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European Commission projects to develop world-changing technologies

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Projects to create flexible carbon, helper robots and [devices](#) that power themselves are just some of the ideas that have received funding of €1.5m (£1.35m) from the European Commission to further their [development](#).

The grants were awarded as part of the Digital Agenda's Future and Emerging Technologies competition. Two projects will be chosen in 2012 to receive further funding of up to €100m a year for 10 years.

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The six projects include work to better understand a flexible form of carbon called graphene that could be used to build electronic components that offer super-fast operational speeds and transparent and flexible form factors.

Another project aims to use the power of supercomputers to [understand how the human brain works](#) and emulate its capabilities, while another focuses on [creating robots that can provide support for vulnerable citizens](#).

The fourth will focus on making [low-energy 'Guardian Angel technologies'](#) that can power themselves by extracting energy from their environments and relay real-time information on the environment and even humans.

The fifth project is focused on using big [data](#) and ICT to improve healthcare by creating highly detailed patient records that can allow medical staff to offer more information-driven care.

The sixth will use ICT to analyse huge amounts of data to predict natural disasters and develop better ways of responding and managing man-made disasters in large geographic regions.

Neelie Kroes, European Commission vice president for the Digital Agenda, said that the projects provide an insight into the ways in which technology will change the world in numerous industries.

"The finalists announced today will plant the seeds for tomorrow's innovation. Europe hosts some of the world's leading researchers in the fascinating and highly inspiring area of future and emerging technologies," she said.

"By joining forces to address grand challenges, European, national and regional funding can lead to innovations that will tackle problems like neuro-degenerative diseases and climate change."

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