

## THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF PUERTO RICO

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Welcome to the Biblioteca Nacional de Puerto Rico, the National Library of Puerto Rico.

The General Library of Puerto Rico, now the National was created by law in 1967, as part of the Instituto de Puertorriqueña (Institute of Puerto Rican Culture). It was founded by Dr. Ricardo Alegría, the first director of the Institute.

Although operating as a public library, from the beginning collection was more akin to that of a national library.

Enriched by a wise selection of materials and spectacular donations from writers and intellectuals, it always had a very rich collection of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century works from Puerto Rico. The printing press arrived in Puerto Rico relatively late, in 1806, and the collection of rare books, dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is in very good condition. In August 17, 2003, through Law 187, the library became the National Library of Puerto Rico, under the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture.

In 1973 the library building that dates from with its sister program, Institute of Puerto Rican Archives of Puerto Rico. hospital by the Spanish became a prison.

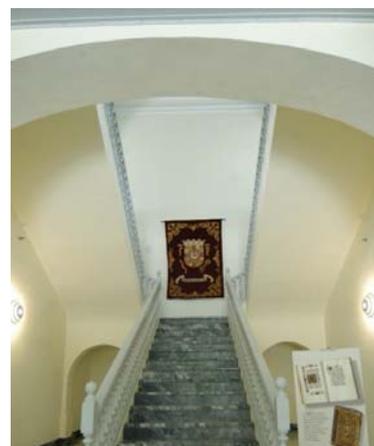


opened in a reconstructed 1877 and which it shares under the aegis of the Culture: the General Original designed as a civil government, the building

After the Spanish-American war of 1898, it became the Porto Rico Tobacco Company. Later it became the Bacardi Rum factory, finally being bought by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture.

It is a classical 19<sup>th</sup> century building, but when entering the building the visitor finds himself the 21<sup>st</sup> century: newly reconstructed in 2007, showcases the latest information technology, steel and marble contrasting with its thick walls and beautiful arches, its two inside patios and what originally was a chapel.

The Library has several collections: Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico Rare Books, General, General Rare Books, Reference, Quick Reference, Vertical Archive, Newspapers and Journals, and the Dominican Collection – leather-bound books from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century, mostly religious. It has recently opened a Sala de Literatura Infantil - a children's room that specializes in Puerto Rican literature. It also houses two special collections: the Sala Eugenio María de Hostos with an extensive collection of works by



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and about this eminent Puerto Rican, including more than 1,300 manuscripts that have been digitalized, and the Casa Biblioteca Concha Meléndez not far in the Condado area, which houses the private collection of this literary critic and late professor of the University of Puerto Rico. Its catalogue can be accessed at the following address: [www.icp.gobierno.pr](http://www.icp.gobierno.pr).

The building is located between Old San Juan – the colonial city – and the Puerto Rico Convention Center, where the 77<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Libraries and Information of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions will take place. It is a very short ride away. It faces the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park and from its windows you can see the bay. It is fully air-conditioned and has free Internet access.

The Library and Archives share a 119 seat amphitheatre at street level where each one has its individual side desk, with an unobstructed view. It does not have a room large enough for a U shaped arrangement of tables for 90 people, so we suggest the use of the amphitheatre.



It has a comfortable stage for lectures with its lectern and microphone, its rear wall painted for video projection. On stage a head table can be placed with all needed chairs. The country flags can be set at the chairs or at a table on stage. Shared microphones will be placed conveniently around the amphitheatre, but not between every 2 members.



Leading to the amphitheatre, there is a wide gallery where registration tables can be placed. There are several smaller meeting rooms in the building that can be used for break-out groups, as needed. Printing and copying can be done at the administration offices in the third level. The

institute of Puerto Rican Culture professional photographer will be present during the activity. A small number of display panels can be rented for the occasion, as needed.

There are wide galleries where refreshments can be placed. A buffet lunch can be arranged, and will take care of cultural requirements if advanced information is given.



An informal reception following the meeting can be arranged, preferably in the patio under tents. A local music presentation will be included. The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture store at the premises will be open for the delegates to have the opportunity to see local crafts and be able to browse the books and magazines printed by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture Press.

The team of assistants is fluent in Spanish, many are also fluent in English and one speaks French. A technical support person in attendance throughout the meeting can be arranged.

The National Library of Puerto Rico is looking forward to host the Conference of Directors of National Libraries in 2011 in our beautiful island. We welcome you with open arms, hoping to provide the right setting for an unforgettable meeting, experiencing our Caribbean culture and the pleasures of the common purpose of the preservation and accessibility of information for all.