BioSpectrum the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

# Puerto Rico Is Positioning Itself as the Western Hemisphere's Next Biopharma Powerhouse

June 25, 2026 | Influencers | By Ankit Kankar | ankit.kankar@mmactiv.com

**At BIO International Convention 2026, Ella Woger-Nieves, CEO of Invest Puerto Rico, explains how decades of manufacturing expertise, multi-billion-dollar investments from Eli Lilly and Amgen, and a growing advanced therapeutics ecosystem are strengthening Puerto Rico's role in global biopharmaceutical innovation and supply-chain resilience.**


During the **BIO International Convention 2026** (June 22–25) in San Diego, **BioSpectrum Asia** spoke with **Ella Woger-Nieves, CEO of Invest Puerto Rico**, about the island's resurgence as one of the world's most strategic biopharmaceutical manufacturing destinations. She discusses how major investments, a highly skilled workforce, established FDA-regulated infrastructure, and emerging capabilities in cell and gene therapy are positioning Puerto Rico to move beyond its legacy as "America's Medicine Cabinet" and become a leading global hub for biopharmaceutical innovation, advanced manufacturing, and resilient supply chains.

**Puerto Rico has attracted significant pharmaceutical investments in recent years. What factors are driving renewed industry confidence in the island as a manufacturing hub?**

Puerto Rico's recent momentum is the result of a unique combination of experience, infrastructure, talent, and strategic positioning. For more than 70 years, the island has served as a cornerstone of pharmaceutical manufacturing, and today that legacy is supported by more than 70 FDA-approved manufacturing facilities operating under the security of the U.S. legal and regulatory framework. What makes Puerto Rico particularly attractive is that companies can access highly skilled talent, established manufacturing infrastructure, regulatory expertise, research institutions, and specialized industry partners within a single, connected ecosystem. Combined with our strategic location between North America, Europe, and Latin America, Puerto Rico offers a compelling platform for companies seeking both operational efficiency and long-term supply chain stability. As global manufacturers reevaluate where critical medicines are produced, we are seeing renewed recognition that Puerto Rico already possesses many of the capabilities companies are working to build elsewhere.

**How are recent expansions by Eli Lilly and Amgen influencing the broader life sciences ecosystem in Puerto Rico?**

The investments announced by Eli Lilly and Amgen represent more than $2 billion in combined commitments and send a powerful message to the global life sciences industry: Puerto Rico is both maintaining its leadership position in biopharma manufacturing and expanding it. Lilly's $1.2 billion investment in Carolina and Amgen's growing commitment in Juncos, which now approaches $1 billion across multiple announcements, reinforce the island's role as a strategic location for advanced manufacturing and biologics production. Beyond the direct economic impact, these projects help accelerate workforce development, attract suppliers and service providers, encourage additional investment, and create new opportunities for collaboration across academia, industry, and government. When companies of this scale continue to invest in Puerto Rico, it strengthens confidence throughout our ecosystem and validates the island's competitiveness for future generations of biopharmaceutical innovation.

Eli Lilly's $1.2 billion investment in Carolina will support the production of its next-generation oral obesity treatment, helping meet global demand for innovative therapies in one of the fastest-growing segments of the pharmaceutical industry. Meanwhile, Amgen's investments in Juncos, including a $650 million expansion announced in 2025 and an additional $300 million commitment in 2026, will increase production capacity for biologic medicines manufactured at one of the largest and most sophisticated biotechnology facilities in the world. The Juncos site produces therapies used to treat cancer, inflammatory diseases, bone health conditions, and other serious illnesses for patients in more than 60 countries.

**What role can Puerto Rico play in strengthening pharmaceutical supply-chain resilience for the US and global markets?**

Puerto Rico is uniquely positioned to help strengthen pharmaceutical supply chains because it combines the advantages of U.S. jurisdiction with a mature manufacturing ecosystem that already operates at global scale. One of the greatest challenges companies face when reshoring production is developing a workforce with experience in highly regulated manufacturing environments. Puerto Rico already has that expertise. Companies can access professionals skilled in quality systems, compliance, validation, engineering, and advanced manufacturing without having to build those capabilities from scratch. Recent investments from Eli Lilly and Amgen illustrate how major manufacturers view Puerto Rico as a long-term solution for increasing production capacity while improving supply chain security. As governments and industry leaders work to reduce vulnerabilities in the production of critical medicines, we offer a proven platform where innovation, manufacturing excellence, and operational resilience already exist.

**Which emerging areas of biotechnology and advanced therapeutics are seeing the greatest momentum on the island?**

While Puerto Rico remains a global leader in pharmaceutical manufacturing, we are increasingly seeing growth in areas such as cell and gene therapy, advanced biologics, and other next-generation therapeutic platforms. Organizations like OcyonBio are helping establish specialized capabilities for gene and cell therapy commercialization, while companies such as Ceria Therapeutics, a preclinical biopharmaceutical company, are developing novel RNA-based therapeutics to treat life-threatening inflammatory conditions. By targeting the underlying causes of dysregulated immune responses, the company aims to restore the body's natural healing processes.

What excites me most is the convergence of scientific research, entrepreneurial activity, and manufacturing expertise. Our universities, research centers, and innovation-focused organizations are creating an environment where companies can access scientific talent and advanced production capabilities within the same ecosystem. This positions the island to play a larger role in manufacturing medicines and developing the therapies that will define the future of healthcare.

**What is your long-term vision for Puerto Rico's position within the global biopharmaceutical value chain?**

Our long-term vision is for Puerto Rico to become the premier reshoring hub for biopharmaceutical innovation and advanced manufacturing in the Western Hemisphere. We envision an ecosystem where research, development, commercialization, and large-scale manufacturing operate seamlessly together, supported by digital technologies, world-class talent, and resilient infrastructure. Puerto Rico has long been known as America's Medicine Cabinet, but the next chapter is about expanding that role beyond manufacturing alone. We want to be recognized as a place where companies can innovate, scale, and produce life-saving therapies while serving both U.S. and global markets. The continued investments we are seeing today from industry leaders such as Eli Lilly and Amgen reinforce our belief that Puerto Rico is well-positioned to become one of the most important biopharmaceutical hubs in the world.