

Vendor Programs Manager

Independent College Bookstore Association (ICBA)

March 2023

About This Position

Seeking a strong retail Buying/Planning professional who is eager to use their talents/skills to support our team serving independently-operated campus stores helping them achieve success, remain competitive, and stay independent as ICBA's **Vendor Programs Manager**. In this role, you will be joining our team in "The Loop" section of the City of Chicago supporting 240+ college store Members and 125+ Vendor Partners across North America in the fast-paced and dynamic collegiate retail industry.

The Independent College Bookstore Association (ICBA; www.ICBAinc.com) is a not-for-profit trade association and service organization that has been dedicated to supporting college stores, and vendors who supply college stores, for over 97 years. ICBA's Mission is to demonstrate that independent operation of a campus store is the best solution to serve a campus community. ICBA is a driver of strategic change and a provider of a diverse group of support programs and services.

ICBA Staff work in a hybrid office environment, typically working in the Chicago office 2 days per week (Mondays and Wednesdays) and working from home on other days. During key times of the year, it may be necessary to work up to 5 days in the Chicago office. Therefore, candidates for this position should be based in the Chicago area or should be willing to relocate to the Chicago area.

The **ICBA Vendor Programs Manager (VPM)** reports to the ICBA Vice President of Programs & Services (VPPS) and has the following primary functions/responsibilities (in addition to being a versatile and flexible member of a collaborative team that offers a broad array of programs and services).

Position Overview: Key areas of focus

- The VPM will assist in developing processes, creating strategies, and managing tactics to ensure programs meet financial targets, run efficiently and effectively, and to regularly analyze results and modify programs based on performance. Working with the VPPS, the VPM will play an active role in managing existing external partner relationships and will be tasked with helping to identify, evaluate, and develop new partner and program opportunities that support ICBA's Strategic/Financial Plans and identified Member needs.
- The VPM works closely with the VPPS to track metrics and complete key analysis for programs/partnerships having specific financial accountability for goals and performance of programs and partnerships. This role has substantial responsibilities to ensure internal tracking and management of vendor data is accurate (including but not limited to agreements, reporting, payments, event registrations, and survey analysis).

- The VPM also will be tasked with supporting an ongoing “pipeline” of new program and partner opportunities and regularly providing concepts and recommendations to the VPPS. The VPM will develop content and manage a vendor programs marketing calendar for key activities and communications, including for social media platforms.
- The VPM will be the primary day-to-day tactical contact for program and service partners, ensuring high partner satisfaction with clear mutual expectations. The VPM will be an active and visible ICBA team Member, representing ICBA at educational conferences and industry events. The VPM will assist in developing content for ICBA Education Presentations and delivering ICBA Education Presentations. The VPM will work closely with the VPPS to manage logistics and vendor communications related to the ICBA Conference.

This is an opportunity to be an integral part of a dedicated, 7-person team that takes pride in delivering extraordinary value to its Members, Vendor Partners, and the entire college store channel. ICBA is widely respected within our industry. The ICBA culture is informal, friendly, and collaborative, while also being fast-paced, innovative, and results-oriented. This is a full time, salaried position with occasional travel required.

As an organization, ICBA is committed to supporting Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion and to take action to ensure that all decisions are made without discrimination, harassment, or prejudicial treatment because of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, disability, or protected veteran's status. Click here: [ICBA's Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Statement & Commitment](#)

Specific Responsibilities

Administrative/Strategic/Financial

- Work with VPPS to develop the ICBA strategies for current and future programs and partnerships to enhance ICBA’s Value Proposition to Members & Partners
 - Assist in the development of new sources of revenue for ICBA that support Member & Partner needs.
 - Accountability for budgeted financial goals and overall performance of programs and partnerships.
- Manage processes to monitor and analyze ICBA programs and partnerships and provide regular reporting on performance of programs and partnerships.
- Maintain accurate vendor data in ICBA’s Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software tool for efficient and effective use of analysis, tracking, and distribution lists for key distribution lists needed for internal and external communications.
- Have a high level of awareness and interest (and perform active research to identify and become a knowledgeable expert) in collegiate and overall market trends relative to a broad array of products, services, emerging brands, and growth opportunities that are relevant to the ICBA Membership and that support ICBA’s Strategic Plan.
- Provide support for marketing/communications messaging as needed (print, online, etc.)

- Assist in development of educational content to support Member needs.
- Provide all common business administrative functions as needed.

Vendor & Partner Programs and Services

- Support the VPPS in the development, marketing, implementation, and management of programs and services.
 - Ability to market and promote Vendor Partner program opportunities through active selling/engagement activities conveying mutual benefits for the ICBA Community.
 - Outline and track an ongoing list/pipeline of prospective high potential and high-value ICBA programs, services, products, and partnerships.
 - Support recruitment & retention of Partners who align with ICBA's strategies through a consistent vetting process to ensure Member benefits are achieved.
 - Coordinate details and help with negotiations of programs with Vendor Partners.
 - Support the VPPS in ensuring responsive and clear communication channels with all program and service providers.
 - Primary day-to-day tactical contact for program/service partners.
 - Primary strategic responsibility for selected program/service partners.

Member Engagement

- Track Member participation in vendor programs and report activity trends
- Work with the VPPS to maintain communication with Members to gauge satisfaction with existing programs and identify opportunities for new programs and services.
- Work with the VPPS to provide information and recommendations to the Director of Marketing & Communications (DMC) to support the effective communication of program details and benefits to both Members and Vendor Partners

Annual Conference

- Actively recruit/promote/sell exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities to meet goals and ensure a mutually beneficial experience for Members and Conference Partners.
- Outline key sponsorship opportunities to provide value to Conference Partners and help ICBA realize new sources of Conference revenue.
- Assist in development of key communications/materials needed to facilitate key activities for exhibitors during pre-conference, set-up, and teardown.
- Work with VPPS to manage exhibit space and act as a liaison to exhibit services partners.

ICBA Representation

- Represent ICBA at retail, higher education, and industry conferences and tradeshow to promote ICBA's visibility and accomplish its mission.
- Present strategies and program offerings to groups of Members and Partners as needed.

Qualifications and Skills

- Minimum 4 years of retail buying and vendor negotiating experience in a position with similar responsibilities.
- Retail market and supply chain comprehension and awareness, preferably in multiple product categories
 - Familiarity with college licensed products is a “plus.”
- Financial acumen relative to creating sales and/or buying forecasts and setting/achieving budgeted goals.
- Experience developing content and delivering business and/or educational presentations to small and medium-sized groups.
- Demonstrated problem-solving, organizational, and analytical skills.
- Experienced business traveler: able to make 10-15 business trips per year.
- A self-starter with high standards for performance and accuracy
- Ability to multi-task, set priorities, & manage concurrent projects.
- Proficient MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel skills
- Familiarity with Customer Relationship Management functions/systems is a “plus”.
- A self-starter with high standards for performance and accuracy
 - Able to demonstrate the ability to work remotely in an organized and productive manner—while maintaining availability to internal and external contacts with the same response times as if working in a traditional office environment.

Compensation and Key Benefits

- Base annual salary of \$66,000-\$70,000 (based on experience and qualifications)
- Additional annual supplemental income of \$11,794 per year
- Retirement contribution matching by ICBA of up to 6% (with full employee vesting/ownership of ICBA's employer contributions on Day 1 of employment)
- 16 paid vacation days per year + 11 additional paid holidays
- Mobile phone monthly allowance to partially offset mobile phone costs

About the Independent College Bookstore Association

The Independent College Bookstore Association (ICBA) is a not-for-profit trade association and service provider supporting 240+ college store Members and 125+ Vendor Partners. Founded in 1927, as a buying group of college stores in the Pacific Northwest, ICBA now provides educational programs, powerful networking forums, and develops/negotiates preferred vendor programs to help Member stores throughout North America achieve the operating scale and business sophistication necessary to compete with off-campus and online competitors, as well as chain store operations.

ICBA is best known for its annual Conference, along with education, networking, and innovative vendor programs, but the current pace of industry change requires more strategic initiatives. The ICBA staff seeks to provide industry advocacy and leadership to identify opportunities and innovative business tactics to help Members better serve their student, faculty, and

administrative customers, while increasing the overall value they provide to the campuses they serve.