



**J. Willard Marriott Library**

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

# Understanding and Engaging with the *ARL 2030 Scenarios*

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# Why Plan?

- Not an obvious question
  
- Uncertainty means pressure in both directions:
  - Less certainty means more need for preparation, but...
  - Costs of planning may not be recouped

# Scenario vs. Strategic Planning

- Different assumptions about the future
  - Strategic planning for more stable environments
  - Scenario planning for more volatile ones
- Some elements of instability for schol comm:
  - Google Books
  - Status of the Big Deal
  - Patron-driven acquisition models
  - Open Access growth (or decline)



# Hope for the Best, Prepare for the Worst

- **Worst-case scenarios for libraries:**
  - Unit price of documents declines to the point that we are no longer needed as brokers
  - Access becomes so easy and ubiquitous that we are no longer needed as guides
  - Customer-focused competitors steal our constituencies from us on a wholesale basis
  - Patrons simply lose patience with being told how to be “good library users”



# ARL's Scenario Planning Project

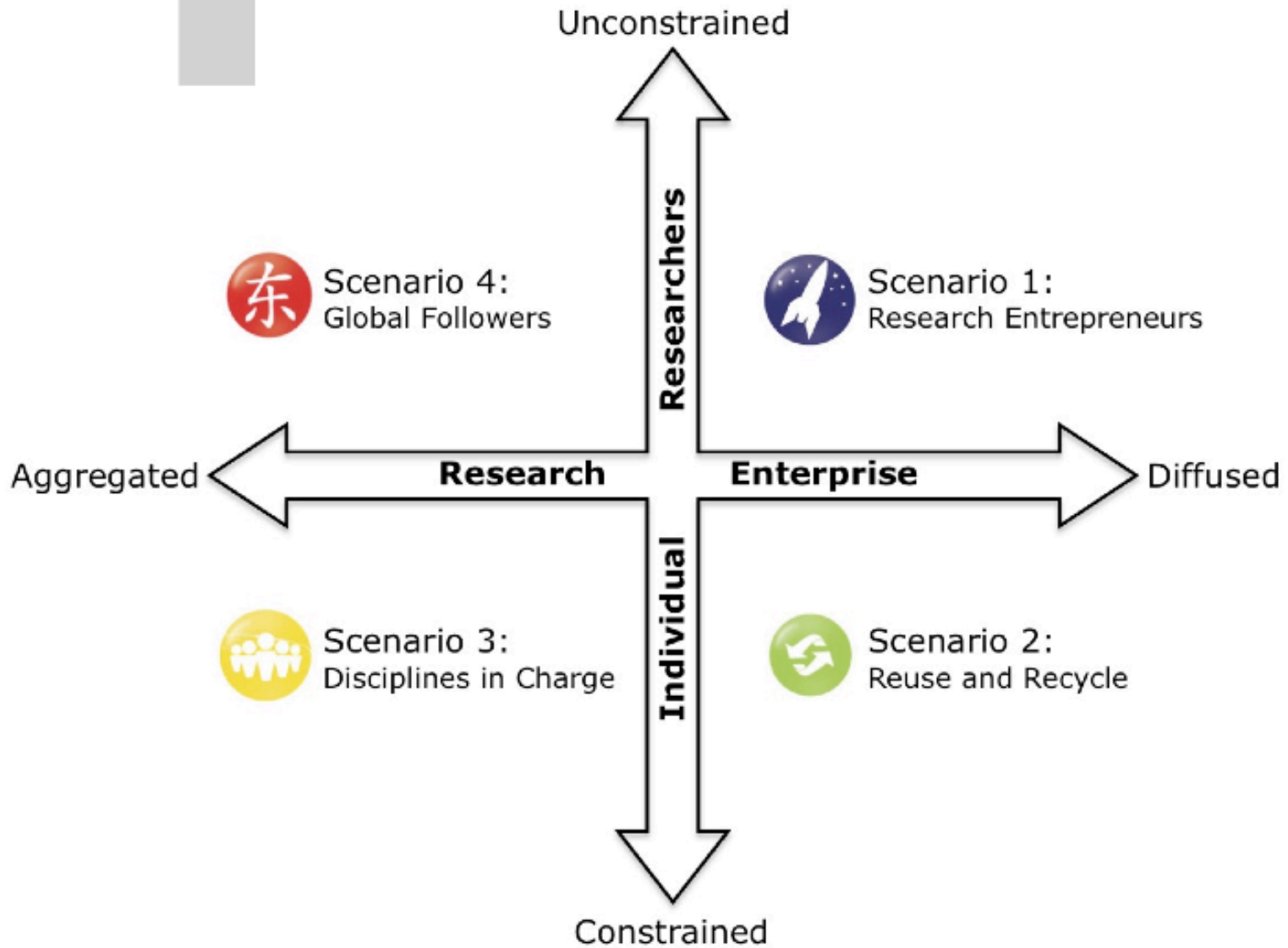
Purpose: to “design a set of scenarios that could serve as a resource for any member library to use to enhance its strategic planning process *and to foster organizational alignment around change.*”

# Pitfalls to Avoid

- Straining at gnats
- Picking likely winners/losers
- Assessing scenario likelihoods based on “should” argument

# The Scenarios

- Four possible futures:
  1. Research Entrepreneurs
  2. Reuse and Recycle
  3. Disciplines in Charge
  4. Global Followers







# Conclusion

“The ARL 2030 Scenarios: A User’s Guide for Libraries”

<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/arl-2030-scenarios-users-guide.pdf>