



For Immediate Release

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## **Silkroad to Receive \$45,000 Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to Support New Podcast Series**

Boston, MA — **Silkroad** announced today that it has been approved by the **National Endowment for the Arts** (NEA) for a **Grants for the Arts Projects** award of **\$45,000**. This grant will support the production of a **new podcast series** as part of Silkroad's [\*American Railroad\*](#) initiative. Silkroad's podcast is among 958 projects that were selected by the NEA to receive funding in its first round of fiscal year 2024 grants, totaling more than \$27.1 million.

"We are fortunate to receive this third grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to further programming tied to *American Railroad*," stated Silkroad's Executive Director Ben Hartley. "The first was for artistic development and the second for touring. This most recent grant will enable us to create evergreen, educational content that is accessible to broad audiences. We are grateful to the NEA for their belief in, and continued support of, our landmark artistic initiative."

Silkroad's *American Railroad* is a multi-year project conceived and spearheaded by Artistic Director Rhiannon Giddens. Launched in 2021, the initiative seeks to highlight untold stories and amplify unheard voices from the communities who built the U.S. Transcontinental Railroad and were most affected by its construction. Through touring performances, educational programs, and community engagement activities, *American Railroad* aims to paint a more accurate picture of the global diasporic origin of the American Empire.

In keeping with *American Railroad*'s theme and mission, Silkroad's new podcast series will serve to broadcast the music, stories, and cultural contributions of diverse communities across the United States who built the country's railroad system or were displaced by its arrival. The podcast will be developed in partnership with nonprofit public media organization [PRX](#), one of the world's top podcast publishers and public radio distributors. Details about the podcast, including its title and release date, will be announced at a later date.

"The National Endowment for the Arts is delighted to announce this grant to Silkroad, which is helping contribute to the strength and well-being of the arts sector and local community," said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. "We are pleased to be able to support this community and help create an environment where all people have the opportunity to live artful lives."

For more information about *American Railroad*, please visit [silkroad.org/american-railroad](http://silkroad.org/american-railroad).

**About Silkroad**

Yo-Yo Ma conceived Silkroad in 1998, recognizing the historical Silk Road as a model for cultural collaboration—for the exchange of ideas, tradition, and innovation across borders. In a groundbreaking experiment, he brought together musicians from the lands of the Silk Road to co-create a musical language founded in difference, thus creating the foundation of Silkroad: both a touring ensemble comprised of world-class musicians from all over the globe and a Boston-based non-profit organization working to make a positive impact across borders through the arts.

Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Rhiannon Giddens and Executive Director Ben Hartley, Silkroad leads social impact initiatives and educational programming alongside the creation of new music by the Grammy Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble.

To learn more, please visit [silkroad.org](http://silkroad.org) and @silkroadproject on social media.

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