



Job Title: Assay Biologist

Job Type: 3 Year Fixed Term Contract, Full Time

Location: Cambridge, UK

Astex Pharmaceuticals is a world leader in innovative drug discovery and development. The company has successfully applied its proprietary Fragment-Based Drug Discovery platform to generate multiple new drug candidates that are progressing in clinical development. Successful collaborations have led to three launched oncology drugs (Kisqali® partnered with Novartis, Balversa® partnered with Janssen and Truqap™ partnered with AstraZeneca). Astex continues to grow and focuses on Neurological Disorders and Oncology.

The Role

An exciting opportunity for a talented assay biologist in the drug discovery bioscience group at Astex, contributing to the drug discovery process from target evaluation to candidate selection. Working in multi-disciplinary teams with structural biologists, biophysicists, chemists, bioinformaticians and biologists, the successful candidates will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of enzyme and protein mechanisms to optimise fragment hits to lead compounds. This role will involve developing and running primary assays to support the testing of compounds against relevant drug targets. Previous experience and knowledge of biochemical assays and screening formats are essential.

Principal Responsibilities:

- Design, develop and/or execute de novo assays for a range of protein systems, including novel enzymes and protein:protein interactions to enable the drug discovery process
- Provide target/compound mechanistic data and insight, and work alongside the chemistry and biophysics teams to interpret SAR
- Explore and implement novel and innovative assay technologies
- Where relevant, provide training and guidance to less experienced team members

Essential Qualifications and Experience:

- Candidates should be familiar with a variety of techniques required for establishing robust biochemical, cell-free assays, preferably gained in an industrial or academic setting
- PhD in a relevant biological/biochemical science
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills

Desirable Qualifications and Experience:

- Skilled in enzyme kinetics, assay development and troubleshooting, with strong analytical skills. Some knowledge of chemistry and/or biophysics is desirable
- Molecular biology expertise, including cloning and cell editing techniques.
- Experience in working with multiple different target classes such as kinases, membrane proteins and protein-protein interactions
- Previous experience of working within a matrix team in pharma or biotech companies



Why Astex

We offer excellent training and career development opportunities as well as highly competitive salary and benefits package including hybrid working options to promote a flexible and inclusive work environment.

At Astex we embrace diversity and equality of opportunity. We are committed to building an inclusive and diverse Company representing all backgrounds, harnessing industry-leading scientific innovation and behaviours.

Astex is situated 2.5 miles from Cambridge City centre on the Cambridge Science Park. The Park has onsite sports facilities and excellent transport links to London.

More information

For information on Astex Pharmaceuticals please visit: www.astx.com

For information on Otsuka Pharmaceuticals please visit: www.otsuka.co.jp

How to Apply

All applicants should apply by email to recruitment.uk@astx.com, attaching their CV and covering letter as PDF documents. The subject line of the email should clearly state the reference (ASBI/0426)

Please note that Astex holds a UK sponsor licence; if you require sponsorship, please state this in your application email.

The closing date for applications is midnight on 25th May 2026