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Collaborative Space Opens in Ponce for “Levanta tu Negocio” in Offices of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust ^[1]

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The Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust (PRSRRTT) has created a collaborative space in its Ponce office so that entrepreneurs affected by earthquakes can continue operations. The space, located in the annex of the Department of Labor and Human Resources in Ponce, will be available Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM while the emergency lasts. The spaces are limited, so those companies interested in using the facilities must request the space and fill out an initial needs survey through <http://bit.ly/coworkingPonce> [2].

The collaborative space was created in a joint effort with the Trust's programs Colmena 66, the local business support network that connects entrepreneurs and merchants with organizations that provide services and assistance to the entrepreneur; Resiliency and Business Innovation (RBI), a concessionaire under an EDai6 proposal that helps companies to be resilient after a disaster; the Response Innovation Lab (RIL) and the Chamber of Commerce of the South.

"The Colmena66 program, reactivated the multisectoral voluntary initiative *Levanta tu Negocio PR*, composed of professionals and entrepreneurs who have joined in with their knowledge and skills with the purpose of supporting business development in Puerto Rico, especially merchants affected by the earthquake." explained Dennisse Rodríguez, executive director of Colmena 66 for the PRSRRTT. "An online survey collects the information of needs in the affected businesses to be able to channel the help available by mapping. In this way we achieve more visibility in order to literally be able to support "lifting" business in the southern area and boosting the local economy." Rodríguez concluded. In addition to identifying needs, responses can be located with geolocation on a map. The results may serve the entities as a basis to align their resources and make the

greatest impact possible. The platform is updated live and can be viewed on a dashboard: http://bit.ly/levantatunegocio_dashboard [3]. In parallel, the Colmena66 team collects the aid available to entrepreneurs, businesses, merchants and startups in the south; and publishes them for more access on its website: <https://www.colmena66.com/es/levanta-tu-nego-pr> [4]

This effort has been supported by the Chamber of Commerce of the South with furniture for entrepreneurs. Other organizations have supported sending this survey among their members, such as Centro de Emprendedores, Echar Pa'Lante, Chamber of Commerce o Puerto Rico, Colegio de CPA, ACDET, AFAE, AIPR, Hecho en PR, Coalición del Sector Privado, Asociación de Industriales, Asociación de Constructores, Colegio de Ingenieros y Agrimensores de PR, Foundation for PR, Footprint, DANOSA, Multi Axis, Coqui Charities y Caribbean Preparedness and Response among others.

For additional information you can contact Gloriselle Torres, Coordinator at Ponce at (787) 675-9453, Annie Mustafa, RBI Program Manager at 787-635-5680 or Colmena66 at 787-525-4111.

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