Atlas Stage 1 Program FAQs

Atlas Stage 1 Program has two components - the Fellowship and Certification. The Atlas Fellowship is the program through which campuses can become Atlas Zero Waste Certified. All campuses can expect to follow the same steps outlined below to become Certified. Further information on the Zero Waste Certification will be available on our website beginning in April 2021.

Steps to Getting Certified

1. Campuses identify a student or staff member who can serve as the Atlas Zero Waste Fellow(s) that will conduct this assessment for their campus.
2. Fellow(s) are trained and licensed to use the Atlas Zero Waste Campus Programs Checklist to gather information for the assessment.
3. Information is gathered by performing interviews with campus stakeholders, compiling campus resources and policies, and synthesizing waste and material management reports.
4. Upon completion of the interviews, the Campus Programs Checklist is scored to give the campus its zero waste score and certification level.

Why did we create the Atlas Fellowship?
Traditionally, Atlas staff members traveled to campuses to conduct the assessment with identified stakeholders in-person over the course of 2-3 days. We chose to transition to a student-led model for the Atlas Assessment for a number of reasons.
- Because PLAN’s work is centered upon equipping students with the training and resources they need to be changemakers, this model is more aligned with our mission.
- The Fellowship provides students with the valuable learning experience of forming relationships with campus stakeholders and understanding the intricacies of their campus’ organizational and materials management systems.
- The Fellowship saves the campus the costs of travel and accommodation associated with an Atlas staff member coming to their campus, because it can be conducted by a student who is already on campus, or conducted completely remotely.

What are my campus’ options for signing up a student for the Fellowship?
There are a couple of options that have worked for campuses in the past. This list is not exhaustive, and we are always open to having a conversation with your campus to consider unique arrangements.
- Option A: Student already has a compensated on-campus internship, job, or research position and is interested in adding another project to their existing responsibilities.
- Option B: A campus department creates a position for a student specifically to complete an Atlas Assessment for their campus.
- Option C: A student wants to complete an Atlas Assessment of their campus and applies for funding and support from their campus to cover both the cost of the engagement and compensation for their work.
What will the Fellow's main responsibilities be?
The Fellowship is designed to be completed in approximately 50 hours, over the course of an academic semester. The Fellow's main responsibilities are:
- Completing Atlas trainings in preparation for the Fellowship (3%)
- Outreach, interview scheduling, and follow-ups with campus stakeholders (17%)
- Conducting interviews with campus stakeholders (60%)
- Attending weekly check-in meetings with Fellowship class and completing an exit interview with their campus supervisor and an Atlas staff member (20%)

Please see the current job description posted on our website for a more detailed explanation of expectations, timeline, etc.

What deliverables will my campus receive following completion of the Fellowship?
Every campus will receive a Zero Waste Scorecard, and if they qualify, a Zero Waste Certification, benchmarking their progress towards zero waste. A Program Scoresheet with a more detailed breakdown of their points will also be provided, along with a list of 10-15 main recommendations. Campuses will receive the above components in a report, which will also include major findings summarized in easy-to-read assessment tables.

How much does the Fellowship cost?
We built our pricing scale based on the staff time required of each component of the Atlas Assessment, including:
- Preparing campus materials and on- and off-boarding Fellow and campus staff
- Fixed rate for Fellow training
- Fixed rate for supervisory role of Atlas staff (i.e. weekly check-ins, office hours, answering questions over email/call, etc.)
- Customization of the Campus Programs Checklist
- Single license for Fellow who is conducting the Atlas Assessment
- Scoring of Campus Programs Checklist
- Preparing the campus' Zero Waste Score
- Drafting and graphically designing the final report

The cost of the Fellowship is scaled depending on what type of institution your campus falls under - please see the pricing scale on our website for more information.

Cool, I want to do the Atlas Assessment! Where do I start?
Fantastic! We’re excited to work with you too! Reach out to schedule a meeting with either Kaula or Yu-Shien to discuss what semester you’d ideally like to engage with us, what funding looks like for the assessment, and how you plan to secure a student fellow/s.