



***“Knowledge is what makes things enjoyable.  
The more you know, the better, so that  
enjoyment and enthusiasm can resolve into  
innovation.”***

- Pedro Duque, Spanish astronaut, 1963 -



**“Tango, Delta” – “Touchdown confirmed!”** After travelling nearly 300 million miles, NASA’s Perseverance spacecraft landed on Mars on 18th Feb 2021. By now, you likely have seen images of the “Red Planet” and perhaps even heard the first audio clip from Mars.

March, the third month of the year, carries the name of the Roman god of war, Mars, which is also the Red Planet’s namesake. On the first day of the month, the Romanians celebrate the festival of Mărțișor. The day marks the beginning of spring. March is also the month to celebrate International Women’s Day (8th) and St. Patrick’s Day (17th). And if you have not had enough of the Lunar New Year celebration last month, we have another New Year in March, Nowruz, the Persian New Year (20th). It is a 13-day celebration.

And guess what? With spring in sight, I have booked myself on the next mission to Mars. My flight scheduled on July 2026 will travel to the Jezero Crater! Read on if you wish to join me on the adventure...

**Warm wishes from Mars for March!**

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## A Journey A Month...

### Your Story. Our Story. The Human Story.

Inspired by J.C. Maxwell (1831-1879), who published the Theory of Electromagnetism, my final year undergraduate project at [KCL](#) was to design and fabricate a Microstrip Antenna for satellite communication. Today I still remain on the mailing list of a group of British IEE engineers living in France. Because of that, I got to watch NASA's live broadcast of the Perseverance landing.

***"One small step for a man, One giant leap for Mankind."*** That was Neil Armstrong's famous quote when he landed on the surface of the Moon. After some enthusiastic surfing on NASA's site, I came across its ["Send Your Name to Mars"](#) programme. I was amazed that 11 million willing participants' names were etched on three finger-nail-sized chips onboard the Perseverance.

Recalling a conversation in which my best friend expressed her interest in Mars travel, I decided to seize the opportunity to board the next flight. Voila, here is my boarding pass issued by NASA. For the trip, I will be earning a whopping 1.1 billion mi/1.7 billion km for my NASA frequent flyer membership!



If you wish to join me on the mission to Mars, you can click on this link and sign up: <https://mars.nasa.gov/participate/send-your-name/future>. Hurry to get your seat; there are already 10 million names for the 2026 flight (3 million more since I signed up!)



Now, back on earth, as non-astronauts, there is still so much for us to discover here. Equally inspiring were explorers such as Marco Polo, Xuanzang, and all the merchants who travelled the ancient Silk Road. Zhenghe, Columbus, Tasman, Cook braved through the waves of the vast oceans to discover the new “worlds.” Their efforts led to exchanges of ideas and cultures, which paved the way to advancing humanity around the globe during their times.



Indeed, it is in our DNA the desire to explore the unknowns. This gene led us to advance in our evolution, first across country boundaries on earth, then to the moon, and now to Mars. While technology allows us to explore the universe, let's not undermine the opportunities to accomplish more on our planet.

Let's ask ourselves these questions: How well do we know our fellow beings on earth? Have you been an avid explorer on earth? Perhaps taking an interest in another person's culture, travelling to a few countries interacting with our fellow earthlings may seem to be a small step. Yet, this very simple exploratory effort can be what it takes for another giant leap for humankind, just like those taken by merchants or sailors along the ancient routes.

***Q:** If we failed to achieve a harmonious world with our species on earth, what do you think of our ability to interact successfully with other species on another planet?*

So, while we get ready with our boarding passes and plan for our trips to Mars, we can continue to develop our interest in our fellow humans. We can also practice our skills to interact and collaborate cross-culturally with people who seem different from us. Surely, earthlings are closer relatives to us versus other alien lifeforms from another planet. Don't you think so?



**So, are you ready for your next adventure?**



*We, at TransCultural Group (TCG), are determined to play our parts in making the world a better place, and we have teamed up with the Cultural Intelligence Centre, U.S.A to bring their well-researched and designed CQ assessment tools to our clients in the Asia Pacific.*

*We are passionate about building bridges and breaking down walls. Please join us in our journey,*



***Beyond Boundaries - Crossing Cultures***

## **The world is fascinating, simply because differences exist...**

Spread the words, share the vision, do our part!



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*A typical TCG's workshop will start with a CQ assessment (either CQ Pro for Professionals, or CQ for Youth for students) as the first step, followed by discussion and interactive sessions to understand how they may further increase their cultural intelligence. If you are interested in TCG's programmes, please reach out to us: [contact@transculturalgroup.com](mailto:contact@transculturalgroup.com).*