

AI Governance at Last? Insights into *AI for All*

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Canada's new artificial intelligence (AI) strategy (the **Strategy**), [AI for All](#), focuses on bolstering AI use and development in Canada.¹ Released June 4, 2026, the Strategy outlines the federal government's plan to introduce policies and programs that support the proliferation of AI across many areas of Canadian life. It is ambitious, attending to a wide range of outcomes, including economic growth and cross-sector innovation.

AI adoption in Canada has lagged behind that of its peers in the G7 and beyond. A principal imperative of the Strategy is to stoke broader AI uptake and literacy in Canada.

While the Strategy discloses the federal government's intention to expand regulatory oversight, it has been criticized for lacking important particulars. It remains to be seen how the federal government will balance safety, privacy, and innovation as it rolls out the Strategy.

The New Directives: An Overview

The Strategy, which aims to foster trust, provide opportunity and safeguard sovereignty, is built on six pillars:

1. **Protecting Canadians and safeguarding democracy:** measures will be taken by the federal government to combat misinformation, including a pledge of \$50M for an expansion of the Canadian AI Safety Institute's operations.
2. **Ensuring AI empowers Canadians:** the federal government will fund programs that provide free AI literacy training for the Canadian workforce, it will modernize its official job-search and labour market platform with AI-powered job matching, and will create up to 90,000 AI-related job opportunities.
3. **Powering AI adoption for shared prosperity:** Canada has several initiatives aimed specifically at assisting micro, small and medium-sized businesses, which represent 99% of Canadian businesses, to incorporate AI tools into their operations. It will also invest in high-impact projects that deliver social good, including improving healthcare delivery and outcomes, and it will connect with identified priority sectors to identify gaps and figure out understand and align investment with workforce transformation needs.

* This article was prepared with the important contribution of BD&P's summer students Isabel Drouin and Eric Kortbeek.

¹ Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, "[Canada's National Artificial Intelligence Strategy: AI for All](#)" (4 June 2026); Carole Piovesan, "[Trust is the North Star: What Canada's AI for All Strategy Means for Your Business](#)" (1 June 2026).

4. **Building the Canadian sovereign AI foundation:** sovereignty will be operationalized through domestic investment in infrastructure, talent, data, and computing power, as well as the deployment of large datasets in priority sectors, all through the mobilization of federal funding.
5. **Scaling Canadian champions:** the federal government will act as a strategic anchor customer and create an investment flywheel rewarding responsible risk-taking.
6. **Building trusted partnerships and global alliances:** by leveraging the Trade Commissioner Service and diplomatic networks, Canada will strengthen collaboration with allies and support domestic and international AI standards development.

The Strategy promises to invest over \$2B in the Canadian economy. It includes major funding for programs devoted to commercializing AI, assisting Canadian AI entrepreneurs, and supporting Canada's AI leaders in scaling up capital. The Strategy also provides for investment in local infrastructure, namely a domestic supercomputer slated to be completed by 2031.

Additional funding is sector-specific, attending to healthcare, workforce development, intellectual property protection, and occupational tools. Further, the federal government has pledged support for the development of open-source AI, both to reduce dependency on proprietary models and to broaden access by lowering costs for smaller players. Overall, the Strategy reflects a comprehensive effort to strengthen domestic innovation, literacy, and capacity regarding AI.

Regulatory Landscape

A patchwork of law governs the regulation of AI in Canada. Canadian AI oversight is comprised of privacy rights laws, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, human rights legislation, and the common law. This does not stand to change under the new Strategy, which resolves to introduce more legislation to address online harms, and to reform existing privacy laws.

Privacy, Safety and Public Opinion

Privacy is central to the federal government's approach to cultivating trust in AI. However, some critics have expressed concern that the Strategy does little to increase transparency around how AI providers store, use, and report personal data. Safety is another key component of the federal government's plan to increase trust in AI, and the federal government plans to pass online safety laws. Critics fear, however, that the details of those laws have been limited to broad assurances about safe AI implementation.²

² Michael Geist, "[AI for All, Details to Follow: Government Releases a Big-Spending AI Strategy That Is Still Short on the Specifics That Matter](#)" (4 June 2026).



Key Takeaways

In the Strategy, the federal government presents AI as a tool to strengthen Canada's economy, public services, and national resilience, with trust serving as the foundation for wider adoption.

The six-pillar framework is broad, forward-looking, and ambitious. The Strategy goes beyond regulation alone and deals with empowerment, prosperity, sovereign infrastructure, Canadian competitiveness, and international partnerships. It is designed to shape both AI development and AI use across the country.

Carefully balancing regulation and innovation is critical; the Strategy aims to protect the public from AI harms, while avoiding overly burdensome regulation which could discourage investment.

While privacy and safety are framed as central tenets of the Strategy, some commentators have observed that further detail is needed on implementation, and it remains to be seen how these objectives will be realized as Canada rolls out the Strategy.

Our [Intellectual Property](#) team at BD&P continues to monitor these developments. If you have any questions or would like assistance, please reach out to any member of our team.