

**The Quaker Institute for the Future (QIF) 2026 Summer Research Seminar
August 13-17, 2026 - Online**



Would you value the opportunity to explore concerns for the future in a setting of collaborative Quaker discernment?

Do you have research or a project you would like to develop in a Quaker context?

Are conflicts around the world leading you to seek or reinforce collaborative engagement?

You are invited!

The Quaker Institute for the Future's 2026 Summer Research Seminar (SRS) will take place online (by Zoom) from August 13 – 17 (quakerinstitute.org/summer-institutes/).

QIF Summer Research Seminars create a venue for Spirit-led research using Quaker methods of discernment and reflection. The SRS is an opportunity to bring new ideas, projects, and research for collaborative discernment conducted as a Meeting for Worship. As individuals share their projects in a Quaker process of collective inquiry and discernment, they often find clarity and new insights that might not have occurred through other means.

Early, late and optional mid-day sessions

Early sessions

We will begin on Thursday at 4:30 pm EDT/1:30 pm PDT with worship, welcome, and an introduction to the seminar. On Friday through Monday, we will begin at 11:30 am EDT/8:30 am PDT with a time of silent centering worship. The **early session**, beginning at 12 noon EDT/9 am PDT, will be devoted to presentations of one or more projects. A session clerk will introduce these presentations, which will commence out of the silence and include time for questions, clarification, and Spirit-led discernment and discussion, all aimed to support those who are developing ongoing projects.

When possible, sessions will be organized into daily themes, which may include:

- Supporting and securing democracy and the rule of law
- Exploring the rapidly developing effects of artificial intelligence on living systems, employment, decision making, and the discernment of truth
- Examining how money systems and banking concentrate wealth, impact people, and degrade the planet
- Acting on affordability and housing justice
- Understanding barriers and opportunities to acting on Earth restoration

We invite SRS participants to propose additional themes when they register.

On **Friday**, the early session will focus on money, banking, and the concentration of wealth, with concern for:

- wealth concentration effects,
- environmental degradation,
- erosion of community,
- inherent instability,
- relation to growth and inflation, and
- complicity with war.

On **Saturday**, the early session will consist of facilitated sessions to examine questions surrounding the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI), including:

- how is AI impacting life systems?
- how does AI affect the discernment of truth and decision making?
- how might Spirit be leading us to direct the development and deployment of AI technologies in advancing what the Friends Committee on National Legislation describes as “The World We Seek?”
- who would fund that development and how would it proceed?

Late sessions

The **late session** will begin each day at 7:30 pm EDT/4:30 pm PDT. These sessions will include time for questions and discussion with SRS participants.

Optional mid-day forums

Between the early and late sessions, optional online forums will be available for SRS participants to gather for creative sharing, informal interactions, or continued discussion of ideas, questions or concerns that arose in another session.

Schedule at a glance

Session Time	Thu 8/13	Fri 8/14	Sat 8/15	Sun 8/16	Mon 8/17
12-3 pm ET 9 am-12 pm PT	None	1 or 2 research presentations on money and wealth concentration	1 or 2 research presentations on artificial intelligence	1 or 2 research presentations on housing and justice	1 or 2 research presentations on economics and the environment
4:30-6 pm ET 1:30-3 pm PT	Welcome and introduction	Open Breakout rooms	Open Breakout rooms	Open Breakout rooms	Reflections on the 2026 SRS
7:30-9 pm ET 4:30-6 pm PT	1 research presentation and discussion	1 research presentation and discussion	1 research presentation and discussion	1 research presentation and discussion	None

Registration

We welcome those who wish to:

- present a project for worshipful discernment,
- participate in introducing and facilitating a theme-based discussion,
- attend and participate without taking on either a presentation or theme-based facilitation, or
- take part in the various discussions outlined above.

Please register at www.quakerinstitute.org by following the links to the 2026 Summer Research Seminar.

Please register by **July 15** if you wish to present a project, facilitate a discussion, or share creative works. You will be able to briefly describe your proposal using the registration form. Registration for other participants will be open throughout the SRS. There is no registration fee, though participants are encouraged to make a donation to QIF that is within their means to help QIF cover the costs of organizing, promoting, and documenting the SRS.

Youth Grants

QIF is offering \$1000 stipends to applicants aged 18 to 35 years old to make a presentation on research or activism that resonates with the QIF mission of advancing a global future of inclusion, social justice, and ecological integrity through Spirit-led participatory research and discernment. The SRS organizing committee will hold two or more orientation/clearness sessions for stipend recipients and will be generally available to help stipend holders prepare for the SRS.

This is part of an ongoing program of Youth Grants. NOTE: People may choose to apply for a Youth Grant independently of the Summer Research Seminar and use it for purposes other than to develop a presentation at the SRS. For more information on the Youth Grants, please see additional information on the web site.

Inquiries

For other questions regarding registration or the SRS in general or for other questions regarding registration or the SRS in general or to apply for a Youth Grant stipend, contact Gray Cox at gray@coa.edu or #207-460-1163.

QIF Background and Charter

In June 2003, 29 Quakers from U.S. and Canada, belonging to 19 Monthly Meetings and 11 Yearly Meetings, many actively involved with Quaker organizations, gathered at Pendle Hill to explore a shared concern about issues of peace, justice, equality, and restoring earth's ecological integrity. The participants in that meeting became convinced of the need for deeper study and discernment of the trajectory of human history, and of the future of humanity on Earth as a basis for corporate Quaker witness. Accordingly, they determined to create an institute for that purpose, leading to the formation of the Quaker Institute for the Future (QIF) in 2004 (quakerinstitute.org/history/).

The following questions were posed in a letter that the Pendle Hill gathering sent to Friends everywhere (quakerinstitute.org/history/2003-gathering-message/):

In the light of Friends Testimonies, what is God calling us to do about the continuing and increasing marginalization of so much of the world's population, the extinction of species and other environmental degradation?

How do we integrate our human communities within the natural world so as to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of future generations?

What changes in the institutions of economy and governance are needed to promote effective stewardship of the natural environment and caring for people and communities?

What is it in nature and human knowledge that we have the right to own?

How best can we promote the values expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Earth Charter?

How can we promote understanding and awareness of the consequences of increasing global interconnectedness and the urgency of addressing the dangers and opportunities that these present?

As we earn, spend and invest money, as individuals and as meeting communities, how can we live in the "virtue of that life and power" that leads us to treat all humans and the Earth as manifestation of the Divine?

Are we aware of the true cost of our consumption?

Do we take into account our concerns for social justice as we earn, spend, and invest money?

What information, tools, and skills do we need to equip ourselves to work effectively for public policies that restore Earth's resilience, increase social equity, and strengthen community?

How, as we labor with these concerns, can we engage with others in ways that help us discern God's will for us at this critical stage of Earth's history?

Today, in 2026, what questions and concerns do you have?