

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman pledges to donate most of his wealth to improve the 'scaffolding of society'

May 28 2024, by James Pollard



OpenAI CEO Sam Altman participates in a discussion during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation CEO Summit, Nov. 16, 2023, in San Francisco. The Giving Pledge announced Tuesday, May 28, 2024 that Altman has joined its list of wealthy philanthropists committed to donating over half their fortunes. Credit: AP Photo/Eric Risberg, File

The Giving Pledge announced Tuesday that OpenAI CEO Sam Altman has joined its list of wealthy philanthropists committed to donating over half their fortunes.

The move comes after a tumultuous six months for Altman, the co-founder of the San Francisco-based company behind ChatGPT and a venture capitalist who Forbes says amassed much of his \$1 billion through investments. His removal and subsequent reinstatement as CEO last November stunned the rapidly commercializing industry as internal conflicts threatened to sink one of the most sought-after voices on artificial intelligence.

Now Altman, who initially founded his company as a nonprofit research lab dedicated to safely building AI for humanity's benefit, says he wants to focus his philanthropic giving on "technology that helps create abundance for people."

"We would not be making this pledge if it weren't for the hard work, brilliance, generosity, and dedication to improve the world of many people that built the scaffolding of society that let us get here," Altman wrote alongside husband and technology investor Oliver Mulherin in a May 18 [Giving Pledge letter](#).

"There is nothing we can do except feel immense gratitude and commit to pay it forward, and do what we can to build the scaffolding up a little higher."

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Bill Gates, Melinda French Gates and Warren Buffett founded the Giving Pledge in 2010 to foster a culture of philanthropy among the world's wealthiest people to tackle urgent problems. More than 240

signatories from 30 countries have committed to giving the majority of their wealth to charity, though critics argue there is little oversight to ensure that community members follow through on their vows.

The latest additions also include Mercuria CEO Marco Dunand and entrepreneur Suzan Craig Dunand, who co-founded a Swiss foundation that seeks to accelerate the transition to net zero carbon emissions; Robert D. Goldfarb, a retired value investor who plans to give 90% of his wealth during his lifetime; Investor Jahm Najafi and entrepreneur Cheryl Najafi, who have recently focused their giving on racial equity; and technology investment capital firm head Hemant Taneja and real estate developer Jessica Schantz Taneja.

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Citation: OpenAI CEO Sam Altman pledges to donate most of his wealth to improve the 'scaffolding of society' (2024, May 28) retrieved 17 July 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2024-05-openai-ceo-sam-altman-pledge.html>

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