A TEAM from Singapore Management University (SMU) has finished runners-up behind South Korea in the Asian zone of an international marketing competition in Paris.

The Singapore trio of Lavinia Tan, 24, Kuik Xiao Shi and Wong Li-Jun Rebecca, both 23, took on students from 32 other countries in the L’Oreal Brandstorm showdown.

The task was to develop a new product range and an accompanying marketing campaign for French cosmetics firm L’Oreal.

SMU’s team – called La Difference – qualified for the international finals by winning the Singapore section last month with a product range called Lancome Crysalis. They designed the range to enhance the effectiveness of other skin-care products when pre-applied.

Their efforts were pipped in the Asian zone by a team from Korea University which went on to the finals and eventually clinched the top prize together with a team from L’institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris.

“The feedback we got was that we had an excellent presentation and that it was like storytelling; rather than just going bang, here’s our product, or bang, here’s our marketing strategy,” said Ms Wong.

“But at the end of the day, we did not win because marketing is very subjective,” said Ms Tan. “It’s not that we made mistakes; it’s more of what better appeals to the judges. Also, the competitors were very strong.”

Ms Wong said the experience they gained was valuable: “It’s a whole new playing field there. Imagine China had to beat 287 teams to get to Paris and present in English.”