The Ethiopian Heritage Fund are delighted to announce that Ethiopian Heritage Authority (EHA) conservator Gebremariam Anenia has succeeded in securing a place on a new 12-month Master of Advanced Studies in the Conservation of Wall Paintings at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI).

Stephen Battle, World Monuments Fund's Senior Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa approached Ethiopian Heritage Fund Director Blair Priday for direction towards possible candidates, while Francesca Piqué, Professor of Conservation Science for Cultural Heritage and Head of the Conservation and Restoration Sector at SUPSI approached EHF's wall painting conservators Stephen Rickerby and Lisa Shekede for the same purposes. Both routes converged on Gebremariam's candidacy. Stephen and Lisa have known Gebremariam since 2019, having first met during educational outreach initiatives at Addis University and EHA when Gebremariam was studying for his master's thesis on the rock-cut church of Abreha wa Atsbha. Their endorsement of Gebremariam's application to the SUPSI course was based on his long-term dedication to the preservation of Ethiopia's wall painting patrimony. EHF is hopeful that Gebremariam's attendance on the course will be a starting point for advancing wall painting conservation as a profession in Ethiopia.

The new course was set up in partnership with the World Monuments Fund to provide formal conservation education to mid-career conservation professionals working in countries where no such programme exists. The course will start in March 2027 and will be repeated annually for the next 5 years.

Illustration caption: Gebremariam Anenia working at Balchi Amanuel Church, Minjar Shenkora Woreda, Amhara