



ANNUAL **REPORT** 2025



DRIVING THE ENTREPRENEUR TO ***GROW, INNOVATE, AND EXPORT***

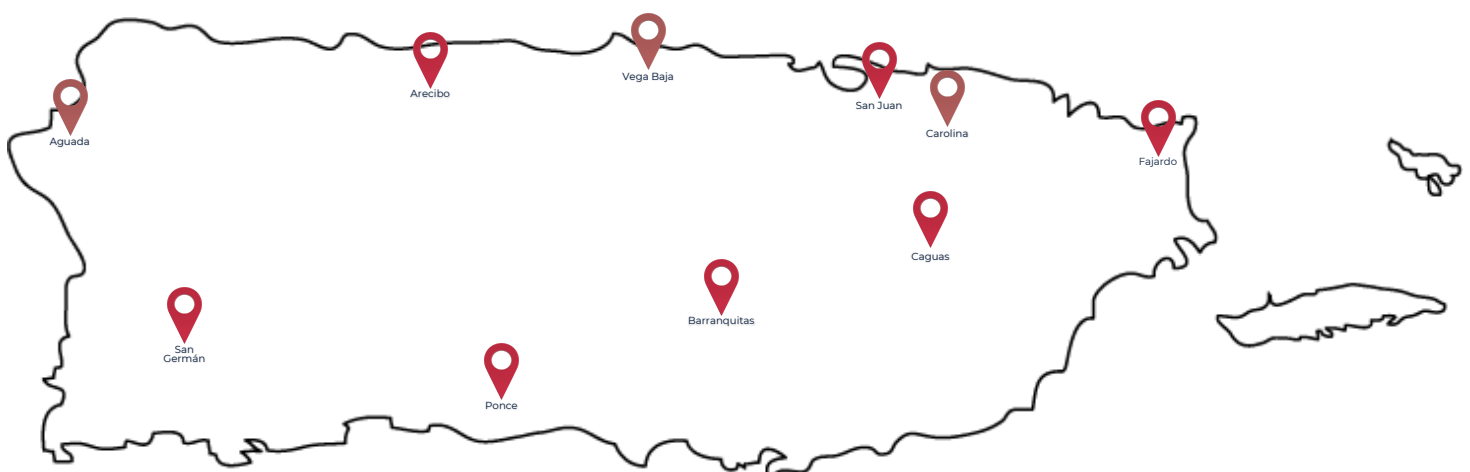
OUR VISION

Become world-class leaders supporting small business growth in Puerto Rico

OUR MISSION

Provide integrated & multidisciplinary business solutions to entrepreneurs in a competitive, innovative and technological environment

PUERTO RICO SBTDC SERVICES REGION



MESSAGE FROM OUR STATE DIRECTOR



As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2025, I am filled with pride in the meaningful impact the Puerto Rico Small Business & Technology Development Centers continue to make across our island. This year's results stand as a powerful reflection of our unwavering commitment to strengthening small businesses and advancing sustainable economic development throughout Puerto Rico.

These achievements are made possible by the dedication and passion of our exceptional team, whose work is rooted in service, excellence, and a profound belief in the entrepreneurs we are privileged to support. We believe in their dreams, we admire their creativity, and we are continually inspired by their discipline and perseverance. They are, without question, the hope and driving force behind Puerto Rico's future.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development, and the municipalities of Caguas, Carolina, and Aguada for their steadfast partnership and support. Together, we are expanding opportunities and building a stronger, more resilient economy.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to broadening our reach, embracing innovation, and standing firmly alongside Puerto Rico's entrepreneurs as they shape a brighter and more prosperous future. The horizon is full of promise, and at the PR SBTDC, we move forward with purpose, pride, and an unwavering belief in the potential of Puerto Rico.

With gratitude and determination,

IVONNE NEGRON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PUERTO RICO SBTDC

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT PARTNERS



“We are honored to host a program that empowers startups and visionary businesses through the work of passionate professionals, committed to fostering entrepreneurship, innovation, and meaningful impact within our communities and among our students.”

RAFAEL RAMÍREZ-RIVERA, ED.D.

PRESIDENT
INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO



“In 2025, the Puerto Rico SBTDC proudly continued its vital role in strengthening entrepreneurship, supporting small business growth and expanding economic opportunities across the island. The remarkable dedication and results achieved by the PRSBTDC team highlight their commitment to empowering entrepreneurs and driving business success throughout Puerto Rico”.

RICARDO MARTINEZ, CPA

INTERIM DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

COLLABORATION



U.S. Small Business Administration

During this year, SBA Project Officer and the Deputy Director attended our roundtables and the three educational Meet Up events of the SBTDC Regional Focus Area. The Lead Center also participates in the monthly Resource Partners meetings organized by the District Office.

Inter American University of Puerto Rico

The Inter American University of PR is the Host Institution of PR SBTDC Program. Service centers collaborate with their academic communities to foster entrepreneurship. On January 31st, the Fajardo SBTDC staff participated in the inaugural event celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Fajardo campus of Inter American University. On February 12th, San Juan SBTDC Director and our Director of Quality and Compliance representing the Executive Director participated in the InterEmprende event. For 15 years, this student program has promoted entrepreneurship. As part of a commemorative video, Ivonne Negrón delivered a message.



The PR Department of Economic Development and Commerce

On August, the Director of the San Juan SBTDC, participated in the Youth Incentive Decree Ceremony held at the Department of Economic Development and Commerce (DDEC). This activity reflects SBTDC's ongoing commitment to encouraging youth entrepreneurship across Puerto Rico.



Satellite Office of Vega Baja

During July, several media outlets featured PR SBTDC activities and expert insights. The opening of the Vega Baja Satellite Center was covered by News is My Business on July 11 and by El Nuevo Día on July 27. During July, several media outlets featured PR SBTDC activities and expert insights. The opening of the Vega Baja Satellite Center was covered by News is My Business on July 11 and by El Nuevo Día on July 27.



Satellite Office of Aguada

On July, the Director of the San Germán SBTDC, and her team received the keys to the new Municipality Business Office in Aguada from the town's mayor. This new location will serve as the PR SBTDC's satellite center.

Caguas Municipality

Our staff participated in the meetings of the Advisory Board of the Technology Business Incubator, INNOVA. The Board offer their recommendations and suggestions to improve its current operation.



Carolina Municipality

On December 13, participated in the Christmas Bazaar in the Municipality of Carolina, providing guidance to entrepreneurs on the services offered by the Puerto Rico SBTDC.

IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY OF PUERTO RICO

12,916

JOB SUPPORTED

ECONOMIC IMPACT

2,811

CUSTOMERS SERVED

151

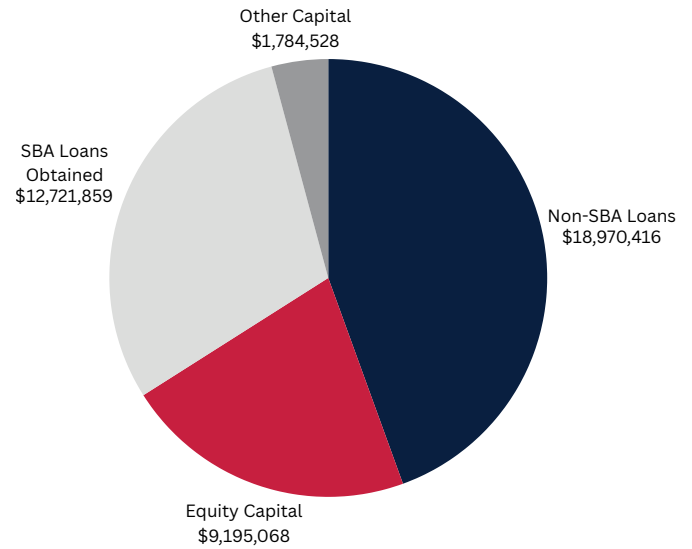
NEW BUSINESSES

\$42M

TOTAL CAPITAL

CAPITAL FORMATION

Overall, the CY2025 outcomes show a resilient and well-supported business environment where entrepreneurs were able to leverage multiple funding streams to start, strengthen, or expand their operations. The balanced mix of equity, SBA, and non-SBA financing points to effective counseling services, strong lender relationships, and a supportive capital ecosystem that enabled businesses to secure the resources they needed to grow. The results of capital formation have shown the normal rule in commercial financing with a trend of 20% in owner investment and the other amount in loans.



363

CAPITAL
TRANSACTIONS

SUCCESS STORIES

➤ Yelitza Pérez and the Expresarte Treatment Clinic Carolina, Puerto Rico



After eight years as a speech therapist, Yelitza Pérez pursued her dream of opening her own clinic. In 2021, she sought help from the SBTDC in San Juan, where she developed a business plan and financing proposal. By October 2021, she secured funding from local banks and opened the Expresarte Treatment Clinic on February 14, 2022, in Carolina. The clinic offers speech, language, feeding, and swallowing services, primarily for young children. Yelitza's dedication has made the clinic a vital community resource for over two years, showcasing the impact of perseverance and support in achieving one's goals.

➤ LS Quilting and Resilience after Hurricane Fiona San Juan, Puerto Rico



LS Quilting, established in 1987 and led by President Luis Sierra, specializes in bedding products and fibers for air conditioning filters. After Hurricane Fiona damaged its facilities, Luis sought financial assistance from the SBTDC service center, which helped him apply for a crucial SBA Disaster Loan. This support enabled the company to recover and continue operations. On May 3, 2023, Luis received the Veteran-Owned Business Award from the U.S. Small Business Administration, recognizing his entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to the local community. LS Quilting exemplifies resilience and community support in overcoming challenges.

➤ Chaliana Berrocales and the KAIRO Med Spa & Makeup Studio San Germán, Puerto Rico



Chaliana Berrocales has been passionate about art and beauty since the age of 11. Her entrepreneurial journey began in 2020 during the pandemic when she worked at a hospital and became pregnant, prompting her to pursue her true passion. Starting small with makeup services, she built a portfolio of 250 satisfied clients and eventually left her hospital job.

To meet higher health standards, she opened KAIRO Med Spa & Makeup Studio on July 20, 2022, funded through personal savings and commercial financing, with support from the San Germán SBTDC team. Her story showcases resilience and dedication to exceptional service in a safe environment, as KAIRO continues to thrive in the beauty industry.

For additional success stories, you may visit our website at the following link: <https://prsbtdc.org/historias-de-exito/>

TRAININGS

STRENGTHENING BUSINESS CAPABILITIES

New Business Program - “Ponle Acción a tu Idea de Negocio”

As part of this expanded initiative, multiple sessions of the New Business Program, “Initiate the Execution of Your Business Concept,” were conducted across several regions in February. On February 7, the Fajardo Center introduced the program to approximately 11 participants. The Arecibo Center followed on February 25, delivering the session to 22 participants, while the San Juan Center hosted a group of 12 on February 27. Additionally, the Ponce SBTDC offered the program on March 18 & 25 to 26 participants from the southern region.



On April 24, 2025, the Arecibo SBTDC Center held the seminar “¡Ponle Acción a tu Idea de Negocio!” with the participation of 31 aspiring entrepreneurs. The session provided participants with essential tools for developing, planning, and launching their business ideas, reinforcing the SBTDC’s commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and supporting new business creation across Puerto Rico.

During September, the Puerto Rico SBTDC continued advancing entrepreneurial development across the island through multiple training initiatives.

On September 5, the Fajardo SBTDC Center hosted the seminar “Ponle Acción a tu Idea de Negocio,” which gathered 21 aspiring entrepreneurs eager to transform their ideas into viable business projects. Later in the month, on September 18 and 25, the Barranquitas SBTDC Center successfully completed the New Business Program, with 29 participants who received intensive training in business planning, management, and financial literacy to strengthen their startup capabilities. These initiatives contributed to the continued support of new business creation throughout Puerto Rico.

On September 15, the San Germán SBTDC Satellite Center in Aguada held the seminar “¡Ponle Acción a tu Idea de Negocio!” at the Municipal Public Library of Aguada, with the participation of 15 aspiring entrepreneurs. Business Consultants from the San Germán SBTDC Center guided participants through the development and implementation of their business ideas.

Caguas Compite 2 Program - “Tools for a Successful Restaurant”

As in previous years, the Caguas SBTDC organized the “Caguas Compite 2 Program” for the Municipality of Caguas. This program is designed for established businesses and, this year, focused on the gastronomy sector, one of the key areas the municipality has been actively promoting to position Caguas as a gastronomic destination. The initiative consisted of a series of three seminars under the theme “Tools for a Successful Restaurant: Pricing, Menu Development, and Logistics.” The seminars were held at the Municipal Learning Center and presented by speaker Beatriz Villanueva, who has extensive experience in restaurant management. The program began on July 22 with the first seminar, “How to Calculate Food Costs,” which had an attendance of 37 participants. The second seminar, “Secrets to a Profitable Menu,” was held on July 29, with 32 attendees. The program concluded on August 5 with the seminar “Dining Room Logistics and Order Management,” which was attended by 24 participants.

2025 REGIONAL FOCUS AREA

Summary of Regional Focus Area: Specialty Service
“Financial Business Continuity Journey”



For CY2025, PR SBTDC selected Financial Business Continuity as its Regional Focus Area, with the goal of strengthening the financial resilience of small businesses throughout Puerto Rico. This initiative was developed based on a five-year performance analysis, available staffing resources, and the economic challenges affecting local businesses.

Throughout CY2025, PR SBTDC implemented a series of Educational MeetUps across its service centers, addressing key topics related to financial preparedness, risk mitigation, and operational continuity. These events, held in San Germán, Ponce, Arecibo, and Fajardo, reached 107 participants and featured experts from the fields of accounting, economics, emergency management, banking, insurance, and organizational development. In addition to these group activities, service centers provided individualized counseling sessions to 34 clients across the island, reinforcing PR SBTDC's commitment to personalized business support.

The first Educational MeetUp, hosted by the San Germán SBTDC in March, titled “Financial Planning for Risk Management,” welcomed 20 business owners. The session addressed essential financial strategies, including risk analysis, scenario planning, budgeting, and the role of credit in small business development. Presenters included CPA Cynthia J. Rijo Sánchez, Esq., President of the Puerto Rico Society of Certified Public Accountants, and Jorge Betancourt from the SBA.

In April, the Ponce SBTDC hosted the second Educational MeetUp, “How to Achieve Greater Financial Capacity,” with 37 participants. The session focused on liquidity management, debt reduction, business diversification, and the importance of insurance as a risk mitigation tool. Speakers included CPA Rafael Cepeda, Associate Director of Quality and Compliance at PR SBTDC, and Rafael Medina, MBA, an expert in financial management, banking, and insurance.

In June, the Arecibo SBTDC organized the third Educational MeetUp, “Implementation and Continuous Improvements before Unexpected Events,” with 29 participants. The event highlighted the economic impact of emergencies affecting Puerto Rico and emphasized the importance of developing Contingency and Business Continuity Plans. Discussions addressed not only preparation for natural disasters but also internal operational challenges, including human resources and organizational readiness. This event also marked the first activity held at the Vega Baja Satellite location, representing an important milestone in expanding PR SBTDC's outreach to additional communities.

In September, the Fajardo SBTDC conducted the fourth Educational MeetUp virtually, “Relationship Between Finances and Business Continuity,” with 21 attendees. The training provided participants with practical strategies to strengthen financial resilience and maintain business operations during unexpected challenges. As part of PR SBTDC's outreach and awareness efforts, the organization also promoted emergency preparedness through media engagement. In July, El Nuevo Día published the article “Consejos para enfrentar emergencias” (“Tips for Facing Emergencies”), written by Rafael Cepeda, Associate Director for Quality and Compliance, as part of the Enfoque Pymes section.



AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

The PR SBTDC supports rural small businesses in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other relevant federal and local agencies.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURS

\$542,259

TOTAL CAPITAN INFUSION



AGRIBIZ

As part of the ongoing collaboration with the USDA 2501 Grant, the PR SBTDC continues to offer training and counseling services to agricultural entrepreneurs. During this year, the Barranquitas Service Center, launched the fifth cohort of the AgriBIZ Program. Approximately 70 farmers are participating in the course.

AGROEDU

The Young Baristas – AgroEdu Project Workshop, organized by the PR SBTDC in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture and Department of Education, introduced 10 high school students from low-income and rural areas to entrepreneurship in the coffee industry. Participants received instruction from certified professionals and had the opportunity to earn a Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) Foundation certification. The initiative supports youth entrepreneurship and workforce development in Puerto Rico's agricultural and hospitality sectors.

269

PARTICIPANTS IN SEMINARS

17

NEW BUSINESS START

NXLEVEL®

Between March 13 and April 8, the SBTDC, in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture, delivered the NxLevel for Agricultural Entrepreneurs course. This 32-hour training, attended by 12 participants, focused on building essential business skills—such as marketing, financial planning, and risk management—tailored to the specific needs of the agricultural sector.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Year 2025

The PR SBTDC gathers customer feedback at various stages of the service cycle. The survey “Su Opinión Cuenta” (Your Opinion is Important) monitors overall experience during counseling sessions. For this year, a total of 2,749 counseling clients were surveyed, of these, 1,058 responded to the survey. Respondents reported an average satisfaction rating ranging between 88% and 96%, reflecting a level of service consistently rated as very good to excellent.

92%
AVERAGE

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM



On November 3, the Director of the ITC, supported the efforts of the trade mission to Spain, coordinated by PromoExport-DDEC. Our clients Econs Group, Propel Unlimited, and Alternative Technical Solutions participated in the mission. Additionally, a **young entrepreneur** who had previously been an ITC intern and now owns Mamposteo attended, along with other clients from our centers, including Montadero Chocolate, Kalmus, and Apiarios.

On July 2, the San Germán SBTDC organized a webinar for aspiring entrepreneurs and graduating students from the Inter American University. Business Consultant from the Aguada satellite office, presented the topic “Design and Validate Your Business Idea with the Business Model Canvas” to approximately 90 participants, including graduates and **young entrepreneurs**. This initiative aimed to strengthen entrepreneurial skills among new professionals and encourage them to pursue self-employment opportunities.

SBDC DAY

On March 19, outstanding photos, videos, and programming for our continued presence on social media were the norm during SBDC Day. The PR SBTDC network shined, and our clients were the true stars.



Adorale, Arecibo



Eyewear Market, San Juan



San Germán Service Center

INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER

\$144K

CAPITAL FORMATION

77

JOBS

To develop export ready small businesses and support international exports, the PR SBTDC integrated export competencies into staff professional development. The Center for International Trade (specialty center) provides advanced services supported by key personnel that offer basic export assistance in service centers.



The International Trade Center (ITC), under the leadership of Center Director, Viviana Acevedo, performed several impactful activities during the first quarter of the year. On January 29, approximately 77 business owners attended a virtual seminar “Panama and Its Business Opportunities” hosted by the ITC, where Director Acevedo served as a speaker. The session featured distinguished guest speakers, including representatives from the U.S. Commercial Service, the Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture of Panama, and Puerto Rico Promo Export Division.



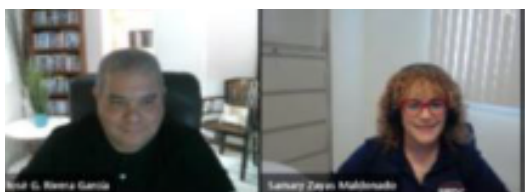
On April 23, a total of 67 entrepreneurs participated in a virtual seminar on Business Opportunities in the Dominican Republic, featuring speakers from ProDominicana and the Puerto Rico Trade Office in the Dominican Republic. The Puerto Rico–Dominican Republic Business MeetUp was also held on June 20, where 26 participants connected to explore export opportunities to the Dominican Republic. After the event, the Executive Director of the PR SBTDC and the Executive Director of ProDominicana signed a collaboration agreement between both organizations for the mutual benefit of both countries.

CENTER INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

\$415K

CAPITAL FORMATION

During this year, program initiatives focused on enhancing the innovation and technology ecosystem. This was achieved by ensuring staff preparedness, providing targeted technical assistance, and fostering strategic collaborations. Capacity-building efforts in areas such as cybersecurity, intellectual property, SBIR/STTR programs, and emerging technologies ensured consistent service delivery across various centers. Collaborations with universities, federal agencies, and ecosystem stakeholders facilitated access to specialized knowledge and funding opportunities. As a result, these efforts led to sustained outreach, increased awareness of technology-based resources, and continued alignment with federal priorities, particularly in innovation, commercialization, and cybersecurity readiness.



Artificial Intelligence

During this year, the Network staff completed a certification in Artificial Intelligence offered through the SBA training program. This initiative strengthens the team's capacity to integrate innovative tools and data-driven approaches into counseling and program management processes

Cybersecurity

The PR SBTDC delivered Cybersecurity Academy sessions at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels to strengthen business digital security.

- Basic (Caguas | March 6 | 90 participants): Introduction to cybersecurity, common threats, and best practices to protect data.
- Intermediate (Barranquitas | March 27 | 52 participants): Risk mitigation, cybersecurity tools, and development of internal policies.
- Advanced (San Juan | April 10 | 47 participants): Implementation of advanced solutions and cyber incident response.

Transforming Digital Presence into Sales:

On July, the Arecibo SBTDC hosted a webinar attended by 91 entrepreneurs, focused on transforming their digital presence into real sales. The session provided tools and strategies to help small business owners enhance their online visibility and increase revenue through digital marketing.

Intellectual Property Protection

The PR SBTDC offered Intellectual Property Academy sessions at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels to help entrepreneurs protect and commercialize their innovations.

- Basic (Arecibo | June 3 | 25 participants): Introduction to trademarks, copyrights, common legal mistakes, and protection strategies.
- Intermediate (Aguada | July 1 | 45 participants): Advanced tools for IP strategy, commercialization, and protection of innovation-based businesses.
- Advanced (CIT | August 21 | 49 participants): Advanced-level training focused on strengthening intellectual property management.

SERVICE CENTERS IN PUERTO RICO

ARECIBO (787) 878-5269

BARRANQUITAS (787) 857-3600 EXT. 2101

CAGUAS (787) 744-8833 EXT. 2909

FAJARDO (787) 863-2390 EXT. 2360

PONCE (787) 284-1912 EXT. 2023

SAN GERMÁN (787) 892-6760

SAN JUAN (787) 763-5108

LEAD CENTER (787) 763-6811

INTERNATIONAL TRADE (787) 763-2665

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY (787) 763-6922

CAROLINA SATELLITE (787) 641-0180 EXT. 2103

AGUADA SATELLITE (787) 868-6400 EXT. 1009

