Akram Boukai obtained his PhD in Chemistry from Caltech, where he was the co-discoverer of high performance silicon thermoelectrics. He then joined the faculty in the Materials Science Department at the University of Michigan as Assistant Professor. There his group made a breakthrough in the manufacture of silicon thermoelectrics that led to the founding of Matrix Industries. Akram is now CEO and co-founder at Matrix having left academia to pursue the challenge of building a valuable business.