Building a robust talent pipeline for BC

BC needs a robust pipeline of skilled talent. BC Tech recommends that Government:

1. **Fund Programs to Increase Awareness of Tech Jobs in the K-12 years**
   Introducing students to tech careers at an early stage can help build a pipeline of future talent. Awareness programs should highlight the diversity of tech roles and the opportunities available in the industry, encouraging more students to pursue tech-related education and careers. This is of particular importance for encouraging young women to enter the field, as they are currently underrepresented, with women accounting for only 18% of employees the key tech occupations we researched.

2. **Increase Post-Secondary Education Capacity**
   Expanding the capacity of post-secondary institutions to accommodate more students in tech related programs is essential. This includes increasing the number of seats in existing programs and developing new programs that align with industry needs.

3. **Expand Work Integrated Learning Programs**
   Enhancing work-integrated learning opportunities, such as the Innovator Skills Initiative (ISI) program, can provide students with valuable hands-on experience. These programs help students develop practical skills and improve their job readiness, benefiting both students and employers.

4. **Streamline the Approval of Private Sector Training Programs**
   Streamlining the approval process for private sector training programs can ensure that educational offerings keep pace with technological advancements. This will enable training providers to quickly introduce courses that address emerging skills and technologies, helping to meet current and future industry demand.

5. **Add Approved Private Sector Providers to Future Skills Grants**
   Incorporating approved private sector training providers into the Future Skills Grants program can expand access to high-quality training options. This will allow more individuals to benefit from financial support for their education, particularly in specialized and rapidly evolving tech fields. There is also scope to increase employer awareness of existing programs.

6. **Provide Targeted Funding for Training Under-represented and Low-Income Individuals**
   Providing targeted funding and support for underrepresented and low-income individuals can help diversify the tech workforce. Scholarships, grants, and subsidized training programs can reduce financial barriers and enable more people to pursue tech education and careers, fostering a more inclusive and equitable industry.