

# Ousted OpenAI CEO Sam Altman 'in talks to return at firm's HQ'

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Sam Altman is being lined up for a surprise return as the chief executive of the ChatGPT developer OpenAI amid pressure from investors to reverse his shock ousting. Altman was fired by the company board on Friday, citing a failure to be “candid in his communications”, in a move that startled Silicon Valley. However, OpenAI’s investors – who include Microsoft – are pushing for his reinstatement, according to reports. Altman was expected to join executives at the company’s San Francisco headquarters on Sunday, the interim CEO, Mira Murati, reportedly told staff. Altman then posted an image of himself on X, formerly Twitter, wearing an OpenAI guest badge with the caption: “First and last time I ever wear one of these.” The Verge, a tech news website, reported on Sunday that Altman was at OpenAI’s offices for the “final stretch” of negotiations over his return, having set a late afternoon deadline to find a solution. Microsoft’s CEO, Satya Nadella, is reportedly mediating the discussions between Altman and the board. Paul Graham, a tech investor and mentor to Altman, posted on X: “No one in the world is better than Sam at dealing with this kind of situation.” On Saturday, the Information, another tech news site, had reported that OpenAI was “optimistic” it could bring back Altman. The report quoted a memo from the company’s chief strategy officer, Jason Kwon, telling staff that an effort was under way to bring back Altman and other senior colleagues who had left. Altman’s departure was followed by the resignations of Greg Brockman, OpenAI’s president, and three senior researchers: Jakub Pachocki, Aleksander Mądry and Szymon Sidor. “We are still working towards a resolution and we remain optimistic,” Kwon wrote, according to the Information. “By resolution, we mean bringing back Sam, Greg, Jakub, Szymon, Aleksander and other colleagues (sorry if I missed you!) and remaining the place where people who want to work on AGI [artificial general intelligence] research, safety, products and policy can do their best work.” Early on Sunday, Altman posted on X: “i love the openai team so much”. According to the Wall Street Journal, Altman is considering a return but has told shareholders he wants a new board and governance structure as a precondition, while he balances the option of starting a new company with former OpenAI colleagues. The WSJ said Altman was set to decide between the two options this weekend. OpenAI is governed by a non-profit parent and its board, which after the departure of Altman and Brockman now consists of four people: OpenAI’s chief scientist Ilya Sutskever and three non-employees. Altman and Apple’s former design chief Jony Ive have been discussing building a new AI hardware device, according to reports. It was also reported that the SoftBank chief executive, Masayoshi Son, had been involved in the conversation. Microsoft, the biggest investor in OpenAI, reportedly supports Altman’s reinstatement, along with the fellow investor Thrive Capital, a venture capital fund and the second largest investor. Khosla Ventures, an early backer of OpenAI, wants Altman back at OpenAI but “will back him in

whatever he does next", the fund's founder, Vinod Khosla, posted on X on Saturday. Altman's sacking was over a "breakdown of communications", not "malfeasance", the chief operating officer, Brad Lightcap, wrote in another internal company memo on Saturday, according to Reuters. Microsoft, Thrive and openAI have been approached for comment.