

Winners of global photo competition to spotlight human impact of COVID-19 announced

Three winners selected for their outstanding images capturing the untold consequences of COVID-19 on people's lives and livelihoods

LONDON (December 16, 2020) – The Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF) and Omidyar Network revealed today the winners of the [‘COVID-19: The Bigger Picture’](#) photo competition.

Launched in August 2020, the initiative uses the power of photography and journalism to bring to the world's attention the often-overlooked stories of how those most vulnerable to the pandemic are being affected. Alongside the photo competition, a series of five professional [photo essays](#) capturing the hidden impact of COVID-19 across the United States were published from August to October.

The photojournalism award was open to anyone with a passion for turning the lens on the real lives behind the headlines, and an ability to capture the most powerful images of the pandemic's impact on everyday people. It attracted more than 500 entries spanning four continents and 91 countries.

“The strong interest generated by this photo competition is testament to the fact that there are countless untold stories of individuals affected by the global pandemic. These stories deserve to be told. Although COVID-19 has changed life as we know it in almost every way, the resilience and humanity so beautifully captured by these pictures offer us a real sense of hope. I am very grateful to Omidyar Network for believing in this initiative from the start and for working so collaboratively with us to make it happen,” said Antonio Zappulla, CEO of the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

“Words alone cannot capture the anguish and suffering that people around the world have endured during this pandemic,” said Mike Kubzansky, CEO of Omidyar Network. *“Every photo submitted through this contest offers a window into someone's life, exposing not only the horrible impact of this virus, but also a sense of shared humanity. In the face of incredible challenges, often exacerbated by deep structural inequalities, people the world over demonstrated enormous amounts of strength, dedication, and compassion. In addition to congratulating our winners and finalists, I want to thank everyone who submitted an entry for sharing a piece of their lives with the world.”*

The winning entries are:

- [‘Quarantine in the Dark’](#) by Wara Vargas (Bolivia) depicting the impact of the pandemic on the livelihoods of La Paz's blind indigenous population
- [‘Rest in Peace’](#) by Rakesh Nair (India) capturing medical staff in PPE performing the last rituals in Hindu tradition before the remains of a COVID-19 victim are cremated
- [‘The Pandemic at the Rohingya Refugee Camp’](#) by Mohammad Rakibul Hasan (Bangladesh) showing a young Rohingya child crying as a swab is collected from him in a refugee camp

The judges also highly commended three images:

- [‘At Home’](#) by Niccolo Verecondi (Spain) photographing the half-lit facade of a residential building during the first week of lockdown in Barcelona
- [‘Superhero’](#) by Vanessa Carvalho (Brazil) capturing a nurse arriving on duty in a superhero cape to surprise other health professionals working to combat COVID-19 in New York City

- [‘Eid’](#) by Armin Durgut (Bosnia and Herzegovina) showing Muslims observing Eid prayers outdoors because of mosque closures caused by COVID-19

In total, fourteen photos were shortlisted, from countries including Egypt, Greece, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, and the United States. Each of the shortlisted photos can be viewed [here](#).

Winners were chosen by a panel of judges made up of the CEOs of the Thomson Reuters Foundation and Omidyar Network, as well as the three professional photographers who captured the photo essays published as part of the initiative: Mike McCoy, Lynsey Weatherspoon and L. Kasimu Harris.

The three winners will receive a photojournalism masterclass delivered by the Thomson Reuters Foundation’s world-leading trainers. Participants will hone their existing story-telling skills as well as build on them through tailored workshops and mentoring. They will also each be offered the opportunity to work alongside the Thomson Reuters Foundation’s news team on a story that will be shared via the Foundation’s global distribution network.

About the Thomson Reuters Foundation

The Thomson Reuters Foundation is the corporate foundation of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. As an independent charity, registered in the UK and the USA, it works to advance media freedom, foster more inclusive economies, and promote human rights. Through news, media development, free legal assistance and convening initiatives, it combines its unique media and legal services to drive systemic change.

About the Omidyar Network

Established by philanthropists Pam and Pierre Omidyar, [Omidyar Network](#) is a social change venture that has committed more than \$1 billion to innovative for-profit companies and non-profit organizations since 2004. Omidyar Network works to reimagine critical systems and the ideas that govern them, and to build more inclusive and equitable societies in which individuals have the social, economic, and democratic power to thrive.

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