trends in lighting design 2026

INTILED

opinions of

11

influencers in light

You are holding an experimental brochure, created by INTILED as a result of conversations with 11 completely different lighting designers-opinion leaders from 6 countries:

Russia
Belorussia
Hong Kong
India
UAE
Italy

This brochure is our attempt to equip you with some additional knowledge and inspiration for 2026

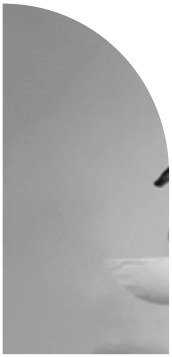
We believe that in the current, rather complex and competitive times, information is one of the key tools for business success, and we are delighted to share it with you.

We asked the experts two questions:

1) What major trend in lighting design will be relevant in 2026?

2) What major trend in products/ technologies will be relevant in 2026?

You can read their answers on the following pages...



Natalia Bystriantseva

PhD in architecture, creative director of the «Svetovaya sreda» design and consulting company, developer of comprehensive lighting plans in Russian cities, co-founder of the Light Environment Development Foundation, associate professor, head of the Master's program in Lighting Design at the Stieglitz Academy and ITMO University.

01

Design control tools.

Speaking about trends in design, it can be said that we have finally "grown up" to the point of developing design control tools and their implementation. I see that systematic work is now beginning to develop and implement tools for quality control of lighting solutions in Russian cities.

In fact, in many cases, I am the initiator and participant in this work. Criteria and tools for control are developed both within the context of stylistic decisions and within the city's regulatory framework, which enables the integration of high-quality lighting solutions and the development of coordinated interactions among all services involved in the design of the city's lighting environment.

Domestic brands of world-class level.

02

Speaking about trends in technology, as they apply to Russia, I think the most noteworthy process is the formation of full-fledged, world-class domestic brands with high added value, which we are currently observing.

Thanks to a number of manufacturers, the level of Russian lighting products on the international market is growing, which will inevitably impact (and is already impacting) the growth of the quality of solutions from all Russian manufacturers.

Eugenia *Cheng*

Eugenia is a recipient of the Lighting 40under40 in 2022 and a member of the UK CIBSE SLL.

Eugenia Cheng is the founder of LightOrigin Studio (LOS), an award-winning lighting design firm based in Hong Kong.

The studio specializes in boutique projects and has successfully completed projects both locally and internationally. It has received accolades from APIDA HK, the [D]ARC Awards, the Dezeen Awards, the LIT Awards, and the FRAME Awards.

I believe the design trends emerging in 2025 will continue into 2026 — with an even stronger focus on **biophilic design.** As biophilic principles (for both humans and animals) increasingly shape architectural, interior, and landscape projects, dynamic, smart, and adaptive biophilic lighting solutions will evolve to align with this shift. This affects both decorative and architectural applications.

With circadian lighting firmly established as a key lighting goal and directive, indirect, seamless lighting techniques will undoubtedly be favored and further refined. These lighting concepts and design approaches will integrate more sophisticated and seamless lighting into both spaces and structural elements.

High-performance, **compact lighting fixtures** — equipped with exceptional CRI and enhanced CCT control — are in strong market demand and will, I believe, be a main technical challenge and technological trend in luminaires. Architects, interior designers, and lighting designers seek smaller fixtures for their aesthetic appeal when installed in spaces and structures, driving more manufacturers and brands to meet this need.

Today, an increasing number of luminaires are being designed to be smaller in size while delivering greater efficiency (lower wattages paired with higher lumen outputs), alongside top-tier CRI and more precise CCT adjustability. Better-quality, technologically stable tunable white and dim-warm fixtures will be in high demand, and manufacturers will respond accordingly.

AI-powered lighting systems will also be part of the trend, with features that allow self-adjusting and respond to occupancy, natural light levels, and even human emotions.

These trends align with the biophilic and circaidan design focus I mentioned earlier, as the combination of compact form, high performance, superior color accuracy, and flexible temperature control allows these fixtures to integrate seamlessly into both architectural and interior design schemes that focus on creating better living being environments.

Roberto Corradini

Educated as an architect, he also graduated with a Master's degree in Lighting Design at IUAV University of Architecture in Venice, Italy. Founded his own firm in 2010 and has completed lighting projects including art exhibitions, museums, hotels, residential projects, places of worship, retail stores, landscapes and gardens, heritage buildings and urban master-planning. In the architectural lighting field, his interests are focused to explore the ways that light affects peoples' environments and creates different settings and moods. Roberto has been invited as a guest lecturer at conferences and universities around the globe.

The main trend in lighting design in 2026 can be described in one word: **integration.** The luminous object is no more alone in the urban/interior environment as a technical fixture. It shall be hidden in the architectural surfaces or integrated in the urban furniture.

After some decades of experimentations and experience, sometimes bad and sometimes good, clients have now clear ideas about what light should offer them. Three main directions can be spotted:

01

Interaction. luminaires are not only requested to switch on, switch off and dim; they must communicate with people and situations, in interiors and exteriors.

02

Unicity. every luminaire/lamp shall be customizable, beautiful, cheaper than before and be perceived as a precious, unique piece.

03

Quality + sustainability. Energy costs and so the components. Luminaires must have a long working lifetime, as their own components.

Pauline **Dibs**

Senior Lighting Designer at UMAYA Lighting Design in Dubai, with 13 years of experience across the GCC.

Specialised in leading and delivering large-scale lighting projects with a strong technical and creative approach.

Experienced in projects with strong sustainability, inclusivity and light-pollution criteria.

01

Dark-sky/light-pollution–compliant fixtures.

The demand for BUG-rated, environmentally responsible lighting will rise as cities tighten regulations and clients become more aware. Recyclable materials, low-impact manufacturing, and reduced carbon footprint will gain even more traction.

02

Flexible lighting systems.

Clients now expect control over their environment, driving adoption of adaptable, user-centric lighting designs.

03

Lighting for impairments.

Accessibility and inclusivity are becoming essential, with standards increasingly requiring lighting that supports diverse visual needs.

04

Smart and AI-driven lighting systems.

Lighting that learns user patterns, automates scenes, integrates with sensors, and optimizes energy use will dominate.

05

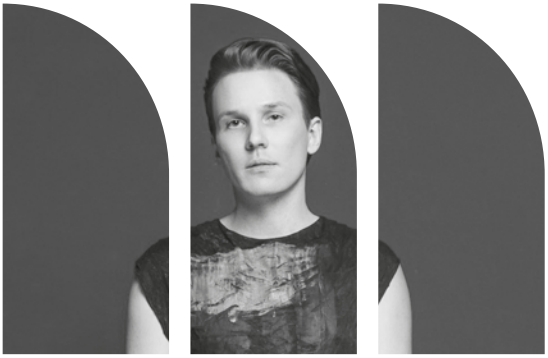
Small fittings with advanced anti-glare performance.

Miniaturized luminaires with high visual comfort will continue to trend, especially in luxury and contemporary interiors.

Extremely high-efficiency fittings with strong lumen-to-watt ratios.

Next-generation LEDs will push efficacy even further, reducing energy consumption without compromising performance.

06



Sergey Ludvig

lighting designer

In recent years, I've observed certain trends and several distinct approaches in projects around the world.

01

The first is solutions that are complex in their composition and layers: using media, complex color schemes and custom shades, content-rich space programming. All of this balances on the edge of show and attention-grabbing effect.

And, of course, in these trends, all the complexity and craftsmanship lies in the harmonious balance of such light structures.

After all, the devil is in the details.

02

The second approach is the opposite and moves toward a minimalist perception of light. While there may be quite a few light groups, individually, they are quite simple and subtly integrated. Where the more complex visual component is the space and architecture itself, and the light only enhances the structure of these volumes, but does not compete with them.

03

To varying degrees, these trends are reflected in the technological impact on lighting fixtures.

On the one hand, they are becoming more complex in their functional range — the same multichannel solutions, composite ones, with a wide range of characteristics. For example, programmable optical systems within a single body of the fixture.

On the other hand, a long-standing trend is being maintained: the integration of light aims to be unnoticeable. This involves work towards compactness, reflectors, visibility and anti-glare systems, and installation engineering.

I'll also note that there's a sense of a new twist and a return to the good old "theatrical" style. This is the use of various effective solutions – caustics, glass, chiaroscuro, and the komorebi effect (from Japanese).

Vladislav Oblasov

Lighting designer, founder of the lighting design bureau RAUM, [DLINA VOLNY] magazine, the running club Light Running.

When it comes to façade lighting trends in the coming year, I see several directions that will shape the industry's development.

A new chapter in working with color light.
This isn't a return to color — it's already been around for a long time. Rather, it's a transition to a new level in this field. Color light is often considered a faux pas, but in fact, it can be a tool for subtle coloristic work. There will be greater attention and focus on shades, their mixing, and the interaction of light with façade materials. Reduced brightness, softer transitions, and more thoughtful palettes will create a more delicate and tactful presence of color in the urban environment.

02

Dynamic and multimedia façades in a new, refined format.

Dynamics will remain, and multimedia façades will evolve. It's important for designers to avoid aggressive animations and flashy advertising dynamics that tire the eye. The trend is toward calm, well-defined rhythms, seamless transitions, and animations focused on human comfort. Essentially, dynamic lighting should integrate into the urban fabric, rather than compete with it.

03

The invisibility of light.

This is a trend that, to me, seems key and long-term.

— *Invisibility during the day:* the luminaires become part of the façade, integrate into the architecture, dissolving into the material.
— *Invisibility at night:* the source is hidden, only the light effect is visible.

This sets new design standards. Engineering components are becoming more complex: concealed installation, thoughtful niches, deeply recessed optics. The role of anti-glare accessories will increase: grilles, screens, louvres — anything that conceals the light source and improves the quality of perception.

04

A conscious approach as the foundation of the future.

I'm not sure this will become a mass trend immediately but it is precisely this awareness that is the key to qualitative changes. A caring attitude towards the environment, precise work with effects, attention to people and architecture — this is what can greatly improve the image of cities.

Marco Palandella

Born in Casale Monferrato and educated as an electrical engineer, after his graduation has practiced for several years in various scale projects in Italy and abroad. He started to work as a lighting designer on several illumination projects of sites of historic and artistic interest, and public venues, which were awarded with important prizes and gained national recognition.

His long experience with the Soprintendenza* — has enabled him to further develop his skills and to handle effectively multiple projects within overlapping deadlines. He is currently professor in Lighting techniques at university of Lugano SUPSI Switzerland, Bachelor of Arts in Interior Design.

01

In 2026, lighting design will be strongly oriented towards a human-centric approach, with particular focus on visual comfort, circadian balance, and the emotional impact of light. Designers will increasingly be expected to adopt a bespoke mindset, working with custom-made products and systems capable of dialoguing both with the architecture and with the clients' specific desires.

02

Sustainability will guide every phase of the project, with growing attention to reducing light pollution and developing adaptive, data-driven lighting scenarios. Luminaires will increasingly integrate advanced sensors, connectivity, and AI-driven controls to optimise energy use and personalise lighting conditions.

03

Modular, repairable, and recyclable product architectures will dominate, aligning with circular-economy principles.

*Soprintendenza — government organizations devoted to the preservation of the artistic, architectural and archaeological heritage

04

Optical systems will become more refined, allowing high performance with extremely low power consumption and minimal glare.

Vitaliy *Pavlov*

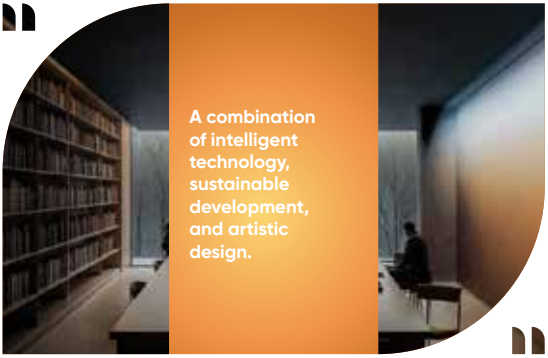
Head of the Russian representative office of the German company ABV Löwen GmbH & Co. KG.

ABV Löwen has been in business for over 20 years and represents several European lighting manufacturers.

01

Harmony of practical use and emotional perception.

Imitation of natural lighting effects in ready-made solutions that do not require complex engineering integrations.

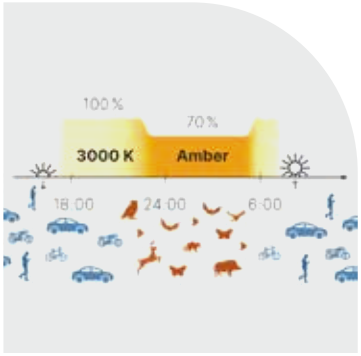


A combination of intelligent technology, sustainable development, and artistic design.

02

Minimalistic aesthetics.

Reducing the size of architectural luminaires both indoor and outdoor, while maintaining high efficiency.



Returning of the 1800-2700K color temperature to landscape projects: parks, private gardens, etc. The light of this temperature range not only benefits people, but also causes the least harm to nature.

03

Human-Nature Centric Lighting

Vinod Pillai

As the creative lead at Studio Lumen, a premier Dubai-based lighting design firm, Vinod's work spans continents and diverse lighting domains. Trained as an architect, he crafts experiential narratives where light and shadow work in powerful harmony to shape the essence of space. Vinod approaches each space as a narrative, drawing contextual inspiration to shape his design concepts. Influenced by his exposure to diverse cultures, he is intrigued by the socio-cultural responses to light and darkness, a perspective that underpins his holistic and collaborative belief that lighting design cannot exist in isolation.

Lighting design and the technology enabling lighting and control systems have always evolved in tandem. At a time when change feels more constant than ever, the possibilities offered by AI-powered intelligent technologies are especially exciting.

To reinforce the sustainability-focused direction of the industry, the new technology presents an opportunity to further support and elevate those efforts through smarter solutions.

Sergey Sizy

Lighting designer, founder and creative director of the LiDS Lighting Design Studio & School.

Member of the International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD) — Chicago and the International Commission on Illumination (CIE) — Vienna.

Founder and President of the Lighting Design Association (LDA). Jury member of the Russian Lighting Design awards.

from amber to white

01

Design.
One of the trends in the development of façade lighting concepts is working with a wide range of white shades and creating light gradients on façades, ranging from amber to warm or neutral white. This makes buildings appear lighter, emphasizes their upward structure, and evokes associations with nature. This technique is often combined with smooth dynamics, reminiscent of the shimmering sunlight on the surface of water or the flashes of fire.

02

Technology.
Lighting designers' high demands on the quality of color mixing are driving the development of Full Color technology. At the same time, given the trend towards using various shades of white, there is an increasing need for custom-made luminaires with a range of primary colors: Amber + W3000 + W6500.

They allow to reproduce intermediate shades while maintaining a high color rendering index without breaking down the spectrum into individual components. It is important to have such lighting devices in the basic model range.

Uliana Vinogradova

Lighting designer with over 16 years of experience, Head of the Lighting Design Department at INTILED.

Over 150 completed projects in architectural, landscape, and urban lighting. Guest lecturer in the Master's program in Lighting Design at ITMO University, and guest speaker at numerous seminars, webinars, and master classes.

01

The trend in lighting design in 2026 will definitely be the use of a super-warm color temperature of 1800-2200K. We are already seeing this "warming" trend, and it will only increase.

from 1800K to 2200K

02

Lighting of industrial facilities and factories is also a popular and rather challenging area of our work, the scale of which has been growing significantly in recent years due to the massive renovation of industrial zones.

03

Another stable trend of recent years, which will continue next year, is the **trend toward integrated design of large residential clusters and lighting masterplanning.**

04

Specific, highly specialized products are already and will continue to be in-demand product technologies. For example: with specific light beam that covers precisely just the needed area or with minimum light pollution into windows and on the façade. At the same time, highly versatile solutions, such as as 6-in-1 multichip solutions, mixed optics, and tuneable white, are in demand.

Natalia Bystriantseva

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Eugenia Cheng

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Office Golden Star – photographer Susanna Yeung

Medical Center Laguna City – photographer Steven Ko Photography, courtesy of JJ Acuna/Bespoke Studio

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