Iraj cycling round the world



An Extraordinary Journey Begins – 15th November 2026

A few words from Iraj, as he prepares to embark on an extraordinary journey.

Following his successful cycling adventure from Oxford to Tehran in 2021, Iraj is now preparing for an even greater challenge. Cycling around the world at the age of 72!

Setting off from Oxford on 15th November 2026, Iraj will be taking on this remarkable adventure while raising awareness and supporting Oxfordshire Mind, a charity close to his heart.

We are incredibly proud of Iraj and wish him every success as he takes on this next chapter.

Here are a few words from Iraj about his upcoming journey, what inspired him to take on this challenge and what he hopes to experience along the way.

A New Adventure Begins

After returning from my successful cycling journey from Oxford to Tehran in 2021, many people asked me, "What's next?"

My immediate answer was, "There is no next."

I needed time to reflect on what I had achieved, to absorb the experiences, memories and encounters along the way, and to allow whatever came next to develop naturally, without expectation.

By the summer of 2022, however, a new idea had begun to take shape. Having cycled from Oxford to Tehran, why not continue the journey and turn it into something even greater. A cycling adventure around the world?

The idea was to travel west to east, continuing from where I had finished in Tehran, through Asia, Australia, New Zealand and America, before returning to Europe and eventually the UK.

I had originally hoped to begin this next chapter in August 2022, but circumstances, including extreme weather and challenges along the planned route, meant that the timing wasn't right.

Four years have passed, and I've come to realise that there may never be a perfect time to embark on such an adventure. Sometimes, you simply have to begin.

So, on Sunday 15 November 2026, at 9:00am, I will set off on my next great adventure from the Radcliffe Camera in Oxford. The very same place where my first journey began.

My initial route will take me cycling to Heathrow, where I will pack my bicycle and fly to Amritsar in India. From there, I will begin cycling eastwards through Asia, with the ambition of continuing across Australia, New Zealand, America and Europe, eventually returning home to Oxford.

And then, I will simply see where my wheels take me.

Why Cycle Around the World at 72?

It is a question I have asked myself, and one that I am sure many others will ask.

My answer is much the same as it was when I set off from Oxford to Tehran.

First and foremost, I am doing this for myself, for my love of cycling, my curiosity about the world and my desire to experience different places, cultures and people.

For me, cycling is about much more than travelling from one destination to another. It is about the journey itself, the people I meet, the landscapes I pass through and the unexpected experiences that make every day different.

Over the years, my understanding of the connection between mind and body has deepened. I have come to appreciate how closely our physical and mental wellbeing are connected, and how important it is to remain present, open-minded and connected to the world around us.

I hope this adventure will be as much an inner journey as a physical one & an opportunity to deepen my connection with people, nature and the world we share.

There will undoubtedly be difficult days, unexpected challenges and moments when I question what I am doing. But that, too, is part of the adventure.

I want to embrace the unknown, live in the moment and discover what each new day brings.

The People Who Make This Possible

Although I will be cycling alone, I will never truly be on my own.

I will carry the love and encouragement of my family and friends with me throughout the journey.

In particular, I want to thank my wonderful wife and my three amazing daughters. Their love, patience, understanding and unwavering support mean more to me than words can express.

Without them, this adventure simply would not be possible.

Supporting Oxfordshire Mind

As with my previous journey from Oxford to Tehran, I would also like to use this adventure to raise awareness and support for **Oxfordshire Mind**, a charity that provides invaluable mental health services to people across Oxfordshire.

Mental wellbeing is something I care deeply about, and I hope that sharing my journey will encourage others to look after both their physical and mental health, embrace new challenges and pursue the things that bring them happiness and purpose.

If you would like to support Oxfordshire Mind through my journey, you can make a donation here:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/iraj-maghounaki-1788949574624

Follow My Journey

I will be documenting my adventure on Polarsteps, sharing regular updates, photographs, stories and reflections from the road.

You will be able to follow my progress from 15th November 2026 using the link below:

https://www.polarsteps.com/IrajMaghounaki/29724540-iraj-cycling-round-the-world-leg-2/planned-step/108155020?mode=plan

I don't know exactly what the coming year will bring, who I will meet or what challenges lie ahead.

But that is precisely what makes this journey so exciting.

At 72, I feel incredibly fortunate to have the health, enthusiasm and opportunity to take on another adventure of this scale.

My hope is that this journey might also inspire others, whatever their age, to remain curious, embrace life and never stop exploring.

The world is waiting, and I am ready to start pedalling.

May all beings be happy.

May all beings live in peace.

With love and compassion to all beings,

Iraj Maghounaki

Oxford, November 2026