



BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

PERFORMANCE
PROGRESS REPORT

OCTOBER 2021-MARCH 2022





BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Performance Progress Report

Grantee: University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez Campus

Project Title: A US Caribbean Regional Proposal for Innovation & Business Development within Puerto Rico & U.S. Virgin Island

Project Number: ED21PHI3030013

Period covered by the report: 10/01/2021 - 03/31/2022

Reporting period end date: March 31, 2022

Report Prepared by: Dr. Moraima De Hoyos - Ruperto (PI)

Narrative

The Business & Economic Development Center (BEDC), a University Center at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez campus, as part of the Caribbean Regional UC completed all the tasks in our scope of work: job creation (**10**), job retention (**6**), and its investment (**\$209,497**). The Caribbean Regional UC proposes to provide specific activities through the BEDC at UPRM, and the UVI-CELL, which includes, providing technical assistance, conducting applied research and dissemination as part of the economic development activities. Three mayor categories of innovation activities proposed are: 1) technical assistance to innovators and existing businesses; 2) applied research through allied centers and courses, and 3) dissemination of all activities that impact economic development in the region. Regarding the direct service to client the BEDC during this period received 65 new service solicitations. We provided more than **73 hours of one-on-one assistance**. A group of **16 intern students**, with **5 graduate students** among them, offered technical assistance in their different areas of specialization to businesses, under the supervision of our mentor's professors and business specialists. The BEDC is the hub of the UPRM E-Ship Network. As ecosystem builder we support all the efforts to expand the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region. Our more closed partners are the NSF I-Corps Site UPRM, Echar Pa'Lante of Banco Popular, RISE Program of the Bravo Family Foundation (an accelerator), Perspectivas Globales (an incubator), Parallel 18, and Colmena 66 of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust (PRTRUST). Additionally, we are working with several organizations to advance the economic development in the region. To reach this goal we started an Incubator and Accelerator (Area-E) program with funds of CDBG-DR for Hurricane Irma and Maria. A group of 34 businesses started in January 2022 as part of our 1st cohort a formal educational program and mentoring process. Also, we are working with the P.R. Department of Economic Development and Commerce through it program "PR INNOVA" providing Business Plan capacitation, mentoring and technical assistant to 100 entrepreneurs. Finally, we received a donation of Banco Popular to provide \$100,000 of seed funds to the clients of our different programs. The Seed fund program launch in May.

Beyond these completed tasks and assignments, we would like to highlight the following:

- A group of students led by the Industrial Engineering Professor Lourdes Medina constitute our **CNDE Improvement team**. The group developed a series of workshops and activities to promote a culture of continuing improvement between all the staff including professors, undergraduate and graduate students. During this period **5 capacitations** were provided and **3 Kaizen Events** were done. Additionally, the BEDC personnel participated in more than **5 professional development training** on subjects related to the center's services including the Kaisen methodology and training on the new CRM acquired; Sourcelink platform. Dr. De Hoyos, participated as a panelist on the PRASBE Faculty Lecture titled: *The New Profile of Entrepreneurial Students*. We continue updating our webpage, adding resources to our potential clients and current entrepreneurs.
- The magazine developed by a group of students called the UPRM E-ship Network La Revista, is currently in its ninth volume. The main subject during this last volume was the Marketing Strategies.
- The BEDC continues engaging with the proposal of **COVID-19**. 59 organizations received assistance from PR and VI and 10 proposals were submitted with \$26 millions of potential investment.
- We provided more than 20 hours of training throughout different events with more than 388 participants.



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As part of the US Caribbean Regional Proposal for Innovation & Business Development the University of Virgin Island-CELL reported:

- Successfully recruited **27 small businesses** throughout the USVI with the intentions of providing entrepreneurship, workforce development, OSHA workplace safety and health workshops, mentorship and coaching services to begin in March 2022.
- Issued two press releases announcing the launch of the program and information on program participation.
- Developed tools and resources for the year-long program.
- Established a Memorandum of Agreement with SCORE Broward County.
- Established a process with the UVI Safety in Paradise OSHA Consultation Program to offer workplace evaluations and technical assistance to improve safety and health.
- Utilized technology resources to implement an online curriculum, register participants and conduct networking events.
- Established a networked shared drive for all program materials.
- Met with UPR to learn about program best practices, resources and tools.

All activities conducted to date have benefited our distressed and underserved community. All participating businesses are low income and minority-owned who have been traditionally underserved.

Activity Summary

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact	During this Period
Technical Assistance and Innovator Existing Businesses 	Assistance includes workshops, seminars, one-on-one and group meetings, as well as other activities to support entrepreneurs with professionals and help them expand their networks.	<p>21 startups and 41 potential entrepreneurs (in the developing idea stage) received support services, including subjects of marketing, funding requests, programs applications, as well technical assistance.</p> <p>Five (5) students participated in a Toyota Mobility Challenge business competition.</p> <p>4 start-ups were established with our assistance: <i>Beso Luna, Boqueron Beach & Country Cabins, Xilema, Palivia.</i></p> <p>Startups and potential entrepreneurs (in the developing idea stage) are the major groups who request our services. Between them we provided services to 1 innovator teams. The startups received investments of \$125,000 (cash), and \$1,522 (in-kind), for a total of \$126,472. Those startups retained 1 employees, created 6 new jobs.</p> <p>4 existing businesses received support services, including the development of a compensation plan, marketing, funding requests, accelerator programs applications, as well technical assistance. Assisted companies received investments of \$37,000(cash), and \$46,025 (in-kind), for a total of \$83,025. Those pivoting businesses retained 5 employees.</p>	

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact	During this Period
<p>Applied research through allied centers and courses</p> 	<p>Identifying a specific challenge or problem to be addressed by the entrepreneur; determine courses, centers, programs that may assist the client and are available in the entrepreneurial network; facilitate the process to connect the entrepreneur with a resource.</p>	<p>Three (3) research were worked on and published;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "<i>Applying Lean Methodologies to Administrative Services</i>" were submitted and accepted to be presented in the IISE Annual Conference & Expo 2022. Authors are the student Valeria A. Cruz Zapata, Dr. Lourdes A. Medina Avilés, (Department of Industrial Engineering UPRM) together with Dr. Moraima De Hoyos Ruperto, from the College of Business Administration. This paper is part of the CNDE Improvement Team work. 2. "<i>Screw Ideas: How to fix the flaws of ideation-focused I&E</i>" were presented in the annual conference VentureWell Open 2022 by Dr. Mari Luz Zapata and Dr. José Lugo as part of their work in NVDE & I-Corp. 3. "<i>Working Paper: Impact and Effects of the Pharmaceutical Entrepreneurial Ecosystem on Small Engineering, Validation, and Automatization Services (EVAS) in Puerto Rico</i>" by Nashaly Valentín-Roman (MBA student), Dr. Rodolfo Romañach and Dr. Bárbara Alvarádo-Hernandez (Chemistry department) and Dr. Moraima De Hoyos-Ruperto of Business Administration. <p>Professor Glennys Rivera served as a resource on the professional development program called CRECEN of the College of Business Administration, impacting twenty (20) potential entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Twenty seven (27) innovation interns, at undergraduate (19) and graduate level (8), participated directly in their service to clients and the development of entrepreneurship ecosystem activities, as part of the different BEDC programs. Students worked on the idea generation process, business consulting, marketing, information systems, accounting, and other business areas such as business agriculture, web developing, industrial engineering, while strengthening the ecosystem. These innovation interns brought their own set of expertise from their university studies and incorporated themselves into services offered by BEDC.</p> <p>Ten (10) professors, thirty-one (31) students graduates and sub graduates and administrative staff compose the BEDC team to supervise and manage all the programs (UC, Area-E and Covid19).</p> <p>32 entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs are registered in the I&E Virtual Education Program. The I&E VMP provide modules of entrepreneurial education for those who are starting to interesting on the entrepreneurial subjects. The program is asynchronous which provides flexibility for individuals to participate and educate themselves during their own time. The program is open to the community, thus high school students and teachers requested to participate, in addition to individuals from universities.</p>	

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact
<p>Dissemination of all activities that impact economic development in the region</p> 	<p>Outreach efforts to make the BEDC programs publicly known and share the diverse opportunities available in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.</p>	<p>With the collaboration of Idea Platform, Bravo Family Foundation, Global Perspectives, more than 12 Entrepreneurial Agenda events or I&E seminar series were held to continue building the UPRM E-Ship Network ecosystem. One hundred one (101) collaborators are active as “Entrepreneurship Faculty Fellows” or as part of the “Doers Mentors Network.” These experts are available to assist innovative teams and ecosystem events, and their areas of expertise range from business, engineering, agriculture, arts, and sciences. During the period, creating and participating in educational activities for entrepreneurs. Among the activities carried out were marketing trainings such as the talk "Influencer Marketing" in October 2021, "Prepare your Carry on" in November 2021</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p>Panels and talks on entrepreneurship, such as "La moda del emprendimiento" in November 2021, the business panel "Del Oeste pal' Mundo" the permit workshop "How to apply for a unique permit?" in November 2021.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>

Activity

Task

Benefits/Outcome/Impact

Dissemination of all activities that impact economic development in the region



Outreach efforts to make the BEDC programs publicly known and share the diverse opportunities available in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In March 2022, women's month, activities focused on female strength were presented, such as the "Coloquio empresarial femenino" and the conference "Toma el control de tu vida".



Also, the BEDC was present in radio interviews and different business fairs, offering its services and publicizing the power of entrepreneurship, motivating hundreds of future entrepreneurs.





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Timeline

The Business & Economic Development Center (BEDC) project at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez, is running on time for its projected schedule. During the 2021-2022 period, the BEDC has completed and exceeded all programmatic and program components goals and activities. We created 12 jobs, have retained 15 jobs, and investments \$487,000.00 in cash, and \$47,547 in-kind.

BEDC UPRM	September 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021	October 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022	Total 2021-2022 Sept to March
Jobs Created Goal: 15	1	11	12
Jobs Retained Goal: 40	9	6	15
Investment: Goal: 500K-1M	\$325,050	\$209,497	\$534,547



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Milestone

Anticipated Impact by Program Milestones -UPRM & UVI

Program Milestones	UPRM Benchmark Metrics per Year PI: Pre- incubation Businesses	UPRM Benchmark Metrics per Year GB: Growing Businesses	UVI Benchmark Metrics per Year PI: Pre - incubation Businesses	UVI Benchmark Metrics per Year GB: Growing Businesses	UPRM Metrics September 2021 through March 31,2022 PI: Pre- incubation	UPRM Metrics September 2021 through March 31, 2022 GB: Growing Business
1. Technical Assistance (TA)						
1.1 Educational Program (S&A)- I&E VMP	10	5	5	2	10	22
1.2 One - on-One TA	50	5	10	3	62	4
1.3 Mentorship program	13	3	5	2	7	7
2. Applied Research Efforts						
2.1 Challenge Identification And plan Development	15	5	5	2	4	0
2.2 Resource Identification- Matching Process	15	5	3	2	5	10
2.3 Successful Completion of AR Program	7	3	2	2	5	0
3. Dissemination Efforts						
3.1 Outreach Activities	4	4	2	2	6	6
3.2 Engagement Businesses and Potential Entrepreneurs (Solicitation of TA)	75	10	10	5	39	16
3.3 Successful Completion of PI or GB Program	25	5	5	2	8	2

Client and Ecosystem Building Success Stories (please see press release for details)

Candid Society

Candid Society

Born from the need to talk and make visible the importance of mental health, based on the process that the owner has gone through. The mission is help others through her merchandise with inspired and motivational messages. Candid Society is currently part of parallel 18's 4th Generation.

Ventetú



Ernesto Vicente, ex alumni of the College of Business Administration and creator of the Ventetú App requested our services to guide how to establish his business. Two years later he plans to launch his application aimed tennis athletes who use different courts through the Island. Through application, the player will be able to separate the courts at specific times and days.

Xilema



The entrepreneurial creator of Xilema arrived at the BEDC in 2021 with the idea of developing a wood workshop within an available space that he had on his farm. There his idea was to design and create different basic and constructible products developed in wood, such as games for children, decoration and furniture. Xilema received advice and coaching to structure his idea. Working under the guidance of the BEDC, compiling the necessary information to carry out the trademark and commercial registration. Currently, Xilema has managed to register over \$20,000 in sales and continues to grow his business exponentially.



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The BEDC continue as a hub of the UPRM E-ship Network serving as a role models to the other campuses and organizations in the process of strengthening and developing their I&E Ecosystem. During this period we support several allied programs such as the CFP of the "Resarch Grants Program", SBIR Comitte and "Phase I" of the PRSTRUST, I-Corp Guayacán, P18, and Venturewell Funds, among others. We still collaborate with projects related to CDBG-DR grants, such as CRECEN and Finca Explora (PRTEC). We continue leveraging our impact on Puerto Rico's west side, through collaboration with programs such as UPR Utuado, Creative Startups, Mercado Colegial, ACS Org, PRASBE, among others



Challenges and Mitigation

The BEDC received with great pleasure the acceptance of this new proposal, turning our project into a great legacy for more than 35 yrs of relationship with EDA. However, the decrease on the amount awarded limits the amount of resources available to provide the services of the UC. We have mitigated this situation by obtaining other grants that complement our services and have given us the opportunity to recruit the necessary personnel to achieve the desired impact.

Press Engagements / Opportunities:

Examples of media coverage of the BEDC's accomplishments, its clients and partnership initiatives.

RUM ofrece capacitación a desempleados y a trabajadores a tiempo parcial



6 DE OCTUBRE DE 2021 POR DIÁLOGO ACTUALIDAD NOTICIAS

El programa CRECEN (Capacitación Estratégica Mediante Resiliencia, Competitividad, y Expansión en los Negocios) del Recinto Universitario Mayagüez (RUM) de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (UPR), anunció que está en la búsqueda de personas que se encuentren

El RUM ofrecerá capacitaciones para desempleados y desarrollo de negocios

Los programas incluyen capacitación, mentoría y asistencia técnica

Redacción, EL VOCERO 19/10/2021



Figure 1:

https://dialogo.upr.edu/rum-ofrece-capacitacion-a-desempleados-y-a-trabajadores-a-tiempo-parcial/?fbclid=IwAR1Sn_BsGUz28e1ULIcL9pxbW-IIsplnQsiwkuJVplPN8bvJyEoVza0rxWo

Figure 2:

https://www.elvocero.com/economia/otros/el-rum-ofrece-capacitaciones-para-las-personas-desempleadas-y-el-desarrollo-de-negocios/article_c1e72d80-3125-11ec-a864-f3a0b10b868a.html



Figure 3:

<https://newsismybusiness.com/upr-mayaguez-campus-area-e-program-marks-1st-year-promoting-small-businesses/>

AGRO

“Estamos redescubriendo la pana”: matrimonio de Jayuya cuenta cómo este fruto es el centro de su empresa

Amasar tiene como misión ofrecer productos saludables al tiempo que apoya a los agricultores locales



Figure 4:

<https://www.elnuevodia.com/negocios/agro/notas/estamos-redescubriendo-la-pana-matrimonio-de-jayuya-cuenta-como-este-fruto-es-el-centro-de-su-empresa/>

Press Engagements / Opportunities:

Examples of media coverage of the Center's accomplishments, its clients and partnership initiatives.

El Recinto de Mayagüez de la Universidad de Puerto Rico recibe millonaria subvención para su Programa de Incubadoras y Aceleradoras de Negocios

11 de diciembre de 2021

La Universidad de Puerto Rico en Mayagüez creó Área-E gracias a una subvención de \$2.4 millones del programa CDBG-DR del Departamento de Vivienda (Programa de Incubadora y Aceleradoras de Pequeñas Empresas). Área-E será un nuevo programa que colaborará con el Centro de Negocios y Desarrollo Económico (CNDE) de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez.



Área-E es la primera incubadora y aceleradora de la Universidad de Puerto Rico que impactará el área oeste de la isla. Su objetivo es promover el desarrollo económico de Puerto Rico mediante el desarrollo de pequeñas empresas viables y sostenibles. A través de los programas de incubación y aceleración, se ofrecerá capacitación, mentoría, acompañamiento, asistencia técnica y «networking».

La incubadora de Área-E ofrecerá asesoría en temas empresariales, administrativos y de otras funciones de una pequeña empresa, desarrollo de modelos de negocios, validación del modelo de negocio, análisis de escan de mercado y servicios de mejoramiento empresarial continuo, además de seguimiento provisto por experimentados asesores por doce meses.

Por su parte, la aceleradora de Área-E capacitará en numerosas áreas tales como: estrategias de obtención y desarrollo de talento, estrategias de actualización de operaciones y optimización de los medios, obtención de clientes, estrategias de escalamiento, valorización de la empresa, estrategia

Figure 5:

https://www.upr.edu/el-recinto-de-mayaguez-de-la-universidad-de-puerto-rico-recibe-millonaria-subvencion-para-su-programa-de-incubadoras-y-aceleradoras-de-negocios/?fbclid=IwAR0-IZvY1Tn4tLIVOsdqXkl5TvaRrGrShXxdLuj44CUt_xnXUsp4RUIJsOQ

El COVID-19 causa retroceso para los derechos de las mujeres

Expertas coinciden en que la emergencia por el coronavirus atrasó una



Figure 6:

<https://www.primerahora.com/noticias/puerto-rico/notas/el-covid-19-causa-retroceso-para-los-derechos-de-las-mujeres/>

CNDE celebra 35 años y se afianza con importantes acuerdos para su expansión

Dr. Javier Valentín Feliciano (javier.valentin@upr.edu)



Figure 7:

<https://www.uprm.edu/portada/2022/03/11/cnde-22/>

ÁREA-E celebra su primer aniversario de pequeñas empresas en Puerto Rico

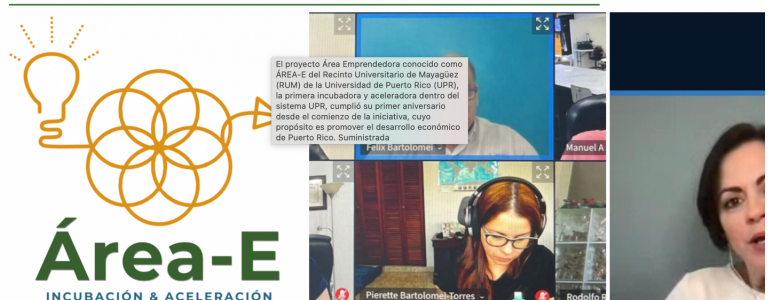


Figure 8:

<https://www.uprm.edu/portada/2022/03/25/areaecelebraprimeraniversario/?fbclid=IwAR1vIrFozRYc6Ywq16IXHdM7DozOe3oyBRyCILrzM5RQFPAbvkuoumUedA>