Published on *Ciencia Puerto Rico* (https://www.cienciapr.org)

The missing link of the Puerto Rican biosciences chain [1]

Submitted on 19 January 2007 - 4:38pm

This article is reproduced by CienciaPR with permission from the original source.

The Professional is a member of CienciaPR

CienciaPR Contribution:



By Mónica I. Feliú Mójer and Daniel Colón Ramos / Special for El Nuevo Día Puerto Rico is globally known as one of the centers with the highest concentration of talent and knowledge in the manufacture of biomedical products. Today, this industry generates more than 40,000 direct and 100,000 indirect jobs, and 28.6% of our national product. Fifteen out the twenty best-selling drugs in the world and 50% of defibrillators used in the U.S. are manufactured in the Island. This makes Puerto Rico the fifth leading region in pharmaceutical manufacturing –behind the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and France. Puerto Rico is a world-leader in the manufacture in the bioscences and this is very important for the Puerto Rican economy. However, manufacture is only a small link in the biosciences chain. In general this industry is divided in three big components: the initial discovery phase, known as Research and Development (R&D); manufacture and, finally, marketing and distribution. Puerto Rico is only a stronghold in the middle link of this value chain. The biosciences industry is extremely competitive and our survival in it depends on our capability to ascend in the value chain. And this can only be achieved in a sustainable manner by attracting R&D to the archipelago. Before reaching the public, biomedical products go through a long Research and Development (R&D) process. R&D is a creative process, whose main product are ideas and knowledge, known as “intellectual property”. These ideas and new knowledge sometimes give way to new technologies and discoveries, that once commercialized go to a mass production phase, or manufacture. In Puerto Rico we have developed manufacture vastly, but we have barely developed the most creative part of the biosciences industry: R&D. Manufacture, so important for our economy, depends entirely and its nurtured by the discoveries stemming from R&D. Because of this, manufacture is at mercy of R&D’s creative potential. This is reflected particularly in the closing of some pharmaceutical plants in Puerto Rico; once their major patents expire, they limit their manufacturing operations in the Island. To retain those industries and take full benefit of the biosciences industry growth, experts

agree that Puerto Rico need to capitalize on its leading manufacturing position and use it as a springboard to develop other sectors of the biosciences value chain, especially R&D. The development of R&D will grant independence and growth to Puerto Rican biosciences, based on its best resource: the creative capacities of its people. Additional to the economical benefits that R&D would bring, the development of this sector will benefit the academy, by facilitating collaborations with academic institutions in the country with the purpose of expanding and commercializing research that is relevant to the biosciences industry. These discoveries will result in the improvement of health services, resulting in a direct benefit to the Puerto Rican society. But, is Puerto Rico capable of competing with other countries to develop this industry? Everything depends on the decisions made in the upcoming years, but today Puerto Rico has a series of characteristics that make it an excellent candidate to attract and develop R&D activities. The quality of our academic institutions, our geo-political position and the close partnership with the pharmaceutical manufacture sector make Puerto Rico a good candidate for the development of R&D activities. However, if Puerto Rico wants to compete on global scale in the development of this industry, we need a series of incentives that make us competitive against other countries that have the same goal.

Copyright © 2006-Present CienciaPR and CAPRI, except where otherwise indicated, all rights reserved
Privacy | Terms | Community Norms | About CienciaPR | Contact Us

---

Source URL:https://www.cienciapr.org/en/external-news/missing-link-puerto-rican-biosciences-chain?language=en#comment-0

Links
[1] https://www.cienciapr.org/en/external-news/missing-link-puerto-rican-biosciences-chain?language=en