



The Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy project submission to NWRA RSES February 2019

The Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy project (USEFE) welcomes the publication of the draft Regional Spatial Economic Strategy from the NWRA and the opportunity to send a submission. USEFE is a joint initiative between the Local Authorities of **Cavan, Leitrim, Longford and Roscommon and Bord Na Mona, ESB** and businesses across the region. We have a strong track record of collaboration and have been a key factor in the delivery of regional projects in recent years.

The key aims of USEFE are to:

- Identify sectoral partnerships and linkages whose development might create wealth opportunities for local economies
- Develop projects of regional significance which can lead to new business and job creation opportunities
- Provide opportunities to help attract skilled employees to the region
- Develop networking opportunities for businesses that can lead to new markets and potential partners
- Build relationships between public and private enterprises, micro and large enterprises

USEFE operates as an overarching structure to **recognise strategic projects and bring partners together to work collaboratively across the region**. The initiative enables business and community representatives to proactively influence and assist with the broader economic development and job creation in the region.

In recognising the growth ambitions set out in the RSES of **economy & employment, connectivity and quality of life**, we believe that these can be realised by enabling initiatives such as USEFE working on a regional level.

To date USEFE has **delivered a five time return on the investment made by our partners** by successfully securing €1,741,040 for regional development and job creation. Our reach creates a critical mass in population of over 213,000 and **connects some of the most rural counties in Ireland¹**. We connect across two regions, NWRA and EMRA, and can be seen as a vehicle for the delivery of commonality across regions.

With support USEFE can continue to act on a regional basis to identify **alignment for funding opportunities** and leverage support across public and private sectors. We can identify partnerships across Local Economic and Community plans and **utilise shared resourcing**.

We look forward to the publication of the final RSES and working with the NWRA and partners to promote regional economic development and job creation.

¹Based on CSO 2016 figures 75% of population in USEFE counties live in rural areas.

