The King Abdulaziz Centre for Knowledge and Culture will mark the 75th anniversary of Saudi Aramco, the world’s largest oil company, and has been designed to represent the history of oil in Saudi Arabia. Located on the Dammam Dome, the iconic structure will stand next to Prosperity Well No. 7, the first well in Saudi Arabia to yield oil in commercial quantities.

When complete, the Centre will offer a range of facilities to include education, healthcare, and youth leadership spaces. The Centre will contain 60,000m² of cultural facilities, including a museum, an auditorium, cinema, library, exhibition hall and archive. Part of the structure exists beneath a landscaped dome, which comprises buildings for the Source (a museum commemorating Prosperity Well No. 7), a museum, plaza, back of house and car park areas.

Our lighting specialists were commissioned to work closely with Snohetta architects to provide functional and enhancement lighting throughout the Centre. The lighting design supported the various architectural themes for each space, which included the welcome plaza, the library, the multi-function space and exhibition areas.

Achieving the simple aesthetic desired in some of the spaces was complex, particularly in the library, which had no lighting in the ceiling and where the majority of lighting was indirect, mounted within book displays. Likewise, the multi-function space has a beautiful interior with copper clad walls that required a bespoke lighting solution. Our engineers concealed luminaries behind these walls, creating a spectacular function space. In a number of the spaces, both theatre and functional lighting are positioned behind apertures, illuminating the tables and displays below and guiding the visitors’ visual experience.

The exterior of the building will provide a series of entrances, where the lighting gives warmth and emphasises the ramped earth walls of the building, creating an inviting entrance. Lights are also projected on to the metallic facade of the tall buildings, evoking a series of festive light scenes.