



Albany Institute of History & Art

Albany, NY

Director of Development

An exceptional opportunity for an advancement leader to bring vision and creativity to the premier museum of art & history in New York's Capital Region

The Albany Institute of History & Art (AIHA) seeks an experienced Director of Development (DOD) to join its senior leadership team and provide strategic direction and guidance for the development department. This position leads fundraising activities and initiatives and works closely with the Executive Director and Board of Trustees to generate financial support for the annual operating budget and planned growth for the museum. For 232 years AIHA has been a cultural centerpiece, a thought leader and convener in New York's Capital region. Its collecting history dates back over 200 years and today leads the region in presenting stories and stimulating discussions about the art, history, and culture of New York's Hudson Valley. Rather than focused solely on the past, AIHA connects art to history, addressing the American story within a context of global contemporary ideas through a robust schedule of exhibitions and related programs. Within this context, the Director of Development will be responsible for working with staff and volunteers to raise funds for this historic and forward-moving institution. This is an opportunity to galvanize the team, board, and community to expand support for one of the oldest museums in the nation, which has been part of the Capital Region's story since the early days of our nation's founding.

Since the arrival of Kayla Carlsen as Executive Director in July 2024, AIHA has seen 18 months of exceptional growth. The DOD will join this ambitious, mission-driven community at a pivotal time in the institution's history, helping to shape the next chapter at AIHA by strengthening a culture of philanthropy, balancing innovation with tradition, and enhancing community engagement. As a collaborative leader, the DOD will partner closely with a skilled staff, an engaged Board of Trustees, and the Executive Director to continue the forward momentum and lay the ground work for AIHA's next campaign. The DOD will provide strategic leadership to all aspects of the AIHA's development

program including membership, annual giving, events, corporate and foundation relations, major gifts and planned giving, and campaign planning. The successful candidate will bring a strong foundation in these aspects of advancement, demonstrated experience guiding development teams, and the ability to lead with professionalism and discretion. Candidates should demonstrate the capacity to manage competing priorities, mentor staff, and maintain a high level of organization while supporting a mission-driven work environment.



Leadership

Executive Director Kayla Carlsen joined AIHA in July 2024 after a national search that attracted more than 70 candidates. A native of Greene County, NY, Carlsen has held senior positions at three of the world's leading art businesses, most recently heading the American Art Department at Sotheby's. As a specialist in American art, Kayla's art historical preferences are uniquely in line with AIHA's collections. She holds a BA in Art History from Clark University (Worcester, MA) and completed her MA Coursework at Hunter College (New York, NY). In the short time since her appointment, Kayla's leadership has already had a profound impact on AIHA, bringing clarity and stability to the financial picture, delivering a balanced budget and launching a strategic plan in her first year.

The Board of Trustees is a dedicated group of 24 community leaders and is currently lead by George R. Hearst, publisher of the Albany Times Union, a director of Hearst Corporation, and a great-grandson of William Randolph Hearst. George has lived in Albany with his wife Christine since 1991 and has made an indelible impact on Albany's philanthropic landscape as a sought-after non-profit board member and generous donor. George assumed the chairmanship just prior to Kayla's arrival and their partnership has energized the board and delivered record fundraising totals.

<https://www.albanyinstitute.org/about/leadership>

Advancement and Financial Overview

Like many arts organizations, AIHA felt the impact of the pandemic and the challenges of the years following, but currently enjoys a position of unprecedented financial strength following two record fund raising years in 2024 and 2025. The budget has grown 50% since 2022 and is on track to continue a trajectory of growth leading into the next campaign, planning for which will begin in late 2026. The endowment stands at \$3 million and visitation is on track to surpass pre-pandemic levels with new educational programs being developed with the support of generous donors.

About the Position and Desired Qualifications

This is a full-time, onsite position, with required flexibility for off-hours events and assignments as needed. The DOD will manage a staff of three: a stewardship manager and board liaison, a membership and events manager, and a database specialist. As a member of AIHA's senior leadership team, the DOD will participate in setting strategic direction and collaboration on institutional decisions.

The DOD is responsible for all aspects of fundraising, including ongoing support for annual operations and long-term growth of individual donors, corporate and foundation support, and endowments. The DOD will work closely with the Executive Director and provide the vision for and oversee the development and implementation of annual and long-range fundraising plans. The DOD will also create fundraising strategies for special events and projects, and maximize a schedule of grant opportunities for general museum and special project funding.

Key Responsibilities

Fundraising Strategy & Execution

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a multi-year fundraising strategy aligned with AIHA's strategic priorities and financial goals.
- Coordinate major gift fundraising, managing a portfolio of prospects and donors.
- Oversee annual giving, membership, planned giving, corporate sponsorships, foundation grants, and special campaigns.
- Ensure strong donor stewardship practices that deepen engagement and loyalty.

Leadership & Team Management

- Provide strategic leadership and direct supervision to the fundraising and development staff, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- Train, mentor, and evaluate team members to build capacity and ensure high performance.
- Establish clear goals, metrics, and work plans for all advancement functions.
- Partner with the Executive Director to engage the Board of Trustees in philanthropy, providing guidance, training, and tools to strengthen board participation.

Donor & External Engagement

- Serve as a key ambassador for AIHA, representing the institution in the community and cultivating meaningful relationships with supporters and partners.
- Work with marketing/communications colleagues to ensure coordinated storytelling, digital outreach, and institutional visibility.
- Collaborate with curatorial, education, and program teams to identify fundraising priorities and opportunities.

Operations & Administration

- Oversee development operations, including gift processing, prospect research, database management, and reporting.
- Ensure compliance with philanthropic best practices, IRS regulations, and donor intent.
- Prepare regular reports for executive leadership and the Board on fundraising progress, trends, and forecasts.
- Develop and manage the advancement budget and contribute to institutional financial planning.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree or fundraising certification (CFRE) desirable.
- Minimum 7–10 years of progressively responsible fundraising experience in a cultural or other nonprofit environment.
- Demonstrated success in securing major gifts and leading fundraising teams.
- Strong knowledge of advancement best practices.

- Excellent communication, interpersonal, and relationship-building skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, including board members, donors, staff, and community leaders.
- Strategic thinker with strong organizational, analytical, and problem-solving abilities.
- Commitment to the mission and values of AIHA.
- Reliable transportation, including the ability to attend off-site donor meetings and events during the workday.



Compensation

The salary is in the range of \$100,000–125,000 annually, commensurate with experience, plus a generous benefits package including various options for health care; dental and vision; a life insurance plan; paid time off including sick, vacation, and personal days; participation in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, access to a tax-deferred annuity (403(b) plan). Applicants must be eligible to work in the United States and successfully pass background checks.

For More Information/How to Apply

This will be a rolling application deadline until position is filled. To apply, submit a cover letter, résumé/CV, and names of 3 references with their contact information and your professional relationship to them to: Dan Keegan, Senior Search Consultant, *Museum Leadership Placement*, dankeegan@museumleaders.com. References will not be contacted without prior permission of the applicant. Please send an email to make nominations.

Diversity and Inclusion

AIHA values diversity in all its forms and actively encourages candidates with diverse backgrounds to apply. It does not discriminate against any candidate or employee based on race, national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or veteran status.

About the Albany Institute of History & Art

The Albany Institute of History & Art was founded in 1791 and is the second-oldest museum in America. Throughout its long history, AIHA has been a centerpiece of New York's Capital Region dedicated to collecting, preserving, and presenting the art, history, and culture of the Hudson Valley from the seventeenth century to the present. Two historic buildings joined by a modern central atrium resulted in a 118,000 square foot facility in the heart of bustling downtown Albany, minutes from the Empire State Plaza complex. AIHA has been American Alliance of Museums accredited since 1980. For more about AIHA, visit the website [here](https://www.aiha.org).

About the Collection and Exhibitions

AIHA's long history of exhibitions and collecting reflects the American story told through the lens of art and the historic role played by the Hudson River Valley in the formative years of America. Leading artists throughout America's history have lived and worked in the region leaving their marks on the story of America.

AIHA's nationally recognized collection of over 25,000 objects date from the seventeenth century to today and include fine examples of painting, decorative arts, furniture and metalwork. Of note is the nationally significant Hudson River School collection with paintings by all the major names of this movement, including Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, Frederic Edwin Church, William Hart, Homer Dodge Martin, Jasper Frances Cropsey, and Sarah Cole.



About Albany and the Region

Albany is the capital of New York State and is located along the Hudson River 135 miles north of New York City. The Albany, Troy and Schenectady region has a population of 1.1 million. Earliest settlement of the region goes back to the Algonquin-speaking Mohican peoples, and the Dutch settled as early as 1614. The city was officially chartered in 1686 and, since the 18th century, Albany's strategic location along the Hudson River made it a center for trade and river transportation. It was the eastern terminus of the Erie Canal with its links to the Great Lakes. As the state capital of New York, Albany bustles with statewide government activity, a vibrant creative community and "small town" look and feel. There is strong interest and funding for revitalizing and improving Hudson River connectivity to downtown Albany and master planning is underway through the Albany Riverfront Coalition. Albany International Airport has excellent connections to all major cities and is in the process of a \$100 million renovation plan. Read an article about Albany revitalization [here](#).

The region's four-season climate offers abundant recreation opportunities. The nearby Catskill Park comprises 700,000 acres across four counties and, to the north, Adirondack Park's 6.5 million acres of forever-wild forests, mountains and lakes is unequalled in America. The Albany area is home to 14 colleges, universities and professional schools.