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The National Geographic Society announced it's Explorer's Grantees this week and Rubén Salgado Escudero, a Blue Earth Alliance photographer, was selected among the recipients. In the same week Salgado was announced as a nominee to the Prix Pictet. Both awards are considered among of the most prestigious for any photographer. As a National Geographic Explorer Mr. Salgado Escudero joins a community whose ranks have also included Jane Goodall and Jacques Cousteau. The Explorer community is comprised of conservationists, scientists, storytellers, educators, and technologists- all seeking to better the world we live in. The Prix Pictet has become the world's leading award for photography and sustainability. Entry to the award is strictly by nomination. The award plays to a global audience of over 400 million and since 2008 the seven cycles of the Prix Pictet have been shown in exhibitions in all major cities of the world in with visitor numbers of over 550,000.

Mr. Salgado Escudero has spent the last four years documenting solar energy in communities around the globe in a project called *Solar Portraits*. *Solar Portraits* is a multimedia project which addresses the critical lack of access to electricity worldwide and the benefits of solar technology and innovation in people's lives. Energy poverty is a global issue, still affecting over 1.1 billion people worldwide. He has already produced and widely published locations in Myanmar, Uganda, and India. The Uganda and India episodes were part of a National Geographic Magazine assignment which was published in a 12-page spread worldwide in 2015 ([seen here](#)) and the Myanmar section was published a year before that in TIME ([seen here](#)). *Solar Portraits* has been widely awarded internationally such as 1st place in the Sony World Photography Awards & 1st place by UK's Royal Geographical Society's 'Earth Photo' award. It has also been exhibited in more than a dozen countries worldwide. Mr. Salgado Escudero has been based in Mexico for the last year documenting communities in Guerrero and Jalisco, and will begin work in Guatemala, Colombia and the USA in 2019.

When asked about the grant and nomination he said, "I feel humbled and excited to get support from such important institutions. Seeing this recognition makes me incredibly motivated to continue documenting these people's stories, and through them the story of global energy transition. We still have a lot of work to do, and support to seek, but I really look forward to what the future holds for Solar Portraits."

With the Nat Geo Grant the entirety of the Americas has been funded. *Solar Portraits* is still seeking support in Asia and Africa. To learn more please visit www.rubensalgado.com.

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