Artificial Intelligence
Sector Briefing

National AI Strategy | AI Adoption | Sovereign Compute | Canadian Procurement

Prepared by

NORTHERN ARC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

June 2026

CONFIDENTIAL

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> *"We will reinforce Canadian sovereignty so Canadians can make their own choices on how AI is built, governed, and used."*
>
> **The Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada**
>
> AI for All Launch, Toronto | June 4, 2026

$200B	250,000	60%	$500M
Targeted Economic Growth	New AI-Related Jobs	AI Adoption Target by 2034	Canadian Tech Growth Fund

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Executive Summary

On June 4, 2026, Prime Minister Carney launched AI for All, Canada's national artificial intelligence strategy, in Toronto. The strategy targets an additional $200 billion in economic growth, 250,000 new AI-related jobs over five years, and a rise in business AI adoption from just over 12 percent to 60 percent by 2034. It commits roughly $2 billion in new federal investment and names the levers that matter to Canadian companies: a $500 million Canadian Tech Growth Fund that provides growth capital and lets the government take equity stakes in promising firms, a $700 million top-up that brings the AI Compute Access Fund to $1 billion, federal procurement positioned as a strategic anchor customer, and protections for Canadian intellectual property. For Canadian companies that build or apply AI, this is the most consequential federal moment the sector has seen.

The strategy rests on an uncomfortable admission. Canada has world-class talent and one of the fastest-growing digital sectors in the G7, yet it is among the slowest countries to deploy AI at scale. Roughly 12 percent of Canadian businesses used AI between mid-2024 and mid-2025, and only about 8 percent of small and medium-sized enterprises have adopted it, well behind Nordic leaders, Germany, and France. The government has named closing that gap a national priority. A company that demonstrably helps close it is not seeking funding. It is delivering on a mandate Ottawa has set for itself, and that distinction changes how a file is received inside a minister's office.

This briefing maps the federal funding and positioning landscape for Canadian companies in the artificial intelligence and applied-technology sector. It outlines a strategic roadmap to capture $3 million to $20 million in non-repayable contributions, repayable financing, and tax credits over 6 to 12 months, plus equity co-investment through the Canadian Tech Growth Fund. Northern Arc's value is not paperwork. It is the political positioning at the ministerial, Deputy Minister, and PMO level that determines which files are understood as strategic before the decisions are made, and which companies become the ones Ottawa points to when it needs to show that its AI strategy is working.

Part One covers the highest-value federal programs for AI companies: the Canadian Tech Growth Fund, the Strategic Innovation Fund, NRC IRAP, the Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative, the first AI Missions Program, the AI Compute Access Fund, Mitacs and NSERC partnerships, BDC capital and advisory, SR&ED, and CanExport. Part Two covers the ministerial portfolios where positioning matters: AI and Digital Innovation (Solomon), Industry (Joly), Finance (Champagne), and the Regional Development Agencies. Part Three covers provincial stacking programs and international market pathways through Canada's trusted-partner AI agreements.

WHAT MAKES CANADIAN AI COMPANIES DIFFERENT

Named in the national strategy. AI for All identifies adoption across priority sectors, including health, energy, transportation, agriculture, manufacturing, robotics, and government services, as a federal objective. Companies working in these sectors map directly to a stated national priority rather than a discretionary program.

Government as customer. The strategy positions federal procurement as a strategic anchor customer for Canadian AI firms and pairs it with the Buy Canadian policy. Procurement is written into the strategy itself, not treated as a side conversation.

Equity is on the table. The $500 million Canadian Tech Growth Fund provides growth capital and lets the government take equity stakes in promising Canadian AI firms, a financing posture that did not exist before June 2026.

Sovereign foundations. Compute, data, and intellectual property protections are treated as national infrastructure. Companies that strengthen Canadian control of these foundations advance the core of the strategy.

CANADA'S AI SOVEREIGNTY: THE NATIONAL ARGUMENT

Prime Minister Carney has been explicit that Canada will reinforce its sovereignty so Canadians can decide how AI is built, governed, and used. The strategy reflects a recognition that Canadian researchers train models on foreign platforms, Canadian companies hold sensitive data in foreign jurisdictions, and too many Canadian scale-ups relocate before they reach their potential.

The government's answer pairs sovereign compute and Canadian growth capital with a build-first procurement posture and deeper partnerships with trusted allies. For a Canadian AI company, the strategic logic is direct: a firm that frames its work as a sovereignty solution, keeping talent, data, and intellectual property in Canada, reaches Ministers differently than a firm seeking a contribution agreement.

THE COMPETITIVE GAP: WHY URGENCY MATTERS

Canadian AI companies with early validation, real commercial traction, and defensible intellectual property are precisely the profile AI for All was written to accelerate. But validation alone does not capture funding. Most companies engage at the program-administrator level, submit through portals, and wait.

Comparable Canadian companies are securing $3 million to $20 million through the Strategic Innovation Fund, the Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative, IRAP, and Mitacs, plus equity through the new Canadian Tech Growth Fund. A national strategy opens a window. In the months after a launch, decision-makers actively decide which firms exemplify the strategy they have just announced.

The question is not whether your company deserves this support. The question is whether your company will be understood as strategic before the window closes.

AI Adoption: The National Gap

The adoption target is the heart of the strategy and the clearest signal for companies. Moving national AI adoption from just over 12 percent to 60 percent by 2034 is a fivefold increase in under a decade, and it cannot happen without the government pulling AI into the priority sectors it has named. Health, energy, agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, and the government's own services are now stated federal deployment priorities. A company solving a real problem in one of these sectors is solving a problem the government has publicly committed to solving, which is the strongest position from which to engage.

How Federal Decisions Are Actually Made

Before examining specific programs, it is essential to understand how federal decisions actually happen. Program guidelines describe eligibility criteria and application processes. They do not describe how decisions are made. The gap between formal process and actual decision-making is where opportunities are won or lost.

The Three Levels of Federal Decision-Making

Political Level: Ministers and Ministerial Staff. Ministers set strategic priorities for their departments. Minister Solomon at AI and Digital Innovation shapes how the national AI strategy is delivered and which companies represent it. Minister Joly at Industry decides which firms are national innovation champions. Ministerial staff filter what reaches the Minister and shape how issues are framed. When a Minister's office understands that a company represents strategic value, that understanding flows through the department.

Bureaucratic Level: Deputy Ministers and ADMs. Deputy Ministers and Assistant Deputy Ministers manage departmental operations and evaluate technical merit. They assess whether files meet criteria and make recommendations to Ministers. A technically sound file that aligns with departmental priorities receives favourable evaluation. The bureaucratic level ensures that political interest translates into defensible decisions.

Central Agency Level: The Prime Minister's Office. The PMO coordinates across departments and ensures alignment with the government's economic and sovereignty strategy. PM Carney has made AI adoption and sovereign industrial capacity centrepieces of his mandate. When the PMO understands that a company is essential to closing the adoption gap or to Canadian AI sovereignty, that understanding shapes how multiple departments approach the file.

Why Alignment Matters

These three levels must be aligned for significant outcomes. A Minister may express interest, but if Deputy Ministers do not see technical merit, the file stalls. A Deputy Minister may recommend support, but if the Minister's office does not see political value, the file sits. Both may align, but if the PMO holds different priorities, interdepartmental coordination fails. Most companies engage only with program administrators who process applications. Northern Arc ensures that when a file reaches a decision point, the political level has already identified the company as strategically important, the bureaucratic level has assessed it favourably, and the PMO understands how supporting it advances national priorities.

Part One: Federal Funding Programs

The federal government has committed unprecedented resources to AI adoption, commercialization, and sovereign capacity. The following programs represent the highest-value opportunities for Canadian AI and applied-technology companies, with a combined target of $3 million to $20 million over 6 to 12 months, plus equity co-investment through the Canadian Tech Growth Fund.

Program	Type	Target Amount	Timeline
Canadian Tech Growth Fund ($500M)	Equity / growth capital	**$5M+**	Deploying 2026
Strategic Innovation Fund	Non-repayable / repayable	**$5M – $20M**	Ongoing
NRC IRAP (Core)	Non-repayable	**$250K – $1M**	Rolling
Regional AI Initiative (RAII, $200M)	Repayable, interest-free	**$250K – $5M**	To Dec 31, 2028
AI Missions Program (health first)	Non-repayable	**$1M – $10M**	First mission 2026
AI Compute Access Fund ($1B)	Compute support	**Variable**	Expanded, ongoing
BDC Capital (deep tech / growth)	Venture / lending	**$1M – $10M**	Ongoing

Mitacs and NSERC Alliance	Non-repayable (research)	**$200K – $1M**	Rolling
CanExport SMEs	Non-repayable	**$30K – $50K**	To Aug 31, 2026
SR&ED + Provincial Credits	Tax credit	**$200K – $500K/yr**	Ongoing
COMBINED FUNDING TARGET		**$3M – $20M + equity**	

Canadian Tech Growth Fund

CANADIAN TECH GROWTH FUND: $500 MILLION, GROWTH CAPITAL AND EQUITY

Announced within AI for All on June 4, 2026, the Canadian Tech Growth Fund provides flexible growth capital and lets the federal government take equity stakes, at times, in the most promising Canadian AI firms. The Fund is designed to help companies attract private capital, compete globally, and retain their talent and intellectual property in Canada. It is the marquee new financing instrument of the strategy and a clear signal of how the government intends to back national champions.

Why Canadian Companies Qualify: Canadian AI scale-ups with commercial traction, defensible IP, and a credible path to global growth, whose financing needs are too large for standard SME instruments yet not yet met by private capital at scale, match the Fund's stated purpose.

What Northern Arc Does: Position the company's file with the Fund's office and Minister Champagne's office. Frame the project within the sovereignty and national-champion mandate. The Fund's deployment is being established now, and engagement during this formation period is how a company is understood as a co-investment candidate before formal processes are set.

Target: $5 million and above in growth capital and equity. Timeline: deploying 2026.

Strategic Innovation Fund

The Strategic Innovation Fund supports large-scale research, development, and commercialization projects that strengthen Canada's industrial and technology base. For AI companies with significant Canadian R&D, job creation, and intellectual property, the Fund provides contributions at a scale that smaller programs cannot match, and it is a natural pairing with the Tech Growth Fund for scale-up stage firms.

Why Canadian Companies Qualify: Canadian AI firms with substantial R&D activity, a strong job-creation profile, and IP developed and held in Canada match the Fund's industrial-benefit and innovation criteria.

What Northern Arc Does: Position the file with Minister Joly's office and ISED senior officials as a Canadian technology champion, and ensure the project's economic and sovereignty benefits are understood before evaluation.

Target: $5 million to $20 million. Timeline: ongoing.

NRC IRAP and Core Innovation Funding

The National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program provides advisory support and non-repayable funding to Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises pursuing technology development and commercialization. For-profit AI companies engage through Core IRAP and its

Industrial Technology Advisor network. The dedicated AI Assist stream is reserved for not-for-profit organizations and is not the pathway for for-profit firms.

Why Canadian Companies Qualify: Canadian AI SMEs developing or commercializing technology, with the capacity to grow Canadian jobs and IP, match the Core IRAP profile.

What Northern Arc Does: The Industrial Technology Advisor relationship belongs to the client. Northern Arc engages NRC's national program office and the ISED ministerial level to ensure the company's file has visibility before the advisor engagement begins, and aligns the R&D framing with parallel federal programs.

Target: $250,000 to $1 million. Timeline: rolling intake.

Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative (RAII)

The Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative is a $200 million federal program delivered through Canada's Regional Development Agencies to speed AI commercialization and adoption in priority sectors including agriculture, clean technology, health, and manufacturing. It offers $250,000 to $5 million per project on continuous intake until December 31, 2028. For-profit recipients receive repayable, interest-free contributions of up to 50 percent of eligible costs.

Why Canadian Companies Qualify: AI firms productizing or commercializing technology, or helping businesses adopt AI in the named priority sectors, sit squarely within the RAII mandate.

What Northern Arc Does: Engage the relevant Regional Development Agency and the RDA Minister's office, and align the AI productization framing with Minister Solomon's national strategy so the file is understood as advancing the adoption target.

Target: $250,000 to $5 million. Timeline: continuous intake to December 31, 2028.

AI Missions Program

AI for All establishes the first AI Missions Program, a focused national effort to apply AI to a defined public challenge. The flagship mission targets health, including diagnostics, patient care, and system efficiency, and opens with a reported initial commitment of $200 million. The mission model is designed to bring Canadian companies, researchers, and institutions together around outcomes the government has prioritized.

Why Canadian Companies Qualify: AI companies with technology applied to health outcomes, or to future mission areas as they are announced, are the intended participants in the program.

What Northern Arc Does: Ensure the company's capability is understood at Minister Solomon's office and among the mission leads, and position the firm for inclusion as the first mission takes shape.

Target: $1 million to $10 million, mission-based. Timeline: first mission 2026.

AI Compute Access Fund

AI for All adds a $700 million top-up to the AI Compute Access Fund, bringing it to $1 billion, and pairs it with support for domestic data centres and a planned public AI supercomputer. The Fund lowers the cost of the compute capacity Canadian researchers and companies need, which the strategy treats as sovereign national infrastructure rather than a discretionary subsidy.

Why Canadian Companies Qualify: AI firms with significant training or inference compute requirements, particularly those keeping data and workloads in Canada, align with the Fund's sovereign-compute purpose.

What Northern Arc Does: Ensure the company's compute requirements and Canadian footprint are understood within the sovereign-compute mandate and connected to the right program officials as the expanded Fund deploys.

Target: variable compute support. Timeline: expanded under AI for All, ongoing.

Mitacs and NSERC Alliance

Mitacs and the NSERC Alliance program fund applied research carried out with Canadian universities, a strong fit for AI companies advancing models, data methods, or applied tooling. Mitacs can be engaged directly through public intake, and its business-development advisors handle guidance and university partner matching at no cost. The NSERC Alliance contribution is contingent on a formal university research partnership.

What Northern Arc Does: Ensure Mitacs and Alliance project descriptions align with the company's R&D framing across IRAP and the Strategic Innovation Fund, so the federal narrative is consistent rather than fragmented.

Target: $200,000 to $1 million combined. Timeline: rolling intake, contingent on a university research partnership for NSERC.

BDC Assessment: Lending, Capital, and Advisory

The Business Development Bank of Canada complements the contribution programs above with capital and advisory support, and a BDC engagement also signals federal confidence that reinforces every other file in the pipeline. Three vehicles are most relevant to AI companies.

BDC Capital, Deep Technology and Growth. BDC Capital invests equity in Canadian deep-technology and high-growth companies, including AI firms with strong IP and a credible scale-up trajectory. It can lead or join financing rounds alongside private investors.

BDC Growth and Scale-Up Financing. Flexible lending for companies scaling commercial operations, suitable for AI firms investing in talent, data infrastructure, and go-to-market capacity ahead of profitability.

BDC Advisory Services. Advisory support in areas such as technology adoption, scaling, and international expansion, which strengthens a company's readiness profile across federal programs.

Northern Arc facilitates introduction to the relevant BDC teams and aligns the engagement with the company's federal narrative. BDC capacity is additional to the combined contribution target stated above.

SR&ED and Provincial R&D Credits

As a technology company with active research and development, your company is likely already claiming SR&ED and provincial R&D tax credits. We include this for completeness. The federal program provides a 35 percent refundable credit on the first $6 million in qualifying expenditures, a threshold Budget 2025 doubled from $3 million, and 15 percent beyond that. Provincial credits stack with the federal claim: Ontario offers the OTC at 8 percent on the first $3 million and the ORDTC at 3.5 percent; Quebec offers the CRIC at 30 percent on the first $3 million and 20 percent beyond; Alberta offers the Innovation Employment Grant at 20 percent of qualifying R&D; and British Columbia offers a provincial SR&ED

component. Combined, the federal and provincial stack can return roughly 40 to 55 percent of eligible R&D expenditures annually.

Target: $200,000 to $500,000 annually. Timeline: ongoing, claims due 18 months after fiscal year-end.

CanExport SMEs

CanExport SMEs provides up to $50,000 per project at 50 percent cost-share to support Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises entering new international markets. For AI companies pursuing customers, partners, or pilots in allied markets, CanExport covers eligible market-development costs. The current intake is open until August 31, 2026, at noon Eastern.

What Northern Arc Does: Align the company's international expansion plan with the Trade Commissioner Service in target markets and ensure timing fits the broader federal engagement.

Target: $30,000 to $50,000. Timeline: open until August 31, 2026.

Key Dates and Deadlines

Date	Milestone
Now	AI for All deployment underway; program parameters being set
Now	Canadian Tech Growth Fund deployment being established; engage during formation
Ongoing	NRC IRAP rolling intake; RAII continuous intake to December 31, 2028
2026	First AI Mission (health) takes shape; AI Compute Access Fund expanded to $1B
August 31, 2026	CanExport SMEs intake closes (noon ET)
Ongoing	Strategic Innovation Fund; BDC Capital and lending; Mitacs and NSERC Alliance
Ongoing	SR&ED claims due 18 months after company fiscal year-end

Part Two: Federal Departments and Positioning

Understanding which federal ministries hold mandates aligned with your company's capabilities is essential for strategic positioning. The goal is not just to apply for programs, but to ensure that when a file arrives at a decision point, decision-makers already understand why the company matters.

AI and Digital Innovation

PRIORITY: HIGH | Minister: Evan Solomon | Mandate: National AI strategy, sovereign AI, FedDev Ontario. Minister Solomon is Canada's first Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, and he leads delivery of AI for All. The strategy needs visible proof of progress: companies whose technology demonstrates adoption, sovereignty, and Canadian commercial scale. Minister Solomon also holds responsibility for FedDev Ontario, which pairs the national strategy with a regional delivery channel.

What Northern Arc Does: Establish an early relationship with Minister Solomon's office, position the company for inclusion in strategy delivery and the first AI Mission, and pursue a ministerial roundtable on applied AI where it fits the company's profile.

Innovation, Science and Economic Development

PRIORITY: HIGH | Minister: Mélanie Joly | Mandate: IRAP, Strategic Innovation Fund, NSERC, innovation ecosystem. ISED oversees Canada's core innovation funding, including IRAP, the Strategic Innovation Fund, NSERC, and the AI commercialization ecosystem anchored by the national AI institutes. Minister Joly's mandate centres on building Canadian technology champions and translating AI strength into economic outcomes.

What Northern Arc Does: Position the company with Minister Joly's office and ISED senior officials as a Canadian technology champion, and align Strategic Innovation Fund and IRAP framing so the company presents one consistent story.

Finance Canada and the Canadian Tech Growth Fund

PRIORITY: HIGH for scale-up stage | Minister: François-Philippe Champagne | Mandate: Canadian Tech Growth Fund. For AI companies at scale-up stage, the Canadian Tech Growth Fund creates a federal co-investment pathway that did not exist before June 2026. The Fund's governance and engagement processes are being established now, and the formation period is when a company's file is identified as a co-investment candidate.

What Northern Arc Does: Engage Minister Champagne's office and the Fund's office to frame the company within the national-champion mandate and connect it to the co-investment process before formal intake is announced.

Regional Development Agencies

PRIORITY: HIGH | Each RDA delivers RAII and ecosystem programs. PrairiesCan, FedDev Ontario, PacifiCan, and the other Regional Development Agencies deliver the Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative and complementary ecosystem programs. Each agency has regional staff who evaluate files and regional Ministers who set priorities.

What Northern Arc Does: Introduce the company to the relevant RDA's regional leadership and position the file with the RDA Minister's office so it is understood as a regional economic-development priority.

Federal Engagement Summary

Department	Priority	Minister	Key Opportunity
AI & Digital Innovation	HIGH	Evan Solomon	AI strategy, AI Missions, FedDev Ontario
ISED	HIGH	Mélanie Joly	IRAP, Strategic Innovation Fund, NSERC
Finance Canada	HIGH	FP Champagne	Canadian Tech Growth Fund equity
Regional Dev. Agencies	HIGH	Various	RAII, ecosystem streams

Part Three: Provincial Stacking and International Markets

Provincial programs stack with federal funding and strengthen positioning across multiple streams. Canada's trusted-partner AI agreements create international pathways that reinforce a domestic federal file.

Alberta. Alberta Innovates delivers named streams including digital innovation, and the Innovation Employment Grant returns 20 percent on qualifying R&D, stacking with federal SR&ED. Amii, the province's national AI institute, anchors a growing Edmonton and Calgary AI ecosystem.

Ontario. The Vector Institute anchors Canada's largest AI research cluster. Ontario's research credits, the OTC and ORDTC, stack with federal SR&ED, and the province actively coordinates with ISED on technology investment attraction.

Quebec. Mila and the Scale AI global innovation cluster make Quebec a centre of Canadian AI. The CRIC refundable research credit stacks with federal SR&ED and the province offers complementary commercialization support.

British Columbia. Innovate BC supports technology company growth, and the strategy's first wave of new data centres includes British Columbia, strengthening the case for compute-intensive AI firms based in the province.

International Markets. Canada has signed a series of AI partnerships with trusted allies, including the Sovereign Technology Alliance with Germany and agreements covering research, talent, compute, and procurement with the European Union, the United Kingdom, Australia, and others. These create market and partnership pathways that strengthen a company's domestic federal positioning. CanExport, Export Development Canada, and the Trade Commissioner Service support Canadian AI firms pursuing allied markets.

Why Canadian AI Companies Are Positioned to Succeed

The Strategy Names the Sectors. For the first time, the federal government has named the priority sectors where it intends to drive AI adoption. A company working in one of them is aligned with a stated national objective rather than competing for a discretionary program.

Government Has Named Itself a Customer. Federal procurement is written into the strategy as a strategic anchor customer for Canadian AI firms and paired with the Buy Canadian policy. Procurement positioning is now part of the national strategy.

Capital Includes Equity. The Canadian Tech Growth Fund provides growth capital and lets the government take equity stakes, a posture that signals commercial confidence and helps firms attract private investment and retain IP in Canada.

The Funding Ecosystem Is Aligned. The Tech Growth Fund, the expanded AI Compute Access Fund, the first AI Mission, RAII, IRAP, and the Strategic Innovation Fund opened or expanded within a single strategy. The coordinated federal investment in AI has no recent precedent.

POLITICAL VALUE: WHY SUPPORTING CANADIAN AI COMPANIES IS A WIN FOR GOVERNMENT

PM Carney has committed to closing Canada's AI adoption gap and to reinforcing Canadian sovereignty over how AI is built and used. Supporting Canadian AI companies checks every political box at once: high-paying technology jobs across the country, productivity gains in priority sectors, sovereign control of compute and data, and visible proof that the national strategy is working.

When Minister Solomon needs a Canadian AI success story for the strategy, when Minister Joly needs a technology champion, and when the PMO needs evidence that adoption is rising, the companies Northern

> Arc positions are the ones they should be pointing to.

What Northern Arc Public Affairs Brings

Northern Arc exists to align political will with bureaucratic process. We ensure that when federal decisions are made, our clients are the answer that Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and the PMO have already agreed upon.

Hon. Kent Hehr, P.C., LL.B., Principal. Kent served as a Cabinet Minister in the Government of Canada. He sat at the Cabinet table where funding decisions are approved, policy directions are set, and departmental mandates are shaped. He understands how Ministers think, what they respond to, and how to frame an issue for political support at the highest levels.

Abed Harb, Managing Partner. Abed served in the Prime Minister's Calgary Regional Office and as Director and Senior Advisor to multiple Ministers. He spent eight years navigating federal decision-making at the highest levels and understands how the PMO coordinates national economic strategy and how to ensure alignment across departments.

What We Do

Ministerial Engagement. We engage directly with the Ministers responsible for the files that matter to our clients: Solomon at AI and Digital Innovation, Joly at Industry, Champagne at Finance, and the relevant Regional Development Agency Minister. We ensure ministerial offices understand why each client represents strategic Canadian capability.

Deputy Minister and ADM Engagement. We engage with the senior officials who evaluate technical merit and make recommendations, ensuring they understand each client's technology and its alignment with departmental priorities.

PMO Engagement. We maintain dialogue with the Prime Minister's Office to frame our clients' growth as essential to national priorities: AI adoption, sovereign compute and data, and Canadian commercial scale.

Positioning and Coordination. We advise on timing and narrative across multiple programs so each client presents one consistent story to federal decision-makers.

> **THE NARRATIVE WE WILL ADVANCE**
>
> “This is a Canadian company building and applying AI that the national strategy was written to support. Canadian talent, Canadian data, Canadian intellectual property. Technology that closes the adoption gap in a priority sector and keeps sovereign capability in Canada. When the Prime Minister says prosperity will belong to the nations that build AI on their own terms, this is a company helping Canada do exactly that.”

Engagement Timeline and Deliverables

Months 1 to 2: Foundation and Immediate Priorities. Deliver a tailored federal opportunities briefing identifying every program the company qualifies for, with a sequenced engagement strategy and combined funding target. Initiate ministerial contact across AI and Digital Innovation, ISED, and the relevant Regional Development Agency. Begin positioning for the Strategic Innovation Fund, IRAP, and RAII, and open the Canadian Tech Growth Fund conversation for scale-up stage clients.

Months 3 to 4: Building Momentum. Advance from introduction to substantive engagement with ministerial offices. Position the company for the first AI Mission where its capability fits, and pursue a cross-ministerial roundtable bringing together AI and Digital Innovation, ISED, and the relevant RDA. Deepen relationships at the Deputy Minister and ADM level.

Months 5 to 6: Consolidation. Ensure the company's file is understood across all relevant departments, not just the primary funding department. Build PMO-level understanding of the company's strategic value to the national AI strategy. Monitor new program parameters and Budget 2027 commitments as they take shape.

Investment and Expected Return

Northern Arc Public Affairs works on a monthly retainer of $10,000 plus applicable taxes. The initial engagement period is six months, providing sufficient time to deliver a tailored federal opportunities briefing, establish ministerial relationships across all relevant portfolios, position for priority programs, and begin PMO awareness building.

The agreement includes a 30-day termination clause, meaning either party may cancel at any time with 30 days notice. After six months, the agreement continues month to month. New AI programs and parameters are being announced continuously, and ongoing engagement ensures clients capture emerging opportunities as they arise.

ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

Federal engagement is not a one-time event. It is an ongoing relationship. Maintaining ministerial awareness as staff turn over, reinforcing positioning as new program parameters are set, and adapting to policy changes all require sustained presence. The foundational work of the first six months creates relationships. Ongoing engagement maintains and leverages them as funding opportunities crystallize.

A six-month initial engagement totaling $60,000 targets $3 million to $20 million in non-repayable contributions, repayable financing, and tax credits, plus equity co-investment through the Canadian Tech Growth Fund. Even at the conservative end of this range, the return on engagement is substantial. Beyond direct financial return, federal recognition provides strategic advantages: easier private capital attraction, since a federal engagement signals confidence; credibility with partners and customers; and consideration for opportunities that never reach a formal application process.

Conclusion

AI for All represents the most consequential federal policy shift for Canadian AI companies in a generation. The strategy targets $200 billion in economic growth, 250,000 new AI-related jobs, and a rise in adoption from just over 12 percent to 60 percent by 2034. It pairs a $500 million Canadian Tech Growth Fund with a $1 billion AI Compute Access Fund, the first AI Missions Program, and federal procurement positioned as a strategic anchor customer. The instruments are new, and their parameters are being set now.

The gap is not eligibility. Canadian AI companies qualify for multiple programs at once. The gap is positioning. Companies that submit through portals and wait are competing against companies that have already built ministerial awareness, aligned their narrative with the strategy's priorities, and established the political groundwork that turns a technically sound file into a funded one. Northern Arc provides that positioning across ministerial offices, the Regional Development Agencies, and the PMO. The target is $3 million to $20 million in federal support over 6 to 12 months, plus equity co-investment through the Canadian Tech Growth Fund. The window is open now.

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