**OpenAI - brief**

**OpenAI, Inc.** is an American [artificial intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artificial_intelligence) (AI) organization founded in December 2015 and headquartered in [San Francisco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco), California. It aims to develop "safe and beneficial" [artificial general intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artificial_general_intelligence) (AGI), which it defines as "highly autonomous systems that outperform humans at most economically valuable work".[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-OpenAI-2018-6) As a leading organization in the ongoing [AI boom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AI_boom),[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-7) OpenAI is known for the GPT family of [large language models](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Large_language_model), the [DALL-E](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DALL-E) series of [text-to-image models](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text-to-image_model), and a [text-to-video model](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text-to-video_model) named [Sora](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sora_(text-to-video_model)).[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-8)[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-9) Its release of [ChatGPT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ChatGPT) in November 2022 has been credited with catalyzing widespread interest in [generative AI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generative_AI).

The organization has a complex corporate structure. As of April 2025, it is led by the [non-profit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonprofit_organization) OpenAI, Inc.,[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-OpenCorporates-1) [registered in Delaware](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delaware_General_Corporation_Law), and has multiple for-profit subsidiaries including OpenAI Holdings, LLC and OpenAI Global, LLC.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-St-10) [Microsoft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft) has invested US$13 billion in OpenAI, and is entitled to 49% of OpenAI Global, LLC's profits, capped at an estimated 10x their investment.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-11)[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-12) Microsoft also provides computing resources to OpenAI through its [cloud platform](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_computing), [Microsoft Azure](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_Azure).[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-13)

In 2023 and 2024, OpenAI faced multiple lawsuits for alleged [copyright infringement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copyright_infringement) against authors and media companies whose work was used to train some of OpenAI's products. In November 2023, OpenAI's board [removed Sam Altman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Removal_of_Sam_Altman_from_OpenAI) as CEO, citing a lack of confidence in him, but reinstated him five days later following a reconstruction of the board. Throughout 2024, roughly half of then-employed [AI safety](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AI_safety) researchers left OpenAI, citing the company's prominent role in an industry-wide problem.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-14)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-15)

**History**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=OpenAI&action=edit&section=1)]

**2015: founding and initial motivations**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=OpenAI&action=edit&section=2)]

In December 2015, OpenAI was founded by [Sam Altman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sam_Altman), [Elon Musk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk), [Ilya Sutskever](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilya_Sutskever), [Greg Brockman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greg_Brockman), [Trevor Blackwell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trevor_Blackwell), Vicki Cheung, [Andrej Karpathy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrej_Karpathy), Durk Kingma, John Schulman, Pamela Vagata, and [Wojciech Zaremba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wojciech_Zaremba), with Sam Altman and Elon Musk as the co-chairs.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-16) A total of $1 billion in capital was pledged by Sam Altman, Greg Brockman, Elon Musk, [Reid Hoffman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reid_Hoffman), [Jessica Livingston](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jessica_Livingston), [Peter Thiel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Thiel), [Amazon Web Services](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_Web_Services) (AWS), [Infosys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infosys), and [YC Research](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YC_research).[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-17)[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-18) The actual collected total amount of contributions was only $130 million until 2019.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-St-10) According to an investigation led by [TechCrunch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TechCrunch), while YC Research never contributed any funds, [Open Philanthropy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Philanthropy) contributed $30 million and another $15 million in verifiable donations were traced back to Musk.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-19) OpenAI later stated that Musk's contributions totaled less than $45 million.[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-20) The organization stated it would "freely collaborate" with other institutions and researchers by making its patents and research open to the public.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-21)[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-bbc-giants-22) OpenAI was initially run from Brockman's living room.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-23) It was later headquartered at the [Pioneer Building](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pioneer_Building_(San_Francisco)) in the [Mission District, San Francisco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mission_District,_San_Francisco).[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-24)[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-technologyreview-25)

According to OpenAI's charter, its founding mission is "to ensure that artificial general intelligence (AGI)—by which we mean highly autonomous systems that outperform humans at most economically valuable work—benefits all of humanity."[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-OpenAI-2018-6)

Musk and Altman stated in 2015 that they were partly motivated by concerns about [AI safety](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AI_safety) and [existential risk from artificial general intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Existential_risk_from_artificial_general_intelligence).[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-csmonitor-26)[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-wired_inside-27) OpenAI stated that "it's hard to fathom how much human-level AI could benefit society", and that it is equally difficult to comprehend "how much it could damage society if built or used incorrectly".[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-bbc-giants-22) The startup also wrote that AI "should be an extension of individual human wills and, in the spirit of liberty, as broadly and evenly distributed as possible",[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-bbc-giants-22) and that "because of AI's surprising history, it's hard to predict when human-level AI might come within reach. When it does, it'll be important to have a leading research institution which can prioritize a good outcome for all over its own self-interest."[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-28) Co-chair Sam Altman expected a decades-long project that eventually surpasses human intelligence.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI#cite_note-wired_far_more-29)