Information Days and Proposers' Days are often big affairs. So it is best if you are prepared to get the most out of them. Generally there are sessions where a Commission project officer explains a topic. At times this explanation is little more than a repeat of what is in the work programme, at other times it is a wealth of information. Whatever the case, their answers to questions from the audience can be insightful and worth the time it takes to attend. Often you will be able to quickly present either your project idea or your expertise to the audience. There also might be brokerage events where you can meet potential partners, exhibitions where you can see funded projects and there are always social events such as lunches.

#### Have a plan

What is it you want out of the event? This you should have firmly in your mind.

You can choose one or all of the suggestions below:

* + Networking
  + Marketing your expertise
  + Looking for consortium members
  + Finding out what competitors are doing
  + Getting more information about a topic
  + Meeting Commission staff/project officers

All require that you develop a plan so that you do not walk away empty handed.

#### Do things in advance

In order to alleviate stress it is always a good idea to prepare in advance. Prepare for attendance like you are preparing for whatever makes you nervous, an exam, meeting, proposal, request for a raise.

#### Have something to say

* Decide (early) what you want your value proposition to be. If you are looking for partners then have a clear idea of the kind(s) of partner(s) you want and what you want them to do. You will need a brief description of your project idea
* If you want to market your expertise then have a clear idea of precisely what that expertise is, not "we can solve any problem" but we are experts in "neuromorphic engineering" or "low-power widgets" or "the psychology of nerds".
* Don't forget other possibilities such as available laboratories, tests beds, living labs etc.
* Industry is always popular as a supplier of needs and stakeholder. If you do have a need, state it ("we need support in solving a problem we have with machine learning and are looking at xx topic").

#### Have an elevator pitch

* When you have decided what you want to say, cook it down to sixty seconds and practice. In the speed dating events like brokerage events or in poster sessions you won't have much time and the most valuable potential partners want you to get quickly to the point.
* The pitch should cover only the basics: who-what-where-when-and-why, and not in detail. Who you are, what you want to do, where the topic can be found, when is the call, and why you want to do it or Who you are, what you are good at, where it might be applied, when you are available and why you are interested.
* Practice, practice, practice until it becomes second nature, while remaining sincere. You can fill in the details later (but not too many, you don't want to bore them).
* Bring a few bullet point notes so you don't forget the important points when you are under pressure.

#### Have something to hand out

* Despite our connected age it does not hurt to have something you can give to people, along with following up electronically. This can be the brief description of your proposal idea or expertise or need, along with your name and contact details.
* What you bring should be written specifically for your audience such as how your skills fit the call or calls. Do not come with just normal marketing material.

#### Do your homework. Also known as due diligence

* Find the topics that either you have expertise to help solve the challenge or you have an idea for a project
* If there is a session on the topic, check those that have signed up to do presentations. See if they have been involved in any H2020 projects. If so they are probably more likely to be good consortium partners. Make an appointment to meet them in advance.
* Look to see if something similar has been called before and if so, find the projects that were funded. Finding these projects means you can see the progression of the topic over time, this will give you insights as to what is being asked in the current topic description. It can also help you formulate questions to ask the project officer.
* Once you find the project's web site you can see who is involved. Check with the Information Day or Proposers’ Day participants' list and if anyone involved with the project that is there then send them a message and suggest you meet up for coffee/lunch.
* Reviewing the participants' list is always worthwhile, particularly if you have a particular organisation in mind you would like to work with. Remember you can often book "speed dating meetings" with them.
* At an ICT Proposers' Day you can introduce yourself as a possible partner, exchange project ideas and upload a presentation.

*ICT Proposers’ Day 2019 - Helsinki*: [be visible: pitch in a parallel session & upload a pesentation](https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/events/cf/digital-excellence-forum-ict-proposers-day-2019/programme.cfm?id=458) Extend your network with the [Face2Face Brokerage event](https://ict2019.ideal-ist.eu/)   
Browse the full list of [participants.](https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/events/cf/digital-excellence-forum-ict-proposers-day-2019/browse-persons.cfm?back=nr0)

#### Follow up

* When you make a good contact, make certain you follow up even if it is to say "nice meeting you, I hope we can work together in the future".
* If you are really interested then follow up immediately!
* If you are marketing your expertise then it is even more important to restate what you can do and why you are the best possible solution.

The FINAL but important note:

Don’t be afraid to deviate from your plan. It sometimes happens that sessions that seemed to promise a lot turn out to be irrelevant, tedious or just not what you had expected (sometimes Commission people don’t do their homework).  In such cases:  go to another session, or go “network” somewhere else.

Networking is about building relations, and can take some time before you can benefit from these connections to form winning proposals.