

# TECHNATION<sup>CA</sup>

## TECHNATION's 2023 Federal Budget Submission: Working Together to Provide Access and Value to Canadians

TECHNATION, Canada's leading national technology association, continues to encourage the Government of Canada to focus on working with the technology sector as a key driver of Canada's economic future to set the path forward for sustained economic prosperity for all regions of the country.

Canada must establish a coherent tech policy approach that combines a digital transformation agenda with an economic development approach. This can support and grow our technology industry and create jobs today and well into the future. It is the time to accelerate investments in digital transformation and tech adoption by both the government and the private sector.

### Delivering Value Through Procurement Modernization

The Government of Canada must prioritize an aggressive and comprehensive digital government strategy. A crucial element is **procurement modernization**. Leveraging the Federal Government's immense purchasing power is a unique lever to drive Canada's economic prosperity and diversify the tech-supplier base to include more under-represented and Indigenous businesses.

**Canada needs to expand on its agile procurement initiatives** and leverage [Canada's Digital Marketplace](#), to uncover innovative domestic solutions to address its most pressing challenges. This will afford the government a low-risk approach to working with homegrown tech scale-ups, many of which are micro and small businesses, to experiment and prototype solutions across various departments. We need Canada to adopt tech solutions, not develop in-house ("buy-tech, don't build tech").

The Federal Government must set the tone and standard for other levels of government, organizations, and businesses across Canada, when it comes to digital adoption and digital enablement. Public sector workers need access to leading digital tools required to deliver services effectively, and securely, to citizens.

More must be done by the Government of Canada to engage tech industry leaders early on in setting its digital roadmap and the procurement process, advancing a true collaboration approach as we have developed with Shared Services Canada, to assist with digital transformation and procurement reform.

### Canada's Tech Sector – Driving Economic Prosperity

A clearly defined national digital strategy is non-negotiable. **TECHNATION urges the Government of Canada to join forces with industry experts to develop focused approaches for industry-government collaboration and tech policy co-creation.** To compete internationally, Canada needs domestic policies that attract technology investments and enable creative businesses to thrive.

# TECHNATION<sup>CA</sup>

TECHNATION requests the Government to:

- **Close the digital divide with meaningful investments in rural broadband, working with industry and the provinces to find real solutions to deliver this critical service to all Canadians as quickly as possible.** It is crucial for all Canadians to be connected.
- **Make future tech workforce development a top, national priority** to identify clear and barrier-free learning and career pathways, helping youth and displaced workers explore potential career opportunities in tech.
- **Ensure the development of cybersecurity talent is a strategic priority.** To enhance skills in leading edge technologies, funding opportunities must adopt these priorities in their proposal selection criteria.
- **Accelerate tech adoption across micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs),** focusing especially on strengthening cybersecurity across all sectors.

## Health Data Management through increased use of Digital Health Tools

TECHNATION applauds the Government of Canada's continued efforts to improve health data management through the acknowledgement to increase the utilization of digital health tools.

We support the Federal Government's continued investment and further commitment to:

- Improving how health information is collected, shared, used, and reported to Canadians;
- Adopting common data standards and policies;
- Modernizing the health care system with standardized information and the utilization of digital tools.

We call on Government to continue investment in the Pan-Canadian Health Data Strategy, led by the Public Health Agency of Canada, to ensure access to timely health data which will improve the government's response to public health ongoing and urgent needs, enabling better health outcomes for the health and wellbeing of all Canadians.

We also urge the federal government to continue funding government agencies and organizations focused on digital health, such as Canada Health Infoway and the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CHIR) to further support efforts to increase digital health adoption across the country.

We encourage further investment in the following innovative health technology-based areas:

- **Health Data and Interoperability Standards:** The selection, development, and implementation of nationally and internationally accepted standards to provide healthcare data for clinicians and policy makers between point of care systems and provincial digital health assets, including provincial long-term care communities.
- **Cybersecurity:** For the continued safety, privacy and accessibility for Canadians and its health systems, and to avoid the potential of billions of dollars in costs for ransom payments or healthcare facility shut downs.
- **Digital Health Regulation:** Investments in the critical expansion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), providing better identification of population health management patterns and trends, that could further address gaps in quality of care and services.

# TECHNATION<sup>CA</sup>

Virtual care will continue to play a significant role in Canada's healthcare system, helping to minimize pressure on urgent care, ER and physician visits as well as continuing to ease access to mental health services and support.

## Cybersecurity

Businesses, governments, and citizens face unprecedented and unrelenting cyber threats every day in Canada. To confront this problem, a matter of simply increasing funding for cybersecurity is not enough. The government needs to do something more significant and direct, and not in isolation. We urge the Government of Canada to consider co-creation of a cybersecurity strategy and roadmap with industry, and other government jurisdictions.

An 'all hands-on deck' industry-public sector approach to accelerate cyber talent and bolster Canada's cybersecurity capacity for the increasing job gap is required to effect the following:

- Ensure the development of cybersecurity talent;
- Reskill and upskill talent to produce faster results through cybersecurity pilots;
- Rapid training and create better quality pathways to fast track cyber talent;
- Tax credits or wage subsidies for companies developing cyber talent;
- Provide training and resources for micro, small, and medium enterprises to better understand and mitigate cyber threats;
- Attract additional awareness and resources to the cybersecurity sector.

This is essential to ensuring a robust cyber workforce, able to effectively protect Canada's citizens and businesses.

For further information please contact Michele Lajeunesse, Senior Vice President, Government Relations & Policy, at [mlajeunesse@technationcanada.ca](mailto:mlajeunesse@technationcanada.ca).

### **About TECHNATION**

As a national industry association, TECHNATION is the industry-government nexus for technology prosperity in Canada. As a member-driven, not-for-profit, TECHNATION unites Canada's technology sector, governments, and communities to enable technology prosperity in Canada. TECHNATION champions technology prosperity by providing advocacy, professional development and networking opportunities across industry and governments at all levels; connecting Canadian scale-ups with global tech leaders; engaging the global supply chain; and filling the technology talent pipeline.

TECHNATION has served as the authoritative national voice of the \$230 billion ICT industry for over 60 years. More than 44,000 Canadian ICT firms create and supply goods and services that contribute to a more productive, competitive, and innovative society. The ICT sector generates more than 671,100 jobs and invests \$8.0 billion annually in R&D, more than any other private sector performer. For more information: [www.technationcanada.ca](http://www.technationcanada.ca). TECHNATION was formerly the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC).