

AASHE: STARS CREDITS



1. Overview of Organization

Name of Organization: Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

Website: <http://www.aashe.org/>

Email: info@aashe.org

Funding Sources: Membership dues

Organization Type: Non-profit

Partners: http://www.aashe.org/files/aashe_annualreport2013.pdf, see page 10 for Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS) partners.

Location: International

Mission: "AASHE's mission is to inspire and catalyze higher education to lead the global sustainability transformation."¹

2. Sustainable Purchasing Activities and Resources

1. AASHE Annual Conference and Expo

<http://conference.aashe.org/2014/>

2. AASHE Awards Program

<http://www.aashe.org/about/aashe-awards>

3. Sustainable Purchasing Guidance Materials

1. Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS)

<https://stars.aashe.org/>

"A transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance."ⁱⁱ This tool allocates various numbers of points in the form of "credits" for many different product and service categories, spanning environmental, social and economic sustainability topics. An institution's STARS score is based on the percentage of applicable points it earns across four categories: academics, engagement, operations and planning & administration. Several of these credits contain purchasing-related requirements, summarized below.

Year Guidance was Published: 2010

Access: Registered institutions access only

Types of Purchasers: Schools/universities

Regional Focus: International

Languages: English

Topics covered:

✓✓✓ environmental sustainability

✓✓✓ social sustainability

✓✓✓ economic sustainability

Steps:

Framed as STARS participant benefits:

Measure campus sustainability performance; Create a baseline for continuous improvement;

Streamline reporting; Compare and learn from other institutions; Monitor progress;

Identify new goals and ideas; Cross-campus collaboration; Gain global recognition for sustainability efforts;

Celebrate your rating; Life cycle cost analysis

From the brochure: http://www.aashe.org/files/documents/STARS/stars_brochure_final_2.0.pdf

The following Credits are given for purchasing:

[OP 6: Food and Beverage Purchasing](#)

[OP 12: Electronics Purchasing](#)

[OP 13: Cleaning Product Purchasing](#)

[OP 14: Office Paper Purchasing](#)

[OP 15: Inclusive and Local Purchasing](#)

[OP 16: Life Cycle Cost Analysis](#)

[OP 17: Guidelines for Business Partners](#)

[OP 18: Campus Fleet](#)

In addition, the following credits incorporate standards that have purchasing-related requirements:

[OP 3: Building Operations and Maintenance](#)

[OP 4: Building Design and Construction](#)

Product categories covered:

√√√ Food and beverages; √√√ electronics; √√√ cleaning products; √√√ office paper; √√√ campus transportation fleet

Service categories covered:

√√√ Building operations & maintenance; √√√ building design and construction; √√√ dining services; √√√ landscaping; √√√ transportation; √√√ hazardous waste management; √√√ water management

See the following link for all guidance associated with these product and service categories:

<https://stars.aashe.org/pages/about/technical-manual.html>

4. Observations

The STARS rating system and guidance documents are primarily focused on US higher education institutions and are widely adopted in that sector. Universities' environmental impacts are directly connected to the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services. The purchasing related guidance provided is comprehensive, covers multiple environmental, social and economic impact categories, and refers to many other standards and programs. The credit system is similar to the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) system in providing guidance, providing recognition for leadership but also enabling some flexibility in how they are applied by different organizations. While designed for Universities, the guidance provided may be applicable to other institutional settings.

ⁱ AASHE. *AASHE Mission, Vision and Goals: Our Mission*. Accessed from: <http://www.aashe.org/about/aashe-mission-vision-goals>

ⁱⁱ AASHE. (2010). *STARS Overview*. Accessed from: <https://stars.aashe.org/pages/about/stars-overview.html>