



TechLobby

Rapid Report on AI Lobbying in Canada

Brad McNeil

Research Coordinator and PhD candidate, McMaster University

Sara Bannerman

Professor, McMaster University

June 18, 2026

thetechlobby.ca

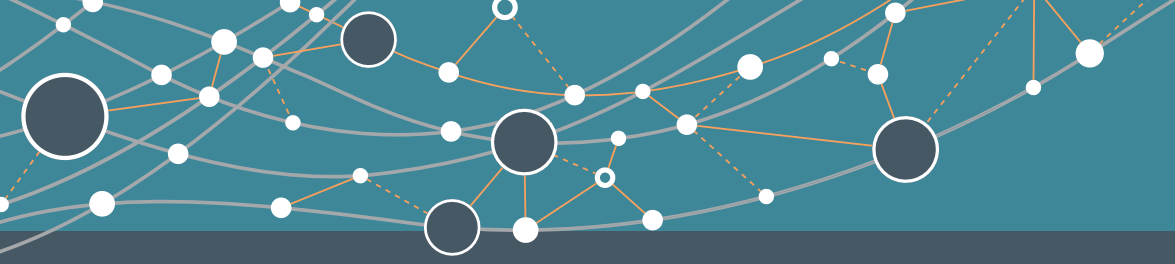


Table of Contents:

Executive summary	2
About us	2
About this report	2
Who lobbied on AI?	4
What organizations lobbied on AI?	5
Who lobbied on AI by country.....	6
Who lobbied on AI by industry.....	7
Who was lobbied about AI?	9
Who lobbied the PMO?	10
Who lobbied the Prime Minister?.....	11
Who lobbied the House of Commons?.....	12
Who lobbied the Senate?.....	13
Conclusion	14
Acknowledgments	15
Appendix: Method	16



Executive summary

About us

TheTechLobby.ca is a project led by **Sara Bannerman** and a **cross-country team of researchers** examining tech companies' lobbying of the Canadian federal government. We publish company profiles, regular reports, and monitoring data about tech lobbying of the federal government on our website, thetechlobby.ca.

About this report

This report provides an overview of AI lobbying trends in Canada, drawing on data provided by the Registry of Lobbyists. In it, we ask who is lobbying about AI, which officials and government departments are being lobbied, who gets access to the top-level officials, and whose voices are missing.

This report finds that, although there are a broad range of industry actors engaged in AI lobbying in Canada, lobbying activity is primarily driven by the private sector. The tech industry, and the cultural industries, dominate private sector lobbying.

AI raises many important societal issues and potentially dramatic social and political change. When lobbying is dominated by the private sector, this has important implications on the interest and perspectives shaping Canadian AI policy. Industry leaders in AI lobbying in Canada are primarily concerned with how AI adoption and government policy will affect their specific industries. Industry lobbying may fail to fully reflect important issues of AI safety, impacts on jobs and labour, and broader societal transformation.

Our report reveals which civil society lobbyists are active communicating with government. These include AI research institutes and educational organizations, healthcare and medical organizations, labour organizations.

Lobbying is a lever of power and access to governmental officials to shape AI policy that is more often utilized by well-resourced actors acting as industry experts – it is therefore necessary to note the issues that are neglected by lobbyists.

The interactive dashboard on which this report is based is available on our web site TheTechLobby.ca.



About us

Thetechlobby.ca is a project led by **Sara Bannerman** and a **cross-country team of researchers** examining various aspects of tech companies' lobbying of the Canadian federal government.

We publish company profiles, regular reports, and monitoring data about tech lobbying of the federal government on our website, **thetechlobby.ca**. Our team of researchers is conducting a set of in-depth case studies about tech lobbying across various domains of policy in the Canadian federal government.

Our research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, McMaster University, and the Canada Research Chairs program.

About the figures

The figures in this document were created with PowerBI. They are available in interactive format here: <https://thetechlobby.ca/techlobby-report-and-dashboard-on-ai-lobbying/>.

The online interactive versions allow you to enlarge, download, or share the graphic. You can also click on the graphics and legends to explore and even download the data.

Who lobbied on AI?

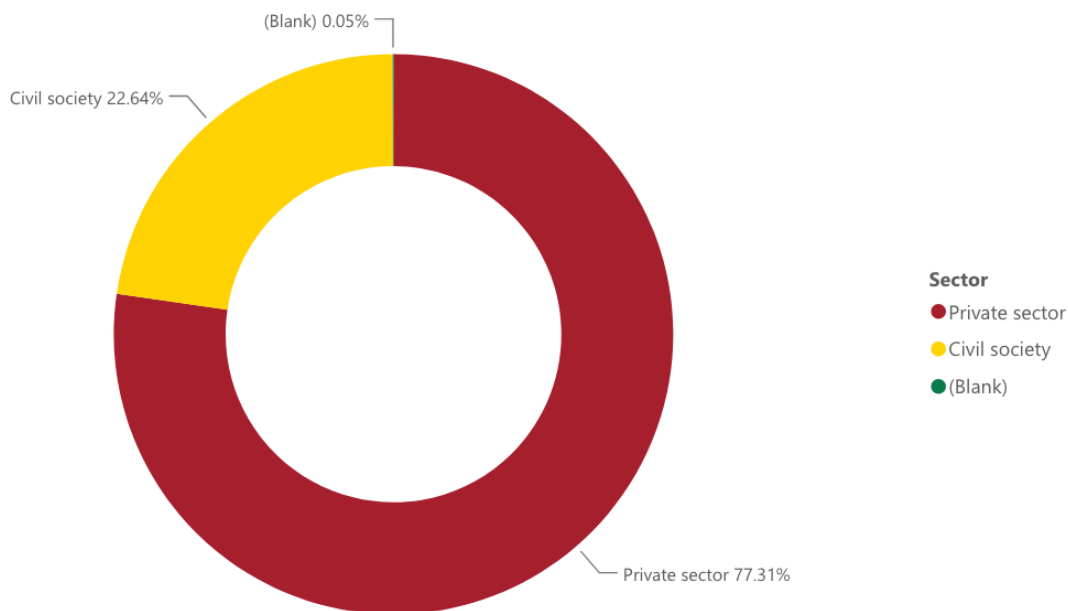


Figure 1: Number of times a public official was lobbied about AI, by sector (since October 2024)

The private sector has dominated federal lobbying about AI, making up more than 75 percent of all lobbying since October 2024. Civil society has also lobbied about AI, to a lesser extent.

While a diverse range of sectors lobbied about AI in 2025, some civil society communities appear to be underrepresented or absent. Absent and underrepresented communities include Indigenous communities, labour organizations, consumer advocacy groups, environmental focussed organizations, for example.

Underrepresentation of civil society actors, in comparison to private sector AI lobbying, means that civic concerns such as mental health, accountability and liability frameworks, public sector use of AI, AI digital literacy, elections and misinformation, as well as accessibility, and inclusion issues may be underrepresented in lobbying communications.

What organizations lobbied on AI?

Organizations that Registered Lobbying Communications on AI (since October 2024)

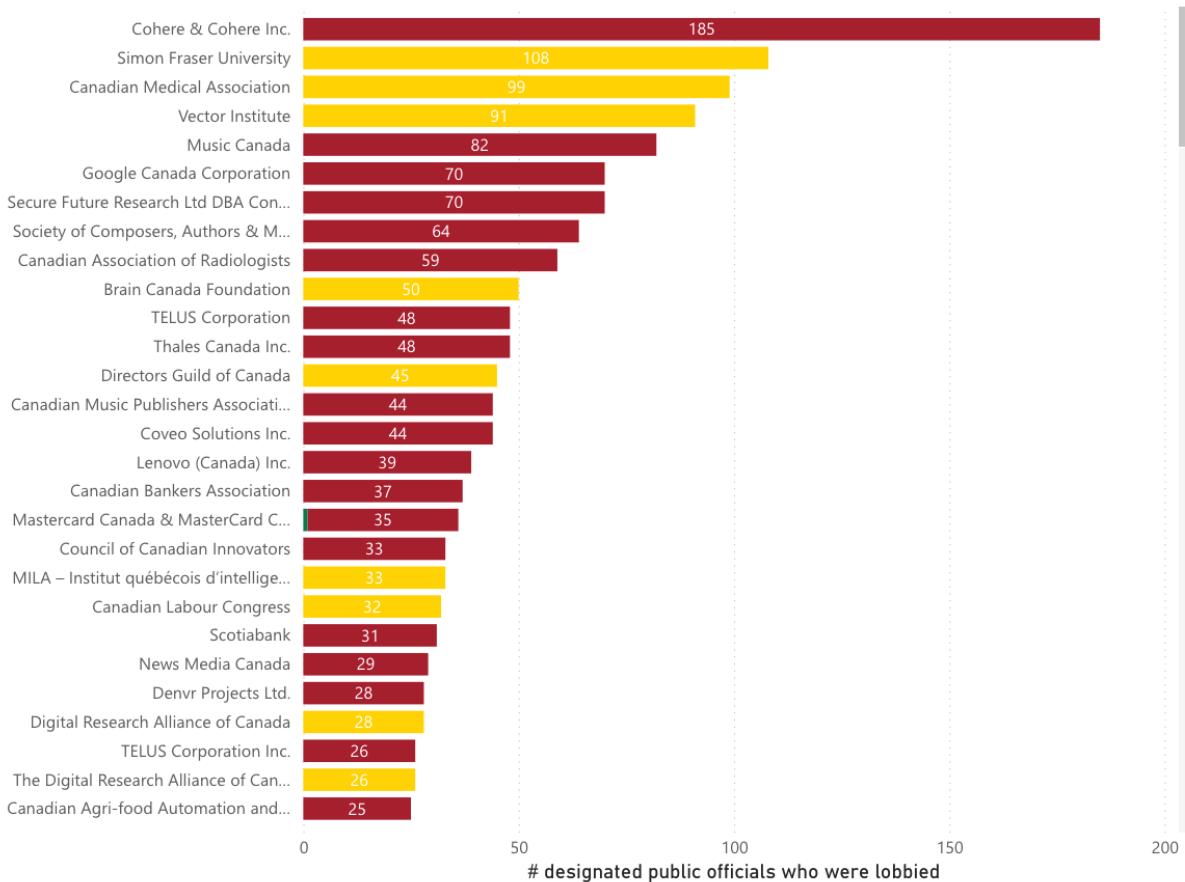


Figure 2: Organizations that registered lobbying communications on AI (since October 2024)

AI organizations have the most significant presence in AI lobbying. The Canadian AI company Cohere has been the most active lobbyist on AI issues, alongside civil society AI organizations like the Vector Institute and MILA. American AI / Big Tech companies like Google are also among the top 10, as are cultural industry organizations (Music Canada and SOCAN).

The graph shows a long tail of organizations with relatively low levels of lobbying activity. This suggests that, while many organizations take part in lobbying, most do so on a fairly modest scale. In other words, lobbying isn't necessarily exclusive to a small group of dominant players but is pursued by a wide range of actors, though with very different levels of intensity.

Who lobbied on AI: by country

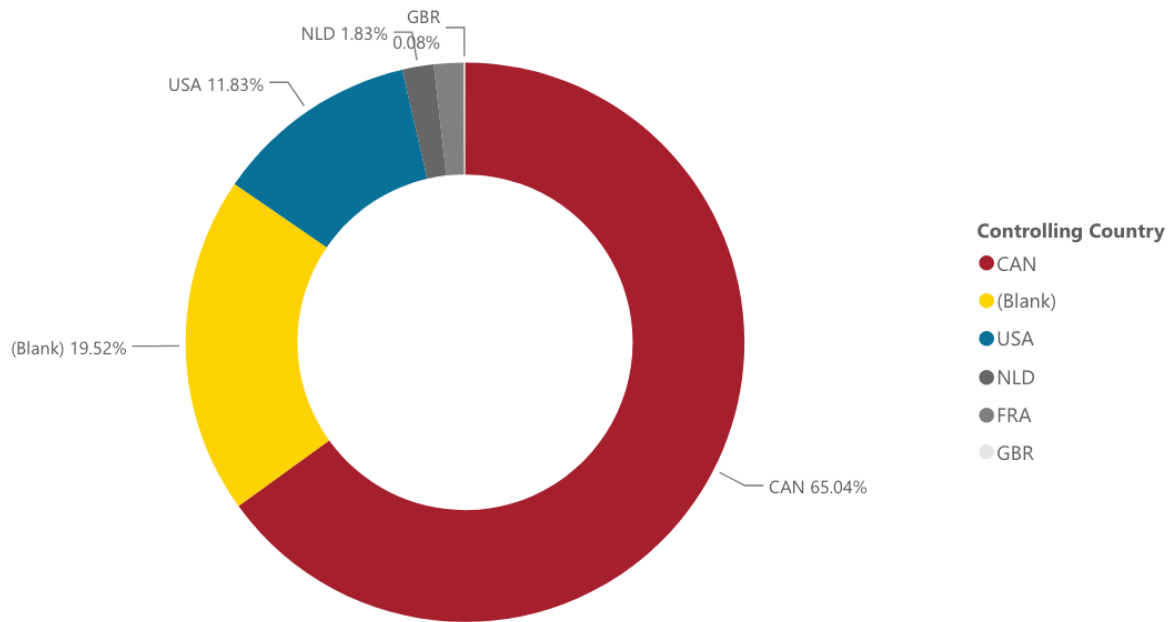


Figure 3: Number of times a public official was lobbied about AI, by country (since October 2024)

Most lobbyists were based in Canada, with a notable segment of US based lobbyists. The UK and the Netherlands also lobbied the Canadian government about AI, but infrequently.

Who lobbied on AI: by industry

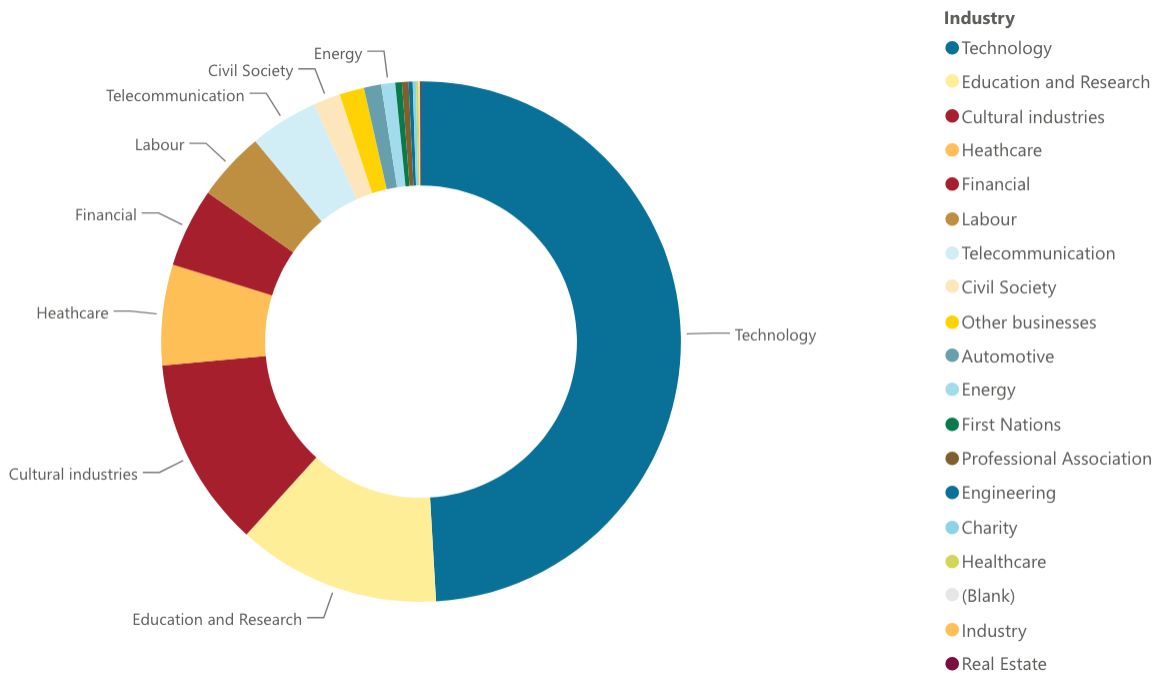



Figure 4: Organizations that lobbied on AI, by industry (since October 2024)

The technology sector was the most active industry in AI lobbying, occupying a substantially greater share than any other industry. There is also a strong presence of education and research entities.

There is a cluster of mid-tier industries that contribute to lobbying totals meaningfully, but much less than the top two categories. These include the cultural industries, healthcare, civil society, labour, and other civil society organizations; each of these occupies a moderate-sized slice of the donut chart. This suggests that AI lobbying is not confined solely to the firms building AI systems; rather, a range of sectors affected by AI's consequences are also seeking policy influence. At the same time, this range of civil society and cultural organizations are massively out-lobbied by technology organizations.

The cultural industries are also significantly out-lobbied by the technology sector. Given ongoing public discussion about AI's impact on authorship, intellectual property, and content generation, the visible size of this segment suggests that cultural-sector actors are active in trying to shape the regulatory landscape, but are significantly out-lobbied by the technology sector. The



moderate lobbying activity of cultural industries in comparison to the tech sector may be reflective of the lobbying resources of the cultural sector, rather than reflective of their motivations to lobby policymakers.

Healthcare-related organizations are engaging in AI policy discussions, likely because AI has growing implications for diagnostics, health administration, public health systems, and medical research.

The lobbying of civil society and labour organizations suggests that AI lobbying includes groups concerned with public interest, worker rights, social outcomes, and accountability. These segments are visibly smaller than the dominant industries, but their inclusion shows that the AI policy field is contested by a variety of stakeholders with different priorities and values.

Overall, AI lobbying is cross-sectoral but unevenly distributed. A small number of industries (especially technology and education and AI research) appear to dominate the activity, while a broader set of sectors contribute at moderate or low levels.

Who was lobbied about AI?

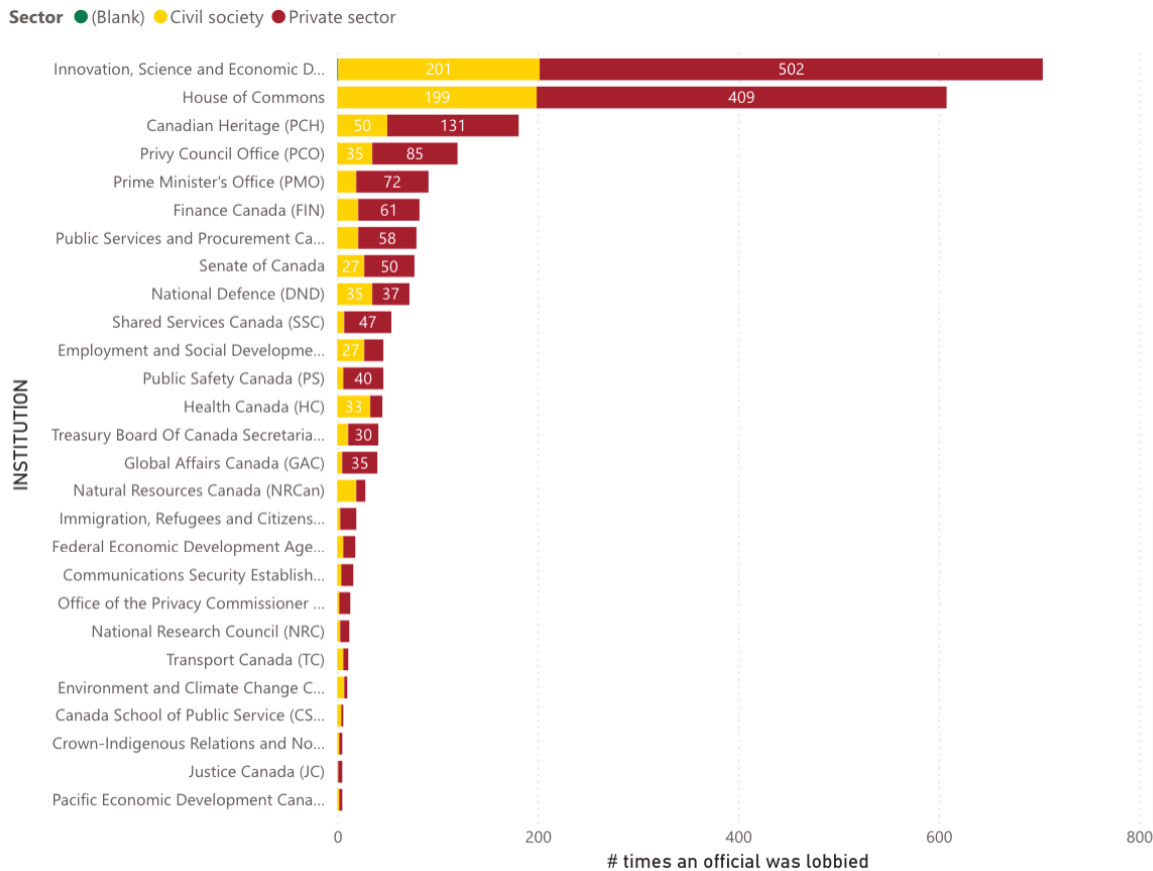


Figure 5: Institutions lobbied on AI (since October 2024)

Lobbying activity is concentrated among a small number of central government institutions, with a steep decline after the top two institutions: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and the House of Commons, which were the institutional focal point of AI-related lobbying activity in the federal government. This suggests that lobbyists see ISED as a principal policy + decision-making body in the context of AI.

The second most-lobbied institution is the House of Commons, showing that AI lobbying is directed not only at executive departments but also very strongly toward elected representatives in the parliamentary sphere charged with putting in place AI-related legislation.

Lobbying activity is directed at institutions associated with security, defence, and public safety, including National Defence and Public Safety Canada. AI is not only an innovation or an economic issue; it also has implications for national security, surveillance, emergency response, and critical infrastructure.

AI lobbying is multi-institutional, spanning legislative bodies, central government institutions, line departments, administrative agencies, and oversight bodies. This breadth indicates that AI is being treated as a cross-cutting policy issue rather than one confined to a single department. However, unevenness of the counts suggests that some institutions are viewed as much more strategically important than others.

Who lobbied the PMO?

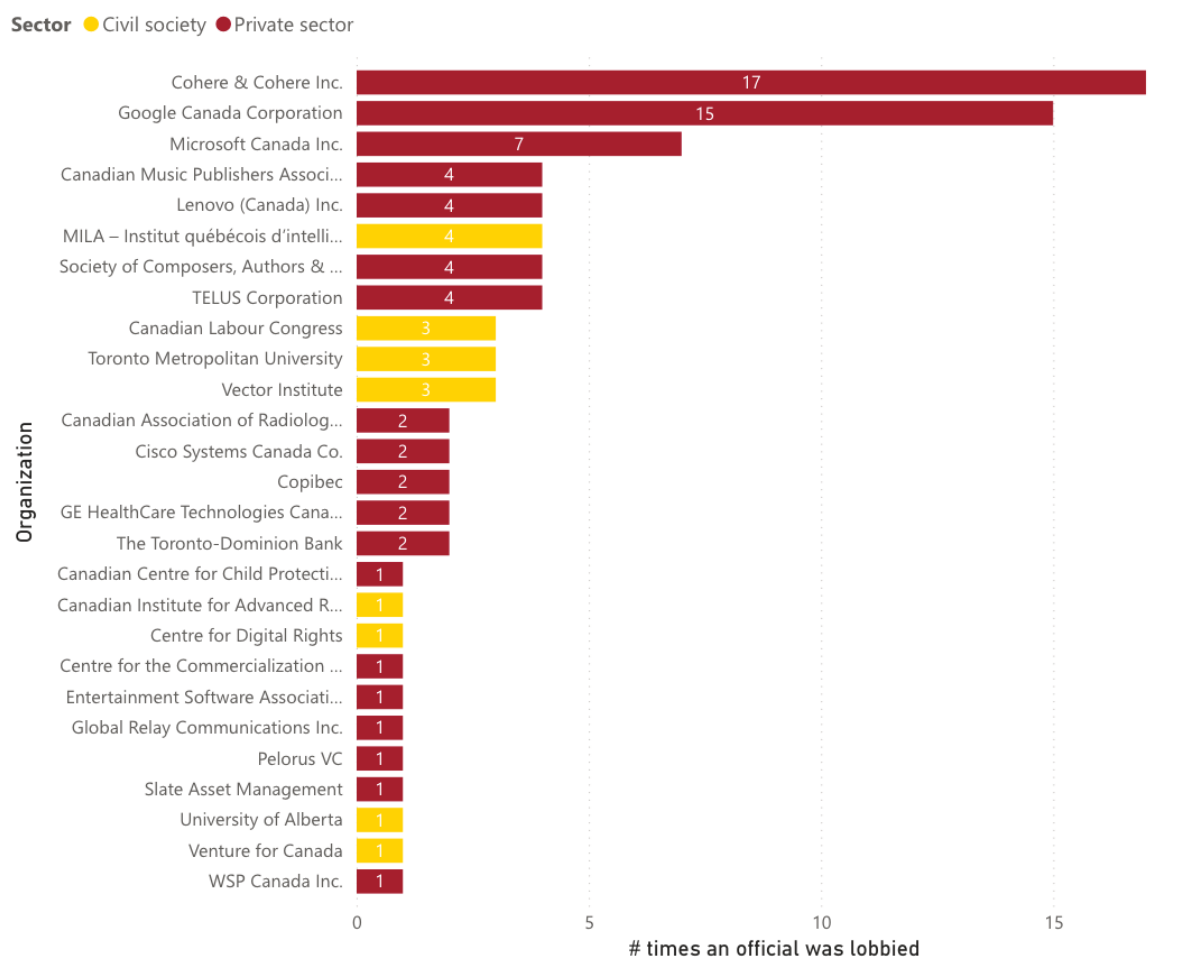
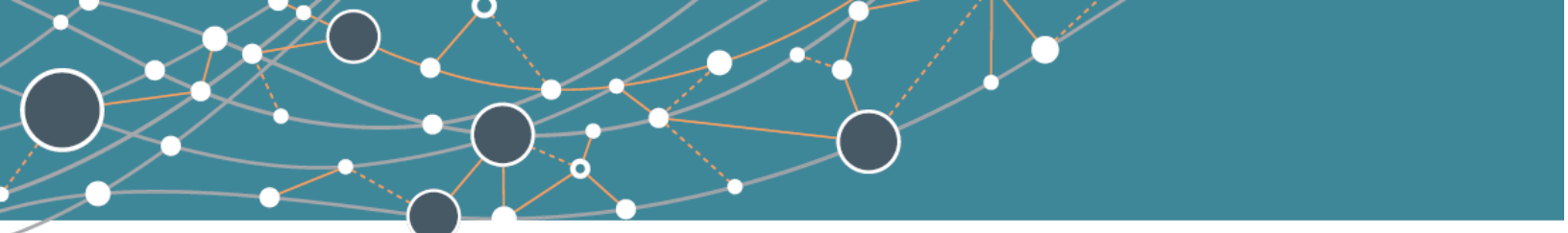


Figure 6: Organizations that registered lobbying communications on AI with the PMO (since October 2024)

Lobbying activity directed at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is unevenly distributed. A small group of organizations account for a substantial share of registered lobbying communications with the Prime Minister's Office. First among these are technology companies: Canada's Cohere Inc. is the most active, followed by Google and Microsoft. Further down the list, the Vector Institute and MILA – the *Montreal Institut québécois d'intelligence*



artificielle, also lobbied the PMO. The table shows that a small number of technology firms represent a large share of all lobbying communications with the Prime Minister’s Office.

Cultural organizations are also present among PMO lobbyists, including the Canadian Music Publishers Association (operating as Music Publishers Canada), Society of Composers, Authors & Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), and TELUS Corporation. A long list of organizations lobbied the PMO a few times, suggesting broad but shallow lobbying participation. The broad range of topics these organizations deal with (child protection, advanced research, digital rights, medicine, gaming, communications, venture capital, asset management, and higher education) indicates that AI is understood as a cross-cutting issue that touches many different institutional and sectoral interests. However, the low counts also imply that these actors are not engaging the PMO with the same intensity as the top-ranked organizations.

The inclusion of cultural, academic, labour, and rights-based organizations indicates that access to the PMO is being pursued by a diverse set of stakeholders seeking influence over AI-related policy debates in which the AI and technology sector dominates.

Who lobbied the Prime Minister?

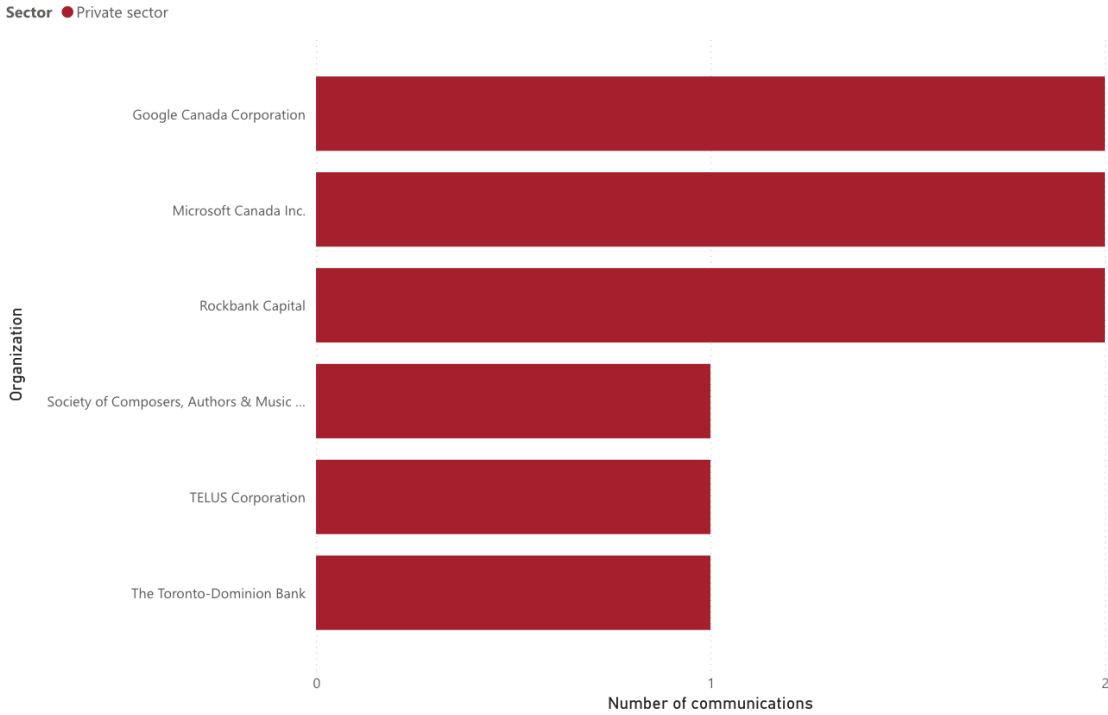


Figure 7: The table shows organizations that registered lobbying communications on AI with Prime Minister Carney since October 2024

Only a few organizations registered lobbying with the Prime Minister Carney himself. Google and Microsoft both registered lobbying communications with the Prime Minister, as well as Rockbank Capital, the Society of Composers, Authors & Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), TELUS Corporation, and The Toronto-Dominion Bank also registered lobbying the Prime Minister. No civil society organizations registered as having lobbied Prime Minister Carney, indicating that private companies have the highest level of access.

Who lobbied the House of Commons?

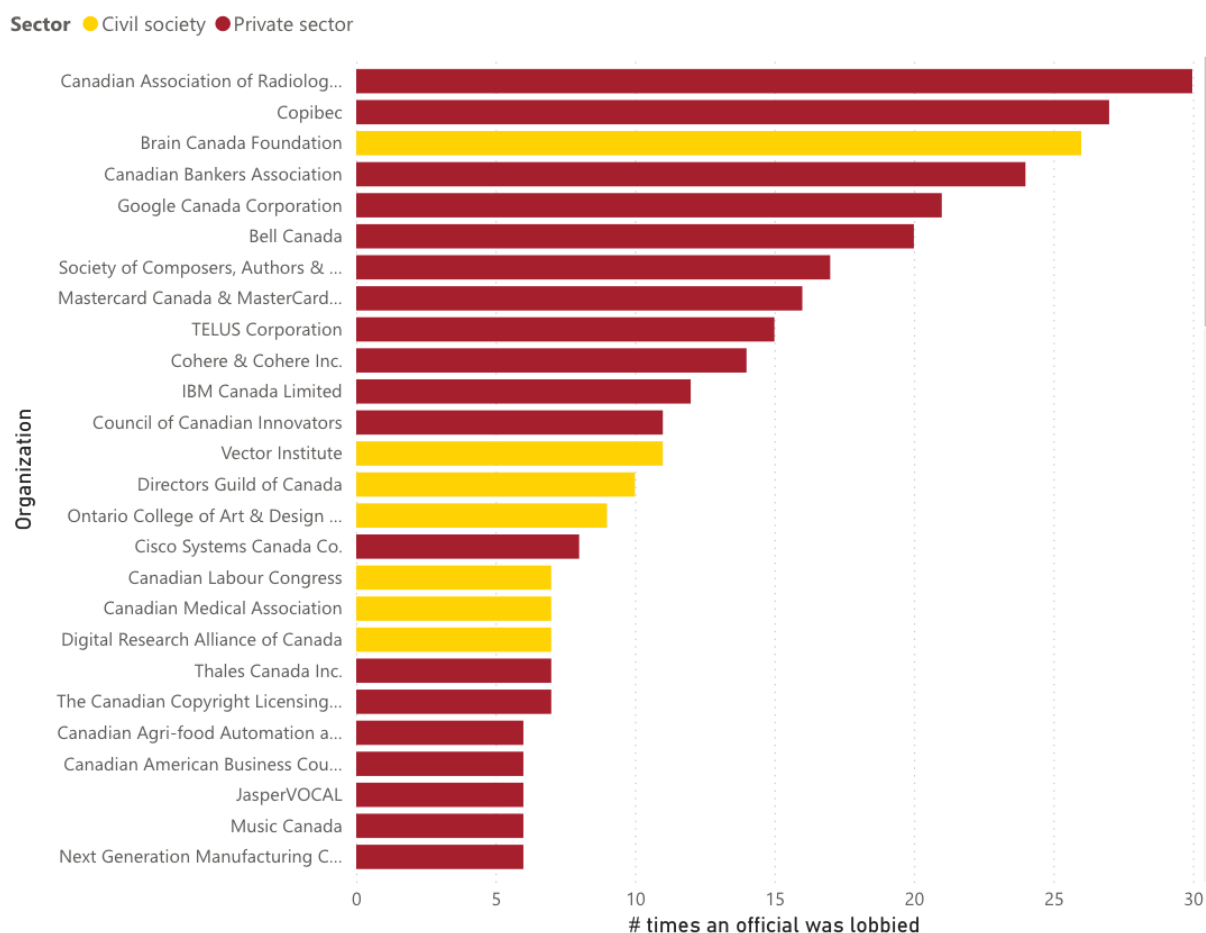


Figure 8: Organizations that registered lobbying communications on AI with the House of Commons (since October 2024)

Members of Parliament (MPs) were frequently targets of AI lobbyists. A group of six organizations lobbied MPs more than 20 times. Additionally, lobbying of MPs was primarily conducted by the private sector—but was less dominated by AI companies than either lobbying overall (figure 2) or lobbying of the PMO (figure 6).

Who lobbied the Senate?

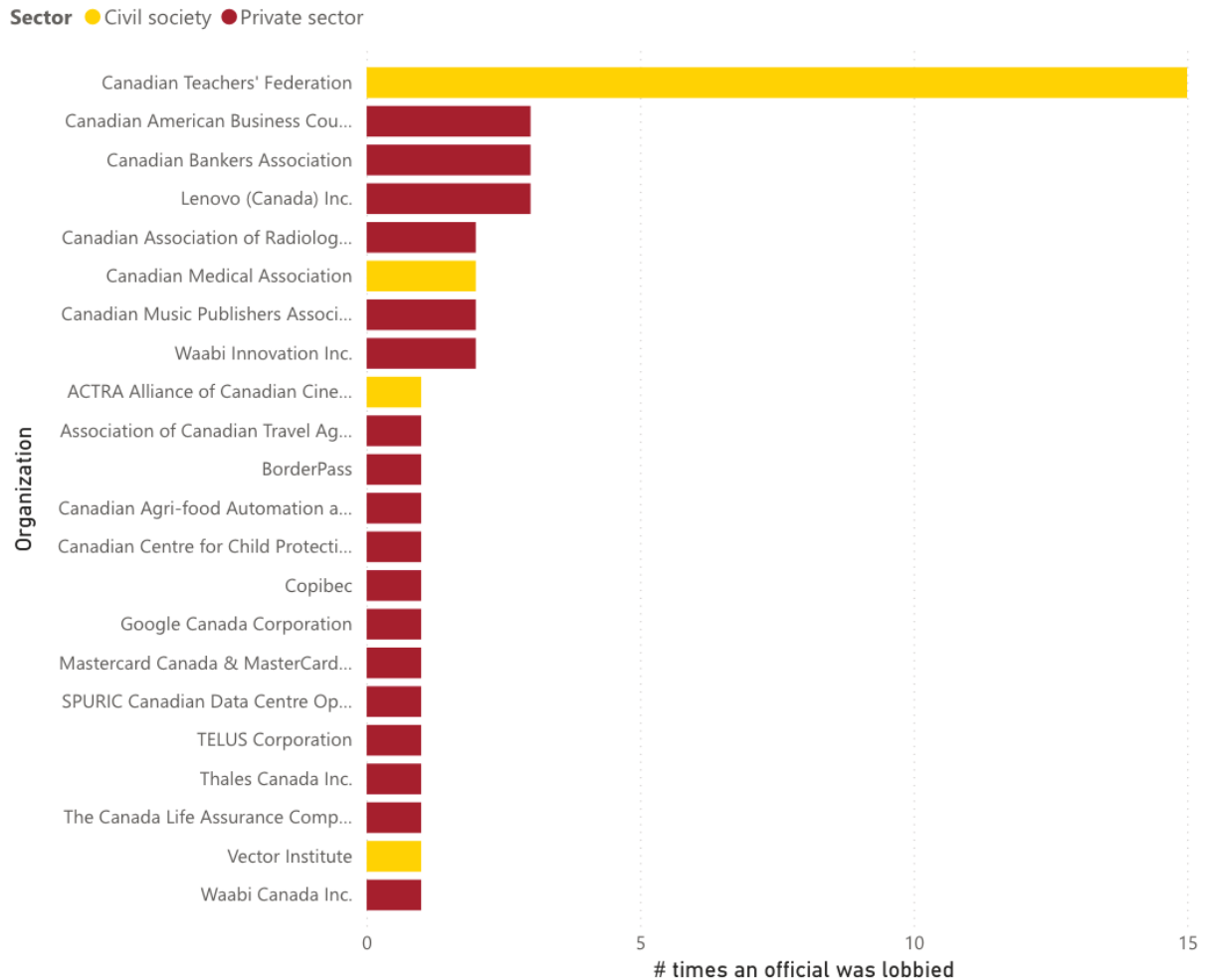


Figure 9: Organizations that registered lobbying communications on AI with the Senate (since October 2024)

Senators were also lobbied about AI. Lobbying of senators was dominated by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTA) which sought to "influence the federal government's policies regarding AI in education."¹ The CTA encourages the Canadian government to provide a regulatory framework for AI-adoption in K-12 public schools, noting that the current regulatory landscape is "murky" with confusion as to what organization bodies and regulatory measures are "addressing risks and minimizing harms to students and educators."²

¹ Registry of Lobbyists. "Registration – In House Organization - Canadian Teachers' Federation/Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants/ Cassandra Hallett, Executive Director." Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada, July, 04, 2025. <https://lobbycanada.gc.ca/app/secure/oc/lrs/do/cmmLgPblcVw?comlogId=638432>.

² Canadian Teachers Federation/Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants. "Towards A Responsible use of Artificial Intelligence in Canadian Public Educaiton." Technology and Public



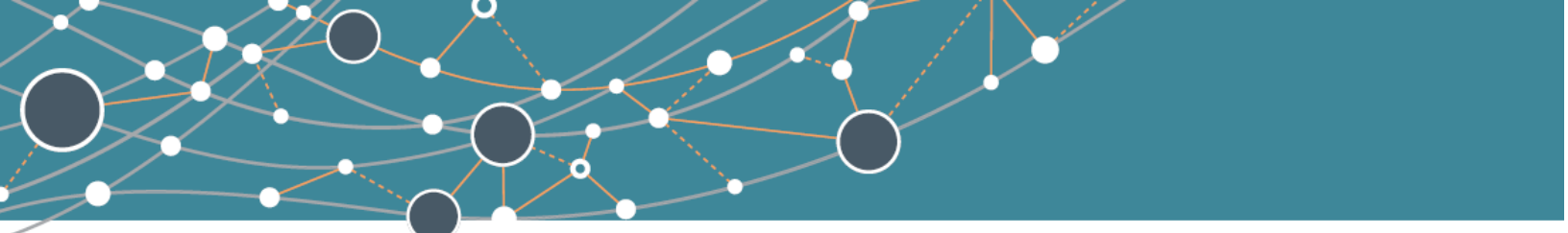
Conclusion

This report shows that the private sector, and specifically AI and technology companies, dominate Canadian federal lobbying about AI. AI lobbying is primarily conducted by Canadian organizations, although U.S. based organizations also regularly lobby the Canadian Government. The domination of AI lobbying by the private sector may be consequential to the interests and perspectives that are embedded in Canadian AI policy and the Government's AI priorities. When private sector perspectives are prioritized over those of civil society, public interest issues related to AI adoption, development, and use such as AI safety, impacts on labour, and the broader societal threats posed by AI become secondary to private interest.

Overall, this report supplements recent work that raises concerns over democratic AI policy making in Canada, such as the [Peoples Consultation on AI](#), and the [CIGI](#), which have argued that AI policy making in Canada is skewed towards industry and requires more meaningful engagement with the broader public.

The interactive dashboard on which this report is based is available on our web site [TheTechLobby.ca](https://www.thetechlobby.ca).

Education: CTF/FCE Policy Brief, September 30, 2024. <https://www.ctf-fce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/3-ENAI-policy-brief-AGM-2024.pdf>.



Acknowledgments:

This work would not have been possible without the support of Jasper Sonmor, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canada Research Chairs Program, McMaster University's Faculty of Humanities, and the Political Accountability, Transparency, and Representation Oversight Network (PATRON).



Appendix: Method

Our data model is built using PowerBI. It draws data directly from the open data of the Canadian federal lobbying registry available here (<https://lobbycanada.gc.ca/en/open-data/>). We begin our analysis in October 2024 when the lobbying registry changed to incorporate detailed descriptions of lobbying communications, allowing us to identify lobbying about AI using keywords.

The keywords we used to filter the data are focussed on artificial intelligence generally, the *Artificial Intelligence Data Act*, and the *Digital Charter*.

English	French
AI	IA
Artificial Intelligence	intelligence artificielle
AIDA	LIAD
C-27	
c27	
Digital Charter	Charte canadienne du numérique

We categorized the organizations lobbying federal officials by sector (private sector, civil society, and government).

Private sector. We categorized corporations, for-profit research institutes, associations made up primarily of corporate members (even if they are nonprofit, since they represent corporations), for-profit media, for-profit public-private partnerships, copyright licencing agencies (even if nonprofit, since they function to distribute profits via licences) and advocacy, non-profit, or charity organizations funded at least 50% by corporate sources as the private sector.

Civil society. We categorized educational institutions (public or private), research institutes (nonprofit or government funded), public and nonprofit media, labour unions, associations made up primarily of individuals or professionals, and advocacy, non-profit, or charity organizations that do not have members that are funded at least 50% by individuals, government, or non-corporate sources as civil society.

We also categorized those organizations by industry (see figure 4).

We count the “number of times an official was lobbied.” If an organization held a meeting with five officials, that would be counted as five. If an organization held two meetings with the same five officials, that would be counted as ten.