

## **Synthesis of Common Themes Across 32 AI Task Force Submissions** **(Generated by Chat GPT)**

### **Executive Summary**

Across 32 submissions to the AI Task Force, there is a striking level of consensus on diagnosis, paired with narrower but important divergences on policy design and sequencing. The dominant view is that Canada's challenge is not AI research capacity, but execution: the country struggles to translate world-leading research and talent into scaled companies, widespread adoption, productivity gains, and durable economic and strategic advantage.

The strongest common themes emphasize speed, procurement as a demand-creation tool, access to scale capital, talent retention through opportunity rather than training alone, and the growing importance of physical AI infrastructure (compute, data, energy). Trust, safety, and democratic legitimacy are widely recognized as prerequisites for adoption, though submissions diverge on whether binding regulation should precede or follow large-scale deployment.

Where disagreement exists, it tends to focus on second-order questions: how to define and operationalize sovereignty, whether to prioritize national champions or broad diffusion, and how quickly to impose new regulatory obligations. Overall, the submissions present a coherent picture: delay is costly, adoption is as strategically important as innovation, and legitimacy is now a core component of competitiveness rather than a constraint upon it.

### **Strongest Common Themes**

#### **Execution, Translation, and Adoption as the Core Challenge**

There is near-universal agreement that Canada's AI problem is not insufficient research excellence. Instead, the central failure lies in execution: moving from discovery to deployment, from pilots to scale, and from innovation inputs to measurable outcomes. This view spans commercialization, scaling, adoption, infrastructure, education, and safety submissions, all of which frame the problem as structural rather than cultural.

#### **Speed as a Strategic Policy Variable**

Speed is repeatedly identified as decisive. Slow procurement, delayed funding decisions, lengthy immigration processes, and fragmented governance are described as self-inflicted disadvantages. Submissions consistently argue that slowness is itself a policy choice with economic and strategic costs, rather than a neutral posture or a proxy for caution.

#### **Procurement as Demand Creation, Not Administrative Function**

One of the clearest points of convergence is the call to shift from grant-heavy support toward using procurement to create markets. Government is urged to act as a strategic

customer, providing early revenue, validation, and scale opportunities that keep companies anchored in Canada and accelerate their readiness for global markets.

### **Scaling Capital as a Binding Constraint**

Many submissions identify late-stage growth capital as a major gap, particularly the limited role of domestic pension funds in scaling Canadian technology firms. While not universal across all themes, this concern is dominant in commercialization and scaling submissions and is framed as essential to building globally competitive companies.

### **Talent Retention Through Opportunity, Not Training**

Talent is consistently described as the real strategic asset, embodied in teams and tacit know-how. Submissions broadly agree that Canada already trains world-class talent, but fails to retain it due to insufficient domestic opportunities, slow pathways to scale, limited compute access, and weak customer pull.

### **Infrastructure as a First-Order Constraint**

Compute, data, energy, and physical infrastructure are now treated as strategic constraints rather than background conditions. There is broad agreement that AI infrastructure resembles other forms of national infrastructure, and that delay in building or securing access carries long-term and often irreversible costs.

### **Trust, Safety, and Legitimacy as Enablers of Adoption**

Most submissions agree that low public trust in AI constrains adoption, particularly in public services and regulated sectors. Trust is framed not as an abstract ethical concern, but as a practical requirement for deployment at scale.

## **Key Areas of Divergence**

### **Regulation and Governance Sequencing**

The primary fault line concerns the role and timing of regulation. Some submissions argue that binding rules, independent oversight, and enforceable accountability are prerequisites for trust and adoption. Others caution that premature or overly broad regulation risks slowing deployment, disadvantaging domestic firms, and regulating systems Canada does not control. This is best understood as a sequencing disagreement rather than opposition to regulation itself.

### **Meaning and Scope of Sovereignty**

While sovereignty is widely invoked, it is defined in different ways: control over infrastructure, ownership of globally scaled firms, or democratic authority over platforms and systems. Submissions rarely reject sovereignty as a goal, but diverge on which dimension should be prioritized.

### **National Champions Versus Broad Diffusion**

Some submissions favour concentrated investment in a small number of national champions or missions, while others emphasize diffusion, adoption capacity, and system-wide productivity gains. Many avoid a direct choice, leaving this tension unresolved.

### **Role of Inclusion in Competitiveness**

Inclusion, connectivity, and literacy are treated as foundational by some submissions, particularly those focused on Indigenous participation and workforce readiness. Others frame inclusion as an enabling or downstream issue rather than a core competitiveness strategy.