Essilor creates the Vision For Life™ program dedicated to eliminating poor vision

(Charenton-le-Pont – France, 3 February 2015) – Essilor, the world’s leading ophthalmic optics company, announces the creation of the Vision For Life program, a pioneering step in the company’s mission to improve lives by improving sight. The Group has committed 30 million Euros to this initiative, making it the largest global strategic giving program dedicated to eliminating Uncorrected Refractive Error (URE).

URE, or poor vision, is the most common disability in the world, and an estimated 2.5 billion people do not have the vision correction they need. Visual impairment has significant social and economic repercussions – the latter calculated to be worth as much as USD 272 billion in lost global productivity1 per year.

Vision For Life is a strategic giving program that aims to accelerate initiatives targeting poor vision through awareness-raising, capacity-building and the creation of basic vision care infrastructure. The sustainable development of local vision care will create jobs, help alleviate poverty and bring socio-economic development to individuals and the communities in which they live.

“The launch of the Vision For Life program is a natural sequel to the creation of our Corporate Mission division in 2013 and provides impetus to our efforts to bring good vision to everyone, everywhere in the world. By addressing the vast unmet vision correction needs, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of individuals and on human development worldwide.” said Hubert Sagnières, Chairman and CEO of Essilor International.

In line with its ambition, Vision For Life will fund various types of public interest projects. These range from community vision care actions led in cooperation with nonprofit organizations, including local Essilor foundations, to the setting up of vision centers and skills development in areas without access to primary eye care. The program will also support public awareness campaigns and advocacy to drive better understanding of the importance of good vision.

1 www.visionimpactinstitute.org
“We are very excited to be marking a new page in the history of the fight against poor vision,” commented Jayanth Bhuvanaghi, Essilor’s Chief Corporate Mission Officer. “Vision for Life is a global strategic giving program that will fund, monitor and measure the impact of projects showing the most potential to scale up and improve the lives of as many people as possible through improved access to vision care.”

The Vision For Life program will be administered by two nonprofit entities, the Essilor Social Impact Fund, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation in the USA and the Essilor Social Impact fonds de dotation (endowment fund) in France. A governing board for each entity will decide the allocation of funding for projects in accordance with their respective investment criteria.

The Essilor Group has a long history of community impact, providing vision screenings and eyewear donations to more than one million underprivileged people in the countries in which it operates. To this end, the Essilor Vision Foundation (EVF) was created in 2008 in the USA and now exists in India, China, Singapore and Canada. The Foundation will continue to deploy the geographic development of its philanthropic programs.

Essilor also created the Vision Impact Institute in 2013, a nonprofit organisation whose mission is to raise awareness about the importance of healthy vision, including the socio-economic impact of Uncorrected Refractive Errors (URE) and quality of life benefits of visual correction.

CONTACTS
Corporate Communication
Lucia Dumas
Press
Maïlis Thiercelin
Tel.: +33 (0)1 49 77 45 02

Corporate Mission
Laura Viscovich
Tel.: +65 6589 9356
About Essilor

The world’s leading ophthalmic optics company, Essilor designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Its corporate mission is to improve lives by improving sight. To support this mission, the Company allocates more than €150 million to research and innovation every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Essilor’s flagship brands are Varilux®, Crizal®, Transitions®, Definity®, Xperio®, Optifog®, Foster Grant®, Bolon® and Costa®. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals.

Essilor reported consolidated revenue of over €5 billion in 2013 and employs more than 55,000 people. It distributes its products in some 100 countries with 28 plants, more than 450 prescription laboratories and edging facilities, as well as several research and development centers around the world.

For more information, please visit www.essilor.com.

The Essilor share trades on the NYSE Euronext Paris market and is included in the Euro Stoxx 50 and CAC 40 indices. Codes and symbols: ISIN: FR0000121667; Reuters: ESSI.PA; Bloomberg: EI:FP.