luis Acevedo-Márquez, Lorraine D. Rodríguez-Rivera, Ednalise Santiago-Cartagena, Jeriel Carrasquillo-Cruz, Gabriela Morales-Vilá, Marcos López-Casillas **Data Transfer System Implementation for Genomic Surveillance of SARS-CoV-2** *Improved reporting efficiency through real-time metadata integration, accelerating weekly updates to the Puerto Rico Department of Health.*

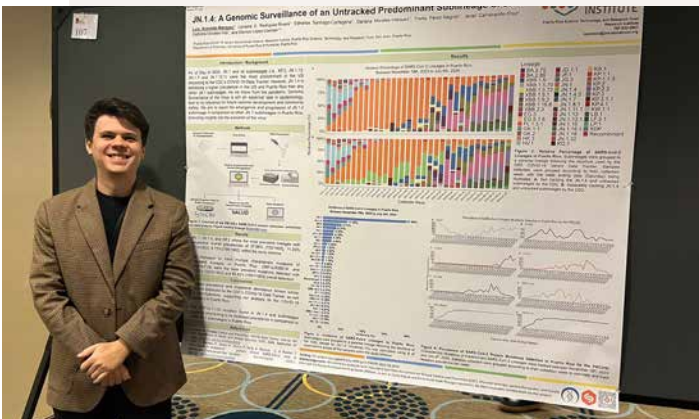
Beyond the scientific contributions, the full participation of the PRCVSI team in the ASM NGS 2024 conference allowed early-career and mid-career investigators from Puerto Rico to engage directly with the global genomics community. This exposure to the latest advancements in sequencing platforms, bioinformatics, and translational microbiology provided invaluable training and sparked new collaborations that will strengthen our island’s research pipeline.



Research Institute team at ASM NGS 2024 In Washington, D.C.



Ednalise Santiago Cartagena, PhD at ASM NGS 2024 In Washington, D.C.



Luis A. Acevedo-Márquez, MSc at ASM NGS 2024 In Washington, D.C.



Most importantly, this milestone serves as validation of the Research Institute’s model: one that blends local talent, high-end infrastructure, and strategic partnerships to produce internationally competitive science. At a time when national genomic surveillance programs are being scaled back, PRCVSI stands out as a resilient, high-impact initiative that not only meets global standards but actively shapes them.

This achievement is not just a recognition of past success—it is a signal of Puerto Rico’s capacity to lead in the next era of pathogen genomics and public health innovation.

## Catalyzing Research Training, Workforce Development, and Biomanufacturing Reshoring in Puerto Rico

The Research Institute continues to be a cornerstone in advancing Puerto Rico’s research capacity, scientific workforce pipeline, and biomanufacturing reshoring strategy. Over the past year, it has provided transformative research, shadowing, and mentorship experiences to more than 100 undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) and the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico (UIPR). These opportunities—primarily in genomics and cancer biology—have helped equip the next generation of Puerto Rican scientists with the skills and exposure needed to succeed in competitive research careers.

A key milestone in 2025 was hosting the first-ever hands-on biomanufacturing training program in Puerto Rico through the NIIMBL eXperience @ PRSTRT, delivered in direct collaboration with INDUNIV. This immersive workforce development initiative trained 15 undergraduate STEM students from across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, offering technical instruction in upstream and downstream biomanufacturing processes using CHO cells to produce tissue plasminogen activator (tPA). Students also participated in exclusive site visits to major biopharmaceutical companies, including Amgen, AbbVie, Bristol Myers Squibb, Lilly, and CytolImmune, deepening their understanding of real-world industry operations.

The program evaluation revealed a 100% Net Promoter Score (NPS)—indicating that every participant rated the experience as highly valuable and would recommend it to others. This exceptional outcome underscores the quality, design, and transformative potential of the initiative.

### Further amplifying its impact, the NIIMBL eXperience @ PRSTRT garnered more than \$50,000 in earned media coverage, including:

- A 2-minute primetime television segment on NotiSeis (WORA-TV)
- A full-page spread in El Nuevo Día
- Online news articles in News is My Business, Puerto Rico Posts, PressPRWire, Metro PR
- National recognition on the NIST website

These workforce development efforts directly reinforce the Research Institute’s strategic role in the newly designated EDA PRBioTech Hub, where demonstrated capacity to design and deliver impactful training programs is critical. Through scalable, high-quality programs like the NIIMBL eXperience, the Research Institute has proven its ability to nurture STEM talent, foster academic-industry alignment, and accelerate biomanufacturing readiness in Puerto Rico. As a result, the Institute serves as a central anchor for reshoring and building the island’s biotech innovation ecosystem—ensuring that local and national investments translate into equitable, long-term economic and scientific growth.



↑ Biomanufacturing Hands On



↑ Biomanufacturing Hands On



↑ Reshoring Panel

## Building World-Class Research Infrastructure in Puerto Rico

With a bold vision to establish Puerto Rico as a global innovation hub, the Research Institute has invested in state-of-the-art scientific infrastructure that is transforming the Island’s research, innovation, and technology development ecosystem. These resources not only enhance scientific capacity, but also foster high-value collaborations, attract national and international partnerships, and enable groundbreaking discoveries across multiple disciplines.

Over the past year, the Institute has deployed six advanced research instruments that significantly expand its capabilities in cellular analysis, imaging, metabolism, and immunoquantification. These include the Cytex Aurora and Northern Lights spectral flow cytometers, the Cytation 10 imaging and plate reader platform, the Seahorse XF Pro metabolic analyzer, and two Luminex FLEXMAP 3D multiplex immunoassay systems. Together, these tools enable researchers to perform cutting-edge immunophenotyping, high-content imaging, real-time metabolic flux analysis, and comprehensive biomarker profiling—essential for cancer biology, immunology, infectious disease, and translational research.

The Institute is also home to Puerto Rico’s largest whole-genome sequencing (WGS) capacity, operating four Illumina platforms (MiSeq, iSeq, NextSeq 550, and NextSeq 2000) alongside two Oxford Nanopore GridION systems. This sequencing infrastructure is powered by a custom-built bioinformatics pipeline capable of handling complex multiomic analyses and real-time variant surveillance. As a result, the Institute is the leading provider of WGS services for public health, pathogen genomics, and precision medicine on the Island.

In a landmark achievement, the Institute launched the first spectral flow cytometry core facility in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, featuring Cytex and Amnis technologies. This regional resource enables high-dimensional single-cell analysis and imaging flow cytometry—bringing world-class capabilities to Puerto Rican investigators and collaborators. Investigators across Puerto Rico are actively leveraging this infrastructure to power their research. Among them are Dr. Maribella Domenech from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez and Dr. Imilce Rodríguez from the UPR Río Piedras campus, both of whom are conducting advanced cellular and molecular research using the Institute’s platforms. Their work, alongside that of many others, reflects the Institute’s commitment to democratizing access to top-tier technology for academic researchers and institutions throughout the Island.

By building and sharing this advanced infrastructure, the Research Institute is catalyzing scientific excellence, workforce readiness, and translational innovation—helping Puerto Rico compete on a global stage as a vibrant hub for biomedicine, biotechnology, and public health research.

## Advancing Cytometry Capacity and Regional Leadership

Puerto Rico Launches First Spectral Flow Cytometry Core and ISAC-Endorsed Training Program in the Caribbean

In 2025, the Research Institute solidified its leadership in advanced immunological technologies with the launch of the region’s first spectral flow cytometry core facility—a state-of-the-art infrastructure that enables high-dimensional cellular analysis, immune profiling, and translational immunology research previously inaccessible in Puerto Rico or the Caribbean. Equipped with cutting-edge platforms such as the Cytex Aurora and Amnis imaging cytometers, this facility democratizes access to precision cytometry and opens new research frontiers in cancer, infectious diseases, vaccine response, and regenerative medicine. The core has already begun supporting diverse investigators, including faculty from UPR Mayagüez and UPR Río Piedras, advancing locally led science and collaboration.

To catalyze workforce development alongside technical infrastructure, the Research Institute will launch the first-ever Caribbean Flow Cytometry Fundamentals Course, endorsed by the International Society for Advancement of Cytometry (ISAC). This intensive five-day training will provide both foundational and advanced instruction to 60–75 researchers, clinicians, and technical professionals from across the region.

The program will feature lectures and hands-on labs led by international experts from academia and industry leaders including Cytex Biosciences, Becton Dickinson, and ThermoFisher, covering topics such as fluorescence principles, cell sorting, spectral cytometry, and clinical applications.

This two-pronged initiative—technological capacity plus expert training—addresses a longstanding gap in biomedical infrastructure and education. It marks a critical step in establishing Puerto Rico as a **regional hub for cytometry innovation** and will continue contributing meaningfully to **scientific workforce development across the archipelago**, aligning with the Research Institute’s broader strategy to expand access to advanced technologies, foster international partnerships, and elevate Puerto Rico’s scientific competitiveness.

- Puerto Rico’s largest whole-genome sequencing capacity with 6 Illumina and Nanopore systems and custom bioinformatics pipeline.
- 1st hands-on biomanufacturing training in Puerto Rico hosted with INDUNIV and NIIMBL, including site visits to 5 major pharma companies.
- 100+ UPR and UIPR students trained in genomics and cancer biology through research, shadowing, and mentoring.





# WHAT'S NEXT

Despite the current fiscal challenges caused by significant reductions in NIH and NSF funding, the Research Institute remains firmly committed to advancing Puerto Rico's scientific ecosystem. Guided by our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, we are launching transformative initiatives that position the island as a global innovation hub—while building resilience through strategic partnerships, diversified funding streams, and scalable infrastructure.

A central priority is the establishment of the **Nexus Research and Innovation Center**, a cutting-edge facility that will house interdisciplinary laboratories, advanced instrumentation, and incubator space. Nexus will accelerate investigator-led research, technology development, and cross-sector collaboration, serving as a cornerstone for scientific discovery and commercialization in Puerto Rico.

To expand our impact on workforce development, we are planning the **Puerto Rico Biomanufacturing Training and Educational Center**, which will institutionalize hands-on training in cell and gene therapies, biologics, and GMP-regulated biomanufacturing. This Center will scale and extend our successful NIIMBL eXperience model, aligning with the national reshoring agenda and ensuring Puerto Rican talent leads in next generation bioproduction.

We are also launching the **Research Institute Affiliation Program**, opening new pathways for collaboration across academic institutions, federal labs, and industry. This initiative will offer affiliated investigators access to proposal development support, core research infrastructure, seed funding, and specialized training—ensuring a stronger and more connected research community on the island. These efforts are rooted in our Strategic Priorities: strengthening research capacity, advancing integrative biosciences, developing the biomanufacturing workforce, and fostering innovation through global partnerships. As we navigate a changing funding landscape, the Research Institute will remain agile and mission-driven, ensuring Puerto Rico's scientists and institutions continue to lead at the national and global level.



# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

126  
Colmena66 & SBIR | STTR

138  
Parallel 18

148  
Fase 1





# IMPACT NUMBERS

20,780  
people served since 2016

44,309  
referrals made by Colmena66 since 2016

49,274  
total interactions with entrepreneurs  
since 2016

9/10  
entrepreneur's rating of Colmena66  
services

210  
active resources in the Resource  
Network

34%  
decided to start a business after  
contacting Colmena66

\$1.1m  
in estimated economic impact  
generated by the Boricua  
Emprende Fest 2024 event

15  
SBIR/STTR proposals submitted in 2024

6  
SBIR/STTR proposals awarded in 2024

\$700K  
in SBIR/STTR Matching Funds awarded  
by the Trust to 5 SBIR-awarded  
companies in 2024



## WHAT WE DO

Colmena66 facilitates entrepreneurship by connecting and building the entrepreneurial community. We are the entrepreneurial ecosystem builder and integrator. Our vision is that anyone in Puerto Rico can start and grow a successful business.

Colmena66 is an award-winning program that connects entrepreneurs with the right resources at the right time, helping them accelerate their ideas into sustainable businesses that create jobs. We identify and analyze gaps in the entrepreneurial ecosystem and work hand in hand with the Entrepreneurial Resource Network to build the invisible infrastructure that supports entrepreneurs.

## HOW WE DO IT

As the main resource hub for entrepreneurs, we provide guidance through our call center, interactive resource directory, event calendar and educational resources. We help find answers to any business question and connect entrepreneurs with the right resource at the right time so that they can start or grow a successful business.

Colmena66 convenes and builds community among Entrepreneurship Support Organizations (ESOs) in the Resource Network. They can leverage our events, communication channels, and data to amplify their reach and better serve entrepreneurs. ESOs benefit from opportunities to network, educate their staff, and join ecosystem-wide efforts such as the Resource Network Meetups, the Boricua Emprende Fest, Tu Camino Empresarial Tour regional events, the Status Report of the Entrepreneurial Community in Puerto Rico and Levanta tu Negocio crisis recovery platform.

## WHO WE CONNECT WITH

To fulfill our role of entrepreneurial ecosystem builder and integrator, we work with entrepreneurs and connect them with the right ESOs to address their needs. We are the only organization in Puerto Rico that works with all types of businesses, at any stage.

The ESOs that make up our Resource Network include non-profit organizations, service providers, academia, government agencies, and others. With this network we have been able to develop system-wide initiatives related to public policy, innovation and R&D, capacity building, disaster recovery, and much more.

### Colmena66 Highlights

Colmena66 achieved significant growth in 2024, reaching over 19,400 newsletter subscribers, a 5.53% increase compared to 2023. Their social media platforms—Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube—generated more than 4.4 million impressions, up 7.33%, and accumulated 38,390 followers, a 7.81% increase from the previous year. Additionally, Colmena66 secured \$208,000 in non-paid publicity, with an estimated 122,000 impressions from 91 media coverage pieces. The program also actively participated in 129 outreach events with resource partners, strengthening its presence and connections within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### Resource Navigator

Colmena66 features an interactive directory that allows users to explore Puerto Rico’s Entrepreneurial Support Network. Through this tool, entrepreneurs can filter by industry, business stage, type of business, location, and other key criteria to connect with the most relevant resources for their journey—matching them with over 200+ local support organizations, including funding opportunities, legal services, entrepreneurial programs, and more. To date, the platform has facilitated over 67,400 searches, reflecting the strong demand for accessible and tailored business support in Puerto Rico.

### Entrepreneurial Calendar

We host the only centralized calendar in Puerto Rico where entrepreneurs can find all business-related workshops and activities in one place. From pitch competitions and funding opportunities to training sessions and networking events, it simplifies the discovery of growth resources. In 2024, it aggregated **724 entrepreneurial events**, driving **14,698-page engagements—a 13% increase compared to 2023.**

### Business Opportunities Hub

Colmena66 curates a centralized directory of open calls, grants, competitions, and funding opportunities for entrepreneurs and small businesses in Puerto Rico. This continuously updated platform connects individuals and organizations with timely opportunities to support their growth. Users can filter listings by deadline, sector, type of opportunity, and more.

In 2024, we shared **61 Calls for Applications** from our Resource Network through our communication channels—actively connecting entrepreneurs with relevant funding and support opportunities. **This engagement helped generate 11,432 visits to the Business Open Call page, marking an impressive 68.83% increase compared to 2023.**



## Business Support Line

Entrepreneurs in Puerto Rico can connect directly with Colmena66’s Entrepreneurship Strategists, the island’s only dedicated hotline for business owners—who take the time to understand each entrepreneur’s story, identify their needs in depth, and connect them with the right resources at the right time. By sharing their stories and specific needs, entrepreneurs receive personalized assistance tailored to support their growth.

## Tu Camino Empresarial Tour

The *Tu Camino Empresarial map* is a visual guide that helps entrepreneurs identify the right resources based on their business type and stage. Building on this concept, the Tu Camino Empresarial Tour brings the map to life through in-person regional events that connect entrepreneurs with the support organizations serving their area. These events create a space for live, meaningful connections while allowing us to curate programming that responds directly to the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities of each region. Each stop of the tour serves as a regional-scale version of the Boricua Emprende Fest, offering a dynamic mix of live networking, one-on-one mentorship, and an educational agenda filled with actionable tools and knowledge. We reached 3,100 new users across the Tu Camino Empresarial and Tu Camino Agroempresarial maps.

In 2024, we brought the tour to Puerto Rico’s Eastern region, with Humacao as the host city, reaching and serving entrepreneurs across surrounding communities.

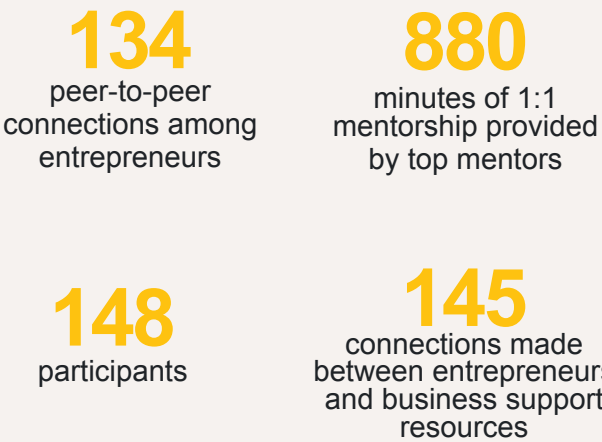


Colmena66’s team members welcoming participants at the TCE Tour in the eastern region



Participants connecting at the TCE Tour in the eastern region

### We achieved the following milestones:



## The Boricua Emprende Fest

Puerto Rico’s largest entrepreneurship event, Boricua Emprende Fest (BE Fest), is the annual premier convening for business education, inspiration, and connection—empowering a community where founders grow, learn, and lead economic development together. In 2024, the event made history by expanding beyond the metro area and hosting its main edition in Ponce for the first time.

The event generated an estimated \$1.1 million economic impact in Ponce alone. To encourage participants to arrive in the city the day before the main event—and to spark additional economic activity—we partnered with local ecosystem organizations to co-create El BemBÉ del BE Fest, a series of community-led entrepreneurship events held the evening prior. This strategic pre-event activation not only built early momentum and created a strong lead-in to the core educational programming but also drove hotel stays, local consumption, and deeper engagement with the entrepreneurial ecosystem. In total, the event drew 4,005 participants: 2,318 attended El BemBÉ and 1,687 took part in the main BE Fest agenda the following day.

Notably, there was a **33% increase in participants from outside Puerto Rico**, reflecting the event’s growing international reach.

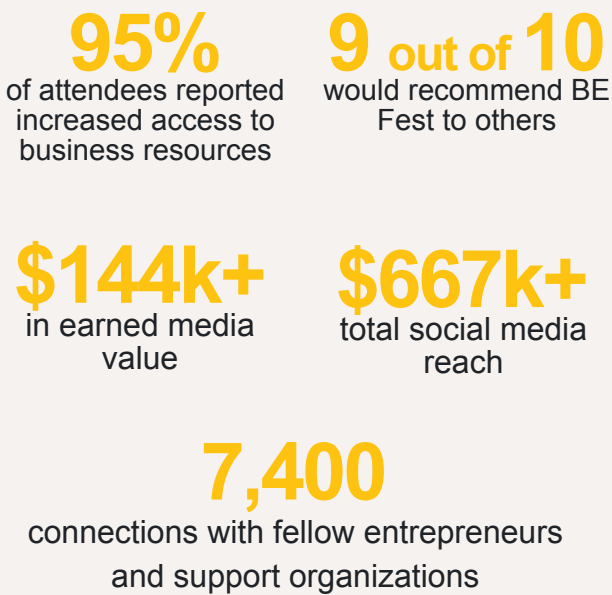


Coffee Talks Session, Boricua Emprende Fest, Ponce



The Boricua Emprende Fest team celebrates a successful event

### Key Additional Highlights:





## Global Entrepreneurship Week

Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) is a worldwide celebration of entrepreneurs and innovators who bring bold ideas to life through startups that drive economic growth and social change. Led by the Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN) every November, GEW connects millions of people across 180 countries through local, national, and global events designed to inspire, educate, and empower.

In Puerto Rico, the Young Entrepreneurship Education System (Yees!) serves as the official lead of the GEW celebration. As co-organizers, Colmena66 plays a pivotal role in amplifying its impact across the archipelago. We lead outreach and coordination efforts to mobilize the most significant number of entrepreneurial support organizations (ESOs) to host events, ensuring Puerto Rico can compete globally with the largest jurisdictions in both volume and quality of activities. In addition, Colmena66 functions as the marketing and communications engine behind GEW Puerto Rico. We gather and centralize all events into a publicly accessible calendar hosted on our website, colmena66.com, and drive visibility through a multi-channel campaign that includes email outreach to over 20,000 subscribers, social media, and targeted promotions. Our efforts ensure that entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs across the island are aware of, and engaged in, this weeklong celebration of innovation, learning, and community.

In 2024, Puerto Rico proudly ranked #2 on the U.S. Leaderboard and placed in the Top 15 globally, with over 100 local events that showcased the island’s dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem and commitment to fostering innovation.

## Status Report of Puerto Rico’s Entrepreneurial Community 2024

Colmena66 launched the second edition of the Interactive Status Report of Puerto Rico’s Entrepreneurial Community, a one-of-a-kind interactive data dashboard that sets a new standard in ecosystem building—both locally and nationally. No other initiative in Puerto Rico—or across the U.S.—offers such a comprehensive, data-driven snapshot of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. This dashboard brings together, for the first time, collective impact metrics from 102 organizations representing 148 support resources across the island, or 70% of the Resource Network. These efforts revealed the accurate scale of our ecosystem’s impact: 52,040 people received direct support through programs offered by the Business Support Network, participants secured \$404 million in funding, 10,108 businesses were launched, created, or scaled, and 22,076 jobs were generated.

But we didn’t stop at metrics. Because we believe storytelling is essential to ecosystem building, the report also highlights the journeys of four entrepreneurs, mapping out the specific resources that supported them at each stage. These stories not only inspire but also serve as practical roadmaps for others navigating their own entrepreneurial paths.

We also identified five critical ecosystem gaps that must be addressed to foster inclusive growth: business closure, sale or transition; financial education and access to capital; crisis and disaster preparedness; permits and formalization; and access to specialized services such as mentoring and sales and marketing.

Our report’s advisory group includes leaders from the Instituto de Estadísticas de Puerto Rico, U.S. Census Bureau, Echar Pa’Lante, Universidad de Puerto Rico - Recinto de Río Piedras, Research Institute of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology & Research Trust, Invest Puerto Rico, Departamento de Desarrollo Económico y Comercio, and New Ways Consulting.

This dashboard isn’t just a report, it’s a strategic tool for entrepreneur-led economic development. [Explore the full 2024 Interactive Status Report here: Reporte de la Comunidad 2024 – Colmena66.](#)



↑ Jamie Ortiz, Business Development Associate, presents the findings during the launch event



↑ Reactor panel discusses the report’s findings and their experiences, moderated by our CEO Lucy Crespo



↑ Colmena66’s team at the launch of the 2024 Status Report of Puerto Rico’s Entrepreneurial Community



## ESHIP Alliance

Colmena66 was selected as one of thirteen members of the first Leadership Council establishing the ESHIP Alliance. The ESHIP Alliance brings together a growing national network of organizations and people to advance entrepreneurial ecosystem building as a widely recognized professional practice in the United States. It equips community leaders across networks and sectors with the knowledge, resources, and connections to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems.

## Levanta tu Negocio PR

Levanta Tu Negocio is a crisis preparedness and recovery platform designed to support small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Puerto Rico. Led by Colmena66, this initiative is an ecosystem-wide effort to strengthen business preparedness and resilience. As part of this effort, we developed an innovative self-diagnosis quiz to help entrepreneurs assess their disaster preparedness—an essential tool in our proactive strategy for long-term recovery. Since launch, 162 individuals have used the tool to understand their business stage and needs better.

The education campaign has reached over 10,000 entrepreneurs across Puerto Rico. In May 2024, Colmena66 and its Resource Partners were recognized by the Small Business Administration Puerto Rico & U.S. Virgin Islands District Office with the District Director Award for their leadership in post-Hurricane Fiona recovery efforts. The Levanta Tu Negocio Committee, composed of 24 active response organizations, met for a strategic session to align crisis support efforts. As a result, we now have a ready-to-deploy, ecosystem-wide needs assessment survey for future emergencies.

To date, 42 organizations have expressed interest in joining the committee—further strengthening our ability to respond collectively when entrepreneurs need it most.

## Juntas de la Red de Apoyo Empresarial

Bringing together support organizations isn’t just a meetup—it’s a strategic investment in Puerto Rico’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. By convening ESOs in regional in-person and virtual gatherings, we build trust and interpersonal networks that underlie meaningful collaboration. These relationships break down silos, facilitate knowledge-sharing, resource-sharing, and catalyze coordinated efforts that multiply impact across communities. In 2024, our three Resource Partner Meetups—hosted in the Central Eastern region, North region, and virtually—brought together 294 practitioners from 115 ESOs. With a satisfaction score of 3.9 out of 4, participants overwhelmingly reported that these forums fostered trust, open dialogue, and new collaborations.

Furthermore, 100% of attendees formed new connections, underscoring the essential role these gatherings play in creating a cohesive, high-functioning ecosystem. Through these meetups, we activate collaboration and partnerships that enhance our collective ability to serve entrepreneurs effectively across Puerto Rico.

## Acércate al Grant – SBIR/STTR Program

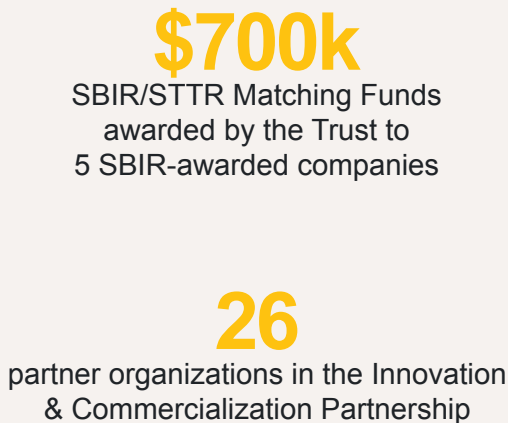
**Acércate al Grant (AAG)** is designed to help researchers and entrepreneurs access the federal SBIR/STTR (Small Business Innovation Research & Small Business Technology Transfer) programs to transition their innovative technologies from lab to market. Funded in part by the Growth Accelerator Fund Competition 2023 and the prestigious Federal and State Technology Partnership (FAST), the Trust, through Colmena66, is the official Small Business Administration (SBA) partner for SBIR/STTR outreach, technical assistance, and financial support in Puerto Rico.

**The program aims to boost the number of successful SBIR/STTR awards in Puerto Rico by:**

- Evaluating project fit for SBIR/STTR and commercialization potential, ensuring a rigorous selection process.
- Designing education and training content to prepare small businesses for the SBIR/STTR application process and understand key aspects to develop a competitive proposal.

- Assigning experienced SBIR/STTR experts serving as Grant Writing Advisors (GWA) to work 1 on 1 with participants. Currently, the program’s technical assistance is provided by 10 providers and in-kind support from 2 private partners: Ferriaouli (a local law firm specializing in IP and patent law), and DECA Analytics (specializing in Puerto Rico’s R&D incentives).
- Connecting participants with other resources to support project development and addressing issues such as intellectual property, business registrations, identifying technical experts, completing customer discovery through Grupo Guayacan’s I-Corps PR program, and more. These resources are members of Puerto Rico’s Innovation & Commercialization Network – a multisector network of 26 entrepreneurship support organizations that Colmena66 convenes periodically to strengthen the innovation and commercialization ecosystem. Participants also have access to a mentor network composed of past SBIR/STTR awardees and a growing community of entrepreneurs developing innovative technologies.
- Reviewing proposals with the Puerto Rico SBIR Review Board prior to submission to provide feedback and develop letters of support for competitive submissions.
- Providing additional funding to SBIR/STTR awardees through the Matching Funds program, matching up to \$100K for Phase I winners and up to \$200K for Phase II winners.

Key Highlights:



# WHAT’S NEXT

Colmena66 will continue shaping Puerto Rico’s entrepreneurial future—strengthening connections, expanding reach, and amplifying impact through its Resource Navigator, Entrepreneurial Calendar, Business Opportunities Hub, and Business Support Hotline.

In 2025, we’ll bring to life the 7th edition of the Boricua Entrepreneur Fest, Puerto Rico’s largest entrepreneurship event, on August 29 at the Puerto Rico Convention Center, uniting thousands through inspiration, learning, and action.

Our outreach will expand with Tu Camino Empresarial Tour, with the next stop in the northern region, gathering business support organizations and entrepreneurs to connect locally.

This November, we’ll activate over 100 events islandwide during Global Entrepreneurship Week, aiming to position Puerto Rico in the global top three.

We’ll keep spotlighting social entrepreneurs via our partnership with Donativos Ambientales Ford, sharing their stories with our community of over 48,900 followers.

Through the Annual Entrepreneurship Survey, we aim to gather insights from 850+ entrepreneurs and 112 support organizations to update our interactive dashboard and the 2025 Status Report of Puerto Rico’s Entrepreneurial Community—tools for transparency and collective progress. In the coming months, Colmena66 will host four gatherings of the Entrepreneurial Support Network to strengthen collaboration and resource sharing.

Finally, through Acércate al Grant, we will continue to support innovation and R&D companies pursuing SBIR/STTR grants through our FAST Partnership with SBA. We will continue performing outreach and training efforts year-round and keep applications open on a rolling basis to maximize support for high-potential projects. The submission pipeline is targeting opportunities from NSF, NASA, DOD, NIH, DOE, USDA, HUD, and more. Additionally, we seek to continue strengthening the Puerto Rico Innovation & Commercialization Partnership, coordinating meetups to share new opportunities with partners and keeping this community up to date with federal policies and funding priorities. These efforts aim to increase the Trust’s impact on innovation-based businesses to foster economic growth and fuel Puerto Rico’s knowledge economy.



parallel<sup>18</sup>



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

# IMPACT NUMBERS

\$17,157,050

Cumulative Grants Distributed in 8 years

\$1,495,000

Grants Distributed (Pre18 & P18) during this fiscal year

78

Graduated Companies in four programs during Fiscal Year 2024-2025: P18 Gen.12 (23), pre18 Gen.7 (23), Xpand Gen.4 (19), and BioLeap Gen.2 (13)

572

Graduated Companies in all programs in 8 years

\$550K

Investments deployed in Companies during this year

\$997,485.60

in Non-Paid Publicity Value (2,629,922 Media Impressions) for the year

WHAT WE DO

Parallel18 is an entrepreneurial center that offers startup founders from all over the world access to high-quality business training, grants, mentorship, connections and investment opportunities to help them scale globally.

The program is part of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust, a private non-profit organization created with the goal of maximizing Puerto Rico’s participation and creation of jobs in the global knowledge economy by promoting investment and financing of science and technology research development.

HOW WE DO IT

We are changing the narrative of Puerto Rico’s economy by promoting an innovative business community. We believe in creating opportunities within the Puerto Rican ecosystem that can propulse high-impact business with a global reach. Our mission is to support founders’ entrepreneurial journey while working to position Puerto Rico as a unique hub for innovative businesses and technological advancement. We leverage the island’s advantages as a multinational business center that offers the structures and protections of U.S. legal frameworks with cultural connections to Latin America and the Caribbean and a bilingual highly-trained workforce.

WHO WE CONNECT WITH

Parallel18 offers a complete startup acceleration cycle, supporting companies at every stage of growth. Through BioLeap, we incubate early-stage life science startups, while Xpand fuels the expansion of growth-stage companies. Our pre18 program helps Puerto Rican founders launch into market, and P18 connects innovative local and international startups with funding, mentorship, and global networks. By combining these programs, we create pathways for startups to thrive from idea to scale, positioning Puerto Rico as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship.

P18 Gen.12

P18 is an **acceleration program** that welcomes companies from Puerto Rico and around the world to help them scale to global markets. The curriculum offers high-quality mentorship, develops business connections, and creates investment opportunities for all our startups.

For P18 Gen. 12, a total of 23 startups successfully scaled their solutions in the Puerto Rican startup ecosystem. Throughout the curriculum, the #P18ners demonstrated consistent growth that generated \$1.6 million in revenues. This twelfth cohort reported an overall portfolio valuation of \$71.15 million and raised a total of \$3.37 million in capital during the duration of the program.



↑ Natasha Martínez Rivera, Program Manager, hosting Gen.12 of P18 on Orientation Day

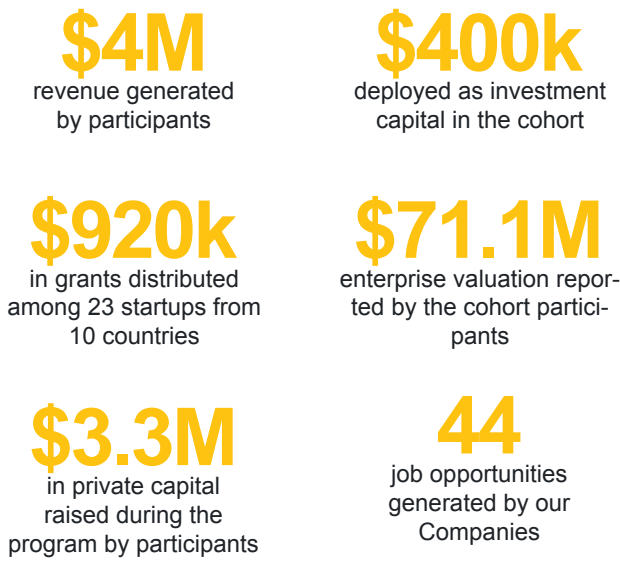


↑ Mentor Session with Alfredo Casta



↑ P18 Gen.12 cohort at DemoDay, that took place on the 18th Dimension Event

P18 Gen.12 results:





## Pre18 Gen.7

Our local pre-acceleration program is focused on helping innovative and early-stage Puerto Rican startups that have the potential to scale up into global markets. We provide funding and education resources that allow them to focus full-time on their new business and to think globally.

During April 2024, the program celebrated the pre18 Gen. 7 DemoDay, where 23 startups presented their solutions after completing 12 weeks of mentoring and business education.

This cohort's results go as follow:

**\$575K**

in grant funding distributed

### Municipalities represented:

- Bayamón
- Carolina
- Guaynabo
- Loíza
- Manatí
- Mayagüez
- Ponce
- San Juan
- Toa Baja



↑ Pre18 alumni panel on Pre18 Gen.7 Orientation Day



↑ Natasha Martínez Rivera, Program Manager, hosting the pre18 Gen.7 cohort on Orientation Day



↑ Pre18 Gen.7 cohort participating in a mentor session

## Xpand

Xpand is a growth stage program developed by parallel18 and subsidized by Banco Popular with the goal of supporting companies that are looking to access new markets by providing resources for sustainable expansion.

During 2024, Gen.4 accumulated a total of 218 technical assistance connections, ranging from public relations, investment, marketing, and business development, among others.

Additionally, the fourth cohort represented industries such as: manufacturing, finance, entertainment, healthcare, medical devices, etc. Their market extended across multiple countries, spanning: Colombia, Chile, Perú, Ecuador, Canada, Jamaica, the United States, China, the Dominican Republic, and more.

Now, the ongoing Gen. 5 is supporting 11 growth-stage companies leading in the following industries: fishing, enterprise SaaS, Artificial Intelligence, FinTech, and Healthcare, among others. The fifth cohort receives recurring technical assistance and participates in roundtable meetings during the year.

\*Gen. 4 is currently ongoing at the time of reporting and is estimated to end in November 2025.



↑ Sylmarie Díaz, Xpand Operations Manager



↑ Xpand Gen.4 Cohort at their Closing Event



## BioLeap

BioLeap is a life sciences focused incubation program developed by the PRSTRT & operated by parallel18 designed to support bioscience entrepreneurs in driving scientific research & innovation toward commercialization. The program concentrates on key sectors including biotechnology, bioengineering, agrotech, medtech, medical devices, digital health & more. This Life Science incubator is possible thanks to a “Build to Scale” grant from the Economic Development Administration of the United States Department of Commerce (EDA), which supports organizations that promote technological entrepreneurship, innovation and boost economic growth.

The second cohort completed the first phase of the program, which consists of a 12-week curriculum focused on business mentorship and support. The Gen. 2 cohort includes the following companies: Ama Earth Group, Consusis Inc., Diversia Health, Equiply.io, Omiquity Health, Prisma Diagnostics, Nura Health, MedETechNi, T-CAN, Baby Abrazo, iHnova, ReleaseBio, and Yagüez Diagnostics. During the Showcase, an all-expenses-paid trip from the startup development program IndieBio in New York was awarded to the cohort. The initiative is part of an agreement between New York Empire State Development IndieBio NY, part of SOSV NY, LLC, with PRSTRT and BioLeap.

\*The program is on-going at the time of reporting.



↑ Collaboration between Parallel18, IndieBio and New York Empire State Development



↑ BioLeap Gen.2 cohort at the Showcase event

## VCAP

The Puerto Rico Venture Capital Access Program (VCAP) will grant access to capital for Puerto Rico-based and early-stage startups that seek to leverage private capital as part of their growth strategy. The program will be implemented by the Economic Development Bank of Puerto Rico in collaboration with parallel18. The initiative has open applications, with more than 110 received in 2024. It is projected to distribute \$30 million among at least 40 investees during 10 years.

## Scientific Innovation Night

The Scientific Innovation Night is a quarterly event designed by the Healthcare Innovation Center to ignite connections among healthcare professionals in a collaborative environment.

In August 2024, parallel18 joined forces with the organization and became the host of this recurring networking opportunity. As part of the event, experts Dr. Fernando Cabanillas, Dr. Rodríguez Orengo and Dr. Manuel Ramírez led conversations about the current healthcare landscape.

## 18th Dimension

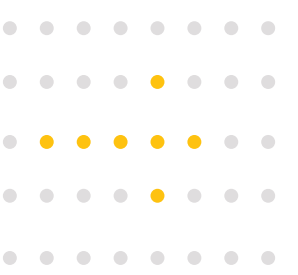
More than 200 attendees gathered at this one-of-a-kind event that showcased our P18 Gen. 12 DemoDay and Alumni Venture Summit. Both groups presented their solutions in front of an audience of investors, mentors, business partners, and members of the entrepreneurial community. It was a 2-track all-day event with educational content and conferences for startups and investors.

At the Ventures Summit Event, sponsored by Inicio Ventures, handpicked startups were granted a unique opportunity to not only present their fundraising pitches but also to showcase their groundbreaking products. These startups captivated potential investors with their vision, strategy, and product offerings, aiming to secure the necessary funding to push their ventures forward. It was a dynamic and inspiring occasion where innovation took center stage, driving discussions and collaborations that could potentially shape the future of various industries.



↑ Panel at The 18th Dimension





# WHAT'S NEXT

## Industry Meet-Ups

The Industry Meetups are designed to generate and foster high-quality business connections. Parallel18 alumni can connect with business executives in their industry to nurture collaborations and close deals. Among the events hosted, our corporate partners RSM, Gain Solutions, the National Chamber of Commerce, and the United States Department of Commerce International Trade Administration, among others, established connections with our startup community.

## Parallel18 in the News

Parallel18 has established a global presence through extensive coverage in international media outlets, positioning Puerto Rico as a dynamic hub for innovative entrepreneurship. This worldwide recognition serves as a strategic gateway, connecting our ecosystem with emerging markets and regions seeking innovation and scalability opportunities.

Last fiscal year, parallel18 reached a non-paid publicity value of \$997,485.60 with a total of 2,629,922 impressions in local and international media.

## Collaborators this past year

- AeroNet
- Banco Popular
- DECA Analytics
- Ferraiuoli LLC
- Invest PR
- Buzzzy
- Compañía de Turismo de Puerto Rico
- PSI
- DLA Piper
- Red Atlas
- DMC Consulting
- Hello Media
- Ydea Law
- Inicio Ventures
- Liberty Ventures
- Co.co Haus
- RSM
- Rones de Puerto Rico
- B. Fernández / El Almacén del Vino

## A fresh approach for Xpand!

With a new focus on technical assistance, the program - available throughout the year - offers a 1-day bootcamp focused on strategy, operations, marketing, and finance. Also, the program accepts participants all year round who have at least two team leaders dedicated exclusively to their company's operations.

## Equity Investment Matching for Early-Growth and Growth-Stage Companies

Kicking off the investment period in 2025 in partnership with BDE. To our knowledge, VCAP is the largest venture capital fund in Puerto Rico's history dedicated to investing in companies positively impacting Puerto Rico! Our long-term plan is to deploy millions per year in local companies, to catalyze 10:1 private financing.



# IMPACT NUMBERS

142

New incubated startups

95%

Program retention rate

53%

Low-and Moderate-Income  
Individuals (LMI) participation

36

Impacted municipalities

265

One-on-One Mentoring Sessions

+70

Outreach & educational events





## WHAT WE DO

Fase1 is our incubation program designed specifically for entrepreneurs in the idea/concept stage. It has two primary objectives: firstly, to offer accessible education in key concepts, tools, and methodologies of entrepreneurship, and secondly, to guide individuals in successfully transforming their ideas into thriving startups. The name ‘Fase1’ represents our commitment to providing new entrepreneurs and those with innovative ideas the fundamental knowledge and a structured approach for idea generation, validation, and product development. Fase1 serves as the starting point for any local aspiring to be part of the Puerto Rico business community, enabling them to gradually turn their creative ideas into tangible startups, one step at a time.

## HOW WE DO IT

Fase1 is divided into two steps, Fase1 Lab and Fase1 Intensive, Fase1 Lab is the foundation of our program, offering a comprehensive online academy. It features training modules covering various entrepreneurial topics that are based on current trends and industry needs. Each module consists of a compilation of short videos that include discussions on technical concepts and real-life experiences from “boristartups”. This simple yet resourceful educational tool aims to provide new and upcoming entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

Participants who have completed at least the first three modules of Fase1 Lab can apply for Fase1 Intensive. This 12-week incubator program focuses on guiding 50 new ideas each year. It provides a structured and guided curriculum, drawing on both internal and external resources. The main objective of Fase1 Intensive is to enhance the capabilities of new founders and increase the success rate of their business endeavors.

## WHO WE CONNECT WITH

Fase1 was tailor-designed for new and upcoming boricuas emprendedores. That is why both, Fase1 Lab and Fase1 Intensive, are 100% in native Spanish, for cultural and language accessibility. However, it is made available to everyone in Puerto Rico who wants to generate and develop new innovative ideas with a business mindset and vision.

### Executive Summary

In fiscal year 2024-2025, Fase1 continued its trajectory of meaningful growth and measurable impact in the local entrepreneurial landscape. Our community saw a 27% increase, with over 2,290 registered participants in our online academy and the first part of our program, as of June 30, 2025. This expansion was driven by tailored outreach efforts —over 70 events with more than 2,000 people reached—and the consistent popularity of initiatives like Fase1 Coffee Talks, which remained a favorite at BE Fest for the second consecutive year.

Fase1 Lab, our online academy, has been instrumental in advancing program recruitment and entrepreneurial education, now offering 11 modules, including two new topics developed in direct response to community feedback: Access to Capital in Puerto Rico and Entrepreneurial Mindset. These modules, created in collaboration with leading partners such as Lendreams, Latino Economic Development Center, Causa Local, and Fase1 Intensive alumni Meliora Centrum, address critical needs and empower our participants with practical, actionable and accessible knowledge. Fase1 Intensive, our business incubator, continues generating new entrepreneurs mostly women (62%), millennials (43%), and low-and-moderate people (53%) from 36 municipalities, highlighting its commitment to expanding opportunities for all in Puerto Rico, regardless of background or location.

This past year also marked significant milestones for Fase1 Intensive by completing our third generation achieving a remarkable 92% participant retention rate, culminating in another memorable Demo Day on September 7th, 2024. There, 46 participants presented their startups to an enthusiastic audience. And more than that, we are pleased that 33% of Fase1 Intensive alumni from the last three cohorts who applied to pre18 have joined our pre-accelerator, showing their continued progress with sustained support beyond demo days. Intensive Gen.3 received an outstanding average rating of 4.91 out of 5 stars from participants, a testament to its transformative impact and the dedication of our highly committed staff, collaborators, and mentors.

As we enter our fifth year and having received 52 new promising business projects in our Gen. 4, Fase1 stands as a catalyst for innovation and opportunity in Puerto Rico’s entrepreneurial landscape.

## Fase1 Lab

As we enter our fourth year in operations, Fase1 has shown undeniable growth and impact. During the past fiscal year, our community grew by 27% in our online academy, Fase1 Lab, impacting mostly women (64%) and millennials (43%). Active participants have access to entrepreneurial educational content in Spanish, 24/7, free of charge, imparted by industry leaders as well as seasoned entrepreneurs. They also have access to supporting work tools as well as one on one support from our Startup Specialist team at every stage of their journey.

Our community spoke, and we listened! This past year, we produced and launched two new educational modules based off our community feedback and needs: Access to Capital in Puerto Rico, and Entrepreneurial Mindset, where we joined forces with key collaborators like Lendreams, Latino Economic Development Center, Jefas & Jervas, Causa Local, and our very own Fase1 Intensive alum, Meliora Centrum, to name a few. To celebrate the launch of our newest modules and continue to foster community, we celebrated in person launch events where participants got a preview of the content, connected with resources and were able to build lasting relationships.



↑ Catálogo Fase1 Lab

**“The module on business models and capital was very informative and motivating. I especially liked the part where they explained how to access financial assistance to start a business.”**

**— Edwin Ayala, Gurabo**

## Fase1 Intensive

The third cohort of Fase1 Intensive achieved remarkable success, with a 92% participant retention rate. Gen.3 wrapped up with a memorable Demo Day on September 7th, 2024, where 46 participants showcased their startups before an audience of supporters and collaborators. We were accompanied by a distinguished panel of 7 judges representing the PR Science Trust board, the Technology Transfer Office and parallel18, as well as collaborators from awakenR, Deca Analytics and Microsoft. The judges evaluated the pitches and selected winners across six categories. Winners received cash grants totaling \$10,000, sponsored by the Trust and for the first time, additional prizes were presented by new Demo Day collaborators Deca Analytics and Spece. The judges' evaluations also identified the top 30 startups, which were referred to the pre18 evaluation committee for consideration for the next generation selection. During the past 3 generations of pre18 (Gen.5 through Gen.7) 33% of Fase1 Intensive alumni who have applied were selected.

Following Demo Day, our team engaged directly with alumni to gather in-depth feedback on their journey through the program. We are proud to share that 93% of program graduates reported gaining essential tools to further advance their startups. Additionally, 76% were inspired to pursue other entrepreneurial programs, illustrating our role as a springboard for continued growth.

The program received a remarkable average rating of 4.91 out of 5 stars, highlighting the effectiveness of Fase1 Intensive in empowering founders and preparing them for the next stage of their entrepreneurial journey.

We sincerely thank our instructors, collaborators, and mentors. Their ongoing support has been vital to the growth and achievements of our entrepreneurs year after year.



↑ Fase1 Intensive Gen.3 Kick-Off



↑ Fase1 Intensive Gen.3 cohort at DemoDay



“Fase1 Intensive Gen.3 has been one of the best learning experiences in my entrepreneurial journey. From day one, I was greeted with a wealth of positive energy, motivation, and empathy. Both the resources, tools, and mentorship provided a solid foundation for continuing to develop my startup. I also loved interacting with other entrepreneurs at a similar level, with creative and diverse ideas, which allowed me to learn from different industries. Completing the Demo Day was an experience that, beyond the presentation, helped me strengthen my entrepreneurial mindset and break down mental barriers, proving that if I could present in front of 200 people, I can continue to do so in front of many more. Thank you Fase1 Intensive Gen 3 for being my starting point!”

— Stephanie Trinidad, founder of Pegao.



Stephanie Trinidad, founder of Pegao on DemoDay

4.91

Average Rating for Fase1 Intensive



## And just like that... Gen.4 is already here!

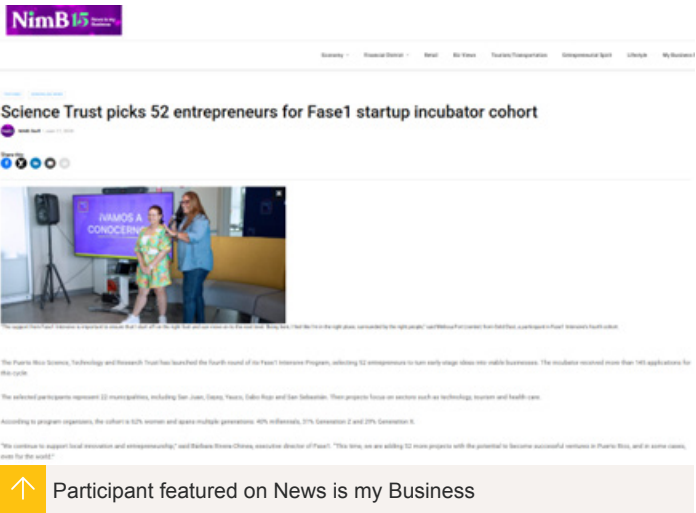
In January 2025, we opened applications for Fase1 Intensive Gen.4 and received a record 149 submissions—28% more than Gen.3. After a thorough multi-step evaluation process involving an external committee, Fase1 selected 52 new ideas to join the fourth generation of our incubation program, which began on June 14th, 2025. Fase1 Intensive is the first program for 85% of participants, making it a Starting Point for aspiring and new entrepreneurs.

Gen.4 participants represent 22 municipalities, including Hatillo, Rincón and San Sebastián, municipalities we had not impacted before. The top 3 industries for this cohort are Health and Social Assistance, Tourism/Hospitality and Information Technology (IT).

This cohort features 62% women-led projects, and over half of the participants—52%—are classified as low- or moderate-income according to criteria set by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

## Our Boristartups are making headlines!

Our work—and the incredible entrepreneurs we support—have been making headlines, capturing the attention of local media and highlighting the impact we’re creating together.



Participant featured on News is my Business



Participant featured on El Nuevo Día



Participant featured on El Nuevo Día



Participant featured on El Nuevo Día



## Entrepreneurship for everyone

Fase1 is dedicated to empowering people to bring their business ideas to life across the archipelago. During the year we continued to build relationships with municipalities, universities and organizations as part of our outreach strategies, facilitating educational presentations regarding entrepreneurship as a means to support individuals, communities and the economic development of Puerto Rico as a whole.

Our purpose is to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset and reach a wide audience of aspiring and new entrepreneurs from all demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. With this in mind, our outreach efforts led us to organize and participate in more than 70 events, impacting 22 municipalities such as Arecibo, Mayagüez, Naranjito, Humacao, Orocovis, Utuado, San Juan and many others. Through our Fase1 Pa’ tu Pueblo campaign we managed to impact more than 850 people in just two months by hosting, co-hosting or accepting invitations to events while visiting new municipalities such as Hatillo, Comerío, Maricao, Guánica, Santa Isabel, Caguas, etc. These events helped us connect with new entrepreneurs from low-and-moderate-income individuals, college students, women and anyone interested in entrepreneurship and invite them to apply to the 4th generation of our incubator, Fase1 Intensive. As a result, applicants for Fase1 Intensive represented 42 out of the 78 municipalities, a true testament of our outreach efforts to reach visionaries across the island.



↑ Fase1 in Utuado



↑ Fase1 in Hatillo



↑ Fase1 in Naranjito

## Coffee Talks

For the third consecutive year, Fase1 designed and hosted the Coffee Talks as part of the Boricua Emprende Fest 2024, which was held in Ponce for the first time. Our Coffee Talks featured 10 sessions and over 20 guests—including entrepreneurs, artists, content creators, influencers, and business partners—each offering unique perspectives and insights. Some highlights from this year’s Coffee Talks include a memorable talk with artist Antonio Martorell, conversations with our CEO Lucy Crespo, and panels featuring Farmacias Caridad, Dialecto Boricua, La Maestría podcast, Barras, Lick, Invest Puerto Rico, True Self Foundation, Invest Puerto Rico, and Banco Popular, which served as a supporting sponsor for the Coffee Talks.

Overall, Fase1 Coffee Talks 2024 were a hit! It was ranked as the second favorite track at BE Fest 2024, earning an average session rating of 4.7 out of 5. We will continue serving our recipe next year!



↑ Eng. Lucy Crespo and Bárbara Rivera at Fase1 Coffee Talks

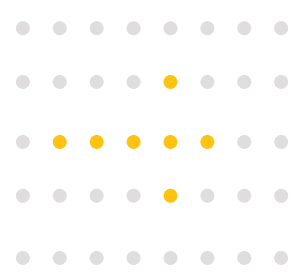


↑ Antono Martorell and Bárbara Rivera at Fase1 Coffee Talks



↑ Fase1 Coffee Talks audience





## Supporting our Women Entrepreneurs

According to the Estado de la Comunidad Empresarial 2024 report developed by Colmena66, 74% of those who embark on an entrepreneurial journey, are women. We believe that supporting women entrepreneurs is essential because it drives fair economic growth, unlocks untapped innovation, and empowers communities by creating more equitable opportunities for future generations. By co-hosting the event ¡eMprendiendo Juntas! at the Concierge Empresarial from the Municipio de San Juan on International Women’s Day, we created a space where 45 women attended and had the chance to hear and learn from other women entrepreneurs who are creating their own opportunities through their businesses. In addition, we designed a fast-paced bootcamp in collaboration with woman-led personal finance platform, Jefas y Jervas, giving 30 women business owners the tools and knowledge they need to catapult their vision. The growing wave of women entrepreneurs is clearly reflected in our online community, where the majority are women, with 64% in our network and 62% in our incubator.

As we continue to grow, nurturing strong, lasting collaborations remains at the heart of our program’s culture and success. Our community includes not only passionate entrepreneurs, but also the dedicated individuals and partners who help make this journey possible.

## We Are the Trust in Action

Collaborating with programs within the Trust helps us reach new audiences and foster more access to opportunities. Each partner adds valuable perspectives, advancing our overall impact. With support from Colmena66 and Parallel18, we’ve received over 115 entrepreneur referrals to Fase1. Beyond our entrepreneurial programs, we’ve also worked with the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust to support communities in Guánica, Comerío, and Maricao, demonstrating how entrepreneurship can empower problem-solvers. Combining the Ruta de Promotores de Salud and Fase1 Pa’ tu Pueblo campaigns through a video led to 59.5 views, spreading the message of entrepreneurship. These collaborations strengthen Puerto Rico’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.



↑ ¡eMprendiendo juntas con Fase1!

# WHAT’S NEXT

Fase1 is ready for an exciting new chapter. With the recent extension of our agreement with the Department of Housing under the SBIA and CDBG-DR funding program for an additional year, we are enabled to continue our work of supporting entrepreneurship across Puerto Rico. This milestone not only ensures the continuity of our current offerings and activities but also opens doors for bold new initiatives.

As we look ahead, we are especially excited about the outcomes anticipated for the Fase1 Intensive Gen.4, which will complete its incubation cycle by the beginning of September. We expect to see a new wave of boristartups ready to launch, each equipped with the skills, connections, and confidence to make a tangible impact within their respective communities and industries.

Moving forward, we are working to establish new partnerships with private entities and strategic business allies across various regions of Puerto Rico. Our goal is to amplify Fase1’s impact by reaching new sectors and underserved communities, leveraging the unique strengths of new and aspiring entrepreneurs to create innovative opportunities and drive growth in different parts of our island. These collaborations will allow us to keep designing new initiatives and programs, expand our network, and deliver resources that respond to the evolving needs of entrepreneur’s island wide. Ultimately, our goal is to make entrepreneurship accessible to all.

ANNUAL 2024  
REPORT 2025



# PUBLIC HEALTH



162  
Puerto Rico Public Health Trust

178  
Puerto Rico Consortium  
for Clinical Investigation

190  
Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit





Puerto Rico  
Public Health Trust



PUBLIC HEALTH

# IMPACT NUMBERS

420

Active Partnerships & Collaborations

667

Outreach & Educational Activities

157

Educational Resources Developed and  
Publicly Available

49,708

Health Prevention and Preparedness  
Items & Tangible Materials Distributed

781

Health and Social Referrals

667

Outreach & Educational Activities

13,553,360

Social Media Impressions

341,173

Social Media Engagement

146

Media Appearances

# WHAT WE DO

The Puerto Rico Public Health Trust (PRPHT), established in 2019 as a program of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust, brings together a multidisciplinary team with strengths in community engagement, health technology and innovation, emergency preparedness, epidemiology, evaluation, and strategic communications. Guided by our Mission —improving Puerto Rico’s public health through evidence-informed interventions, working hand in hand with communities, and facilitating intersectoral collaborations— we envision a healthy Puerto Rico driven by a collaborative health ecosystem. This report highlights our collective efforts over the past fiscal year to advance community health and resilience, strengthen Puerto Rico’s health workforce and technological capacity, and elevate evidence to inform policy and shape the public health dialogue.

# HOW WE DO IT

AT the PRPHT, our values of collaboration, excellence, innovation, integrity, respect and social justice drive our work. These values guide our efforts to ensure we maintain and establish strategic alliances and partnerships to achieve our objectives. We use knowledge, research, technology and data to drive innovative initiatives.

# WHO WE CONNECT WITH

Through a strong network of community leaders, we center the needs of our communities to increase health promotion and preparedness. We provide training and education for health professionals and community members and leaders to build capacity in chronic disease management, emergency and climate change, preparedness, telehealth, community organizing, behavioral health and social determinants of health.

## Advancing Community Health & Resilience

### Community-Centered Public Health Outreach

Over 45 community health workers across 29 municipalities and in collaboration with 19 organizations, extended PRPHT’s capacity to address public health at the community level.

At the community level, CHWs addressed a wide range of health-influencing factors through 238 clinical and 543 non-clinical referrals.

Over 96,000 individuals were reached through over 667 community-centered outreach and educational activities ranging from blood drives, vaccination and health fairs, to virtual and in-person educational workshops.

Grassroots special projects were launched in response to locally identified needs to promote well-being across Puerto Rico.

- Rumor Tracker, which addressed 185 health-related misconceptions.
- ¡Ponte al Día!, which improved digital literacy and loneliness in the elderly population.
- Emergency Preparedness Plans co-developed with residents, tailored for community-wide and individual use, and accessible for people with health conditions and functional diversity.

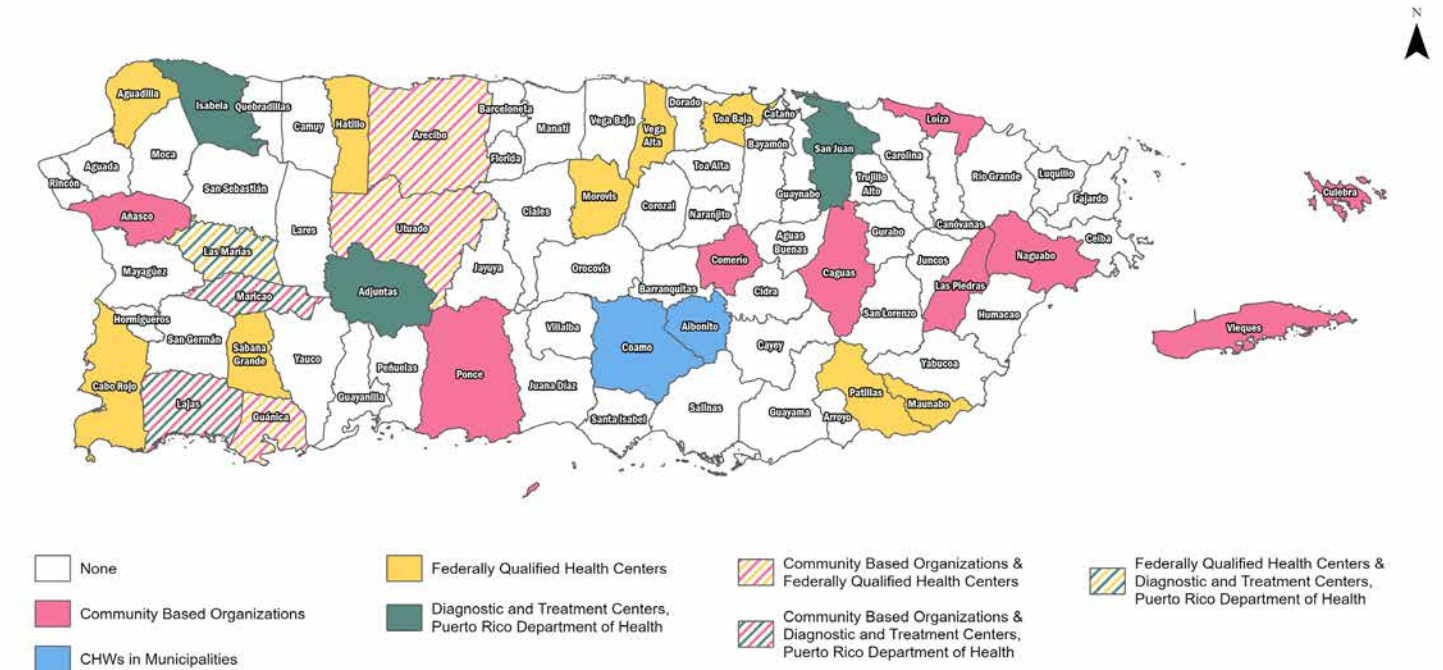


Figure 1: Map of Community Health Workers deployed across Puerto Rico using diverse collaborative models.



- Educational campaigns such as Tu Salud es Mi Parranda, Salud Pa’ Ti, and Transforming Your Health aimed at preventing, monitoring, and managing chronic diseases and promoting healthier lifestyles.

These projects were infused with innovation and grounded in evidence-informed approaches. Our Communications experts curated messaging that resonates and stories that move, strategically executing educational campaigns across multiple channels—social media, radio, television, newspapers, and print material.

For instance, Tu Salud es Mi Parranda promoted physical and mental health across generations through games, workshops, and music. ¡Ponte al día! An initiative launched in five municipalities improved digital and health literacy for over 60 older adults, achieving a 65% knowledge gain and a 37% reduction in loneliness scores.

In collaboration with the American Cancer Society, 53 new Health Access Ambassadors from various organizations were trained and deployed across P.R. to educate 5,000 people about the prevention and detection of prostate, breast, and colorectal cancers.



↑ “Tu Salud es Mi Parranda” in Aibonito.



↑ ¡Ponte al Día! Intergenerational, digital and health literacy initiative.

## Advancing Children’s Mental Health

Over 900 children participated in trauma-informed literacy sessions, facilitated by CHWs using a series of locally adapted storybooks, Cuentos que Sanan (Stories that Heal), co-created with communities, subject matter experts, and PRPHT.

Over 1,800 printed copies of the storybooks were distributed, and digital versions remain available in the Resources Library, ensuring access to the broader public.

Complementary train-the-trainer workshops equipped 112 educators and caregivers with tools to promote emotional wellness in youth and creative expression exercises.



↑ Trauma-informed storybooks “Cuentos que Sanan” educational campaign in Añasco. Through traditional music, dramatized storytelling, and hands-on art activities, 35 children learned skills to manage emotions related to hurricanes and violence.

## Building Resilience Together with Communities

Caribbean All-Hazards Program to Build Resilience and Climate Equity (CAPBRACE) initiative addressed the human health impacts from extreme weather events and extreme heat.

CAPBRACE launched the first Climate Impact Compendium which assessed the health impacts of temperature, precipitation, hurricanes, sea levels, vector borne disease, and others. It also implemented two adaptive actions: community-centered disaster planning and an educational curriculum.



↑ CAPBRACE session in Torrecilla Baja, Loíza.



Through participatory disaster preparedness in Loíza, 85 residents engaged in community meetings and 42 individual emergency plans were completed. Over 160 emergency supplies were distributed, enhancing local readiness. The impact was possible through the PhotoVoice methodology, community visits and resource distributions, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for 13 residents. Using the Photo-Voice methodology, residents of Torrecilla Baja, Loíza, documented their priorities and challenges— such as inadequate drainage and limited access to first aid supplies and water cisterns.



↑ Residents of Torrecilla Baja document priorities and challenges using the Photo-Voice methodology.

The educational curriculum for high schools comprises eight modules to enhance knowledge and promote proactive measures.

Community-defined resilience strategies and sustainable water management practices were developed through the Comunidades Resilientes en Sequías (CRESe or Resilient Communities in Drought, in English). The team engaged in participatory research with community leaders and operators of 12 non-PRASA (non-Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer.



↑ CRESe team supporting one of the community aqueducts.

Authority) community aqueducts. A 10-member Community Advisory Council and 45 semi-structured interviews informed the initiative's approach and priorities.

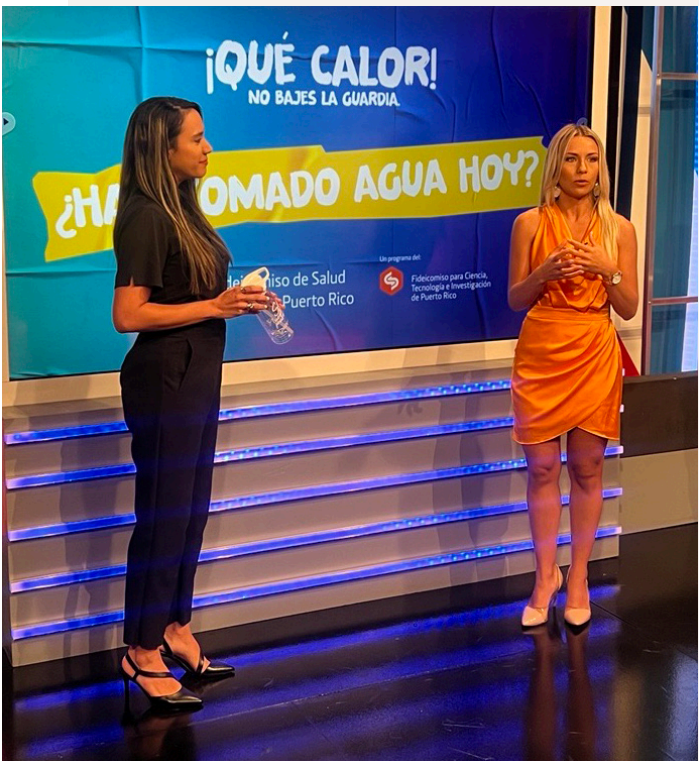
The heatstroke prevention campaign 'It's Hot! Did You Drink Water Today?', in collaboration with nutritionists and influencers, raised awareness and provided resources, reaching the public through social media (>1 million impressions), six regional radio stations, billboards in three major municipalities (reaching 355,000 people), and featured in three major national news outlets.

## Strengthening Puerto Rico's Health Workforce & Technological Capacity

### Symposium for Advancing Precision-Based, Integrative, and Individualized Healthcare in Puerto Rico

On May 1st, PRPHT and the Puerto Rico Consortium for Clinical Investigation co-hosted the first-ever symposium in P.R. focused on laying the groundwork in knowledge and collaboration to shape the future of Precision Medicine. The Symposium featured 16 experts in healthcare, public health, clinical research, and academia. It convened 200 participants to engage in a practical dialogue aimed at advancing a more precise, integrative, and individualized healthcare landscape in P.R. The Symposium was highlighted in 40 media outlets internationally with over 149,000 views.

Topics covered include cultural context and patient-centered care, local and overseas case



↑ Heatstroke prevention campaign highlighted at the Jugando Pelota Dura television program.



↑ Panel Innovative Case Studies at Symposium for Advancing Precision-Based Medicine



studies, ethical, legal, and social considerations, current and future healthcare practice, and the role of Artificial Intelligence in enhancing data analysis and throughput.

## Expanding Capacity Through Collaborative Learning

Thirteen ECHO® series, representing over 200 hours of live, virtual collaborative learning, bringing together 1,110 participants to share real-life cases and insights about pressing public health topics:

- Behavioral Health During Pregnancy and Postpartum
- Emerging public health issues such as Long COVID, Opioid Crisis, and Dengue Fever
- Strengthening Healthcare Professionals' Capacities
- Elderly Care & Healthy Aging
- Diabetes Management
- Extreme Weather Resilience, Community-Managed Aqueducts, and Emergency Preparedness
- Management of Chronic Diseases

These series connected stakeholders across the health ecosystem—including healthcare providers, emergency frontline professionals, academic institutions, public agencies, and community members—to scale solutions, expand access to health services, and strengthen resilience.

Nine of PRPHT's health workforce capacity building sessions qualified for continuous education

credits by the Ponce Health Sciences University, Universidad Central del Caribe, Asociación de Educadores en Salud de Puerto Rico, and the University of Puerto Rico medicine school, and thirteen students from various academic and other institutions interned at PRPHT.

## Increasing Access to Care Through Telemedicine

PRPHT participates in the P.R. Telehealth Working Group, which generates evidence and promotes policies about the use of telemedicine in Puerto Rico.

PRPHT equipped healthcare professionals on Digital Health through the Telemedicine & Telehealth for Health Professionals webinar series—featuring sessions on Telemedicine coverage by Medicare and Vital insurances. Complementing this effort, PRPHT developed a publicly accessible Telemedicine Directory to facilitate access to telemedicine services across Puerto Rico.

To ensure the quality, relevance, and long-term impact of its telemedicine initiatives, PRPHT also established an advisory committee composed of experts and healthcare professionals. A qualitative study on Telemedicine Use revealed the main experiences, barriers, facilitators, and perceptions regarding telemedicine use in Puerto Rico.

A Behavioral Health Integration research study was launched aimed at implementing a Collaborative

Care Model in three medically underserved clinics with the triple aim of training primary care health professionals to provide integrated behavioral health services, connecting at least 400 patients to psychiatric or psychological specialists via telemedicine, and comparing patient outcomes between telemedicine and in-person services. This is a collaborative project implemented with the CIMA Mennonite Hospital in Aibonito, 330 Community Health Centers in Salinas and Patillas, and the COSSAO Community Clinic in Utuado.

## Learning by and for CHWs

The CHW Coalition—facilitated by PRPHT—became 144-members strong, bringing together CHWs and allies.

The CHW Coalition organized the first-ever CHW Symposium, which convened over 200 participants to showcase the work of CHWs across Puerto Rico, strengthen alliances, and gain public health knowledge and skills.

A CHW ECHO® learning community was launched, positioning CHWs as both educators and learners. PRPHT also invested in CHW trainings in trauma-informed care, disaster recovery, digital literacy, cancer prevention, and aging, which further increased their effectiveness and health impact in the community.



↑ Participation at the Telehealth Working Group meeting in San Juan, PR



↑ Scope of ECHOs for Telementoring.



↑ CHW Symposium.



Addressing Non-Clinical Barriers to Health

The Public Health & Wellbeing Interest Group expanded to 765 professionals (from 206) across the health ecosystem, from healthcare providers to academics and public health practitioners. The purpose of this Interest Group is to increase understanding of economic, educational, structural, and cultural factors that influence health outcomes and expand collaborations to address these factors.

The group launched a webinar series which attracted over 2,700 participants to learn about non-clinical factors impacting renal and cervical patients, environmental and geographical factors in asthma, considerations when caring for LGBTQ+ communities and elderly populations, thanatological perspectives, HIV prevention, motivational interviewing, and suicide prevention.



Law 121-2024 establishing formal recognition for CHWs and creating a CHW Week and Day to raise awareness and support.

Elevating Evidence to Inform Policy & the Public Health Dialogue

Elevating the CHW Workforce for Healthier Communities

In July 2024, Law 121-2024 was enacted, successfully completing the CHW Coalition’s groundbreaking efforts to recognize and validate the vital role of CHWs within Puerto Rico’s public health ecosystem.

PRPHT participated in national policy forums—including the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW). In March 2025, a PRPHT representative joined 77 other NACHW members in Capitol Hill, meeting with 30 State legislative offices, 57 unique House Districts, and 60 Senate offices to advocate for improved reimbursement for CHW services and expanding access to community-based services.

Driving Data-Informed Health Initiatives

PRPHT’s Evaluation experts provided evaluation and data strategy support to over 10 internal and partner-led projects in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. This included developing logic models, defining indicators, guiding data frameworks, measuring knowledge acquisition and behavior modification, tracking service delivery impact, and conducting baseline assessments for initiatives spanning chronic disease prevention, public health preparedness, and community resilience.

Tracking the Lasting Impacts of COVID-19

In collaboration with the P.R. Department of Health and the Emergency Management and Disaster Administration, a COVID-19 seroprevalence study tested over 1,400 individuals across P.R. in just four days. Results revealed that most participants had been exposed to SARS-CoV-2.

A separate study revealed a higher prevalence of Long COVID among females, underlying health status, and access to healthcare.



Participation at the NACHW Annual Capitol Hill Visit



Publication in Perspectivas magazine of the Puerto Rico Health Education Association



Team members deployed to collect samples and conduct surveys as part of the Seroprevalence Study.



# Sharing Insights, Shaping Dialogue in Puerto Rico and Beyond

PRPHT generated evidence and insights shared through 60 outputs, including publications, posters, oral presentations, and panels.

PRPHT successfully sustained its High Capacity (Category A) recognition from the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) for having a reputation for reliably serving Puerto Rico through large-scale, collaborative and impactful population-based programming, research, and advocacy. Two PRPHT members earned the NNPHI's Rising Star and Unsung Grass Roots Hero awards, and seven posters were presented during the 2025 NNPHI Annual Conference. And PRPHT's Executive Director, Dr. Marianyoly Ortiz Ortiz, was welcomed as part of the NNPHI Board of Directors, further expanding PRPHT's influence at the national level.

Over 40 PRPHT staff became members of the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW) and two members earned the NACHW Ambassador recognition. This allowed PRPHT to engage with a U.S.-wide network of CHWs and access to best practices and evidence resources.

PRPHT co-leads the Extreme Heat Community of Practice with the P.R. Department of Health,



↑ Rising Star and Unsung Grass Roots Hero awards recipients at NNPHI's Annual Conference.



↑ Dr. Marianyoly Ortiz Ortiz joins the NNPHI Board of Directors.

to strengthen extreme heat-related emergency preparedness, response, and recovery and to assess how agencies can integrate policies that address health impacts from extreme heat.

As part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's Regional Centers for Public Health Preparedness and Response, PRPHT conducted Listening Session Focus Groups in San Juan, Ponce, and Mayagüez, convening over 45 professionals in emergency management, public health, academia, nonprofits, and Region II partners (US Virgin Islands, New York and New Jersey). Insights from these listening sessions contributed directly to the five-year regional work plan discussed at the Regional Coordinating Body Meeting in New York, ensuring local public health needs and priorities were reflected in national frameworks.

PRPHT's work was highlighted at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting & Expo, held October 27-30, 2024 through one oral and five poster presentations and participation in three expert panels and roundtables.

Noteworthy publications:



↑ Extreme Heat Working Group meeting.



↑ Collaborating with Region II Center for Public Health Preparedness and Response.



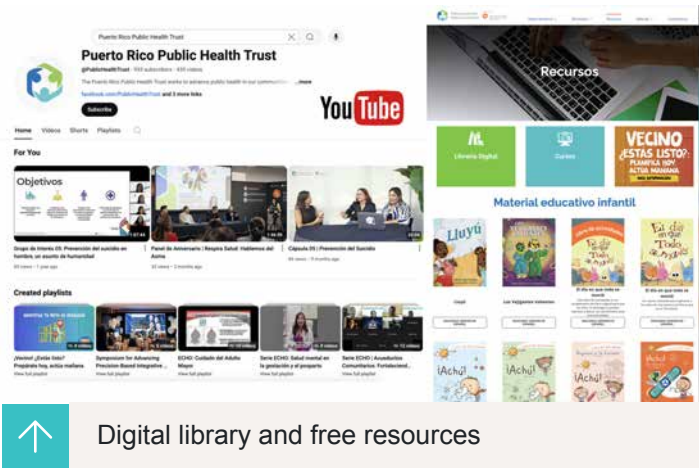
↑ Public Health Preparedness and Response Listening Sessions conducted by PRPHT with Columbia University



- A study examined how COVID-19 vaccine availability during early stages of the pandemic (2021) influence individual's hurricane evacuation decisions, revealing concerns about shelter safety. Hartnett, J. J., Dunn, E. A., Collins, J. M., Maas Cortes, L., & Jones, R. (2025). Evacuation decision-making post-COVID-19 vaccine availability: Implication of compound hazards in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, 19, e94. <https://doi.org/10.1017/dmp.2025.85>
- Results from a multidisciplinary ECHO® learning model between community and health professionals showed >96% knowledge gain about non-clinical factors that influence health outcomes and fostered intersectoral collaborations. Muñoz López, N., Ortiz, A., Ortiz, M., & Alvarado Ortiz, M. (2024, August 30). Un modelo innovador para educar sobre los determinantes sociales de la salud y fomentar las colaboraciones entre los profesionales de la salud y las organizaciones de base comunitaria en Puerto Rico. Perspectivas, 14–15. [https://issuu.com/aespr/docs/revista\\_perspectivas\\_2024](https://issuu.com/aespr/docs/revista_perspectivas_2024).

## Digital Library & Free Resources

A digital library and a YouTube channel provide free, public access to media assets, courses and educational material, storybooks, manuals and workbooks. Additional free resources are shared through Instagram, Facebook, and Newsletter. The work in this Annual Report was funded through Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA U3I4351, UL853318 and UU754330); the Environmental Protection Agency (84047601); the Centers for Disease Control (NUE1EH001495, CDC-RFA-DP21 2109, subrecipient CDC-RFA-PS-24-0026 and subrecipient of NH78TU000004); Doris Duke Foundation; American Cancer Society; and private & corporate sponsorships.



## WHAT'S NEXT

Building on the momentum of this year's accomplishments, PRPHT undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process to chart its course for the next five years. The development of the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan was grounded in a deep understanding of both the national and local public health landscape. It included extensive internal reflection and collaborative workshops with staff and advisors to define strategic priorities, goals, and measurable objectives.

The resulting plan outlines a bold path forward centered on four strategic priorities: building a strong and sustainable program, advancing community wellbeing, strengthening Puerto Rico's digital health capacity, and deepening thought leadership.

Looking ahead, PRPHT will focus on strengthening its internal foundation and expanding its external impact. A comprehensive assessment of organizational capacity and capabilities will guide a multi-year action plan for internal development. Financial sustainability will be a key priority, with efforts to diversify revenue streams and ensure continuity for core programs. PRPHT will also map and prioritize strategic partnerships to co-create initiatives aligned with its focus areas and the needs of the communities it serves. As a trusted convener, PRPHT will bring together diverse stakeholders to define a shared path forward for strengthening the public health ecosystem and expanding access to care.







# IMPACT NUMBERS

40+

Active studies across the PRCCI  
Clinical Research Center  
and consortium site network

40

New Clinical Research Coordinators  
certified by PRCCI

1

Grant award renewal  
(All of US Research Program)

573

new followers gained across  
all PRCCI social media platforms



## WHAT WE DO

The Puerto Rico Consortium for Clinical Investigation (PRCCI) has a clear vision which is to become the preferred partner for the implementation of clinical trials in Hispanics.

Our mission is to promote and expand clinical research activities optimizing the quality and speed of execution; leveraging strategic partnership (in and outside of Puerto Rico); establishing best practices to conduct clinical trials; building capacity and creating new job opportunities; and educating patients, sponsors and research professionals. These combined efforts result in a direct and indirect impact in inclusion of Hispanics in clinical trials.

## HOW WE DO IT

Our value proposition focuses on the continuous growth of clinical research to deliver safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable patient-centered clinical trials. PRCCI has access to a large network of strongly committed and experienced investigators in Puerto Rico; serves as one-point of contact for sponsors for quick and effective start-up processes; offers an array of local services such as quality assessment and validation, study monitoring, patient recruitment strategies, contract and budget negotiations, invoice and billing, clinical trials management system, regulatory and staffing support; educational and capacity building for healthcare professionals and other staff to share best practices and tailored sessions for advocacy groups.

## WHO WE CONNECT WITH

PRCCI connects with a broad network of partners, including sponsors, investigators, healthcare organizations, academic institutions, and patient advocacy groups. Through these collaborations, we streamline clinical trial operations, enhance research capabilities, and expand access to high-quality studies in Puerto Rico. By fostering these alliances, PRCCI drives innovation and promotes the inclusion of Hispanic populations in global research.

### Highlights

Fiscal year 2024–2025 was a transformative period for PRCCI, marked by bold strides in advancing our vision of making Puerto Rico a premier hub for world-class clinical research. At the heart of our progress was the continued enhancement of our Clinical Research Center, which has grown in both capacity and capability to meet the evolving demands of global studies. Through strategic investments, streamlined operations, and strengthened collaborations, we expanded our ability to support cutting-edge research and deliver high-quality, reliable results. This year’s accomplishments reflect not only our commitment to operational excellence but also our unwavering belief in the potential of Puerto Rico to lead in shaping the future of clinical innovation.

Our Clinical Research Operations team supported over 40 active studies across our own Clinical Research Center and the broader consortium network, primarily focusing on contract and budget negotiations, site activation, and operational oversight. Four new trials were secured this year.

Strategic business development efforts yielded 64 new leads and 32 qualified opportunities, fueled by targeted outreach, site visits, and industry events. The addition of three physician investigators, specializing in pediatric endocrinology, bariatric surgery, and genetics, significantly expanded our therapeutic reach. We also hosted multiple in-person visits from leading pharmaceutical companies, including Sanofi, Amgen, Eli Lilly, Bristol Myers

Squibb, and GSK, reinforcing PRCCI’s visibility and value as a high-performing research site.

Two special projects were finalized: a study with Rhaeos for a wearable device to monitor hydrocephalus, and the EMMA study with Nura Health, advancing non-invasive diagnostics for endometriosis.

Education remained a cornerstone of our mission. We awarded 38 new CRC certifications and launched a successful GCP and diversity-focused training thanks to an educational grant from Boehringer Ingelheim. We partnered with the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust to host student interns and co-organize educational events, including a blood donation campaign that potentially impacted 92 lives.

We continued our engagement in the All of Us Research Program. As the only site in Puerto Rico to receive a renewed Year Two subcontract from Yale University, funded by the NIH, PRCCI is proud to deepen its leadership in the All of Us Research Program. This continued support empowers us to drive meaningful community engagement and unlock the potential of precision medicine by expanding awareness and use of the program’s transformative data resources across Puerto Rico’s diverse communities.

Looking ahead, PRCCI remains committed to expanding our clinical trial pipeline, strengthening collaborations with industry and academia, and delivering impactful research that improves health outcomes across Puerto Rico and Latin America.



## Clinical Research Operations

This year, PRCCI's Clinical Research Operations team expanded its footprint and further advanced the capabilities of the PRCCI Clinical Research Center as a central hub for high-quality trial execution. With a continued focus on operational excellence, stakeholder engagement, and strategic growth, the team achieved several key milestones:

- Secured five new clinical trials at the PRCCI Clinical Research Center.
- Managed over 40+ active studies across the PRCCI Clinical Research Center and consortium site network.
- 8 studies were negotiated across the PRCCI Clinical Research Center and consortium site network.
- Delivered 20+ sponsor and site presentations to position Puerto Rico as a premier destination for clinical research.
- Provided ongoing operational support for contract and budget negotiations across the network.

Beyond study execution, the Clinical Research Operations team played a pivotal role in driving sponsor engagement, conducting targeted presentations to pharmaceutical companies and research organizations to showcase PRCCI's capabilities.

Looking ahead, the Operations team is focused on expanding capacity and deepening partnerships with local investigators and global sponsors. Our commitment to operational excellence and patient-centered research remains the driving force behind the successful delivery of clinical trials in Puerto Rico.

## Business Development & PRCCI Clinical Research Center

Since the launch of the PRCCI Clinical Research Center, our business development efforts have been centered on accelerating research opportunities and building partnerships that strengthen Puerto Rico's clinical research ecosystem. This year, we achieved notable results:

- Generated 64+ new leads through targeted outreach, strategic events, and referrals
- Developed 32+ qualified opportunities through feasibility assessments and relationship building
- Executed 5 clinical trial contracts, expanding our participation in large-scale studies.

These achievements reflect a focused and sustained effort to position PRCCI as a high-performing, site-of-choice within the global research landscape.

We also welcomed three new physician investigators representing diverse specialties: Pediatric Endocrinology, Bariatric Surgery, and Medical Genetics. These additions enhance our therapeutic coverage and strengthen our capacity to support a broader range of clinical trials that address both prevalent and underserved conditions in Puerto Rico.

The PRCCI Clinical Research Center also hosted several in-person visits from top global pharmaceutical sponsors, including Sanofi, Amgen, Eli Lilly, Bristol Myers Squibb, and GSK, offering them a firsthand look at our infrastructure, capabilities, and commitment to operational excellence. These visits signal growing sponsor interest in PRCCI as a trusted research partner.

During the fiscal year, we successfully managed 10 monitoring visits from sponsors and CROs to ensure compliance with protocols, regulatory requirements, and Good Clinical Practice (GCP) standards. Each visit included detailed reviews of source documentation, site procedures, and regulatory binders, reinforcing our commitment to quality and patient safety.

Our participation in BIO International 2025 as part of the InvestPR delegation further increased our visibility. The Puerto Rico pavilion served as a high-impact platform to showcase our capabilities, build relationships, and promote Puerto Rico as a destination for world-class clinical research.



↑ Sanofi team visiting PRCCI facilities to strengthen partnerships and foster collaborative opportunities.



↑ Eng. Lucy Crespo, CEO of PRSTRT and Jorge Martinez, Clinical Research Operations Lead at Bio International Convention 2025 in Boston.



In parallel, PRCCI advanced several special projects aligned with our mission of expanding clinical research across Puerto Rico and Latin America. These include initiatives focused on patient screening programs, regional recruitment strategies, site monitoring services, and clinical coverage across multiple Latin America countries. We are also contributing to infectious disease research, including studies and proposals related to Dengue virus infections and epidemic preparedness.

Two new collaborations were formalized this year:

- With Rhaeos, supporting a clinical feasibility study of FlowSense, a remote wearable device for noninvasive, continuous monitoring of shunts in hydrocephalus patients
- With Nura Health, through the EMMA study, which aims to develop a multimodal, non-invasive diagnostic and personalized medicine platform for endometriosis

Looking ahead, PRCCI remains focused on expanding its research pipeline, attracting innovative clinical trials, and building long-term collaborations with industry, academia, and government stakeholders. Backed by the trust of global sponsors and a growing team of experts, the PRCCI Clinical Research Center is well-positioned to lead Puerto Rico's continued emergence on the global clinical research stage.



Jorge Martinez, Dr. Hector Jirau, Dr. Noé Crespo, Dr. Abel Baerga & Dr. Marcos Lopez, at BIO conference.



PRCCI & PRSTRT participated at Puerto Rico pavilion with Invest PR at BIO Conference 2025.

## Awarded Grant

On May 1st, 2025, PRCCI's participation in the All of Us Research Program (AoURP) was renewed through the Coast-to-Coast Consortium (C2C), with a new award totaling \$30,000 for the period of May 1st, 2025, to April 30th, 2026. This award reflects a shift in program scope and priorities, with current efforts centered on the retention and support of participants who have already enrolled in the program. While no new participant recruitment is taking place under this cycle, the PRCCI team remains committed to maintaining engagement with the existing cohort, ensuring they are well-informed and supported throughout their continued involvement in the program.

Additionally, this year marks a transition toward supporting the research utilization of the All of Us data. PRCCI is focusing on outreach to research-oriented groups and academic institutions to promote awareness and responsible use of the All of Us Researcher Workbench within Puerto Rico. These activities aim to connect local researchers with a powerful tool for exploring health trends and disparities across diverse populations, including our own.

Although this phase of the program operates with a more limited budget and narrower scope, PRCCI remains actively engaged with national All of Us (AoURP) partners and continues contributing to the program's long-term mission of fostering inclusive biomedical research.



Participants of Clinical Research Coordinator Certification program visiting PRCCI.



Participants of Clinical Research Coordinator Certification program visiting PRCCI.



## Clinical Research Training & Education Program

PRCCI remains committed to building a skilled, informed, and research-ready workforce while expanding access to clinical research education for professionals and communities across Puerto Rico. This year, we reached important milestones that highlight our growing leadership in strengthening the island’s research ecosystem:

### Clinical Research Coordinator Certification Program

PRCCI awarded 38 new Clinical Research Coordinator (CRC) certifications this year, bringing the total to 269 certified professionals. The certification program offers hands-on training through case studies, role-playing, and real-world experiences at PRCCI’s Clinical Research Center, equipping participants with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complexities of clinical trial coordination.

### Investigator Training: GCP and Diversity in Clinical Trials

Through an educational grant from Boehringer Ingelheim, PRCCI launched a new in-person certificate program focused on Good Clinical Practice (GCP) and Diversity in Clinical Trials. With over 50 professionals in attendance, the training provided foundational knowledge in clinical trial conduct and regulatory compliance, while emphasizing diversity and inclusion in participant recruitment. The program also explored innovations in digital health, preparing investigators to lead modern, patient-centered studies.



PRCCI convened various events during this year.



PRCCI convened various events during this year.



PRCCI was part of the Precision Medicine Symposium held with PRPHT & PRSTRT.

## Symposium on Precision-Based, Integrative, and Individualized Healthcare

In partnership with the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust (PRPHT), PRCCI hosted a groundbreaking symposium in San Juan focused on advancing precision-based, integrative, and individualized healthcare. The event brought together over 250 attendees, including thought leaders, researchers, and healthcare professionals, to explore innovative strategies that position Puerto Rico as a hub for healthcare innovation and equity.

### Educational Visit: PRINBRE Summer Internship Program

As part of the PRINBRE Summer Internship Program, PRCCI welcomed 31 university students from across the island. Led by Dr. Maribel Campos Rivera in collaboration with Dr. Loyda B. Mendez Torres, the visit offered students an immersive introduction to biomedical research and public health, including the work of PRCCI and the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU). The visit also included a dialogue session at Emergemnos, a space dedicated to integrative medicine innovation. This initiative was supported by INBRE’s mission to build research capacity through mentoring and hands-on experience.

### Summer Internship Experience

This year PRCCI hosted two summer interns from the University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón. These internships are part of our broader strategy to mentor emerging professionals and strengthen the future clinical research workforce.



Symposium on Precision-Based, Integrative, and Individualized Healthcare.



University students’ educational visit to PRCCI - PRINBRE Summer Internship Program.



Participants of the Clinical Research Coordinator Certification Program visiting PRCCI.



**Blood Donation Campaign**

In commemoration of World Blood Donor Day (June 14), PRCCI partnered with the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust (PRPHT) to organize a blood donation campaign that engaged staff, partners, and volunteers. The initiative successfully contributed to the care of up to 92 patients and reflected our ongoing commitment to public health and community responsibility beyond clinical research.

**Operational Readiness & Compliance**

In preparation for launching patient visits at PRCCI’s Clinical Research Center, HIPAA compliance measures were fully implemented, ensuring participant privacy and institutional readiness for high-quality research operations. PRCCI will continue expanding its educational impact by offering Continuing Medical Education (CME) training for physicians and launching new workshops for patients, caregivers, and advocacy groups. These initiatives aim to enhance research literacy, foster community trust, and further develop a robust pipeline of professionals committed to improving health outcomes across Puerto Rico.

**Marketing & Communications Efforts**

PRCCI’s marketing and communications strategy, reinforced over the last two years, gained significant traction in 2025; supporting patient recruitment, educational program enrollment, brand visibility, and outreach to the U.S. market.

Through targeted digital campaigns, bilingual content, and consistent social media engagement, PRCCI effectively disseminated information about clinical studies and training opportunities to both the public and professional audiences. These efforts boosted awareness of available trials, attracted new sponsors, and positioned PRCCI as a trusted, high-quality research partner.

**WHAT’S NEXT**

**Strengthening Operations, Deepening Impact, and Expanding Reach**

As PRCCI enters the next phase of its Clinical Research Center development, our focus shifts from foundational setup to long-term operational stability, strategic partnerships, and expanded research capabilities. Based on progress made during Year 1, we are recalibrating efforts to deepen our community impact, streamline research operations, and create value for sponsors and collaborators.

**Operational Optimization and Quality Enhancement**

In the coming year, we will focus on refining site workflows, SOPs, and data collection systems to improve study start-up times, protocol adherence, and participant experience. We will also continue strengthening internal quality assurance processes, ensuring all research activities meet the highest ethical and scientific standards.

**Participant Engagement and Retention**

With initial recruitment strategies in place, our emphasis will shift toward participant retention, follow-up, and re-engagement. We are developing targeted communication tools and feedback mechanisms to support a positive, informed participant journey and build long-term community trust.

**Collaborations and Outreach**

Expanding our network remains a strategic priority. We will seek new alliances with academic institutions, government agencies, and industry stakeholders while continuing to engage our local community through educational events and health initiatives.

**Workforce Development and Culture Building**

Recruitment and retention of skilled research professionals remain key priorities. We plan to enhance our onboarding and training programs and continue investing in our team’s professional growth through workshops, certifications, and mentorship. Building a strong culture of collaboration and accountability will remain central to our success.

**Data Readiness and Technology Integration**

We will continue enhancing our data infrastructure to support greater interoperability and integration with sponsor systems. This includes investments in eSource tools, remote monitoring capacity, and real-time data reporting, which will allow us to remain competitive and responsive to sponsor expectations.

**Research Portfolio Growth and Diversification**

We aim to expand our research portfolio by onboarding new studies in therapeutic areas that reflect community needs and sponsor demand. Priority will be given to collaborations in obesity, respiratory diseases, dermatology, rheumatology and gastroenterology. In parallel, we are working to strengthen our site’s readiness to support early-phase trials and long-term observational studies.

**Toward Long-Term Sustainability**

As we prepare for Year 3 of our site development plan, we are exploring options for long-term growth, including grant development and diversification of funding sources. These efforts will help ensure that PRCCI continues to be a trusted, innovative, and sustainable clinical research hub for Puerto Rico and the Caribbean region.







Puerto Rico Vector  
Control Unit



# IMPACT NUMBERS

\$2,452,998.00

New funding

1,114

Surveillance traps deployed

51,657

Total pools tested for arbovirus

340

Total pools positive for dengue

>290

WALS applications

42

Dengue clusters intervened

165

Outreach and educational activities

5,330

Educational and prevention  
materials distributed

465

Members of the PRVMA

# WHAT WE DO

The Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU) was established in September 2016 as part of a cooperative agreement between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Puerto Rico Science, Technology, and Research Trust. The PRVCU aims to leverage Puerto Rico’s capacity to control the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, the vector for the diseases Zika, chikungunya, and dengue.

Mission:

To protect the people of Puerto Rico from the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, while educating and empowering everyone to reduce mosquito populations across Puerto Rico dramatically and sustainably.

Vision:

Has a modern and dynamic territory-wide integrated vector management program that serves as a local and regional research, evaluation, and training center.

# HOW WE DO IT

The unit’s non-profit organizational structure makes it unique among vector management programs, all of which are associated with a state or local government. The PRVCU, thus, has flexibility, independence, and nimbleness that other programs lack. We use these advantages in working with municipalities, health regions, and PR Department of Health to implement those management practices most locally appropriate. We are also active in competing for grants and awards at all levels and, as our reputation and recognition has grown, so has our award success grown. Finally, we strongly emphasize the evaluation and adoption of new technology for vector management.

During this period, PRVCU continues to perform the activities for awards from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Table 1 shows the details of these awards, and the additional funding received this year.

## Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit Program Highlights

During this reporting period, the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU) continued implementing key activities under multiple awards from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These projects aim to strengthen surveillance, vector control, and public health infrastructure in Puerto Rico and the region. Notably, a new HUD-funded project was awarded during this period to evaluate integrated

vector management (IVM) strategies, including outdoor mosquito control and window screen interventions, in public housing complexes across Puerto Rico. While PRVCU awaits confirmation of the continuation of CDC funding for the upcoming fiscal year, it is important to note that there have been no cuts to federal funding during this period for PRVCU. In addition, formal agreements with private sector companies have been established, providing at least \$100,000 per year in funding support. Table 1 summarizes the active awards, and the additional funding received this year. Further details and progress on each initiative are presented in the subsequent sections.

Award Project Title	Agency or Organization	Period of Performance	Description	Original Award	Additional Funding
Enhancing Global Health Security: Strengthening Public Health Surveillance Systems and Preparedness Globally	CDC	September 30, 2021 – September 29, 2026	Establish and evaluate the use of Wolbachia in the <i>Aedes aegypti</i> population throughout the urban areas of El Salvador.	\$7,044,654.04	Pending
Enhancing Regional Capacity for Vector Surveillance and Control in the US territories in the Caribbean	CDC	September 30, 2022 – September 29, 2026	Develop a dengue hotspot response protocol, Advanced Molecular Detection (AMD) applications, professional networks, among others.	\$12,758,188.00	\$703,000.00

↑ Table 1. PRVCU Awards were received during this reporting period.



Award Project Title	Agency or Organization	Period of Performance	Description	Original Award	Additional Funding
Lead and Healthy Homes Technical Studies (LHHTS) Grant Program	HUD	December 1, 2022-December 1, 2025	Evaluate how effective are the screens in doors and windows to prevent virus borne diseases by Aedes aegypti in Ponce, Puerto Rico.	\$925,000.00	N/A
Strengthening Training, Evaluation, and Partnerships in the Prevention and Control of Vector-Borne Diseases	CDC	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2028	Develop the Tropical Island Training and Evaluation Center (TITEC) for vector-borne disease to provide training, evaluation, and partnerships in the prevention and control of vector-borne diseases in the US territories and freely associated states.	\$1,500,000.00	\$750,000.00
Lead and Healthy Homes Technical Studies (LHHTS) Grant Program	HUD	March 31, 2025 – March 31, 2028	Evaluate Integrated Vector Management (IVM) strategies to suppress outdoor vector mosquitoes' population along with window screens in Puerto Rican public housing complexes.	\$999,998.00	\$999,998.00
Total of awards during this period				\$23,227,480.04	\$2,452,998.00

## Recognitions and presentations

PRVCU staff had the opportunity to represent us at various conferences as speakers, panelists, awardees, among others. Table 2 highlights the recognitions, high-level visits, and presentations that took place during this period. These engagements continue to position and recognize PRVCU as a world-class vector control program, both locally and internationally.



↑ Dr. Cohen, former CDC Director, visited our laboratory and toured the Municipality of Bayamón, where she met part of our team and observed firsthand the PRVCU’s efforts.



↑ Joanelis Medina, Laboratory Manager, represented our organization at the 2024 Puerto Rico Society of Microbiology meeting.



↑ Participation of our team in the AMCA conference in Puerto Rico.







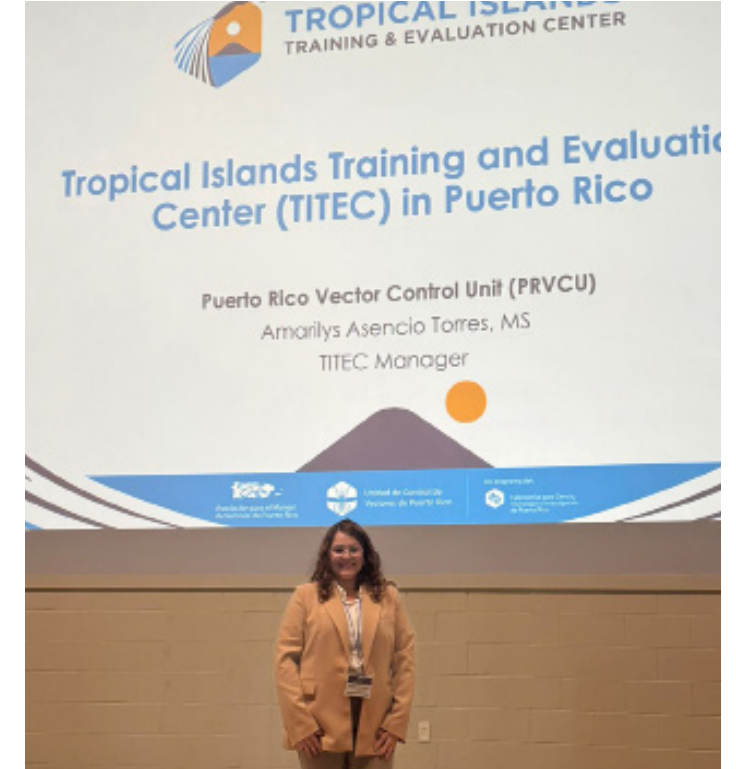
↑ Joanelis Medina and Dr. Grayson Brown at the Annual Meeting of the Entomological Society of America in Phoenix, Arizona.



↑ Lianmarie Soto, Vector Management Technician, received a travel grant to participate in the training “Invasive Mosquito Species Identification Course” in Virginia.



↑ Visit by Amarilys Asencio and Julieanne Miranda to the Anastasia Mosquito Control District in St. Augustine, FL.



↑ Amarilys Asencio during her participation in the Southeastern Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases Annual Meeting, in St. Augustine, FL.



↑ Visit from the Board of Directors of the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA) to the San Juan facilities.



↑ Dr. Julieanne Miranda, Nexilianne Borrero, and Joanelis Medina participated in the National Home Performance Conference & Trade Show hosted by the Building Performance Association in New Orleans as part of our initiatives with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). They also visited the St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement in New Orleans.



↑ As part of the “Science Policy Fellowship” with the Entomological Society of America, Joanelis Medina, Laboratory Manager, participated in a visit to the U.S. Congress and Senate in Washington, D.C. During the visit, she had the opportunity to meet with senators and representatives from Puerto Rico, Florida, and New York, highlighting the importance of legislation that supports science initiatives, with a focus on public health and entomology.



↑ Cristhian Sánchez and Luis Quintanilla received a travel grant to participate in the Annual Conference of the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA) in Washington, D.C.



PRVCU Student Program

During this year, we received 18 interns from the University of Puerto Rico-Bayamón Campus and Ana G. Méndez University that provided support on several projects of the PRVCU. The primary goal of this program was to offer students their first work experience in the fields of science and public health, with a focus on surveillance, control, and prevention of vector-borne diseases. The participation of student interns strengthened the efforts of the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit by allowing greater coverage of community and educational activities. At the same time, this experience provided students with valuable practical learning opportunities in the field of public health and vector control in Puerto Rico



↑ Interns providing support to PRVCU projects,

Dengue Epidemic Response

As of March 25, 2024, the PRDoH issued a public health emergency declaration in response to the rise in dengue cases. In 2024, Puerto Rico reported a total of 6,147 confirmed and probable cases of dengue, marking a significant public health challenge. As of June 24, 2025, the accumulated number of dengue cases in Puerto Rico for 2025 stands at 1,939. Puerto Rico continues to remain in public health emergency order until December 2025. PRVCU continues strengthening the collaboration between the PRDH and the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture to implement modern technologies and the use of effective pesticides to control the Ae. aegypti. Also, PRVCU continues providing support for entomological expertise to both agencies.

Vector Surveillance

Laboratory capacities were established in San Juan and Ponce and have been operating at full capacity since 2018 and 2019, respectively, to support surveillance activities and testing of alternative control technologies. As part of the PRVCU mosquito surveillance program, female Aedes aegypti are collected, identified, and submitted weekly for arbovirus testing. This surveillance system has expanded to include samples from all our main projects, covering locations such as Aibonito, Bayamón, Canóvanas, Carolina, Cataño, Guayama, Guaynabo, Ponce, Rincón, Sabana Grande, and San Juan, although some of these areas are not currently active in the surveillance system. Additionally, some traps were removed during this year and are therefore not included in this report. As of June 2025, a total of 1,114 AGO traps are processed weekly (Table 3).

Municipality	Number of AGO traps	Project or purpose
Aibonito	26	Dengue Hotspot
Bayamón	433	Dengue Hotspot and Bayamón Program
Canóvanas	7	Dengue Hotspot
Carolina	141	Dengue Hotspot
Cataño	17	Dengue Hotspot
Guayama	17	Dengue Hotspot
Guaynabo	14	Dengue Hotspot
Ponce	190	HUD Project
Rincón	26	Dengue Hotspot
Sabana Grande	17	Dengue Hotspot
San Juan	226	Dengue Hotspot

↑ Table 3. Number of active/processed AGO traps as part of the surveillance system until June 2024.

The PRVCU laboratory uses the Triplex assay developed by the CDC-Dengue Branch. This is a multi-target molecular assay intended for the qualitative detection and differentiation of RNA from dengue, chikungunya, and Zika viruses in mosquito samples. If dengue is detected, the DENV1-4 assay is then used to determine the dengue serotype (DENV-1, 2, 3, 4). From January 2018 through June 2025, 254,329 capture chambers have been processed, with 2,852,864 Ae. aegypti females captured. Table 4 shows a summary of the mosquitoes processed and the number of pools evaluated for arboviruses. We also provide mosquito testing to Pacific islands as a service.

Since July 2021, PRVCU agreed to start deploying AGO traps in municipalities around the Island considered, by members of CDC, Department of Health and PRVCU, as hotspots that should be considered as priority in molecular testing for arbovirus surveillance detection. The municipality hotspot selection was based on areas with high incidence of dengue human confirmed cases and mosquito positive traps. Female Ae. aegypti are collected from AGO traps, identified, and submitted for weekly testing in PRVCU Molecular Laboratory. During this year, most of those positives were DENV-3 (211), 72 were DENV-2 and 57 were DENV-3. Table 5 shows the historical overall positive pools detected in the hotspot’s areas.

Description	July 2024-June 2025	To date (January 2018-June 2025)
AGO captured chamber processed	20,047	254,329
Total Ae. aegypti female captured	218,562	2,852,864
Total pools tested for arbovirus	51,657	229,388
Total pools positive for dengue	340	1,533

Table 4. Summary of mosquito samples processed in the PRVCU laboratory for this period.

Dengue serotype	Dengue virus positive pools
Dengue 1	57
Dengue 2	72
Dengue 3	211
Dengue 4	0

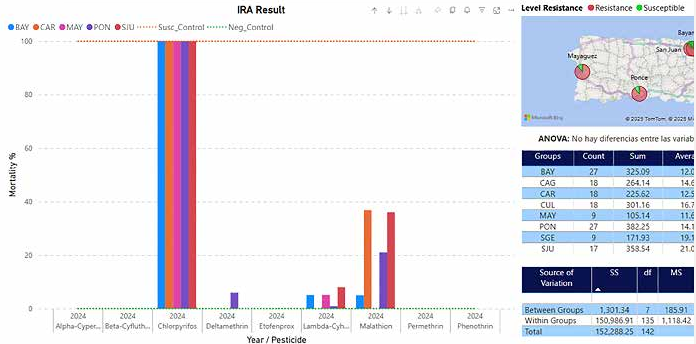
Table 5. Historical overall positives pools detected per hotspot zone considering Dengue serotype identification.

## Insecticide resistance assays

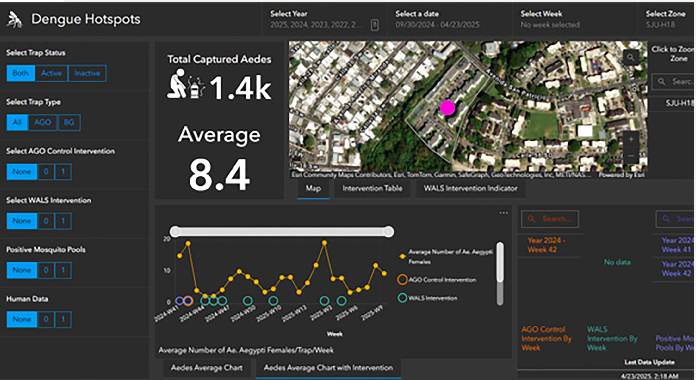
During this reporting period, the Insecticide Resistance Assay (IRA) was conducted in December 2024. All assay procedures, diagnostic times, and diagnostic doses were documented and reported following the CDC-CONUS protocol. The municipalities tested included Bayamón, Carolina, Mayagüez, Ponce, and San Juan. The active ingredients analyzed were permethrin, deltamethrin, entomofenprox, phenothrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, malathion, chlorpyrifos, alpha-cypermethrin, and beta-cyfluthrin. Figure 13 presents the Ae. aegypti mosquitoes exposed to these active ingredients in the tested municipalities. Consistent with previous findings, the results demonstrate that, Ae. aegypti is highly resistant to the adulticides most used for control in Puerto Rico. Limited susceptibility was observed only to malathion and chlorpyrifos, underscoring the urgent need to diversify available chemistries and adopt integrated vector management strategies.

## Dengue hotspot response and municipal support for vector control

Since July 2021, PRVCU has deployed AGO traps in Puerto Rico municipalities identified by CDC, PRDoH, and PRVCU as arbovirus hotspots. In September 2024, updated criteria were established to identify high-priority census tracts for intervention using 60-day epidemiologi-



Results of insecticide resistance testing for Ae. aegypti resistance against 9 insecticides at 5 different locations in Puerto Rico



Dashboard - Integrated Vector Management Response in San Juan Dengue Cluster



cal data, prioritizing areas with the highest number of dengue cases and incidence rates. Tracts are no longer in the top 10, and ongoing interventions for 35+ days are phased out. The intervention strategy includes: (a) AGO trap deployment and weekly PCR testing for dengue; (b) mass trapping; (c) larviciding via WALS or spot treatments; (d) community messaging and education; (e) source reduction; and (f) community-led cleanup campaigns. The Department of Agriculture approved additional insecticides (Merus, DeltaGuard, Nyguard, VectoBac, Natular) to address resistance. PRVCU and CDC shifted focus to public housing complexes to optimize resources. Surveillance and response now target community-level transmission, and broader clusters were removed from the intervention list. Between July 2021 and July 2025, 42 dengue clusters intervened in 11 municipalities. Over 300 surveillance and 1,220 control traps were deployed. Nine clusters were treated with 291 WALS applications. A GIS dashboard supports real-time, data-driven responses to outbreaks (Figure 14). Figure 15 shows pictures of activities in the dengue response in collaboration with the municipalities and Department of Health.



↑ Pictures of activities in the dengue response in collaboration with the municipalities and Department of Health.

## Advanced Molecular Diagnostics (AMD)

The AMD-funded project, “Tracking emerging dengue virus variants in the context of new vaccine and vector control interventions in communities at risk in Puerto Rico”, aims to establish a deployable Dengue Virus (DENV) detection system in mosquitoes. Field surveillance for the AMD has primarily relied on the use of superpooling for cost-efficient PCR screening of 10’s of thousands of mosquito pools per year. This has, in turn, enabled the Unit to detect and respond to areas with local dengue transmission much more rapidly and precisely than human case data would allow. Using this approach, the Unit has performed more PCR tests on mosquito samples for arbovirus in each week than the average number of tests performed in an entire year by a US state. The next step in the AMD project will be to develop new tests for arbovirus such as in wastewater where excreted dengue can be detected on vessels, aircraft, etc. so as to better understand the sources and risks of imported cases and their role in local outbreaks.



↑ Pictures of the activities in Bayamón program.



## Integrated Vector Management Project in Bayamón

From 2024 to 2026, the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU) implemented an Integrated Vector Management (IVM) program in Bayamón, Puerto Rico's second most affected municipality by mosquito-borne diseases. In partnership with the CDC and the municipality, the program combined mosquito control, surveillance, and community engagement in public housing, schools, and high-risk homes. Key interventions included the installation of 406 surveillance AGO traps and 508 control AGOs in housing complexes, along with larvicide and WALS applications. Early results (Feb–Jul 2025) show a 25% reduction in mosquito counts. In schools, 2,235 AGOs were deployed, and a Train-the-Trainer program was implemented. In homes, 54,752 passive emanators were distributed, with 80% installed, and WALS treatments covered 350 acres. Community engagement efforts reached over 7,200 individuals through 2,101 household visits and 163 educational talks. Activities also included storytelling, games, and booths. These engagements promoted use of the “Mosquito” app and supported pre- and post-intervention KAP surveys. Over 4,000 educational materials and repellents were distributed. These comprehensive actions, centered on residential areas, public housing, and schools, aim to reduce disease transmission and sustain behavior change through community participation, culturally appropriate messaging, and continuous surveillance and monitoring. Figure 16 shows pictures of the activities conducted in the Bayamón Program.



↑ Pictures of the activities in Bayamón program.

## Evaluation of Wolbachia replacement in El Salvador

In 2023, PRVCU received CDC funding to support a vector control project in El Salvador aimed at establishing and evaluating Wolbachia in *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes across urban areas of Santa Ana, San Sebastián Salitrillo, and Chalchuapa. The project was a collaboration between PRVCU, the World Mosquito Program (WMP), El Salvador's Ministry of Health (MINSAL), and the CDC. As part of the collaboration, the team conducted a parallel surveillance to monitor *Ae. aegypti* populations, detect arboviruses, and assess the replacement of native mosquitoes with Wolbachia-infected ones to block dengue transmission. By 2024, 101 AGO traps had been deployed over 44 weeks, and 13,396 mosquito release points were activated, achieving 88% of the original plan. WMP led short-term monitoring using aspirators, while PRVCU and MINSAL conducted a monitoring round in late 2024. At the end of 2024, Wolbachia prevalence was 46.45%, likely reduced by emergency adulticide spraying during a dengue outbreak. Despite this, early findings show a stable Wolbachia establishment. To sustain progress, PRVCU and WMP donated materials for continued surveillance. MINSAL's entomology team is now equipped, with the support of PRVCU, to monitor Wolbachia presence for at least two more years, ensuring long-term evaluation and supporting future vector control strategies. Figure 14 shows some pictures of the closing activities for this project. The remaining funds of this project were allocated to conduct a similar project in Lima, Perú. For the next reporting period, a summary will be provided.



↑ Pictures of the El Salvador project's activities



## SíScreens Project, Ponce, Puerto Rico

In August 2023, PRVCU, Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU), and the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDH) launched a three-year HUD-funded project to prevent dengue by installing window and door screens in homes in Ponce. Households were selected from the COPA cohort study and randomly assigned 1:1 to either receive full screen installation (intervention) or no intervention (control). Eligible homes had  $\leq 50\%$  of windows and doors with intact screens at enrollment. Entomological surveillance using 15-minute indoor mosquito aspirations was conducted at 0, 6, and 12 months, along with household questionnaires and screen condition assessments. Between August 2023 and April 2025, 499 households were enrolled: 249 interventions and 250 control. At baseline, cost of installation (62%) and repair (47%) were the most reported barriers to maintaining screens. Six-month follow-up showed that intervention homes were less likely to have at least one female *Ae. aegypti* (18% vs. 33%) and had lower mean female mosquito density (0.36 vs. 0.90 per home) than controls. However, 37% of intervention homes had at least one damaged screen in 6 months. Ongoing evaluations are monitoring screen durability, mosquito density, satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness. The project also promotes local microenterprise development to sustain screening services beyond the study. Figure 18 shows pictures of the activities of this project.



Pictures of some activities conducted on the SíScreens Project.

## COPA Emanator Research and Evaluation Study (CERSE)

In partnership with PHSU and CDC, the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU) launched the COPA Emanator Research and Evaluation (CERSE) study to assess the effectiveness of passive emanators (PEs) in reducing *Aedes aegypti* bites and dengue transmission in Puerto Rico. The study includes 1,024 households randomly assigned to intervention or control groups, with 12-month follow-up visits for interviews and dengue testing. Between October 2024 and June 2025, a total of 891 households were enrolled, with 429 (48%) receiving PEs. On average, 11.6 devices were installed per intervention home. At the 3-month follow-up (n=458), 50% of intervention households reported fewer indoor mosquitoes and mosquito bites, compared to 24% and 23% in control households, respectively. Overall satisfaction with PEs was high (92%), with most dissatisfaction related to limited mosquito reduction or devices falling. Entomological data from 104 homes indicated greater reductions in female *Ae. aegypti* in intervention homes (mean: 1.64 to 0.32) compared to control homes (1.20 to 0.79). The percentage of homes with at least one female *Ae. aegypti* also decreased more in intervention homes (34% to 16%) than in controls (31% to 28%). These preliminary results suggest that PEs are both effective and well accepted. Figure 19 shows pictures of the activities of this project.



Pictures of some activities conducted on the CERSE Project.



## Support of outbreak in United States Virgin Islands

The United States Virgin Islands (USVI) experienced a dengue outbreak with approximately 134 reported cases, including 97 in St. Thomas and 37 in St. John. In response, the CDC-Dengue Branch requested technical support from the PRVCU to assist with outbreak response efforts. This collaboration aimed to enhance local capacity, provide expertise in vector control strategies, and support data-driven decision-making to help mitigate the spread of the virus in the affected areas. From October 15 to November 8, 2025, the Epidemiology Division of the USVI Department of Health worked in collaboration with the CDC and PRVCU to curb the spread of the mosquito-borne virus. This was done through community outreach and mosquito control efforts. To conduct these activities, PRVCU provided mosquito dunks, bite barriers, Nyguard, Vectobac WDG, vector control materials, and local support with PRVCU personnel. In addition, ovitraps were installed on both islands to collect mosquito eggs for insecticide resistance testing (Figure 20).



Figure 20. Pictures of the visit to USVI.

## Community outreach and education activities

The PRVCU Community Mobilization Program continues participating in the proactive program. Table 6 shows a summary of the outreach and education activities during this period and since 2017. A total of 168 activities were conducted and a total of 4,146 educational materials and 988 mosquito repellents were distributed (Figure 21). In response to the 2024 dengue epidemic declared by the PRDoH, the PRVCU launched a targeted educational campaign during Aedes aegypti Mosquito Awareness Month in August, aligning efforts with World Mosquito Day on August 20.

Using the Health Belief Model, the PRVCU's Community Team organized region-specific workshops, information sessions, and clean-up events across Puerto Rico to raise awareness about mosquito breeding site elimination and disease prevention. The campaign reached 3,274 individuals across 25 municipalities, marking a notable increase in community engagement compared to previous years and reinforcing PRVCU's mission of sustained mosquito control and public health education.

Activity/Material	July 2024 – June 2025 Number of activities/materials	Total to date since September 2017 Number of activities/ materials
Educational booths	68	775
Educational talks (general public)	37	462
Educational talks (schools)	46	658
Community visits	12	9,373
Informational visit	2	402
Summer camps	3	35
Distribution of repellents	988	140,738
Distribution of larvicides	9	7,019
Distribution of educational material	4,146	190,953
Distribution of activity books	171	19,921
Mosquito nets	22	1,353

Table 3. Number of active/processed AGO traps as part of the surveillance system until June 2024.



## Puerto Rico Vector Management Association (PRVMA)

The Puerto Rico Vector Management Association (PRVMA), managed by PRVCU, now includes 466 members from Puerto Rico and abroad. It serves as a key platform for engaging municipal staff in training, webinars, and events. A dedicated website (<https://amvpr.org/>) supports communication and information sharing. In 2024, the PRVMA Annual Convention, “Dengue Epidemic 2024, What Can We Do Now?”, was held in Carolina and Cabo Rojo, drawing 270 participants. The Captain Alfredo Evaldo Casta Vélez Award, which honors outstanding field staff, was awarded to Jesús Manuel Otero Morales from Carolina. Figure 22 shows pictures of the convention in 2024.

PRVCU continues its strong collaboration with the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA). In Winter 2024, Wing Beats published a Puerto Rico Special Issue featuring seven PRVCU articles on topics such as vector management, community engagement, and molecular surveillance (See issue here: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/c712c607-72e5-49c7-be80-9c68d059cd68>). An additional article on screens and passive emanators appeared in the Spring 2024 issue (See issue here: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/dedad6bb-3e92-451f-82bd-b58434b-3dea5>). PRVCU and PRVMA also hosted the 91st AMCA Annual Meeting in Puerto Rico, attended by 937 professionals. The event included field tours, presentations, and an education day involving over 250 participants and 230 students. PRVCU contributed 22 presentations, two posters, and an



↑ Pictures of education and community outreach activities



↑ Pictures of the 2024 Annual Convention

exhibition booth, while its media strategy generated four interviews and boosted public awareness. Figure 23 shows pictures of participation in AMCA 2025.

## Tropical Islands Training and Evaluation Center (TITEC)

The Training, Innovation, and Technical Expertise Center (TITEC) has led a comprehensive capacity-building initiative for vector management across Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), and the Pacific Islands. In Puerto Rico, over 700 professionals have been trained, while a February 2025 in-person session engaged participants from all U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPIs). A regional needs assessment survey guided training efforts and was presented at SECVBD and AMCA 2025. TITEC is also developing the first Public Health Entomology graduate program in partnership with academic institutions. It hosts undergraduate and graduate interns, leveraging the year-round transmission of vector-borne diseases for practical training. TITEC also evaluates vector control tools and strategies. New eco-friendly insecticides have shown promise against permethrin-resistant *Ae. aegypti* in Puerto Rico. Other innovations under evaluation include emanators in American Samoa and ultrasound larvicides in the USVI. All training sessions undergo evaluation to ensure impact and relevance. Key partnerships strengthen TITEC's efforts. Collaborators include the CDC Dengue Branch, Centers of Excellence (SECVBD, PacVec), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Pacific Island Health Officers' Association (PIHOA), and the Puerto Rico Vector Management Association (PRVMA)—the third largest U.S. state-level



↑ Pictures of the 91st AMCA Annual Meeting



association. These partnerships support training, research, communication, and implementation. Figure 24 shows pictures of the activities conducted by the TITEC.

## Quality Assurance Division

Between July 2024 and May 2025, PRVCU's Quality Control team contributed to various local and international initiatives aimed at enhancing entomological surveillance, vector control, and data management. In El Salvador, the team provided technical support by developing protocols, training staff, and assisting with data collection using AGO traps and Prokopack aspirators. Over 8,700 visits resulted in the collection of nearly 29,000 female mosquitoes, with validated data shared among collaborators. Contributions also included drafting a data management section for an operational manual. In Puerto Rico, PRVCU published an article in Wing Beats (Winter 2024) outlining its surveillance system, later presented at the 2025AMCAAnnual Convention. In Bayamón, weekly data visualizations, a passive emanator distribution flowchart, and customized data tools were developed. Community Listening Sessions were also analyzed to inform future actions. In the CERSE project, staff were trained on aspirator use, and devices were labeled with unique codes. Materials were selected for durability and visual suitability. Through TITEC, PRVCU assessed knowledge gains among technical staff using pre- and post-training tests. TITEC also hosted a training for technicians from the U.S. Virgin Islands and Pacific Islands, including sessions on Puerto Rico's surveillance system and GIS tools.



↑ Pictures of TITEC activities

# WHAT'S NEXT

**New Technology:** Onsite molecular testing throughout Puerto Rico using our new PRVCU mobile unit (Fig. 25. Below). This Unit is new and will be initially used to deliver timely mosquito pool testing to the far western portion of Puerto Rico. Another new technology is the use of a device that emits ultrasound in water rupturing mosquito air tubes and killing larvae. These devices are solar powered and cost about \$100 each. They would be ideal in cisterns – a major concern area in Culebra, Vieques, USVI, and some parts of Puerto Rico.

**New International:** PRVCU International is starting a new Wolbachia project in Lima, Peru, extending our work in El Salvador. Another new project in Guatemala is in discussion and likely. As PRVCU International's reputation grows in Latin America, we expect it to open new funding opportunities.

**Agricultural Expansion:** The PRVCU is completing an MOU with the PR Department of Agriculture which will include the PRVCU taking over training for Pesticide Applicators in Public Health (Category 9) as well as developing management programs for those veterinary insects that transmit disease in both human and domesticated animals. This will give us access to funding from the USDA.







# EDUCATION

216  
STEM Education & Workforce  
Development Program

228  
Meet-Ups Program



# IMPACT NUMBERS

\$20K

Awarded in 4 Azmat A. Assur Scholarships for Future Academics in STEM

1,200+

Students, Educators, and General Public impacted through Hexagon, HackLab, Despegue Científico, 3D Workshops, and school visits

19

Educators Certified in STEM+AI first cohort and 8 Department of Education’s high school science teachers trained for TecLab Clubs’ first cohort

10

New public-private partnerships established and 11 MOUs for TecLab’s first cohort, including 10 Department of Education High Schools and one with the UPR - Ponce Campus

\$35K+

in support provided for equipment and educational tools

800+

Participants engaged via HackLab Academy and 106 Department of Education’s high school students enrolled and retained in TecLab’s first cohort

4

New Curricula for STEM+ AI certification, Biotechnology and HackLab Academy developed

12

STEM outreach events held across Puerto Rico and 3 Meetup and Community Sessions for the Smart Island initiative as Community Partners (OGP)

256

Participants completed PR Ready program



# WHAT WE DO

Global economies, innovation, science, and technology require adaptable, skilled workforces to navigate 21st-century challenges. The STEM Education & Workforce Development Program fosters formal and informal approaches to sustain a healthy K-12 and lifelong learning pipeline through meaningful partnerships, innovative programs, and educational policy advocacy to revolutionize the region’s educational and employment systems. It focuses on equity and diversity in STEM opportunities for K-12 students and skills-building in emergent technologies open to interested stakeholders, thereby enabling for the success of the island’s prime asset - its people.

Our mission is to advance, connect, expand, and sustain key initiatives that drive STEM Education & Workforce Development as key components of Puerto Rico’s economic development.

# HOW WE DO IT

- Connecting with key education, technology and innovation projects, communities and organizations, engaging in meaningful work that advances our mission.
- Collaborating with key stakeholders to ensure successful STEM, CTE and Workforce Development initiatives.
- Designing informal and formal approaches to learning, training, and capacity building.
- Advocating on behalf of innovation, lifelong learning and professional development as the keys to long-term socioeconomic development in Puerto Rico.

# WHO WE CONNECT WITH

As a strategic partner for the innovation, science, technology and research ecosystem, the program connects with a multitude of stakeholders to deliver high quality STEM education content, programs, and services, as well as workforce development programs specialized in emerging technologies.

## Premio Azmat Assur: Supporting Puerto Rico’s Future STEM Leaders

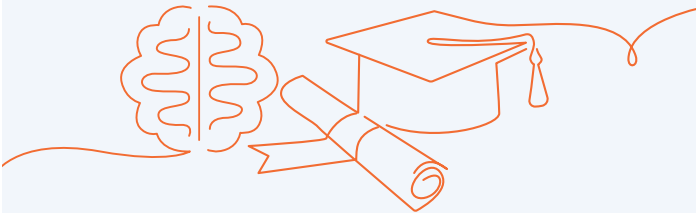
This prestigious scholarship program continues to recognize the academic excellence and leadership of public-school students pursuing postsecondary STEM degrees in Puerto Rico. This year, four recipients were awarded \$5,000 each to support their studies. Applicants underwent a rigorous selection process that included GPA and transcript review, essay evaluation, interviews, and recommendation letters. The initiative strengthens the Trust’s commitment to supporting local talent and building a robust STEM workforce pipeline.

## Azmat Assur GALA: Creating a STEM culture in Puerto Rico

With a commitment to fostering a sense of recognition and a STEM culture on the island, the STEM Education and Workforce Development Program hosted the Assur Awards Gala. This event brought together the winning students and their families, as well as distinguished individual scientists and professionals from various organizations, industry, and academia, who are widely recognized in their fields. The Gala not only celebrated the students’ achievements but also served as an inspiring platform to connect emerging talent with role models and future opportunities in Puerto Rico’s STEM ecosystem.

2025 UN PREMIO PRESTIGIOSO PARA ESTUDIANTES SOBRESALIENTES.

## Premio Azmat Assur



Azmat Assur 2025



Gala Azmat Assur 2025

## Hexagon 3D Printing Lab: Expanding Access to Additive Manufacturing

Located in Ponce and since its opening in 2024, Hexagon 3D Studio offers hands-on learning experiences in 3D modeling and digital fabrication. In FY2024–2025, over 5 workshops were held, serving 150+ students, educators, and the public. Participants explored fundamental and intermediate concepts in 3D modeling, preparing them for careers in advanced manufacturing. Membership options were introduced to ensure sustainability and broaden community engagement, with reduced pricing for students and schools.

## STEM Despegue Científico: Taller de Cohetes y Aeronáutica

A dynamic pre-college workshop designed for students ages 7 to 18, focused on aerospace science and engineering careers. Hosted at the PR Science Trust's Innovation & Forward Center, the hands-on session allowed 50 participants in 2024 and 50 participants in 2025 to explore the principles of aerodynamics, propulsion, and rocket design by building and launching their own rockets. The workshop aimed to spark early interest in STEM through experiential learning in a safe and inspiring environment. Offered at no cost, the program received outstanding feedback from families, earning a perfect 5/5 rating based on 14 reviews. Parents highlighted the enthusiasm



Opening Hexagon 3D Printing Studio



Hexagon 3D Printing Studio

of their children and the workshop's ability to make complex scientific concepts engaging and accessible. As part of the Trust's broader STEM Education & Workforce Development strategy, STEM Despegue Científico contributed to building curiosity, creativity, and foundational skills among young learners. This initiative reinforces the Trust's mission to deliver high-quality STEM opportunities across Puerto Rico. It exemplifies its commitment to developing a future-ready generation through innovative programming and early intervention.

## HackLab Academy: Empowering Digital Creators through STEM

A flagship program of the PR Science Trust that blends creativity, coding, and hands-on learning to promote digital fluency across generations. The Academy offers a 10-week curriculum using Micro:bit devices to teach coding fundamentals, circuitry, sensors, and introductory robotics. Sessions are held at the Trust's Innovation Center, with youth attending on Saturdays and adults on weekday evenings. Each participant receives a STEM Certificate in Programming & Digital Tools, a Micro:bit kit, learning materials, a program T-shirt, and access to mentorship support.

In FY2024–2025, HackLab successfully graduated both its second cohort (Fall 2024 with 10 students



Despegue Científico 2025



HackLab Academy 2025



and eight adults) and third cohort (Summer 2025 with 15 students). The summer cohort emphasized collaborative, project-based learning with a culminating showcase of student-designed sensor systems and interactive digital prototypes. Participants consistently rated the program highly for its engaging structure, relevant content, and supportive environment.

HackLab Academy continues to expand its reach and impact by equipping Puerto Rican youth and adults with the tools to explore STEM careers and technological innovation. It remains a key pillar of the Trust’s broader mission to foster inclusive, future-ready communities through quality STEM education and early intervention programs.

### Strategic Public-Private Partnerships

The program established over 10 new partnerships, including collaborations with technology companies, universities, industry, and community-based organizations. These relationships enhanced student access to internships, digital tools, and STEM career exploration opportunities.

### TecLab Puerto Rico Project

TecLab Puerto Rico is a project subsidized by the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce with the purpose of encouraging students, grades 9-12, to pursue an interest and participation in science and technology. Its strategy is to establish a TecLab Club in every high school in Puerto Rico’s public education system.

TecLab Clubs follow a curriculum of active-learning activities implemented by Teacher Coordinators who receive 24 hours of training and extended support during the semester. Clubs offer curricula in Biotechnology, Information Technology, or Emerging Technologies that promote the development of skills transferable to technical schools and universities and provide opportunities for educational experiences relevant to the labor market.

TecLab Puerto Rico covers the installation of the Clubs in the participating schools, including the equipment and laboratory materials needed to conduct the semester activities.

The first cohort commenced in January 2025 in the Educational Region of Ponce with an enrollment of 106 students and 8 Teacher Coordinators from seven schools under the Biotechnology curriculum.

TecLab Puerto Rico aims to promote future

collaborations between schools, the community, academia, and industry. Support from all these sectors will expand the Project’s scope and impact, thus contributing to the development of future STEM professionals, essential for innovation at a local and global level.

### PR Ready

The Workforce Training Program (WTP) had the goal of training the workforce in Puerto Rico to meet the needs of the reconstruction and to build the skills capacity necessary to propel Puerto Rico into the economy of the future. The program aligned its objectives with the fulfillment of one of the national objectives, established to benefit low and moderate-income individuals. We reached 83% LMI participants in our program, with emphasis on Manufacturing, Technology, and Health Services topics for the professional certifications.

The goal of WTP is to prepare Puerto Rico residents with the skills required to gain opportunities in industries that will drive the island’s economy over the next decade. We facilitated the participation of Low and Moderate Income (LMI) individuals in diverse training.

The program received 691 applications and 256 (57% female and 43% male) of those applicants completed the registration process and were able to achieve a professional certification. The program completed the closure process in spring 2025.



TecLab Puerto Rico Cohort 1



TecLab Puerto Rico Cohort 1



TecLab Puerto Rico. José Vizcarrondo Añeses High School Students visit the Trust



# STEM + AI Certification for Educators

The funds for STEM+AI certification are intended for professional development for teachers in the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE). Educators will integrate the acquired knowledge and skills into the curriculum, causing improvement in student engagement and achievement. Over five years, the program must train 125 teachers. This certification included 32 hours of hybrid training, with teachers meeting with the course facilitator through Canvas (Learning Management System) and in-person meetings in San Juan.

In this first cohort, 19 educators completed the certification. As part of the follow-up, we asked: What did you implement in your educational practice in the school year that ended? Some responded: “I integrated activities based on STEM and AI to foster critical thinking and problem solving in my students. This made the classes more dynamic and relevant to current challenges”. “I had the opportunity to present to the students how the robot works”. “Research in action”. “Principles of programming”.



STEM + AI Certification for Educators



STEM + AI Certification for Educators

# Smart Island

The Trust is one of the allied organizations in promoting Study and Employment opportunities for the Puerto Rico Broadband Program (Office of Management and Budget). Our role is to promote educational opportunities in the High-Speed Internet industry, connect with communities, and disseminate initiatives that facilitate the path to high-demand careers in this growing industry. This is possible through in-person strategies and others online (Meet Ups), where we address various topics so that the community is aware of the program and the benefits it provides to citizens. The official page of the initiative is:

[puertoricoestapati.pr.gov](http://puertoricoestapati.pr.gov)



Smart Island



Smart Island



Smart Island



**Promoting Women in Science:  
L’Oréal-UNESCO International  
Awards 2026**

In alignment with global efforts to elevate gender equity in STEM, the PR Science Trust actively promoted the 2026 L’Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science International Awards, encouraging the nomination of outstanding women scientists from Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. This year, the STEM Education & Workforce Development Program successfully nominated two distinguished Puerto Rican researchers: Dr. Filipa Godoy-Vitorino, expert in microbial ecology, and Dr. Idhaliz Flores, renowned for her work in endometriosis and women’s health.

The award honors five laureates, one per global region, for exceptional contributions to Life and Environmental Sciences, each receiving €100,000 and recognition at a ceremony in Paris in June 2026.

Through active engagement with academic institutions and scientific networks, the Trust amplified regional visibility and participation in this prestigious platform, which has honored 137 women leaders and supported over 4,500 young researchers since 1998. This initiative reflects the Trust’s ongoing commitment to advancing women in STEM and ensuring that Puerto Rican scientists are celebrated for their leadership, impact, and contributions to global scientific progress.

**WHAT’S  
NEXT**

In FY2025–2026, the STEM Education & Workforce Development Program will significantly expand its impact across Puerto Rico, with a focus on reaching underserved communities. Outreach initiatives will deliver hands-on workshops in 3D printing, coding, and digital inclusion to rural and marginalized regions. The Premio Azmat Assur will double its support, awarding 4 new scholarships and continuing our commitment to the 4 previous recipients, supporting up to eight exceptional public-school students pursuing STEM degrees. New curriculum partnerships will introduce middle school students to emerging fields such as artificial intelligence and biotechnology, fostering early exposure and interest. The Smart Island initiative will have 4 in-person events and 3 virtual ones through MeetUps to inform communities about study and employment opportunities in the

broadband sector. The Program will officially launch its collaboration with HPE, expanding visibility around the initiative and its recruitment goals—targeting the creation of 450 high-skilled positions in advanced technology areas. Efforts will focus on strengthening industry-academic partnerships, supporting outreach to connect candidates, leveraging emerging sectors where Puerto Rico is building new capabilities, and developing a hands-on training space. Project TecLab will expand its reach to include 15 schools through formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and will train 15 Teacher Coordinators. Additionally, it will formalize partnerships with academia, industry, and community-based organizations and strengthen the project’s long-term sustainability through external funding opportunities.



# IMPACT NUMBERS

6

Meetups

53

Speakers & Panelists

5

Collaborations with Trust Programs

819

Meetups participants

32

Companies & Startups Supported

23

Partnerships & collaborations





## WHAT WE DO

We foster an environment of sustained dialogue and collaboration within a network of stakeholders and the ecosystem of the knowledge economy of Puerto Rico.

## HOW WE DO IT

Our vision is to create a vibrant and thriving community within the knowledge economy, where diversity and creativity are celebrated as fundamental pillars of social and economic prosperity. We are committed to fostering productive dialogues that lead to innovative solutions, ultimately enhancing the well-being of citizens and driving sustainable economic development.

## WHO WE CONNECT WITH

This is designed for a diverse audience, encompassing researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs, innovators, industry professionals, policymakers, and community leaders, providing insights and resources for individuals and organizations. .

### Meetups: Series of Meetups addressing Climate & Sea Level Challenges

The Meetups Program dedicated a three-part series to exploring **climate change and sea level rise challenges** and their profound impact on Puerto Rico’s biodiversity, research infrastructure, and cultural patrimony. The series brought together scientists, environmental planners, cultural heritage specialists, policymakers, and community leaders to examine the vulnerabilities and adaptive strategies needed across these sectors. The biodiversity-focused session highlighted threats to critical habitats, endemic species, and coastal ecosystems. At the same time, the research infrastructure meetup examined how rising seas, flooding, and extreme weather events jeopardize the continuity of scientific work and the resilience of knowledge hubs. The cultural patrimony session addressed the risks to archaeological sites, historic architecture, and intangible heritage, emphasizing the urgency of preservation and documentation. A significant outcome of this series was the **mapping of over 267 research facilities across Puerto Rico** into a GIS-referenced platform, enabling stakeholders to visualize and prioritize which centers are most at risk from sea level rise and related climate impacts. This tool now serves as a decision-making asset for resilience planning, funding allocation, and emergency preparedness. The series not only fostered cross-sector dialogue but also delivered actionable insights, bridging science, culture, and community resilience in the face of accelerating climate pressures.

### Meetups: Presentation of the Puerto Rico Cacao Report

We convened a dedicated session to present the **Puerto Rico Cacao Report**, developed under the Cacao Academy initiative led by the STEM & Workforce Development program with support from the Peter Alford Foundation. This presentation marked the official close of the grant and served as a platform to share the report’s findings with farmers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers. The report offers an in-depth analysis of the current state of cacao production in Puerto Rico, including agronomic conditions, market trends, value chain challenges, and growth opportunities. Its contribution to Puerto Rico’s farming ecosystem is significant, as it consolidates technical knowledge, stakeholder input, and global best practices into a single, accessible document. Designed as a **clear road map** for cacao project success, the report guides everything from optimal cultivation techniques and post-harvest processing to market positioning and export readiness. Beyond serving as a strategic tool for farmers and agricultural investors, it also lays the groundwork for academic research, innovation in cacao-based products, and the expansion of agro-tourism linked to cacao culture. By offering actionable recommendations and data-driven insights, the Puerto Rico Cacao Report positions the island to strengthen its cacao sector and capture a greater share of the growing global demand for fine-flavor cacao.

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## Meetups: Smart Island Puerto Rico Broad Band Program

We hosted two Smart Island sessions designed to support the Trust’s broader **STEM and Workforce Development Program**. These meetups focused on how emerging technologies, data-driven systems, and sustainable infrastructure can be integrated to position Puerto Rico as a model for innovation-driven island economies. The first session examined the technological backbone required for smart island initiatives. The second session explored the human capital dimension, addressing how STEM education, vocational training, and industry partnerships can align to meet the workforce demands of a rapidly digitizing economy.

Together, the events provided a platform for students, educators, technology developers, entrepreneurs, and public sector leaders to identify skills gaps, training priorities, and collaborative opportunities. By linking infrastructure modernization with education and workforce development, these meetups reinforced the vision of a technologically advanced, sustainable, and inclusive Puerto Rico prepared to lead in the smart island era.

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## Special Projects: Food Security

The Meetups Program played a key role in advancing the **Agro Recursos Platform**, a new digital tool designed to strengthen Puerto Rico’s agricultural sector. Developed in collaboration with La Colaborativa, the Peter Alfond Foundation, Espacios Abiertos, Agrolnnova, Para la Naturaleza, and Colmena 66, the platform will centralize critical resources, technical assistance, and market connections for farmers, agribusinesses, and support organizations. Its creation represents a significant step forward for the island’s **food security**, providing a space where producers can access information, training opportunities, funding sources, and networks essential for long-term resilience and growth. The program’s involvement also facilitated **collaborative agreements** with Colmena66 and the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture, ensuring that the platform integrates with existing support systems and government initiatives. This alignment maximizes the platform’s reach and impact, avoiding duplication of efforts while strengthening coordination across the agricultural ecosystem. By fostering partnerships among nonprofits, government agencies, and private sector actors, the Meetups Program has helped lay the foundation for a resource that will empower farmers to innovate, expand production, and contribute to a more self-sufficient Puerto Rico. Agro Recursos is poised to become a cornerstone in the island’s strategy to make its food systems more secure and sustainable.

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## Special Projects: Creative Industries

Through multiple high-level meetings with the Secretary of Economic Development (DEDC), the Fiscal Oversight and Management Board (FOMB), and Invest Puerto Rico, the program positioned the creative industries as a key driver of innovation, job creation, and cultural export. This groundwork was essential in facilitating that the two landmark research projects—**Puerto Rico Creativo 2023** and **Convergencia Creativa**—both made possible through the support of the Trust where used to inform economic development strategies by both the DEDC and the FOMB. Puerto Rico Creativo 2023 provided a comprehensive mapping of the sector innovation ecosystem, while Convergencia Creativa offered a strategic framework for maximizing the sector’s potential. These studies, along with the work of the Fiscal Control Board’s consultant, **Boston Consulting Group**, were instrumental in the decision to formally include the creative industries in Puerto Rico’s **Economic Development Plan**, marking a significant policy milestone. Moreover, the research directly informed the DEDC, **21st Century Workforce Development Strategy**, ensuring talent development initiatives align with the needs of the creative sector. The findings also influenced the design of incentives under Act 60, reinforcing the program’s role as a catalyst for evidence-based policymaking that elevates the creative sector’s role in Puerto Rico’s economic future.

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## Special Projects: B Corporation Certification

The Meetups Program celebrated a significant milestone with the successful completion of Puerto Rico’s **first B Corp Certification Cohort**, surpassing its initial goal by certifying **four companies** across diverse sectors—public relations, business incubation, farming and added-value production, and sustainability consulting. This achievement marks a significant step in positioning Puerto Rico as a hub for businesses committed to the highest standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. The program’s structured approach provided participating companies with technical guidance, peer learning opportunities, and direct engagement with B Lab’s certification process. Building on this success, the program continues to support **nine additional companies** currently in various stages of certification, ensuring they receive tailored assistance to address challenges and meet rigorous assessment criteria. Beyond the cohort, the program has **advised over 25 companies** on the requirements, benefits, and strategies for achieving B Corp Certification, expanding awareness and adoption of impact-driven business models throughout the island. By fostering this growing community of certified and aspiring B Corps, the program is not only strengthening Puerto Rico’s sustainable business ecosystem but also contributing to a broader economic vision where profitability is aligned with social and environmental responsibility, driving long-term, inclusive growth.



Special Projects:  
Circular Economy

The Meetups Program remained an active driver in advancing the circular economy in Puerto Rico, fostering partnerships and collaborations with key stakeholders such as El Estuario de la Bahía, Generación Circular Department of Natural Resources (DRNA), and Invest Puerto Rico. Through these alliances, the program has supported initiatives that address waste reduction, material recovery, and sustainable production models, aiming to transform waste streams into economic opportunities. A notable contribution this year was the program’s participation in working sessions and ideation processes for the DRNA’s Waste Characterization Study—a long-overdue and critical assessment to determine the actual composition of waste generated across the island. This study is essential for accurately identifying the scale of environmental impacts caused by current waste management practices and for informing strategic investments in recycling, composting, and upcycling infrastructure. Leveraging these same partnerships, the program also contributed to a grant submission by the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust that addresses the intersection of economic development, environmental health, and climate resilience in coastal communities. The proposal integrated circular economy strategies as a tool to reduce environmental degradation, create sustainable jobs, and strengthen community adaptation to weather-related challenges, amplifying the program’s impact across ecological, social, and economic dimensions.

Special Projects:  
PR Research & Innovation  
Meetups 10 Year Review

The Puerto Rico Research & Innovation Meetups – **10-Year Knowledge Economy Review (2015–2025)** is a comprehensive retrospective that examines a decade of meetups and special projects, highlighting their contribution to building Puerto Rico’s knowledge economy. Guided by the mission of the Trust—to invest, facilitate, and build capacity to advance the island’s economy and citizens’ wellbeing through innovation-driven enterprises, science, technology, and public health—the review categorizes 46 events into four major areas: **Education, Science & Technology, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, and Public Health**. It documents how the program has served not only as a convener of cross-sector dialogues but also as a catalyst for collaboration, data-sharing, and the alignment of initiatives with global trends. Through topics ranging from STEM education, artificial intelligence, and blockchain to bioeconomy, creative industries, precision agriculture, and waste management, the Meetups Program has created a lasting impact by strengthening networks, mapping ecosystem development, influencing policy, and supporting 16 peer programs of the Trust. This 10-year review also looks forward, proposing the program’s evolution as a permanent platform for dialogue, emerging ecosystems development, strengthening stakeholders’ partnerships and collaborations, knowledge economy development monitoring, and information exchange that drives sustained and sustainable development in Puerto Rico.

WHAT’S  
NEXT

The program will continue hosting **high-impact meetups** that identify **emerging opportunities within Puerto Rico’s knowledge economy ecosystems**, including new thematic series such as The Impact of AI. These events will remain a critical mechanism for convening stakeholders, fostering dialogue, mapping opportunities, and catalyzing action across sectors.

Equally important, the program will sustain its **active engagement in special projects**, which have consistently delivered outstanding value—not only by advancing strategic initiatives, but also by generating **new grants and funding opportunities**. By remaining embedded in these projects, the program strengthens partnerships, positions itself as a trusted collaborator, and attracts investment to initiatives that support innovation-driven growth.

A key priority will be completing and disseminating the **10-Year Knowledge Economy Review**, documenting its findings, and expanding its reach to a broader audience. This work will feed directly into the creation of the **Puerto Rico Knowledge Economy Information Hub (PR-KEIH)**. This centralized, AI-enhanced platform will integrate and democratize data, insights, and research on Puerto Rico’s most relevant knowledge economy ecosystems. PR-KEIH will equip entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, and policymakers with the intelligence needed to monitor ecosystem development, track progress, and identify opportunities for strategic investment, business expansion, and global positioning.



# Annexes



ANNUAL 2024  
REPORT 2025



Also, the PRSTRT’s most recent  
**STRATEGIC PLAN,**  
applicable from 2024 through 2025  
can be reviewed in these attachments

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028



1

## Strategy Map Puerto Rico Science, Technology, and Research Trust

### Learning and Growth

- Strengthen the innovation and collaboration culture
- Enhance staff learning and knowledge sharing. Maintain employees' engagement.
- Leverage data analytics and emerging technologies to drive innovation across all business functions.
- Establish the Trust as an AI leader in Puerto Rico, including enabling High Performance Computing Capability Access for Knowledge creation and Economic Development
- Accelerate development of Scientific and Entrepreneurial Infrastructure at Science City

### Programs and Initiatives

- Advance scientific and technological competitiveness for local researchers
- Accelerate the deployment of an integrative biosciences research institute
- Parallel 18 is a global venture accelerator and investment platform
- Mindset shift to move to a fee-for-service approach for program product and services
- Leverage technologies and build digital health capacity for healthier communities
- Progressively develop PRCCT's in-house Contract Research Organization (CRO)
- Align STEM Education with Workforce Development Through Strategic Partnerships

### Financial Stewardship

- Stabilize and increase government funding for Research and Development (Intensity Rate)
- Increase diversification of funding sources, including R&D Credit, New Tax Market Credit, and Private Foundations
- Expand role as financial advisor and funder using mechanisms such as Treasury VCAP and SBA Loans
- Expand Trust's financial capabilities using AFICA Funds for Science City
- Increase endowment fund

Plan Objective: Increase Puerto Rico's innovation capacity



3

## Board of Trustees



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Our Board is composed of distinguished professionals who support and oversee our work, providing guidance to ensure that the Trust is managed within its mission and vision.



2

## Get to know Us

### Mision

We invest, facilitate and build capacity to continually advance Puerto Rico's economy and its citizen's well-being through **innovation-driven enterprises, science and technology and public health.**

### Vision

Puerto Rico is a globally recognized **innovation hub.**

### Values

- Integrity
- Be a facilitator
- Desire to Innovate
- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Optimism / Respect
- Collaboration
- Be a Facilitator
- Accountability
- Leadership / Adaptability
- Customer-Centric
- Accomplishments & Results
- Commitment
- Ethical use of AI

DRAFT



4





5

## Research & Development Pillar

**Research Grants Program**  
**Technology Transfer Office**  
**Biodiversity Center**  
**Research Institute**

DRAFT



7

## Puerto Rico Science Technology & Research Trust

2025 – 2028 Strategic Plans  
*All Programs*



DRAFT



6

## Research Grants Program

The Research Grants Program (RGP) is a structured, systematic, open, and competitive funding mechanism to support the development of science and technology research projects in Puerto Rico. RGP supports fundamental research and commercialization activities that strengthen the economy, fuels innovation, and empowers Puerto Rican scientists and entrepreneurs.

### VISION

A Puerto Rico where research thrives, innovation is cultivated, and local talent drive solutions to global scientific challenges.

### MISSION

To support and accelerate research excellence in Puerto Rico by funding high-impact, competitive projects that address local and global challenges.

### FOCUS AREAS

- Access to funding
- Research excellence
- Research Capacity Building

### HOW WE WORK

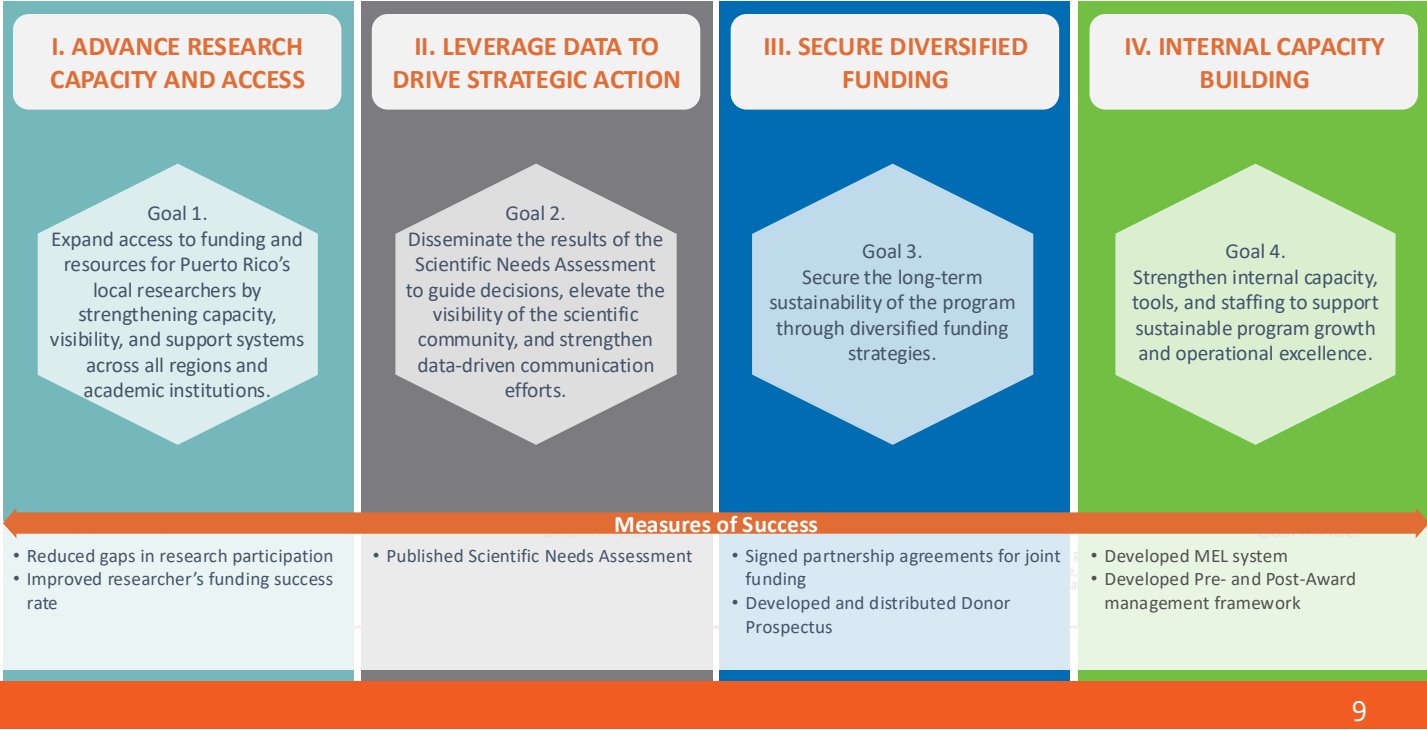
- Standardized peer reviewed process
- Competitive grants and performance-based evaluation
- Training programs, mentorship, and early-career researcher support



8

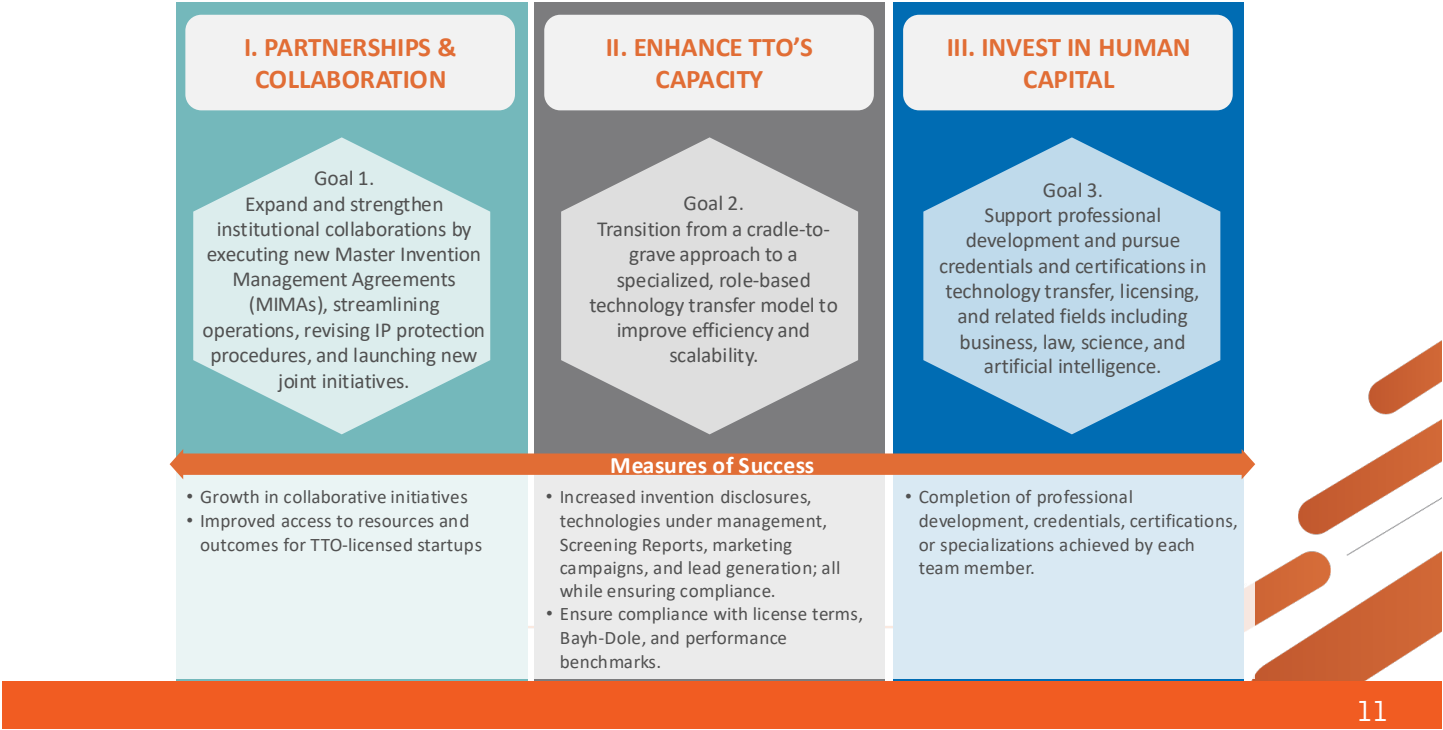
# RGP • Strategic Priorities

WeAreTheTRUST



# TTO • Strategic Priorities

WeAreTheTRUST



# Technology Transfer Office

WeAreTheTRUST

The Technology Transfer Office (TTO) identifies, evaluates, protects, markets, and transfers the most promising research discoveries from Puerto Rico's universities, institutions, and research centers and institutes to the private sector for commercialization and to benefit the public. Through its resources and partnerships, the TTO supports the growth of Puerto Rico's innovation ecosystem.

**VISION**

A Puerto Rico where research discoveries and high-value intellectual property are transformed into thriving businesses, driving innovation, economic growth, and public benefit.

**MISSION**


To effectively identify, assess, protect, market, and transfer the most promising research discoveries from Puerto Rico's researchers and entrepreneurs.

**FOCUS AREAS**

- Portfolio of inventions and intellectual property in Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Engineering
- Partnerships with academia, industry, and government

**HOW WE WORK**

- Identification, evaluation, and protection of ideas and discoveries through intellectual property.
- Provide guidance, templates, and education.
- IP protection, marketing, negotiation and deal-making services.



# Center for Tropical Biodiversity

WeAreTheTRUST

Established in 2015 to guide the efforts of conservation and exploration of Puerto Rico's unique geography for benefits that can be scientific, societal or economic. CTB supports a searchable collection of biological specimens, the conservation of biodiversity resources, and the commercialization of biodiversity-derived products, including natural chemical compounds.

**VISION**

Puerto Rico's ecosystems and biodiversity are protected and understood, and its natural resources are sustainably leveraged for scientific and economic advancement.

**MISSION**

CTB facilitates high-impact research to deepen understanding and advance the responsible use and preservation of Puerto Rico's biodiversity.

**FOCUS AREAS**

- Natural products
- Artificial Intelligence and drug discovery
- Access and benefit sharing with local communities

**HOW WE WORK**

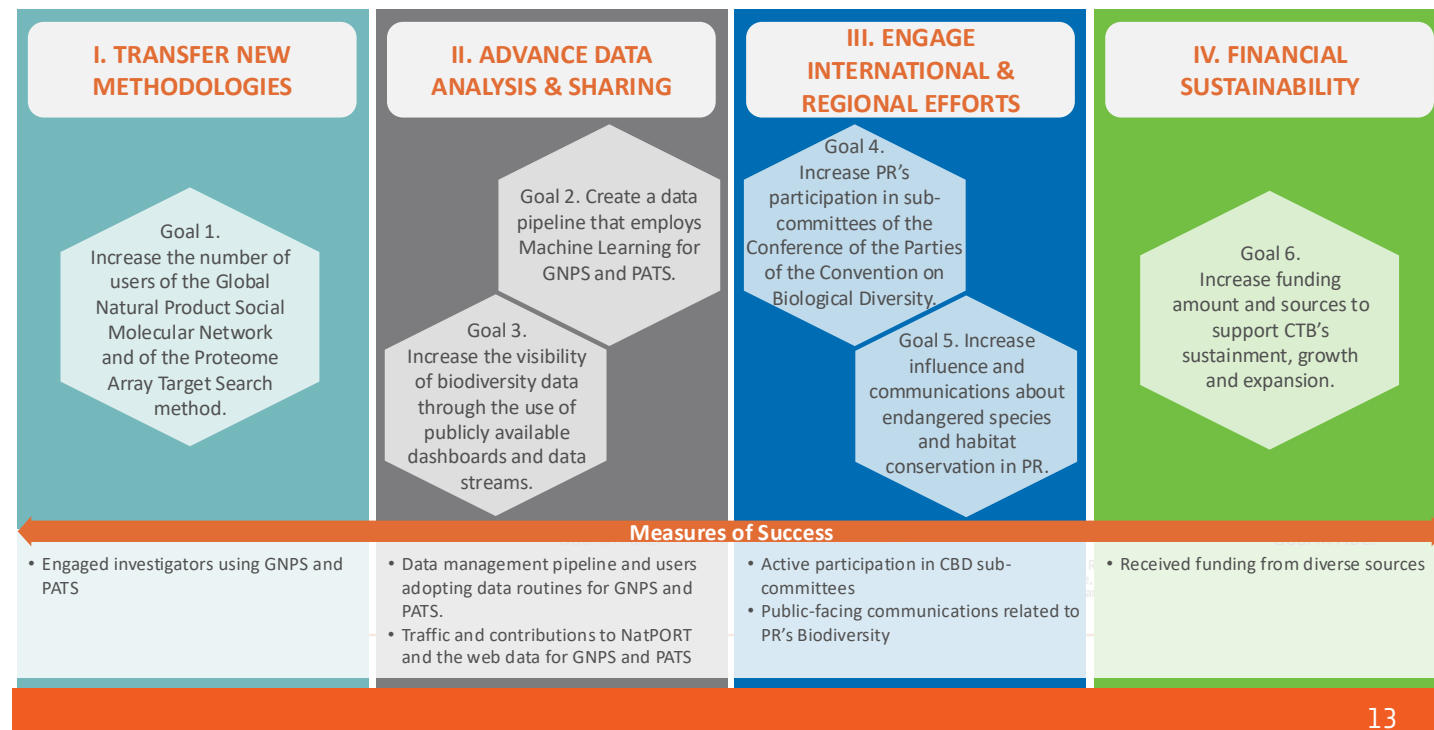
- Collaborating across the research spectrum, regionally and internationally
- Developing new methods
- Cataloging natural products
- Informing public policy decisions





## CTB • Strategic Priorities

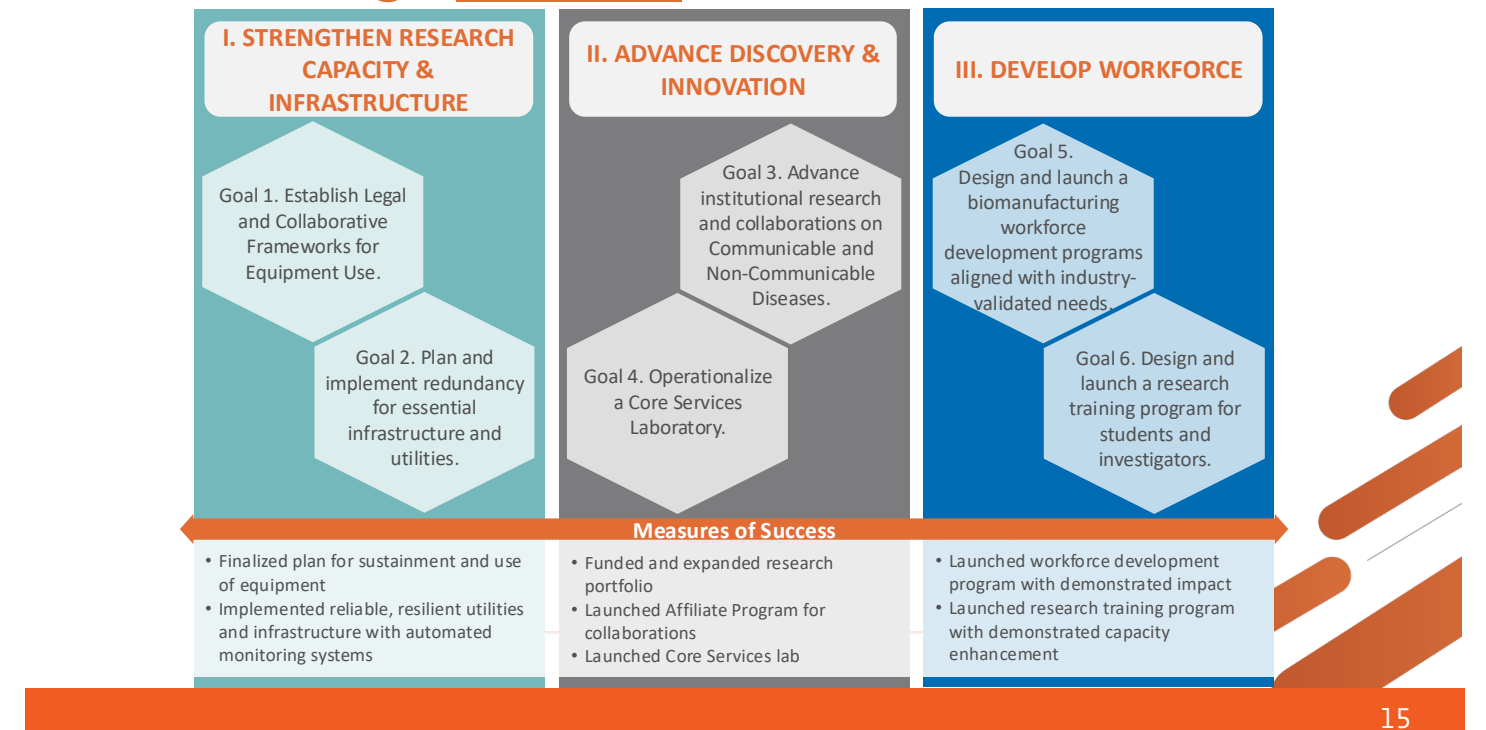
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## RI • Strategic Priorities

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15

## Research Institute

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## Entrepreneurship Pillar

Colmena 66

Fase 1

Parallel 18

DRAFT WeAreTheTRUST



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# Colmena 66

WeAreTheTRUST

Colmena66 strengthens Puerto Rico's entrepreneurial ecosystem by connecting founders at any stage to hundreds of resources in the Entrepreneurial Resource Network. It conducts research to identify and address ecosystem gaps and needs.

## VISION

Anyone in Puerto Rico can start and grow a successful business.

## MISSION

Colmena66 facilitates entrepreneurship by connecting and building the entrepreneurial community.

## FOCUS AREAS

- Access to capital & federal funding
- Data & insights on entrepreneurship and economic development
- Ecosystem building & collaboration
- Community engagement & visibility
- Crisis preparedness & recovery

## HOW WE WORK

- Connect entrepreneurs with the right resource at the right time.
- Create resources and content that entrepreneurs can follow to create or grow companies.
- Build community through events that connect the business ecosystem.



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# Fase 1

WeAreTheTRUST

Fase1, established in 2021, is a business incubator designed to support aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial journey – from idea to launch. Through accessible education, technical resources, connections, and mentorship the program nurtures a pipeline of high potential startups equipped for scale and impact.

## VISION

Aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs successfully launch new innovative businesses that strengthen the local economy throughout Puerto Rico.

## MISSION

Fase1 equips aspiring and early-stage Puerto Rican entrepreneurs with accessible education and resources to turn high-potential ideas into real businesses.

## FOCUS AREAS

- Early-stage entrepreneurial education and specialized curriculum
- Community & strategic connections
- Innovative, scalable, impact-driven ventures
- Accessible and individualized support to participants

## HOW WE WORK

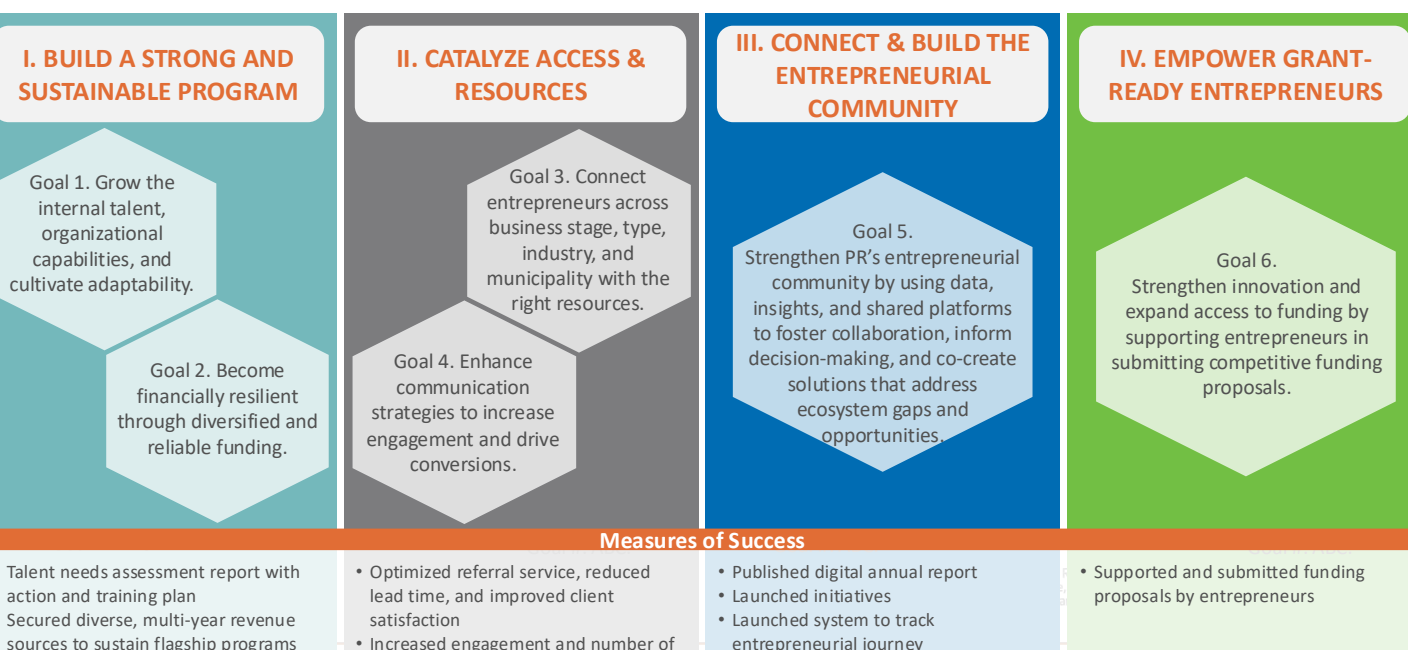
- Offer entrepreneurial education with practical tools, targeted programs, and networks to validate promising ideas and turn them into startups.
- Create an active community of early-staged entrepreneurs, mentors and supporters that enables collaboration.



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## C66 • Strategic Priorities

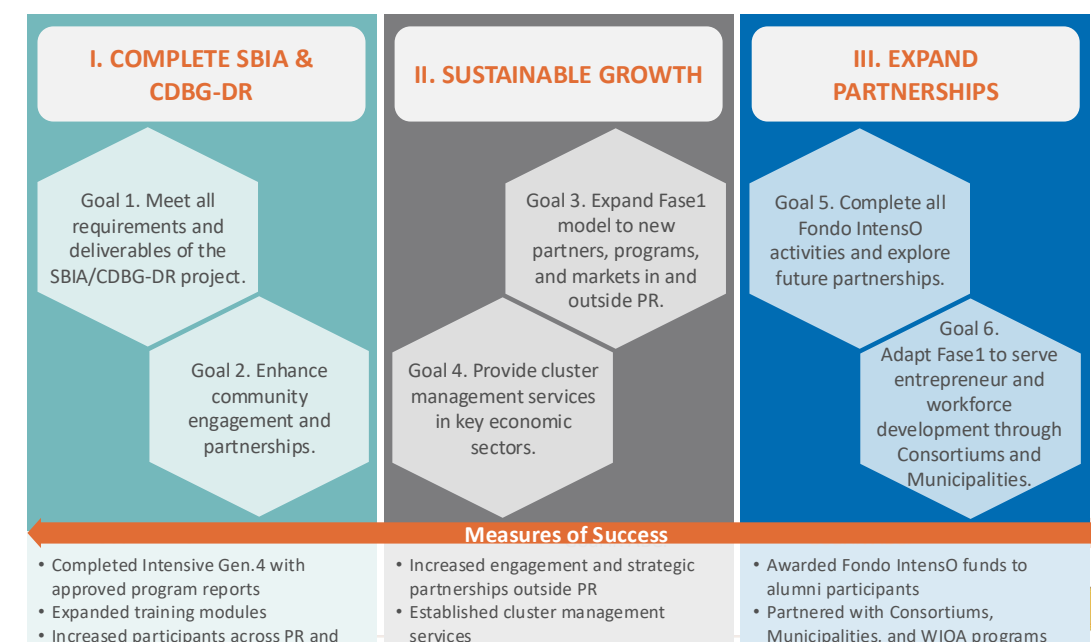
WeAreTheTRUST



18

## F1 • Strategic Priorities

WeAreTheTRUST



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# Parallel 18

Parallel18 seeks to become a global venture accelerator and investment platform designed to identify, invest in, and scale high-potential startups from within Puerto Rico. As part of the PRSTRT, it aims to position Puerto Rico as a globally connected launchpad for innovation and technology-driven entrepreneurship.

### VISION

A Puerto Rico recognized worldwide as a leading launchpad for innovation and technology-driven entrepreneurship, powering a vibrant, globally connected business ecosystem.

### MISSION

To identify, invest in, and accelerate high-potential global startups, providing the capital, mentorship, knowledge, and global connections they need to scale and transform industries.

### FOCUS AREAS

- World-Class Mentorship & Founder Education
- Structured Growth Frameworks
- First Check & Seed Capital Investments
- Enterprise & Ecosystem Access
- Follow-On Investment Vehicles

### HOW WE WORK

We are **evolving** from a grant-awarding platform into an **investment vehicle** structure.



# Public Health Pillar

Puerto Rico Public Health Institute

Puerto Rico Public Health Institute

Puerto Rico Consortium for Clinical Investigation



## P18 • Strategic Priorities

### I. TRANSITION INTO AN INVESTMENT PLATFORM

- Goal 1. Transition from an equity-free funding model to a performance-based investment program using syndicate financing.
- Goal 2. Structure and launch a Venture Capital Fund to back operations and all financing activities.

### II. CONSOLIDATE AND ELEVATE PROGRAM OFFERINGS

- Goal 3. Transition into an integrated pipeline that originates, de-risks, and scales venture-backable startups across key verticals.
- Goal 4. Programmatic unification with CRM, diligence platform, and modernized curriculum.

### III. EXPAND GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

- Goal 5. Establish strategic, co-branded Global Hubs with leading incubators to facilitate cross-border startup mobility and market access.
- Goal 6. Implement joint programming with global incubators to channel founders into P18's pipeline and build an investment ecosystem.

### IV. OPTIMIZE OPERATIONS & SECURE SUSTAINABILITY

- Goal 7. Establish standardized, compliant workflows and digitized systems to drive efficiency and cost-reduction.
- Goal 8. Secure recurring revenue, recycle capital, and boost efficiency to reduce PRSTRT subsidy to ≤20% of operating budget.

### Measures of Success

- ≥10 accredited angel investors
- >\$250K cumulative capital committed through Special Purpose Vehicles
- VCF closed at ≥\$5M AUM with ≥3 LPs
- ≥10 startups from ≥3 U.S. states per BioLeap cohort; of which ≥75% reach post-incubation milestones
- Integrated intake funnel deployed for
- ≥2 signed MOUs with incubators and implemented unified analytics system
- Piloted Global Hubs with a monetizable platform
- ≥40% reduction in processing time, ≥80% KPIs automated
- ≥20% of operating budget covered by PRSTRT

## Puerto Rico Public Health Institute

Established in 2019, we serve as the Puerto Rico Public Health Institute with the purpose of promoting innovative and evidence-informed public health practices to achieve systematic improvements and sustainably support the health of residents.

### VISION

A healthy Puerto Rico driven by a collaborative health ecosystem.

### MISSION

Improving Puerto Rico's public health through evidence-informed interventions, working hand in hand with communities, and facilitating intersectoral collaborations.

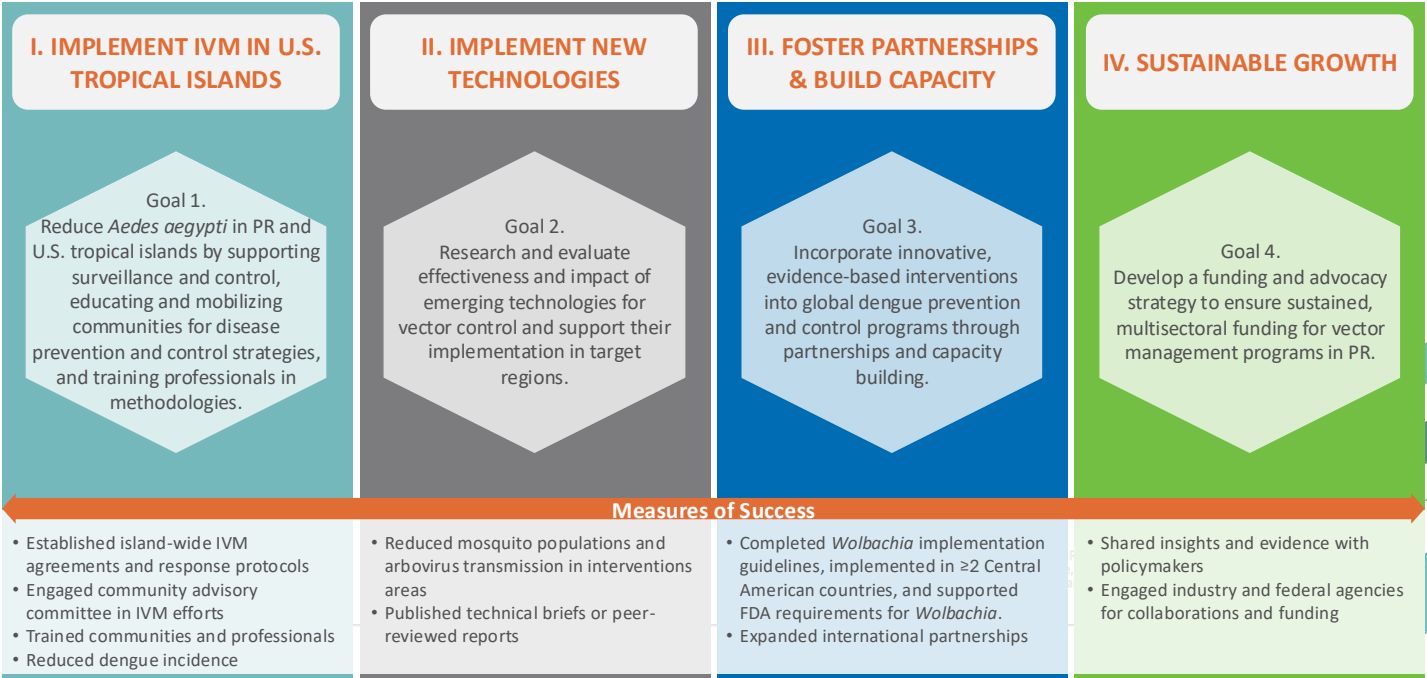
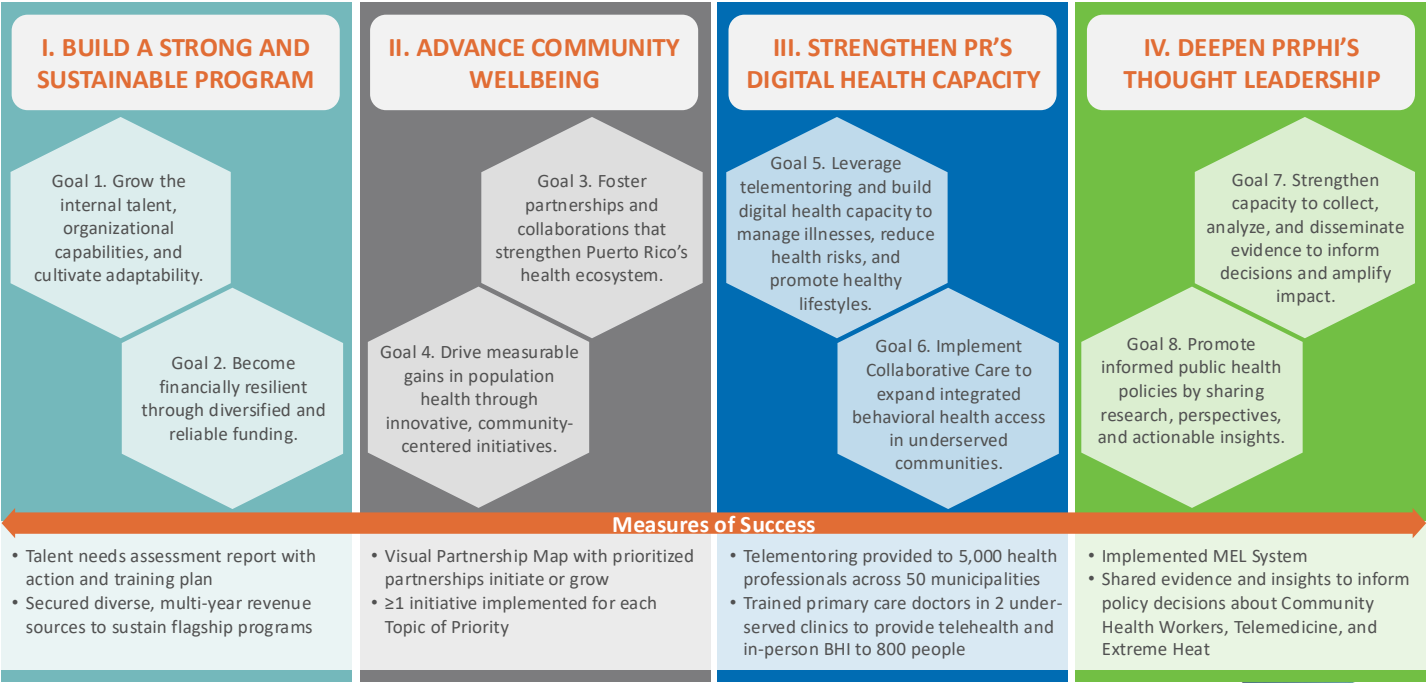
### FOCUS AREAS

- Chronic Diseases
- Digital Health
- Emergencies and Disasters
- Rural Health
- Mental Health

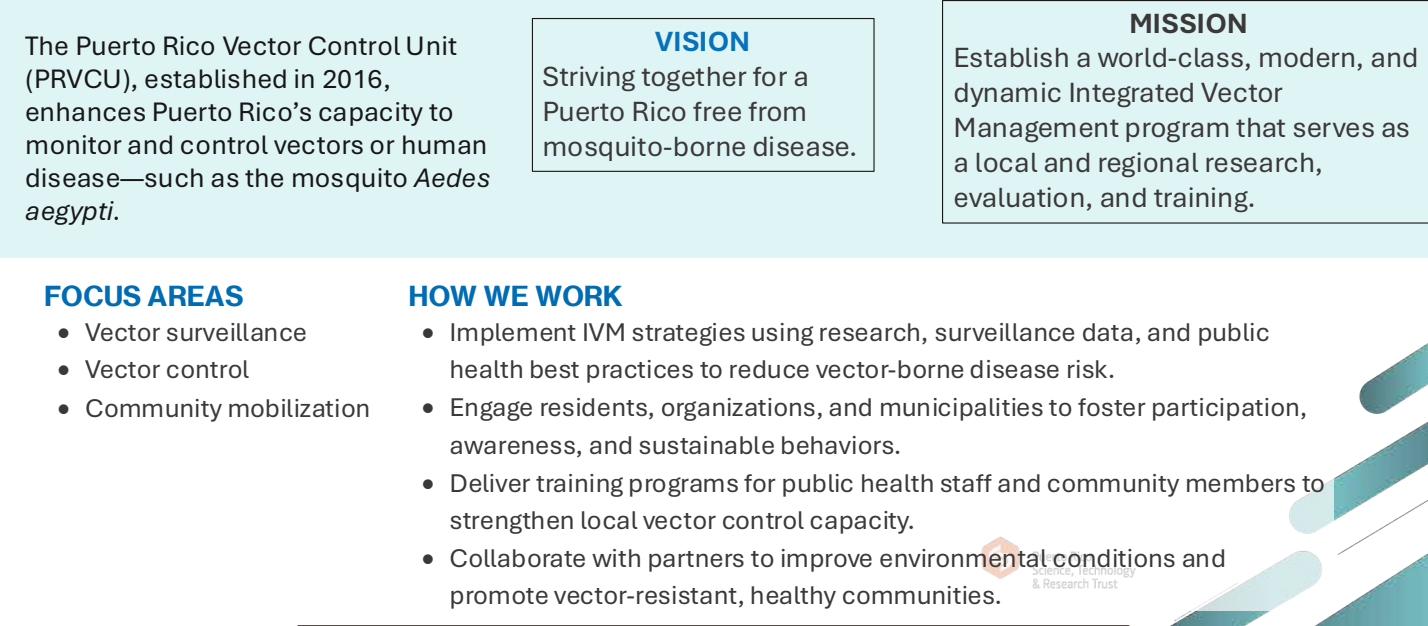
### HOW WE WORK

- Health promotion for healthier lifestyles
- Capacity building, education and communication
- Participatory research and community engagement
- Public policy and health advocacy
- Data, evidence, knowledge generation

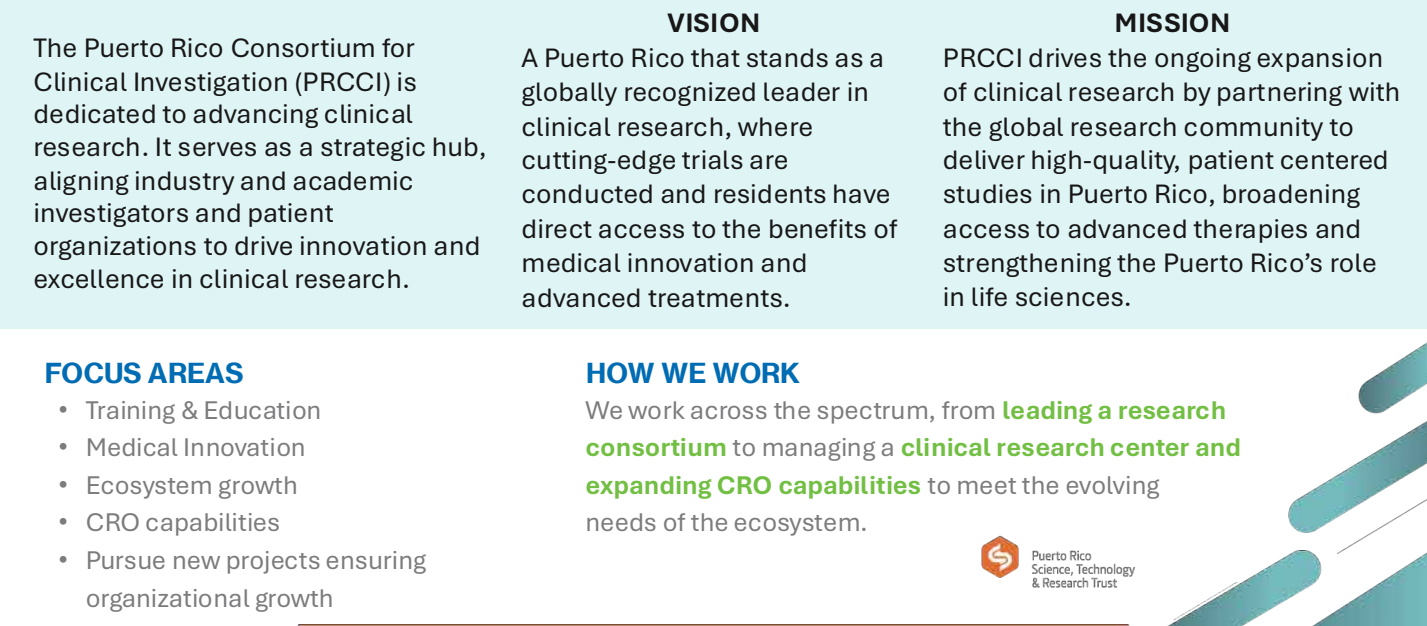




Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit



Puerto Rico Consortium for Clinical Investigation





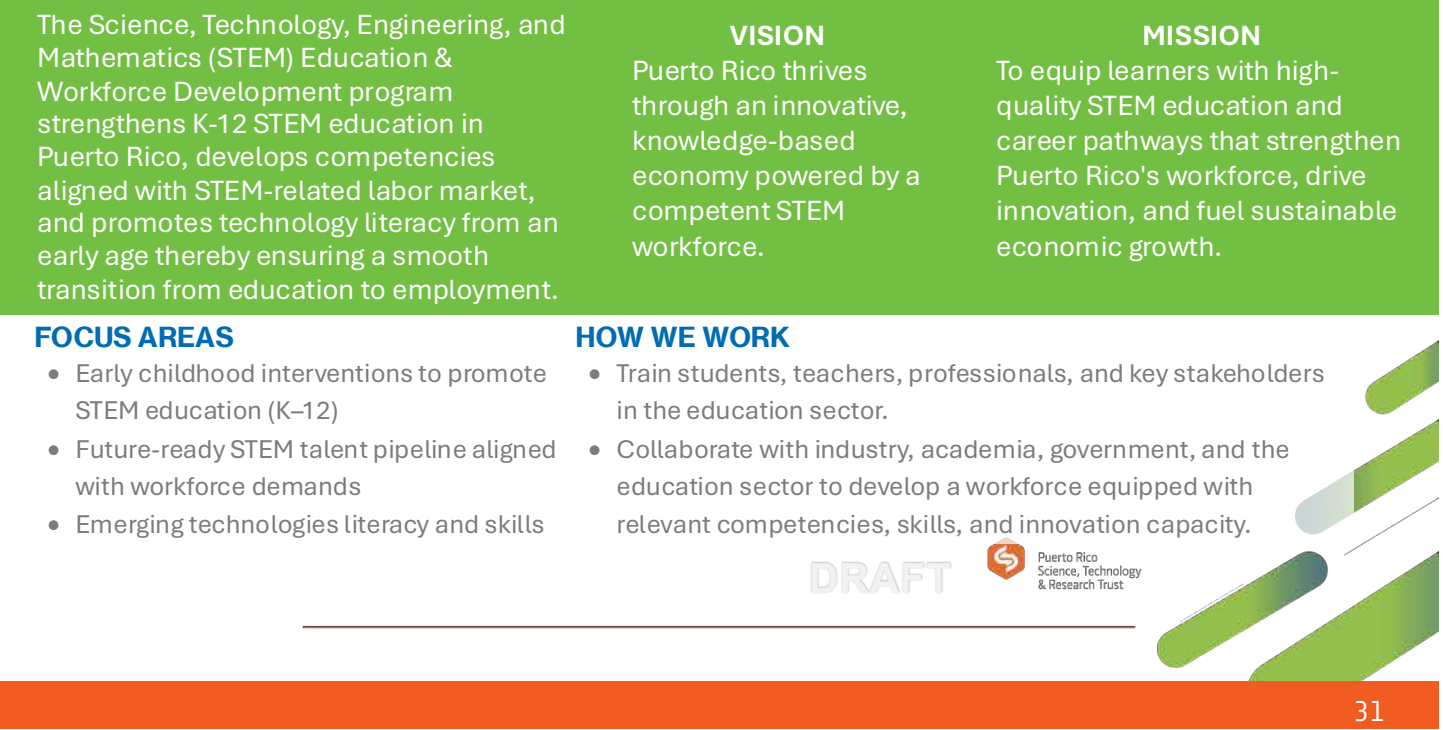
PRCCI • Strategic Priorities

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STEM Education and Workforce Development

WeAreTheTRUST



Education Pillar

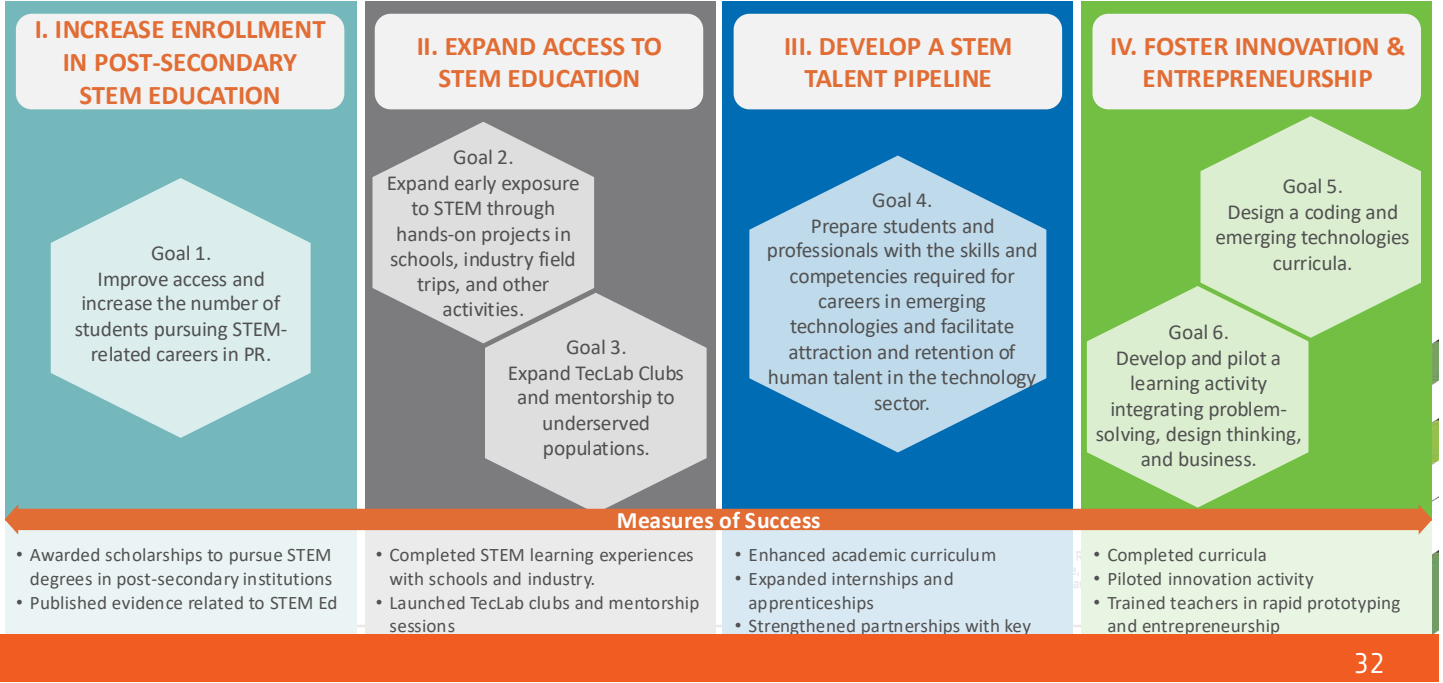
STEM Education & Workforce Development

WeAreTheTRUST



STEM • Strategic Priorities

WeAreTheTRUST



# Trust Journey

This timeline highlights the Trust's evolution, showcasing the launch of pioneering programs, expansion of research and entrepreneurship initiatives, and key milestones that have positioned Puerto Rico as a leader in science, technology, and innovation.



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## Transformation through Innovation

This timeline highlights the Trust's evolution, showcasing the launch of pioneering programs, expansion of research and entrepreneurship initiatives, and key milestones that have positioned Puerto Rico as a leader in science, technology, and innovation.

Eng. Luz A. Crespo is appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

**New programs:**

- Research Grants, Center for
- Tropical Biodiversity,
- Research & Innovation Meetups.

**Facilities transformation:** Science City is initiated.

Amendment of deed designating the Public Health Institute and Educational Organization as bona-fide fiscal agent of the Government of P.R.

**New programs:** Cultural Heritage Innovation

Expansion of recovery, economic development and public health programs.

**New programs:**

- Resiliency Business Innovation
- Response Innovation LaB
- Puerto Rico Public Health Trust
- ProdTec

Expansion of programs in agriculture, education, community response and access to business funding.

**New programs:**

- Recuperación Agrícola
- STEM & Workforce Development
- SBIR/ STTR Federal Grants
- Pre18
- Puerto Rico Hurricane Hub and ASHTO

Expansion in research and entrepreneurship programs.

**New programs:**

- Technology Transfer Office
- Brain Trust for Tropical
- Disease Research & Prevention
- Parallel18
- Colmena66
- PR Consortium of Clinical Research
- PR Vector Control Unit.



The PRSTRT is constituted under Public Law 214-2004 as a non- profit private organization.

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Signing of amendment to the deed of creation of the Trust.  
**Public Health Leadership:** Enhanced COVID-19 response with telemedicine, expanded community health programs, led genomic surveillance, expanded vector control management and increased investment in clinical trial research.

**Entrepreneurship Growth:** Supported +2k entrepreneurs, generated \$189M in revenues, awarded \$11.6M in grants and expanded programs.

**Education & Workforce Impact:** Expanded stem efforts and workforce capacity building.

**New programs:** Caribbean Center for Rising Seas, Research Institute, Fase 1 , Telemedicina para Adultos Mayores, Laboratorio Genómico de COVID-19, Community Health Promoters Capacity building program, Red de Pacientes, Academia del Cacao, Puerto Rico Ready.

**New programs:**

- Xpand (p18)
- Agile (Research Grants)
- EnTrust (TTO)
- Agroecología para el futuro (Stem & Worforce).

Awarded the **NSF Engines Development Award** to the Trust to foster regional collaboration and growth in the biopharmaceutical sector.

Trust recognized as **1 of 31 Tech Hubs** in the United States under the Biden-Harris administration's EDA Tech Hubs program, an initiative that promotes the biotechnology sector with allies such as DDEC, UPR and private companies.

Selected by the New York Department of Commerce as **host in P.R. for the life sciences exchange** with IndieBio NY, promoting the development of biotech startups.

2020

Strengthening of all programs in strategic pillars

Growth in collaborations (51MOUs)

**New programs:**

- Re-Grow PR
- Telemedicine (PRPHT)

2021

2022

199 collaboration agreements signed (MOUs)

\$13.8M, with ROI of \$37M by Research Grants.

22 patents filed and 7 issued by Technology Transfer Office, contributing to Puerto Rico's high ranking in patent applications.

Over 84 clinical trial protocols by PRCCI.

Colmena66 Top-ranked in US Source Link network for entrepreneur assistance.

P18 Graduated 138 companies and raised \$189M in private investment.

Continued expansion of public health initiatives through PRPHT and PRVCU

2023



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Science City expansion: Opening of the **Forward Center** building and new headquarters of parallel18.

Trust designated as the financial advisor to the PR Economic Development Bank for the **Venture Capital Access Program**, providing a \$30M allocation from the U.S. Department of Treasury for investment in emerging and expanding companies.

**Hexagon 3D printing studio** opening in Ponce (STEM & Workforce program)  
Cohorts for **Empresas B en Formación** (Meetups Program)

2024

2025

The Federal Reserve allocates \$30M to the BDE and the VCAP program, with the Trust selected as the administrator of this effort.

Two research projects funded by the Research Grants program, both from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, are launched to the International Space Station. First edition of the Milo Climate Action Academy, focused on developing innovative solutions using satellite data and advanced technology (presented by Research Grants and the MILO Space Science Institute at Arizona State University).

Premiere of the documentary When the Sea Reaches Us, the first film production by the Trust and its Caribbean Center for Rising Seas program.

First edition of the Futuros Académicos Awards, funded by the Azmat Assur Foundation, granted to public school students to support their STEM studies in Puerto Rico.

First cohort of the NIIMBL eXperience, a free summer program for students interested in biomanufacturing and STEM careers (presented by the Research Institute, with funding from the NIIMBL Institute).



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**ANNUAL 2024  
REPORT 2025**



# Basic Consolidated Financial Statements 2024-2025



**RSM Puerto Rico**  
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San Juan, PR 00922-0528

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**

To: The Board of Trustees of  
Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust

**Opinion**

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust, a Puerto Rico not-for-profit organization, and its Subsidiaries, which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust and its Subsidiaries as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

**Basis for Opinion**

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust and its Subsidiaries and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

**Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust and its Subsidiaries' ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the consolidated financial statements are available to be issued.

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES**  
*(A Puerto Rico Not-For-Profit Organization)*

Basic Consolidated Financial Statements  
June 30, 2025 and 2024







## Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the consolidated financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust and its Subsidiaries' internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust and its Subsidiaries' ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

San Juan, Puerto Rico  
October 31, 2025.



D0P91-1152  
Puerto Rico Science, Technology and  
Research Trust (BASIC)

*RSM Puerto Rico*



## PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

### CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30, 2025 and 2024

	2025	2024
<b>ASSETS:</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 11,997,155	\$ 18,517,760
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for credit losses of \$61,516 and \$82,516, respectively	701,964	702,207
Prepaid expenses	9,600	115,601
Due from governmental entities	1,739,149	2,913,529
Investments	4,846,340	4,368,712
Notes receivable, net	144,016	247,148
Other assets	18,278	18,278
Endowment fund	55,645,117	51,837,920
Property and equipment, net	3,428,057	2,078,975
Right-of-use asset for operating lease, net of accumulated amortization of \$171,528 and \$119,962, respectively	44,411	130,175
Building, net	15,497,368	15,855,113
Land and property for research, development and infrastructure project related to science and technology	18,100,307	18,100,307
Land development costs	12,124,213	12,029,600
Construction in progress - Science City	11,148,357	11,148,357
	<u>\$ 135,444,332</u>	<u>\$ 138,063,682</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>LIABILITIES:</b>		
Program service payable	\$ 1,329,576	\$ 607,126
Accounts payable	2,250,589	2,369,473
Refundable advances	1,403,110	636,832
Accrued expenses	525,715	488,481
Operating lease liability	44,512	132,314
Other liabilities	193,294	178,544
	<u>5,746,796</u>	<u>4,412,770</u>
<b>NET ASSETS:</b>		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	45,925,619	53,695,191
Designated by the Board of Trustees for endowment	55,645,117	51,837,920
	<u>101,570,736</u>	<u>105,533,111</u>
With donor restrictions:		
Purpose restrictions	10,026,493	10,017,494
Perpetual in nature	18,100,307	18,100,307
	<u>28,126,800</u>	<u>28,117,801</u>
	<u>129,697,536</u>	<u>133,650,912</u>
	<u>\$ 135,444,332</u>	<u>\$ 138,063,682</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated statements of financial position.

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES**



**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**  
**For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024**

	2025		
	Without donor restrictions	With donor restrictions	Total
<b>REVENUES, SUPPORT AND OTHERS:</b>			
State grants and assessments	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
Federal grants	21,031,933	-	21,031,933
Private grants and sponsorships	1,307,664	190,000	1,497,664
Donations and contributions	19,491	-	19,491
Clinical trials	339,961	-	339,961
Rental income	321,902	-	321,902
Interest Income	432,097	-	432,097
Net return on investments	2,654,593	225,239	2,879,832
Net return on endowment fund	1,034,833	-	1,034,833
Other income	202,638	-	202,638
	<b>32,345,112</b>	<b>415,239</b>	<b>32,760,351</b>
Net assets released from restrictions:			
Satisfaction of program restrictions	406,240	(406,240)	-
	<b>32,751,352</b>	<b>8,999</b>	<b>32,760,351</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES:</b>			
Program and services:			
Research and data	4,774,828	-	4,774,828
Public health initiative	15,865,049	-	15,865,049
Technology transfer and commercialization	7,661,230	-	7,661,230
Science City development	500,374	-	500,374
	<b>28,801,481</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28,801,481</b>
Supporting services:			
Management and administrative	7,912,246	-	7,912,246
	<b>36,713,727</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>36,713,727</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(3,962,375)</b>	<b>8,999</b>	<b>(3,953,376)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b> , beginning of year	<b>105,533,111</b>	<b>28,117,801</b>	<b>133,650,912</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b> , end of year	<b>\$ 101,570,736</b>	<b>\$ 28,126,800</b>	<b>\$ 129,697,536</b>

Continues...

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES**



**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**  
**For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024**

Continued...

	2024		
	Without donor restrictions	With donor restrictions	Total
<b>REVENUES, SUPPORT AND OTHERS:</b>			
State grants and assessments	\$ 16,425,402	\$ -	\$ 16,425,402
Federal grants	15,560,797	-	15,560,797
Private grants and sponsorships	2,025,474	199,680	2,225,154
Donations and contributions	83,524	-	83,524
Clinical trials	105,184	-	105,184
Rental income	323,276	-	323,276
Interest Income	571,930	-	571,930
Net return on investments	3,537,871	502,888	4,040,759
Net return on endowment fund	931,766	-	931,766
Other income	204,063	-	204,063
	<b>39,769,287</b>	<b>702,568</b>	<b>40,471,855</b>
Net assets released from restrictions:			
Satisfaction of program restrictions	1,661,456	(1,661,456)	-
	<b>41,430,743</b>	<b>(958,888)</b>	<b>40,471,855</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES:</b>			
Program and services:			
Research and data	4,736,811	-	4,736,811
Public health initiative	13,567,970	-	13,567,970
Technology transfer and commercialization	6,868,873	-	6,868,873
Science City development	332,237	-	332,237
	<b>25,505,891</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,505,891</b>
Supporting services:			
Management and administrative	7,194,897	-	7,194,897
	<b>32,700,788</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,700,788</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>8,729,955</b>	<b>(958,888)</b>	<b>7,771,067</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b> , beginning of year	<b>96,803,156</b>	<b>29,076,689</b>	<b>125,879,845</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b> , end of year	<b>\$ 105,533,111</b>	<b>\$ 28,117,801</b>	<b>\$ 133,650,912</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated statements.



**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES**



CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES  
 For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024

2025						
	Program and services				Supporting services	
	Research and data	Public health initiative	Technology transfer and commercialization	Science City development	Management and administrative	Total
Program support:						
Capacity building and sponsorships	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 173,912	\$ 173,912
Research and development grants	1,635,736	-	75,000	-	-	1,710,736
Matching grants	-	-	425,000	-	-	425,000
Parallel 18 grants	-	-	1,540,000	-	-	1,540,000
Other program initiatives	267,884	3,768,777	682	-	-	4,037,343
	1,903,620	3,768,777	2,040,682	-	173,912	7,886,991
Personnel costs:						
Salaries and wages	1,138,904	4,563,937	2,192,459	-	2,506,703	10,402,003
Benefits and payroll taxes	574,601	2,186,360	836,593	-	1,075,212	4,672,766
	1,713,505	6,750,297	3,029,052	-	3,581,915	15,074,769
Professional services	442,745	3,096,402	1,792,344	143,787	882,678	6,357,956
Occupancy expenses:						
Depreciation and amortization	36,529	1,598,483	4,598	68,624	617,466	2,325,700
Rent	-	14,650	-	-	113,004	127,654
Repairs and maintenance	6,225	-	-	114,871	392,345	513,441
Security	-	-	-	128,525	222,131	350,656
Other	51,900	5,417	587	-	815,921	873,825
	94,654	1,618,550	5,185	312,020	2,160,867	4,191,276
Travel	91,492	199,442	104,966	-	102,989	498,889
Other	528,812	431,581	689,001	44,567	1,009,885	2,703,846
Total operating expenses	\$ 4,774,828	\$ 15,865,049	\$ 7,661,230	\$ 500,374	\$ 7,912,246	\$ 36,713,727
						Continues...

Continues...



**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES**

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES  
 For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024

Continued...

2024						
	Program and services				Supporting services	
	Research and data	Public health initiative	Technology transfer and commercialization	Science City development	Management and administrative	Total
Program support:						
Capacity building and sponsorships	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 118,760	\$ 133,760
Research and development grants	454,833	-	299,990	-	-	754,823
Matching grants	-	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Parallel 18 grants	-	-	1,509,329	-	-	1,509,329
Other program initiatives	161,333	3,516,651	1,438	-	-	3,679,422
	631,166	3,516,651	1,860,757	-	118,760	6,127,334
Personnel costs:						
Salaries and wages	1,068,085	3,907,044	1,954,742	-	2,293,386	9,223,257
Benefits and payroll taxes	515,458	1,797,914	706,830	-	906,030	3,926,232
	1,583,543	5,704,958	2,661,572	-	3,199,416	13,149,489
Professional services	496,253	1,967,219	1,696,803	134,842	889,864	5,184,981
Occupancy expenses:						
Depreciation and amortization	40,122	1,299,543	5,184	35,364	562,153	1,942,366
Rent	1,040	25,345	119,201	-	61,002	206,588
Repairs and maintenance	2,561	-	-	46,757	409,286	458,604
Security	-	-	-	-	144,164	144,164
Other	24,253	12,100	-	81,814	712,061	830,228
	67,976	1,336,988	124,385	163,935	1,888,666	3,581,950
Travel	48,865	186,283	107,403	493	89,193	432,237
Other	1,909,008	855,871	417,953	32,967	1,008,998	4,224,797
Total operating expenses	\$ 4,736,811	\$ 13,567,970	\$ 6,868,873	\$ 332,237	\$ 7,194,897	\$ 32,700,788

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated statements.

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
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**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**  
For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024

	2025	2024
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Change in net assets	\$ (3,953,376)	\$ 7,771,067
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Credit losses	4,000	223,526
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	13,072	(312,956)
Realized loss on investments, net	20,000	75,000
Capitalized income on Endowment fund	(1,034,833)	(931,766)
Unrealized gain on Endowment fund	(2,580,058)	(3,406,342)
Depreciation and amortization	2,239,936	1,856,602
Amortization of right-of-use asset for operating lease	85,764	85,764
Changes in operating assets and liabilities-		
Decrease (increase) in assets:		
Accounts receivable	21,243	(237,404)
Prepaid expenses	106,001	(70,564)
Due from governmental entities	1,174,380	(1,264,157)
Other assets	-	8,983
Increase (decrease) in liabilities:		
Program service payable	722,450	(673,220)
Accounts payable	(118,884)	(16,085)
Refundable advances	766,278	(2,117,133)
Accrued expenses	37,234	9,185
Operating lease liability	(87,802)	(83,772)
Other liabilities	14,750	(72)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(2,569,845)	916,656
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Net repayments (advances) under notes receivable	78,132	(27,080)
Proceeds from sale and redemption of investments	134,291	515,649
Purchase of investments	(644,991)	(470,000)
Contributions to Endowment fund	(192,306)	(298,630)
Purchase of property and equipment	(3,082,441)	(1,205,357)
Additions to building	(148,832)	(1,788,647)
Additions to land development	(94,613)	(234,642)
Net cash used in investing activities	(3,950,760)	(3,508,707)
<b>NET DECREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>(6,520,605)</b>	<b>(2,592,051)</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, beginning of year</b>	<b>18,517,760</b>	<b>21,109,811</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 11,997,155</b>	<b>\$ 18,517,760</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated statements.

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
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**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
June 30, 2025 and 2024

**1) Organization and summary of significant accounting policies:**

A) Organization – Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust (the Trust) is a not-for-profit organization created on August 18, 2004 by Act No. 214, as amended (the Act 214), of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (the Commonwealth). The purpose of the Trust is to foster, and fund research, development and infrastructure projects related to science and technology that will promote the economic, social or educational development of the Commonwealth and to operate exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes. The Act 214 also designates the Trust as a Public Health Institute, an Educational Organization and allows the Trust to act as fiscal agent to pursue certain federal funding opportunities on behalf of the Commonwealth. The Act 214 also enables the Trust to establish a research institute through which researchers from public and private research institutions might affiliate with and enables the Trust to evaluate competitive grant proposals and/or act as fiscal sponsor to pursue funding opportunities on behalf of these institutions.

The projects of the Trust are financed as follows: (i) the greater of \$6,340,000 or 31% out of the monies deposited in the Special Fund for Economic Development (FEDE for its Spanish acronym) managed by the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO) for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017 through 2019, (ii) the monies of Scientific Investigation Fund for the Centenary of the University of Puerto Rico (Centenary Fund), (iii) \$5,000,000 annually from the balance of collections of federal excise taxes in accordance with Section 7652(a)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and (iv) private grants and donations, other government funds, and legislative appropriations. During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, FEDE was superseded by the Economic Incentive Fund (EIF), created under Act 60 titled “*Código de Incentivos de Puerto Rico*”. Section 5010.01 of Act 60 bestows upon the Secretary of the Department of Economic Development and Commerce (DEDC) total discretion upon the use of the EIF.

The Act 214, as amended in August 2017, provides that the Board of Trustees is to be composed of eleven (11) trustees, two (2) of whom shall be members *ex officio* including the Secretary of the DEDC and other government agency representative to be appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth; and nine (9) members from the private sector.

Since September 2016, the Trust has been awarded, as prime recipient and subrecipient, with federal funds from the US Department of Health and Human (DHHS) - Center for Disease Prevention and Control, the DHHS - National Institutes of Health, the US Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration, the US Department of the Treasury, and the US Department of Agriculture. In addition, the Trust has been the primary recipient, or acted as fiscal sponsor, for the implementation of privately funded initiatives, mostly related to recovery efforts after the passing of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico in September 2017, and the organization's Public Health Institute initiative.

Subsidiaries – The Trust has established the following subsidiaries by virtue of Article 5(26) of Act 214, as amended, whereby the Trust may organize subsidiaries or affiliates subject to its total or partial control to carry out any assignment from the Trust's Board of Trustees for the best interest of the Trust:

- The Puerto Rico Consortium for Clinical Investigation, Inc. (PRCCI) – A not-for-profit entity organized on January 20, 2016. PRCCI began operations on April 1, 2016 and its purpose is to improve the impact, quality, and speed of clinical research activity conducted in Puerto Rico, especially in the fields of oncology, infectious diseases, neurological disorders and cardio-metabolism. To achieve its mission, PRCCI partners with clinical research sites across Puerto Rico to ensure access to a diverse patient population. PRCCI's operations are sustained through a combination of revenues obtained from clinical research sponsors, grants and contracts with state and private entities, and contributions from the Trust.



# PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

## NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS June 30, 2025 and 2024



- PRST, Inc. (PRST) – A not-for-profit entity organized on December 28, 2016. The purpose of PRST is to act as a Qualified Promoter as defined in Section 2034.01 of the newly enacted Incentives Code of Puerto Rico. A Qualified Promoter is authorized by the Department of Economic Development and Commerce to engage in the promotion of new companies established in Puerto Rico and to obtain decrees under Act No. 20 of 2012, to establish and expand their export services. During the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, no operations were conducted by this subsidiary.
- Innovation Financial Solutions Inc. (IFS) – A not-for-profit entity organized in November 2023. The purpose of IFS is to manage programs to increase the Trust's portfolio of investments in ventures. During the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, no operations were conducted by this subsidiary.

These consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the Trust and its Subsidiaries (collectively referred as the Trust and its Subsidiaries) as of and for the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024.

- B) Summary of significant accounting policies – The Trust and its Subsidiaries prepare its consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (U.S. GAAP) for not-for-profit organizations. The significant accounting policies used by the Trust and its Subsidiaries are as follows:

Principles of consolidation – The accompanying consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the Trust and its Subsidiaries, as described in Note 1A. Intercompany transactions and accounts have been eliminated in consolidation.

Basis of presentation – The consolidated financial statements of the Trust and its Subsidiaries report information regarding its financial position and activities according to the following net assets classifications:

- Net assets without donor restrictions – Net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions and may be expended for any purpose in performing the primary objectives of the Trust and its Subsidiaries. These assets may be used at the discretion of the Trust and its Subsidiaries' management and the Board of Trustees.
- Net assets with donor restrictions – Net assets that are subject to stipulations imposed by donors and some grantors. Some donor restrictions are temporary in nature; those restrictions will be met by actions of the Trust and its Subsidiaries or by passage of time. Other donor restrictions are perpetual in nature, whereby the donor has stipulated the funds be maintained in perpetuity.

Donor restricted contributions are reported as increases in net assets with donor restrictions. When a restriction expires, net assets are reclassified from net assets with donor restrictions to net assets without donor restrictions in the statements of activities. However, if a restriction is fulfilled in the same period in which the contribution is received, the Trust and its Subsidiaries report the support as without donor restrictions.

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the Trust and its Subsidiaries' net assets with donor restrictions include the following:

Purpose restrictions:

- Federal funds that are restricted for the implementation of programmatic initiatives, and funds from private sources that are restricted for the implementation of public health and venture creation initiatives.

# PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

## NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS June 30, 2025 and 2024



- Monies for the Scientific Investigation Fund for the Centenary of the University of Puerto Rico. This fund was created to improve the infrastructure, activities and environment of investigative activities of the University of Puerto Rico, and to facilitate the commercialization of the innovations that are developed there. Among the activities to be supported are the recruitment and retention of researchers and the promotion of technology transfer.
- Restricted portion of the Forward Center Building from funds received from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA). This amount is presented net of accumulated depreciation.

Perpetual in nature:

- Consist of a land, described in Note 11 that was contributed with the restriction of using it for the purpose described in Act 214, as amended, through the implementation of a Master Plan.

Use of estimates – The preparation of consolidated financial statements in conformity with U.S. GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts of assets and liabilities, at the date of financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Cash and cash equivalents – Cash equivalents are short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less at the time of purchase. Cash equivalents include cash in investment-managed accounts such as money markets and mutual funds.

Allowance for credit losses – The Trust and its Subsidiaries offset gross accounts receivable with an allowance for credit losses. The allowance for credit losses is the Trust and its Subsidiaries' best estimate of the amount of probable credit losses in the existing accounts receivable and is based on management's evaluation of current status of donor pledges, contributions and grants, and any other factors that deserve current recognition. Receivables are charged-off against their respective allowance accounts when deemed to be uncollectible.

Estimating credit losses based on risk characteristics requires significant judgment by the Trust and its Subsidiaries. Significant judgments include but are not limited to assessing current economic conditions and the extent to which they would be relevant to the existing characteristics of the Trust and its Subsidiaries' financial assets, the estimated life of financial assets and the level of reliance on historical experience in light of economic conditions. The Trust and its Subsidiaries review and update, when necessary, its historical risk characteristics that are meaningful to estimating credit losses, any new risk characteristics that arise in the natural course of business and the estimated life of its financial assets. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

Investments – Investments represent a Puerto Rico government bond, private equity securities and Simple Agreements for Future Equity (SAFE) investments, which are recorded at its fair value. Net investment return (loss) is reported in the consolidated statements of activities and consists of interest and dividend income, realized and unrealized capital gains and losses, less external and direct internal investment expenses.

Fair value measurements – Fair value is defined as the exchange price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date. The valuation techniques are based upon observable or unobservable inputs.

PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
June 30, 2025 and 2024



Observable inputs reflect market data obtained from independent sources, while unobservable inputs reflect the entity's market assumptions. Market or observable inputs are the preferred source of values, followed by assumptions based on hypothetical transactions in the absence of market input. These two types of inputs create the following fair value hierarchy:

- Level 1 – Quoted prices for identical instruments in active markets.
- Level 2 – Quoted prices for similar instruments in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are not active and model-derived valuations whose inputs are observable or whose significant value drivers are observable.
- Level 3 – Significant inputs to the valuation model are unobservable.

The Trust and its Subsidiaries maintain policies and procedures to value financial instruments using the best and most relevant data available.

Property and equipment – Property and equipment are stated at cost, or if donated, at the fair value at date of receipt. Maintenance and repair costs that do not improve or extend the useful life of the respective assets are expensed as incurred. Costs of renewals and betterments which extend the useful life of the respective assets are capitalized. Depreciation and amortization are computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the related assets, as follows:

Description	Estimated Useful Life
Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Computer and laboratory equipment	3 to 5 years
Leasehold improvements	Lease term

At the time property and equipment is sold or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related accumulated depreciation or amortization are removed from the books and the resulting gain or loss, if any, is credited or charged to operations.

Building – Is carried at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis over the useful life of 35 years. Maintenance and repair costs that do not improve or extend the useful life of the building are expensed as incurred while the costs of renewals and betterments which extend its useful life are capitalized. When the asset is sold or disposed of, the cost of the asset and the related accumulated depreciation are removed from the books and the resulting gain or loss, if any, is credited or charged to operations.

Accounting for the impairment or disposal of long-lived assets – The Trust and its Subsidiaries' long-lived assets held and used in operations are tested for recoverability whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of the assets may not be recoverable. Assets are considered to be impaired if the carrying amount of the asset exceeds the sum of the undiscounted cash flow expected to result from the use and eventual disposition of the asset.

If such assets are impaired, the impairment to be recognized is measured by the amount by which the carrying amount of the assets exceeds its fair value. Assets to be disposed of, other than by sale, continue to be classified as held and used until they are disposed of. Assets to be disposed of by sale are classified as held for sale in the period in which certain criteria are met and reported at the lower of the carrying amount or fair value. At the time such criteria are no longer met, such assets are reclassified as assets held and used in operations.

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Land development costs – Represent costs for a land site consultation approval, certification of environmental compliance, architectural design, and other costs incurred in connection with land received by the Trust and its Subsidiaries for the construction of its facilities.

Contributions and support revenue – The Trust and its Subsidiaries mainly derive its revenues from state and federal grants, contributions received from the government, corporations, sponsors and individuals. The Trust and its Subsidiaries recognize contributions when cash, securities or other assets; an unconditional promise to give; or a notification of a beneficial interest is received. Grants, contribution, and conditional promises to give with a measurable performance or other barrier and a right of return are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend have been met. All revenues and contributions are considered to be available for unrestricted use, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Amounts received that are designated for future periods or restricted by the donor for specific purposes are reported as donor-restricted support that increases the net assets with donor restrictions class. However, if a restriction is fulfilled in the same period in which the contribution is received, the Trust and its Subsidiaries report the support as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions. The Trust and its Subsidiaries also report donor restricted contributions that were initially conditional as increases in net assets without donor restrictions if both the donor-imposed restriction and the condition are met in the same period. The Trust and its Subsidiaries has a similar policy for reporting gains and investment income that are limited to specific uses by donor-imposed restrictions and the restrictions on the gains and income are met in the same reporting period as the gains and income are recognized.

A portion of the Trust and its Subsidiaries' revenue is derived from cost-reimbursable federal and state contracts and grants, which are conditioned upon certain performance requirements and/or the incurrence of allowable qualifying expenses. Amounts received are recognized as revenue when the Trust and its Subsidiaries have incurred expenditures in compliance with specific contract or grant provisions. Amounts received prior to incurring qualifying expenditures are reported as refundable advances in the consolidated statements of financial position.

In-Kind contributions – Contributed nonfinancial assets include donated professional services, donated equipment, and other in-kind contributions which are recorded at the respective fair values of the goods or services received. There were no in-kind contributions during the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024.

Leases – The Trust and its Subsidiaries adopted the Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 842, *Leases* effective July 1, 2022, as allowed, using the modified retrospective approach.

The Trust and its Subsidiaries elected the practical expedients of not reassessing whether any expired or existing contracts are or contain leases, not reassessing the lease classification for any expired or existing leases and not reassessing any initial direct costs for existing leases. In addition, the Trust and its Subsidiaries elected the practical expedient to not separate lease and non-lease components for all its asset classes. A permitted accounting policy election was made to not apply the Topic 842 to leases with an initial term of 12 months or less. Those lease payments are recognized in the consolidated statements of activities on a straight-line basis over the lease term. A lease entered during the year ended June 30, 2023, however, was recognized under Topic 842 resulting in the recognition of a right-of-use (ROU) asset and a lease liability for \$250,137 at the inception of the lease. See Note 14 for further information.

In addition, under Topic 842, lessors will only capitalize incremental direct leasing costs. As a result, the Trust and its Subsidiaries no longer capitalize non-incremental direct costs. These costs are expensed as incurred and are included within general and administrative expenses on the consolidated statements of activities.



# PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

## NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS June 30, 2025 and 2024



Functional allocation of expenses and operational expenditures – The costs of providing the Trust and its Subsidiaries' programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the accompanying consolidated statements of activities. The consolidated statements of functional expenses present the natural classification detail of expenses by function. During the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, certain costs have been allocated among the following programs and support activities:

- *Research and data*: includes expenses aimed to improve, analyze and/or strengthen the local research and development (R&D) infrastructure and the breadth of science and technology activity in Puerto Rico. It also includes support activities to strengthen science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Expenses within this function include: clinical trials, grants to support laboratory infrastructure, research grants, research institute and educational organization initiatives, grants to attract or retain distinguished researchers, studies to determine R&D, innovation, knowledge economy activity in the Island; and, salaries and professional services to support this area.
- *Public health initiative*: includes expenses incurred regarding the *Puerto Rico Public Health Trust*, an initiative established by the Trust and its Subsidiaries to act as Public Health Institute (PHI). Acting as a PHI, the Trust implements programs which aim is to improve public health capacity, systems and outcomes by fostering innovation, leveraging resources and building partnerships to improve the public's health. Expenses within this function include: integrated vector management initiatives, farmers support, health-outcome-and-measures research and studies, and salaries and professional services to support this area.
- *Technology transfer and commercialization*: includes expenses incurred in initiatives to support technology transfer and commercialization and direct investments in technology development projects which have a clear commercialization aim. Expenses within this function include: intellectual property assistance, sponsorship, grants for technology developments; investment in technology commercialization accelerators and startup incubators, salaries and professional services to support this area.
- *Science City development*: includes non-capitalizable expenditures necessary for the on-going development and construction of sites at the Science City. These expenditures include salary and professional services to support this area, planning and assessment projects, security services to enable construction work, etc.
- *Management and administrative*: includes all administrative expenses incurred to support all functional areas as described above which are not directly allocable to any of them. These expenses include administrative staff salaries, accounting fees, depreciation and amortization, utilities, etc.
- *Fundraising*: includes expenses incurred in soliciting contributions, gifts, grants, etc. These expenses include publicizing and conducting fundraising campaigns, soliciting grants from foundations and government agencies, costs of participating in federated fundraising campaigns, preparing and distributing fundraising manuals, instructions and other materials. The Trust and its Subsidiaries did not engage in any fundraising activity during the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024.

Certain categories of expenses are attributed to more than one program or supporting function. Therefore, expenses require allocation on a reasonable basis that is consistently applied. The expenses that are allocated include mainly salaries, fringe benefits and payroll taxes, which are allocated on the basis of time and effort.

# PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

## NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS June 30, 2025 and 2024



Income taxes – The Trust and its Subsidiaries are exempt from Puerto Rico income taxes under the provisions of Act 214, as amended, and from federal taxes under the provisions of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, no provision for income taxes has been recorded in the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

The Trust and its Subsidiaries follow the guidance for uncertainty in income taxes issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). Management evaluated the Trust and its Subsidiaries' tax positions and concluded that the Trust and its Subsidiaries had taken no uncertain tax positions that require adjustments or disclosure in the consolidated financial statements.

All applicable tax returns have been appropriately filed by the Trust and its Subsidiaries. The Trust and its Subsidiaries' open audit periods are fiscal years ended June 30, 2021 to 2025.

Advertising and promotion – The Trust and its Subsidiaries charge to operations advertising and promotion costs as they are incurred. During the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, the Trust and its Subsidiaries incurred in advertising and promotion expenses of approximately \$198,000 and \$293,000 respectively.

Accounting pronouncements for future applicability – In July 2025, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued the ASU 2025-05, *Financial Instruments- Credit Losses (Topic 326) Measurement of Credit Losses for Accounts Receivable and Contract Assets*. The ASU 2025-05 provides a) all entities with a practical expedient and b) entities other than public business entities with an accounting policy election when estimating expected credit losses for current accounts receivable and current contract assets arising from transactions accounted for under Topic 606, *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. In developing reasonable and supportable forecasts as part of estimating expected credit losses, all entities may elect a practical expedient that assumes that current conditions as of the balance sheet date do not change for the remaining life of the asset. An entity other than a public business entity that elects the practical expedient is permitted to make an accounting policy election to consider collection activity after the balance sheet date when estimating expected credit losses. The ASU 2025-05 is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2025.

The Trust and its Subsidiaries is currently evaluating the impact of this pronouncement on its financial statements.

### 3) Concentrations of credit risks:

Financial instruments, which potentially subject the Trust and its Subsidiaries to concentration of credit risks, consist of cash and cash equivalents and accounts receivable.

The Trust and its Subsidiaries maintains its cash deposits in various financial institutions. The cash deposits, at times, may exceed the amount insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) of \$250,000 per financial institution or the amount protected by the Securities Investor Protection Corporation (SIPC) of \$250,000 per brokerage firm. As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the Trust and its Subsidiaries' cash deposits exceeded the insured limits of FDIC and SIPC by approximately \$11,162,000 and \$18,000,000, respectively.

For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, grants and contributions from state and federal entities represent approximately 78% and 79%, respectively, out of total revenues. The balance due from these state and federal entities represents approximately 48% and 81%, respectively, of total accounts receivable.

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
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**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
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**4) Liquidity and availability:**

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, financial assets available for general expenses, that is, without donor restriction or other limiting their use, within one year of the financial position date, comprises the following:

Description	2025	2024
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 11,997,155	\$ 18,517,760
Accounts receivable	701,964	702,207
Due from governmental entities	1,739,149	2,913,529
Investments	4,846,340	4,368,712
Endowment fund	55,645,117	51,837,920
Less amount not available to be used within one year:	74,929,725	78,340,128
Net assets with donor restrictions	(4,603,176)	(4,429,835)
Financial assets available to meet general expenditures over the next twelve months	<u>\$ 70,326,549</u>	<u>\$ 73,910,293</u>

**5) Investments:**

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, investments consisted of the following:

Description	2025	
	Cost	Fair value
Fixed income:		
Puerto Rico government bond	\$ 1,394,297	\$ 1,342,542
Private equity securities	1,868,798	1,868,798
SAFE investments	1,635,000	1,635,000
	<u>\$ 4,898,095</u>	<u>\$ 4,846,340</u>
Description	2024	
	Cost	Fair value
Fixed income:		
Puerto Rico government bond	\$ 1,528,588	\$ 1,489,905
Private equity securities	1,798,807	1,798,807
SAFE investments	1,080,000	1,080,000
	<u>\$ 4,407,395</u>	<u>\$ 4,368,712</u>

**6) Fair value measurement:**

For certain of the Trust and its Subsidiaries' financial instruments, including cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, the carrying amounts approximate fair market value due to their short-term maturities.

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Below is a description of the methodology used for instruments recognized at fair value, including the classification of such transactions in accordance with the valuation hierarchy.

Puerto Rico government bond – The fair value of this bond is obtained from third party pricing service providers that use a pricing methodology based on an active exchange market and quoted market prices for similar securities.

Private equity securities and SAFE investments – The objective of these investments is to achieve current income by providing debt and equity financing alternatives to targeted privately-held companies that are mostly organized or engaged in trade or business in Puerto Rico. The market value of these investments is determined based on unobservable inputs that are significant to the market value measurement.

As of June 30, 2025, and 2024, the Trust and its Subsidiaries' investments are classified as follows:

Description	2025			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Fixed income:				
Puerto Rico government bond	\$ -	\$ 1,342,542	\$ -	\$ 1,342,542
Private equity securities	-	-	1,868,798	1,868,798
SAFE investments	-	-	1,635,000	1,635,000
	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,342,542</u>	<u>\$ 3,503,798</u>	<u>\$ 4,846,340</u>
Description	2024			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Fixed income:				
Puerto Rico government bond	\$ -	\$ 1,489,905	\$ -	\$ 1,489,905
Private equity securities	-	-	1,798,807	1,798,807
SAFE investments	-	-	1,080,000	1,080,000
	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,489,905</u>	<u>\$ 2,878,807</u>	<u>\$ 4,368,712</u>

The change in carrying values associated with investments measured at fair value on a recurring basis using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3), are as follows:

Description	2025		
	Private equity securities	SAFE investments	Total
Balance at July 1, 2024	\$ 1,798,807	\$ 1,080,000	\$ 2,878,807
Purchases	69,991	575,000	644,991
Realized losses	-	(20,000)	(20,000)
Balance at June 30, 2025	<u>\$ 1,868,798</u>	<u>\$ 1,635,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,503,798</u>



**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES**

**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**June 30, 2025 and 2024**



Description	2024		
	Private equity securities	SAFE investments	Total
Balance at July 1, 2023	\$ 1,783,807	\$ 700,000	\$ 2,483,807
Purchases	15,000	455,000	470,000
Realized losses	-	(75,000)	(75,000)
Balance at June 30, 2024	<u>\$ 1,798,807</u>	<u>\$ 1,080,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,878,807</u>

The table below presents qualitative information for all assets and liabilities measured at fair value on a recurring basis using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3), as of June 30, 2025 and 2024:

Description	Valuation Technique	Unobservable Input
Private equity securities	Acquisition cost	None
SAFE investments	Acquisition cost	None

**7) Notes receivable:**

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the Trust is the holder of the following promissory notes:

Description	2025	2024
5% interest bearing promissory note, due in December 2024. The note is reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>\$ 25,000</b>	\$ 25,000
5% interest bearing promissory notes, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuers. The notes were due in December 2023. Some of these notes are currently in the process of payment.	<b>59,375</b>	87,148
5% interest bearing promissory notes, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuers. The notes were due in August 2022. These notes are reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>175,000</b>	175,000
5.25% interest bearing promissory note, due on June 30, 2024. The note is reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>74,329</b>	74,329
5% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note was due in December 2024 and was reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>25,000</b>	25,000

Continues...

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
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**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**June 30, 2025 and 2024**



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Description	2025	2024
3% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note was due in December 2023 and was reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>75,000</b>	75,000
7% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note was due in December 2023 and a repayment agreement is currently in process.	<b>24,641</b>	75,000
10% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note was due in August 2022 and was reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>50,000</b>	50,000
5% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note was due in January 2021 and was reserved in the allowance for credit losses.	<b>75,000</b>	75,000
7% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note is due in February 2026.	<b>35,000</b>	35,000
10% interest bearing promissory note, convertible to shares of common stock of the issuer. The note is due in February 2026.	<b>50,000</b>	50,000
	<b>668,345</b>	746,477
Less: Allowance for credit losses	<b>(524,329)</b>	(499,329)
	<u><b>\$ 144,016</b></u>	<u>\$ 247,148</u>

**8) Endowment fund:**

During the year ended June 30, 2020, the Trust and its Subsidiaries established an investment fund that has a perpetual investment horizon and is tax exempt. Its main purpose is to provide for long-term sustainable growth, while addressing any current operational expenses and those public financial responsibilities established by applicable law, rules and regulations.

The endowment fund includes funds designated by the Board of Trustees to function as endowments, including reserves created by the Trust and its Subsidiaries to assist in assuring its sustainability and its projects into perpetuity. The endowment fund might be nurtured as well of donations from individuals, private corporations and the U.S. government. Net assets associated with endowment funds, including funds designated by the Board of Trustees to function as endowments, are classified and reported based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions.

The Trust and its Subsidiaries have adopted an investment policy for endowment assets, as approved by the Board of Trustees, that attempts to provide a predictable stream of funding while seeking to maintain their purchasing power. Under this policy, total investments' return should exceed the rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index plus 3%, net of fees, expenses and taxes. This objective should be achieved in such a manner that the fund is protected from unwarranted market risk. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this amount. To satisfy its long-term rate-of-return objectives, the Trust and its Subsidiaries rely on a total return strategy in which investments' return is achieved through both capital appreciation (realized and unrealized) and current yield (interest and dividends). The Trust and its Subsidiaries targets a diversified asset allocation and provides its managers appropriate guidelines to achieve its long-term objective within prudent risk constraints. The preferred asset mix, expressed in lower-upper limits, is: 10%-70% global equities, 10%-40% global fixed income, 0%-25% alternative investments and 0%-5% cash and cash equivalents.

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**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**June 30, 2025 and 2024**



As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the endowment fund is presented in the net assets without donor restrictions as designated by the Board of Trustees. Changes in the endowment fund for the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, consisted of the following:

Description	2025	2024
Endowment fund at beginning of year	\$ 51,837,920	\$ 47,201,182
Investment return:		
Investment income, net	1,034,833	931,766
Net appreciation	2,580,058	3,406,342
Total investment return	3,614,891	4,338,108
Contributions	192,306	298,630
Endowment fund at end of year	\$ 55,645,117	\$ 51,837,920

**9) Property and equipment:**

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, property and equipment consisted of the following:

Description	June 30, 2025		
	Cost	Accumulated depreciation and amortization	Book value
Furniture and fixtures	\$ 755,087	\$ 366,536	\$ 388,551
Computer and equipment	8,662,963	5,631,604	3,031,359
Leasehold improvements	829,068	828,427	641
Vehicle	59,025	51,519	7,506
	<u>\$ 10,306,143</u>	<u>\$ 6,878,086</u>	<u>\$ 3,428,057</u>

Description	June 30, 2024		
	Cost	Accumulated depreciation and amortization	Book value
Furniture and fixtures	\$ 715,074	\$ 244,313	\$ 470,761
Computer and equipment	5,620,535	4,032,273	1,588,262
Leasehold improvements	829,068	828,427	641
Vehicle	59,025	39,714	19,311
	<u>\$ 7,223,702</u>	<u>\$ 5,144,727</u>	<u>\$ 2,078,975</u>

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**June 30, 2025 and 2024**



**10) Building:**

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, building consisted of the following:

Description	2025	2024
<i>Innovation Center Building</i> - A three-story building that houses the Trust's headquarters and provides space for both, the incubation of local hi-tech startups and strategic service providers, creating a synergistic effect to accelerate the commercialization of technologies.	\$ 4,698,359	\$ 4,688,362
<i>Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board's Laboratory</i> - Building that houses the laboratory facilities of the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board and the laboratory facilities of the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit.	3,694,428	3,574,428
<i>Forward Center Building</i> - A three-story building partially funded by EDA grant. In connection with the EDA grant-imposed restrictions, the property shall only be used to provide space to high-technology ventures to conduct research and development and manufacturing activity for a period of 20 years from the date of its completion.	9,419,867	9,401,032
	17,812,654	17,663,822
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(2,315,286)	(1,808,709)
	<u>\$ 15,497,368</u>	<u>\$ 15,855,113</u>

**11) Land and property for research, development and infrastructure project related to science and technology:**

On October 22, 2007, the Trust received prime real estate in the metropolitan area of San Juan, which includes the former Río Piedras Correctional Facilities (Oso Blanco State Penitentiary). The land and property were valued based on a market appraisal opinion report, dated October 20, 2008.

As established by Act 214, as amended, the Trust and its Subsidiaries plan to develop the land of Oso Blanco State Penitentiary site into a research park, which combines residential, retail, educational, and civic facilities with laboratory and research and development facilities with the purpose of facilitating the development of infrastructure favorable to the research and development of science and technology. Costs related to the design, development and improvements of the campus are capitalized as incurred.

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the land was restricted by donor for research, development and infrastructure project related to science and technology.

**12) Construction in progress - Science City:**

The Trust and its Subsidiaries' main infrastructure-related initiative is the Science City, located in a 69-acre mixed-use land located in San Juan, in a dense concentration of hospitals, universities, and other science and technology resources. The aim for the development of the Science City is to strengthen Puerto Rico's research infrastructure and enable its use as a tool to develop, attract, and retain a vibrant research ecosystem.



# PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

## NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS June 30, 2025 and 2024



Since the year ended June 30, 2016, the Trust and its Subsidiaries are executing a plan of action with the ultimate goal of facilitating such an innovation ecosystem, including the identification of a Master Development Partner (MDP) to lease, finance, develop, and manage the Science City project. To facilitate the identification and attraction of a MDP, the Trust and its Subsidiaries have invested approximately \$11,150,000 in critical infrastructure comprised of the construction of the Laboratory Road and major improvements for the interconnection of Highway 21 and 28 to the Science City. These projects will be further developed and finalized after the identification of the MDP.

### 13) Rental income:

The Trust and its Subsidiaries lease building spaces under operating lease agreements. The lease agreements are for periods of one year with a renewal option for an additional year on a month-to-month basis.

In addition, the Trust and its Subsidiaries lease a facility for two (2) years expiring during the year ended June 30, 2025. The monthly rental payments range from approximately \$21,000 to approximately \$24,000.

For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, revenues from rental agreements amounted to approximately \$322,000 and \$323,000, respectively.

### 14) Leases:

The Trust and its Subsidiaries lease an office space located in Ponce, Puerto Rico, under an operating lease agreement expiring on December 31, 2025. The remaining term of the agreement calls for monthly rental payments of \$7,500.

For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, the components of the lease cost were as follows:

Description	Financial Statements Classification	2025	2024
Operating lease cost	Program and services- Public health initiative	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000

As of June 30, 2025 and 2024, the weighted average remaining lease term and discount rate for the Trust and its Subsidiaries' operating lease were as follows:

Description	2025	2024
Weighted-average remaining lease term in years	.5	1.5
Weighted-average discount rate	3.5%	3.5%

# PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH TRUST AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

## NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS June 30, 2025 and 2024



As of June 30, 2025, maturities of lease liability for the operating leases are as follows:

Year ending June 30,	Amount
2026	\$ 45,000
Less: Imputed interest	(488)
Present value of lease liability	\$ 44,512

For the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, total rent expense amounted to approximately \$490,000 and \$615,000, respectively.

### 15) Retirement plan:

The Trust and its Subsidiaries have established a defined contribution retirement plan (the Plan) that covers all full-time employees who have reached 21 years of age, without requiring eligibility service requirements. Under the Plan, participants may contribute an amount not exceeding \$15,000 per year. The Trust and its Subsidiaries is not required to make matching contributions but reserves its right to start making matching contributions based on a maximum of 3% out of each dollar contributed by the employee, up to 10% of compensation. The Trust and its Subsidiaries may contribute a discretionary amount in addition to the matching contribution for all eligible participants. Amounts contributed by the Trust and its Subsidiaries are 100% vested after an employee completes one (1) year of service.

Total contributions made by the Trust and its Subsidiaries during the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, amounted to approximately \$302,000 and \$263,000, respectively.

### 16) Commitments:

The Trust has entered in certain commitments to invest in various private equity funds. These commitments and the investment as of June 30, 2025, are as follows:

Entity	Commitment	Investment
Semillero Investment Fund I, LLC	\$ 500,000	\$ 499,620
Semillero Investment Fund II, LLC	1,000,000	566,149
Bluhaus Small Business Fund, L.P.	250,000	187,500
Grupo Guayacán, Inc.	1,000,000	290,612
	\$ 2,750,000	\$ 1,543,881

### 17) Contingencies:

The Trust and its Subsidiaries, in its ordinary course of business, is a party to a legal claim. Management, after consulting with its legal counsel, is of the opinion that the ultimate outcome or settlement of this claim, if any, will not have a material impact in the Trust and its Subsidiaries' financial position and result of operations.

**PUERTO RICO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
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**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**June 30, 2025 and 2024**

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**18) Supplemental disclosures for the statements of cash flows:**

A) Non-cash from investing and financing transactions – During the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, non-cash investing and financing activities consist of the following:

Description	2025	2024
Retirement of fully depreciated property and equipment	\$ -	\$ 112,527

B) Other cash flows information – During the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, the Trust and its Subsidiaries make no interest payments.

**19) Subsequent events:**

Management has evaluated subsequent events through October 31, 2025, the date the financial statements were available to be issued and concluded there were no events or transactions that occurred during this period that required recognition or disclosure on the accompanying financial statements.



**ANNUAL 2024  
REPORT 2025**



# Colmena66 Impact Report 2024-2025



 Puerto Rico  
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ANNUAL 2024  
REPORT 2025



# Parallel18 Impact Report 2024-2025



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