

Editorial: European Companies Target Graphene Products at Global Technical Textile Markets

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Abstracts

Graphene is a form of carbon consisting of a single layer of atoms arranged in a hexagonal lattice. The properties of graphene are extraordinary, and it is these extraordinary properties which have led to predictions that the material will soon be as ubiquitous as plastic. Graphene is the strongest material ever tested. Also, it conducts heat and electricity efficiently, and it is nearly transparent. Despite these extraordinary properties, the commercial exploitation of the material in Europe has so far been limited. Nevertheless, a number of companies in the EU—many operating on a global scale and with overseas partners—have achieved commercial success with graphene in various applications, including technical textiles. In particular, the properties of graphene are being exploited in the manufacture of technical textiles for use as reinforcements in composite structures and in resins and coatings to add strength and other functional properties. In this report, Robin Anson examines the achievements of selected companies in developing products containing graphene, including the Italy-based company Directa Plus and the UK-based companies Applied Graphene Materials, Haydale Graphene Industries, SHD Composites, Thomas Swann and Versarien. Looking ahead, he speculates that the use of graphene in filtration could revolutionise water filtration across the world—particularly in countries which can not afford large scale desalination plants.

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