

General Conference Entity Author Guidelines

2017



Introduction

Congratulations! You have been chosen to write an article on an entity (department, office, institute, foundation, association, ministry) of the General Conference Headquarters for the new *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* (ESDA). Your selection indicates that you have distinguished yourself as an authority on this entity or are in the best position to gain expertise and thus can write an authoritative article accessible to the church and to the public. This article will be the go-to source on this subject and so should meet the high standard that all ESDA articles will achieve: thoroughly researched, primary-source based, information-rich, clearly written, accurate, honest, comprehensive, engaging, authoritative, and written for both Adventists and the wider public. These criteria should be kept in mind throughout the article-writing process. This guide will take you through a step-by-step process to help you produce such an article. More resources for ESDA authors can be found at this link (<https://goo.gl/YklFzg>).

Step One: Orientation

Be sure to orient yourself with the word length and due date of your assignment so you can finish on time and within the parameters. It would be optimal to finish before the due date but only if this is not to the detriment of quality.

<u>Article Type</u>	<u>Word Length</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
General Conference Entity	1,000-5,000 words	1 year

Step Two: Research

I. Preliminary Research

If you have written anything previously on your subject, consult your work again in order to refresh yourself. Next, read the 1996 *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* article on the subject, if there is one. Reviewing this source is just so you can know what has been written on your subject in the previous *Encyclopedia*, not to reproduce the entry. In fact, one of the reasons for the ESDA project is to update research from the 1996 *Encyclopedia*, correct inaccuracies, fill in gaps of information, and publish new articles based on the primary sources now available to us, reflective of current understanding. Nonetheless, the former *Encyclopedia* provides excellent overviews of ADRA and will be invaluable to the formation of your article. You will likely want to keep the article handy throughout the writing process.

II. Web Research

Given ESDA's high standard for its articles, articles should be thoroughly researched. ESDA recommends the following resources:

- *SDA Yearbook* (<https://goo.gl/mkwfPC>): This official record of the denomination will be the go-to source for the following information on the entity: official title, year of organization and reorganization, address, and personnel.
- General Conference Committee and General Conference Session Minutes (<https://goo.gl/83cAjD>): These official minutes of the General Conference contain votes for the organization of GC entities, often including the entity's original purpose/philosophy and the rationale and votes for its reorganization.
- *GC Working Policy*: This semiannual publication includes the entity's purpose/philosophy.

- Website: Most GC entities will operate a website that can be found through a Google search or by visiting <https://www.adventist.org/en/world-church/general-conference/departments/>. The website should contain information about the history of the entity.

III. Visiting Research

Because most GC entities were organized in the twentieth century and came of age in the last fifty years, interviews will be an especially valuable source for articles. These days, interviews do not have to be conducted in person but can be done via email, Skype, or phone. Please consult the ESDA Oral History Interview Guide (<https://goo.gl/xQR1iM>) for instructions on how to conduct an interview.

The final step in the research phase is to pursue any source not specified in the other steps. This could be newspapers, websites, media, social media, unpublished articles, etc. It is a good idea to ask others about possible sources.

Important note: Your article must be based on primary sources. Since the ESDA will be a digital resource, every effort should be made to digitize (scan) and preserve the *unique and significant primary sources* used to write your article. Please follow the instructions in “Preserving Primary Sources” found here (<https://goo.gl/YklFzg>).

Step Three: Writing

Although there will be variations in the article structure depending on the type of entity, below is a general outline. The layout of the article can follow one of two models: 1) chronological, in which the history of the entity is traced from its origins to the present, or 2) thematic, beginning with a brief overview of the history of the entity then examining by theme separate sections (e.g., important administrators, name changes, defining eras, etc.).

If the GC entity no longer exists, the dates it was in operation should be included after the title (e.g., “Operational from 1926 – 1972”). When including other dates, include day, month, and year. Endnotes adhering to the Turabian style should be used (<https://goo.gl/q1iyjt>). At the end of the article, include the address of the entity as well as the geo-coordinates of that address.

- I. Origin
- II. Organization
- III. History
- IV. Role and place in the World Church and its mission
- V. Lists

I. Origin

Trace the origins of the entity, which always originated first from theological/philosophical beliefs as well as mission then move to the implementation of the belief, and conclude when the official church entity was established. For instance, the origins of Adventist Health Ministries can be traced back to the early Adventist emphasis on the importance of health, the body as the temple of God, and the belief that the health message went part and parcel with the three angels’ messages. Initial activism by members and the health facilities of the fledgling church in the

1860s stemmed from this philosophy and mission, as did the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association which was organized in 1893 with John Harvey Kellogg as its first president. This association was forerunner to Adventist Health Ministries.

The subtle distinction between forerunner and predecessor can be tricky, so care needs to be taken here. The difference between predecessor and forerunner is that the forerunner came before the entity but was not the entity, per se, whereas the predecessor is the entity even though it possibly had several iterations, title changes, and relocations. If the entity has a forerunner, its history should be shared here since it is not being covered in another article. However, if your entity has a predecessor, it should be covered in another article, so only a paragraph should do here. The online article on the entity will contain a link to the article on the predecessor.

Ask yourself these questions when preparing this section:

- What theology or philosophy undergirds the mission of my entity?
- When were these first articulated or written down?
- What did early Adventists do about their beliefs?
- What entity(ies) was organized or established to more effectively carry out the mission?

II. Organization

Here the official General Conference Committee or GC session action that established your entity should be included as well as the context surrounding the vote.

- Why was the entity organized when it was? What was the perceived need? What did the minutes state as the original purpose for the entity?
- What was to be its role in the World Church, and how would it help fulfill the mission?
- Who were some of the main persons involved in making the organization of the entity a reality? Bear in mind that in some cases the organization will not be straightforward, as there may have been a merger of two departments, a reorganization of a defunct entity, or the like.

III. History

This section should cover the broad history of the entity which will include the following:

- Dates of title and location changes
- Significant developments and events
- Noteworthy accomplishments of the entity
- Challenging times
- Salient statistics
- Any alterations in the purpose or mission of the entity and why they occurred
- Important leaders of the entity and their influence on the entity and the church/world

IV. Role and Place in the World Church and its mission

Provide a summary of the historical and current role of the entity and a measured take on the future of the entity in this regard. This should not be long or elaborate, but bring all of the previous information together for the reader.

V. Lists

- Title Changes: A listing of the titles and their timespan should be included as below in the instance of the General Conference Department of Communication:

Official Names

Bureau of Public Relations (1912-1948); Radio-Television Department (1948-1973); Department of Communication (1973-)

- Leaders: Here is how the leaders (directors, presidents, secretaries) of the entity should be listed. Although in biographical articles initials in names should be spelled out when first introduced, in these lists, render the name that the leaders popularly went by, as listed in the *Yearbook*. Note also that this section will include the various names of the entity along with the titles of the leaders. These are the leaders of the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

Statistical Secretaries

H.E. Rogers (1904-1941); Claude Conard (1941-1950); E.J. Johanson (1950-1952); H.W. Klaser (1952-1962); E.L. Becker (1962-1965); R.J. Radcliffe (1965-1966); Jesse O. Gibson (1966-1975)

Directors of Archives and Statistics

F. Donald Yost (1973-1995); R. William Cash (1995-1998); Bert Haloviak (1998-2010)

Directors of Archives, Statistics, and Research

David Trim (2010-)

Step Four: Style and Formatting

Writing Style

Since the ESDA will be a General Conference-based publication, American English will be used. Adhering to this can be most easily accomplished by setting Microsoft Word to American English (Select “File,” then “Options,” then “Language,” then “English [United States]”).

Title and Name

At the top of the first page, include the name of the article (which is the subject) your name under the title as you would like it to appear in print.

Spacing

Include an extra line between paragraphs and italicize subheadings. After the period at the end of each sentence, only insert one space, not two.

Images

Please note that there should be *no* images (i.e., pictures, photos, portraits) whatsoever in the article. Images will be handled separately (see the document “Preserving Primary Sources” at <https://goo.gl/YklFzg>).

Documentation

Each ESDA article will have two kinds of citation formats: endnotes and sources, each in the Turabian style (<https://goo.gl/b0zsB>). Use the ESDA Documentation Manual for quick access to the Turabian style.

Endnotes

Endnotes should be used when an author wants to provide evidence for a point that may be questioned or contested. They should also be supplied for a direct quote or paraphrase and unique information from a particular source. Endnotes should not be used in the case of generally established facts. Neither should they be used to advance an argument; this should only be done in the actual body of the text.

Information that *should* be cited with endnotes include:

- The date the first Seventh-day Adventist entered a country
- The date the first person was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in a city, country, or region
- The date an individual was converted or baptized
- Correspondence (letters) between people
- Committee or board minutes or actions
- Statistical figures such as membership, enrollment, employee count, etc.
- Direct quotations or paraphrases
- Date construction began on an institution
- Official church statements
- Any controversial or disputed point

Information that should *not* be cited with endnotes include:

- Established dates such as when the General Conference was established (1863) or when Ellen White died (1915)
- Generally known facts about historical events like “World War II concluded in 1945” or “Martin Luther posted the 95 theses in 1517”
- Points that are used to advance an argument or an extensive explanation

Endnotes can be inserted in Microsoft Word by selecting “References” from the top of the menu and choosing “Insert Endnote.” Endnotes should be numerical. This is done by selecting the “Footnotes” dropdown menu, going to the “Number Format” and choosing “1, 2, 3,…” and clicking “Apply.” Note that Word can also convert sources to Turabian style by selecting the “Reference” tab in the ribbon and then selecting from the “Style” dropdown menu.

The Sources section is similar to a bibliography, except that it is comprised of a listing of all the sources used to write the article. To be thorough, however, some authors may wish to include sources on the subject that they did not use in writing or researching the article but which could be helpful to the reader for further research. The Sources page will be the final part of the article and will follow the Turabian style.

Things to Keep in Mind While Writing

Check your article for the following pitfalls to which Adventist writers are particularly susceptible. Remove or edit if you come across them:

Spiritualizing or moralizing: To reflect on or express opinions about something in terms of right and wrong, especially in a self-righteous or tiresome way.

Example: “Bob Smith was often assailed by temptation but never gave in to the devil. Like Bob, we too can be overcomers.”

Use of Adventist nomenclature: Avoid using terms and phrases that only Adventists would know without introducing and explaining them before they are employed.

Example: ABC, AYS, campaign, crusade, lost (a person who has not accepted Christ), MV, present truth, probation, remnant, spirit of prophecy, Sabbath School, SDA, Sunday Law, the message, the world, third/three angels’ message(s), etc.

Revealing bias toward your subject

Example: “Bob Smith’s motives were pure.”

Heavy judgmentalism: Akin to bias, this is negatively judging an action of your subject.

Example: “Bob Smith’s intentions were evil.”

Too much information: ESDA articles should err on the side of more information but listing a subject’s favorite color, pet’s names, and eating habits is too much information and should be left out.

Mythography: Don’t perpetuate myths about the entity. If you *cannot* find evidence of something, either do not mention it or preface with “Some believe...” or “It is commonly held...”

Hyperbole: An exaggeration of ideas for the sake of emphasis.

Example: “Bob Smith is the greatest teacher the Adventist church has ever known.”
“Bob Smith is the most controversial theologian in Adventist history.”

Personal reminiscences: Keep out any personal experiences you may have had with the article subject. Separate from the main article, there will be a section called “Memory Statements” in which personal memories from site visitors will be featured.

Umpiring: Avoid taking sides in historical disputes; retain historical detachment.

Presentism: Presentism is “the tendency to interpret past events in terms of modern values and concepts.” ESDA articles should not stand in condemnation on the one hand or glorification on the other of what Adventists did in the past. Neither should what was done be used to win a current debate. Do not be critical just for the sake of being critical. Articles should determine what actually happened, why the article subject(s) acted the way they did, and what lessons can be drawn from it.

Step Five: Editing

Once you have finished writing the article, it is time to edit, which means reviewing your article for content, structure, quality, and flow. The editing process is to ensure the best possible article. Take your article through the steps below, reading it afresh with that particular step in mind.

1. **Content:** Pretend that you know nothing about the entity and are reading about it for the first time in this article. Are you well informed about the entity after you read it? Is the article clear? Is it logical? Does it flow?
2. **Accuracy:** Are the salient facts of the history of the entity included? Are dates and names accurate? Are other details correct?
3. **Structure and flow:** Does the article follow a chronological order? Is any life event out of order? Are your ideas logically organized within each paragraph and within the article as a whole? Does your writing make sense to both Adventist and non-Adventist readership?
4. **Quality:** Are you concise? Is your sentence structure easy to follow or confusing? Do transitions between sentences and paragraphs make sense?
5. Send the article to a friend or relative to read who has never heard of the article subject, and ask them for their feedback: specifically, does the article provide a good overview of the entity?

Step Six: Proofreading

ESDA articles will lose much of their impact and respect if the grammar is poor. Please do not skip this step; your article will be returned to you to do it.

1. Read the article, looking for the following items:
 - a. Are there any run-on sentences?
 - b. Do I use periods and commas properly?
 - c. Do the nouns and verbs agree in tense and number?
 - d. Have I made proper use of articles (a, an, the)?
 - e. Do I use words correctly?
2. Read the article again, this time out loud, asking the above questions.
3. Have a spouse, friend, or colleague proofread the article. Extra eyes usually pick up things that you have not.

Step Seven: Submit

Each individual who writes an article for the *Encyclopedia* will have an Author Page on the ESDA website. This page will include a brief biography and links to all of the ESDA articles that the author wrote. Please submit in a *separate* Word document from the article a bio of yourself no longer than three sentences. This can include any information you like but usually covers things like birthplace, education, career, accomplishments, publications, hobbies, and family. Please send this bio to your editor.

You are now ready to submit your article. There are two ways in which this can be done.

1. If you have completed your article before the due date, email your editor notifying him that you are ready to submit. The editor will then send you a link that you will click. Follow the instructions to upload the article.
2. Around the time of the due date, an email will arrive from your editor with a link and submission instructions. After you have uploaded the article, you will receive an email

confirmation that it has been received, and then you will wait for the editor to contact you further.

Thank you for your contribution to the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* and the World Church!