Ferrum College created the Blue Ridge Institute & Museum in 1973 to document, interpret, and present the folk heritage of the Blue Ridge region. Since that time, the Institute has grown steadily, working throughout Virginia and Appalachia while maintaining an emphasis on the western portion of the Commonwealth.

The Blue Ridge Institute & Museum has a longstanding national reputation for quality and authenticity. From festivals and concerts to exhibitions and publications, the BRI&M offers educational and entertaining programming. The Institute’s audience spans all ages and backgrounds, enhancing Ferrum College’s educational mission. A heritage-tourism leader, the BRI&M is a major venue on The Crooked Road: Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail. In recognition of its accomplishments, the Institute was designated The State Center for Blue Ridge Folklore by Governor Gerald Baliles and the Virginia State Legislature in 1986.

The Blue Ridge Institute & Museum is part of Ferrum College’s Institutional Advancement Division. Along with fulltime and part-time professionals, the BRI&M staff includes a number of student workers building valuable skills as part of their Ferrum experience.