SAFI BAHCALL

Physicist · Biotech founder & CEO · Author of "Loonshots"

Safi Bahcall is a physicist, entrepreneur, and founder of Folkman Ventures, which invests in biomedical, digital health, and technology infrastructure companies. Previously, Bahcall founded Synta Pharmaceuticals, a biotechnology company focused on discovering and developing novel therapies for serious diseases. As CEO for 13 years, he led the company's growth from startup through its public offering and evolution into a fully integrated drug discovery and development organization. The company, now known as Madrigal Pharmaceuticals, achieved the first FDA approval for a treatment for metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH), a major milestone in liver disease treatment. Before this, Bahcall was a consultant at McKinsey & Company, advising organizations on strategy and operations, and contributed to public policy through his work with President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST).

Bahcall's research has focused on applying the science of phase change to understanding the spread of ideas inside companies, which helps leaders design more innovative organizations, and the behavior of markets, which helps investors better understand bubbles and crashes. Bahcall's book *Loonshots: Nurture the Crazy Ideas that Win Wars, Cure Diseases, and Transform Industries* describes how this research can help explain the rise and fall of companies and nations, and offers practical rules for innovating in turbulent times. It has been translated into 23 languages and was recognized as a top nonfiction book by *Bloomberg, The Financial Times*, *Forbes*, *Inc., Newsweek, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post,* and others.

Bahcall has advised hypergrowth startups, investment funds, Fortune 500 companies, and U.S. government organizations including the CIA and branches of the U.S. military, and has lectured at leading universities and scientific organizations around the world. He received an A.B. degree in physics from Harvard University *summa cum laude,* Phi Beta Kappa; a Ph.D. in physics from Stanford University, where he studied many-body physics under Nobel prize winner Robert Laughlin; and a Miller Research Postdoctoral Fellowship in physics from UC Berkeley, where he studied properties of high-temperature superconductors.