

Vendor Programs Coordinator

Independent College Bookstore Association (ICBA)

September 2024

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 Coordinator**. In this role, you will be joining our team in "The Loop" section of the City of Chicago supporting 255+ college store Members and 150+ 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, buying group, and service organization that has been dedicated to supporting college stores, and vendors who supply college stores, for over 98 years. ICBA's Mission is to demonstrate that independent self-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 is necessary to work up to 5 days in the Chicago office. Candidates for this position must be based in the Chicago area.

The **ICBA Vendor Programs Coordinator (VPC)** 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 VPC will assist in Vendor program processes and managing tactics to ensure programs meet targets and run efficiently and effectively, through regular follow-up and support of the vendor community. Working with the VPPS, the VPC will play an active role in supporting existing external partner relationships and will be tasked with helping to execute, track, and monitor new partner and program opportunities that support ICBA's Strategic/Financial Plans and identified Member needs.
- The VPC works closely with the Vendor Programs Manager (VPM) & VPPS to track metrics and gather key data 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 VPC will propose content and manage a vendor programs marketing calendar for key activities and communications, including for social media platforms.
- The VPC will support the VPPS and VPM on primary day-to-day tactical contact for program and service partners, ensuring high partner satisfaction with clear mutual expectations. The VPC will be an active and visible ICBA team Member, representing ICBA at educational conferences and industry events. The VPC will assist in supporting the VPPS on ICBA Education Presentations through gathering of information and validating content accuracy/understanding. The VPC 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, 9-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 support the ICBA strategies for current and future programs and partnerships to enhance ICBA's Value Proposition to Members & Vendor Partners.
- Assist with processes to monitor and analyze ICBA programs and partnerships and provide regular reporting on performance of programs and partnerships.
 - Propose process improvements to create efficiency
- Maintain accurate vendor data in ICBA's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software tool for efficient and effective use of analysis, tracking, and exporting of key distribution lists as 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.)
- 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 assist in the marketing and promotion of Vendor Partner program opportunities through active engagement activities conveying mutual benefits for the ICBA Community.
- Follow-up and track progress of the ongoing list/pipeline of prospective high potential and high-value ICBA programs, services, products, and partnerships.
- Support recruitment & retention of Vendor Partners who align with ICBA's strategies through a consistent vetting process to ensure Member benefits are achieved.
- Support the VPPS and VPM in ensuring responsive and clear communication channels with all program and service providers.
 - Primary day-to-day tactical contact for program/service partners.

Member Engagement

- Assist in tracking Member participation in vendor programs and report activity trends
- Work with the VPPS and VPM to maintain communication with Members to gauge satisfaction with existing programs and communicate potential opportunities for new programs and services.
- Assist 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 support the VPPS and VPM in exhibitor and sponsorship follow-ups and tracking to meet goals and ensure a mutually beneficial experience for Members and Conference Partners.
- Assist in the tracking and execute tactical activities for key sponsorships sold 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 and VPM 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 tradeshows 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 2 years of retail buying and/or vendor/supplier 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 gathering, updating, and tracking data for analysis purposes to support financial goals.
- Experience in preparing or updating content for educational presentations to small and medium-sized groups.
- Demonstrated problem-solving, organizational, and analytical skills.
- Experienced business traveler: able to make 2-4 business trips per year.
- A self-starter with high standards for performance and accuracy
- Ability to multi-task, set priorities, & manage concurrent assignments/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 \$54,000-\$58,000 (based on experience and qualifications)
- Additional annual Supplemental Income of \$12,012 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)
- An additional 1% of gross wages contribution by ICBA toward employee retirement accounts (even if employees are not making contributions)
- 16 paid vacation days per year + 11 additional paid holidays
- 1 additional paid day off for employees who participate in approved community service activities
- Mobile phone monthly allowance to partially offset mobile phone costs
- Multiple “early quit” designated days during the year (i.e. work 5 hours, but get paid for 8)
- Additional ICBA benefits are available

About the Independent College Bookstore Association

The Independent College Bookstore Association (ICBA) is a not-for-profit trade association, buying group, and service provider supporting 255+ college store Members and 150+ Vendor Partners. Founded in 1927, as a buying group of college stores in the Pacific Northwest, ICBA now provides educational and professional development 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. ICBA also helps Vendor Partners achieve greater success in the college store channel.