

## Essilor to put proven expertise of vision care capacity-building at the service of the Commonwealth

***(Charenton-le-Pont, France, 16 April 2018) – Essilor commits to expanding its award winning inclusive business and philanthropic programmes to meet the unmet vision needs of 900 million people living with uncorrected refractive errors in the Commonwealth. This commitment will leave a legacy of improved vision care infrastructure and in addition, provide 200 million people living below the poverty line with free ophthalmic lenses.***

Comprising 53 countries, the Commonwealth has a population of 2.4 billion. It is estimated that 900 million people suffer from uncorrected refractive errors; approximately two-thirds of them live below the poverty line. Essilor's commitment will be made in partnership through the \$1bn Vision Catalyst Fund. The Fund is a new initiative under development by The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, civil society and public-private stakeholders, to provide sustainable solutions for eye health to entire populations in Commonwealth countries and around the world.

Essilor has been working for many years to provide vision care at the base of the pyramid through inclusive business and philanthropic programmes. As creators of the largest rural optical network in the world, Essilor addresses the two biggest barriers to good vision for all; access and awareness. By training primary vision care providers and creating last mile connectivity to locally-relevant product innovation, Essilor has gathered unique experience deploying sustainable vision care programmes for the most underserved communities.

Chief Executive and Chairman of Essilor International, Hubert Sagnieres, commented: *“A simple pair of glasses has the power to change a person’s life and create positive ripple effects on the social and economic development of their community. Much like the ongoing fight to ensure children everywhere in the world are immunized against infectious diseases, civil society and public-private stakeholders must work together to immunize everyone against the negative impact of poor vision by making vision care universally available. We welcome the opportunity to share our unique knowledge with our partners in the Vision Catalyst Fund, and to provide ophthalmic lenses to 200 million people in the Commonwealth living below the poverty line. We are committing to do this by 2030, the year the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals come to end. These efforts represent a huge step forward for Essilor on our journey to eradicate uncorrected poor vision by 2050 and to transform the lives of hundreds of millions of people.”*

Dr Astrid Bonfield CBE, Chief Executive of The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust commented: *“We are delighted that Essilor is supporting the Vision Catalyst Fund by committing to both provide 200 million people living below the poverty line with ophthalmic lenses and to continue to build capacity of and access to eye care providers. We are at an historic moment where, thanks to the efforts of a diverse but united community, we have the potential to bring vision to everyone, everywhere within just one generation. Essilor’s visionary commitment is set to be truly transformational and takes us a step forward towards realising our goal of quality eye care being a part of everyday life for everyone.”*

Vision and development are closely linked. Poor vision impacts a person's ability to learn, work, earn a decent income, to be safe and live an independent life. Improving vision directly impacts many of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. Essilor's commitment deadline of 2030 is in line with the closing of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, with a clear objective to place vision care on the global health agenda.

Essilor's initiatives to bring vision care to the 2.5 billion people living with uncorrected poor vision include inclusive business programmes, strategic giving, raising awareness and advocacy. Partnering with others who support the cause of good vision plays a key role in these initiatives. Notable partnerships include the support of the Australian Government to expand Essilor's inclusive business programmes into Bangladesh, and the selection of Essilor by the Indian State Government of Telangana to provide glasses to the millions in need.

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## Notes to Editors

### **About the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Fund**

The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust is a charitable foundation established in 2012 by Commonwealth Heads of Government to mark and celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's 60-year contribution to the Commonwealth at the time of her Diamond Jubilee. The Trust has received donations from governments, corporate partners, trusts, foundations, community groups and individuals from across the Commonwealth, and its programmes work in alliance towards ending avoidable blindness and to empower a new generation of young leaders. The Trust's aim is to leave a lasting legacy, owned by the whole Commonwealth, to honour The Queen. For more information, please visit: [www.jubileetribute.org](http://www.jubileetribute.org)

### **About Essilor**

*Essilor International (Compagnie Générale d'Optique) ("Essilor") is the world's leading ophthalmic optics company. Essilor designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Its mission is to improve lives by improving sight. To support this mission, Essilor allocates more than €200 million to research and innovation every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Its flagship brands are Varilux®, Crizal®, Transitions®, Eyezen™, Xperio®, Foster Grant®, Bolon™ and Costa®. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals.*

*Essilor reported consolidated revenue of around €7.5 billion in 2017 and employs approximately 67,000 people worldwide. It has 34 plants, 481 prescription laboratories and edging facilities, as well as 4 research and development centers around the world. For more information, please visit [www.essilor.com](http://www.essilor.com).*

*The Essilor share trades on the 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.*

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