



**ARPA funding allocation will raise the
tourism marketing at competitive levels**

San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 3, 2021- American Rescue Plan Act funds (ARP), funds for tourism marketing will allow Puerto Rico to invest –for two years- a similar amount to those of our closest competitors, such as the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and Jamaica.

Under ARP, \$50 million will be used during 2022 and 2023 to expand the marketing campaign throughout the United States and boost promotions beyond the already developed international markets, said Leah Chandler, the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of Discover Puerto Rico, during a webinar in which the utilization of the federal funding was discussed.

These funds will be added to Discover Puerto Rico's fixed budget of \$ 25 million annually.

Brad Dean, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Discover Puerto Rico, explained that this increase in promotional funds occurs at a favorable juncture for Puerto Rico as the local tourism industry has experienced a phenomenal year with traveler spending hovering 19% more than in 2019. In the U.S, travel spending is 9% lower than 2019, according to U.S. Travel Association & Tourism Economics.

"While other tourist destinations are surviving, we are thriving. While our competitors are still well below the pre-pandemic levels, we are on our way to make 2021 a record year," Governor Pedro Pierluisi said during the event.

"This is a historic opportunity to continue the success of 2021 and take tourism in Puerto Rico to new levels," said the CEO of Discover Puerto Rico.

Chandler explained that the organization developed a plan to use the funds whose main objective is to stimulate economic development and, from the competitive advantages achieved during the pandemic, pave the way towards a domain of tourist markets.

"This time, we are not working on a comeback, but a takeover," explained Chandler.

The marketing executive explained that among the initiatives contemplated in the plan to use ARP funds is to develop a promotional campaign throughout the United States, not only the existing geographic markets targeted by the DMO.

Similarly, tourism promotion will delve into the niche of conscientious travelers seeking cultural experiences in connection with local communities. It will also promote the competitive advantages of Puerto Rico as a destination, including accessibility, the high rate of vaccinated population, and the cultural peculiarities that allow the destination to be perceived as an international destination for U.S. visitors.



Strategies are also being designed to promote Puerto Rico within the content distributed by streaming platforms such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon, create a Spanish version of the Discover Puerto Rico website and explore new niches among the Hispanic and African American communities. Efforts will be redoubled for visitors to explore the Island beyond the San Juan metropolitan area.

Chandler elaborated on the multiple strategies that will be developed to attract visitors. She explained that, at the local level, Discover Puerto Rico will use a portion of the funds to establish a program that will educate small business in municipalities to promote, align, and boost their offerings through digital platforms.

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