

## **Essilor appoints Professor Kovin Naidoo Senior Vice President of Inclusive Business, Philanthropy and Social Impact**

*(Charenton-le-Pont, France, 30 October 2018) – Essilor is proud to announce Professor Kovin Naidoo has been appointed Senior Vice President of Inclusive Business, Philanthropy and Social Impact. In this newly created position, Professor Naidoo will lead the Group’s efforts to reach the 2.5billion people living with uncorrected poor vision through inclusive business and philanthropy.*

Most recently serving as Associate Professor of Optometry at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), former CEO of the Brien Holden Vision Institute and former Africa Chair of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, Professor Naidoo is internationally celebrated as a public health leader. This year Kovin has been recognised by American Academy of Optometry with the Carel C. Koch Memorial Medal Award for his outstanding contributions to the enhancement and development of relationships between optometry and other professions.

Essilor’s Chief Mission Officer, Jayanth Bhuvanaraghan commented; *“We’re delighted to welcome Kovin to the team. A longstanding friend of Essilor, Kovin has dedicated his professional life to delivering eye care to people in need. As one of the leading minds working in solving the uncorrected refractive error problem around the world, his unique and diverse experience will add further strength to our inclusive business and philanthropic efforts around the world as we strive towards our ambition of eradicating poor vision by 2050.”*

Professor Kovin Naidoo said of his appointment; *“All my life I have been driven by the passion to make a positive impact on the world’s vision. I have supported Essilor’s initiatives to reach those living with uncorrected poor vision for a long time both as a collaborator and independent adviser. Joining Essilor, an organisation that shares my commitment to the cause and personal values, gives me the opportunity to take my actions to a new scale and I look forward to working with such a dedicated team.”*

Uncorrected poor vision is the world’s most widespread disability and affects 2.5 billion people, 90% of whom live in developing countries. Every year USD 272bn is wasted in the global economy due to lost productivity as a result of uncorrected poor vision. This impact is felt acutely in rural areas where awareness and access to vision care is often poor.

**-ENDS-**

#### **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. In line with its mission to improve lives by improving sight, Essilor has the ambition to eradicate poor vision by 2050. To support this ambition, Essilor allocates more than €200million to research and innovation every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. In 2013 the Group identified 2.5billion people were living with uncorrected poor vision and set up dedicated inclusive business solutions, strategic giving and research, advocacy and awareness initiatives to address this. By 2020, Essilor will have provided 50 million members of underserved communities and low-income individuals with the vision correction they need.*

*For more information visit [www.essilorseechange.com](http://www.essilorseechange.com)*

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