

Position Title:	Visitor Experience & Retail Associate or Lead
Department:	Communications & Visitor Experience
Reports To:	Manager of Visitor Experience & Retail Operations
Supervises:	N/A
Created/ Revision Date:	7/1/2026
Job Category:	Staff
Pay:	\$16/hour

The Visitor Experience & Retail Associate is responsible for the front-line operations of the Albany Institute of History & Art's (AIHA) admission desk and museum shop, playing a critical role in shaping the first impression of the museum for every visitor. This role supports creating a visitor experience that is welcoming, informative, and seamless from arrival through departure.

The Visitor Experience & Retail Associate demonstrates high standards of customer service, a strong understanding of the Institute and its mission, and a working knowledge of the museum's collections, exhibitions, events, programs, and campaigns. As part of the Communications & Visitor Experience team, this role is responsible for clearly and confidently conveying information to visitors and ensuring that all interactions reflect the museum's mission.

The Visitor Experience & Retail Associate will ensure a welcoming and engaging atmosphere that extends to all visitors before, during, and after their time at the museum. Availability to work a flexible schedule and the hours necessary to open and close, including weekends, evenings, and holidays, is required.

The Visitor Experience & Retail Lead is expected to fulfill all responsibilities above, while demonstrating advanced operational expertise, strong communication skills, and expansive institutional knowledge. Leads act as on-site representatives of the Manager and are expected to model best practices in visitor engagement, messaging, and staff support.

Visitor Experience Functions:

- Deliver welcoming, engaging interactions that reflect AIHA's mission and visitor experience standards
- Support the immediate needs of museum visitors while fostering long-term relationships and repeat visitation
- Process point-of-sale functions at the admission desk, including admission, membership sales, and program and event sales

- Communicate clearly and accurately about exhibitions, programs, events, and visitor amenities, ensuring alignment with current institutional messaging
- Orient visitors to museum spaces and offerings, enhancing their understanding and experience
- Answer and field incoming phone calls and general email inquiries in a professional and informed manner
- Perform daily opening and closing operations of the admission desk
- Ensure cleanliness and presentation of public-facing spaces, including the admission desk, coat room, locker room, Explorer's Gallery, and brochure racks
- Maintain accurate, current, and well-stocked signage and marketing materials; report any discrepancies
- Contribute to communications, visitor engagement, and data initiatives during non-peak periods, including maintaining accurate visitor information and feedback, supporting digital content, and ensuring the integrity of public-facing information
- Other responsibilities of the Visitor Experience & Retail Associate may include all the above and the following:
 - Respond to operational issues as they arise and communicate effectively with the Manager and appropriate staff
 - Follow AIHA's emergency procedures and support implementation, as needed.
 - Assist with special events and programs, as needed.
- Other responsibilities of the Visitor Experience & Retail Lead may include all the above and the following:
 - Oversee admission desk and museum shop operations in the Manager's absence
 - Support the implementation of an online ticketing system
 - Support other staff across departments as needed

Retail Operations Functions:

- Deliver welcoming, engaging interactions that reflect AIHA's mission and visitor experience standards
- Process point-of-sale transactions in the museum shop
- Maintain visual merchandising displays and ensure the shop reflects current exhibitions, programs, and institutional branding
- Ensure the cleanliness and presentation of the museum shop, café, and atrium seating areas
- Follow merchandising, selling, and fulfillment procedures to support both customer experience and store performance
- Maintain organized, safe, and accessible storage and back-of-house areas
- Identify and report potential safety concerns in public and private spaces
- Follow loss prevention practices as directed
- Participate in annual merchandise inventory
- Visitor Experience & Retail Leads will be responsible for all the above, as well and the following:
 - Assist in the execution of retail-driven events, including author talks, book signings, and vendor activations, in coordination with Education and Communications

- Support the development and launch of an online museum shop
- Help ensure store accessibility and compliance with ADA standards

Experience & Core Competencies:

- Prior retail or customer service experience required; Visitor Experience & Retail Leads require a minimum of two years of retail operations experience, supervisory experience is preferred.
- Interpersonal skills, including the ability to:
 - maintain effective working relationships with staff, volunteers, and members of the public;
 - exercise tact and diplomacy at all times;
 - demonstrate an understanding of protocol and sensitivity to cultural diversity issues;
 - nurture a positive working environment.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to quickly establish rapport and maintain relationships with museum members and visitors and initiate and close sales.
- Creative and possessing a “good eye” for visual merchandising.
- Knowledge of customer service principles, best practices, and procedures preferred.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office 365 required; Visitor Experience & Retail Leads familiarity with Adobe Suite preferred.
- Familiarity with Vend/Lightspeed Series X POS preferred.
- Availability to work a flexible schedule generally ranging from 12–24 hours per week during AIHA’s business hours, 9:30AM– 5PM (Wednesdays through Saturdays) and 11:30AM–5PM (Sundays), with flexibility for off-hours events and assignments as needed.
- Must be able to work some evenings and maintain a flexible schedule that may vary from week-to-week.
- Required to work at least one day per weekend (Saturday or Sunday).
- Reliable transportation.

Physical Requirements:

- Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.
- Ability to read, write and speak English fluently.
- Required to talk, hear, stand, walk, use hands to finger, handle, or feel and reach with hands and arms.
- Dexterity to write and operate standard office machines such as computers, printers, copiers, fax machines, phones, monitors, and other office and/or presentation-related equipment as required.
- Able to stand for extended periods (up to 7 hours) daily.
- Able to bend, crouch, stoop, reach, and push merchandise.
- Able to operate a computer and related software.

- Able to perform the essential job functions consistently safely and successfully with ADA, FMLA, and other federal, state, and local standards, including meeting qualitative and/or quantitative productivity standards.
- Able to maintain regular, punctual attendance consistent with ADA, FMLA, and other federal, state, and local standards.

Working Conditions and Environmental Factors:

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those the employee will experience on the job. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is working in office or public commercial settings and may be exposed to items such as but not limited to money, toner, office equipment, cleaning supplies, dust, low light, and moderate noise levels.

About the Albany Institute of History & Art

Founded in 1791, the Albany Institute of History & Art is New York's oldest museum. With more than 25,000 objects in the collection and one million documents in the research library, its museum and library holdings form one of the most significant collections in the United States documenting the life and culture of the Hudson Valley region from the late seventeenth century to the present day. The broad scope of its collections includes paintings, sculptures, furniture and furnishings, prints, drawings and watercolors, antiquities, textiles and costumes, manuscripts, photographs, and more. Long-term exhibitions include The Hudson River School: Landscape Paintings from the Albany Institute, Ancient Egypt, and Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture.