“Do you know what’s so great about lighting? It is everywhere! And the moment you convert lighting systems into a smart grid, it means that you have created a smart public space,” says Mary-Ann Schreurs, Vice-Mayor of Innovation and Design, Sustainability and Culture at the Municipality of Eindhoven. “Ledification and digitalization of lighting brings unprecedented possibilities. We aim for a deployment of lighting that enhances the quality of life.”

By the end of 2016, the Municipality of Eindhoven contracted the consortium Philips Lighting/ ILI for the further development of Eindhoven as a smart society. The consortium will build on the ‘Roadmap Smart City Lighting Eindhoven 2030’, which was developed in collaboration with the Technical University of Eindhoven and ILI. The city wants to be on the forefront of developments in the field of intelligent lighting. “Our approach is to work in co-creation with numerous stakeholders, including the public. We are developing, so hardly anybody can or should join forces and develop together. Will we succeed in developing a great lighting system and smart public space together? I don’t doubt that.”

The consortium will collaborate intensively with all testing grounds, together with the Municipal Council, TU/e, entrepreneurs and the public. The experiences gained at the testing grounds will deliver new systems and structures that improve our quality of life. “The road to the future smart city solutions will be locally rooted, resembling our Philips Lighting heritage. Collaborating, creating knowledge and light(ing) that unites our efforts. We return to the values of our do-democracy, and a third line is all about social change. This is specifically important for the public domain. In what way will technology influence our lives and what do we want from technology? Now and by 2030. That’s why we entered into a 15 year partnership within the consortium. To be able to truly explore and achieve great results together.”

Mary-Ann Schreurs interviewed by Michiel de Boer of Moesasji

"Identity" “Our future smart city solutions will be locally rooted, resembling our identity. After all, light perception is a cultural phenomenon. In China, for example, people like flashy, intense, almost circus-like lighting. Within the framework of my activities as chair of LUCI (Lighting Urban Community International) I recently visited Copenhagen. I was amazed by the dimmed, low-intensity street lighting situation. When I referred to this, people gazed at me, quite puzzled. They didn’t perceive it as such; to them this was a completely accepted phenomenon. So, lighting and a wider public space need to fit the cultural identity of a city. We have put a lot of energy in the preparation of our activities. TU/e and ILI have created a clear and realistic roadmap based on extensive research and current trends. The first line considers the developments in digitalization and the role that gathering and sharing information will play in our lives. The second line is the development of lighting technology, in which ILI plays a major role. In short, ILI is exploring what’s possible and what’s next. The third line is all about social change. This is specifically important for the public domain. In what way will technology influence our lives and what do we want from technology? Now and by 2030. That’s why we entered into a 15 year partnership within the consortium. To be able to truly explore and achieve great results together.”

Light connects people” “So we cannot give a very specific answer to the question, “What will Smart City Eindhoven look like in 2030?” And we don’t have to. I think that we’re entering a new era, the do-democracy, and a time in which companies, citizens, scientists and governments join forces and develop together. Will we succeed in developing a great lighting system and smart public space together? I don’t doubt that. The program is designed to suit our core competences: technology and design. And remarkably enough, it is again lighting that unites our efforts. We return to the values of our Philips Lighting heritage. Collaborating, creating knowledge and sharing knowledge is what makes us enthusiastic. Co-creating will deliver new systems and structures that improve our quality of life.”

Interview | Mary-Ann Schreurs interviewed by Michiel de Boer of Moesasji

‘Intelligent lighting is all about quality of life’