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## **Astex ranked top biotech company for the second year running in The Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100**

**Cambridge, UK - October 5th 2004** - Astex Technology, the fragment-based drug discovery company, is again ranked as the fastest growing biotechnology company in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 league of Britain's fastest growing technology companies, published Sunday 3rd October. Astex is one of only a small group of biotechnology companies to have made it onto the annual Tech Track 100 since the list was first compiled in 2001.

This last year has been a defining one for Astex with the first of its in-house developed oncology drugs expected to enter the clinic early in 2005. In addition, Astex signed a major new discovery deal in March 2004 with leading pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim and extended its collaboration with Aventis in June 2004. Astex was also rewarded by its pharmaceutical company partners for its drug discovery efforts - achieving a second milestone in its \$40m drug discovery collaboration with AstraZeneca to develop drug candidates for Alzheimer's disease. Astex also has drug discovery deals with Schering AG, Mitsubishi Pharma Corporation and Fujisawa Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. The company has continued to achieve yearly sales growth of approximately 170% since 2000.

"We are really pleased to appear once again in this prestigious listing of Britain's fast growing technology companies as Britain's top biotech company. This achievement is a measure of the professionalism and dedication of Astex's people and is a tribute shared by everyone in the company," stated Mr. Timothy Haines, CEO of Astex.

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