



Astex Achieves Milestones in Drug Discovery Collaboration

Cambridge, UK, 31st March 2009

Astex Therapeutics, the leading fragment-based drug discovery company, today announced that it has successfully achieved two scientific milestones in its drug discovery collaboration with Janssen Pharmaceutica NV. The milestones relate to Astex having successfully solved the 3-Dimensional protein crystal structures of two of the novel drug targets involved in the collaboration. The achievement of each milestone has triggered a payment to Astex (financial details were not disclosed).

The collaboration, announced in June 2008, is a two-year alliance for the discovery of novel drugs against two cancer drug targets of interest to Janssen where Astex is applying its proprietary fragment-based discovery approach, Pyramid™, to generate novel drug molecules that are active against these disease targets. In addition, Astex granted a worldwide license to Janssen to develop and commercialise compounds arising from Astex's selective Fibroblast Growth Factor Receptor ("FGFR") inhibitor programme.

"This achievement of the first milestones in our newest collaboration demonstrates Astex's ability to rapidly deliver results in its drug discovery partnerships with leading pharmaceutical partners," said Harren Jhoti, Chief Executive Officer of Astex. "We are delighted at this early progress and we look forward to continuing to build on the success achieved in this important collaboration."

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About Astex Therapeutics

Astex is a UK-based biotechnology company that discovers and develops novel small molecule therapeutics. Using its pioneering fragment-based drug discovery platform Pyramid™, Astex has built a pipeline of five molecularly targeted oncology drugs, of which three are currently being tested in clinical trials and two are in pre-clinical development.

In addition to its proprietary research programmes, Astex's productivity in lead discovery has been endorsed through numerous partnerships with major pharmaceutical companies, including AstraZeneca, Bayer-Schering, Boehringer Ingelheim and Novartis.

For further information on Astex please visit the Company's website at www.astex-therapeutics.com