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3,299.04  
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0.11  
118.40  
+0.09%

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13,882.79

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10,824.31

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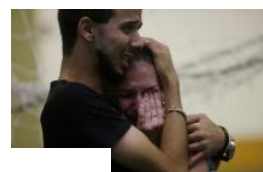
By Chris Hughes

Delegates at this year's World Economic Forum want solid reasons to be bullish. And so the U.S. shale

gas revolution has taken on an undesired status as a web-like catalyst for global change. In the echo chamber of Davos, semi-logical conclusions quickly become common wisdom. [Commentary](#)

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# Scientists win 2 billion euros to fight brain disease, study graphene

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By Claire Davenport  
BRUSSELS | Mon Jan 28, 2013 12:55pm GMT

(Reuters) - The European Commission will award a total of 2 billion euros for research into brain disease and into the "miracle material" graphene which could be used to make flexible electronic devices and could lead to superfast Internet speeds.

The funding will be distributed over 10 years, with more than half of it coming from the Commission's research funds and the rest from EU member countries and the private sector, officials said on Monday.

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The recipients - the Human Brain Project and the graphene study - were chosen from 21 projects assessed since July 2010 by a group of scientists, academics and a Nobel prize winner.

They looked at research which they considered would have the greatest impact on society and the economy.

"The European Commission is supporting ambitious and risky projects which promise a big return in the long term," the European Union's executive body said in a statement.

The international Human Brain Project, based in Switzerland, uses supercomputers to understand brain activity, speed up the diagnosis of brain diseases such as depression, Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's and possibly develop new treatments.

The project also aims to use the brain's capacity to process signals from trillions of synapses - neural connections - as a model to develop computers which can do more with less energy consumption.

Nicknamed a miracle material, graphene is a flexible sheet of carbon that can conduct electricity. Despite being just one atom thick, it is 100 times stronger than steel.

It could be used to make lighter aircraft, as well as flexible devices such as tablets and laptops and medical gadgets to carry cancer-fighting drugs into the body.

Scientists have also found the combination of graphene and metallic wires could speed up web communication by tens if not hundreds of times faster than the fastest Internet cables currently in use. The graphene project will be coordinated by the Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden.

The Commission's research funding from 2014-2020 is still being decided in delayed talks over the European Union's long-term budget, but it said it was confident it could meet the 2 billion euro (\$2.7 billion) total.

"We intend to fulfil our part of this equation," the EU commissioner for the digital economy, Neelie Kroes, told a news briefing. "We are expecting member states and others to contribute as well."

(\$1 = 0.7421 euros)

(Reporting By Claire Davenport; Editing by Rex Merrifield and Pravin Char)

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