

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST® CHURCH

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United for Mission

Welcome to the first conference of Adventist human-subject researchers. We in the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research (ASTR) are delighted to be hosting this conference in conjunction with Andrews University; we appreciate your taking the time to join us.

Adventist theologians, librarians, physicians and surgeons, schoolteachers, lawyers: all have regular meetings. But Adventist researchers working on religious topics that are not chiefly investigated using texts, and whose subject matter is not medical or pedagogical research—they have yet to meet together to discuss their work, their methodologies, their findings, and their concerns.

That is the purpose of this conference. Its occasion is partly the keen interest of the General Conference in rigorous empirical research—and many of you attending are working on projects funded by ASTR. Yet this is also a broader opportunity, for scholars who have a common area of research to talk together. We are confident that something good will come out of it—so confident, in fact, that the dates for next year's conference have already been set. We look forward, in twelve months' time, to welcoming you to the Seventh-day Adventist World Headquarters.

Our immediate focus, however, is here and now. We are very grateful to Andrews University for hosting us—ASTR's partnership with Andrews is very important for the GC's research agenda. We particularly appreciate the assistance provided by Dr. Gary Burdick, the Associate Dean for Research, and Sarah Kimakwa, his assistant. Without their work, this conference would not have been possible. I am also grateful personally to Galina Stele, D.Min., coordinator of human-subject research for ASTR, who has worked tirelessly over several months to make this conference a reality. And I am grateful to you, for joining us and for starting an important conversation among Adventist researchers.