

Toyota de Puerto Rico and Ciencia Puerto Rico announce alliance to strengthen STEM education in public schools across the Island

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Submitted on 15 December 2025 - 5:42pm

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In an effort to drive the development of the next generation of innovators, scientists, and engineers, Toyota de Puerto Rico and the nonprofit organization Ciencia Puerto Rico (CienciaPR) announced a strategic alliance to strengthen science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education in public high schools and specialized schools across Puerto Rico.

“At Toyota, we firmly believe that education is a powerful tool for transforming lives and communities. Through the Toyota STEM Laboratory, we aim to inspire young people to explore, create, and discover their potential in fields that are essential to Puerto Rico’s future. This partnership with CienciaPR fills us with pride because we know that together we are contributing to the development of capable, creative leaders who are committed to their country,” said Dany Oliva, Vice President of Toyota de Puerto Rico, highlighting the social importance of the initiative.

As part of this collaboration, both organizations launched the Toyota STEM Laboratory, an initiative designed for students to develop hands-on projects that promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving through STEM-based experiences.

“Our commitment is to democratize access to high-quality scientific experiences, and this collaboration with Toyota amplifies that mission. The Toyota STEM Laboratory gives students the opportunity to learn by doing, to apply scientific principles to real-world problems, and to build confidence in their ability to innovate. We are convinced that initiatives like this strengthen public education and open doors to future STEM professionals,” said Gretchen Díaz, Executive Director of Ciencia Puerto Rico, emphasizing the program’s educational and community impact.

A project to inspire the country's future engineers and scientists

During this first edition, 15 specialized and vocational public schools will participate in an engineering and robotics challenge that will culminate in the creation of a lightweight modular vehicle built primarily with recycled and/or eco-friendly materials. Students will apply key principles of design, balance, structural efficiency, responsible construction, and even marketing.

The vehicles designed by students will be evaluated across four main areas: structural efficiency, measuring the ratio between the load the vehicle can support and its total mass; modularity and mobility, requiring clearly defined modules (chassis, axles/wheels, cargo platform) and the ability to travel distances through programming; craftsmanship and reliability, assessing alignment, smooth motion, solidity of joints, and consistency during testing. The fourth pillar is sustainability, through the use of recyclable and/or eco-friendly materials promoted by the Laboratory, while the fifth pillar focuses on marketing, for which students must draw inspiration from the Toyota brand to name their vehicle and develop a slogan. In their final presentations, students must justify their choices and demonstrate the durability of the components.

Participating students will have three months to develop their projects. "Throughout the process, students will receive support from professionals in related fields who are part of Ciencia Puerto Rico. In this way, they benefit from mentorship that helps them develop skills while inspiring them to pursue further studies in these disciplines," explained Dr. Díaz.

Oliva concluded by highlighting Toyota's commitment to innovation at all levels. "The Toyota STEM Laboratory provides young people with a platform to innovate and create while exploring the operational side of managing a project. We trust that this initiative will serve as a springboard for many students who have the talent and desire to grow within the STEM world."

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