

**National Cancer Institute awards contract to Asterand,
valued at up to \$24.3 million**

Asterand plc (LSE: ATD), (“Asterand” or the “Company”), a leading provider of human tissue and human tissue-based services to pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies engaged in drug discovery research announced today that it has been awarded a 5-year, up to \$24.3 million contract with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to supply clinically annotated human biospecimens for The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) project. The base award is valued at \$5.4 million over 17 months; with provisions for renewal at the NCI’s option. The contract is partly funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Asterand’s Chief Executive Officer, Martyn Coombs noted:

“We are honored that the NCI has selected Asterand as a partner for this prestigious project. The TCGA will revolutionize the molecular understanding of cancer. This project emphasizes the significant impact of well characterized and high quality human specimens on modern biomedical research. We feel privileged to play a role in enabling the NCI to advance this critical research and accelerate the development of new treatments and diagnostic tools for this disease. Furthermore, the contract plays an important part in our strategy to expand our work with government institutions.”

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ABOUT ASTERAND

Asterand plc is a leading supplier of high quality human tissue and tissue-based services. Our comprehensive approach to human tissue and research services offers pharmaceutical, biotech and diagnostic companies the unique opportunity to have one Company meet all of their human biomaterial needs along the continuum of drug discovery and development. Our mission is to accelerate target discovery and compound validation and enable pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to take safer and more effective drugs into the clinic.

Asterand offers unparalleled access to human biospecimens for research purposes. The Company manages a network of more than 100 active collaborative donor institutions and

maintains a repository of several hundred thousand specimens for immediate shipment. In addition, human tissues and clinical data can be custom collected to meet special requirements; including the collection of follow-up data related to patient outcome. Asterand's renowned quality assurance procedures provide stringent controls on specimen collection; characterization and on the corresponding clinical data. These procedures allow researchers to choose samples that will best meet their scientific requirements.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

NCI leads the National Cancer Program and the NIH effort to dramatically reduce the burden of cancer and improve the lives of cancer patients and their families, through research into prevention and cancer biology, the development of new interventions, and the training and mentoring of new researchers. For more information about cancer, please visit the NCI Web site at <http://www.cancer.gov> or call NCI's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237).

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.